



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

Guide to the

**Charity Bailey papers**

1950-1978

Sc MG 71

## Summary

**Creator:** Bailey, Charity

**Title:** Charity Bailey papers

**Date:** 1950-1978

**Size:** 0.83 linear feet (2 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Jack White, May 1981.

**Revision History:** Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

**Abstract:** Charity Alberta Bailey (1904-1978) was a pioneer in the field of children's music. Her papers consist of biographical material and working files for the development of a curriculum to teach educators and children.

**Conditions Governing Use:** Permission to hand copy Bailey's scores required from Jack White or his son, John W. White.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Charity Bailey papers, Sc MG 71, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Accessioned by M. Gumbs, February 1994.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division: audio and moving image materials. For more information, please contact the division at [schomburgaudiovisual@nypl.org](mailto:schomburgaudiovisual@nypl.org) or 212-491-2270.

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs.

## Creator History

Charity Alberta Bailey (1904-1978) was a pioneer in the field of children's music. She was recognized nationally as an authority on the use of folk music as a tool to teach music to children.

Born in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1904, Charity Bailey was a graduate of the Rhode Island College of Education and The Dalcroze School of Music in New York City; she also studied at the Julliard School of Music. She taught at Spelman College Laboratory Elementary School in Atlanta, Georgia, and she was the music director at The Little Red School House in New York City for ten years. She also taught at the Heathcote School in Scarsdale, New York, from 1959-1970. From 1954-1956, Bailey hosted a musical show, *Sing a Song*, for children on WRCA-TV (now NBC), and in the late 1960s she worked on another television program for children called *Here's Charity* on WNET-TV, channel 13. Bailey also recorded for Decca Records, Young People's Records, and Folkway Records, which produced two of her albums. Her book, *Playtime With Music*, was a best seller.

Bailey's teaching methods included ear training; sight singing; use of percussion and simple tone instruments to teach the elements of rhythm; melody; and folk dances. She was proficient in the piano, guitar, auto harp, and drum. Her television programs became required viewing for several training courses at Teacher's College, New York City.

## Scope and Content Note

These papers consist of biographical material and working files for the development of a music curriculum for educators and children. The bulk of the collection consists primarily of folksongs that Bailey arranged and adapted for use in the classroom. Included are folksongs from Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the U.S., and African and European countries. Also included are three books of folk tales. There are also suggestions and guides for encouraging children's participation. The collection also contains several of Bailey's lesson plan books, as well as a lesson plan book of songs and a developmental musical program for Bank Street College. Finally, there is a scrapbook of her tenure on *Sing a Song*; a manuscript of a book, "Here's Charity: With Songs to Sing and Do", on how to develop music teaching programs; and notes for a lecture on Mendelsohn's opera, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

## Key Terms

### Subjects

African American women educators  
African American women musicians  
African American women teachers  
Authors, Black  
Folk music  
Folk music -- Instruction and study  
Music -- Instruction and study

### Names

Bailey, Charity

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Biographical 1958
- b. 1 f. 2 Letters 1950-1980
- b. 1 f. 3 Writing 1964-1965
- b. 1 f. 4 Certificate, awards, and diploma 1954-1967
  - Folk songs
- b. 1 f. 5 African
- b. 1 f. 6-7 American
- b. 1 f. 8 European
- b. 1 f. 9 Caribbean, Latin American, and Indonesian
- b. 1 f. 10 Haitian (notebooks)
- b. 1 f. 11 Caribbean folk tales (published books)
- b. 2 f. 1 "Folksongs Taught by Charity" 1952
- b. 2 f. 2 *Lecture on Mendelsohn's A Midsummer Night's Dream* 1955
- b. 2 f. 3-4 Lesson plan books 1966
- b. 2 f. 5 Instruments used by Bailey
- b. 2 f. 6 Developmental musical program for Bank Street College 1972
- b. 2 f. 7 *Sing A Song scrapbook* 1954-1955
- b. 2 f. 8 "Here's Charity: With Songs to Sing and Do" ca. 1966
- b. 2 f. 9 Programs 1964-1971
- b. 2 f. 10 Clippings 1950-1955
- b. 2 f. 11 Children's poems
- b. 2 f. 12 Miscellaneous 1966