

A TOUR OF THE JUBA PROJECT

THE JUBA PROJECT, a four year research project funded by the University of Toronto and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, explores blackface minstrel performance during a crucial early period, the 1840s, when it exploded in popularity and influence in the United States and abroad. The project focuses on its early dissemination to England and Scotland. Through a database, it traces the routes of early minstrel performers, & more generally the performance of race in the early Victorian period, providing information on performers, performances, and venues, including a mapping feature. The Project also provides a guide to this kind of research through a 'Featured Performers and Documents' section, a practice based research section in which contemporary artists engage with the accumulated documents, and information on a related colloquium exploring the interdisciplinary possibilities of the study of blackface.

Stephen Johnson, Project Director & Principal Investigator



 THE JUBA PROJECT EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852	Featured Performers & Documents	Burnt Cork: An Interdisciplinary Symposium
	Search the Minstrelsy Database	Artists Respond to Juba

White performers in blackface make-up were performing in supposed imitation of American slave culture long before 1842. But in that year these entertainers began appearing together as groups in stand-alone entertainments, minstrel shows. Originating in the north-eastern United States, they almost immediately traveled to Britain, where they were particularly popular.

The Juba Project, named after early minstrelsy's most famous and most unusual early practitioner, explores this phenomenon both from a historical and a dramaturgical perspective. Links on this page will take you to the different parts of the project, including a database that will allow you to trace the movements of performers around Britain from 1842-1852 ([Search the Database](#)), a closer examination of some of the documents and one group of performers ([Featured Performers & Documents](#) -- a good place to start), a performance-practice site that will explore the responses of contemporary artists to the documents and traditions of minstrelsy ([Artists Respond](#)), and information about a 2008 Symposium on minstrelsy's traditions and legacy ([Burnt Cork](#)).

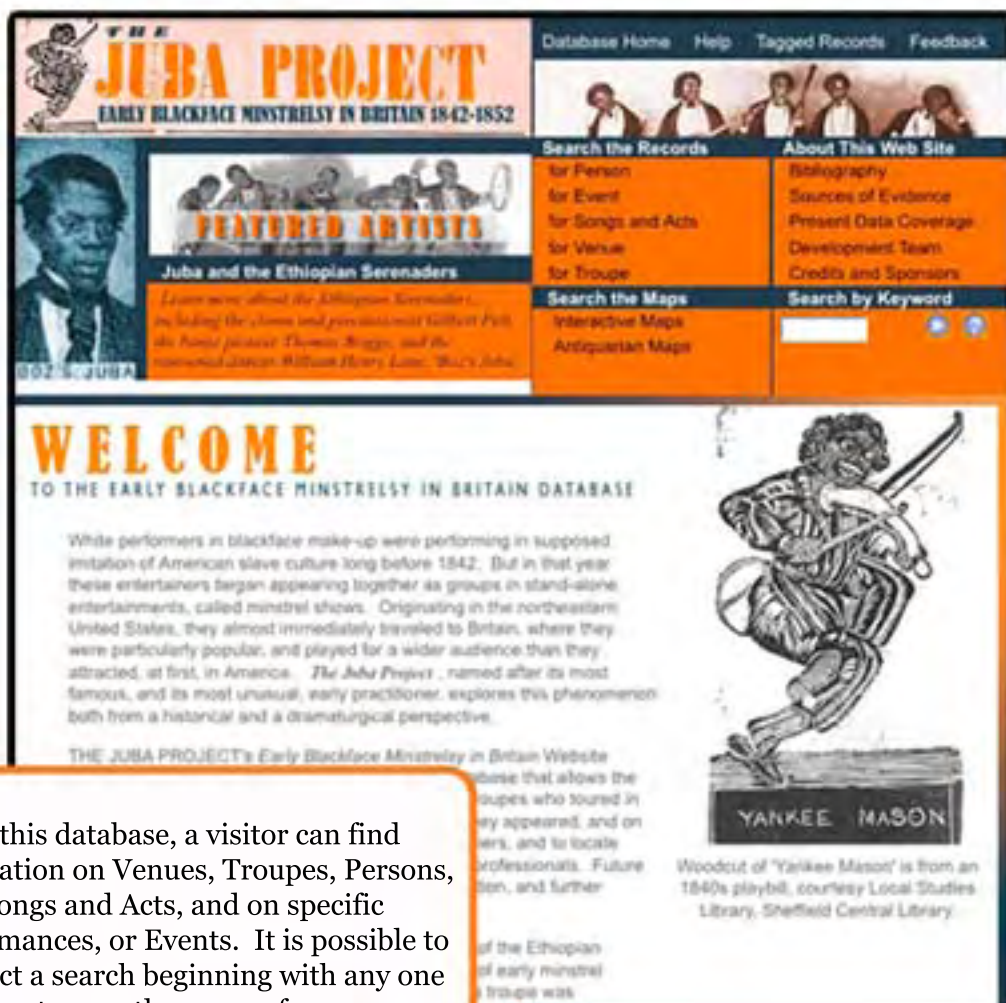
This is the Home Page for the Juba Project, which provides the visitor with four points of entry into the project. This introductory document will guide you through each entry point, beginning with the database.

The Design for the website is by Nick Marquis, with later revisions by Justin Blum and Beth Marquis. The Database web design is by Gordon Belray. This document designed by Beth Marquis.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

THE JUBA PROJECT's Early Blackface Minstrelsy in Britain website draws together a range of documentation into a database that allows the visitor to access information on the individuals and troupes who toured in Britain during these years, on the venues in which they appeared, and on individual events--to trace the movements of performers, and to locate documentary information on these touring, itinerant professionals. The information was accumulated from national and local newspapers and from archives in London, Birmingham, Sheffield, Portsmouth, Liverpool, Bristol, and elsewhere. Research has now ended for this stage of the project, though the database is available for the further addition of information.



In this database, a visitor can find information on Venues, Troupes, Persons, Songs and Acts, and on specific Performances, or Events. It is possible to conduct a search beginning with any one of these terms--the name of a person, a venue, a song title, a troupe name, or a specific date. You can search by any keyword as well, including a type of venue (from Theatre Royal to Circus), type of Act (song, play).

This guide will take you through a typical search by way of an individual's name--in this case the dancer Juba.



Click on PERSONS. We will show you what you can do on the next page.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

Search the Records	About This Web Site
for Person	Bibliography
for Event	Sources of Evidence
for Songs and Acts	Present Data Coverage
for Venue	Development Team
for Troupe	Credits and Sponsors
Search the Maps	Search by Keyword
Interactive Maps	<input type="text"/>
Antiquarian Maps	<input type="button" value="Go"/> <input type="button" value="Help"/>


Click on PERSONS, and type Juba into the Keyword search. You can also type in 'Dancer' or other role in the troupe. The Dates of Birth and Death can be used, but these are not filled in for many performers as of yet; that is part of a future, genealogical project.



SEARCH FOR A PERSON

Choose which restrictions you would like to place on your search for a person. Not all fields need to be completed to perform a search.

To list all persons in the records, just select 'Search'.



E. W. Mackney, from a sheet music cover, courtesy Mander and Mitchenson Collection.

Search the Records	About This Web Site
for Person	Bibliography
for Event	Sources of Evidence
for Songs and Acts	Present Data Coverage
for Venue	Development Team
for Troupe	Credits and Sponsors
Search the Maps	Search by Keyword
Interactive Maps	<input type="text"/>
Antiquarian Maps	<input type="button" value="Go"/> <input type="button" value="Help"/>

Search for Person [Help](#)

Keyword of name or nature of participation:

Born:

Died:

List results by:
 Name Birth date

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

The List of names shown here represents performers 'associated' with the name Juba, either so named, or described invoking his name, or whose biographical entries mention Juba.

