



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**William "Pop" Gates scrapbook**

1930-1996 [bulk 1938-1958]

Sc MG 689

## Summary

**Creator:** Gates, Pop, 1917-1999

**Title:** William "Pop" Gates scrapbook

**Date:** 1930-1996 [bulk 1938-1958]

**Size:** 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Gift of Cleo Gates, 2001-2007.

**Abstract:** William "Pop" Gates was a professional basketball player. He played for several professional teams, ending his career with a five year (1950-1955) tour of duty with the Harlem Globetrotters, as both a player and a coach. This collection consists of a scrapbook on Gates.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], William "Pop" Gates scrapbook, Sc MG 689, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Accessioned by Rosalie P. Jeter, September 2001.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

## Creator History

William "Pop" Gates began playing basketball at age 10 at the Harlem Young Men Christian Association (YMCA), where he became a member of the YMCA boy's team, "The Midgets". Gates captained his high school team to many victories including the All City Championship. Believed to be the only player to play in all ten Chicago championships, Gates enjoyed an illustrious professional career spanning 37 years.

He played for several professional teams, ending his career with a five year (1950-1955) tour of duty

with the Harlem Globetrotters, as both a player and a coach. During the 1946-1947 season, Gates was signed to a white team, the Tri-Cities Blackhawks, and became the first black player hired by a professional basketball team. The signing of Gates occurred six months before Jackie Robinson was signed to a major league baseball team. In June 1982, Gates was inducted into the Robert L. Douglas Hall of Fame, and in 1989, he was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame.

## **Scope and Content Note**

This collection consists of a scrapbook on William "Pop" Gates. It contains newspaper clippings documenting Gates's career from his days at Benjamin Franklin High School and the Harlem YMCA in the 1930s to his induction into the Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame in 1989; a ribbon; and name plates from the Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American athletes  
African American basketball players  
Basketball players -- United States  
Basketball teams

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Scrapbooks

### **Names**

Gates, Pop, 1917-1999  
King, Dolly, 1916-1969  
Basketball Hall of Fame (Springfield, Mass.)  
Buffalo Bisons (Baseball team)  
Cincinnati Royals (Basketball team)  
Harlem Globetrotters  
New York Renaissance (Basketball team)  
Robert L. Douglas Hall of Fame (Harlem, New York, N.Y.)  
Tri-Cities Blackhawks (Basketball team)