10-1-2015

SPILLER, Isabele Taliaferro

MSRC Staff

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Scope Note

The Isabele Taliaferro Spiller collection consists of a combination of manuscript material of Isabele Spiller, Director of the Spiller School of Music, New York City, and her husband, William N. Spiller, founder of the school.

The collection contains biographical material on the Taliaferro and Spiller families, correspondence, photographs, organizational material, and a large volume of material relating to the Spiller School of Music and the Musical Spillers.

The Musical Spillers were a unique musical group organized by William N. and Isabele T. Spiller in 1906 in Chicago, Illinois. The group performed all over the United States, Europe, South America and Africa. There are broadsides, playbills, programs, clippings, and photographs publicizing the exciting musical career of these famous black musicians during the years 1906-1940. There are also a number of individual profiles of members of the group.

Mrs. Spiller provides her own personal notes and reminiscences to many of the materials, particularly the photographs, giving an added dimension to this collection. Her holographic notes are either attached
to or written directly on the materials, and they focus on important periods in her life such as her involvements with the Federal Music Project, the Harlem Evening School, Wadleigh High School, and the Spiller School of Music.

The acquisition of this collection was in installments from Mrs. Spiller from 1952-1960. The collection size is approximately 3 linear feet.
1888 March 18
Bona to Josephine Benjamin Outlaw
Taliaferro and
Rev. Granville, L.A.
Taliaferro, Abington, Va.
1894
Moved with parents to
Philadelphia; taught to play
parents.
all instruments by
Conservatory of Music.
Educated at New England
professionals including Carl
Studied with numerous
Charlton, Boston Symphony.
Gardiner and Melville
1906-1926
One of the organizers and members
of the Musical
Spillers in Chicago
along with co-organizer and
husband William N.
Spiller.
Organized Musical Spiller
1926
Conductor of Excelsior Temple
School in New York City,
Director of Ashland Place
1929
Band; Brooklyn, N.Y.
1934-39
Supervisor of Federal Music
Project, New York City.
Consultant, Breeze Bill School
1936-37
Music supervisor in Columbus
Wawayanda, New York.
Supervised the instrumental
1938
Program for the New York
Hill Center, N.Y.C.
music.
1938
1939
World's Fair.
Following the World's Fair, supervised for musical therapy at Bellvue Hospital, New York City.

1938-1940 Orchestra Director, Moorland Branch Y.M.C.A.; Plainsfield, New Jersey.

1942 High School which was Member Music Dept. Wadleigh school for Girls in New York City.

1944 Sept. 2 William N. Spiller died.

1948 Nov. 5 Elected to Honor Society, "Arista",

1952-58 Music Director, Harlem Evening High School, New York City.
Series Description

Series A
93-1
Taliaferro family, to
documents and
93-2
Spiller's organi-

Series B
Box 93-2
photographs of William N.
Isabele T. Spiller and founder

Series C
Box 93-2
contract, correspondence, to
newspaper clippings,
93-3
of individual members

Series D
Box 93-3
photographs of teachers to
specific programs
93-4

Series E
Box 93-4
William N. Spiller and to 1937, Mrs. Isabele
students.

Series F
Restricted Items

Isabele Taliaferro Stiller
Biographical material on the
correspondence, photographs,
materials related to Isabele T.
zational involvements.

William N. Spiller
Biographical data and
Spiller, husband of
of the Musical Spillers.

The Musical Spillers
The Musical Spiller's
programs, publicity items,
sheet music and photographs
of the group.

The Spiller School of Music
Business cards, programs,
and students, documenting
presented by the school.

Photographs
Oversized Photographs of
the Musical Spillers from 1908
T. Spiller and many of her

Restricted Items
Box 93-6
broadsides and to Spillers. Photo-
Item 93-7 interfiled in

NOT CIRCULATE

Fragile items, primarily playbills of the Musical
copies of these items are
the collection. FRAGILE - DO

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## Container List

### Box 93-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Isabele Taliaferro Spiller</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taliaferro Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taliaferro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Isabele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Photograph, Isabele Taliaferro Spiller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Coop Breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Excelsior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Federal Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Federal Music</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Federal Music</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Federal Music</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Federal Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Federal Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Harlem Evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Harlem Evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Harlem Evening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Family biographies**
- **Correspondence, General**
  - Taliaferro Spiller -
  - Correspondence, 1930, 1941
- **Isabele Taliaferro Spiller**
- **Organizational Affiliations**
  - Hill, Wawayanda, N.Y.
  - Temple Band - Photograph
  - Project - Correspondence
  - Project - notes by Spiller (holographs)
  - Project - Photographs -
  - Music Project - Photographs -
  - Project - Programs
  - Project - Y.W.C.A.
- **High School - Clippings**
- **High School - Programs**
- **High School - Publications**
High School -
Photographs
Orchestra
Settlement
Conference, Moorland Branch,

