

BW Billie Whitelaw Collection

Billie Whitelaw was born in Coventry on 6 June 1932 and educated at Thornton Grammar School, Bradford. She was an actress who worked extensively with Samuel Beckett. She was appointed CBE in 1991. Billie Whitelaw died on 21 December 2014.

Collection contains annotated scripts, notebooks, correspondence relating to her theatrical work with Samuel Beckett. Includes a cassette recording of Samuel Beckett reading from and discussing his play *Rockaby*; 2 dresses worn by Whitelaw during performances of Beckett plays
The theatrical papers of Samuel Beckett's favourite actress were acquired by the University at auction in December 2014, with the generous support of the Arts Council England/Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund.
Website: <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/p/purchase-grant-fund/>
1964-1980s

**BW A Annotated playscript and rehearsal notes
Arranged in date order of production**

1960s-1980s

BW A/1 *Play*

Play was Billie Whitelaw's first performance of a work overseen by Beckett. She played W2 in the premiere of *Play* at the National Theatre, London, 1964

1964-1966

BW A/1/1 Typescript reading script for the part of W2

With pencil notes and markings by Billie Whitelaw
[Please note these 3 script are very fragile, so photocopies would normally be made available for use]
1964

- BW A/1/2 Typescript recording script for Play for the BBC Third Programme
- With pencil notes and markings by Billie Whitelaw
Produced by Bennett Maxwell, Man - Robert Stephens,
Woman 1 - Pauline Jameson, Woman 2 - Billie Whitelaw
[Please note this script is fragile, so photocopies would normally be made available for use]
- BW A/1/3 Rehearsal script for Play, An Act by Samuel Beckett at the National Theatre, 22 Duchy Street, London
- 1 doc
1964
- BW A/2 *Not I and Krapp's Last Tape*
- Billie Whitelaw worked with Samuel Beckett in 1972-1973 on the production at the Royal Court which was a double bill with Krapp's Last Tape.*
- 1972-1973
- BW A/2/1 Typescript rehearsal script for Not I and Krapp's Last Tape by Samuel Beckett, Royal Court Theatre
- Inscribed by Samuel Beckett 'For Billie with fond love and gratitude from Sam'. Not I annotated with marks and notes in pencil and coloured inks.
[Please note this typescript is fragile and a photocopy will normally be made available for use]
Undated [1972-1973]
- BW A/2/2 Partial typescript for Not I by Samuel Beckett
- Marginal performance notes and underlinings in red ink and pencil
2 docs
Undated [1972-1973]

- BW A/2/3 Directorial notes on for Not I, notes written by Samuel Beckett
- Notes made by Samuel Beckett after rehearsals before the Royal Court production, providing a synopsis, dividing the play into sections, with a list of pauses, headed stationary of the Hyde Park Hotel, London
3 docs
Undated [1972-1973]
- BW A/2/4 Book entitled Not I by Samuel Beckett, published by Faber & Faber
- With some markings
1 doc
1973
- BW A/3 *Footfalls*
- Footfalls was written with Billie Whitelaw in mind. The play was performed at the Royal Court.*
- 1976
- BW A/3/1 Typescript working script of Footfalls by Samuel Beckett
- Annotated in coloured inks and pencil by Billie Whitelaw, with her comments on the character, with a page of notes on movement
- [Please note the originals are fragile and a photocopy will normally be made available for use]
1976
- BW A/3/2 Book entitled Footfalls by Samuel Beckett
- Inscribed 'for Billie with love and wonderment from Sam London May 1976'
1 doc
1976

- BW A/4 *Happy Days*

Royal Court production

1979
- BW A/4/1 Book entitled *Happy Days* by Samuel Beckett, Faber
paperbacks
1
inscribed 'for Billie with fond love & gratitude from Sam
7.6.1979'
Billie Whitelaw's working copy of *Happy Days* from the 1979
production at the Royal Court, directed by Samuel Beckett.
With extensive performance notes in pencil and coloured ink,
with autograph cuts to 18 pages in black ink, and some
autograph corrections in Beckett's hand.
1979
- BW A/4/2 Two lists of textual revisions to *Happy Days*, in Samuel
Beckett's hand for the Royal Court production in 1979

One list is alterations to the text, the other is a list of pages
with deletions. Both sets of revisions marked in Billie
Whitelaw's copy of the printed text [BW A/4/1].
2 docs
1979
- BW A/4/3 Notebook entitled '*Happy Days*' Reh [rehearsal] Moves, Notes
etc. Props written by Billie Whitelaw

Consists of 21 pages of detailed notes on *Happy Days* (written
from the end) and a prop list (at the front)
1 vol
Undated [1979]
- BW A/4/4 Notebook entitled '*Run through Wednesday May 9th*'

Pencil notes by Billie Whitelaw on the text
2 docs
Undated [1979]

- BW A/5 *Rockaby*
- The play premiered as part of a Beckett festival in Buffalo, New York, U.S.A.. Billie Whitelaw spoke to Samuel Beckett on the telephone about the play, the recording of the conversation made by Billie Whitelaw survives and is ref no BW C/1.*
- 1981
- BW A/5/1 Photocopy typescript rehearsal script of *Rockaby* by Samuel Beckett
- Annotated in pencil and coloured ink by Billie Whitelaw
Please note there are 2 pages (out of 5 pages) currently stuck together. Please note the original is fragile so photocopies will normally be made available for use.
- 1981
- BW A/6 *Eh Joe*
- Undated [1980s?]*
- BW A/6/1 Notebook containing Billie Whitelaw's notes on a meeting with Samuel Beckett on a production of *Eh Joe*
- Includes a diagram in Beckett's hand
1 doc
Undated [1980s?]
- BW A/7 *Embers*
- 1989
- BW A/7/1 Typescript of *Embers* by Samuel Beckett
- With notes by Billie Whitelaw for a performance as *Ada*, New York International Radio Festival directed by Everett Frost
1 doc
1989

