

Vinton Freedley Papers



**Music Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2021**

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/perform.contact>

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Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Rachel McNellis, 2021
Revised 2022 November

Collection Summary

Title: Vinton Freedley Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1865-1960

Bulk Dates: 1921-1938

Call No.: ML31.F74

Creator: Freedley, Vinton

Extent: approximately 75 items

Extent: 3 containers

Extent: 2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2015667102>

Summary: Vinton Freedley (1891-1969) was a producer of American musical theater, including works by Vernon Duke, George and Ira Gershwin, Burton Lane, and Cole Porter. The Vinton Freedley Papers consist chiefly of scripts and manuscript and printed music for these and other composers such as Hoagy Carmichael, Ray Henderson, Herbert Johnson, and Jimmy McHugh.

Acquisition Information

The music and miscellaneous items were purchased from a dealer in 1989. Michael Feinstein donated the scripts in 2016.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

Rodney Todd processed the Vinton Freedley Papers in the 1990s. Rachel McNellis coded the finding aid in 2021. Jane Cross added the scripts in 2022. The scripts have undergone mold remediation.

Other Repositories

The Vinton Freedley Papers at Harvard University's Houghton Library houses a small collection of printed and manuscript music, scripts, correspondence, and business papers related to Freedley.

Related Material

The [Vernon Duke Collection](#) and [Irving Berlin Collection](#) contain correspondence with Freedley.

Copyright Status

Materials from the Vinton Freedley Papers are governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws.

Access and Restrictions

The Vinton Freedley Papers are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Music Division prior to visiting in order to determine whether the desired materials will be available at that time.

Certain restrictions on using or copying materials may apply.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container or reel or digital ID number], Vinton Freedley Papers, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1891 November 5	Born in Philadelphia
1914	Graduated from Harvard University
1917-1920	Performed in various musical comedies
1917	Earned a JD at University of Pennsylvania Married Mary Middleton Mitchell (1894-1955)
1918	Birth of son Vinton Freedley (died 1985) Served in the United States Marine Corps Elected to the theatrical organization The Lambs
1920	Played the leading role in Victor Herbert's musical comedy <i>Oui Madame</i> Met producer Alex Aarons, who was producing his first show, Fred Jackson's play <i>A Hole in the Wall</i>
1922	Performed the lead role in the musical <i>For Goodness' Sake</i> , which Aarons produced
1923	Began a long-term partnership with Aarons
1924	Co-produced his first show with Aarons, Cosmo Hamilton's play <i>The New Poor</i>
1924 September 23	Daughter Eleanor Ann born (died circa 1995)
1924-1925	Co-produced George and Ira Gershwin's musical <i>Lady Be Good!</i> with Aarons
1927	Opened the Alvin Theatre (now named the Neil Simon Theater) on Broadway with Aarons
1930-1931	Co-produced George and Ira Gershwin's musical <i>Girl Crazy</i> with Aarons, which was the first major stage production starring Ethel Merman and Ginger Rogers
1933	Ceased partnership with Aarons
1934-1935	Produced Cole Porter's musical <i>Anything Goes</i>
1938-1939	Produced Cole Porter's musical <i>Leave It to Me!</i> , which was Mary Martin's first stage performance
1940-1941	Produced Vernon Duke's musical <i>Cabin in the Sky</i> with an entirely Black cast
1941-1942	Produced his last major theatrical success, Cole Porter's musical <i>Lady in the Dark</i> , which featured Danny Kaye
circa 1941-1954	Elected treasurer of The Actors Fund
1943	Elected president of The Episcopal Actors Guild
1950	Produced his final production, Anderson Lawler and Russell Marker's musical <i>Great to Be Alive</i>
1954-1964	Elected president of The Actors Fund
1969 June 5	Died in New York City

Scope and Content Note

The Vinton Freedley Papers span the years 1865 to 1936, the bulk of which dates from 1921 to 1931, and encompasses music and papers related to producer Vinton Freedley. The [Music](#) series consists chiefly of music manuscripts and printed music for composers of popular music during the 1910s through the 1930s. Some scores are annotated or inscribed, including those of John H. Densmore, Vinton Freedley, George Gershwin, and Herbert Johnson. The series also contains music by Joseph Alger, Jas A. Brennan, Hoagy Carmichael, Vernon Duke, Virginia Gabriel, Ray Henderson, Burton Lane, Jimmy McHugh, and Lee S. Roberts, among others.

