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Finding Aid/Contents List

**Title:** Schamp-Levin Collection, ca. 1923-1998

**Collection ID:** MSS00057

**Finding Aid Author:** Jonathan Puckett

**Biographical Note:** Mable E. Schamp (1912-1950) was born in Mathis, Texas to Harvey and Belle Schamp. When her mother died of sleeping sickness in 1923, Mable helped her widowed father raise her younger siblings, but intellect and perseverance made her the youngest graduate of her high school class in 1927, when she was 15. She received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Chicago in 1931 and a Ph.D. in 1936. She married Murray Foy in December 1932, a fellow student who died of typhoid fever shortly after the marriage. Remarrying to Jewish activist and author Meyer Levin in 1935, Mable relocated to Spain and assisted the Loyalist cause during the Spanish Civil War. Mable served with the International Brigades, and she was placed in charge of a laboratory in a hospital to care for wounded soldiers. Returning to the United States, Mable remarried Irving Jacoby in 1944. She continued working in chemistry in both the District of Columbia and Honolulu and briefly oversaw on the development of contraceptives. Mable was the first woman appointed to the faculty of the Chemistry Department at the City College of New York, teaching there as an instructor from 1947-1948 and in 1950. After Mable developed schizophrenia, she underwent treatment, but chronic depression resulted in a fatal overdose in 1950. Jo Basiste's memories of his mother are located in the memoir "Mable," Box 2 Folder 8.

Meyer Levin (1905-1981) was an American journalist and novelist who wrote for the *Chicago Daily News* and, from 1933-1939, *Esquire*. Born in Chicago, Levin developed an interest in Jewish history and literature, and much of his novels reflect this passion. Levin acted as a war correspondent during the Spanish Civil War and World War II, and he simultaneously wrote books like *My Father's House* (1947), a story about Jews driven from Poland. He later directed a film adaptation of this book, the first Palestinian feature film, in 1945. Other works include *Compulsion* (1956), which recounts the Leopold-Loeb murder case, and a stage adaptation of *The Diary of Anne Frank* from a Jewish perspective. Levin died in Jerusalem in 1981.

**Scope and Contents:** This small collection is comprised of papers relating to Mable Schamp and her second husband, Meyer Levin. Box 1 contains Mable's journals, documents pertaining to Mable and Meyer's time spent in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, copied newspapers on Levin's Anne Frank playscript, correspondence, and manuscripts. Box 2 includes biographical manuscripts and photographs, including images from a nudist camp where Mable lived in ca. 1940s and a signed card from

African American actor, activist, and musician, Canada Lee. Box 3 contains Mable's "School Memories" scrapbook from her high school graduation in 1926-1927.

Books donated with the collection can be found by searching "Jo Basiste" in the "Custom Advanced Search" box in our catalog located [here](#).

**Arrangement:** This small collection consists of five sections:

- 1: Notebooks (Box 1; Box 3)
- 2: Documents (Box 1)
- 3: Correspondence (Box 1)
- 4: Manuscripts (Box 1; Box 2)
- 5: Photographs (Box 2)

**Extent/Size:** 1.5 cubic feet

**Languages:** English, Spanish; Castilian

**Acquisition Source:** Jo Basiste

**Access:** Open to researchers.

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### **Box 1:**

#### **Series 1: Notebooks**

##### **Folder 1: Administrative File**

##### **Folder 2: Jo Basiste's Photograph Notebook, ca. 1949-1950**

##### **Folder 3: Mable Schamp's Journal, July - August 1949; June 1950**

##### **Folder 4: Mable Schamp's Journal, 1947-1950**

#### **Series 2: Documents**

##### **Folder 5: Anne Frank Clippings (Meyer Levin playscript controversy), ca. 1997-1998**

Item 1: "Paper Prints Disputed Text of Anne Frank," *The New York Times*, 27 August 1998

Item 2: "A Writer's Appeal," from Meyer Levin

Item 3: "Compulsion: Jon Blair on Meyer Levin and the Legacy of Anne Frank," *Book Review, Los Angeles Times*, 28 September 1997

Item 4: "Five Precious Pages Renew Wrangling Over Anne Frank," *New York Times*, 10 September 1998

Item 5: "A New 'Anne Frank' Still Stuck in the 50's," *The New York Times*, 21 December 1997

Item 6: "The Diary of Anne Frank," Playbill, *The Music Box*

Item 7: "The Interpretation of Jews," by Laurie Stone, *The Nation*, 26 January 1998

