



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the George and Hart's Up To Date Georgia Minstrels Scrapbook

NMAH.AC.0576

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2015

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	George and Hart's Up To Date Georgia Minstrels Scrapbook
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1876-1901
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.0576
<b>Creator:</b>	George, J. Edward (manager) Up To Date Georgia Minstrels (performers) San Diego Historical Society Hart, G. E. (manager)
<b>Extent:</b>	0.1 Cubic feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	Scrapbook contains articles and ephemera relating to an African American troupe of thirty five minstrels who performed in the Pacific Northwestern United States.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The material was donated to the Archives Center, National Museum of American History by the San Diego Historical Society on March 11, 1997. The Society has no further information about the scrapbook which was outside the scope of its collecting policy.

### Ownership and Custodial History

Donated by the San Diego Historical Society. The initial contact was between Sally West, San Diego Historical Society Assistant Archivist, and National Museum of American History Chief Archivist, John Fleckner.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by Ida Jones, Deborra Richardson (May 1997), and Vanessa Broussard Simmons, (2015).

### Preferred Citation

George and Hart; Hart's Up to Date Minstrels Collection, circa 1876-1901, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

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## Biographical / Historical

George and Hart's Up To Date Georgia Minstrels were an African American troupe of thirty-five entertainers about whom this scrapbook was created. In 1901, these minstrels were described as "the only colored show running for thirty years." The troupe, which began circa 1866, was billed as "the most popular" troupe of performers from California to Montana to Washington to New Mexico to Colorado to Minnesota. They performed standard minstrel acts and included a contortionist, an acrobatic act, and a male impersonator. This form of theater entertainment was used by African American dramatic performers for consistent employment with reasonable wages. The Up To Date Georgia Minstrels were said to have been the "highest paid" performers in the area, making five to fifteen dollars a week. The troupe was managed by George Hart.

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## Scope and Contents

The scrapbook offers documentation of the troupe's activities dating from 1876-1909 in the Pacific Northwestern United States. It contains articles, ticket stubs, newspaper and magazine clippings and programs. Also included are brief biographical sketches of Billy Williams, the contortionist, and Harry Gillam, the "Hebrew acrobat," and an article about the managers of the Up To Date minstrels, J. Edward George and G. E. Hart. In addition, there are business cards from other minstrel performing groups including, Cissel and Mines and Oliver and Gilliam, with accompanying pictures. There are loose materials which were probably once part of the scrapbook, including programs and letterhead stationery. There are also photographs of the troupe taken in Missouri in 1900 standing outside a train car as they travelled from one location to another. The materials are arranged first by type and then in chronological order.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged in one series.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Acrobats -- 1900-1910
- African American entertainers -- 20th century
- Contortionists -- 1900-1910
- Minstrel shows -- 1900-1910
- Minstrels -- 1900-1910
- Revues -- 1900-1910
- Troubadours -- 1900-1910 -- United States

### Types of Materials:

- Advertisements -- 1900-1910
- Scrapbooks -- 1880-1910

### Names:

- Cissel and Mines, entertainers
- Cissel, Clarence (entertainer)
- Gillam, Harry (entertainer)

Gilliam, Bessie (entertainer)  
Mines, Augusta (entertainer)  
Oliver and Gilliam (entertainers)  
Oliver, Jack (entertainer)  
Williams, Billy (entertainer)

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## Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	<a href="#">Advertisements , circa 1876</a>
Box 1, Folder 2	<a href="#">Scrapbook, 1898-1901</a>
Box 1, Folder 3	Ephemera, 1890, undated
Box 1, Folder 4	Program, Gluck's Opera House, 1900-1901
Box 1, Folder 5	Letterhead stationary for George and Hart and Gardner E. Hart, 1900-1901, undated
Box 1, Folder 6	Program, Luella Theatre, 1900-1901
Box 1, Folder 7	<a href="#">Photographs, July 3, 1900</a>
Box 1, Folder 8	Newspaper clippings, 1901, undated
Box 1, Folder 9	The Stage, Opera House, Hutchinson, Kansas , 1901
Box 1, Folder 10	Program, Opera House, January 28, 1901
Box 1, Folder 11	Program, Whitiey Opera House, February 4, 1901