Database Home Help Tagged Records Feedback

Search the Records
for Person
for Event
for Songs and Acts
for Venue
for Troupe

Search the Maps
Interactive Maps
Antiquarian Maps

About This Web Site
Bibliography
Sources of Evidence
Present Data Coverage
Development Team
Credits and Sponsors

Search by Keyword

Options
Change search criteria

SEARCH FOR A PATRON

Keywords: juba

Number of matching people: 15

Name	Birth/Death	Nature of participation
1. Brandon,	n.d.	
2. Briggs, T.F.	1824 - 1854	Minstrel Banjo Player
3. Brower, Frank,	1820 - 1874	
4. Busby,	n.d.	
5. Ceda, William	1826 - 1873	
6. Dugburgh, Herr	n.d.	
7. Dumboton, James A.	n.d.	Manager
8. Dwight, Mrs.	n.d.	
9. George,	n.d.	
10. Hodgson, D.	n.d.	
11. Juba,	n.d.	Minstrel Dancer Tambourine player Vocalist
12. Juba, Infant	n.d.	
13. Pelham, Richard W.	1815 - 1856	
14. Price,	n.d.	
15. Redmond,	n.d.	

There is only one listing for a performer 'Juba'. Link onto that name for a Biographical Entry.

11. Juba,	n.d.	Minstrel Dancer Tambourine player Vocalist
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THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

THE JUBA PROJECT
EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852

Database Home | Help

Search the Records
for Person
for Event
for Songs and Acts
for Venue
for Troupe

Search the Maps
Interactive Maps
Antiquarian Maps

PERSON DETAILS:
JUBA, (n.d.)

Tag this Record

Biographical overview

Birth Date: Unknown
Death Date: Unknown

Notes: In 1848, a young black American called Juba arrived in London from New York and danced, to great acclaim and notice. This dancer's style of performance created a sensation, and he toured extensively through 1851, after which he disappeared from the documentary record. During this brief period, he was noticed by the press more often than any other dancer in England, and received wide praise for his innovative style.

Images
Juba
Juba Dancing

Juba, Participation details
Search Related Records
Events naming person
Troupe affiliation
Songs & Acts
Bibliographic Sources
Options
Start a new person search

This is a Biographical Entry on Juba, which provides basic information, and an indication of the kind of performances he gave. We include here the Troupes with which he appeared, 'monikers' or epithets applied to him, common acts, along with illustrations we have found. We have made an effort to provide something for each performer recorded in this database; but these are itinerant performers who may appear without announcement and then disappear into obscurity. In many respects, there is nothing to record except what we have found for this database. The work of filling in this gap in information is cause for another research project. This is a start, at least.

Juba, Participation details
Search Related Records
Events naming person
Troupe affiliation
Songs & Acts
Bibliographic Sources
Options
Start a new person search

Additional links indicate the other information that can be accessed about this performer, including a full Bibliography of each document we have found, a list of the events at which he appeared, and a list of the troupes with which he toured, according to our research.

We will show what happens when you link on Bibliography, and then on Events.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

The screenshot displays the website interface for 'THE JUBA PROJECT: EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852'. The top navigation bar includes links for 'Database Home', 'Help', 'Tagged Records', and 'Feedback'. A banner image shows five performers. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES:** A search result for 'Juba, (-)' with a link to 'View a list of abbreviations'.
- Search the Records:** A sidebar menu with options: 'for Person', 'for Event', 'for Songs and Acts', 'for Venue', 'for Troupe'.
- About This Web Site:** A sidebar menu with options: 'Bibliography', 'Sources of Evidence', 'Present Data Coverage', 'Development Team', 'Credits and Sponsors'.
- Search the Maps:** A sidebar menu with options: 'Interactive Maps', 'Maps'.
- Search by Keyword:** A search input field with a magnifying glass icon.
- Search Related Records:** A sidebar menu with options: 'Juba, (-)', 'More Bibliographic Sources', 'Sources for Patrons', 'All Sources'.

The main search results list several entries for 'Albion (Liverpool)'. One entry is expanded to show a document scan:

Albion (Liverpool) November 20, 1848: 1: 1.

Albion (Liverpool) November 27, 1848: 2: 1.

Info in Record:

- description/review
- moniker
- other (comparison to Falstaff)

Albion (Liverpool) February 5, 1849: 1: 1.

Info in Record:

- acts

Albion (Liverpool) October 30, 1848: 2: 6.

Info in Record:

- biography
- description/review
- moniker
- performer endorsement

Albion (Liverpool) December 4, 1848: 3: 1.

Info in Record:

- moniker

Albion (Liverpool) November 13, 1848: 1: 1.

Info in Record:

The document scan shows a newspaper clipping with the following text:

"BOB" 'N' JUBA, AND G. W. FELL'S CELEBRATED ETHIOPIAN SENSATIONS.—From the high tribute of applause bestowed on this company by the whole of the editors of the London, Brighton, and Manchester journals who have witnessed their performances within the last two months, it gives us great pleasure to announce that the Liverpool public will shortly be equally gratified with the many thousands who witnessed them in those localities. They will appear at the Theatre-Royal, Williamson-square, on the 7th of November, for the first time. Mr. Fell is himself the most celebrated player on "the bones" the world has yet produced, and the whole of his company, in their respective departments, sing negro melodies of great novelty, play the banjo, dancing, &c.; but the wonder of the wonders of this humorous band is "Juba", a youth only seventeen years of age, whose feats as a singer and dancer must be heard and seen, for our contemporaries acknowledge their inadequacy to do them justice by description. His dexterity and volubility of utterance, when required, are truly astonishing. His dancing exceeds all previous efforts in this line into the shade, and he is so flexible, so rapid in change, and in so altogether novel, as to establish in his own person what may be called a variety of physical phenomena before deemed beyond the power of man. We may add that he is the veritable youth whom "Bob" (or Dickens) so graphically describes in his *American Notes*, and we need not say more to conclude a warm reception of these foreigners on their arrival.

Document Scan
Albion (Liverpool), October 30, 1848, p.2.

Navigation instructions for the document scan:

- Click your mouse and DRAG UPWARDS, to increase the zoom ratio.
- Click your mouse and DRAG DOWNWARDS, to decrease the zoom ratio.
- Click your mouse and DRAG TO THE RIGHT, to increase the size of the zoom window.
- Click your mouse and DRAG TO THE LEFT, to decrease the size of the zoom window.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

Juba,
Participation details

Search Related Records
Events naming person
Troupe affiliation

Songs & Acts

Bibliographic Sources

Options
Start a new pe

Linking on Events Naming Person (back on the Juba bio page) will provide a full list of (in this case) 94 performances. 'Performance' in this database is defined as up to a week's run, the typical booking period, though it also will include one-night-stands. Linking onto any one of these will take you to an entry about that Event.

Database Home Help Tagged Records Feedback

SEARCH FOR A EVENT

MAP IT

Person: Juba (n.d.)

Number of matching events: 94

Event and Date	Location	Troupe
1. Variety Jun 12-17 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
2. Variety Jun 19-24 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
3. Variety Jun 26- Jul 1 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
4. Variety Jul 3-8 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Variety Jul 10-15 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Variety Jul 17-21 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Minstrel Show Jul 22 1848	Newburgh Rooms, Cannon Place Brighton, Sussex	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Variety Jul 24-29 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Minstrel Show Jul 24 1848	Newburgh Rooms, Cannon Place	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
2. Variety Jun 19-24 1848	Vauxhall Gardens London	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Variety Jul 31- Aug 5 1848	London	(1848-49)
12. Minstrel Show Aug 5 1848	Newburgh Rooms, Cannon Place Brighton, Sussex	Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)

Options
Change search criteria

Here we will link to Variety --designating the type of performance-- for June 19-24, 1848 at Vauxhall Gardens.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

JUBA PROJECT
EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852

Database Home Help Tagged Records Feedback

Search the Records About This Web Site

EVENT DETAILS:
ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS
19 JUNE 1848 - 24 JUNE 1848

Tag this Record

Event Type: Variety

Troupe: Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)

County, Location: London

Venue: Vauxhall Gardens

Venue type: Pleasure Gardens

Date: 19 June 1848 - 24 June 1848

Date Notes: Performance Days Within Run:

- Monday Evening (June 19)
- Tuesday Evening (June 20)
- Wednesday Evening (June 21)
- Thursday Evening (June 22)
- Friday Evening (June 23)

Part of a longer run (June - October, 1848)

Event Notes: Performers Listed:

- Juba
- Pell

Other Acts on Bill Listed:

- "Gauthier's excellent troupe of (1848-49) Vauxhall Gardens, London"

Search Related Records

Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)

Valentine, J.W. (n.d.)

Briggs, T.F. (1824 - 1854/1855)

Pell, Gilbert W. (d. 187)

Ludlow, M.C. (n.d.)

Juba, (n.d.)

Irwin, J.H. (n.d.)