Item 8: "The Afterlife of Anne Frank," *The New York Review*

### **Folder 6: Anne Frank Clippings (Meyer Levin playscript controversy), ca. 1997-1998**

Item 1: "A Fresh Look at 'Anne Frank' in Search of the Historical One," *The New York Times*, 30 November 1997

Item 2: "Can Anne Frank Be Rescued from 50's Kitsch?," *The Forward*, 12 December 1997

Item 3: "A Darker Anne Frank: A New Version of the Holocaust Drama Tries to Mollify Its Critics," *Time*, 15 December 1997

Item 4: "From Chicago to Beit Yannai: (Meyer Levin, 1905-1981)"

Item 5: "The Dark at the Top of the Stairs: A New Production Tries to Re-Create the World of Anne Frank," *The New Yorker*, 15 December 1997

Item 6: "This Time, Another Anne Confronts Life in the Attic," *The New York Times*, 05 December 1997

Item 7: "Anne Frank Now," *The New York Times*, 02 December 1997

Item 8: "Compulsion," *Book Review, Los Angeles Times*, 28 September 1997

Item 9: "The Obsession: A Sympathetic Examination of What Happened When Meyer Levin Tried to Bring Anne Frank's Diary to Broadway," *The New York Times Book Review*, 26 October 1997

Item 10: "Leopold and Loeb Depicted as Everymen," *The New York Times*, 02 December 1997

Item 11: "Park Avenue Stalinist?" *The New York Times*, 16 November 1997

Item 12: "A Less-Than-Frank Interpretation of Anne's Views," *Jewish Chronicle*, 10 October 1997

Item 13: "The Mail," *The New Yorker*, 14 October 1997

Item 14: "The Diary of Anne Frank," Broadway Theater Guide, *The New York Times*, 12 December 1997

Item 15: "Who Owns Anne Frank?" 06 October 1997

Item 16: "A Playwright's Obsession with the Story of Anne Frank: How Meyer Levin Struggled to Present a Jewish Adaptation of the Famous Diary," *The Daily Forward*, 19 September 1997

Item 17: "Meyer Levin's Many Causes," *The Daily Forward*, 10 October 1997

Item 18: "50 Years Later, the Jewishness of Anne Frank Blooms," *The New York Times*, 24 December 1997

## **Folder 7: Mable Schamp and Meyer Levin Documents, ca. 1923-1970**

Item 1: "Mrs. Schamp is Victim of Sleep Disease," obituary of Belle M. Schamp, 25 May 1923

Item 2: Certificate of Marriage, Murray Foy and Mable Schamp, 18 December 1932

Item 3: "More Than Anything I Love Mable Signed Mur [Murray Foy]"

Item 4: Sketch of Mable; "This does not vaguely resemble my wife – Murray Foy"

Item 5: Death Certificate, Murray Foy, 1933

Item 6: Marriage License (Genealogy Purposes Only – Copy), Meyer Levin and Mable Foy, Cook County, Illinois, 26 February 1935

Item 7: Banco de Espana, Certificado de Plata Diez Pesetas, de curso legal; \$10 Pesata Spanish Bank Note, 1935

Item 8: Brigadas Internacionales, Carnet Militar para Levin, Mable, 1937

Item 9: Salvoconducto, Armees Espagnole, Base des Brigades Internationales Etat Major, Mable Foy Levin, 04 April 1938

Item 10: Decree of Divorce, Mable Schamp Foy Levin vs. Meyer Levin, 1944

Item 11: Certificate of Marriage, Irving A. Jacoby and Mable Schamp Foy, 03 June 1944

Item 12: Screen Writers' Guild, Inc., Membership Card, Meyer Levin, issued 07 May 1948

Item 13: Mable's Birth Certification by father, 23 January 1948

Item 14: Death Certificate, Mable Jacoby, 1950

Item 15: Levin, Meyer to Hiatt, Merrill L. (Friends Academy, Locust Valley, New York), 15 February 1952

