

Guide to Letters to music lyricist and publisher Dallas "Dal" Gray C0344

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circa 1919-1936



Title Statement

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Subtitle: Letters to music lyricist and publisher Dallas "Dal" Gray

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Publication Statement

Publisher: George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Fenwick Library, MS2FL
4400 University Dr.
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Business Number: 703-993-2220
Fax Number: 703-993-8911
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URL: <https://scrc.gmu.edu>



Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-06-05 03:02:37 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

C0344

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/673

Unit Date

circa 1919-1936

Language

English

Abstract

Personal and professional letters received by music lyricist and publisher Dallas "Dal" Gray, as well as those addressed to his Monmouth Music Publishing Company business. Notable senders include his long-time collaborator Jack Kjellin and composer Claude Lapham.

Creator

Gray, Dal (Dallas A.)

Extent

.5 Linear Feet 1 box

Physical Location

R 71, C 1, S 6

Repository

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no access restrictions.

Use Restrictions

The copyright and related rights status of this collection have not been evaluated (See <http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/CNE/1.0/>)

Acquisition Information

Purchased from Ian Brabner Rare Americana by Music Librarian Steve Gerber in August 2018.

Processing Information

Processing completed by Meghan Glasbrenner in September 2023. Finding aid completed by Meghan Glasbrenner in September 2023.

Preferred Citation

Letters to music lyricist and publisher Dallas "Dal" Gray, C0344, Special Collections Research Center, George Mason University Libraries

Biographical Information

Dallas Gray, known as "Dal" to both friends and professional contacts, was a newspaper editor, songwriter, and owner of the Gloucester City, New Jersey based Monmouth Music Publishing Company, with Western offices in Portland, Oregon and Hollywood, California. Jack Kjellin was a composer and lyricist, based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and a long-time collaborator of Gray. While neither man achieved widespread fame, both appear to have had some success in publishing or selling songs, such as Gray's "Annie" (possibly in collaboration with Kjellin, circa 1930) and Kjellin's "Just another night" in collaboration with Nick Kenny (1939) and "There's a story going 'round" (1940). Composer Claude Lapham, who communicated with both Kjellin and Gray, saw notable success in providing uncredited compositions for early silent films, including Feet First (1930) starring Harold Lloyd and Charley's Aunt (1930) starring Charles Ruggles. Lapham passed away in 1957.

Scope and Content

Personal and professional letters received by music lyricist and publisher Dallas "Dal" Gray. The majority of the letters are from Gray's long-time collaborator Jack Kjellin who addresses them to "Old Pal Dal". These letters, of which there are approximately 53, conclude with the breakup of their collaborative relationship, but the final letter appears to end on a friendly note from Jack. The remaining letters are from mixed senders, such as composer Claude Lapham, and concern personal or financial matters, with several addressed to Gray's Monmouth Music Publishing Company business. Contents also include a single photograph of Jack Kjellin and his wife, a page of handwritten lyrics, and a flyer advertisement.

Related Materials

The Special Collections Research Center also holds [sheet music composed by Dal Gray](#), and other music related collections such as the [Sophocles Papas papers](#) and the [Sam di Bonaventura papers](#).

Keywords

Popular music
Personal correspondence
Battle Creek (Mich.)
Gloucester City (N.J.)
Music -- 20th century
Popular music -- Writing and publishing
Lyric writing (Popular music)
Music
Correspondence
Kjellin, Jack (John J.)
Monmouth Music Publishing Company
Lapham, Claude

Bibliography

"Claude Lapham - Biography." n.d. IMDb. Accessed September 13, 2023.
<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1109834/bio/>.

Library of Congress. Copyright Office. 1940. Catalog of Copyright Entries 1940 Musical Compositions New Series Vol 35 Pt 3 For the Year 1940. U.S. Govt. Print. Off. <http://archive.org/details/catalogofcopyrig353libr>.

Arrangement

This collection was arranged into 6 folders based on subject or medium of materials.

Description of Subordinate Components

Letters from Jack Kjellin

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/180392

Unit Date May 1928 - May 1929

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Letters from Jack Kjellin

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/180393

Unit Date June 1929 - May 1930

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Letters from Jack Kjellin

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/180394

Unit Date June 1930 - March 1932

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Letters from mixed senders

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/180395

Unit Date circa 1919 - 1934

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Letters sent to Monmouth Music Publishing Company

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/180396

Unit Date 1930 - 1936

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Jack Kjellin photograph, pencil lyrics manuscript page, and Walter W. Newcomer & Associates printed circular

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/180397

Unit Date circa 1929 - 1930s

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)