Everton, J.H. (n.d.)

Vauxhall Gardens

Bibliographic Sources

Options

Start a new event search

Images

Playbill, Part 1

Part 2

Programme Notes

Event Program: 1. Steve's Lament; Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49); Overture

Notes: Instrumental?


In the entry, you can see a listing of the dates, performers, other acts in the bill, the names of the other individuals involved in the minstrel performance, information that is in the source document that might be of value to a researcher, and a list of the minstrel Songs & Acts identified, with links to entries on each

The page also provides links to the other individuals performing at this event for which there are biographical entries (that is, minstrel performers), to information about the venue and troupe, and to bibliographical sources.


You will also see on this page links to a playbill for this event, which you can look at directly. We will now look at each of these links in turn.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database



[Database Home](#) | [Help](#) | [Tagged Records](#) | [Feedback](#)




EVENT DETAILS
ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS (1848-49),
19 JUNE 1848 -24 JUNE 1848

Tag this Record

Images

Event Title: **Playbill, Part 1**


Image: 

County, Location: **Part 2**

Venue type: **Public Gardens**

Images

Event Title: **Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)**

Image: 

County, Location: **Vauxhall Gardens, London**

Venue type: **Public Gardens**

Date: 19 June 1848 -24 June 1848

Date Notes: Performance Days Within Run:

- Monday Evening (June 19)
- Tuesday Evening (June 20)
- Wednesday Evening (June 21)
- Thursday Evening (June 22)
- Friday Evening (June 23)

Part of a longer run (June - October, 1848)

Event Notes: Performers Listed:

- Juba
- Pyll

Other Acts on Bill Listed

- "Gauthier's excellent troupe of equestrians"
- "Grand Concert, including Mr. J. W. Sharp (the comic vocalist), "Miss G. Smythson and Mrs. Arling Smith"
- "Widest and Moseley's talented Corps"
- "An unrivalled band under the direction of Herr Raab"
- "Illuminations and Fireworks"
- "Mr. T. Barry, the popular clown"
- "Colossal View of Constantinople"

Other Event Info Available:

- audience
- context
- description/review
- performance time
- programme (general)
- reception
- ticket info
- weather

Note: All 'Other Info' categories list information that can be found about each item in relation to this event and/or the writings surrounding it.

Programme Notes: 2-4, 6, 8, performance at June 19 performance

Event Program: 1. Slave's Lament, Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49), Overture
Notes: Instrumental?

From the Description of the Vauxhall Garden performance, you can link to an image of the full Bill of Performance, from the Lambeth County Archives in London.



THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

The screenshot displays the website interface for 'THE JUBA PROJECT: EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852'. It is divided into two main sections: 'EVENT DETAILS' and 'SONG / ACT DETAILS'.

EVENT DETAILS: ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS (1848-49), 19 JUNE 1848 -24 JUNE 1848. The event type is 'Variety' and the troupe is 'Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)'. A search sidebar offers options for Person, Event, Songs and Acts, Venue, and Troupe, as well as Interactive Maps and Antiquarian Maps. A list of songs is visible on the right, including 'Slave's Lament', 'Ohio Boatman', 'Stop dat Knockin'', 'Railroad Travelling', 'Rosa Mae', 'Jenny, put de Kittle on', and 'Plantation Dance'.

SONG / ACT DETAILS: STOP DAT KNOCKIN!. The title is 'Stop dat Knockin!', type is 'Song', and the description notes it is an alternately titled 'Stop That Knocking' or 'Stop Dat Knocking At My Door'. The description text explains its origin with Winnemore's Boston Minstrels and its connection to earlier theatrical works like 'Who's Dat Knocking at the Door' and 'The Virginy Cupids'. A callout box highlights the entry: '3. Stop dat Knockin; J.W. Valintine, Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49); New Solo & Chorus'. Below the description are links for 'Lyrics', 'Sheet Music', and 'Cover'. A final callout box states: 'From the Description of the Vauxhall Garden performance, you can link to information on each song identified in the bill.'

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

JUBA PROJECT
EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELTY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852

Database Home | Help | Tagged Records | Feedback

EVENT DETAILS:
ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS (1848-49),
19 JUNE 1848 -24 JUNE 1848

Tag this Record

Event Type: Variety
Troupe: Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
County, Location: London
Venue: Vauxhall Gardens,
Venue type: Pleasure Gardens

Search the Records
for Person
for Event
for Songs and Acts
for Venue
for Troupe

Search the Maps
Interactive Maps
Antiquarian Maps

Images
Playbill, Part 1
Part 2

About This Web Site
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Search by Keyword

Search Related Records
Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Valentine, J.W. (n.d.)
Briggs, T.F. (1824 - 1854/1855)
Pell, Gilbert W. (d. 1872)
Ludlow, M.C. (n.d.)
Juba, (n.d.)
Irwin, J.H. (n.d.)
Everton, J.H. (n.d.)
Vauxhall Gardens

Bibliographic Sources

From the Description of the Vauxhall Garden performance, you can link to a full listing of the traveling itinerary for this troupe of performers, the Ethiopian Serenaders. Juba was appearing with them for this performance and during this period of his stay in Britain.

TROUPE
ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS (1848-49)

Tag this Record

Troupe type: Minstrel
Troupe member(s): Briggs, T.F. (1824-1854)
Everton, J.H. (n.d.)
Irwin, J.H. (n.d.)
Juba, (n.d.)
Ludlow, M.C. (n.d.)
Pell, Gilbert W. (d. 1872)
Valentine, J.W. (n.d.)

Event(s) listed for this troupe **MAP IT**

1.	Variety	Vauxhall Gardens, London	Jun 12-17 1848
2.	Variety	Vauxhall Gardens, London	Jun 19-24 1848
3.	Variety	Vauxhall Gardens, London	Jun 26- Jul 1 1848
4.	Variety	Vauxhall Gardens, London	Jul 3-8 1848

for Songs and Acts
for Venue
for Troupe

Search the Maps
Interactive Maps
Antiquarian Maps

Images
The Serenaders

Present Data Coverage
Development Team
Credits and Sponsors
Search by Keyword

Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
Search Related Records

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

Search Related Records
 Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
 Valintine, J.W. (n.d.)
 Briggs, T.F. (1824 – 1854/1855)
 Pell, Gilbert W. (d. 1872)
 Ludlow, M.C. (n.d.)
 Juba, (n.d.)
 Irwin, J.H. (n.d.)
 Everton, J.H. (n.d.)
 Vauxhall Gardens

Bibliographic Sources

JUBA PROJECT
 EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852

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EVENT DETAILS:
ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS (1848-49),
 19 JUNE 1848 –24 JUNE 1848

Tag this Record

Event Type: Variety
 Troupe: Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)

Images
 Playbill, Part 1
 Part 2

Search the Records
 Search the Maps
 Search by Keyword

Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
 Vauxhall Gardens, London

Search Related Records
 Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
 Valintine, J.W. (n.d.)
 Briggs, T.F. (1824 – 1854/1855)
 Pell, Gilbert W. (d. 1872)
 Ludlow, M.C. (n.d.)
 Juba, (n.d.)
 Irwin, J.H. (n.d.)
 Everton, J.H. (n.d.)

From the Description of the Vauxhall Garden performance, you can link to an entry on the venue, Vauxhall Gardens. The Ethiopian Serenaders and Juba appeared here for the entire summer of 1848. The Gardens was a regular venue for blackface performers, and for exhibitions of race more generally.

