American history through the Civil War and British literature through early Modernism are particular strengths of The Rosenbach’s rare book and manuscript collection. The purchase of the manuscripts and correspondence of the modernist poet Marianne Moore in the late 1960s brought many 20th-century writers and artists into the collection. Although African and African American books and manuscripts were not a focus of the Rosenbach brothers’ collecting or of the Rosenbach until recently, many writers, poets, and notable figures of African and African American heritage can be found here. This collections guide includes letters, manuscripts, books, and photographs with Black authorship or that depict specific, named Black individuals. Figures of mixed ancestry whose background includes African heritage such as William Apess, Alexandre Dumas père and fils, and Robert and Elizabeth Barret Browning (whose Black ancestry is posited in the joint biography Dared and Done by Julia Markus, 1995) are also included.

Africans and African Americans also appear in other areas of the Rosenbach collections which may be of interest to researchers. These are particularly our historical collections and Abolitionist literature. A collections guide for those materials is forthcoming.

Items collected by Dr. Rosenbach are distinguished with an “*”. Objects acquired since 2016 are marked with a “+”. This collections guide will be updated periodically to reflect new acquisitions and further cataloging of the Rosenbach collections. For more information on any item listed on this guide, please contact us at https://rosenbach.org/research/make-an-inquiry/. For information about on-site research, or to request an appointment to see specific materials, visit https://rosenbach.org/research/make-an-appointment/.

Entries are arranged alphabetically by the name of the person who is the creator of the work. Anonymous works and anthologies are listed by title before those with named authors. For ease of finding, all African and African American creators and subjects are bolded.
MML 0101  
From the library of Marianne Moore.

MML 0667  
(Accompanying autograph letter praises a story by Alice Walker.)  
From the library of Marianne Moore.  

AN .E78  
*The Essex gazette* (Salem, Mass.), 16–30 Oct. 1770  

AL2 .A2n  

Ali, Muhammad  
*see* Plimpton, George  
Wide World Photos

Alice  
*see* Custis, John (1678–1749)

Apess, William (1798–1839)  
A 831s*  
*A son of the forest: the experience of William Apes [sic], a native of the forest, written by himself*. 2nd ed., revised and corrected. New York: Published by the author, 1831.

Apuleius  
Incun 469a  
*Opera*. Rome: In domo Petri de Maximis [Conradus Sweynheym and
Arnoldus Pannartz], [28 Feb. 1469].

Asfa Yilma, Princess (1875–1945)
Born Hannah Waldmeier in Ethiopia, granddaughter of an Ethiopian noblewoman and an Englishman whose daughter married a Swiss missionary.

MML 1505

A biography of Haile Selassie.
From the library of Marianne Moore.

Baldwin, James (1924–1987)

MMP

“Sweet Lorraine,” Esquire v. 72 no. 5 (Nov. 1969).
An article of Baldwin’s reminiscences of Lorraine Hansberry.
From the library of Marianne Moore.

MML 0618

From the library of Marianne Moore.

Bassir, Olumbe
see An anthology of West African verse

Baudelaire, Charles, 1821–1867.

C4 .B338fl.En 936

The copy of Harlem Renaissance poet Countee Cullen, with his signature on the first blank and five ticks in his hand to the contents pages.

Moore V:04:03

Belafonte, Harry (1927– )
Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1968.
1 folder (11 leaves)
Belafonte was guest host of The Tonight Show when Moore was a guest on 7 February 1968.
see also E.O. Brody Co.

Berghaus, Albert (fl. 1869–1880), attributed artist
**1981.0011 Emperor Shields & Lieutenant Coppick**
Pencil and grey wash drawing on brown wove paper.
Scene from the trial of the participants in John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry, showing Shields Green (Emperor Shields), one of the five African Americans in the group, with co-defendant Edwin Coppoc. Published in *Frank Leslie’s illustrated newspaper*, 5 Nov. 1859.

**Browning, Elizabeth Barret (1806–1861)**
*“Only a curl”: autograph manuscript signed, 1847.*
Fair copy of a poem on the death of a child, written at the request of a mother who sent a lock of his hair.

**Browning, Robert (1812–1889)**
*“Helen’s Tower”: autograph manuscript, London, 1870.*
Manuscript poem accompanied by an autograph letter signed to the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava.

**Campanella, Roy (1921–1993)**
*It’s good to be alive.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1959.
From the library of Marianne Moore.

**Cepeda, Orlando.**
*My ups and downs in baseball,* by Orlando Cepeda with Charles Einstein. 
New York: Putnam [1968].
From the library of Marianne Moore.

