



**Primary Source Materials related to Blackface Minstrelsy in the collections of the  
Center for Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University**

**What is Blackface Minstrelsy?**

A type of popular American entertainment, which spanned from 1830 to the mid-20th century. Blackface minstrelsy consisted of the theatrical presentation of ostensible elements of black life in song, dance, and speech, and was generally derogatory. At first performed by whites impersonating blacks, minstrelsy only later was participated in by blacks.

**What original materials do you have related to Blackface Minstrelsy?**

The Center for Popular Music has numerous holdings that relate to blackface minstrelsy from the 19<sup>th</sup> through mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. These items include posters, theatre playbills and programs, songsters and other song books, sheet music and song broadsides, photographs, trade catalogs, sound recordings, and manuscript collections containing minstrel-related items, such as scrapbooks. (See examples below.)

**How do I search for these primary source materials?**

Most of these primary source materials are cataloged and may be searched online through the Center's website. Sound recordings may be searched in the Center's Reading Room through the in-house database.

Online Searching:

To search for these materials **online**, visit the CPM website at <http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/collections/default.aspx>. You may search for specific titles, artists or songs in the Quick Search field. Other keywords or search terms to try are: Minstrel, Blackface, Minstrel show, Minstrel music, Minstrel songs and music, Blackface entertainers, African Americans Stereotypes, or Ethiopian. This catalog will search for minstrel materials in the following collection categories: [Manuscript Collections](#), [Rare Books and Scores](#); [Sheet Music](#); [Song Broadsides](#); [Posters, Playbills, and Programs](#); [Trade Catalogs](#); [Photographs](#); and [Periodicals: Secondary Collection](#). For an overview of each of the major collections, see the detailed menu to the left of the screen under "Search Our Collections."

Click on the Advanced Search link <http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/collections/advanced-search.aspx> to take you to a more detailed search screen. You may limit your search to a particular field or type of material.

To search our separate website for the digitized Kenneth S. Goldstein Collection of American [Song Broadsides](#), go to: <http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/Broadsides/index.html> .

Visit the [Songs of Sam Lucas](#) <http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/lucas/lucas.html> to learn about this celebrated minstrel entertainer of the post-Civil War era.

At the Center (in-house searching only):

To search for [Sound Recordings](#), please visit the Center and use our in-house database or email [Rachel Morris](#) or [Martin Fisher](#).

## Secondary Source Materials

To search for **Secondary Source Materials** available in the Center's Reading Room– go to MTSU's Walker Library catalog (<http://library.mtsu.edu/>) and use either search terms listed above. This includes books about minstrelsy, as well as minstrel joke books, minstrel show handbooks, histories, and dissertations.

## Minstrel Music Bibliography

Bean, Annemarie. *Inside the minstrel mask : readings in nineteenth-century blackface minstrelsy* / edited by Annemarie Bean, James V. Hatch, and Brooks McNamara ; foreword by Mel Watkins Hanover, NH : Wesleyan University Press, c1996 PN3195 .I58 1996

Cockrell, Dale. *Demons of disorder : early blackface minstrels and their world* / Dale Cockrell Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1997 ML1711 .C63 1997

Conway, Cecelia. *African banjo echoes in Appalachia : a study of folk traditions* / Cecelia Conway Knoxville : University of Tennessee Press, c1995. ML3556 .C667 1995

Hans, Nathan. *Dan Emmett and the rise of early Negro minstrelsy* Nathan, Hans, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962, 1977 printing. ML 2870 .N37 1977

Lott, Eric. *Love and theft : blackface minstrelsy and the American working class* / Eric Lott New York : Oxford University Press, 1993. 791.12 L911

Mahar, William J. *Behind the burnt cork mask : early blackface minstrelsy and Antebellum American popular culture* / William J. Mahar. Urbana : University of Illinois Press, c1999 ML 2870 .M331 1999

Toll, Robert C. *Blacking up : the minstrel show in nineteenth century America* / Robert C. Toll. New York : Oxford University Press, 1974 ML 2870 .T64 1974

### Original Minstrel Books:

Rice, Edward Le Roy. *Monarchs of minstrelsy, from "Daddy" Rice to date*, by Edw. Le Roy Rice ... New York city, N.Y., Kenny publishing company [c1911] SPCL PN 1969 .M5 R42 1911

Dumont, Frank. *The Witmark amateur minstrel guide and burnt cork encyclopedia* / by Frank Dumont / New York : M. Witmark & sons [1899]

Dick, William B. (William Brisbane), 1827-1901. *Dick's stump speeches and minstrel jokes : containing an immense collection of original and selected negro acts and farces, eccentric sketches, stump speeches, funny conversations, burlesque sermons and lectures, end men's jokes, Bones' gags and Tambo's witticisms; especially adapted for first class minstrel entertainments* / by William B. Dick / New York : Fitzgerald Publishing Corporation, c1889.

Kaser, Arthur LeRoy, 1890-1956. *Mellow moon minstrel first-part : a complete routine for the circle* / by Bob Royce [i.e. Arthur LeRoy Kaser] / Chicago : T. S. Denison & Company, c1932.

