



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the George E. "Mello" and Neva Satterlee McNally Vaudeville Collection

NMAH.AC.0760

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	George E. "Mello" and Neva Satterlee McNally Vaudeville Collection
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0760
Date:	1889-2000, undated
Creator:	McNally, George E. (Collector) LaClair, Beatrice M. (Donor) McNally, Neva Satterlee, -1909 (Collector)
Extent:	1 Cubic foot (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Collection consists of photographs, commercially published sheet music, and original music manuscripts from the McNallys' vaudeville careers. Materials include minstrel show and blackface material; photo of Albert Tovell, once the master of ceremonies for Frances H. "Peaches" Browning; and a photograph of "Gov. Jordan," a blackface female impersonator.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated to the Archives Center by the granddaughter of the McNallys, Beatrice M. LaClair, in 2000.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Franklin Robinson, 2002.

Preferred Citation

George E. "Mello" and Neva Satterlee McNally Vaudeville Collection, 1889-1964, Archives Center, National Museum of American History. Gift of Beatrice M. LaClair.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Rights situation uncertain. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

According to family history, Neva Satterlee at the age of seventeen formed an orchestra and was its leader for many years. At one time she was under contract with Charles Hoyt Productions, probably the same Hoyt of Morgan & Hoyt's who boasted a Ladies Band and Imperial Singing Orchestra on their bill. She was an

accomplished musician and actress. Neva married George McNally and they took the stage surname of Mello. Neva did all the musical arrangements as she was the only one of the pair who could read music. Their home base was the town of Fulton, New York. The couple remained on the vaudeville circuit as entertainers until Neva's death during child birth in 1909. The couple had at least one child, Angeline McNally. George continued to work in vaudeville. The act was under the direction of George Mello and Eddie Shaw. The act, titled Hokem is Hokem, was a minstrel, musical revue style show and apparently consisted of at least five musical selections; the opening Hot-Time, followed by He's Goin' to Hab a Hot Time Bye an' Bye termed (the greatest coon song ever published), Tall Girl (arranged by Neva Satterlee Mello), Snaps, and The Man Behind the Plow. The act's band consisted of a piano, violin, cornet, trombone, drums, clarinet, and flute but may have included other instruments. According to family tradition, Mello ceased his vaudeville career by 1928.

The vaudeville tradition began in the aftermath of the Civil War when numerous minstrel companies began touring the country in minstrel shows presenting songs and comedy in an easily accessible format. Vaudeville became the staple American family entertainment during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Tony Pastor gave the first big time vaudeville show in New York City in 1881 and by 1919 there were reportedly 900 vaudeville theatres in the country. Featuring a collection of sketches, short plays, popular songs, and simple comedy routines, the show often featured minstrel-type acts presented by actors in blackface. With the influx of immigrants in the latter 19th century, the tradition continued but was changed by European and ethnic influences. Booking agents operated in the major cities of New York, Chicago and San Francisco promoting and developing their own Vaudeville Acircuits. Booking agents booked small troupes of actors, specialty acts and musical performers to tour the circuit traveling from one town's vaudeville house to the next. (Encarta Encyclopedia, IATSE)

Scope and Contents

Series 1: Original Music Manuscripts/Arrangements contains original manuscripts used in the Hokem is Hokem act orchestrated by Neva Satterlee Mello. There are parts scores for five musical instruments and various instruments have additional music scores as well for individual selections. The series is arranged alphabetically.

Series 2: Commercial Sheet Music contains commercially printed sheet music, mostly from the vaudeville era with a few exceptions such as Hello Dolly and others. The series contains some well worn sheet music selections, some of which were presumably used by Neva's orchestra or the Hokem is Hokem troupe. One piece, Lily of the Valley, has been sewn along its spine by a sewing machine to help keep it together. The series is arranged alphabetically.

Series 3: Photographs contains photographs of George Mello and some of the Mello's/McNally's vaudeville contemporaries. Of special interest is one photograph of a man dressed in drag and blackface and a photograph of Albert Tovell, one time master of ceremonies for the somewhat infamous Frances H. Browning aka Peaches Browning (1910-1956). There is also another photograph of two men dressed in blackface.

Series 4: Memorabilia contains the music covers for the Hokem is Hokem act and one publication.

Arrangement

Collection is divided into four series.

