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# Guide to the Manet Harrison Fowler and Manet Helen Fowler Papers

JWJ MSS 59



by Jennifer Meehan

2009

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
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<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** JWJ MSS 59

**CREATOR:** Fowler, Manet Harrison, 1895-1976

**TITLE:** Manet Harrison Fowler and Manet Helen Fowler papers

**DATES:** 1902-1984

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2.88 linear feet (9 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of material created and accumulated by Manet Harrison Fowler and her daughter Manet Helen Fowler. The Manet Harrison Fowler material documents her work as a singer, musician, and educator with the Mwalimu School and the Texas Association of Negro Musicians. The Manet Helen Fowler material documents her various research and professional activities with the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society and other organizations. Material includes photographs; printed material relating to the Mwalimu School and sound recordings of the Mwalimu Festival Chorus; programs for performances by and sound recordings of Manet Harrison Fowler; and original oil paintings by Manet Harrison Fowler. Also included are correspondence, research files, and personal papers of Manet Helen Fowler. The collection provides documentation of African American musicians and music education, particularly African American women musicians and teachers, during and after the Harlem Renaissance.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.fowler>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.fowler>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.        box  
f.        folder  
■■■■     item barcode

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from William Reese Co. on the Edwin J. Beinecke Book Fund, 2009.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Box 5 (sound recordings): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The Manet Harrison Fowler Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Preferred Citation

Manet Harrison Fowler Papers. James Weldon Johnson Collection in the Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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### Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections as they are acquired, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization. Information included in the Description of Papers note and Collection Contents section is drawn from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

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## Manet Harrison Fowler (1895-1976)

Manet Harrison Fowler was an African American singer, musician, and educator from Fort Worth, Texas. She graduated from the Tuskegee Institute in 1913 and studied at the Chicago College of Music. She co-founded the Texas Association of Negro Musicians and in 1928 founded the Mwalimu School in Texas, later relocating it to Harlem. The school was associated with the Harlem Renaissance, providing educational opportunities in the arts for Harlem's residents. Under the direction of Fowler, the Mwalimu School choir regularly performed and recorded. Fowler was also a painter whose style incorporated religious and civil rights themes.

Manet Harrison Fowler was the wife of Stephen H. Fowler, and the mother of four children: Manet Helen (b. 1918), Stephen Hamilton (b. 1918), George Harrison (b. 1920), and Carroll Lacy (b. 1924).

## **Manet Helen Fowler (b. 1918)**

Manet Helen Fowler was the eldest daughter of Manet Harrison Fowler and Stephen H. Fowler. In 1952, she became the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from a university in the United States.

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### **Scope and Contents**

The collection consists of material created and accumulated by Manet Harrison Fowler and her daughter Manet Helen Fowler. The Manet Harrison Fowler material documents her work as a singer, musician, and educator with the Mwalimu School and the Texas Association of Negro Musicians. The Manet Helen Fowler material documents her various research and professional activities with the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society and other organizations. Material includes photographs; printed material relating to the Mwalimu School and sound recordings of the Mwalimu Festival Chorus; programs for performances by and sound recordings of Manet Harrison Fowler; and oil paintings by Manet Harrison Fowler. Also included are correspondence, research files, and personal papers of Manet Helen Fowler. The collection provides documentation of African American musicians and music education, particularly African American women musicians and teachers, during and after the Harlem Renaissance.

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### **Arrangement**

Arranged into five series: I. Correspondence. II. Photographs. III. Other Papers. IV. Sound Recordings. V. Art Work.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence

The bulk of the correspondence consists of letters received by Manet Helen Fowler, addressed to Miss Manet Fowler or Dr. Manet Fowler. Also found is some correspondence received by Manet Harrison Fowler and some Fowler family correspondence.

Correspondence is largely unsorted within files.

b. 1, f. 1-7	Correspondence Includes some correspondence to Manet Harrison Fowler.	1930-1959
b. 2, f. 8-10	Correspondence	1960-1981
b. 2, f. 11	Correspondence from Lonnie Jackson	1939-1943
b. 2, f. 12	Correspondence to Manet Harrison Fowler from E. Clyde Whitlock	1962-1969
b. 2, f. 13	Correspondence to Manet Harrison Fowler from Mrs. Guy R. Pitner	1962-1965

**Series II: Photographs**

b. 2, f. 14-15	Harrison and Fowler Family Photographs	circa 1890-1950
b. 2, f. 16	Manet Harrison Fowler Photographs	circa 1913-1950
b. 2, f. 17	Mwalimu School Photographs	1933
b. 3, f. 18-19	Miscellaneous Photographs	

