



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

Guide to the

**Gertrude Elise Ayer papers**

1931-1966

Sc MG 277

## Summary

**Creator:** Ayer, Gertrude E. (Gertrude Elise), 1884-1971

**Title:** Gertrude Elise Ayer papers

**Date:** 1931-1966

**Size:** .2 linear feet; 1 microfilm reel

**Source:** Gift; material acquired at auction, Marie A. Bradley, 10/04/1987

**Abstract:** Gertrude Elise (née Johnson) McDougal Ayer, 1884-?, was born in New York City, attended City and Hunter Colleges and Columbia University. She began teaching in New York City public elementary schools in 1905, and was the first vocational guidance instructor in an elementary school. In 1924 and 1936 Ayer was appointed assistant principal and principal, respectively. For twenty-five years she was the only black person to hold the position of principal within the New York City public school system. The collection consists of biographical information, a family history written by Mrs. Ayer possibly for her daughter, Elizabeth, and a few items related to her professional activities before and after retirement in 1954. The scrapbooks, 1931-66, deal with Mrs. Ayer's appointment and career as an assistant principal and principal, and include samples of columns in the "New York Amsterdam News."

**Access:** Advance notice required.

**Alternative Form Available:** Scrapbooks Available on microfilm only. (Originals destroyed after filming). New York Public Library; call number Sc Micro R-4842

**Preferred citation:** Gertrude Elise Ayer papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

## Creator History

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## **Scope and Content Note**

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## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American school principals -- New York (State) -- New York  
African American school principals -- New York (State) -- New York -- Biography  
African American teachers -- New York (State) -- New York  
African American women -- New York (State) -- New York  
Elementary school teachers -- New York (State) -- New York  
School principals -- United States  
Teachers -- New York (State) -- New York  
Women teachers -- New York (State) -- New York

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Memoirs

### **Names**

Ayer, Gertrude E. (Gertrude Elise), 1884-1971  
Ayer, Elise Johnson McDougal