



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Luther S. Thomas papers**

1951-1954

Sc MG 370

## Summary

**Creator:** Thomas, Luther S.

**Title:** Luther S. Thomas papers

**Date:** 1951-1954

**Size:** 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Gift of Amelia Baker, 1988.

**Abstract:** Luther S. Thomas was an African American railroad porter employed by the Pullman Company in the 1940s and 1950s, and president of the Asheville North Carolina Division of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. The Luther S. Thomas papers contains correspondence, including a few letters to staff of the Pullman Company, membership records, and printed matter documenting Luther S. Thomas's career as president of the Asheville, North Carolina Division of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union. The collection also contains miscellaneous correspondence and documents relating to the Triennial Convention of the Brotherhood in 1953, including a handwritten report by Thomas to the Asheville division. The bulk of the collection pertains to labor grievances filed by Thomas and several Asheville porters, particularly on issues of discrimination and adequate health safeguards in the transportation of patients with communicable diseases. Also included are Division membership lists and printed material about tourist sites published by various railroad lines.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Luther S. Thomas papers, Sc MG 370, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Accessioned by Andre Elizee, May 1988.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Art and Artifacts Division: artifacts.

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs.

## **Related Materials:**

Also held by the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture:

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection, Sc MG 250

(Jessica Davis) Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection, Sc MG 426

## **Creator History**

Luther S. Thomas was an African American railroad porter employed by the Pullman Company in the 1940s and 1950s, and president of the Asheville North Carolina Division of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Luther S. Thomas papers contains correspondence, including a few letters to staff of the Pullman Company, membership records, and printed matter documenting Luther S. Thomas's career as president of the Asheville, North Carolina Division of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union. The collection also contains miscellaneous correspondence and documents relating to the Triennial Convention of the Brotherhood in 1953, including a handwritten report by Thomas to the Asheville division. The bulk of the collection pertains to labor grievances filed by Thomas and several Asheville porters, particularly on issues of discrimination and adequate health safeguards in the transportation of patients with communicable diseases. Also included are Division membership lists and printed material about tourist sites published by various railroad lines.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American labor union members  
African Americans -- Employment  
Communicable diseases -- Prevention  
Discrimination in employment  
Labor disputes -- United States  
Porters -- Labor unions  
Pullman porters  
Railroads -- Employees -- Labor unions

### **Names**

Thomas, Luther S.  
Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters  
Pullman Car Company

## Container List

### Correspondence

- b. 1 f. 1 1951-1953  
Also includes membership information.
- b. 1 f. 2-4 1952-1954
- b. 1 f. 5-6 Printed matter