Item 16: Friends Academy to Levin, Eli, 13 March 1991

Item 17: Levin, Meyer to Levin, Eli, 1970

Item 18: Levin, Meyer to Dr. Talley, 12 May 1970

## **Series 3: Correspondence**

### **Folder 8: Correspondence, "Mable's Letters from Spain in my book"**

Item 1: Envelope, to Szwarc, Tereska, 16 January 1938

Item 2: Szwarc, Tereska to Levin, Eli, 16 September 1965

Item 3: Schamp, Mable to Szwarc, Tereska, 01 September 1938

Item 4: Levin, Mable to Szwarc, Tereska, 24 November 1937

Item 5: Szwarc, Tereska to Levin, Eli, 25 May 1972; 08 June 1972

Item 6: Levin, Mable to Levin, Eli, 18 July 1958

Item 7: Schamp, Foy, Mable to unknown, ca. 1950 (Mable's last letter)

Item 8: Schamp, Mable to Levin, Eli, 05 May 1970

Item 9: Jacoby, Irving to Levin, Meyer, 15 April [no year]

Item 10: Schamp, Mable to unknown, undated

Item 11: Levin, Jo to Levin, Meyer, 14 June 1950

Item 12: Levin, Jo to Levin, Meyer, undated

Item 13: Levin, Jo to Levin, Meyer, from Honolulu, undated

Item 14: Schamp, Mable (?) to Levin, Meyer (?), 30 November [no year]

Item 15: Levin, Jo to Levin, Mable, undated

Item 16: Levin, Mable to Levin, Jo, undated

Item 17: Levin, Mable to Levin, Jo, undated

**Folder 9: Correspondence, Mable Schamp's Letters to Meyer Levin**

Item 1: Levin, Meyer to Levin, Mable, from boat leaving Spain, undated

Item 2: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, Hotel Ben McGehee, Little Rock, Arkansas, undated

Item 3: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, undated

Item 4: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, undated

Item 5: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, The Hotel Hamilton, Washington, ca. 1939

Item 6: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, The Hotel Hamilton, Washington, undated

Item 7: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, 26 December [no year]

Item 8: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, 31 December [no year]

Item 9: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, 08 January 1938

Item 10: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, 13 January [no year]

Item 11: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, undated

Item 12: Levin, Mable to Levin, Meyer, 02 February 1938 (incomplete letter)

**Series 4: Manuscripts**

**Folder 10: "Audacious Pilgrim: The Story of Meyer Levin, Chicago Writer, A Biography" by Martin Litvin, edited by Jo Basiste**

**Folder 11: "In Love," by Meyer Levin**

**Box 2:**

**Series 4: Manuscripts**

**Folder 1: "Mable," by Jo Basiste**

**Folder 2: "The Haunted Houses of Meyer Levin," by Tereska Torres, 1991**

**Series 5: Photographs**

**Folder 3: Photographs, Meyer Levin**

Item 1: Postcard; Levin, Meyer to Dr. I Krechevsky; image of Paris, Pantheon et Rue Soufflot, 1937

Item 2: Postcard from Levin, Meyer; image of Martin B-26, Marauder

Item 3: Book Cover, "Two Scribes"

Item 4: Book Cover, photograph by Archie Lieberman

Item 5: Book Cover, photograph by Judith Sheftel

Item 6: Book Cover, jacket design by Paul Bacon

Item 7: Book Cover, jacket design by Paul Bacon

Item 8: "Meyer Levin: Summation at Seventy-five"

Item 9: Meyer Levin wearing hat, black and white

Item 10: Meyer Levin posing in suit, photo by Archie Lieberman, black and white

Item 11: Meyer standing beside adobe house, black and white

- Item 12: Meyer standing beside adobe house (2), black and white
- Item 13: Meyer sitting beside clay pot, black and white
- Item 14: Meyer Levin and Archie Lieberman, black and white
- Item 15: Meyer Levin holding glasses, black and white
- Item 16: Meyer Levin looking to the left, black and white
- Item 17: Meyer Levin standing outside in suit, black and white
- Item 18: Meyer and Jo, black and white
- Item 19: Meyer and Mable Levin “show at Chicago World’s Fair for ‘Buster Brown Shoes,’” black and white
- Item 20: Meyer Levin in suit against brick wall, black and white
- Item 21: Meyer Levin sitting at typewriter, black and white
- Item 22: Meyer Levin headshot, black and white
- Item 23: Meyer Levin, shirtless, black and white
- Item 24: Meyer Levin at typewriter holding glasses, black and white
- Item 25: Meyer Levin in white shirt, black and white
- Item 26: Meyer Levin in red shirt, last photo taken, color
- Item 27: Meyer Levin – “Hello JoJo – We had a beach party – Meyer,” black and white
- Item 28: Meyer Levin – “Happy Birthday to JoJo from Meyer,” black and white
- Item 29: Meyer Levin with binoculars – “Hello JoJo – I can almost see you, Meyer,” black and white
- Item 30: Meyer Levin as teenager, black and white
- Item 31: Meyer Levin at table, black and white
- Item 32: Meyer Levin, young, holding paper, black and white
- Item 33: Meyer Levin in shirt and tie, black and white

