

Register to The South Before the War Company Papers

MSS 87



Compiled by Ana Bentancur

1996-2007

120 High Street
PO Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520
(203) 432-0497

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<https://guides.library.yale.edu/MusicSpecialCollections>

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Gilmore Music Library
120 High Street
PO Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520
(203) 432-0497
musicpecialcollections@yale.edu
<https://guides.library.yale.edu/MusicSpecialCollections>

CALL NUMBER: MSS 87

CREATOR: South Before the War Company

TITLE: The South Before the War Company Papers

DATES: [Late 1890s?]

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 4 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: Materials chiefly in English.

SUMMARY: Music and other materials from the touring minstrel show The South Before the War

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/music.mss.0087>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/music.mss.0087>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The South Before the War Company Papers were established in the Music Library of Yale University by Marguerite S. Megaw in 1981.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to researchers by appointment. There are no restricted materials in the collection.

Conditions Governing Use

The South Before the War Company Papers are the physical property of the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University. Copyrights belong to the composers and authors, or their legal heirs and assigns.

Preferred Citation

MSS 87, The South Before the War Company Papers in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University.

Processing Information

This finding aid contains original descriptive language for materials that contain racists, outdated, and harmful language. This includes transcribed titles of musical works. The use of this description is not an endorsement of the language it contains. Original descriptive language has been retained to promote searchability and discoverability of the collections.

Citation for the biographical/historical note on Blackface minstrelsy: Berry, Dorothy. "Descriptive Equity and Clarity around Blackface Minstrelsy in HTC Collections." August 6, 2021. www.dorothy-berry.com/description

Biographical / Historical

The South Before the War Company was a minstrel show owned and managed by Herman Wallum (alias Harry Martell) that toured the United States in the late 1890s (and possibly before and after that time as well). The musical show performed by the Company was also named *The South Before the War*, and the company-owned parlor car bore the same name.

Blackface minstrelsy is a popular entertainment form, originating in the United States in the mid-19th century and remaining in American life through the 20th century. The form is based around stereotypical and racist portrayals of African Americans, including mocking dialect, parodic lyrics, and the application of Black face paint; all designed to portray African Americans as othered subjects of humor and disrespect. Blackface was a dominant form for theatrical and musical performances for decades, both on stage and in private homes. The Gilmore Music Library's Special Collections include Blackface minstrelsy materials for the benefit of scholars seeking to better understand the role racial performance has had in shaping Western culture.

Scope and Contents

The South Before the War Company Papers include scripts, orchestral parts, published and unpublished sheet music, and other ephemera. Unfortunately, there is no list of musical numbers used in the show, and it is difficult to judge if any of the orchestral parts constitute a complete score. The script is complete, however, and it is possible to combine that with the songs and segues that most frequently appear in the orchestral parts to make a very preliminary sketch of the musical numbers involved:

Act I:

Before Curtain

Curtain music

Chorus at curtain: Negro melodies: "Picking Cotton", "Oaken Bucket" etc.

"Chicken Songs"

"Black Annie"

"My Old Kentucky Home"

"The Days When I Was Young" (or "My Old Savannah Home"?)

"Ambolena Snow"

Grand Chorus: "Palms"

Act II & Act III (?):

Intro. music to "Levee scene"

"Buck Dance"

"Soft Shoe Dance"

"Frog Act"

"Paulina Cotrell" (female solo?)

The Baileys -- specialty act

Andy McLeod -- specialty act

"One Hundred Fathoms Deep"

Keystone Quartet -- specialty act

Imperial Quartet -- specialty act

"The Man Who Led the Cake Walk"

Finale

The Papers, of course, include many more songs than indicated in this list. The individual orchestral scores are largely made up of segues identified only by script cues, and there is some variation from score to score. The second half of the show appears to have been only loosely related to the story line: it is basically a variety revue.

Arrangement

In 2 series, as follows: I. Publicity, scripts, and other materials. II. Music.

Collection Contents

Series I: Publicity, scripts, and other materials

-
- | | |
|------------|---|
| b. 1, f. 1 | Publicity & other ephemera
1 small publicity brochure

Photograph, b&w, of company & private parlor car

Publicity statement, handwritten, in ink -- 3 pages

Contract for performance at Atheneum Theatre [city not mentioned] dated 1898. [The contract is the only dated document in this collection.]

