

# Fuller Sisters Collection



**Music Division, Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
2023**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018571960>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu023006>

Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Maya Lerman, 2023 May

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Fuller Sisters Collection

**Inclusive Dates:** 1880-1947

**Bulk Dates:** 1911-1917

**Call No.:** ML31 .F85

**Creator:** Fuller Sisters (Vocal group)

**Extent:** approximately 2,400 items

**Extent:** 16 containers

**Extent:** 8 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English.

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018571960>

**Summary:** The Fuller Sisters (Oriska, Rosalind, Cynthia, and Dorothy Fuller) was an English folk singing group from Dorset, England, who performed English, Scottish, and Irish folksongs and was managed by their brother Walter Fuller. They undertook five tours of North America between 1911 and 1917. The collection chiefly documents these tours through correspondence, journals, programs and publicity materials, photographs, music and lyric sheets, and other materials pertaining to the Sisters's and Walter's lives.

## Acquisition Information

Gift, Jessica North, Nigel Foote, and Belinda Pring, 2023

## Custodial History

Dorothy Fuller's husband, Jack Odell, collected and organized the materials with the assistance of Oriska (Riss) Fuller. The collection was then passed down to Jack and Dorothy's only child, Carol, and then to Carol's children, Jessica North, Nigel Foote, and Belinda Pring.

## Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

## Processing History

Maya Lerman processed the Fuller Sisters Collection and coded the finding aid in 2023.

## Transfers

Three sound recordings of performances by descendants of the Fuller Sisters have been transferred to the Library of Congress Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division, where they are identified as part of the Fuller Sisters Collection (MAVIS no. 17846). An inventory of this material is available in the Music Division's collection file.

## Copyright Status

Materials from the Fuller Sisters Collection 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 Fuller Sisters Collection is 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 number], Fuller Sisters Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

The Fuller Sisters was an English folk singing group from Dorset, England, who performed English, Scottish, and Irish folk songs to harp accompaniment and was managed by their brother, Walter Fuller. Walter Fuller was a writer, editor, and peace activist, who was married to Crystal Eastman, a journalist, feminist, fellow peace activist, and co-founder of *The Liberator* (a socialist magazine) and the American Civil Liberties Union. The Fuller Sisters - Oriska (Riss), Dorothy, and Rosalind, and Cynthia Fuller – only ever appeared as a trio, with Oriska Fuller's place as harpist being taken by Cynthia when Oriska married Dr. Basil Ward. The group undertook five tours of the United States between 1911 and 1917, where they gained followings in urban centers and received high praise from the press. Their folk singing was lauded by English musician, composer, teacher, and folk song collector Cecil Sharp, who gave the Sisters letters of introduction for their tours of America. The Fuller Sisters performed twice for President and Mrs. Wilson. After their tours of America, Oriska Fuller continued to perform as a musician, Dorothy and Cynthia pursued the visual arts as illustrators and painters, and Rosalind became an actress.

## Scope and Content Note

The Fuller Sisters Collection spans the years 1880 to 1947, the bulk of which dates from 1911 to 1917. The materials primarily consist of manuscripts and photographs from the Fuller Sisters's tours of the United States, where they gained prominence as performers. The correspondence, journals, programs and publicity, music and photographs illustrate the scope and nature of the Sisters's tours and networks, and offer windows into their experiences touring overseas and into their relationships with each other and the rest of their family.

The [Tour Files](#) series contains correspondence, photographs, and publicity from each of the Fuller Sisters's five tours of America. The [Writings](#) series includes firsthand accounts by the Sisters during and after the tours through journals and other written recollections. The [Correspondence](#) series contains letters by the Fuller Sisters not included in the Tour Files series, as well as those from other Fuller family members and friends. The [Music and Lyrics](#) series contains song books and music and lyric sheets related to Fuller Sisters's repertoire and musical backgrounds. The [Biographical Materials](#) series includes a range of written materials and artwork related to the lives and careers of the Fuller Sisters and Walter Fuller, primarily after the tours of America. The [Photographs](#) series primarily contains photographic prints and albums of the Fuller Sisters and their family from the Sisters's early lives through their tours of America.

## Organization of the Fuller Sisters Collection

The collection is arranged in six series:

- [Tour Files, 1911-1917](#)
- [Writings, 1888-1918](#)
- [Correspondence, 1888-1947](#)
- [Music and Lyrics, circa 1908-1937](#)
- [Biographical Materials, 1907-1939](#)
- [Photographs, circa 1880-1917](#)

## 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

Fuller family--Correspondence.  
Fuller, Cynthia.  
Fuller, Dorothy.  
Fuller, Rosalinde.  
Fuller, Walter, 1881-1927.

