The Reginald Mills Silby Collection

The Reginald Mills Silby Collection is a small donation of sacred music materials focusing on the career of organist and choirmaster, R.M. Silby. “Throughout his career, Silby was committed to teaching children and among his young students was composer and Duquesne University professor Joseph Wilcox Jenkins, who studied organ with Silby as a child in Philadelphia, and who took particular delight in Silby’s organ improvisations.” (Quoted from the paper by Kevin Vogt, “Reginald Mills Silby: The Westminster Connection”). Both the Silby and Jenkins collections are housed in the University Archives as part of the “Duquesne University” Sacred Music Collection.

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION
Creator: Melodie Frankovitch, November 2015
Title: The Reginald Mills Silby Collection
Date: 1909-1954, post-death correspondence from 1983 and 1985 to daughter
Quantity: 1 linear foot
Location: University Archives

BIOGRAPHY
Reginald Mills Silby was born March 8, 1884 in London, England. He attended Brompton Oratory in London for his primary and secondary education. Between 1903-1909 he served as assistant organist and choirmaster at the newly opened Westminster Cathedral in London under the direction of Sir Richard Terry. In 1909 Silby travelled to the United States to further his musical career. He became organist and choirmaster at St. Patrick’s Church in Washington D.C. and served there until 1916. From 1919-1925 he was organist and choirmaster at St. Cecilia’s Cathedral in Omaha, Nebraska. For ten years, 1925-1935, he served as organist and choirmaster at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia. He held his final position as organist and choirmaster at St. Ignatius Church on Park Ave. in New York City from 1935 until his death on January 13, 1954.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE
Box one includes original manuscripts of both unpublished and published music by R.M. Silby based on religious texts and poetry. There are folders of announcements of performances and various programs including church festivals. Box two includes lecture notes on music topics such as Gregorian Chant, Polyphony, Jazz, Vocal Training, etc. There is a folder and scrapbook (very delicate condition) containing newspaper clippings following R.M. Silby’s musical career from 1909-1931. Several copies of his obituary have been collected in one folder. The collection measures 1 linear foot. Condition of the material ranges from fair to fragile.
ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession Information
Given to Duquesne University by Gwynneth Silby Stewart (daughter), August 27, 2014.

Processing Information
Materials sorted by Sara Purifoy, Music Intern. Folders prepared and finding aid created by Melodie Frankovitch, November 2015.

Preferred Citation
The Reginald Mills Silby Collection, Duquesne University Archives and Special Collections, Duquesne University.

Restrictions
Photocopying by staff only.

INVENTORY

Box 1
London, Westminster Cathedral: Music 1903-03 Folder 1
   Cantus Cor Jesu
   Litany of Irish Saints (Silby)
   Officium et Missa, Sancti Gregorii I. Papae

London: Concert Programs 1902-08 Folder 2
(Sir Richard Terry retires from Westminster Cathedral)

London: Article clippings 1924 Folder 3

London: Miscellaneous Folder 4
(British Museum brochure and unidentified poem excerpt)

Washington D.C., St. Patrick’s Church: 1911-1929 Folder 5
(Concert programs and miscellaneous)

Omaha, Nebraska, Church of Saint Cecilia Folder 6
(Concert programs 1919-1925 includes radio broadcast program)

Omaha, Nebraska: Correspondence 1924, 1949 Folder 7
(telegrams, postcards, newspaper clippings)

New York City, St. Ignatius of Loyola Folder 8&8a
(includes 14 choral pieces, list of music sung, church bulletins and a letter)

R.M.Silby Published Compositions: Folder 9
Falsi Bordoni
The Frog of Windham
Holy Week Music
Hymn (in honor of St. Joseph of Arimathea)
O Sacum Convivium (composed by Thomas Weelkes edited by Silby)
Our Boys – A Patriotic Song
Tu es Sacerdos
Certificate of Registration of Original Compositions from the Library of Congress Folder 10
(Filed by Alice Mercedes Silby 1955, after R.M. Silby’s death)

R.M.Silby Sacred Music Manuscripts: Folder 11
Feria V in Corua Domini (Ad Quatutinum)
Feria VI in Paraceve (Ad Quatutinum)
Feria Quintta in Coena Domini
Feria Sexta in Parasceve (Ad Matutinum)
Jerusalem (From Tallis Lamentations)
Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae
Magnificat
Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum matthaeum
Salva Nos
Ubi Est

R.M. Silby Non-sacred Music Manuscripts: Folder 12
Anthem
An Arab Love-Song (Francis Thompson “Selected Poems”)
Banbury Ale
A Bowl of Roses
By Babylon’s Wave (Viola)
Carol
Colonel Spencer
Evening
Farewell Mine Own Sweet Heart
Gentle Willie
Hey Diddle Diddle The Cat and The Fiddle
I Send You Here (Ronsard)
Josephine
Lost for a Roses Sake (Ronsard)
Lullaby-A Carol Anthem
Madrigal
The Mistress of Vision (Francis Thompson) “Where is the Land of Luthany” and “On Golgotha Grew A Thorn”
My Country Tis of Thee
Night (from the Russian of Plestchuv)
The Popcorn Man
The Sly Old Cat
Still Glides the Gentle Stream On
Symphonia Infanta
Tusitala (Andrew Lang)
The Ten O’clock Scholar
Variations on a Theme

R.M.Silby Miscellaneous Manuscripts Folder 13
Musical Programs and Church Bulletins 1930-1940 Folder 14
Box 2
Lecture Notes-History of Church Music  Folder 1
Lecture Notes-Gregorian Chant  Folder 2
Lecture Notes-Polyphony  Folder 3
Lecture Notes-Music Composition  Folder 4
Lecture Notes-Jazz  Folder 5
Lecture Notes-The “Mass”  Folder 6
Lecture Notes-Voice Training  Folder 7
Lecture Announcement (May 1952)  Folder 8
Philadelphia Chamber String Simphonietta  Folder 9
The Polyphonic Society  Folder 10
Correspondence/Letters (1913-1952, 1983, 1985, some n.d.)  Folder 11
Program Announcements and Short Articles  Folder 12
Short Plays  Folder 13
Photographs  Folder 14
Newspaper Clippings 1942, 1948  Folder 15
Scrapbook of Newspaper clippings  Folder 15a
R.M.Silby Obituary (various editions)  Folder 16
“Reginald Mills Silby: The Westminster Connection” 2013  Folder 17
(Paper and slide presentation by Kevin Vogt, D.M.A. at the Conference of the Church Music Association of America, October 15, 2013, St. Paul, Minnesota)
Provenance and Administrative Information 2013-2016  Folder 18