



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

Guide to the

**W.C. Handy collection**

1942 - 1957

Sc MG 49

This inventory was one of several prepared as a part of the archival preservation program at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The necessary staff and supplies for this program were made available through a combination of grant funds from the library, National Endowment for the Humanities, and State of New York. The collection was processed by D. Carter and S. Davis in July 1980.

## Summary

**Creator:** Glover, George Washington, 1888-1993

**Title:** W.C. Handy collection

**Date:** 1942 - 1957

**Size:** 1 linear foot (1 flat box)

**Source:** Gift of George Washington Glover, 1980.

**Abstract:** Glover was founder and active member of the National Association of Negro Musicians which promoted the careers of black musicians and singers. The George Washington Glover collection is a compilation of materials focusing on the music industry, spotlighting the work and contributions of William Christopher Handy.

**Access:** Some collections held by the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. To request access to materials in the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, please visit: [http://archives.nypl.org/scm/request\\_access](http://archives.nypl.org/scm/request_access)

**Preferred citation:** [Item], W.C. Handy collection, Sc MG 49, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

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## Creator History

William Christopher Handy was a composer and blues musician. Handy was known for elevating the popularity of a regional music style, the Delta blues. Handy was an educated musician who used elements of folk music in his compositions. He documented the sources of his works, which frequently combined stylistic influences from various performers. He also started a music publishing business with Harry Pace called Pace and Handy Sheet Music; in the 1920s, he founded the Handy Record Company in New York City. Handy received numerous awards and honors including induction into the National Academy of Popular Music Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1970, the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1983, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame in 1985, and the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in 1993. He also received a Grammy Trustees Award for lifetime achievement in 1993. George Washington Glover was a music promoter; he promoted the "cakewalk," a dance craze of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Glover's love and appreciation of music and promoting ventures led eventually to what would become a long association with the National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM).

## Scope and Content Note

The George Washington Glover collection is a compilation of materials focusing on the music industry, spotlighting the work and contributions of William Christopher Handy. The papers consist of correspondence, issues of the Handy Music Company publication, *The Handy News*, other printed material, and news clippings. Incoming letters (1934-1956) are primarily from W.C. Handy concerning the promotion of music composed by African Americans, in part via the Handy Brothers Music Company. Included are issues of *The Handy News* (1951-1957) which contain articles about blues and other forms of American music, its artists and patrons. Other material consists of programs, sheet music, and press releases. Information documenting Handy's efforts to aid blind black musicians include brochures for the W.C. Handy Foundation for the Blind and a program for the Lighthouse Music School in Braille. Lastly, there are news clippings (1942-1956) reflecting the latter years of Handy's life, including advertisements for the Handy Brothers Music Company.

**Arrangement:** Each file is arranged in chronological order.

## Key Terms

### Subjects

African American composers  
African American musicians  
African Americans in the performing arts  
Blues (Music)  
Blues musicians  
Music -- United States

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

Press releases  
Programs  
Scores (documents for music)

### Names

Glover, George Washington, 1888-1993  
Handy, W. C. (William Christopher), 1873-1958

Handy Brothers Music Company  
W.C. Handy Foundation for the Blind

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 **Correspondence 1943 - 1956**

These letters are all incoming to George Glover and his wife, and they are primarily from W. C. Handy, many written under the auspices of the Handy Music Company. There are two letters generally addressed "Dear Friend" from the Concert Committee of the J.U.G.G.'s (a music organization that sponsored artists in concert) and the National Association of Negro Musicians. There are also two letters written by Noble Sissle and Carl Van Vechten, on behalf of the W. C. Handy Foundation for the Blind, soliciting support.
- b. 1 f. 2 ***The Handy News* 1951 - 1957**

There are several issues of the *The Handy News*; they are composed of articles about the world of music, artists, and patrons.
- b. 1 f. 3 **Printed material 1945 - 1954**

This folder consists of a variety of items, including programs, sheet music, press releases, and two stage scenery plans. A program for the Lighthouse Music School is in Braille, a transcription of which was provided by the Library for the Blind, The New York Public Library.
- b. 1 f. 4 **Newspaper clippings 1942 - 1956**

The clippings include an assortment of articles reflecting the last years of W. C. Handy's life and an advertisement for the Handy Brothers Music Company.