VENUE DETAILS:
VAUXHALL GARDENS

Tag this Record

Pleasure Gardens
 Built 1660s
 Located in London

Overview

- **Address:** Lambeth (area currently bounded by Kennington Lane, St. Oswald's Place, Leopold Walk, Vauxhall Walk & Goding St.) For a current map, [Click Here](#). For historical maps showing the venue (in addition to the one excerpted at right), [Click Here](#), [Here](#), and [Here](#).
- **Alternate Names:** New Spring Gardens (opening-1785), Royal Gardens, Vauxhall.
- **Capacity:** The gardens could house massive crowds; many accounts, audiences frequently numbered in the thousands.
- **Audience Composition:** The typical Vauxhall audience included a wide range of spectators - male & female, young and old, working class & aristocratic (along with a fair share of prostitutes & ruffians, especially in the late 18th Century).
- **Performance Space Description:** Prominent features of

for Event
 for Songs and Acts
 for Venue
 for Troupe

Search the Maps
 Interactive Maps
 Antiquarian Maps

Sources of Evidence
 Present Data Coverage
 Development Team
 Credits and Sponsors

Search by Keyword

Historical Map (1843)
 Orchestra
 Rotunda Theatre
 Rotunda Theatre (Image #2)

Vauxhall Gardens
 Search Related Records
 Events at venue
 Troupes at venue
 Bibliographic Sources
 Options
 Start a new venue search

You will see that from the venue entry, at the right, you can link to all events at this venue, all troupes who appeared there, a full list of citations for the site, and imagery for the site. Of course, the amount of information varies widely for venues. Some have no available information.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

THE JUBA PROJECT
EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852

Database Home Help Tagged Records Feedback

EVENT DETAILS:
ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS (1848-49),
19 JUNE 1848 -24 JUNE 1848

Tag this Record

Event Type: Variety
Troupe: Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)

County, Location: London
Venue: Vauxhall Gardens
Venue type: Pleasure Gardens

Date: 19 June 1848 -24 June 1848
Date Notes: Performance Days Within Run:

- Monday Evening (June 19)
- Tuesday Evening (June 20)
- Wednesday Evening (June 21)
- Thursday Evening (June 22)

Search the Records
 for Person
 for Event
 for Songs and Acts
 for Venue
 for Troupe

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 Playbill, Part 1
 Part 2

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Search by Keyword

Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
 Vauxhall Gardens, London

Search Related Records
 Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-49)
 Valintine, J.W. (n.d.)
 Briggs, T.F. (1824 - 1854/1855)
 Pell, Gilbert W. (d. 1872)
 Ludlow, M.C. (n.d.)
 Juba, (n.d.)
 Irwin, J.H. (n.d.)
 Everton, J.H. (n.d.)
 Vauxhall Gardens

Bibliographic Sources

From the Description of the Vauxhall Garden performance, you can link to Bibliographic Sources, which will provide an accounting of every citation recording this event. For performances at Vauxhall Gardens in 1848, there are many corroborating announcements and reports (28 in this case); for many others, one reference of a few words is all we have.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES

[View a list of abbreviations](#)

Advertiser (London) June 20, 1848: ?.

Info in Record:

- Performance Type: Variety
- Performers Listed: "Juba," "Mr. Pell"
- Days & Times: "Yesterday"
- Venue Name: "Vauxhall Gardens"
- Program Info: Ohio Boatman (inc. Pell on Bones), Stop that knocking (inc. Pell on Bones), Railroad Travelling (inc. Pell on Bones), Jenny put de kettle on (Juba), Plantation dance (Juba)
- Other: context, description/review, reception

Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle June 18, 1848: 2: 1.

Info in Record:

- Performance Type: Variety
- Troupe Name: "Pell's Company of Serenaders"
- Performers Listed: "Pell", "Boz's Juba"
- Days & Times: "tomorrow" and "every evening except Saturdays"

Search the Maps
 Interactive Maps
 Antiquarian Maps

Search by Keyword

Management Team
 Credits and Sponsors

Images
 Document Scan

Search Related Records
 More Bibliographic Sources
 All Sources

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

As you can see, there are a great many cross-references in a database such as this. A researcher can look for intersections of individuals, troupes, songs and venues, and might stray far from the original search in the process. While a strong plan of action going into a database for a search is a good thing, it is also beneficial to wander. One of the benefits of a database is that connections not previously visible might appear.

This search by 'Person' leading to pages on a Troupe, a Venue, & an Event, is typical of what you will find on this database.

You can also search:

By Troupe...

SEARCH FOR A TROUPE

Choose which restrictions you would like to place on your search for a troupe. Not all fields need to be completed to perform a search.

To list all troupes in the records, just select 'Search'.

Ethiopian street musicians, from Henry Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor

Search for a Troupe [Help](#)

Troupe keywords: _____

Type of performer: _____

Performed in date range (choose unit): _____ OR _____

List results by: Name Type

SEARCH FOR AN EVENT

Choose which restrictions you would like to place on your search for an event. Not all fields need to be completed to perform a search.

To list all events in the records, just select 'Search'.

SADLERS WELLS, POSITIVELY THE LAST SIX NIGHTS BOZ'S JUBA, THE GREAT PELL, (THE ORIGINAL BOVEN,) SERENADERS!

THIS EVENING - MONDAY, June 11th TUESDAY, June 12th, WEDNESDAY, June 13th, THURSDAY, June 14th, FRIDAY, June 15th, and SATURDAY, June 16th, 1848. CHANGE OF PROGRAMME EA H EVENING. EACH EVE'ING

Search for an Event [Help](#)

Performed by troupe: _____ Performance venue type: _____

Event type: _____

City or town: _____

Performer type: _____

Occurred in date range (choose unit): _____ OR _____

List events by: Date Troupe Type

By Event...

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

SEARCH FOR SONGS & ACTS

Choose which restrictions you would like to place on your search for songs, acts, and other performance items. Not all fields need to be completed to perform a search.

To list all performance items in the records, just select 'Search'.

Woodcut of 'Yankee Sullivan' is from 1540. Local Studies Collection, Sheffield C

for Songs and Acts
for Venue
for Troupe

Present Data Coverage
Development Team
Credits and Sponsors

Search the Maps
Interactive Maps
Antiquarian Maps

Search by Keyword

Search for Songs and Acts

Title Keyword:

Act type:

Performance venue type:

Performer/Troupe keyword:

Venue keyword:

City or town:

Search

By Song & Act...

SEARCH FOR A VENUE

Choose which restrictions you would like to place on your search for a venue. Not all fields need to be completed to perform a search.

To list all venues in the records, just select 'Search'.

Contains the word(s):

Type of venue:

Location:

Visited by troupe:

List results by: Name Year

Search

By Venue...

Search by Keyword

And by any Keyword.

all of which provide different parameters and limitations--by venue, performer, and performance type, by city, and by date.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

Several further features in particular are worth showing you.

An important feature of the Songs & Acts entries, in addition to the history of the song and its recording legacy, is that, for some of the songs, we have been able to provide our own recordings. The entry for Lucy Long, for example, has two recordings attached: as parlour music recorded by a soprano and pianist; and as folk music recorded by a band in St John's, Newfoundland. You can also find lyrics and sheet music covers for this song in the entry.

SONG / ACT DETAILS:
LUCY LONG

Tag this Record

Title: Lucy Long
Type: Song
Description: [Alternately: "Miss Lucy Long"]

To listen to this song (and others) on the Artists Respond to Juba Site. [Click Here](#) and/or [Here](#).

Music for "Miss Lucy Long" by Billy Whitlock (1813-1878); lyrics by T.G. Booth (dates unknown). This claim, made by Whitlock, Hans Nathan (42).

[for Songs and Acts](#)
[for Venue](#)
[for Troupe](#)
[Search the Maps](#)
[Interactive Maps](#)
[Antiquarian Maps](#)

[Lyrics](#)
[Audio File - Minstrels in the Parlour](#)
[Sheet Music Cover #1](#)

MINSTRELS IN THE PARLOUR

- [Introduction](#)
- [A Night by de Galles Fire](#)
- [Buffalo Gals](#)
- [Carry Me Back to Old Virginia](#)
- [De Boatman's Dance](#)
- [De Dandy Broadway Swall](#)
- [De Coler'd Finner Bull](#)
- [Dearest Man](#)
- [Ginger Blue](#)
- [Gwinee Offic: de Minstrelante](#)
- [Honey Are We Darker So Gay](#)
- [Jenny Get Your Ostrack Dance](#)
- [Miss Lucy Long](#)

Miss Lucy Long
(Alternately: Lucy Long)

For information on this song as part of the blackface minstrel tradition, please see [its page in The Juba Project's Minstrels Database](#).

For an alternate interpretation of this song, see [The Mid-Atlantic Minstrel Show](#) -- another item in this project's 'Artists Respond to Juba' section.

Credits
Art Babayants, piano; Alison Jutzi, vocals; Dennis Patrick, sound technician.

Lyrics
Verse 1

MISS LUCY LONG

LUCY LONG.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

Antiquarian Maps have been located, scanned and entered into one part of the site for researchers to review & use in following the itinerary of performers. We restricted ourselves to seven cities, including London. On each map, the location of known venues that housed minstrels has been designated. You can link on that point of the map, and you will be taken to the appropriate page on the database.