Series 1: Original Sheet Music

Series 2: Commercial Sheet Music

Series 3: Photographs

Series 4: Memorabilia

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Blackface entertainers
- Female impersonators
- Minstrel shows -- 1900-1960
- Musicians
- Vaudeville

Types of Materials:

- Manuscripts
- Photographs -- 1890-1900
- Photographs -- 1900-1950
- Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- 1910-1930
- Sheet music
- Sheet music -- Manuscripts -- 19th century

Names:

- Browning, Frances H. "Peaches", 1910-1956
- Tovell, Albert

Container Listing

Series 1: Original Sheet Music

Box 1, Folder 1	He's Goin to Hab a Hot Time Bye an' Bye, 1898
Box 1, Folder 2	Home Sweet Home
Box 1, Folder 3	Hop te Doo
Box 1, Folder 4	Hot-Time
Box 1, Folder 5	Man Behind the Plow, The
Box 1, Folder 6	Mike Brady
Box 1, Folder 7	She Has No Poodle Now/Mike Brady
Box 1, Folder 8	Snaps
Box 1, Folder 9	Tall Girl
Box 1, Folder 10	That's What By Gosh
Box 1, Folder 11	Upper Ten & Lower Five, 1889

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Series 2: Commercial Sheet Music

Box 1, Folder 12	200 Favorite Old Songs, 1935
Box 1, Folder 13	Melody Magazine, January 1935
Box 1, Folder 14	Song Hits, September 1940
Box 1, Folder 15	Annie Doesn't Live Here Anymore
Box 1, Folder 16	Are You Lonesome Tonight ?
Box 1, Folder 17	At the Cotton Picker's Ball
Box 1, Folder 18	Carry Me Back to Old Virginy
Box 1, Folder 19	Don't Judge a Girl by Her Dress
Box 1, Folder 20	Don't Tell Her What's Happened to Me
Box 1, Folder 21	Galway Bay
Box 1, Folder 22	Gasoline Gus and His Jitney Bus
Box 1, Folder 23	Good-Night Mr. Moon
Box 1, Folder 24	Green, Green Hills of Home
Box 1, Folder 25	Hello Dolly
Box 1, Folder 26	If I Had You
Box 1, Folder 27	I'm Living a Life of Shadows (Bring Back the Sunshine to Me)
Box 1, Folder 28	In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree
Box 1, Folder 29	Kathleen My Rose
Box 1, Folder 30	Light Cavalry
Box 1, Folder 31	Lily of the Valley
Box 1, Folder 32	Little on the Rag-Time, A
Box 1, Folder 33	Moonlight on the Hudson
Box 1, Folder 34	Mother's Birthday

Box 1, Folder 35	Potpourri Sur Somnambula
Box 1, Folder 36	Sad
Box 1, Folder 37	She Wouldn't Do (What I Asked Her To)
Box 1, Folder 38	Sliding Sid
Box 1, Folder 39	Smiles
Box 1, Folder 40	Stumbling
Box 1, Folder 41	(Sweet Angie) The Christmas Tree Angel
Box 1, Folder 42	Sweet Violets
Box 1, Folder 43	That's What God Made Mothers For
Box 1, Folder 44	The Egg and I
Box 1, Folder 45	Them There Eyes
Box 1, Folder 46	Titania
Box 1, Folder 47	Whispering Wind, The
Box 1, Folder 48	Write to Your Dear Mother (If It's Only Just a Line)
Box 1, Folder 49	You Must Come Over Tonight

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Series 3: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 50

Scope and Contents: a. Unidentified minstrel pair; b. Novelty Balancers, Freeborn & Co. Road Show 451; c. Jackson's Singing Revue, Western Vaudeville Managers' Association; d. The Colonial Quartette with Van Nemans Minstrels (also known as the Colonial Four); e. Albert Tovell of Gordon & Tovell, A Late Master of Ceremonies with Peaches Browning; f. Gov. Jordan (man in blackface and drag); and g. Group photograph, George E. Mello McNally far right.

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Series 4: Memorabilia

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|------------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 51 | Music covers for the Hokem is Hokem act |
| Box 1, Folder 52 | Radio City Music Hall Pictorial, 1950 |
| Box 1, Folder 53 | Correspondence and Ephemera, 2000, undated |

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