



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

Guide to the

Mary Cardwell Dawson papers

1937-1981

Sc MG 104

Home to Harlem Project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Summary

Creator: Dawson, Mary Cardwell, 1894-1962

Title: Mary Cardwell Dawson papers

Date: 1937-1981

Size: 0.02 linear feet (1 oversize folder, 1 folder)

Source: Purchase, 05/10/77

Revision History: Finding aid updated by Allison Hughes.

Abstract: Opera director, concert singer, teacher, conductor and impresario, Dawson was the founder, president, and general manager of the National Negro Opera Company. Formed in 1941 due to Dawson's concern regarding the lack of opportunity for Afro-Americans in opera because of racial discrimination, for over 20 years the Company presented such productions as Verdi's *Aida* and *La Traviata*, and C.C. White's *Ouanga*. Among the featured opera singers were Minto Cato, Lillian Evanti, Muriel Rahn, Edward Boatner, and Robert McFerrin. Ms. Dawson also founded the Cardwell School of Music and the prize winning Cardwell-Dawson Chorus. At the time of Dawson's death in 1962, her proteges were appearing in the great opera houses of the world. Collection of documents relating to Dawson and the National Negro Opera Company. Collection includes a booklet describing the history and activities of the Company, biographical data on Dawson, and several certificates commending Dawson for her achievements and contributions to various organizations.

Preferred citation: [Item], Mary Cardwell Dawson papers, Sc MG 104, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Creator History

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Scope and Content Note

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Key Terms

Subjects

African American singers
Opera -- Biography
Opera companies -- United States
Opera producers and directors -- United States
Women singers -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Certificates
Souvenir programs

Names

Dawson, Mary Cardwell, 1894-1962
National Negro Opera Company (U.S.)

Container List

- f. 1 Certificates, Program, and Booklets 1937-1959
- o. 2 Schomburg Center Mary Cardwell Dawson Memorabilia Dedication Poster
1981 May 2