

Frances McCollin papers

Ms. Coll. 1041

Finding aid prepared by Molly B. Hutt.

Last updated on March 23, 2016.

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

2014 November 6

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	McCollin, Frances, 1892-1960
Title	Frances McCollin papers
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1041
Date [inclusive]	1924-2007
Extent	0.4 linear feet (2 boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	The McCollin-Arnett family, including Frances McCollin (1892-1960), Edward McCollin, and Edward McCollin Arnett, was influential in the musical community of Philadelphia. This collection documents some of their activities through correspondence, notes, photographs, programs, sheet music, and recordings.

Biography/History

Frances McCollin (1892-1960) was a Philadelphia composer and organist. She wrote 333 compositions, 93 of which were published during her lifetime. Despite being blind, or perhaps because of it, she showed a great appreciation and talent for music by the age of fourteen months.

Edward McCollin, Frances McCollin's father, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, where he was a member of the Penn Glee Club, in 1878. He acted as the president of the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia from 1910 through 1923 and played a major role in the musical education of his daughter.

Edward McCollin Arnett graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1940, where he then went on to earn a PhD in chemistry. He is Frances McCollin's nephew.

Scope and Contents

The Frances McCollin collection documents some of the activities of the McCollin-Arnett family, including Frances McCollin, Edward McCollin, and Edward McCollin Arnett, with a particular focus on the music of Frances McCollin.

The folder labeled "Correspondence" includes letters to and from Edward McCollin Arnett and interlocutors such as Eugene Ormandy (on the topic of Frances McCollin's death) and Alexander McCurdy of the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia as well as the "Siren Song" newsletter from Women's Voices Chorus, Inc. A subset within this folder, set apart by its creator, holds material related to Frances McCollin's music, including letters, an article, information on royalty payments, and sheet music.

The second folder contains notes written by Frances McCollin's father, Edward McCollin, about her early musical education, beginning when she was approximately fourteen months old. Following this there are thirteen pages of notes on Frances' training at approximately the age of five, in which Edward McCollin describes his daughter's talent as natural, stating that, "She required no further instruction but my once telling her" and that her lessons rarely exceeded ten minutes due to the strength of her natural abilities.

Folder 3 holds three identical copies of a paper containing information on a 1964 international musical competition sponsored by the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia as a trustee of the Edward Garrett McCollin Fund for the Encouragement of Creative Work in the Higher Forms of Music.

Folder 4 contains a photograph of four women labeled "Celebrating the 50th year of The Women's Committee of the Philadelphia Orchestra." The women depicted are labeled as: Mrs. Frances Wister, Mrs. Gazzam, Mrs. McCollin, and Mrs. Arnett.

The fifth folder includes programs from various musical performances from the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia; the University United Methodist Church in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; The Curtis Institute of Music in Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia; and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Folder 6 holds three recordings: a cassette tape of "Snowflakes" by Frances McCollin, performed by the Women's Voices Chorus; a video cassette of the "DeMedio Concert of F. McCollin"; and a record of the "Mother Goose Toccata" No. 4 (from "Nursery Rhyme Suite") performed by Elisabeth Gittlen as part of The McCollin Society's recorded works of Frances McCollin.

The folder labeled "Sheet music" has been separated due to the size of the materials and is located in drawer 50. It includes printed sheet music for three of Frances McCollin's pieces as well as four copies of a full score for Frances McCollin's piano quintet.

The final folder houses a sign-in journal of visitors to Frances and Alice McCollin's home between 1924 July 11 and 1944 December 28. Notable appearances include Eugene Ormandy on 1938 October 30 and Marian Anderson on 1938 December 15.

This collection may be of use to those who are interested in the Philadelphia community in the early to mid-twentieth century.

Administrative Information

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Access Restrictions

The bulk of this collection is open for research use; however, access to original audio/visual materials and computer files is restricted. The Kislak Center will provide access to the information on these materials from duplicate master files. If the original does not already have a copy, it will be sent to an outside vendor for copying. Patrons are financially responsible for the cost. The turnaround time from request to delivery of digital items is about two weeks for up to five items and three to seven weeks for more than five items. Please contact Reprographic Services (reprogr@upenn.edu) for cost estimates and ordering. Once digital items are received, researchers will have access to the files on a dedicated computer in the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center. Researchers should be aware of specifics of copyright law and act accordingly.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Custodial History note

This collection was donated by Edward McCollin Arnett in 2007.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

At the University of Pennsylvania:

Edward G. McCollin papers, 1877-1953.

Correspondence with Marian Anderson, 1924.

William Benjamin Hillard Comstock papers, 1927-1971.

Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia records, ca. 1820-1994.

Separated Materials note

Books donated by Edward M. Arnett with the collection were removed for cataloging. The Scrapbook of Ed McCollin (Penn class of 1878) was transferred to the University of Pennsylvania Archives.

Controlled Access Headings

Form/Genre(s)

- Audiovisual materials
- Concert programs
- Correspondence
- Notes
- Sheet music
- Sound recordings

Personal Name(s)

- Arnett, Edward McCollin
- McCollin, Edward, 1858-1923

Subject(s)

- Musicians--United States
- Women musicians--United States

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Correspondence to and from Edward McCollin Arnett, 1961, 1964, 1990-1991, 1998, 2000-2001, 2004.	1	1
"Notes about the education of Frances McCollin by her father", 1892, undated.	1	2
Papers relating to the International Competition sponsored by the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia, 1964.	1	3
Photograph from the 50th anniversary of the Women's Committee of the Philadelphia Orchestra, undated.	1	4
Programs, 1964-1965, 1967-1970, 1981, 1996, undated.	1	5
Recordings [RESTRICTED], [1981], 1996, undated.	1	6
Sheet music, undated.		50

	Box	Folder
Sign-in journal of visitors to Frances and Alice McCollin's home, 1924 July 11-1944 December 28.	2	1