

# Register to The South Before the War Company Papers

MSS 87



Compiled by Ana Bentancur

1996-2007

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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  
musicspecialcollections@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>

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## 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

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## Administrative Information

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### 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.

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### Conditions Governing Access

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

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## 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.

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## Preferred Citation

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

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## 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This finding aid contains original descriptive language for materials that contain racists, outdated, and harmful language.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](http://www.dorothy-berry.com/description)

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## Arrangement

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

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## 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: Music**Subseries 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	<p>"O'Possum"  <i>9 pages</i>  [by E. Morback Buck?]</p> <p>One-page orchestral parts for: leader, 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in B flat, cornet in B flat, trombone, drums</p>
b. 4, f. 19	<p>"My Baby"  <i>8 pages</i>  [no author given]</p> <p>Mimeographed one-page orchestral parts for: 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in A, cornet in A, drums &amp; bells</p>
Subseries II.C: Unidentified fragments	
b. 4, f. 20	<p>Unidentified fragments  <i>19 pages</i>  In manuscript form, in ink and pencil</p>
Subseries II.D: Published songs	
b. 4, f. 21	<p>"Who Dat Say Chicken in dis Crowd"  <i>8 pages</i>  Marion, Will</p> <p>Published orchestral parts for (one page each): 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, bass &amp; cello, flute, clarinet in A, cornet in A, trombone</p>
b. 4, f. 22	<p>"Black Annie"  <i>10 pages</i>  Hillman &amp; Perrin</p> <p>Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, cello &amp; bass, flute, clarinet in A (2 copies), cornet in A, trombone, drums</p>
b. 4, f. 23	<p>"Ambolena Snow"  <i>7 pages</i>  Maywood</p> <p>Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, bass &amp; cello, flute, clarinet in A, cornet in A, trombone, drums</p>
b. 4, f. 24	<p>"At a Georgia Campmeeting"  <i>12 pages</i>  Mills, Kerry</p> <p>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 &amp; 2nd trombone, trombone, drums</p>
b. 4, f. 25	<p>"I'm the Warmest Member in the Land"  <i>4 pages</i>  [incomplete]</p> <p>Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: cello &amp; bass, cornet in A, trombone, drums</p>

## Subseries II.D: Published songs (continued)

b. 4, f. 26	<p>"The Enquirer's Club"</p> <p>8 pages</p> <p>(march)</p> <p>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</p>
b. 4, f. 27	<p>"Marie! Come Kiss Your Honey Boy"</p> <p>8 pages</p> <p>[incomplete]</p> <p>Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, viola, bass, flute, clarinet in B flat, cornet in B flat, trombone, drums</p>
b. 4, f. 28	<p>"Take Back the Engagement Ring"</p> <p>4 pages</p> <p>[incomplete]</p> <p>Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, bass, clarinet in B flat, cornet in B flat</p>
b. 4, f. 29	<p>"Happy House in Coontown"</p> <p>4 pages</p> <p>[incomplete]</p> <p>Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 1st violin, bass, 1st cornet in A, drums</p>
b. 4, f. 30	<p>"The First Wench Done Turned White"</p> <p>4 pages</p> <p>[incomplete]</p> <p>Published orchestral parts (one page each) for: 2nd violin, flute, cornet in A, trombone</p>

## Subseries II.E: Published Piano-Vocal Scores

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