### Organizations

Fuller Sisters (Vocal group)  
Fuller Sisters (Vocal group)--Archives.

### Subjects

Folk music--United States--History and criticism.  
Folk musicians--England--Correspondence.

### Form/Genre

Biographies.  
Business correspondence.  
Clippings (Information artifacts)  
Diaries.  
Folk music.  
Lyric poetry.  
Personal correspondence.  
Photographs.  
Programs (Publications)  
Scores.  
Songbooks.  
Songs.

## Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-6, 11	<p><b><u>Tour Files, 1911-1917</u></b></p> <p>Manuscript and photographic materials from the Fuller Sisters's five tours of the United States during 1911 through 1917 comprise this series. It includes correspondence between and from the Fuller Sisters, photographs from the tours, performance programs, fliers, itineraries, reviews, and drawings.</p> <p>Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 7-8	<p><b><u>Writings, 1888-1918</u></b></p> <p>Journals, diaries, other recollections, and poetry primarily written by the Fuller Sisters.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by subject.</p>
BOX 8-9	<p><b><u>Correspondence, 1888-1947</u></b></p> <p>Correspondence from the Fullers Sisters and other family, as well as friends of the family.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.</p>
BOX 9, 11	<p><b><u>Music and Lyrics, circa 1908-1937</u></b></p> <p>English folk song books, as well as miscellaneous song and lyric sheets likely from Fuller Sisters repertoire or used as inspiration.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by title.</p>
BOX 10-12, 15	<p><b><u>Biographical Materials, 1907-1939</u></b></p> <p>This series contains newspaper clippings, musical programs, tributes, obituaries and other materials about the Fuller Sisters and Walter Fuller with an emphasis on their lives and careers after the tours of the United States. Included are early drawings by Dorothy Fuller, and a painting of Oriska Fuller by family friend John Rae. There is also a bound version of the play, <i>A Masque of the Seasons</i>, by John Wessex (pseudonym for Walter Fuller), with "Songs, Music, and Dances arranged by Oriska V. Fuller and Rosalind Fuller."</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by subject.</p>
BOX 10-11, 13-14, 16	<p><b><u>Photographs, circa 1880-1917</u></b></p> <p>Photographic prints, loose and in albums, primarily of the Fuller Sisters and other family from their childhood through the tours of America.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by subject.</p>

# Container List

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>BOX 1-6, 11</b>	<b>Tour Files, 1911-1917</b> Manuscript and photographic materials from the Fuller Sisters's five tours of the United States during 1911 through 1917 comprise this series. It includes correspondence between and from the Fuller Sisters, photographs from the tours, performance programs, fliers, itineraries, reviews, and drawings. Arranged chronologically.
<b>BOX-FOLDER 11/1</b>	On Tour in America, circa 1911-1917 Poster for a Fuller Sisters performance
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/1 to 2/1</b>	First tour, 1911 December-1912-May
<b>BOX-FOLDER 2/2 to 3/3</b>	Second tour, 1913 January-1913 June <i>Includes:</i> Card from bouquet of flowers delivered to the Fuller Sisters during their performance at the White House
<b>BOX-FOLDER 3/1-8</b>	Third tour, 1913 September-1914 May
<b>BOX-FOLDER 3/9 to 6/1</b>	Fourth tour, 1914 October-1916 May
<b>BOX-FOLDER 6/2</b>	In between tours, 1916 June-1916 September
<b>BOX-FOLDER 6/3-9</b>	Fifth tour, 1916 October-1917 September
<b>BOX 7-8</b>	<b>Writings, 1888-1918</b> Journals, diaries, other recollections, and poetry primarily written by the Fuller Sisters. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
<b>BOX-FOLDER 7/1-8/2</b>	Journals and diaries, 1911-1918
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/3</b>	Poetry, 1888-1915
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/4-5</b>	Recollections, undated Journals of Cynthia Fuller and Dorothy Fuller, in addition to other writings by the Fuller Sisters about their memories of the tours of the United States and their performances.
<b>BOX 8-9</b>	<b>Correspondence, 1888-1947</b> Correspondence from the Fullers Sisters and other family, as well as friends of the family. Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/6</b>	Eastman, Crystal, 1919-1927 and undated
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/7</b>	Friends, 1905-1927
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/8</b>	Fuller, Cynthia, undated
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/9</b>	Fuller, Dorothy, circa 1908-1910
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/10</b>	Fuller, Elizabeth, 1888
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/11</b>	Fuller, Henry, undated
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/12-13</b>	Fuller, Oriska, 1909-1911 and undated
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/14</b>	Fuller, Rosalind, 1908-1910 and undated
<b>BOX-FOLDER 8/15-16</b>	Fuller, Walter, circa 1905-1911
<b>BOX-FOLDER 9/1-2</b>	Fuller Family, 1913-1915
<b>BOX-FOLDER 9/3-6</b>	Fuller Sisters, circa 1914-1947

