

# **Guide to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra: William H. Murphy Papers UP002863**

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Walter P. Reuther Library

5401 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48202

URL: <https://reuther.wayne.edu>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Walter P. Reuther Library
<b>Source:</b>	Detroit Symphony Orchestra
<b>Title:</b>	Detroit Symphony Orchestra: William H. Murphy Papers
<b>ID:</b>	UP002863
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1920-1930
<b>Physical Description:</b>	3 Linear Feet (1 OS)
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	This collection contains documents, clippings, photographs and a scrapbook from William H. Murphy (1855-1929). Murphy was a successful businessman engaged in the lumber industry, insurance and other business ventures. He and his wife, Laura (Hayward) Murphy, were early donors to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and he served as the president of the Detroit Symphony Society from 1920 until his death in 1929. In 1924, they donated a Cassavant Brothers pipe organ to the DSO. Called the "Murphy Organ," it was dedicated and played for the first time on March 17, 1924. Many of the documents in this collection relate to the organ donation and to memorials for William and Laura Murphy.

### Preferred Citation

"Detroit Symphony Orchestra: William H. Murphy Papers, Box 1, Folder or Item [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

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## Biographical / Historical

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Born in Bangor, Maine, William H. Murphy (1855-1929) came to Detroit in 1882 and became a successful businessman engaged in the lumber industry, insurance and other business ventures. He and his wife, Laura (Hayward) Murphy, were early donors to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and he served as the president of the Detroit Symphony Society from 1920 until his death in 1929. In 1924, they

donated a Cassavant Brothers pipe organ to the DSO. Called the "Murphy Organ," it was dedicated and played for the first time on March 17, 1924.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection contains documents, clippings, photographs and a scrapbook from William H. Murphy. Many of the documents relate to a pipe-organ donation to the DSO and to memorials for William Murphy and his wife, Laura Murphy. In folder 3, there are documents pertaining to the donation of a viola, once owned and played by William H. Murphy and said to have once belonged to Felix Mendelssohn. The provenance of the instrument prior to Murphy's ownership and its donation to the DSO by one of his children in the 1960s cannot be proven. Folder 6 contains a photograph of Murphy playing a viola. The scrapbook includes a signature page from a "luncheon to Marcel Dupré" at the Detroit Athletic Club, March 17, 1924, with signatures of William H. Murphy, Ossip Gabrilowitsch, Bruno Walter, Victor Kolar, Marcel Dupré and others. The collection also includes sheet music: "Allegro" and "Andante" dedicated to "Mr. Murphy," signed by Marcel Dupré, from 1924. Photographs of William Murphy playing the viola and of DSO conductor Ossip Gabrilowitsch and Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch are also part of the collection.

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## Arrangement

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Folders are in original order.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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Detroit, MI 48202

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## Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

## Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was deposited at the Walter P. Reuther Library by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra on January 8, 2019.

## Processing Information

Minimally processed and finding aid written by Aimee Ergas on December 14, 2022. Originally processed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Archivist as DSO.37.

## Conditions Governing Use

Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library "Rules for Use of Archival Materials." Copyright is held by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Patrons are responsible for determining the appropriate use or reuse of materials.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Other collections in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Records.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Symphony orchestras
- Music
- Performing Arts
- Detroit (Mich.)

- Detroit Symphony Orchestra

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Instances	
DSO program; booklet, 1925 December 17-18	Box 1	Folder 1
Memorial pages from DSO program books, dedication note for Mrs. William H. Murphy and portrait of William H. Murphy; photocopies, 1928, 1929	Box 1	Folder 2
Materials from Murphy relatives re donation of viola and organ; correspondence, documents, clippings, various dates	Box 1	Folder 3
Donation of Murphy Organ to DSO; documents, correspondence, clippings, photos, 1924	Box 1	Folder 4
Estate claim, from Sidney T. Miller, addressed to Roy D. Chapin; correspondence, 1930 May	Box 1	Folder 5
Photographs provided by Murphy great-granddaughter Serena Carroll in 2009: William H. Murphy playing viola; Signed image of Ossip Gabrilowitsch and Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch (pre-1920?); 10 x 14 inches, undated	Box 1	Folder 6
Scrapbook re dedication of the "Murphy Organ" at Orchestra Hall, Detroit, leather scrapbook; program, clippings, documents, sheet music, 1924	Box 1	Scrapbook 7