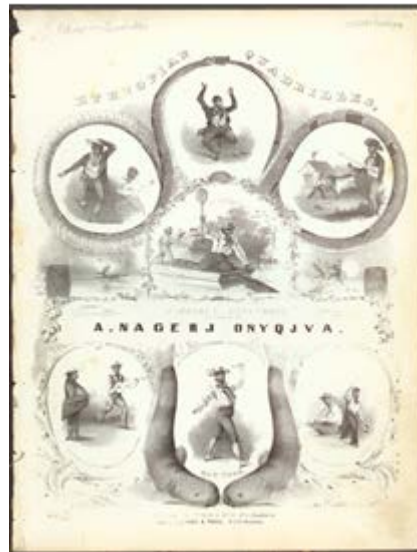
Kaser, Arthur LeRoy, 1890-1956. *Minstrel spice; a collection of minstrel stunts, jokes and novelties* / Syracuse, N.Y., Bugbee, [c1934]

# Examples of Center for Popular Music Special Collection Minstrel items:

## Sheet Music

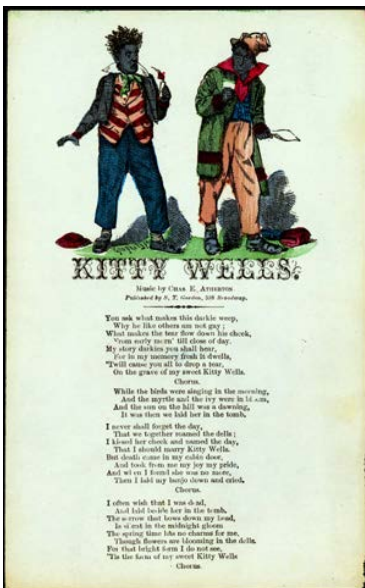


003331-CPMLG Jim Crow's Ramble!, Center for Popular Music

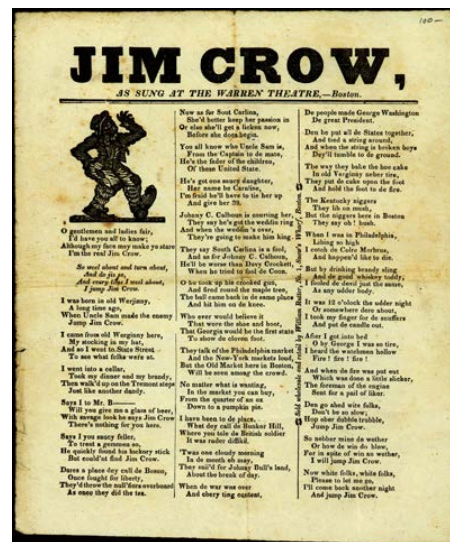


001234-BYULG Ethiopian Quadrilles, Center for Popular Music

## Broadsides



001554-BROAD Kitty Wells, Center for Popular Music

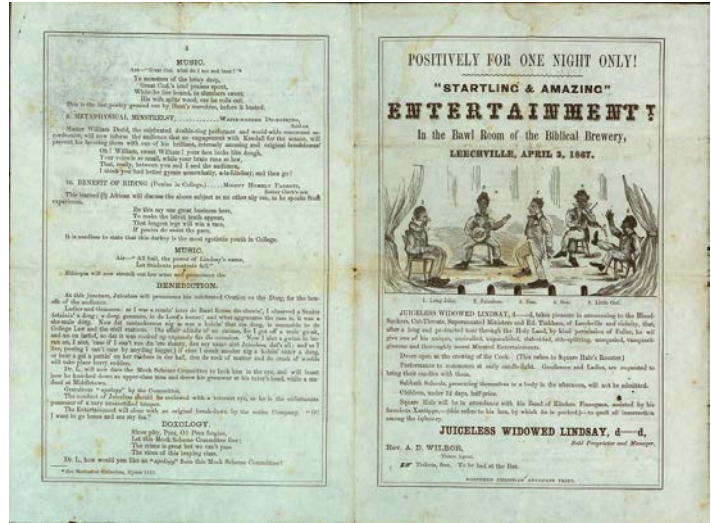


002510-BROAD Jim Crow, Center for Popular Music

# Posters, Playbills, Programs



Center for Popular Music 000054-MINSTREL, Christy's Minstrels



Center for Popular Music 000007-MINSTREL, Bawl Room of the Biblical Brewery

# Photographs



Center for Popular Music GEN-CD-00001



Center for Popular Music GEN-CD-00025

## Trade Catalogs



Center for Popular Music CAT-00240  
Crest Trading Co., 1906



Center for Popular Music CAT-00505  
T.S. Denison Company, Everything For  
Your Minstrel Show[1930]

## Manuscript Collections

97-036 Billy Carter Minstrel Scrapbook - Memorabilia scrapbook primarily assembled by Billy Carter, containing newspaper clippings; clippings of humorous sketches, jokes, and cartoons; contracts; prints; programs; and playbills, 1863-1904.  
<http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/archives/inventory/Carter.htm>

Carter 97-036 from Billy Carter Minstrel Scrapbook. Center for Popular Music



01-012 McCauley, Jamie. "Johnny Leighman's Superior Minstrels" Papers - .2 l.f. of materials documenting the origin and 1923 tour of the "Johnny Leighman's Superior Minstrels."  
<http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/archives/inventory/Leighman.htm>

MAN-PR-00001 from "Johnny Leighman's Superior Minstrels." Center for Popular Music