



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

Guide to the

**Cecil "Duke of Iron" Anderson collection**

1943-2010 [bulk 1945-1957]

Sc MG 865

Processed by Aileen Bloise, February 2013.

## Summary

**Creator:** Duke of Iron

**Title:** Cecil "Duke of Iron" Anderson collection

**Date:** 1943-2010 [bulk 1945-1957]

**Size:** 0.42 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Gift of Velma M. Anderson, August 2012.

**Revision History:** Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

**Abstract:** Cecil Anderson, also known as the "Duke of Iron," was an internationally known Calypso performer and composer. A native of Trinidad, Anderson moved with his family to New York in 1923. During his active years (1930s-1960s), he was influential in promoting the spread of this Afro-Caribbean music genre throughout the United States. Among his most popular songs are "Matilda", "Out De Fire", "Last Train to San Fernando", "Ugly Woman", "Big Bamboo", and "Don't Stop the Carnival.". The Cecil "Duke of Iron" Anderson collection contains newspaper clippings, a scrapbook, performance flyers and programs, invoices, booking requests, and copyright certificates. Some materials pertain to his daughter, Velma M. Anderson.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Cecil "Duke of Iron" Anderson collection, Sc MG 865, 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:** Processed by Aileen Bloise, February 2013.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

## Creator History

Cecil Anderson, also known as the "Duke of Iron," was an internationally known Calypso performer and composer. A native of Trinidad, Anderson moved with his family to New York in 1923. During his active years (1930s-1960s), he was influential in promoting the spread of this Afro-Caribbean music genre throughout the United States. Among his most popular songs are "Matilda", "Out De Fire", "Last Train to San Fernando", "Ugly Woman", "Big Bamboo", and "Don't Stop the Carnival."

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Cecil "Duke of Iron" Anderson collection contains newspaper clippings, a scrapbook, performance flyers and programs, invoices, booking requests, and copyright certificates. Some materials pertain to his daughter, Velma M. Anderson.

The Printed Matter folder contains newspaper and magazine clippings, flyers advertising his performances, and programs which document Anderson's performances and give insight into his public persona. In addition to other clippings that span the breadth of his career, a scrapbook also includes a few photographs. Concluding the glimpse into Anderson's performance life and artistic process are several handwritten song lyrics, music, song lists, and planned improvisations in the Performance Materials folder.

Documenting the business aspects of his career are booking correspondence, invoices for three recording sessions, and copyright certificates for twelve of his songs.

The remaining documents in the collection concern the U.S. Virgin Islands' acknowledgement of Anderson's cultural contribution. Material includes the event program, invitation, and a letter from the U.S. Virgin Islands' Governor, Dr. Charles W. Turnbull, to Velma M. Anderson thanking her for donating the Quattro used by her father. Details regarding other material donated by Ms. Anderson are outlined in correspondence between her and the Virgin Islands Humanities Council.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

Authors, Black  
Calypso musicians -- New York (State) -- New York  
Calypso musicians -- Trinidad and Tobago  
Caribbean Americans  
Latin jazz -- New York (State) -- New York  
Popular music -- Caribbean Area  
Popular music -- New York (State) -- New York  
Trinidadians -- New York (State) -- New York -- Music  
West Indian Americans

### **Names**

Duke of Iron

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Scrapbook
- b. 1 f. 2 Printed matter 1947-1957
- b. 1 f. 3 Performance materials
- b. 1 f. 4 Copyright certificates 1957
- b. 1 f. 5 Booking correspondence 1950-1967
- b. 1 f. 6 Financial correspondence 1956-1957
- b. 1 f. 7 Tribute from Governor of U.S. Virgin Islands 2005-2006
- b. 1 f. 8 Virgin Islands Humanities Council 2010