



Blacks in Blackface: A Sourcebook on Early Black Musical Shows: 2 Volumes

Henry T. Sampson

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Published in 1980, *Blacks in Blackface* was the first and most extensive book up to that time to deal exclusively with every aspect of all-African American musical comedies performed on the stage between 1900 and 1940. An invaluable resource for scholars and historians focused on African American culture, this new edition features significantly revised, expanded, and new material.

In *Blacks in Blackface: A Sourcebook on Early Black Musical Shows*, Henry T. Sampson provides an unprecedented wealth of information on legitimate musical comedies, including show synopses, casts, songs, and production credits. Sampson also recounts the struggles of African American performers and producers to overcome the racial prejudice of white show owners, music publishers, theatre managers, and booking agents to achieve adequate financial compensation for their talents and managerial expertise. Black producers and artists competed with white managers who were producing all-Black shows and also with some white entertainers who were performing Black-developed music and dances, often in blackface.

The chapters in this volume include:

- An overview of African American musical shows from the end of the Civil War through the golden years of the 1920s and '30s
- New and expanded biographical sketches of performers
- Detailed information about the first producers and owners of Black minstrel and musical comedy shows
- Origins and backgrounds of several famous Black theatres
- Profiles of African American entrepreneurs and businessmen who provided financial resources to build and own many of the Black theatres where these shows were performed
- A chronicle of booking agencies and organized Black theatrical circuits, music publishing houses, and phonograph recording businesses
- Critical commentary from African American newspapers and show business publications
- More than 500 hundred rare photographs

A comprehensive volume that covers all aspects of Black musical shows performed in theatres, nightclubs, circuses, and medicine shows, this edition of *Blacks in Blackface* can be used as a reference for serious scholars and researchers of Black show business in the United States before 1940. More than double the size of the previous edition, this useful resource will also appeal to the casual reader who is interested in learning more about early Black entertainment.

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