

**Collection of early rock and  
roll 78 RPM records, 1948-1951  
BCA-039**

**Finding aid prepared by Amanda Axel**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

December 07, 2018

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Berklee Archives  
2017/04/03  
Berklee College of Music  
1140 Boylston St  
Boston, MA, 02215  
617-747-8001

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Berklee Archives
<b>Creator</b>	Brenston, Jackie, 1930-1979
<b>Creator</b>	Brown, Roy, 1925-1981
<b>Creator</b>	Delta Cats (Musical group).
<b>Creator</b>	Dominoes (Musical group : U.S.).
<b>Creator</b>	Harris, Wynonie, 1915-1969
<b>Creator</b>	Thornton, Big Mama
<b>Title</b>	Collection of early rock and roll 78 RPM records
<b>Date</b>	1948-1953
<b>Extent</b>	5.0 78 RPM disc
<b>Language</b>	English

### Preferred Citation note

[Identification of item], in the Collection of early rock and roll 78 RPM records, BCA-039. Berklee Archives, Stan Getz Library, Berklee College of Music.

## Scope and Contents note

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The 78 RPM records in this collection are of unknown provenance and were selected for addition to the Archives for their rarity. They highlight early hits in rock and roll music, such as "Sixty Minute Man" and "Rocket 88," both of which are contenders for the first rock and roll record ever recorded. Each record has a four-digit number attached. These are catalog numbers, which were used both to track sales through distributors and for in-house accounting.

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## Arrangement note

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The 78s in this collection are arranged chronologically.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Berklee Archives 2017/04/03

### Conditions Governing Access note

This non-circulating collection is open for research use by appointment on site at the Berklee Archives (Monday - Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with evening hours available upon request). Advance notice is required to retrieve archival items because these materials are stored offsite. Use of audiovisual materials may require the production of listening or viewing copies. To schedule an appointment or request further information, please email [archives@berklee.edu](mailto:archives@berklee.edu) or call 617-747-8001.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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## **Genre(s)**

- Blues (Music)
- Popular music
- Rock music
- Sound recordings

## **Subject(s)**

- Blues (Music) -- United States -- 20th century
- Music--history
- Popular music -- United States -- 20th century
- Rock music -- United States -- 20th century

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## **Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note**

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Repeated playback of records causes physical deterioration; for this reason, permission to access this collection must be granted in advance by the Associate Director of the Berklee Archives.

## Collection Inventory

	<b>Box</b>	<b>Disc</b>
<p>“Good Rockin’ Tonight”/”Good Morning, Mr. Blues” by Wynonie Harris, 1948</p> <p><b>Contents</b></p> <p>Released by King Records (4210)</p> <p>Considered one of the forerunners of rock and roll, Wynonie Harris was nicknamed Mr. Blues; artists such as Elvis Presley were influenced by his vocal style and physical movements. Harris’ cover of Roy Brown’s “Good Rockin’ Tonight” hit number one on the U.S. R&amp;B/Race charts when it was released in 1948.</p>	1	1
<p>“Long About Sundown”/”Cadillac Baby” by Roy Brown, 1950</p> <p><b>Contents</b></p> <p>Released by De Luxe Records (3308)</p> <p>Roy Brown is considered to have been a significant influence in early rock and roll and R&amp;B music. Though “Long About Sundown” was released as the A-side on this record, “Cadillac Baby” actually reached higher on the R&amp;B charts (#8 and #6, respectively).</p>	1	2
<p>“Sixty Minute Man”/”I Can’t Escape from You” by The Dominoes, 1951</p> <p><b>Contents</b></p>	1	3

Released by Federal Records (12022)

The Dominoes were one of the most successful R&B groups of the early 1950s. Notable for its sexualized lyrics, the lead singer of “Sixty Minute Man,” Bill Brown, brags about his sexual abilities. “Sixty Minute Man” was chosen as Song of the Year in 1951 and reached number one on the R&B chart in May of that year. It also reached #17 on the pop chart, making it one of the first crossover hits. Along with “Rocket 88,” “Sixty Minute Man” is a contender for the first rock and roll record ever recorded.

“Rocket 88”/“Come Back Where You Belong,” by Jackie Brenston and his Delta Cats, 1951

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### Contents

Released by Chess Records (1458)

Considered by many to be the first rock and roll record ever recorded, “Rocket 88” was written by a 19 year old Ike Turner. Though the band is credited as the Delta Cats, the band on the record was actually Ike Turner and his Kings of Rhythm with his saxophonist, Jackie Brenston, singing lead vocals. Notable for the distorted guitar played by Willie Kizart, this record was recorded by Sam Phillips of The Memphis Recording Service (later Sun Records) and was licensed to Chicago’s Chess Records.

“Hound Dog”/“Night Mare” by Willie Mae “Big Mama” Thornton, 1953

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### Contents

Released by Peacock Records (1612)

“Hound Dog,” written by a young Leiber and Stoller, was recorded by Big Mama Thornton in 1952 and released in 1953. The first recording ever produced by Leiber and Stoller, it featured Johnny Otis on drums (as Kansas City Bill), Pete Lewis on guitar, and Mario Delagarde on bass.

“Hound Dog” was number one on the R&B chart for 7 weeks and sold 500,000 copies. Though Elvis Presley’s cover of the song is more well known, Big Mama Thornton’s original version was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2013, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame has listed it as one of the “500 Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll.”