THE JUBA PROJECT
EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852

Database Home Help Tagged Records Feedback

Search the Records
for Person
for Event
for Songs and Acts
for Venue
for Troupe

About This Web Site
Bibliography
Sources of Evidence
Present Data Coverage
Development Team
Credits and Sponsors

Search the Maps
Interactive Maps
Antiquarian Maps

Search by Keyword

ANTIQUARIAN MAPS

Follow the links below to access period cartography of some of the cities visited by blackface performers in the mid-19th Century. These maps plot the location of known minstrelsy-related venues, and provide links to the venue detail pages for these sites, at which more information can be found.

In compiling these maps, we have researched the locations of blackface performances and venues at which blackface performers performed while visiting the U.K.; and from the mid-19th century, provide links to the venue detail pages for these sites, at which more information can be found.

Brighton (1852)
Image Courtesy Brighton and Hove City Council
Acquisition & Research

Bristol (1854)
Bolton's Map of Clifton
Image Courtesy Bristol City Council
Acquisition & Research

Liverpool (1847)
Bennison's Map of Liverpool
Image Courtesy Liverpool City Council
Acquisition & Research

London (1843)
A Street Map of London
Web Preparation: Bethany

Newcastle (1858)

Red Targets indicate Venue Locations. For more information about a venue, click on its target.
For a complete list of minstrelsy-related venues in Brighton, perform a venue search [Here](#).

THE JUBA PROJECT

Search the Database

The University of Toronto's Cartography Office assisted in the creation of an interactive feature that allows the researcher to map the movements of troupes and individuals. As an example, for all Events at which Juba appeared, the map will look as you see it below. The hope is that, as more information is recorded, regular itinerary routes following roads and train lines can be determined.

THE JUBA PROJECT
EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852

Database Home Help Tagged Records Feedback

SEARCH FOR A EVENT

MAP IT

Person: Juba (n.d.)

Number of matching

Event and Date

1. Variety Jun 12-17 1848
2. Variety Jun 19-24 1848
3. Variety Jun 26-Jul 1 1848
4. Variety Jul 3-8 1848
5. Variety Jul 10-15 1848
6. Variety Jul 17-21 1848
7. Minstrel Show Jul 22 1848
8. Variety Jul 24-29 1848
9. Minstrel Show Jul 24 1848
10. Minstrel Show Jul 29 1848
11. Variety Jul 31-Aug 5 1848

ORDER	venue	PLACED	GEONx	GEONy	VENUES	EVENTS	FROM
1	london00	530945.1045	181082.8367		Vuehall Gardens	5	June 12, 1848
2	swind00	528500	105500		Newburgh Rooms, Cannon Place	2	July 22, 1848
3	london00	530945.1045	181082.8367		Vuehall Gardens	1	July 24, 1848

MAP IT

A TOUR OF THE JUBA PROJECT

The Database clearly is a powerful tool for the researcher. All material on it is available to the general public for its use, and will, we hope, be particularly useful to historians of the period and those interested in performance.

But a database such as this can be daunting to those new to research, or to this kind of tool. As an introduction, and as a repository for our own research using this material, we created the Featured Performers and Documents site, which we will tour now.

	Featured Performers & Documents	Burnt Cork: An Interdisciplinary Symposium
	Search the Minstrelsy Database	Artists Respond to Juba



White performers in blackface make-up were performing in supposed imitation of American slave culture long before 1842. But in that year these entertainers began appearing together as groups in stand-alone entertainments, minstrel shows. Originating in the north-eastern United States, they almost immediately traveled to Britain, where they were particularly popular.

The Juba Project, named after early minstrelsy's most famous and most unusual early practitioner, explores this phenomenon both from a historical and a dramaturgical perspective. Links on this page will take you to the different parts of the project, including a database that will allow you to trace the movements of performers around Britain from 1842-1852 ([Search the Database](#)), a closer examination of some of the documents and one group of performers ([Featured Performers & Documents](#) -- a good place to start), a performance-practice site that will explore the responses of contemporary artists to the documents and traditions of minstrelsy ([Artists Respond](#)), and information about a 2008 Symposium on minstrelsy's traditions and legacy ([Burnt Cork](#)).

[Featured Performers & Documents](#)

This portion of the site can be accessed by clicking on the Featured Performers & Documents link(s) on the Project Home Page

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

These pages of The Juba Project will introduce you to some of the performers, troupes, venues and songs of early minstrelsy in Britain, and provide you with examples of the kind of research that we are doing into the history of popular performance--and that you also might be interested in doing.



You can link into three different areas that take you in three different directions:

1. how one blackface minstrel troupe looked, performed and moved over time, including an itinerary with attached documents. Information here helps to prepare the researcher to search the database
2. close examinations of individual documents, with interactive pop-up commentary, including a focus on descriptions of the dance of Juba. Information here helps to prepare the researcher to read the documents found in the database.
3. contextual information includes a bibliography, as well as some information on the contemporary legacy of blackface, found on the web and on YouTube.

We will introduce you to each direction in this part of the guide.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

Juba & the Ethiopian Serenaders connects with the database directly as often as possible, to give the visitor to the project an introduction to its use.

Juba & The Ethiopian Serenaders in the U.K.: 1842 - 1852

THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers and Documents
Juba and the Ethiopian Serenaders in the UK: 1842-52

'Ethiopian Serenaders' was a name used by several troupes of influential early minstrel performers who toured Britain between 1846 and 1850, playing in saloons and castles, for the working classes and for Queen Victoria. They appear to have 'cleaned up' minstrelsy, making it safe for the middle classes; and they introduced the influential dancer Juba to a large audience. Juba was the only performer of colour in these early minstrel shows, and worth looking at for that reason alone. He was also quite possibly the most 'noticed' (that is, reviewed) dancer in Britain during the period of his brief career.

This section focuses narrowly on the travels of two different versions of The Ethiopian Serenaders. The sole consistent feature between them, besides the name, was the appearance and leadership of G. W. Pell, an influential clown and 'bones' player.

Use the navigation tools to the left of this page to access brief biographies of some of the Serenaders, information related to the venues in which they performed during this period, samples of the kind of music they performed, and a timeline detailing their travels using reviews and other primary sources.

THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers and Documents
Juba and the Ethiopian Serenaders in the UK
Who were they?

The early blackface minstrels came from a wide range of backgrounds and points of origin, though most were white working-class Anglo-Americans. One of the goals of The Juba Project is to re-examine the backgrounds of the men who took to this kind of make-up during its first years of widespread popularity. The answer for the Ethiopian Serenaders: they were a very American group, advertising (falsely) their authentic re-creation of an American culture--the songs, dances and other entertainments of plantation slavery. They were working class, and they were white--with the extraordinary exception of William Lane, 'Juba,' a dancer of colour in a segregated business.

Here are three sample biographies of representative performers in the Ethiopian Serenaders--a clown, a banjo player, and a dancer. They knew each other well--for a while they toured alone, as a trio. They may be seen to represent different strains of minstrelsy.

G. W. Pell, (Gilbert Pelham), a master bones player and clown. Pell clearly exhibits minstrelsy's roots in circus and street performance, with his too-wide collar, his perpetual motion and his inability to behave.

WHO were they?
WHERE and WHAT did they play?
TIMELINE: Itineraries and reviews.

Linking on Who Were They provides a brief introduction to early minstrelsy through three distinctive performers from one troupe and tour. Linking on their names takes the visitor to their database biographies.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

Linking on Where and What Did They Play provides the visitor with a brief statement on the range of venues housing blackface minstrelsy, with links to samples, from castle to saloon, but focusing on two in particular, the St James in London and the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, for both of which we have programs.

[WHO were they?](#)
[WHERE and WHAT did they play?](#)
[TIMELINE: Itineraries and reviews.](#)

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers and Documents Juba and the Ethiopian Serenaders in the UK Where and What Did They Play?