Box 93-2
Place
Raid Warden - Isabele Spiller
School - Clippings
School - Correspondence
School - Notes by
T. Spiller
School - Programs
School - Publication -
Wadleigh Owl, 1947

15 Harlem Evening
16 Polish
17 Union
18 Y.M.C.A.
N.J.
19 Y.M.C.A. Ashland Place
20 Volunteer Air T.
21 Wadleigh High
22 Wadleigh High
23 Wadleigh High
Isabele
24 Wadleigh High
25 Wadleigh High
The

-----------------------------------------------------------------
A Isabele Taliaferro Spiller cont'd

Organizational

Affiliations
Box 93-2
Photographs, 26 Wadleigh High School - 1946

B William N. Spiller

biographical

photographs

notes)

C The Musical Spillers

contract

clippings

Spillers, 1906-

Originals in

93-6)

only;

93-6)

only;

93-6)

Box 93-3

London,

only;

30 Correspondence
31 Bennett, Walter (Jock)
32 Boco, Abson
33 Lewis, Willie
34 Taylor, George (Fake)
35 Hackley, E. Azalia
36 Cook, Will Marion
37 Scrapbook of newspaper on the Musical Spillers, 1906-
1911 (Xeroxes Only,

38 Publicity, 1907
39 Publicity, 1911 (Xeroxes originals in Box

40 Publicity, 1912 (Xeroxes originals in Box

41 Publicity - Musical Spillers, Alhambra Theatre,

England, 1912 (Xerox
42 Publicity, 1913
43 Publicity - "Peek-A-Boo"
44 Publicity, 1921 (Xeroxes only; originals in Box 93-6)
45 Publicity, 1926
46 Publicity, 1930
47 Publicity, 1940 (Xeroxes only; originals in Box 93-7)
48 Publicity "Giggles",
49 Programs Johnson, James and Johnson, J. "Lift Every Voice and Sing"
50 Programs - various
51 Sheet Music - Joplin, (Xerox only; originals in Box 93-6)
D  The Spiller School of Music

Box 93-3

Spiller School
Extension
Center - Spiller
Music Extension

Box 93-4

Spillers

Bessie Taliaferro,
the Spiller School

Teachers, Harold
Bessie Taliaferro
Bennett, William
Spiller School of Music
Brisbane, Thomas
Spiller School of Music
Duke, Fred
Spiller School of Music
Edwards, Dicky
Spiller School of Music
Holder, Louise
Spiller School of Music
Programs - Hudson,
York Music Week

52  Business cards
53  Programs
54  Beulah Church -
of Music
55  Columbus Hill
School of
56  Photograph - Musical
School
57  Photograph -
Teacher in
of Music
58  Photograph -
Rogers and
59  Photograph -
Student,
60  Photograph -
Student,
61  Photograph -
Student;
62  Photograph -
Student,
63  Photograph -
Student,
64  Photographs,
Lawrence
65  Photographs - New
Contest
Music Education League
National Association of
Musicians, Inc. 53rd.
Celebration

E  Photographs

Box 93-5
Isabele
Spiller, Teacher 1930

Bugle Corps -
Taliaferro Spiller -
Brooklyn Scout Troop,
Bugle
[Quintet]
Jean Bedini to have
of each show taken
of the season circa 1941
Spiller, circa 1924

66 Photographs -
67 Program -
Negro
Anniversary

68 Drum & Bugle Corps -
Taliaferro

69 Concord Drum &
Isabele
Teacher 1930

70 Concord Church,
1929 - Drum &

71 Cal[vin] Bateman

72 The Custom of
the picture
at the end

73 Ten Musical
(2 copies)
Box 93-5

74 Spiller & His

Level Jazz Band &

Entertainers at the Every

1908

75 Seven

Musical Spillers

copies) 1921

76 Six (2

Musical Spillers - Clever

Entertainers at the Every

1908

77 Six

Musical Spillers

78 Bon

Voyage Dinner given by Norma &

Constance Tamadge to their

friends - Castle Cove -

1920

Aug. 7,

Musical Spiller

79 Six

Spillers - Dancing Circus,

Man Band

80 Five

Spillers "This Act Was

to Europe About 1930"

Spiller & the Rellips

81 Musical

Sisters (Spiller spelled backwards)

Taken

82 Musical

Rellips

83 Sisters

Spillers - 1930-1937

84 Musical

School Contest Pupils

85 Spiller

1933

86 Six Musical

Spillers