The [Scripts](#) for plays and musical theater productions produced by Vinton Freedley are typed, and most are annotated.

The [Miscellany](#) series contains two items: a telegram from Joe Dubarry Sr. to Vinton Freedley and a list of songs from musicals by prominent composers, such as Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, and Sigmund Romberg.

Organization of the Vinton Freedley Papers

The collection is arranged in three series:

- [Music, 1865-1931](#)
- [Scripts, 1928-1960](#)
- [Miscellany, 1936](#)

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Brennan, James A. (James Alexander), 1885-1956.

Carmichael, Hoagy, 1899-1981.

Densmore, John H. (John Hopkins), 1880-1943.

Duke, Vernon, 1903-1969.

Freedley, Vinton, 1891-1969--Archives.

Freedley, Vinton, 1891-1969.

Freedley, Vinton, 1891-1969.

Gabriel, Virginia, 1825-1877.

Gershwin, George, 1898-1937.

Henderson, Ray, 1896-1970.

Lane, Burton, 1912-1997.

McHugh, Jimmy, 1894-1969.

Porter, Cole, 1891-1964.

Roberts, Lee S., 1884-1949.

Subjects

Musicals--Excerpts--Scores.

Popular music--United States.

Titles

Vinton Freedley collection, 1920-1949

Form/Genre

Autographs (Manuscripts)

Lists (Document genres)

Musicals.

Popular music.

Scores.

Songs.

Description of Series

Container

BOX 1

Series

Music, 1865-1931

This series consists chiefly of manuscript and printed scores, the majority of which are songs from Broadway musicals and other American popular music. Freedley composed four of these works and autographed the piano-vocal score for "If You But Smile." The manuscripts for George and Ira Gershwin's works are notable for their annotations, and the lyrics for the song "I Love a Simple Way," from the musical *A Dangerous Maid* (1921), are written in Ira Gershwin's hand. Also present are Ray Henderson's piano and piano-vocal scores for three songs from the musical comedy *Hold Everything!* (1928), which ran for 409 performances. Several additional items are inscribed to Freedley, including the piano-vocal scores for John H. Densmore's "Love Lightly" (1916) and Herbert Johnson's "Mr. Jacquemont" (1916), as well as an unidentified vocal score titled "Finale." This series also contains compositions by Joseph Alger, Jas A. Brennan, Hoagy Carmichael, Vernon Duke, Virginia Gabriel, Ray Henderson, Burton Lane, Jimmy McHugh, and Lee S. Roberts, along with unidentified holograph scores and sketches.

Arranged alphabetically by composer and title therein

BOX 2-3

Scripts, 1928-1960

This series contains scripts for plays and musical theater productions produced by Vinton Freedley. The scripts are typed and many contain annotations.

Arranged alphabetically by title.