Blackface minstrelsy quickly became a phenomenon in the United Kingdom after the arrival of the first major troupe in 1843. Specialist blackface performers arrived regularly from the United States, other American performers began performing minstrel songs and dances (with or without the actual make-up), and British entertainers 'blacked up' in imitation, to cash in on the popularity. In the same way American rhythm and blues and then rock and roll found its way to the UK in the 1950s and 1960s, profoundly influencing local culture and performance, minstrelsy exported a black American idiom to a British white audience. It had been corrupted and capitaliz

Minstrels pla
 palaces (at A
 pleasure gar
 rooms of sal
 theatres and
 all-male aud
 gave speciall

Diverse audi
 humour of th
 of the goals e
 performance

**TUESDAY, THURSDAY,
and
SATURDAY,**
(FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES)
Commencing each Evening at Half past Eight o'Clock;
 AND THEY WILL REPEAT URBIN
DAY PERFORMANCE,
OR
Wednesday Morning July 1,
Commencing at Half past Two o'Clock. 1846

PROGRAMME

PART I.

QUICK STEP, ----- FULL BAND.
 GLEE, -- "**Come Darkies Sing,**" ----- COMPANY.
 ▶ SONG, -- "**The Old Jaws Bone**" ----- HARRINGTON.
 ▶ GLEE, -- "**Color'd Fancy Ball**" ----- COMPANY.
 ▶ SONG, -- "**Ginger Blue**" ----- WHITE.
 ▶ SONG, -- "**Lucy Long**" ----- GERMON.

PART II.

SLOW MOVEMENT, "**Love Not**" ----- FULL BAND.
 GLEE, -- "**Get along home, Yellow Gals**" ----- COMPANY.
 ▶ SONG, -- "**LUCY NEAL**" ----- HARRINGTON.
 (Which is continually encored with the most enthusiastic applause)
 GLEE, -- "**Phantom Chorus**" ----- COMPANY.

We have recreated the program for these two performances as an interactive page --linking on the song title will take you to the appropriate page in the database, and linking on the arrow at the beginning of selected songs will allow you to hear what it sounds like, in a recording taken from The Juba Project's Artists Respond site.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

Hanover Square, London: Jan. 1846

The Ethiopian Minstrelsy.—We were present on Monday evening at the private concert given by these able entertainers, in the Hanover-square Rooms. The black troupe consists of six "Devils" from the State of "old Virginia." The vocal part of the entertainment consisted of songs, duets, and choruses; and the instrumental portion, of pieces well suited to display the possibilities of the instruments used—namely, the banjo, mandolin, and bone castanets. We must confess, that we were by no means prepared for so rich and varied a musical treat; as we did not suppose the vocalists, or the instruments they employed, could have performed such elegant music. Independent of the various pieces announced in the programme, the whole gentlemen attended the company by the performance of some half-dozen others, in compliance with the wishes of some portion of the audience. The most extraordinary part of the performance was that of Mr. Pell on the "bones," which was highly finished and most surprising. This performer's management of the bone castanets is really wonderful; and the ease and rapidity with which he produced tones, grace and force, quite exceeded his powers. He possesses exquisite taste, a most correct ear, and the modulation of tone produced on these rude instruments was most effective and pleasing. In short, we may say with the Icelandic, that—

He settled his "bones,"
And produced such tones.

They'd have noted the name of the performers.

We may add to our commendation of Mr. Pell, by stating, that he possesses all the quiet humour of a genuine comedian. The vocalists sing with admirable taste and effect, and their voices may be truly said to blend in sweetest harmony. Some of the comic songs were executed with considerable humour; but in our taste, the most effective portion of the vocal business, was the beautiful ballad of "Lucy Neal," which was given with great feeling by Mr. Hanington—it was the gem of the evening. The selections from *Fire Drill*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and *L'opera*, were neatly executed; and "The Railroad Overture" was a real go-a-head "master." We have no doubt but these amusing performances will prove very attractive. To those who wish to do so, "the Devils" we can recommend a call to "the black devils" (we only use the term applied to them by the Yankee brethren) at the Hanover square Rooms, as a most efficient and pleasant remedy.

WHO were they?

WHERE and WHAT did they play?

TIMELINE: Itineraries and reviews.

Linking on Timelines: Itineraries and Reviews allows you to follow the travels of the Ethiopian Serenaders on two important tours, in 1846 and 1848, in a timeline that features a wide range of original documents.

THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers and Documents
Ethiopian Serenaders in the UK: 1842-52
Timeline: Itinerary and Reviews

Timeline for the British tours of two 'versions' of the Ethiopian Serenaders. You can follow their travels, and look at reviews and other documents that can help you understand what they looked and sounded like, and how audiences reacted to them. This is the kind of timeline you can create for any performer or troupe when you search the database.

Jump to the Second Ethiopian Serenaders (1848-9) [here](#).

The First Ethiopian Serenaders (1846-7)

Arriving in Britain late in 1845 under the management of J. A. Dumbolton, this troupe included G. W. Pell playing the 'Bones' and acting as the primary comedian, as well as W. White, George Harrington, Moody Stanwood and Frank Germon. For most of 1846 they performed three nights a week at the St James Theatre in London, alternating with foreign-language theatre troupes and concerts of classical music. They played for a remarkably broad audience, including appearances at working class taverns and minor theatres, morning concerts for children, private concerts for the aristocracy, and a Royal Command Performance for Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and the Duke of Wellington at Arundel Castle late in the year. They were at least partly responsible for standardizing the repertory, costuming and patter used by minstrel troupes after them; the name itself became a common term for all minstrels.

1842 - 1852

Parsing the Documents

Blackface Minstrelsy in Context

WHO were they?

WHERE and WHAT did they play?

TIMELINE: Itineraries and reviews.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

Parsing the Documents

Parsing the Documents focuses on a Microhistorical analysis of individual documents, with internal links encouraging the visitor to look again at all areas of the image or text for clues and questions.

THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers and Documents
Parsing the Documents

'To parse' means to examine something in minute detail, to dismantle it in order to analyze its parts, and to try to understand how those parts relate to one another. Historians spend a good deal of time engaged in this activity. This part of the website provides some examples of what might--just might--be learned about blackface minstrelsy from the very close examination of a few documents. Typically, the examination complicates, rather than simplifies any possible understanding. The documents we examine in this section provide the case in point.

The focus remains on the Ethiopian Serenaders, and on the dancer Juba, though other documents will be brought into the discussion. You can link on the left to three different kinds of examination.

In HYPERDOCUMENTS we reproduce specific individual documents, and allow you to interact directly with them, linking on different parts of the image or words of the text to find additional explanation, discussion, information, and images, links, and sounds that might help to understand that one small part of a larger body of

In PAST THE DOCUMENTS, we reproduce two publications by the Juba Project's

THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers and Documents
Parsing the Documents
Hyperdocuments

Here you will find what we call Hyperdocuments. Move your cursor over the reproduced document and link on any highlighted area to read commentary, see related imagery, link to other useful information, and generally move out from the document into the world. We will add to the list, and to the numbers of links within each documents. So far we have 'parsed' the following:

- the standard [image of Juba dancing at Vauxhall gardens](#), often reproduced as typical of minstrel dance
- a rough [woodcut of a minstrel dancing](#) that may say more than we would have expected
- an [image of the Ethiopian Serenaders](#) that has embedded in it a remarkable portrait
- a full analysis of a [Manchester review that included a full wench dance](#), with Juba

[Hyperdocuments](#)

[Past the Documents, to the Dance](#)

[Witness to Juba](#)

The first area is a set of six Hyperdocuments.
We will show you two here.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

The first is an image of Juba dancing at Vauxhall, well-known in studies of dance and minstrelsy.

JUBA DANCING:
A Micro-Historical Study

JUBA DANCES AT VAUXHALL GARDENS
-- Introduction --

This is the best known and most discussed image of the master of early minstrel dance, William Henry Lane, or 'Blacks Juba,' dancing at Vauxhall Gardens in 1848. Much has been made of this image, as an illustration of his dance, his personal style and his cultural milieu; the two most influential commentaries are by [Marian Hannah Winter](#) and [John F. Szwed](#). This page is intended to provide a critical reading of this image as a historical document.

show, and that his was a whole-body, rhythmic performance. The visitor to this page should be able to see different interpretations, in these two articles and [the Documents and Witness to Juba](#).

But then take a closer look at this image. Does this support the argument, or is it an artist's rendering of a unique event, or a composite? Can we learn anything at all about Juba or does it completely, utterly lie?

Let's suppose for a moment that this is not a lie, but a formulaic image of someone who danced like this.

Run your cursor over the image, and highlighted sections of the image will appear.