#### **Folder 4: Photographs, Mable Schamp**

- Item 1: Mable sitting on ground, black and white
- Item 2: Mable in fur coat, black and white
- Item 3: Mable holding book beside lamp, black and white
- Item 4: Mable, headshot, black and white
- Item 5: Mable and brother (?) laying on grass, black and white
- Item 6: Mable as teenager, black and white
- Item 7: Mable in striped swimming top, black and white
- Item 8: Mable wearing winter clothes, black and white
- Item 9: Mable wearing winter clothes, black and white
- Item 10: Mable with bow in hair, black and white
- Item 11: Mable in front of bookshelf, black and white
- Item 12: Negative of Mable sitting on ground
- Item 13: Mable, school photo
- Item 14: Mable, headshot
- Item 15: Mable in Spain: “Mable Hall Schamp” letterhead
- Item 16: Mable in Spain: headshot, black and white
- Item 17: Mable in Spain: headshot, black and white
- Item 18: Mable in Spain: headshot, arms on hips, black and white
- Item 19: Mable in Spain: headshot, looking down, black and white
- Item 20: Mable in Spain: headshot, black and white

Item 21: Mable in Spain: standing in front of monument, color  
Item 22: Mable in Spain: standing in front of monument, color  
Items 23-29: Mable, school pictures, black and white  
Item 30: Mable and other girl, black and white  
Item 31: Mable standing and lectern, black and white  
Item 32: Mable sitting in chair, black and white  
Item 33: Mable and JoJo building snowman, black and white  
Item 34: Mable in cap and gown, black and white  
Item 35: Mable headshot, standing in front of fence, black and white  
Item 36: Mable standing in white dress, black and white  
Item 37: Mable in hat alongside doctor and family, black and white  
Item 38: Mable in hat alongside doctor and family, black and white  
Item 39: Mable in cap and gown, black and white  
Item 40: Mable Schamp, headshot, black and white  
Item 41: Mable in laboratory, black and white  
Item 42: Mable sitting on couch, black and white  
Item 43: Mable smiling and wearing broach, black and white  
Item 44: Mable standing on seashore, black and white  
Items 45-46: Mable and JoJo reading, black and white  
Item 47: Mable in chair, black and white  
Item 48: Mable in hoodie, black and white  
Item 49: Mable and Murray Foy, black and white  
Item 50: Murray Foy reading, black and white  
Item 51: Mable sitting in chair, black and white  
Item 52: Mable standing erect, black and white  
Items 53-54: Mable reclining, black and white  
Item 55: Mable posing, black and white  
Item 56: Mable posing, black and white  
Item 57: Mable with head on lap, black and white  
Item 58: Mable with kitten, black and white  
Item 59: Mable sitting in chair, black and white  
Item 60: Mable reclining with cigarette, black and white  
Items 61-63: Mable wearing black shirt, black and white  
Item 64: Mable headshot, standing in front of fence, black and white  
Item 65: Mable in swimgear outside house, black and white  
Item 66: Mable in chair, black and white  
Item 67: Mable in polka-dot shirt, black and white  
Item 68: Signed to Mable Foy from Canada Lee, Colored Welterweight Champion  
Item 69: Mable playing with baby Jo, black and white  
Item 70: Mable and Foy kneeling, black and white  
Item 71: Mable standing against wall, black and white  
Item 72: Mable playing with baby Jo, black and white  
Item 73: Mable standing in winter coat, black and white  
Item 74: Mable reading with Jo, black and white  
Item 75: Mable and Jo building a snowman, black and white  
Item 76: Mable kneeling next to canoe at nudist camp, black and white  
Item 77: Mable swinging at nudist camp, black and white

Item 78: Mable reclining next to water at nudist camp, black and white  
Item 79: Mable swinging at nudist camp, black and white  
Item 80: Mable and baby Jo, black and white  
Item 81: Mable swinging at nudist camp, black and white  
Item 82: Mable swinging at nudist camp, black and white  
Item 83: Man shooting arrow at someone, posing, nudist camp, black and white  
Items 84-86: Mable reclining against boards, nude, black and white  
Item 87: Mable and Jo reading, black and white  
Item 88: Mable standing on pier, nudist camp, black and white  
Item 89-93: Mable with Jo on shoulders and on lap, nudist camp, black and white  
Item 94: Mable in tree, nudist camp, black and white; "Puzzle: Find Tom's Mustache!"  
Item 95: Photograph reel of three boys skinny dipping, black and white