BOX 1

Miscellany, 1936

This series contains an undated note written in two different hands with lyrics for an unidentified song, as well as a list of songs from the musicals of Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, and Sigmund Romberg, and other Broadway composers. It also includes a telegram that Joe Dubarry Sr. sent to Vinton Freedley.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	<p>Music, 1865-1931</p> <p>This series consists chiefly of manuscript and printed scores, the majority of which are songs from Broadway musicals and other American popular music. Freedley composed four of these works and autographed the piano-vocal score for "If You But Smile." The manuscripts for George and Ira Gershwin's works are notable for their annotations, and the lyrics for the song "I Love a Simple Way," from the musical <i>A Dangerous Maid</i> (1921), are written in Ira Gershwin's hand. Also present are Ray Henderson's piano and piano-vocal scores for three songs from the musical comedy <i>Hold Everything!</i> (1928), which ran for 409 performances. Several additional items are inscribed to Freedley, including the piano-vocal scores for John H. Densmore's "Love Lightly" (1916) and Herbert Johnson's "Mr. Jacquemont" (1916), as well as an unidentified vocal score titled "Finale." This series also contains compositions by Joseph Alger, Jas A. Brennan, Hoagy Carmichael, Vernon Duke, Virginia Gabriel, Ray Henderson, Burton Lane, Jimmy McHugh, and Lee S. Roberts, along with unidentified holograph scores and sketches.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by composer and title therein</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	<p>Alger, Joseph The Man I Married Is a Bathroom, undated Piano-vocal score</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/22	<p>Brennan, Jas A. (?) The Rose of the Mountain Trail, circa 1914 Parts (strings, clarinet, cornet, trombone, and drums)</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	<p>Carmichael, Hoagy In My Wildest Dreams, undated Piano-vocal score</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	<p>Moonburn, undated Piano-vocal score</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	<p>Densmore, John H. Love Lightly, 1916 Piano-vocal score, possibly in the hand of Densmore <i>Note:</i> Inscribed to Freedley</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	<p>Duke, Vernon Come What May, undated Piano-vocal score</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	<p>Freedley, Vinton Dance, undated Trombone part with annotations</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	<p>If You But Smile, undated Piano-vocal score <i>Note:</i> Autographed by Freedley and inscribed "Mary M. Mitchell"</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	<p>There Was a Little Girl, undated Vocal lead sheet Freedley, Vinton and J. K. Hodges</p>

Music, 1865-1931

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Opening Chorus Act 2, undated Mimeograph of vocal score Gabriel, Virginia
BOX-FOLDER 1/19	The Garden of Roses, circa 1865 Piano-vocal score <i>Note:</i> Inscribed "E. S." Gershwin, George
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Anything for You (from <i>A Dangerous Maid</i>), circa 1921 Copyist piano-vocal score in the hand of William Daly
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	I Love the Simple Way (from <i>A Dangerous Maid</i>), circa 1921 Text in the hand of Ira Gershwin
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	Just to Know You Are Mine (from <i>A Dangerous Maid</i>), circa 1921 Copyist piano-vocal score (no lyric) with annotations Gershwin, George (?)
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	When You Get Home Again (from <i>Dere Mabel</i>), undated Copyist piano-vocal score in the hand of William Daly, with annotations most likely by George Gershwin Henderson, Ray
BOX-FOLDER 1/13	Let Everything Go (from <i>Hold Everything!</i>), circa 1928 Piano-vocal score
BOX-FOLDER 1/14	To Know You Is to Love You (from <i>Hold Everything!</i>), circa 1928 Piano-vocal score (no lyric)
BOX-FOLDER 1/15	You're the Cream in My Coffee (from <i>Hold Everything!</i>), circa 1928 Score for piano Johnson, Herbert
BOX-FOLDER 1/16	Mr. Jacquemont, 1916 April 6 Printed piano-vocal score <i>Note:</i> Inscribed to Freedley Lane, Burton
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Singin' the Blues, 1931 Piano-vocal score
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Singin' the Blues, 1931 Score for piano McHugh, Jimmy
BOX-FOLDER 1/17	It's the Darndest Thing, 1931 Printed piano-vocal score Roberts, Lee S.
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	Little Songs of Optimism, 1921 June 21 Piano-vocal score <i>Note:</i> Inscribed to Mrs. Henry Phipps Unidentified
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	Family, undated Lead sheet
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	Finale, undated Lead sheet
BOX-FOLDER 1/23	The Girl I'd Choose for Kissing, undated Score for piano; sketch; lyric sheet