List of company expenses, handwritten, in ink

Log sheet, unused, for company's itinerary |
| b. 1, f. 2 | "Harry Martell's New and Original Picturesque Spectacle Entitled 'South Before the War' in Three Acts and Numerous Tableaux"

Complete typed script -- 28 pages |
| b. 1, f. 3 | Scripts for Act I
Holograph [Harry Martell's handwriting?], in ink -- 13 pages

4 typed scripts -- 17 pages, 16 pages, 24 pages, 24 pages |
| b. 1, f. 4 | Scripts for Act II
Handwritten script, in ink -- 27 pages

Handwritten script for scene 1, Act II -- 14 pages

Typed script -- 20 pages |
-

Series II: MusicSubseries II.A: Manuscript Orchestral Scores and Parts
[fragments, duplicates, etc.]

b. 2, f. 5	Leader [conductor] <i>64 pages</i>
b. 2, f. 6	1st violin <i>11 pages</i>
b. 2, f. 7	2nd violin <i>40 pages</i>
b. 2, f. 8	Viola <i>35 pages</i>
b. 2, f. 9	Bass (and/or Cello) <i>62 pages</i>
b. 3, f. 10	Flute <i>33 pages</i>
b. 3, f. 11	Clarinet in A & B flat <i>58 pages</i>
b. 3, f. 12	Cornet in A <i>18 pages</i>
b. 3, f. 13	Cornet in B flat <i>47 pages</i>
b. 3, f. 14	Trombone <i>44 pages</i>
b. 3, f. 15	Drums <i>35 pages</i>

Subseries II.B: Manuscript Songs

b. 4, f. 16	"Niger's Luck" <i>9 pages</i> [no author given] One-page orchestral parts for: 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in B, cornet in B, trombone, drums
b. 4, f. 17	"Our Gallant Boys in Blue" <i>10 pages</i> [no author given] One-page orchestral parts for: 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, cello, bass, flute, clarinet, cornet in A, trombone, drums

Subseries II.B: Manuscript Songs (continued)

- b. 4, f. 18 "O'Possum"
9 pages
[by E. Morback Buck?]

One-page orchestral parts for: leader, 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in B flat, cornet in B flat, trombone, drums
-
- b. 4, f. 19 "My Baby"
8 pages
[no author given]

Mimeographed one-page orchestral parts for: 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in A, cornet in A, drums & bells
-
- Subseries II.C: Unidentified fragments
- b. 4, f. 20 Unidentified fragments
19 pages

In manuscript form, in ink and pencil
-
- Subseries II.D: Published songs
- b. 4, f. 21 "Who Dat Say Chicken in dis Crowd"
8 pages
Marion, Will

Published orchestral parts for (one page each): 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, bass & cello, flute, clarinet in A, cornet in A, trombone
-
- b. 4, f. 22 "Black Annie"
10 pages
Hillman & Perrin

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, cello & bass, flute, clarinet in A (2 copies), cornet in A, trombone, drums
-
- b. 4, f. 23 "Ambolena Snow"
7 pages
Maywood

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, bass & cello, flute, clarinet in A, cornet in A, trombone, drums
-
- b. 4, f. 24 "At a Georgia Campmeeting"
12 pages
Mills, Kerry

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: piano, 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in B flat, 1st cornet in B flat, 2nd cornet in B flat, 1st & 2nd trombone, trombone, drums
-
- b. 4, f. 25 "I'm the Warmest Member in the Land"
4 pages
[incomplete]

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: cello & bass, cornet in A, trombone, drums
-

Subseries II.D: Published songs (continued)

- b. 4, f. 26 "*The Enquirer's Club*"
8 pages
(march)

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: piano, cello, 2nd clarinet in B flat, oboe, 1st horn in F, 2nd horn in F, 2nd cornet in B flat, bassoon
-
- b. 4, f. 27 "*Marie! Come Kiss Your Honey Boy*"
8 pages
[incomplete]

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in B flat, cornet in B flat, trombone, drums
-
- b. 4, f. 28 "*Take Back the Engagement Ring*"
4 pages
[incomplete]

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, bass, clarinet in B flat, cornet in B flat
-
- b. 4, f. 29 "*Happy House in Coontown*"
4 pages
[incomplete]

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 1st violin, bass, 1st cornet in A, drums
-
- b. 4, f. 30 "*The First Wench Done Turned White*"
4 pages
[incomplete]

Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, flute, cornet in A, trombone

