



BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

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(J. Rosamund Johnson, W.C. Handy, Joe Lurie, and others)

Signed Photograph of the Members of The Memory Lane Review (circa 1933)

\$5000



Sepia-toned gelatin silver photograph. 10" x 8". Fine. A photograph of all 14 performers in The Memory Lane Review, and signed by all 14 of them. Additionally Signed a second time on the verso by J. Rosamund Johnson, perhaps indicating that this was his personal copy of the photograph.

J. Rosamund Johnson

The Review, started in the early 1930s by Joe Laurie was intended to include “notable favorites from a half century ago,” according to a 1934 newspaper article, which further notes that each performer brought to the stage “something of the past that endeared the artist to the followers of things theatrical back in the good old days of merriment.” According to W.C. Handy, the show was inspired by the repeal of prohibition when an impromptu celebration in New York City led by Al Smith resulted in a number of old time vaudevillians each performing, prompting Joe Laurie to form the traveling group. Handy described the tour “as It was the crowning glory of my life on the stage.”

A wonderful and nostalgic photograph with accompanying autographs. A complete list follows.

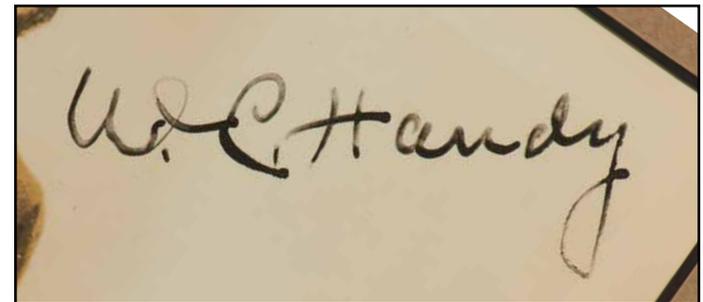
The group includes:

1. Joe Laurie: Founder of the Review who had performed as a comedian on the vaudeville circuit, on Broadway, and on radio. He authored two books: *Show Biz from Vaude to Video* and *Vaudeville: From the Honkey Tonks to the Palace*. The later title includes a mention of The Review.



2. J. Rosamund Johnson: The brother of author James Weldon Johnson and composer of music with lyrics by his brother to “Lift Every Voice and Sing”, widely known as the “Negro National Anthem.” He was also active in vaudeville with lighter works such as “The Evolution of Ragtime” and “Under the Bamboo Tree.” With his song writing partner Bob Cole, he produced popular operetta such as *Shoo-Fly Regiment* and *Red Moon*. He also originated the role of Frazier in the premiere performance of *Porgy and Bess*, and compiled and edited several volumes of African-American folk songs and spirituals.

3. W.C. Handy: Widely known as “The Father of the Blue”, Handy composed St, Louis Blues, Memphis Blues, Yellow Dog Blues, and many dozens more. His autobiography *Father of the Blues* is a major work on the history of the genre, and he was the editor of *Blues: An Anthology*, a major collection. Handy devoted all of Chapter 18 in *Father of the Blues* to The Memory Lane Review , where he noted the irony that in the nation’s capitol “... no colored person was allowed to see our show in Washington.”



4. Emma Francis: Famed as an acrobatic wooden shoe dancer or clogger, Francis appeared first in circuses and traveling shows, then into vaudeville, and eventually onto Broadway, where she was once billed as “Emma Francis and her Arabian Whirlwind.” At age 65 she was still performing hand springs, cart wheels, tap dances, and a soft shoe routine at Billy Rose’s Diamond Horseshow Club.
5. Harry Brooks: An early jazz composer, he was a friend and writing partner with Thomas “Fats” Waller. Along with .Waller and Andy Razaf, he composed *Ain’t Misbehaving* and *Black and Blue*. Handy referred to him as the “last of the old time banjoists.”
6. Annie Hart: Hart was a vaudeville performer who performed as a singer and actress. She appeared in Jerome Kern’s 1928 production of *Show Boat*.
7. Lizzie Wilson: Wilson was a popular signer and comedian. She was best-known for the *Schnitzelbank Song* which she sang at Tony Pastor’s in New York City, the original home of Vaudeville. She was known as “the Schnitzelbank Girl” and often performed in German costume. (as she is pictured in this photograph).
8. Dave Genaro: A vaudeville singer and dancer who often appeared with his wife Ray Bailey, was often credited with creating the “Cakewalk” dance.
9. Tom Harris: A vaudeville dancer, who according to Handy In *Father of the Blues* was prepared to dance the same dance for Franklin D. Roosevelt, that he had danced for Abraham Lincoln, when unfortunately FDR was called away.
10. Albert Campbell: “Campbell was a popular singer who first recorded in the 1890s and made a number of solo recordings before partnering with Henry Burr, John H. Meyer, and Frank Croxton to form the Peerless Quartet which became the most commercially successful group of the acoustic era of recording. Among their hits were *Sweet Adeline*, *By the Light of the Silvery Moon*, *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*, *Over There*, *My Wild Irish Rose*, and *I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl That Married Dear Old Dad*.
11. Gus Hill: Hill started as an Indian Club Juggler, became an impresario, owning all manner of troupes from circus-style troupes, burlesque, comic theatre, and a popular play based on the *Mutt and Jeff* cartoons.
12. Bill Swan: A vaudeville comedian most popular in the 1880s.
12. William Maxwell: Professionally known as Max Holden, a Scottish-born vaudeville performer and magician who emigrated to the U.S. in 1905, where he improved the art of shadow puppets! He later owned a chain of magic stores.
14. William Renaud: A Broadway and vaudeville actor and singer, who performed as the lead tenor with the Primrose Quartet and Minstrels.

Detailed image on following page. [\[BTC#423780\]](#)



Geo Hill
Wm. [unclear]

[unclear]
al Campbell

W. [unclear]

W. C. Handy

[unclear]

Harry Brooks
Tom Harris

Dorcas

Emma Francis

[unclear]

Annie Hart

Lizzie Wilson