BW B **Correspondence**
Arranged alphabetically by correspondent

1960s-1980s

BW B/1 *Letters from Samuel Beckett*

1972-1986

BW B/1/1 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw

1 doc
18 Nov 1972

BW B/1/2 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope

2 docs
7 Feb 1973

BW B/1/3 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope

2 docs
20 Feb 1973

BW B/1/4 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope

2 docs
26 Feb 1973

BW B/1/5 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope

2 docs
4 Oct 1975

BW B/1/6 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw

1 doc
3 Nov 1975

BW B/1/7 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope

2 docs
29 Dec 1975

- BW B/1/8 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
1 doc
10 Feb 1976
- BW B/1/9 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
19 Feb 1976
- BW B/1/10 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
25 Apr 1977
- BW B/1/11 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
24 Nov 1977
- BW B/1/12 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
25 Apr 1978
- BW B/1/13 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
22 Mar 1979
- BW B/1/14 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
17 Sept 1979
- BW B/1/15 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
1 doc
19 May 1980
- BW B/1/16 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
14 Nov 1981

- BW B/1/17 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
23 Dec 1981
- BW B/1/18 Postcard from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw

1 doc
11 Feb 1986
- BW B/1/19 Letter from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With photocopy
2 docs
21 Mar 1986
- BW B/1/20 Postcard from Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
With envelope
2 docs
28 Mar 1986
- BW B/1/21 Five empty envelopes addressed to Billie Whitelaw by Samuel
Beckett

5 docs
1978-1979
- BW B/1/22 Telegram to Billie Whitelaw from Samuel Beckett

1 doc
29 Jan 1975
- BW B/1/23 Telegram to Billie Whitelaw from Samuel Beckett

1 doc
16 Feb 1984
- BW B/1/24 Press cutting sent by Samuel Beckett to Billie Whitelaw
From Le Matin de Paris, in French, on Billie Whitelaw's
performance at the Royal Court
1 doc
21 Aug 1979
- BW B/1/25 Copy of a letter sent by Samuel Beckett to George [Devine?]

Relating to a view of the da capo [in Play?]
1 doc
9 Mar 1964

- BW B/2 Letter from Suzanne Beckett [Samuel Beckett's wife] to Billie Whitelaw
[In French]
3 docs
1 Dec 1987
- BW B/3 Letter from Barbara [Bray] to Billie Whitelaw

2 docs
13 Jun 1979
- BW B/4 Copy of a letter from Warren Brown to Billie Whitelaw,
incorporating a copy of a letter from Samuel Beckett about a
film of Not I

1 doc
19 Feb 1975, 28 Feb 1975
- BW B/5 Letter from James Knowlson to Billie Whitelaw, with two
copies of letters from Samuel Beckett

3 docs
2 May 1991
- BW B/6 Three drafts of letters from Billie Whitelaw to Samuel Beckett

5 docs
1977 and undated
- BW B/7 Letters to Billie Whitelaw from Alan Schneider, theatre
director

20 docs
1973-1984

BW C Audio material

27 Feb 1981

BW C/1 Audio cassette recording of two telephone conversations with Samuel Beckett, made by Billie Whitelaw

Beckett and Whitelaw discuss Rockaby, the second conversation includes Beckett's instructions on Whitelaw's performance and readings from the play by both Beckett and Whitelaw

Length of conversations c. 9 minutes and c. 28 minutes. Beckett's voice faint throughout - inaudible on side A, faint on side B.

Available to listen to in the reading room on CD.

27 Feb 1981

**BW D Conference material
Relating to the Alan Schneider Conference at the University
of Wisconsin, U.S.A.**

1990

BW D/1 Conference material relating to the Alan Schneider

Conference at the University of Wisconsin, U.S.A. Includes Alan Schneider 1917-1984 by W. McNeil Lowry, Alan Schneider First Annual John F. Wharton Theatre Award St Regis Roof 4 Dec 1980, cutting from the New York Times about the death of Alan Schneider 4 May 1984, correspondence relating to the Alan Schneider Conference from Robert Skloot 1990, Billie Whitelaw's handwritten notes, Alan Schneider The Man, W. McNeil Lowry, University of Wisconsin, Madison 10 Mar 1990, letter from Jean 14 Mar 1990, note by Billie Whitelaw on acting in Beckett plays, photographs of Alan Schneider with Samuel Beckett and Alan Schneider with Billie Whitelaw, folder of Alan Schneider conference material including list of speakers, maps and expenses 1990
2 folders
1990

BW PH **Photographic material
Relating to the Alan Schneider Conference at the University
of Wisconsin, U.S.A.**

Undated [1960s-1980s]

BW PH3/1 Photograph of Billie Whitelaw and Samuel Beckett, probably
rehearsing a play

1 doc
Undated [1960s-1980s]

BW PH3/2 Photograph of Billie Whitelaw , dressed as a character for a
play

1 doc
Undated [1960s-1980s]