Subseries II.E: Published Piano-Vocal Scores

- b. 4, f. 31 Published piano-vocal scores
All for you (by Carl Vandal) -- 3 pages
As it was of old (Lyn Udall) -- 3 pages
The cake-walk in the sky (Ben Harney) -- 4 pages
The change will do you good (John W. Bratton) -- 3 pages
Chicoongo (Arthur S. Shaw) -- 3 pages
City of Harrisburg (L. A. Drumheller) -- 1 page
Coming Home to Die (Gussie L. Davis) -- 3 pages
Coons in the Canebrake (M. S. Clayson) -- 4 pages
Could the dream but go on (Richard Stahl) -- 3 pages
The dandy sparrow cops (W. H. Batchelor) -- 4 pages
Dear old soul (John W. Bratton) -- 4 pages
Done said all I had to say (J. Hicks & S. Perrin) -- 4 pages
Everything's a comin' mah way (E. Moulton) -- 3 pages

The field burglars (G. H. Bramhall) -- 4 pages
Flanagan, rushin' the can again (Taylor & Stephens) -- 4 pages
The gripcar gripman's grip (Wm. Devere) -- 4 pages
He is coming to us dead (Gussie L. Davis) -- 4 pages
I'm not particular (Murray & Leigh) -- 4 pages
I've got money locked up in a vault (I. Jones) -- 3 pages
I think of thee (Louis C. Elson & Hartel) -- 2 pages
In the heart of old New England (T. S. Allen) -- 3 pages
Just a little spray of heather-bells (Heelan & Hamilton) -- 3 pages
Kiss your goosie woosie (C. G. Cotes & B. Scott) & It didn't take long to do (Murray & Leigh) -- 6 pages
Little Miss Vixen (Louis Reinhard) -- 4 pages
A long time ago (C. Moreland) -- 4 pages
Ma Caroline (Lee Johnson) -- 4 pages
A Maine girl (W. E. Chadwick) -- 4 pages
Mamie Tracy (Roger Harding) & Mary Had a Little Lamb (J. Tabrar) -- 6 pages
Mandy, will you be my lady love? (S. L. Perrin) -- 4 pages
Meet me half way (J. Donigan) -- 3 pages
Miss Virginia (Jefferson & Irving) -- 4 pages
Molly McEntee (Edwin W. Cole) -- 4 pages
My little octoroon (W. R. Williams) -- 3 pages
My old Westchester home among the maples (W. B. Gray) -- 4 pages (2 copies)
Oft-times (J. E. Fay & J. B. Oliver) -- 4 pages
Oh! such a business! (Arthur Gillespie & G. Edwards) -- 4 pages
Only a dream (J. E. Fay & J. B. Oliver) -- 3 pages
The pride of the pier (W. H. Ford & J. W. Bratton) -- 3 pages
The sermon Deacon Vandewater preached (W.B. Gray) -- 4 pages
Sweet, sweet love (C. Horwitz & F. V. Bowers) -- 3 pages
Take good care of mother ('Murphy' & J. A. Bland) -- 4 pages
There's always a home for you (G. L. Davis) -- 4 pages
There's something going to happen mighty soon (C. Lane) -- 4 pages
Unrequited (W. Blake & G. J. Couchois) -- 3 pages
Why don't you love me in the same old way? (W.R. Williams) -- 3 pages
Cantiniere (W. L. Gilmore) & The best in the wide, wide, world (Cooper & Ryan) & Turtle dance (G. A. Held) & A fancied resemblance, that's all (Browne & Coleman) -- 13 pages

Subseries II.F: Published Sheet Music (Fragments)

- b. 4, f. 32
- Published sheet music - Fragments
 - America my glorious home - for trombone -- 1/2 page
 - Break the news - for trombone -- 1/2 page
 - The cake walk - piano-vocal fragment -- 2 pages
 - Country life - for trombone -- 1 page
 - Smiles & tears - for trombone -- 1 page
 - Dear little love - piano-vocal fragment -- 2 pages
 - Hot tomale alley - for cornet in A -- 1 page
 - Katie Emmett March - for cello -- 1 page
 - Mahooney's days - for 2nd violin & viola -- 2 pages
 - Medley selection of Southern plantation songs - for violin -- 1 page
 - Tandem 2-step - for 1st violin -- 1 page [torn]
 - Every night in central park - 1st violin -- 1 page [torn]
 - Unidentified - for 1st violin & viola -- 2 pages
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Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Minstrel shows

Corporate Body

South Before the War Company