**Cullen, Countee (1903-1946)**
*See* Baudelaire, Charles

**Custis, John (1678–1749)**
Father of Martha Washington’s first husband, Daniel Parke Custis.
*Document and autograph letter signed: Williamsburg, Va., 1747 Feb. 3.*
Manumission papers for his son by an enslaved woman named Alice, *John “Jack” Custis;* also a letter to his son Daniel Parke Custis mentioning his concern at Jack’s illness. Jack died in 1751.

**Custis, John (Jack) (ca. 1733-1751)**
*see* Custis, John (1678–1749)
Dumas, Alexandre (1802–1870)

MS 807/23

*Blanche de Neige: autograph manuscript, [late 1850s].
Retelling of “Snow White,” first published in Le Monte-Cristo 44-45 (February 18 and 25, 1858).

C4 .D886i MS

*“L’Invitation a la valse,” autograph manuscript, 1857.
A one-act play.

Dumas, Alexandre (1824–1895)

CMs 196/25.2

*Autograph letter signed: to an unidentified correspondent, no date.
Letter to “mon cher maître,” about a young woman.

Dunbar, Paul Laurence (1872–1906)

AL1 .D899p 900


AL1 .D899c 901


AL1 .D899o

Signed by the author.

E.O. Brody Co.

2006.4460.001

Vase
Glass
Cleveland, Ohio, between 1958 and 1972
Given by Harry Belafonte to Marianne Moore

Green, Shields (Emperor Shields)

see Berghaus, Albert

Belle da Costa Greene (1883–1950)

RCo I:077:21

*Correspondence with the Rosenbach Company, 1950.
1 folder (4 leaves)

Morgan (Pierpont) Library

RCo I:126:01–

RCo I:126:07

*Correspondence with the Rosenbach Company, 1910–1953
7 folders (506 leaves)
Includes Greene’s dealings with the Company in her capacity as the Morgan’s Librarian.
Unknown artist
Portrait of Belle da Costa Greene
Engraving
1914
Inscribed to A.S.W. Rosenbach.

**Haile Selassie**
*see* Asfa Yilma, Princess

**Hansberry, Lorraine**
*see* Baldwin, James, “Sweet Lorraine”

**Hughes, Langston (1902–1967)**

**AL1 .D899o** Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1962–1966. 1 folder (12 leaves)


**AL2 .H893no 930** *

**AL2 .H893frr 954** *

**AL2 .H893we 926** *
*see also The best short stories by Negro writers*

**Lewis, R. B. (Robert Benjamin) (1802–1858)**

**A 849l** *
*Light and truth: collected from the Bible and ancient and modern history, containing the universal history of the colored and the Indian race, from the creation of the world to the present time.* By R.B. Lewis. Boston: Published by a Committee of Colored Men, 1849.

**Locke, Alain (1885–1954)**

Included in René Maran’s correspondence with the Rosenbach Company (see below).  
see also The new Negro

**Maran, René (1887–1960)**

*Batouala*: autograph manuscript, no date.


**RCo I:119:06**  
*Correspondence with the Rosenbach Company, 1929.*  
1 folder (4 leaves)  
Includes a note from Alain Locke, acting as Maran’s agent to sell the *Batouala* manuscript.

**Mays, Willie, 1931-**

From the library of Marianne Moore.

**Morrison, Toni (1931–2019)**

MML 0960 *The bluest eye:* uncorrected proof, 1970.  
From the library of Marianne Moore.

Bartel was an actor and independent film director.


**Negro Book Club**

Moore V:43:33 Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1962.  
1 leaf
**Patterson, Floyd (1935–2006)**

Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1962–1963
1 folder (3 leaves)

**Plimpton, George (1927–2003)**

Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1961–1969
1 folder (116 leaves)
Includes arrangements for a meeting with Muhammad Ali

**Sancho, Ignatius (1729?–1780)**

*Letters of the late Ignatius Sancho, an African*. In two volumes. To which are prefixed, memoirs of his life.
Fifth, but first Sancho, edition.

**Sancho, William**

*see Sancho, Ignatius*

**Terence**

*Comoediae*. Barcelona: Johann Rosebach [sic], 17 Mar. 1498.

**Walker, Alice**

*see The best short stories by Negro writers*

**Wheatley, Phillis (1753–1784)**

*Poems on various subjects, religious and moral*. London: printed by A. Bell, 1773.

*see also The Essex gazette*

**Wide World Photos**