

INTRODUCTION

Archives & Special Collections supports the teaching, research, and public service mission of the University by:

- ◆ Collecting, preserving, organizing, and providing access to original source materials for research, primarily in the humanities and social sciences;
- ◆ Maintaining archival records of the University;
- ◆ Promoting wider knowledge, appreciation, and use of the collections by students and scholars through outreach activities.

The department is concerned with materials that require special handling and preservation, including manuscripts, early printed books, broadsides, pamphlets, photographs, and prints; as well as special subject collections kept together for research purposes.

Materials in Archives & Special Collections must be used in the John P. McDonald Reading Room. Access to the materials is provided through a combination of sources including special files maintained in the department; HOMER, the Library's online public catalog; and the departments website at www.lib.uconn.edu/DoddCenter/ASC

Curators are available for individual consultation and can also arrange presentations for classes and seminars.

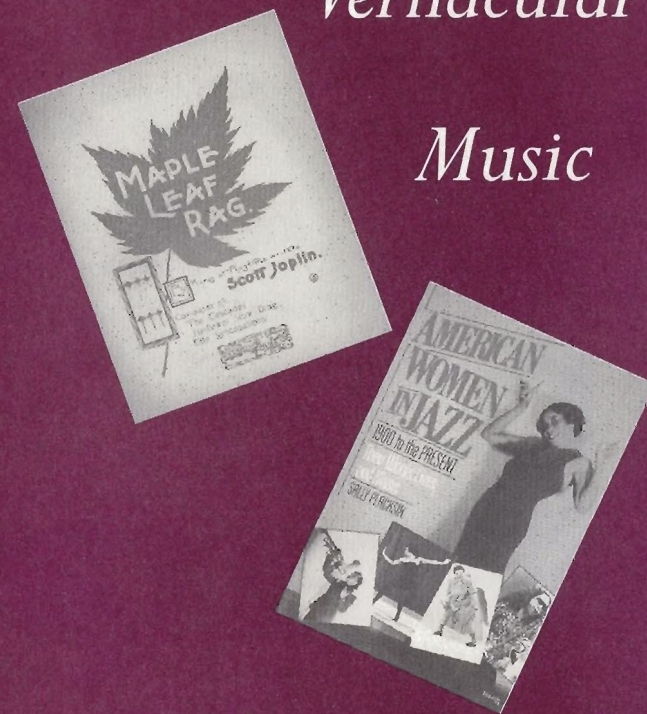
Other Notable Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center

Alternative Politics and Culture
American and English Literature
Archives of Nursing Leadership
Belgian Revolution Collection (1830-1839)
Connecticut Business, Industry & Labor
Connecticut Historic Preservation
Connecticut Politics and Public Affairs
ExLibris Collection and Bookplate Literature
Ethnic Heritage and Immigration
French Political Pamphlets (1775-1840)
French Satirical Periodicals (ca. 1850-1910)
Graphic and Book Arts
Hispanic History and Culture
Human Rights
Natural History
Northeast Children's Literature Collection
Pierce Welsh Gaines Collection of Americana
Italian Risorgimento Collection
Paul Laumonier Collection of French
Railroad History
Renaissance Literature
Pioneers of Survey Research
Stevenson Collections on Skating and Social Dance
University Archives
Waugh Collection on Sundials and Timekeeping

Contacting Us

Archives & Special Collections
Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
University of Connecticut
405 Babbidge Road, Unit 1205
Storrs, CT 06269-1205
Telephone: (860) 486-2524
<http://www.lib.uconn.edu/DoddCenter/ASC>

Archives of African American Vernacular Music



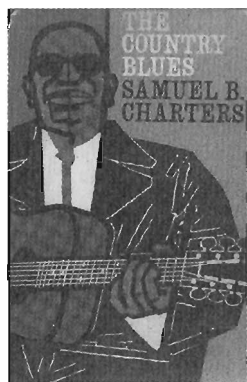
Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
University of Connecticut Libraries



University of Connecticut

THE SAMUEL & ANN CHARTERS ARCHIVES OF BLUES & AFRICAN AMERICAN VERNACULAR MUSIC

The core of this extensive collection is the working archives of author and record producer Samuel Charters, and reflects his more than a half century of involvement in African American music. Charters won a Grammy award as producer of the album *I'm Here*, with Clifton Chenier, he was presented with the Deems Taylor Award for his book *The Roots of Blues*, and in the spring of 2000 he was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame for his book *The Country Blues*.

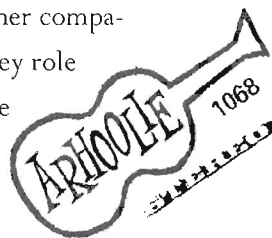


In researching his many books in this field, Charters amassed a wide ranging archive, which extends from sheet music with “Ethiopian” melodies from the pre-Civil War years to LPs, CDs and videos documenting the rap music of today.

The collection, at its dedication in the fall of 2000, already contained over three thousand recordings, hundreds of books, an extensive sheet music collection, in addition to advertising ephemera, posters, and catalogs. There was also a representative gathering of videos ranging from documentation of African guitar styles to current rap releases.

THE CONTINUING COLLECTION

Through Charter’s contacts with other producers and company owners in the blues field he is continuing to bring new music to the collection. Already the owner of the famed blues label Arhoolie Records, Chris Strachwitz, has presented Archives & Special Collections with a complete collection of blues, zydeco, and gospel music produced by his company. In addition, other companies who have also played a key role in the revival of interest in the blues have offered to augment the collection with examples of their own releases.



THE SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

Although the collection emphasizes the blues, the intention in the fifty years of collecting has been to document every style of music which has flourished in the African Diaspora. There is extensive material from the islands of the Caribbean, including Cuba and Haiti, from isolated cultural areas like Cape Verde, as well as a sampling of the rich musical styles of countries like Brazil, Columbia, and Venezuela. Africa itself is represented with numerous examples of music from the areas of West Africa which became part of the cultural transfer to the new world.

THE SAMUEL & ANN CHARTERS MULTIMEDIA ROOM

The purpose of the collection is to make the materials available to both students and scholars. To facilitate this Charters and his wife Ann, a professor of English at the University of Connecticut, and herself the author of books dealing with the African American cultural experience, have helped provide for a listening and viewing room in the Dodd Research Center. This new multimedia room is available for anyone interested in making use of the materials in the collection.

The room includes two listening stations that include DVD/CD players, cassette players, phonograph turntables and amplifiers. Because many of the materials are original and considered rare, the level of security that is standard with all other materials in Archives & Special Collections was taken into account when designing the room. Researchers will find this equipment enclosed in glass off of the John P. McDonald Reading Room along with framed artwork and a hanging quilt entitled “Mother of Blues” crafted by former University of Connecticut professor Pat Carter.