### **Folder 5: Photographs, Jo Basiste**

Item 1: Jo, headshot, black and white  
Item 2: Jo standing on Meyer's shoulders, black and white  
Item 3: "Meyer and I are giving a bath to Bambi on his first day with us."  
Items 4-5: Jo in Paris with Notre Dame in background, black and white  
Item 6: Meyer and Jo in Paris with Notre Dame behind, black and white  
Item 7: Jo, Tereska, and girl on beach, black and white  
Item 8: Meyer, Jo and girl sitting beside car, "en route vas la mer," black and white  
white  
Item 9: Jo in suit, April 1963, color  
Item 10: Jo as toddler in water, black and white  
Item 11: Jo underneath Christmas tree, black and white  
Item 12: Jo wearing sheriff's hat beside pet bird, black and white  
Item 13: Jo sitting in coveralls, black and white  
Item 14: Jo as baby, black and white  
Item 15: Jo kneeling as toddler, black and white  
Items 16-17: "Dominique Toms and brother"  
Item 18: Jo in winter jacket as toddler, black and white  
Item 19: Jo in striped shirt reading, black and white  
Item 20: Jo playing in water, black and white  
Item 21: Jo as baby, black and white  
Items 22-24: Jo playing with toy train, black and white  
Item 25: Jo smiling at camera, black and white  
Items 26-28: Jo as toddler in water, black and white (2 years old)  
Item 29: Jo as baby, black and white  
Items 30-31: Jo as toddler, black and white (2 years old)  
Item 32: Jo building snowman, black and white  
Item 33: Jo as baby, black and white  
Item 34: Jo draped in winter coat, black and white  
Item 35: Jo in white pants standing in front of tree, black and white  
Item 36: Jo as baby, black and white  
Item 37: Jo as teenager, black and white



- Item 38: Jo and another child fishing, black and white
- Item 39: Jo as baby in highchair, black and white
- Item 40: Jo in Paris in front of Notre Dame, black and white
- Item 41: Jo smiling, school photo, black and white
- Items 42-43: Jo as a toddler drinking a canned drink on a pier, nude, black and white
- Item 44: Jo reading in bed, pet bird, black and white

### **Folder 6: Photographs, Mable's Family**

- Item 1: "Steinberg House Glencoe," black and white
- Item 2: "Could this be the car the family traveled north in?", black and white
- Item 3: "Don't know" – man in hat, black and white
- Item 4: "I would guess Harvey and Harry, but June should have recognized them if that is correct. Perhaps 1939"
- Item 5: Men in front of Armacia, black and white
- Item 6: "Could this be Harry on the Whipple's farm in Indiana?", black and white
- Item 7: "I would guess this is Harry", black and white
- Item 8: "Jo with Philippe Francois and guy and Colette," black and white
- Item 9: Couple sitting in grass, black and white
- Item 10: "Taken in Jackson Park, Chicago, behind the Museum of Science and Industry; Could it be Mable and Foy?", black and white
- Item 11: Man in hat and glasses, black and white
- Item 12: Sculpture of head, black and white
- Item 13: Woman standing and man sitting on bench, black and white
- Item 14: Handwritten notes on Mable's family history; found with photographs
- Item 15: "I don't have a clue with a 1930 date," black and white
- Item 16: "Aren't some or all of these of your mother?", black and white
- Item 17: Older woman with young boy, Christmas tree in back, black and white
- Item 18: Old woman on farm, black and white
- Item 19: Priest wearing glasses, black and white
- Item 20: "I suppose this could be Harvey, Sr." black and white
- Item 21: "Probably Belle's or Harvey's mother," black and white
- Item 22: "This is certainly not Harvey," black and white
- Item 23: "My guess this is Belle at about the time they married. I have a similar picture of my grandmother they were the same age," black and white
- Items 24-25: Old woman on farm, "Is this the Packard in the background. Did you stop at any farms on the way to Texas?", black and white
- Item 26: Negatives

### **Box 3:**

#### **Series 1: Notebooks**

**Folder 1: "School Memories: The Book of Mable Schamp," ca. 1926-1927**