Summary


Title: William H. Butler papers

Date: 1917-1982

Size: .10 linear feet (2 boxes)

Source: Gift, Lenszler, Bill, 19850125

Abstract: "Billy" Butler was a musical arranger, conductor, violinist and travel editor of the "Pittsburgh Courier." A graduate of Chicago Musical College, Butler worked with J. Rosamond Johnson, Eubie Blake and other prominent African-American musicians of the period. He also conducted several musical revues including Lew Leslie's "Blackbirds of 1939," "Rhapsody in Black" and Sissle and Blake's "Shuffle Along." In 1947 Butler started "Travelguide," a directory of public accommodations in the United States which catered to people of African descent. The list was later expanded to include foreign countries. Butler was also co-owner of King Travel Organization, Inc., a New York City agency which specifically catered to travelers of African descent. Papers include correspondence and printed material relating to Butler's musical career, articles by Butler on African-American music and musicians, a scrapbook containing reviews of the Lew Leslie musicals in which he appeared, orchestral parts for "Blackbirds of 1939" and "Rhapsody in Black," holograph scores by Butler, a folder of lyrics and a playscript by Butler entitled "Let's Forget Papa."

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: William H. Butler papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Creator History

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**Key Terms**

**Subjects**
African American businesspeople
African American entertainers
African American musicians
African Americans -- Music
Musicals -- United States
Revues -- United States
Travel agents

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**
Musical scores
Scrapbooks
Scripts

**Names**
Butler, William H. (William Henson), 1903-1981
Blake, Eubie, 1887-1983
Johnson, J. C., 1896-1981
Wilson, Edith, 1896-1981