

C Blind Boone Memorial Foundation, Inc., Papers, 1886-1976
3664 .4 linear feet

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

INTRODUCTION

Included in this collection are some of the compositions of John William "Blind" Boone, a musician and composer of classical and ragtime music. Also included are orchestrations and choral arrangements of Boone's music, correspondence, programs, and posters from a memorial concert in 1961. Correspondence concerning recovery of Boone's piano, and posters and tickets from some of Boone's concerts are also part of the collection.

DONOR INFORMATION

Consult the reference staff about donor information.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKETCH

John William Boone was born on 17 May 1864, the son of Rachel Boone. When he was six months old he developed "brain fever," and to relieve the pressure doctors removed his eyes.

Boone grew up in Warrensburg, Missouri, and displayed an early talent for music. After an unsuccessful time at the Missouri School for the Blind in St. Louis, he took to wandering, playing in the tenderloin district of St. Louis, traveling central Missouri, singing to passengers on trains, and playing in churches.

Once while playing in a church, Boone attracted the attention of John Lange, a black contractor in Columbia, Missouri. Lange was to become the initial underwriter and finally the manager of the Blind Boone Company.

By 1885 the Blind Boone Company was regularly booked and playing in both the large cities and small towns in the Midwest, with enthusiastic reviews from everyone. Wealth and fame was lavished on Blind Boone.

By the 1920s Boone's career was declining with the coming of the jazz age, and in 1927 Boone died of a stroke. Heavy debts scattered his estate, and he was buried in a grave that remained unmarked until the 1970s.

A revival of interest in ragtime music prompted the establishment of the Blind Boone Memorial Foundation, Inc., and the subsequent acquisition of his piano, along with benefit concerts honoring his music.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Blind Boone Memorial Foundation, Inc. Papers are arranged by type of material. More complete descriptions of the material are in the folder list.

FOLDER LIST

- f. 1-13 Correspondence. Concerned with setting up the foundation, acquisition of Boone's piano, and arrangements for concerts honoring Boone's music. Also includes standardized correspondence with foundation sponsors and bills and receipts.
 - f. 1 8 February 1960-4 January 1961.
 - f. 2 5 January 1961-2 March 1961
 - f. 3 3 March 1961-5 April 1961.
 - f. 4 6 April 1961-19 June 1962
 - f. 5 26 November 1962-29 January 1971
 - f. 6 7 February 1971-16 October 1971
 - f. 7-10 Correspondence, some in form letters, with foundation sponsors. Arranged alphabetically.
 - f. 11 Correspondence, n.d.
 - f. 12-13 Bills and receipts. Titled to the Blind Boone piano.
- f. 14-17 Press releases and copies of newspaper articles on Blind Boone, the Blind Boone Memorial Foundation, and concerts honoring Blind Boone's music. Also included are press releases on several of the artists performing Boone's work.
- f. 17a Scripts of radio plays on Blind Boone prepared in 1961 by the Christian College radio workshop.
- f. 18-19 Advertising material and photographs. Posters, tickets, and advertisements from Blind Boone's concerts as well as posters and advertisements from the Blind Boone Memorial Foundation fund raising concerts.
- f. 20 Photographs.
- f. 21-60 Music. Included are some original compositions by Blind Boone published in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The bulk of the musical collection comprises orchestrations and choral arrangements of Boone's original compositions for various benefit concerts.
 - f. 21-40 Original compositions by Blind Boone
 - f. 21 Aurora Waltz, 1907
 - f. 22 Caprice de Concert, No. 1, 1893 (photocopy)
 - f. 23 Caprice de Concert, No. 2, 1893 (photocopy)
 - f. 24 Caprice de Concert, No. 3, 1902 (Dance des Negres)
 - f. 25 Cleo, 1886 (Photocopy)
 - f. 26 Dat Mornin' in de Sky, 1899
 - f. 27 Dinah's Barbecue, 1893
 - f. 28 Geo'gia Melon, 1908 (photocopy)
 - f. 29 Last Dream, 1909
 - f. 30 Love Feast, 1913 (photocopy)
 - f. 31 Melons Cool and Green, 1894
 - f. 32-33 Old Folks at Home, 1894 (photocopy)
 - f. 34 Southern Rag Medley, No. 1, 1908
 - f. 35 Southern Rag Medley, No. 2, 1909 (photocopy)
 - f. 36 Sparks, 1894 (photocopy)
 - f. 37 That Little German Band, 1894

- f. 38 Whar Shill We Go When de Great Day Comes, 1892 (photocopy)
- f. 39 When I Meet Dat Coon To-Night, 1892 (photocopy)
- f. 40 You Can't Go To Gloria, 1893
- f. 41-60 Orchestrations and choral arrangements
 - f. 41 Overture "Blind Boone"
 - f. 42-43 Caprice do Concert, No. 1 (photocopy)
 - f. 44 Caprice de Concert, No. 2 (photocopy)
 - f. 45-47 Cleo (photocopy)
 - f. 48 Dinah's Barbecue (photocopy)
 - f. 49-50 Dixie Fantasy (photocopy)
 - f. 51-52 Melon's Cool and Green (photocopy)
 - f. 53-55 Sparks (photocopy)
 - f. 56-57 That Little German Band (photocopy)
 - f. 58-60 Where Shall We Go When That Great Day Comes (photocopy)

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