



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

Guide to the

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection

1937-1991

Sc MG 426

Summary

Creator: Davis, Jessica Bell, d. 1991

Title: Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection

Date: 1937-1991

Size: .8 linear feet

Abstract: The Jessica B. Davis, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection consists of the constitution and history of the BSCP, programs, anniversary and commemorative booklets, speeches and writings by A. Philip Randolph, and news clippings by and about Randolph. There are also tributes to this union leader during his lifetime, and an address and press release for the 1942 planned March on Washington.

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Creator History

Jessica Bell Davis (?-1991) was the daughter of an official of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, James H. Bell and also the wife of the union official, Clarence E. Davis. She was a teacher in addition to a director and supervisor under A. Philip Randolph, for whom she worked for forty-five years.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) organized railway porters (traditionally an occupation for African Americans) to bargain with the Pullman Company, which held a virtual monopoly on the nation's sleeping car facilities. The BSCP was organized in 1925 in New York City. A. Philip Randolph, an editor and labor advocate, became its president in 1928. In the mid-1930's the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the New Deal's National Mediation Board recognized the BSCP.

Scope and Content Note

The Jessica B. Davis, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection consists of the constitution and

history of the BSCP, programs, anniversary and commemorative booklets, speeches and writings by A. Philip Randolph, and news clippings by and about Randolph. There are also tributes to this union leader during his lifetime, and an address and press release for the 1942 planned March on Washington. Additionally, there are yearbooks and other printed material from the A. Philip Randolph Campus High School at City College in New York City (1983-1989), and representing both the St. Catherine A. M. E. Zion Church in New Rochelle, New York and the Key Women of America are programs, newsletters and other printed material. Included are a few letters and an obituary for Davis.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American churches -- New York (State) -- New Rochelle
African Americans -- Employment
Porters -- Labor unions -- United States
Railroads -- Labor unions -- United States
Working class -- United States

Names

Davis, Jessica Bell, d. 1991
Randolph, A. Philip (Asa Philip), 1889-1979
A. Philip Randolph Campus High School (New York, N.Y.)
Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
Key Women (New York, N.Y.)
Negro March on Washington Committee
St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion Church (New Rochelle, N.Y.)