**Series III: Other Papers**

b. 3, f. 20	Manuscript music composed by Manet Harrison Fowler	1902
b. 3, f. 21-23	Mwalimu School	1932-1959
b. 3, f. 24	Texas Association of Negro Musicians	1930-1956
b. 3, f. 25	Programs, Performances by Manet Harrison Fowler	
b. 3, f. 26	Programs, Various Performances	
b. 3, f. 27	Newspaper clippings	1930-1984
b. 4, f. 28	Newsletters and other printed material	
b. 4, f. 29-32	Genealogical and Historical Research and Writing Some or all of this material is related to Manet Helen Fowler's work as consultant for the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society.	
b. 4, f. 33	Scrapbook, Student Memories, Manet Helen Fowler	1928-1932
b. 4, f. 34	Diploma and certificate, Stephen H. Fowler	
b. 6, f. 48	Binder originally housing Mwalimu Festival Chorus phonograph records	



**Series IV: Sound Recordings**

Box 5 (sound recordings): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 35, ■■■■ 39002140964637	"Mwalimu Song," sung by Mwalimu Festival Chorus <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:02:49 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Clicks, pops, and static can be heard. The program is distorted at times. Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 36	"Deep River Thus Saith the Lord," Accomp. by Manet Harrison Fowler, phonograph record	
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 37	Eva Brown Studio, Manet Fowler on piano, phonograph record	1943 June 11
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 38	"A Name to Remember," William A. Fowler's Band, phonograph record	
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 39, ■■■■ 39002140964645	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, (Manet Harrison Fowler conducting), Nikosi Sikilele; Uyeze - Izirin, sides 1 and 3 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:08:31 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops are present. The program is distorted at times. The program begins abruptly. Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 40, ■■■■ 39002140964652	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, Balanki - Ku'aeja - Vasa Gore; "Bamboula"; sides 2 and 4 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:07:30 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops can be heard. The program is distorted at times. Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 41, ■■■■ 39002140964660	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, Male Voices, "Pou Piti Lo Lotte" - "To!To!To!"; Conf - "Criole Candio" - "Nobody Knows the Trouble", Sides 5 and 7 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:09:37 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops are present. The program is distorted at times. Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 42, ■■■■ 39002140964678	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, Male Cho - ACE - "Criole Candjo" - Cont; "Crucifixion" - cont., sides 7 and 8 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:10:24 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops can be heard. The program is distorted at times. Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 43, ■■■■ 39002140964686	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, "Crucifixion" - Concluded; "O Holy Lord" - Concluded - Angst - "Ich for einmal", sides 8, 10 and 11 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:08:03 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops are present. The program is distorted at times. Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31

b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 44, [REDACTED] 39002140964694	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, "How Long Brethren" - "O Holy Lord" - cont.; "Spielt die blues Vor uns Leight Morgen", sides 10 and 12 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:09:19 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops during the program. The program is distorted at times.  Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 45, [REDACTED] 39002140964702	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, "Exletonis" - "Ich bix Amerika"; "If You Love God Save Him", "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot", "Sea Drift" - cont., sides 11, 13-17 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:09:10 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops are present. The program is distorted at times. Excessive noise for the first 5 minutes due to scratches on the surface of the disc.  Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 46, [REDACTED] 39002140964710	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, "Sea Drift", not part; Encore, "I Couldn't Hear Nobody If You Love God Serve Him", sides 14 and ? <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:10:21 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks, and pops can be heard. The program is distorted at times.  Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31
b. 5 (Record album storage), f. 47, [REDACTED] 39002140964728	Mwalimu Festival Chorus, Encore, "Witness", sides 18 and 19 <i>1 Phonograph Record 00:02:56 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static, clicks and pops can be heard. The program is distorted at times.  Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1939 March 31

## Series V: Art Work

b. 7, f. 49	"De Ole Ship of Zion," original oil painting by Manet Harrison Fowler
b. 8, f. 50	"Swing Low Sweet Chariot," original oil painting by Manet Harrison Fowler
b. 9, f. 51	"Git on Board," original oil painting by Manet Harrison Fowler

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

African American musicians  
African American music teachers  
African Americans -- Music  
African American women musicians  
African American women teachers  
Arts -- Study and teaching  
Harlem Renaissance  
Musicians  
Music -- New York (State)

### **Genres / Formats**

Audiovisual materials  
Oil paintings (visual works)  
Phonograph records  
Photographs  
Sound recordings

### **Occupations**

Music teachers

### **Names**

Fowler, Manet Harrison, 1895-1976  
Fowler, Manet Helen, b. 1918

### **Corporate Bodies**

Mwalimu Festival Chorus  
Mwalimu School (New York, N.Y.)  
Tarrant County Black Historical and  
Genealogical Society  
Texas Association of Negro Musicians

### **Contributors**

Fowler, Manet Harrison, 1895-1976  
Fowler, Manet Helen, b. 1918