JUBA DANCES AT VAUXHALL GARDENS
-- The Hands & Posture --

This dancer has his [hands in his pockets](#), and he is slightly stooped. This appears at first glance (to me) to be the image of an Irish traditional dance as we might witness it today--body upright, back straight, hands unmoving and all the motion in the feet. Descriptions of Juba compare what he does to a great [many other dances](#): there is no reason to think that this style would not be one of them. We know how impressive this kind of dancing can be, and certainly one of the features of Juba's dance was the [A minstrel dancing](#) made by his feet. On the other hand, to be quiet while listening to Juba's performance in the contrary, he was a very different [depictions of](#) e, it may be that this suggests Juba's descriptions of this, and argues against the as

In fact, it is [dancing mi](#) suggests Juba's descriptions of this, and argues against the as

From an early 1860s playbill: reprinted in Nathan. See the thumbnails below for additional images.

[Juba Dancing Ma](#)

Get Appare for Your Website.



Link on any of these, and text will appear to provide information and to ask questions, in this case about the head, the shape of the torso, the position of the leg, and the shape of the boots, for example. Within each explanation, there are further links that will provide additional imagery, citations, additional comments, links and entire articles. The objective is to provide as much interpretive material, and means to interpret, as is possible without the discursive, narrative structure of an essay (on the one hand), but without falling into an incomprehensible accumulation of raw data (on the other). A focus on the single document can help.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

The second document displayed here by way of example is a brief narrative report of Juba's death. Each few words of this short tale raises questions and causes concern, provided for in the commentary. This includes the statement, and evidence, that his skeleton was on display after he died.

JUBA'S OBITUARY:
A Micro-Historical Study

**Among the Minstrels of the Past.
THE RISE AND FALL OF BURNT CORK.**

The original Juba, a negro lad whose actual name was William Henry Lane, was subsequently a strong "card" at Charley White's Melodeon, in the Bowery. Thomas Briggs the banjo-player and Gilbert Ward Pell, brother of Richard, negotiated him away from White in 1849, and took him to England, where he became a "lion." Success proved too much for him. He married too late (and a white woman, besides), and died early and miserably. In a note addressed to Charley White, Juba informed him that, when next he should be seen by Charley, he (Juba) would be riding in his own carriage. It has been said that in 1852 his skeleton, without the carriage, was on exhibition at the Surrey Music Hall, Sherfield, England.

The Death & Exhibition of Master Juba
-- "The original Juba..." --

Juba was a dancer the 1840s, emerging from the dance houses of the Five Points district of New York City to win dance competitions, perform regularly in variety theatres and early minstrel performances in New York and along the eastern seaboard, and finally to travel, with the Ethiopian Serenaders, to England, where he was widely praised

**Among the Minstrels of the Past.
THE RISE AND FALL OF BURNT CORK.**

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Scotland, Ireland and (possibly) Europe. You can find out much more about his [brief biography](#) and his [itinerary](#) in the database and website, look at [descriptions of his performance](#), and read an [analysis](#)

at the time of writing, there had been imitators using his name.

[Juba's Obituary Main](#)

The Death & Exhibition of Master Juba
-- "... Gilbert Ward Pell, brother of Richard ..." --

Pell and his brother [performed together](#) as blackface minstrels early in their careers, but separated and competed afterward. [Richard \(Dick\) Pelham](#) was a member of the (allegedly) first minstrel troupe in 1843, and traveled to England shortly after forming. He remained there and died in Liverpool in 1876. [His](#) [Brief Obituary - G.W. Pell](#) www.utm.utoronto.ca [with](#) [other](#) [at Gilbert Pelham](#) - Pell was well known as a blackface clown and dancer. [Pell's obituary](#) was [reproduced](#) in [the](#) [New York Clipper](#), and [is](#) [available](#) [at](#) [the](#) [New York Public Library](#).

GILBERT WARD PELL,

The retired bone player, died on Dec. 21, 1872, and was buried in the Cemetery St. Helens, Lancashire, Eng., aged forty-seven years.

New York Clipper, 30 March 1912.

[Juba's Obituary Main](#)

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

Past the Documents, To The Dance provides two articles (a more traditional approach) taking a closer look at the evidence related to Juba's dance style.

[Hyperdocuments](#)

[Past the Documents, to the Dance](#)

[Witness to Juba](#)

The image shows a composite of three elements: a website navigation menu, a website header, and a document viewer. The navigation menu on the left lists: 'THE JUBA PROJECT HOME' (with a silhouette of performers), 'Juba & The Ethiopian Serenaders in the U.K.: 1842 - 1852', 'Parsing the Documents', 'Blackface Minstrelsy in Context', 'Hyperdocuments', 'Past the Documents to the Dance', and 'Witness to Juba'. The website header in the center reads: 'THE JUBA PROJECT', 'Featured Performers and Documents', 'Parsing the Documents', and 'Past the Documents, To the Dance'. Below this is a paragraph of text and a list of two links: 'Past the Documents, To the Dance' and 'Juba's Dance: An Assessment of Newly Acquired Documentation'. The document viewer at the bottom shows the title 'PAST THE DOCUMENTS, TO THE DANCE: THE WITNESS TO JUBA IN 1848', copyright information for Stephen Johnson (1999), and the beginning of an article by Domenico Pietropaolo discussing the distinction between history and historiography.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

As a complement to this, Witness to Juba provides annotated excerpts from those descriptions.

The screenshot shows the main page of 'THE JUBA PROJECT' with a sidebar on the left and a main content area. Several callout boxes are overlaid on the page:

- Top Callout (Orange):** 'Hyperdocuments Past the Documents, to the Dance Witness to Juba'.
- Left Sidebar (Grey):** 'THE JUBA PROJECT HOME' with silhouettes of dancers.
- Left Sidebar (Orange):** 'Juba & The Ethiopian Serenaders in the U.K.: 1842 - 1852', 'Parsing the Documents', 'Blackface Minstrelsy in Context', 'Hyperdocuments Past the Documents, to the Dance Witness to Juba'.
- Main Content Area (White):**

THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers and Documents
Parsing the Documents
Witness to Juba

The following links arrange a selection of eyewitness accounts that describe Juba on his tour to England and Scotland in 1848-9. The accounts are accompanied by commentary wherever it seemed valuable. For full citations of all transcriptions, search the database.

There is a large piece of silk in the New York Public Library's Dance Collection that was created as a souvenir programme in 1848, in commemoration of Juba's long run at Vauxhall Gardens. The silk has printed on it dozens of excerpted descriptions of Juba. A recent argument contends that the silk is a remnant of a press campaign that encouraged reviewers to attempt to describe him, in competition with the well-known attempt by Charles Dickens, used in the advertising [[@Note](#)]. That is the first question, of course: are these descriptions spontaneous and heartfelt, or are they examples of a purchased or manipulated review, or 'puffery'? They seem far too intricate for half-hearted puffery, as you will see.

[Precision](#)

[Wild Abandon, Whole-body Dancing, Contortion and Sudden Change](#)

[Comparisons](#)

[The Launch](#)
- Bottom Callout (White):** 'THE JUBA PROJECT Featured Performers and Documents Parsing the Documents Witness to Juba Precision'.
- Bottom Callout (White):** 'Back to Eyewitness Accounts Main'.
- Bottom Callout (White):** 'Note - Observer, 12 June 1848. www.utm.utoronto.ca' with a snippet of text: 'Some advertisements caution audiences that they will have to be very quiet during some of Juba's dancing, in order to hear this "precision," as if the sounds were so quick and staccato that listeners might miss them altogether. This is some of the best evidence for this dancer's contribution to early forms of "tap" dancing, and in particular that still-bodied foot work embodied by Bunny Briggs more recently, whose feet did not appear to move, despite the intricate percussion. It is also an indication of the what might have been "judged" during the competitions with which he was involved in New York City prior to his British tour. The contradiction: at the same time, Juba is described as dancing with wild abandon.'
- Bottom Callout (White):** 'The manner in which he beats time with his feet, and the extraordinary command he possesses over them, can only be believed by those who have been present at the exhibition. [[@Noty](#)]'.

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers & Documents

Blackface Minstrelsy in Context provides links to further information on blackface minstrelsy...

