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9. Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, 2009), 38.
10. Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind*, 356.
11. On this see also: Véronique Garros, et al., eds, *Intimacy and Terror: Soviet Diaries of the 1930s* (New York, 1998).
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## Digitization of George M. Cohan Collection, Museum of the City of New York

The Museum of the City of New York is in the process of digitizing portions of its not inconsiderable holdings, and earlier this year it announced that it had made materials relating to George M. Cohan available. The digitized holdings include published sheet music and orchestral scores, as well as scripts and other materials relating to more than two dozen of Cohan's shows. It is a collection that is likely to be of interest to researchers working on early twentieth-century musical theatre in the United States. While this is an exciting collection, the collections portal through which one can gain access to the materials is designed to facilitate ordering higher resolution images rather than viewing what is posted for research. Nevertheless, it is possible to gain access to materials that otherwise required a visit to the museum via this site.

Instructions on how to gain access to the collection and to work with the document viewer can be found here: <https://www.mcny.org/story/now-playing-george-m-cohan>, while the research portal can be found here: <https://collections.mcny.org/Explore/Featured/George%20M.%20Cohan%20Collection/>

The first page offers step-by-step instructions on how to view individual pages and whole documents, and it is worth reading this first because the site is not entirely intuitive. I also found that the site did not work well with Chrome – I had to grant permission for the browser to run Flash and also get it to unblock pop-ups in order to gain full functionality; the functionality improved somewhat once I updated my Flash viewer. The same problems occurred when using Safari, and even though I adjusted the browser settings to allow pop-ups, I could not get the document magnifier to load. The site seems to work most effectively on Firefox – it loaded faster, and the document magnifier worked best on this browser. The magnifier window is small, which is a definite shortfall, but it allows one to magnify the image up to 200%, providing a high resolution image that can be read fairly easily. It is also possible to download images and to save them as a low-resolution PDFs, which would be fine for the sheet music, but poses problems for the handwritten manuscripts, which are not always readable in the low-resolution image.

Despite the problems with the portal and viewer, this collection is exciting because it allows access to materials that are otherwise only accessible by visiting the museum's research collections in person. The portal and document viewer allow the researcher to do a preliminary search, and to examine documents to determine which items to prioritize when planning

a research visit to the museum. If one is not able to travel, the portal and viewer might suffice when examining documents.

There are a small number of songs in this collection that cannot be found elsewhere, but most songs are also held by the collection at the Library of Congress ([loc.gov](http://loc.gov)) and the Lester Levy Sheet Music Collection at Johns Hopkins University (<https://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/>). The viewers for both of these collections are much better suited for sheet music, and both sites allow easy downloading of digital items.

The digitized documents include songs, orchestral parts and scripts and cue sheets for 25 shows written by Cohan, including *Broadway Jones*, *The Little Millionaire*, *Little Johnny Jones*, *The Cohan Reviews* of 1916, 1917 and 1918, and *George Washington, Jr.* The scripts, a number of which are annotated, are probably the most exciting part of this collection and, despite its problems, the viewer will allow researchers to transcribe materials and to zoom in closely enough to decipher handwritten documents. Materials from *The Cohan Review* of 1917 include hand-written drafts of scripts written on the back of letterhead from the New Willard Hotel in Washington, DC. Occasionally, Cohan's writing spills over to the other side of the sheet, which is obvious because both sides of the page have been scanned, even when one side is blank. This handwritten script shows the ways in which Cohan constructed and revised this work – text is struck through, but often still readable, and insertions are equally obvious. Working with this material allows one to watch his thought process develop and to better understand his working process. Another page includes an outline of a rough bill, giving the order of sketches and a cast list. Elsewhere, Cohan wrote a long series of sums down the page, indicating salaries, perhaps, and the income from various shows. While it would take some detective work to pursue these leads, these scribbled sums could provide invaluable information that is often difficult to find.

