

African and African American Holdings at the Rosenbach: Literature and Culture
February 2021

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 *filis*, and Robert and Elizabeth Barrett 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 *An anthology of West African verse*, compiled by Olumbe Bassir. Ibadan, Nigeria: Ibadan University Press, 1957.
From the library of Marianne Moore.

MML 0667 *The best short stories by Negro writers: an anthology from 1899 to the present*. Edited and with an introduction by Langston Hughes. Boston: Little, Brown, 1967.
(Accompanying autograph letter praises a story by Alice Walker.)
From the library of Marianne Moore.
Inscribed, "Happy Holidays to Marianne—from one Missourian to another—Langston. New York, Christmas, 1966."

AN .E78 *The Essex gazette* (Salem, Mass.), 16–30 Oct. 1770
Contains an advertisement for Phillis Wheatley's first published work, "An elegiac poem written on the death of the Rev. George Whitefield."

AL2 .A2n +*The new Negro: an interpretation*. Edited by **Alain Locke**; book decoration and portraits by Winold Reiss. New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1925. First edition.

Ali, Muhammad
see Plimpton, George
Wide World Photos

Alice
see Custis, John (1678–1749)

A 831s* **Apess, William (1798–1839)**
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.

Incun 469a **Apuleius**
**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

Haile Selassie: Emperor of Ethiopia. New York: Appleton-Century, 1936.
A biography of **Haile Selassie**.
From the library of Marianne Moore.

MMP

Baldwin, James (1924–1987)

“*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

“Fifth Avenue, Uptown, The Black boy looks at the white boy,” James Baldwin interviewed by G. Astor, *Smiling Through the Apocalypse; Esquire’s History of the Sixties*, edited by Harold Hayes. New York: McCall, 1970.
From the library of Marianne Moore.

Bassir, Olumbe

see An anthology of West African verse

C4 .B338fl.En 936

Baudelaire, Charles, 1821–1867.

+*[Fleurs du mal. English & French]. Flowers of evil: from the French of Charles Baudelaire by George Dillon [and] Edna St. Vincent Millay; with the original texts and with a preface by Miss Millay. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936.*

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.
- EL3.B885 MS1** **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.
- EL3 .B8851 MS1** **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.
- MML F3.24** **Campanella, Roy (1921–1993)**
It's good to be alive. Boston: Little, Brown, 1959.
From the library of Marianne Moore.
- MML 0245** **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
- AMs 788/12** **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)

- MS 807/23** **Dumas, Alexandre (1802–1870)**
*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.
- CMs 196/25.2** **Dumas, Alexandre (1824–1895)**
*Autograph letter signed: to an unidentified correspondent, no date.
Letter to “mon cher maître,” about a young woman.
- AL1 .D899p 900** **Dunbar, Paul Laurence (1872–1906)**
+*Poems of cabin and field*. New York: Dodd, Mead and company, 1900.
Second edition.
- AL1 .D899c 901** +*Candle-lightin' time*. New York: Dodd Mead, 1901. First edition.
- AL1 .D899o** *Oak and ivy*. Dayton, Ohio: Press of the United Brethren Publishing
House, 1893.
Signed by the author.
- 2006.4460.001** E.O. Brody Co.
Vase
Glass
Cleveland, Ohio, between 1958 and 1972
Given by **Harry Belafonte** to Marianne Moore
- Green, Shields (Emperor Shields)**
see Berghaus, Albert
- RCo I:077:21** **Belle da Costa Greene (1883–1950)**
*Correspondence with the Rosenbach Company, 1950.
1 folder (4 leaves)
- RCo I:126:01–
RCo I:126:07** Morgan (Pierpont) Library
*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.

- 2006.2218** 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)
- MML 0668** *The Big Sea: an Autobiography*. New York: Hill and Wang 1963, c1940
From the library of Marianne Moore.
- AL2 .H893no 930** +*Not without laughter*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930.
Gift of Michiko Quinones.
- AL2 .H893firr 954** +*The first book of rhythms* by Langston Hughes; pictures by Robin King.
New York: Franklin Watts, 1954. [First books 49] First edition, first
printing of the second of five books Hughes wrote for Franklin Watt's
"First books" series. With original dust jacket.
- AL2 .H893we 926** +*The weary blues*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926. [1st edition, 1st
printing]
see also The best short stories by Negro writers
- Lewis, R. B. (Robert Benjamin) (1802–1858)**
- A 849I** **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)**
- RCo I:119:06** Autograph note signed: Paris, 1929 July 2.

Included in **René Maran's** correspondence with the Rosenbach Company (see below).

see also The new Negro

Maran, René (1887–1960)

- MS 1052/12** **Batouala*: autograph manuscript, no date.
- C4 .M311b 921** *Batouala: véritable roman nègre*. Paris: Albin Michel Editeur, 1926.
- C4 .M311b 928** *Batouala*. Illustré de dix-huit gouaches de P.-E. Bécot, gravées par Louis Maccard. Paris: Editions Mornay, 1928.
- C4 .M311b.En** *Batouala: a novel by René Maran*; translated by Alvah C. Bessie and illustrated by Miguel Covarrubias. New York: Limited Editions Club, 1932.
- 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.
- MML 0919** **Mays, Willie, 1931-**
My secrets of playing baseball, by Willie Mays with Howard Liss; photos by David Sutton. New York: Viking Press, c1967.
From the library of Marianne Moore.
- MML 0960** **Morrison, Toni (1931–2019)**
The bluest eye: uncorrected proof, 1970.
From the library of Marianne Moore.
- AL2 .M882be987a** + *Beloved : a novel* / by Toni Morrison : uncorrected proof.
New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 1987. Inscribed on title page "[To] Paul Bartel Toni Morrison".
Bartel was an actor and independent film director.
- AL2 .M882bl 970** +*The bluest eye*. New York: Holt McDougal, 1970.
- Moore V:43:33** **Negro Book Club**
Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1962.
1 leaf

- Moore V:48:12** **Patterson, Floyd (1935–2006)**
Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1962–1963
1 folder (3 leaves)
- Moore V:49:13** Plimpton, George (1927–2003)
Correspondence with Marianne Moore, 1961–1969
1 folder (116 leaves)
Includes arrangements for a meeting with **Muhammad Ali**
- EL2 .S2111** **Sancho, Ignatius (1729?–1780)**
+*Letters of the late Ignatius Sancho, an African*. In two volumes. To
which are prefixed, memoirs of his life.
London: Printed for **William Sancho**, 1803.
Fifth, but first Sancho, edition.
- Sancho, William**
see Sancho, Ignatius
- Incun 498t** **Terence**
**Comoediae*. Barcelona: Johann Rosembach [sic], 17 Mar. 1498.
- Walker, Alice**
see The best short stories by Negro writers
- A 773p** **Wheatley, Phillis (1753–1784)**
Poems on various subjects, religious and moral. London: printed by A.
Bell, 1773.
- A 786po** *Poems on various subjects, religious and moral*. London: Printed;
Philadelphia: reprinted and sold by Joseph Crukshank, 1786. 1st
American ed.
see also The Essex gazette
- 2006.7589** Wide World Photos
Photograph of Marianne Moore writing with **Muhammed Ali** at Toots
Shor Restaurant, 1966.