Blackface Minstrelsy in Context

THE JUBA PROJECT HOME

- Juba & The Ethiopian Serenaders in the U.K.: 1842 - 1852
- Parsing the Documents
- Blackface Minstrelsy in Context
- Blackface Minstrelsy:
 - In the Library
 - On the Web
 - On YouTube

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers and Documents

Blackface Minstrelsy in Context

'Blacking up' the face as a part of a performance has been a feature of many cultures for a very long time. As a representation of the plantation slave of the southern United States, the image became firmly entrenched in commercial entertainment in the mid-19th century, was disseminated to colonial and immigrant cultures around the world, and has had extraordinary persistence. Despite the absence of the blackface image from the mass media since the beginning of the American civil rights movement in the late 1950s, it has not disappeared. The Juba Project takes a close look at one small corner of the history of blackface minstrelsy. We believe it is a significant corner, a time when the form first established itself as a popular and viable means of expression and entertainment, a good source of parody and humour as well as repression. This is when the form as we still experience it in some measure took hold in Western culture. A better understanding of the complexities of that first phenomenon is important in any understanding of its legacy.

These pages provide some basic information for further reading on blackface and on minstrelsy, compiled from various sources. It will be added to from time to time, as more work appears.

You will also find here a report on what we found when we visited two of the...

THE JUBA PROJECT

Featured Performers and Documents

Blackface Minstrelsy in Context

Blackface in the Library

The word 'blackface' typed into a 'Google Books' search results in 3,450 hits (August 2009). No doubt that will grow daily. Such access to information provides an extraordinary resource for anyone interested in finding out more about this subject (or any other), but it can also make it difficult to begin. Here are some basic sources.

For the most part, this list restricts itself to works published since the early 1990s, books only, and books with a significant discussion of blackface from any perspective--cultural and social history, histories of theatre, cinema, music and dance, as well as discussions of class and gender. Much more will be found by the interested researcher in journal articles, dissertations and archives.

Excerpted from a bibliography compiled by Agnieszka Baranowska for the project "Biting the Inevitable Hand: Blackface Minstrelsy and the Origins of American Animation."

To Begin--8 Works on the 'Matter' of American Blackface Minstrelsy

Blackface Minstrelsy:

- [In the Library](#)
- [On the Web](#)
- [On YouTube](#)

...in the Library...

THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers & Documents

... and as a still-extant contemporary phenomenon through searches of the Web ...

Blackface Minstrelsy:

- [In the Library](#)
- [On the Web](#)
- [On YouTube](#)



THE JUBA PROJECT
Featured Performers and Documents
Blackface Minstrelsy in Context
Blackface on YouTube

This page offers a few words about the availability of examples of representations of blackface on this popular video-sharing site, compiled by Stephen Johnson with materials from Steph Berntson & Lydia Wilkinson.

On the one hand, the blackface tradition has been buried (not gone--just buried) in North American popular performance culture since the early years of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s. The Internet, however, has created an environment for the distribution of everything by everybody. A few minutes on [YouTube](#) will resurrect a range of imagery and of performance. Writing now (in March 2008) you will find the following examples:

- a silent film with the great African American blackface performer Bert Williams from 1916.

...and YouTube

A TOUR OF THE JUBA PROJECT

From the Home Page, you can also find out more about The Juba Project's involvement in *Burnt Cork: Traditions and Legacies of Blackface Minstrelsy*, a two day symposium held in March 2008.



White performers in blackface make-up were performing in supposed imitation before 1842. But in that year these entertainers began appearing together as groups.

[Burnt Cork: An Interdisciplinary Symposium](#)

To access this portion of the site, Click on the Burnt Cork link at the top right of the Home Page.

...group to practice site that minstrelsy (Artists (Burnt Cork).

THE JUBA PROJECT HOME

[About the Symposium](#)

[About the Participants](#)

[Discuss and Research Blackface Minstrelsy](#)

[Press Release](#)

[Symposium Schedule](#)

[Symposium Sponsors](#)

[Registration](#)

THE SYMPOSIUM

Dedicated to the highly contentious and richly complex tradition of blackface minstrelsy, this two day symposium aims to provide an opportunity for exploration, discussion, and debate concerning the varied legacies of this performance idiom.

Click on the links at left to read further information about various aspects of the Symposium.

A TOUR OF THE JUBA PROJECT

Finally, from the Home Page, you can link to Artists Respond, a gallery of work by contemporary artists. We asked them to look at some of the documents, the remnants of Juba and his world, and to tell us how they would interpret them—not to re-create Juba's performance, but to translate the remnants of his art and life back into performance, into a modern idiom. We asked for a 'reading,' which either took place as an interview, or as a performance.

	Featured Performers & Documents	Burnt Cork: An Interdisciplinary Symposium
	Search the Minstrelsy Database	Artists Respond to Juba



White performers in blackface make-up were performing in supposed imitation of American slave culture long before 1842. But in that year these entertainers began appearing together as groups in stand-alone entertainments, minstrel shows. Originating in the north-eastern United States, they almost immediately traveled to Britain, where they were particularly popular.

The Juba Project, named after early minstrelsy's most famous and most unusual early practitioner, explores this phenomenon both from a historical and a dramaturgical perspective. Links on this page will take you to the different parts of the project, including a database that will allow you to trace the movements of performers around Britain from 1842-1852 ([Search the Database](#)), a closer examination of some of the documents and one group of performers ([Featured Performers & Documents](#) -- a good place to start), a performance-practice site that will explore the responses of contemporary artists to the documents and traditions of minstrelsy ([Artists Respond](#)), and information about a 2008 Symposium on minstrelsy's traditions and legacy ([Burnt Cork](#)).

[Artists Respond to Juba](#)

As with the other portions of the site, the Artists Respond Gallery can be accessed by clicking the relevant link on the top right of the Project Home Page

THE JUBA PROJECT

Artists Respond to Juba

Included in the Artists Respond to Juba section are excerpts from a stage and a radio play based on Juba's career, interviews with dancers and musicians about minstrelsy's continued influence, its early use as a children's entertainment, and so on. There are recordings of songs by musicians in Newfoundland treating minstrelsy's songs as folk music, and by an operatic singer in Toronto treating them as polite parlour music. A group of undergraduate students and a group of professional dancers both try to evoke Juba's experience in the minstrel show through movement.



**Channeling Juba's Dance:
3 dancers explore Juba**

Channelling Juba's Dance

Table of Contents

- [Dramaturg's Don't Dance \(Notes on the Process\)](#)
- [Intro: Word Inquiry #1](#)
- [Excitement, Bill #1](#)
- [Compete One](#)
- [Solo One](#)
- [Compete Two](#)

Compete #2
Jen and Kathleen

This improvisation was based on the words 'control' and 'abandon.' Juba was, on the one hand, described as having absolute precision of movement, and complete control. On the other hand, and sometimes by the same eyewitnesses, he was described as chaotic, out of control, and indescribable for that reason. How could he be both? See Precision and Wild Abandon for some of the sources.

Here, we've indicated what you might see by clicking on just one of the Gallery Links: Channeling Juba's Dance

A TOUR OF THE JUBA PROJECT

Back Home

We hope this brief tour will help you understand how the project is constructed, why it was undertaken, and the means by which you can make more effective use of the database. The first phase of the research project that created this database has come to an end, along with the grant that supported it.

The good thing about a database and any on-line research project such as this, is that the end of a grant does not mark the end of the project. Any research generated in future, from any source, can be entered in a fully integrated manner into the database, thus enriching and improving the value of the project. Students and Artists who wish to respond to the materials provided here can continue to have their work added to Artists Respond. Documents can continue to be interrogated publicly in the Hyperdocuments section of the site.

 <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: orange;">THE JUBA PROJECT</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; font-weight: bold; color: black;">EARLY BLACKFACE MINSTRELSY IN BRITAIN 1842-1852</p>	Featured Performers & Documents	Burnt Cork: An Interdisciplinary Symposium
	Search the Minstrelsy Database	Artists Respond to Juba



White performers in blackface make-up were performing in supposed imitation of American slave culture long before 1842. But in that year these entertainers began appearing together as groups in stand-alone entertainments, minstrel shows. Originating in the north-eastern United States, they almost immediately traveled to Britain, where they were particularly popular.

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We also hope this tour has helped to give less experienced researchers an understanding of the kinds of research possible in the larger discipline this project represents--the history of popular performance.