## Correspondence, 1888-1947

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 9/7	Rae, John "Jack," 1913-1914 and undated
BOX 9, 11	<b>Music and Lyrics, circa 1908-1937</b> English folk song books, as well as miscellaneous song and lyric sheets likely from Fuller Sisters repertoire or used as inspiration. Arranged alphabetically by title.
BOX-FOLDER 9/8	Cynthia Fuller Manuscript Composition Book, undated
BOX-FOLDER 9/9	Eager Heart, 1908
BOX-FOLDER 11/2	English Folk Songs, undated Set of ten broadsides with song notation and lyrics
BOX-FOLDER 9/10	Fifty Folk Songs Compiled at the Request of the English Folk Dance Society by Cecil Sharp, undated
BOX-FOLDER 9/11	Fifty Folk Songs: Fifty Songs in Two Books, undated Selected and edited by Hugh Brandon
BOX-FOLDER 9/12	Miscellaneous folk songs, undated
BOX-FOLDER 9/13	Miscellaneous lyric sheets, undated
BOX-FOLDER 9/14	Old Hark; Hark! The Glad Sound, undated
BOX-FOLDER 9/15	Selected List of English Folk-Songs, Children's Singing-Games ..., 1937
BOX-FOLDER 11/3	The Seven Virgins, undated Manuscript scores for two songs <i>Note:</i> Title of second song is illegible
BOX-FOLDER 11/4	Unidentified, undated Manuscript scores and fragments
BOX 10-12, 15	<b>Biographical Materials, 1907-1939</b> This series contains newspaper clippings, musical programs, tributes, obituaries and other materials about the Fuller Sisters and Walter Fuller with an emphasis on their lives and careers after the tours of the United States. Included are early drawings by Dorothy Fuller, and a painting of Oriska Fuller by family friend John Rae. There is also a bound version of the play, <i>A Masque of the Seasons</i> , by John Wessex (pseudonym for Walter Fuller), with "Songs, Music, and Dances arranged by Oriska V. Fuller and Rosalind Fuller." Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX-FOLDER 11/5	Clippings, 1933
BOX-FOLDER 10/1	Drawings, circa 1908
BOX-FOLDER 10/2	Eastman, Crystal, undated
BOX-FOLDER 10/3-5	Fuller, Walter, 1911-1928 <i>Note:</i> Box 10, Folder 3 contains <i>A Masque of the Seasons</i> , by John Wessex (pseudonym for Walter Fuller), with "Songs, Music, and Dances arranged by Oriska V. Fuller and Rosalind Fuller"
BOX-FOLDER 11/6	Fuller Sisters, 1907-1911
BOX-FOLDER 10/6	Fuller Sisters, 1918-1939
BOX-FOLDER 10/7-8	Fuller Sisters, undated <i>Includes:</i> Tuning fork used by the Fuller Sisters
BOX 15	Painting of Oriska (Riss) Fuller, undated By John "Jack" Rae 11 x 16.5 inches

## Biographical Materials, 1907-1939

Container	Contents
BOX 12	Press clippings book of all tours, 1911-1917 Scrapbook/album with press clippings of articles about the Fuller Sisters's tours and performances
BOX-FOLDER 10/9	Rae, John "Jack," undated
BOX 10-11, 13-14, 16	<b>Photographs, circa 1880-1917</b> Photographic prints, loose and in albums, primarily of the Fuller Sisters and other family from their childhood through the tours of America. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX-FOLDER 10/10	Fuller, Cynthia, undated
BOX-FOLDER 10/11, 11/7	Fuller, Dorothy, undated
BOX-FOLDER 10/12	Fuller, Oriska, undated
BOX-FOLDER 16/1	Fuller, Oriska, undated
BOX-FOLDER 10/13	Fuller, Rosalind, undated
BOX-FOLDER 10/14, 11/8	Fuller, Walter, undated
BOX 14	Fuller Sisters, circa 1880-1917 Photograph album of the Fuller Family, and, primarily the Fuller Sisters from childhood through their tours of America.
BOX-FOLDER 10/15, 11/9	Fuller Sisters, 1911-1912 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 16/2	Fuller Sisters, undated
BOX 13	Fuller Sisters, circa 1906-1911 "Fuller Sisters family photo album circa 1906 to 1911 (before tours of America)"
BOX-FOLDER 16/3	Fuller Sisters, 1914 October-1916 May Album compiled by Eugene Hutchinson, Chicago (4th tour)
BOX-FOLDER 10/16	Nott, Stanley, undated
BOX-FOLDER 10/17	Pick, Richard, undated