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Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

George D. Cannon papers

1932-1982

Sc MG 595

Compiled by Cheryl P. McDaniels, 1997.

Summary

Creator: Cannon, George Dows, 1902-1986

Title: George D. Cannon papers

Date: 1932-1982

Size: 1.51 linear feet (4 boxes)

Abstract: George Dows Cannon (1902-1987) was a radiologist in Harlem, New York City. The collection comprises personal papers, correspondence, research materials, FBI files, printed matter, certificates, speeches, and corporate records.

Access: Advance notice required.

Conditions Governing Access:

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Conditions Governing Use: Information on copyright available from repository.

Preferred citation: [Item], George D. Cannon papers, Sc MG 595, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library.

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Creator History

George Dows Cannon (1902-1987) was a radiologist in Harlem, New York City (1937-1982). He was the first African-American to be appointed to the staffs of the Hospital for Joint Diseases, the Hospital for the Daughters of Israel, and Triboro Hospital. He served as National Secretary of the Physicians' Forum and was a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians, the New York Academy of Medicine, and the American Medical Association. In addition to his medical career, Dr. Cannon served on the boards of numerous organizations involved in working for equal rights for blacks in the fields of

education and medicine, including the NAACP Legal and Educational Fund, National Urban League, Lincoln University, City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem, as well as the Barnes Foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania.

Custodial History

The collection was salvaged from a dumpster after subject's death.

Scope and Content Note

George Dows Cannon (1902-1987) was a radiologist in Harlem, New York City. The George D. Cannon papers include: biographical summaries; family estate papers for Cannon's aunt, Rosettie Atkinson (1968-1974), his mother, Genevieve Wilkinson Cannon (1959), and Vivian M. Cannon (relationship unknown); research papers on William Augustus Hinton, the first black professor at Harvard University's medical school and on Cannon's father, George E. Cannon, also a physician; copies of Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency disclosure files about Cannon (1943-1963); and income and tax records (1977, 1978, 1981).

Also in the collection are Cannon's radiology logs and account books (1978-1982); daily record sheets (1981); patient diagnosis letters (1974-1980); black physicians and dentists lists; speeches delivered by Dr. Cannon (1940-1980); typescripts of interviews (1960, 1974), and published writings (1935-1975).

There are papers relating to Cannon's work with the Barnes Foundation (1960-1977), the NAACP Legal and Educational Fund (1940-1982), the Sub-Committee on Health and Hospitals of the City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem (1942). There are also corporate papers for Geocan Realty, Inc., of which Cannon was a shareholder (1958-1978).

Incoming and outgoing correspondence files (1932-1981) document Cannon's professional career as he sought to further his studies in the tuberculosis field, his attempts to improve conditions at Harlem Hospital and reduce mortality rates from tuberculosis, as well as a resolution he authored that was introduced in the New York County Medical Society urging the American Medical Association to admit Southern black physicians to regular membership (1950). In other letters of the 1940s he wrote about his participation in founding the Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York (HIP). Also included are letters recommending that Cannon be awarded citations that summarize his contributions to his medical and civic pursuits, and correspondence with publishers about his unpublished autobiography (not included here).

Correspondents include: artist Andrew Wyeth; Horace M. Bond, President of Lincoln University; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Rudolph J. Thomas, Executive Director of the Harlem Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association of Greater New York; Howard M. Payne, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine, Howard University; Alfred Ring, M.D., Medical Superintendent of Triboro Hospital (Long Island, New York); Charles F. Stewart, M.D., Chairman, Committee on Hospitals and Dispensaries, Medical Society of the Country of New York; C. St. C. Guild, M.D., Field Secretary, Committee on Tuberculosis Among Negroes, National Tuberculosis Association; and A. Philip Randolph, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

There is an interview with the City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem, in which Cannon discussed discrimination against black physicians and tuberculosis patients in New York City hospitals in the 1940s. There are also speeches concerning tuberculosis patients, Lincoln University, and his advocacy

of national health insurance (1940s-1950s). Additionally, there is a speech by Judge Constance Baker Motley entitled "The Continuing American Revolution" (1975).

Key Terms

Subjects

African American children -- New York (N.Y.)
African American physicians
African American radiologists
African American universities and colleges -- Pennsylvania
African Americans -- Education (Higher) -- Pennsylvania
African Americans -- Medical care
African Americans -- Social conditions
African Americans in medicine -- New York (N.Y.)
Discrimination in employment -- New York (N.Y.)
Harlem (New York, N.Y.)
Hospital patients
Hospitals -- Medical staff
Public health -- New York (N.Y.)
Race discrimination -- New York (N.Y.)
Tuberculosis -- Patients

Names

Bond, Horace Mann, 1904-1972
Cannon, George Epps, 1869-1925
Hinton, William A. (William Augustus), 1883-1959
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968
Motley, Constance Baker, 1921-2005
Randolph, A. Philip (Asa Philip), 1889-1979
Wyeth, Andrew, 1917-2009
Barnes Foundation
City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem
Harlem Hospital Center (New York, N.Y.)
Lincoln University (Pa.)
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Biographical
- b. 1 f. 2 "George E. Cannon: Presbyterian Layman"
- b. 1 f. 3 Family Estate Papers 1959-1974
- b. 1 f. 4 Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency Reports
1943-1963
- b. 1 f. 5 Geocan Realty, Inc 1958-1978
- b. 1 f. 6 "William Augustus Hinton, A Study" 1972
- b. 1 f. 7 Income and Taxes 1977, 1978, 1981
- b. 1 f. 8 Black Dentists and Physician Lists
Correspondence
- b. 1 f. 9 1932-1946
- b. 1 f. 10 1947-1953
- b. 1 f. 11 1954-1981
- b. 1 f. 12 Daily Record Sheets 1981
- b. 1 f. 13 Patients List
- b. 1 f. 14 Physicians Letters Re: Diagnosis 1974-1980
- b. 1 f. 15 Radiology Log and Account Books 1978 June-1982 January
- b. 2 f. 1 Speeches 1940-1980
- b. 2 f. 2 Speeches 1940-1980
- b. 2 f. 3 Speeches by Others 1953, 1954, 1972
- b. 2 f. 4 Typescripts 1960, 1974
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- b. 2 f. 6 Barnes Foundation 1960-1977
Lincoln University Correspondence
- b. 2 f. 7 1947-1953
- b. 2 f. 8 1954-1961
- b. 2 f. 9 1962-1965
- b. 2 f. 10 1966-1967
- b. 3 f. 1 1968 June-1970 May
- b. 3 f. 2 1970 June-1972
- b. 3 f. 3 1973-1979
- b. 3 f. 4 Publications 1966-1971
- b. 3 f. 5 NAACP -- Freedom Fund Dinner 1962 May 20
NAACP -- Legal and Educational Fund
- b. 3 f. 6 1940-1978
- b. 3 f. 7 1975-1982
- b. 3 f. 8 Sub-Committee on Health and Hospitals 1942
- b. 4 Certificates