The collection holds more extensive material for a number of Cohan's musical comedies. For example, multiple scripts for *Little Johnny Jones* have been digitized. This is the show that brought us one of Cohan's signature hits, 'The Yankee Doodle Dandy'. The digitized materials vary from annotated typescript drafts, to final full scripts and part scripts for each of the characters in the show. The typescript draft includes the original cast for the show. The collection includes orchestral scores for the show, some annotated in what looks like Cohan's handwriting. Rental scores by Witmark have also been digitized, which should allow the researcher to note both the orchestration for these shows, and the ways that the music for the show developed; vocal scores, and scores for the chorus, are also included. While these materials do not comprise the complete materials and scores for the show, they represent the most complete collection available online. The Tams-Witmark Collection (held by the Library of Congress and the University of Wisconsin-Madison) does not hold such extensive Cohan materials, and while the University of Wisconsin-Madison has begun digitizing the Tams-Witmark collection, they only hold materials relating to three Cohan shows and nothing from *Little Johnny Jones*. Having access to these digitized materials would allow one to formulate research strategies and questions before travelling to New York to visit both the Museum of the City of New York and also the collections held by the New York Public Library Performing Arts Collection. This latter collection makes one or two songs and some pamphlets available in digital form.

As it develops, and more material becomes available, this digital collection will undoubtedly attract more researchers to explore the works of George M. Cohan as well as other early twentieth-century musical comedies. This is an area of scholarship that is in great need of attention. Digital access allows greater access to works by this pioneer of American musical comedy, and I look forward to seeing this digital collection develop in the coming years and expect to further explore these materials myself.

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## **The Challenges and Rewards of Digital Archives: The New Holst Online Catalogue at the Britten-Pears Library**

Funded by a National Cataloguing Grant, the new Holst Online Catalogue, prepared by the Britten-Pears Library, follows on the success of earlier digital projects like the online Britten Thematic catalogue. Archivist Judith Radcliffe and her team faced a daunting task in cataloguing 375 boxes of documents and manuscripts centred on the life and career of Imogen Holst, and also containing significant archival material about her father, Gustav. These documents were organized by Imogen herself, with subsequent revisions by Rosamund Strode and Britten-Pears Library staff. The current project attempts to preserve these earlier efforts, while also modernizing and streamlining the organizational structure. The catalogue is generally organized into eight categories, the first seven representing material accessioned to the Britten-Pears Foundation in 2008, and the last category collecting material gathered since then.

The Library has set up a special user-friendly online portal ([www.imogenholst.org](http://www.imogenholst.org)) for the Holst Online Catalogue. This includes a biography, comprehensive list of works, bibliography and discography for Imogen, as well as pages dedicated to contextualizing the collection itself. Lavishly illustrated with archival material, this provides a resource unto itself for those researchers perhaps unfamiliar with Imogen's importance to so many strands of British music history. There is also a page which suggests a number of important directions that this archive-based research could take. Two particularly fascinating features are the detailed digital walk-through of Imogen's modernist cottage at 9 Church Walk in Aldeburgh (including the soundproof room where much of this collection was long held), and the manuscript to her unpublished overture, *Persephone* (1929).

The actual link to the collection proper, which is part of the integrated catalogue of the Britten-Pears Library, is slightly buried on a sub-page that also then provides the general architecture of the catalogue. The records within the catalogue, no matter their place in the site hierarchy, are comprehensive, often including helpful notes about annotations on the items from previous cataloguers. Each page has its own permalink and all records include a parent record hierarchy, as well as a space for notes on related material. In addition, an extremely helpful navigation menu floats at the right of the screen allowing users to return to search results, reset the search, print the record, or see a list of related items. This last feature is particularly helpful in ensuring complete bibliographic control over the particular topic being researched. It is worth noting that if one goes to the Britten-Pears integrated catalogue page directly, one can find the catalogue in question by searching Holst Archive under 'title'.