

# **Livre de Chanson**

**Ms. Codex 1849**

**Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.**

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Last updated on May 09, 2019.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

August 2017

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Creator</b>	Cowette, Demerise, 1877-1853
<b>Title</b>	Livre de Chanson
<b>Call number</b>	Ms. Codex 1849
<b>Date</b>	circa 1920-1930
<b>Extent</b>	1 volume (+ 11 leaves)
<b>Language</b>	French
<b>Language Note</b>	In French. One song in French and English is laid in the volume.
<b>Abstract</b>	A volume of eighteenth-century French songs from the Acadian region of Kennebec, Maine compiled by Demerise Cowette between the years 1920 to 1930.

**Cite as:**

Livre de Chanson composé pas Demerise Cowette, circa 1920-1930, Ms. Codex 1849, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

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## Biography/History

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Born Demerise Vaillancourt in Van Buren, Aroostook County, Maine to Damase and Anastasie Duplessis dit Sirois Vaillancourt. She was one of thirteen children. While working as cook at logging camps on the Maine-Canada border, Demerise met Godfrey Cowette. Godfrey, a widower and mill worker, was born in Québec, Canada about 1850, he died in 1935. The couple married on September 23, 1901. They had eight children, five of whom survived. Various spellings appear for the surname of Godfrey Cowette. He was born with the name Godefroi Kaouet. Variants of the name include Cowette, Caouette, Cowett, and Cayouette.

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## Scope and Contents

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A marble paper, covered ruled notebook comprising collection of eighteenth century French songs. The song lyrics were transcribed and compiled by Demerise Cowette probably between the years from 1920 to 1930. These early songs date prior to 1759 and were originally brought to the Acadia region by French settlers. In 1759 Acadians were forcibly transported by the English to Louisiana. Some of the Acadians settled in the Kennebec region of Maine. Cowette's knowledge of the lyrics of the songs was probably passed down through her husband, parents, and grandparents. Songs portraying Canadians, love, relationships, and history are included in the volume. There is a table of contents listing the titles or first lines of 109 songs on 139 numbered pages. Laid in the volume are three leaves listing the names and birth dates of twenty-six Vaillancourt family members; two leaves affixed together on the left edge consist of two songs; one typed leaf has a short poem in French and English by Wilfred O. Lajoie. Cowette's name and title of the volume is written on a label affixed to the front cover. R.F.D. 49, North Vassalboro, Maine is written on the inside front cover. There are four leaves of correspondence and one envelope dated 2007 discussing the song book. Two leaves from plants have been laid in the notebook.

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## Administrative Information

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### Access Restrictions

This codex is open for research.

### Use Restrictions

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holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

### **Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Caroline F. Schimmel, 2016.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **CORPORATE NAME(S)**

- Caroline F. Schimmel Fiction Collection of Women in the American West (University of Pennsylvania).

### **FORM/GENRE(S)**

- Codices (bound manuscripts)
- Manuscripts, French--18th century
- Musical texts
- Songs (documents)

### **SUBJECT(S)**

- Acadians--18th century--Songs and music--Texts
- French-Canadians--18th century--Songs and music--Texts
- Songs, French--18th century--Texts

## Collection Inventory

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	Volume	Folder
Livre de Chanson composé pas Demerise Cowette, circa 1920-1930.	1	