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**New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center**  
**Music Division**

Guide to the

**Anna Case papers**

1912-1969

JPB 13-09

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, February 2013

## **Summary**

**Creator:** Case, Anna, 1889-1984

**Title:** Anna Case papers, 1912-1969

**Size:** 2.59 linear feet (10 boxes)

**Source:** Unknown. The collection was acquired in the 1980s.

**Abstract:** Anna Case (1889-1984) was an American soprano and composer who performed with the Metropolitan Opera from 1909 to 1920, and toured as a concert soloist until 1931. Her papers hold concert programs, scores by Case and other composers, correspondence, photographs, clippings, writings, and financial records.

**Access:** Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photography and photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

**Copyright information:** For permission to publish, contact the Chief, Music Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Preferred citation:** Anna Case papers, JPB 13-09. Music Division, New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Processing consisted of foldering and arranging papers and scores.

## **Creator history**

Anna Case (1889-1984) was an American soprano and composer who performed with the Metropolitan Opera from 1909 to 1920, and toured as a concert soloist until her marriage in 1931. She was also one of Thomas Edison's favorite singers, appearing on hundreds of his recordings.

Case started at the Met in small roles before gaining notice in the first American production of Boris Godunov, and in the Met premiere of Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* (both in 1913). Her other notable parts with the company included Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen* and Papagena in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. She retired from opera in 1920, but continued an extensive concert career until her marriage to the millionaire Clarence Mackay, the father-in-law of Irving Berlin. Case was also a composer with several published songs to her credit. She continued to compose and publish music after her retirement from vocal performance.

Source: J.B. Steane. "Case, Anna." The New Grove Dictionary of Opera. Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed January 10, 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O005839>.

### Scope and content note

The Anna Case papers hold concert programs, scores by Case and other composers, correspondence, photographs, clippings, writings, and financial records. Case's career as a vocalist is documented by the concert programs and clippings (mostly bound in scrapbooks); the correspondence; and a few of the photographs. The programs mostly document her post-opera career as a soloist, and the photographs contain publicity shots of Case from her opera days, as well as several portraits of her and her husband. Published and unpublished scores, publisher correspondence, and lyric writings document her work as a songwriter and composer; her writings also contain brief autobiographical essays. Other composers with published and unpublished scores in the papers include Charles Wakefield Cadman, Benny Davis, and Alexander Russell. Some of the published scores by other composers are autographed.

### Arrangement

The Anna Case papers are organized into the following series:

Series I: Personal Files, 1912-1969

Series II: Scores, 1916-1965

### Key terms

#### Names

Cadman, Charles Wakefield, 1881-1946  
Case, Anna, 1889-1984  
Davis, Benny, 1895-1979  
Mackay, Clarence H. (Clarence Hungerford), 1874-1938  
Metropolitan Opera (New York, N.Y.)  
Russell, Alexander, 1880-1953

#### Occupations

Composers  
Musicians  
Singers

#### Special formats

Black-and-white photographs  
Clippings (information artifacts)  
Commercial correspondence  
Manuscripts (document genre)  
Personal correspondence  
Programs (documents)  
Scores  
Typescripts

## Container list

### **Series I: Personal Files, 1912-1969** (6 boxes)

This series, arranged by format, contains concert programs, correspondence, photographs, clippings, writings, financial records, and school workbooks. The concert programs, which extensively document Case's performance career from 1912 to the 1930s, are in three bound books and one folder of loose programs. The books are in fragile condition. Most of the programs are for solo recitals, though there are some from the Metropolitan Opera as well.

The correspondence mostly deals with Case's career and is usually not of a personal nature. It includes fan letters, logistical and contractual correspondence regarding performances, and publishing/copyright correspondence. The folder of Clarence Mackay correspondence discusses the awarding of a military honor named for him. The photographs contain publicity shots of Case from her opera days, several portraits of her and Mackay likely dating from the early 1930s, and a few later, undated photos.

The clippings (many of them copies of the originals) are mostly from New York-area newspapers. Though some articles address Case's music career, most mention Case in a society context, as she had married into wealth. The writings are a combination of song lyrics and personal essays (including a few discussing her family history). They also include radio scripts sent to Case. The financial records consist of correspondence between Case and her financial advisors. The school workbooks are for classes in French, German, and English.

- b.1 f.1-2 Clippings, 1915-1969
  - Correspondence
- b.1 f.3 Case, Anna, 1914-1963
- b.1 f.4 Mackay, Clarence, 1938
- b.1 f.5 Financial Records, 1937-1947
- b.2 f.1-3 Photographs, ca. 1915-1931, undated
  - Programs
  - Bound
  - b.3 1912-1920
  - b.4 1920-1925
  - b.5 1924-1931
- b.1 f.6 Loose, 1913-1936
- b.1 f.7 School Books, undated
- b.6 f.1-4 Writings, Notes and Lyrics, 1938-1954

**Series II: Scores, 1916-1965** (4 boxes)

This series primarily holds manuscripts of Case's music, including finished work as well as unfinished or untitled sketches, and about 20 published songs. It also contains scores by other composers, and is split into two sections, one holding Case's music and the other holding other composers' scores.

Case's scores are mainly songs for voice and piano, but also hold a few arrangements for vocal groups and for strings, piano, and voice. One of her published songs, "Just An Old Fashioned Picture," has part manuscripts for a full orchestral arrangement. Other published song titles are "Odin's Horse," "Song of the Robin," and "When You My Love Did Woo Me."

Other composers with manuscripts or published music in the collection include Charles Wakefield Cadman, Wilma E. Casebeer, Benny Davis, Alexander Russell, and Otto Wick. Their scores are for songs, and are mostly unpublished. The published song scores are autographed by the composers. These include scores by Cadman, Casebeer, and E. Edwin Crierie.

Case, Anna

- b.7 f.1-4 Manuscripts , 1937-1939, undated
- b.8 f.1 Manuscripts, 1919-1955, undated
- b.8 f.2 Published Music, 1916-1955
- b.9 f.1-4 Sketches, undated

Other Composers

- b.10 f.1-2 Manuscripts, 1931, undated
- b.10 f.3 Published Music, 1919-1935, 1964-1965