Music, 1865-1931

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	Glad I Met You, undated Sketch
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Grey Day, undated Sketch
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Here's One Who Wouldn't, undated Piano-vocal score (no lyric)
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	I Couldn't Find Another, undated Piano-vocal score
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Lady Flicotine (?), undated Sketch
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	March Song Act 2, undated Score for piano
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	Same Old Tale, undated Sketch
BOX-FOLDER 1/23	Selection "Loravia", undated Conductor score
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Usher Girls, undated Lead sheet
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Unidentified, undated Piano-vocal score
BOX 2-3	Scripts, 1928-1960 This series contains scripts for plays and musical theater productions produced by Vinton Freedley. The scripts are typed and many contain annotations. Arranged alphabetically by title.
BOX-FOLDER 2/1	<i>Anything Goes</i> , 1934 By Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse; revised by Howard Lindsay; music and lyrics by Cole Porter
BOX-FOLDER 2/2	<i>Anything Goes</i> , undated By Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse; treatment by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse; music and lyrics by Cole Porter
BOX-FOLDER 2/3	<i>Blind Date</i> , undated By Guy Bolton, Sidney Sheldon, and Ben Roberts; lyrics by Howard Dietz; music by Vernon Duke
BOX-FOLDER 2/4	<i>Call Me Lucky</i> , undated By Walter O'Keefe; music by Irv Orton
BOX-FOLDER 2/5	<i>Family Honeymoon</i> , undated By Owen Davis
BOX-FOLDER 2/6	<i>The French They Are</i> , undated By Robert Wallsten
BOX-FOLDER 2/7	<i>Funny Face</i> , 1928 By Fred Thompson and Paul Gerard Smith
BOX-FOLDER 2/8	<i>Garrick Gaities</i> , undated Music by Richard Rodgers; lyrics by Lorenz Hart
BOX-FOLDER 2/9	<i>Girl Crazy</i> , undated By Guy Bolton and Jack McGowan; music by George Gershwin; lyrics by Ira Gershwin
BOX-FOLDER 2/10	<i>Girl Crazy</i> , 1960 By Guy Bolton and Jack McGowan; music by George Gershwin; lyrics by Ira Gershwin

Scripts, 1928-1960

Container	Contents
	<i>Laid in: Correspondence</i>
BOX-FOLDER 2/11	<i>Great To Be Alive</i> , 1949 By Walter Bullock and Sylvia Regan; music by Abraham Ellstein
BOX-FOLDER 2/12	<i>Here's Howe</i> , undated By Fred Thompson and Paul Gerard Smith
BOX-FOLDER 3/1-2	<i>Jackpot</i> , undated By Guy Bolton, Sidney Sheldon, and Ben Roberts; music by Vernon Duke; lyrics by Howard Dietz
BOX-FOLDER 3/3	<i>Leave It to Me</i> , 1938 By Bella and Samuel Spewack
BOX-FOLDER 3/4	<i>Let's Face It!</i> , undated By Dorothy and Herbert Fields; music by Cole Porter
BOX-FOLDER 3/5	<i>Miss Quis</i> , undated By Ward Morehouse
BOX-FOLDER 3/6	<i>Oh, Kay!</i> , 1928 By Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse; music by George Gershwin; lyrics by Ira Gershwin
BOX-FOLDER 3/7	<i>Pardon My English</i> , 1933 By Herbert Fields and Morrie Ryskind; music by George Gershwin; lyrics by Ira Gershwin
BOX-FOLDER 3/8	<i>Polonaise</i> , undated By Gottfried Reinhardt and Anthony Veiller; music by Bronislaw Kaper
BOX-FOLDER 3/9	<i>Red, Hot and Blue</i> , undated By Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse; music and lyrics by Cole Porter
BOX-FOLDER 3/10	<i>Singin' the Blues</i> , 1938 By John McGowan; music by James McHugh; lyrics by Dorothy Fields
BOX-FOLDER 3/11	<i>Treasure Girl</i> , 1928 By Fred Thomspson and Vincent Lawrence; music by George Gershwin; lyrics by Ira Gershwin
BOX-FOLDER 3/12	<i>Young Man with a Horn</i> , undated By Dorothy Baker
BOX 1	Miscellany, 1936 This series contains an undated note written in two different hands with lyrics for an unidentified song, as well as a list of songs from the musicals of Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, and Sigmund Romberg, and other Broadway composers. It also includes a telegram that Joe Dubarry Sr. sent to Vinton Freedley. Arranged alphabetically by type of material
BOX-FOLDER 1/24	Note, undated <i>Includes:</i> Lyrics for unidentified song; list of songs from various musicals by Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, and Sigmund Romberg, among others
BOX-FOLDER 1/24	Telegram from Joe Dubarry Sr. to Vinton Freedley, 1936 June 29