

George Morrison, Sr. Papers

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2002**

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Biographical Note

George Morrison, Sr. was born in Fayette, Missouri, on 09 September 1891, the youngest son of Alice and Clark Morrison. His parents were, respectively, a talented pianist and a champion fiddler. Taken to Boulder, Colorado as a young child, Morrison attended Boulder public schools and studied violin for several years under Professor Harold Reynolds of the University of Colorado.

Upon graduating from high school, he met Miss Willa May of Denver at a dance at the old East Denver Turner Hall at 21st and Arapahoe Streets. They married in Denver on the 28th of August 1911.

After moving to Denver, Morrison continued his work with David Abromwitz and Dr. Horace Tureman, Conductor of the Denver Civic Symphony Orchestra. Declining a scholarship to the New England Conservatory, Morrison instead attended the Columbia Conservatory of Music on Chicago. Paying his own way with a job at the Panama Cabaret at 34th and State Streets.

In 1920, along with his orchestra, Morrison went to New York to record for Columbia Records and play at the Carleton Terrace Supper Club. There, he met Fritz Kreisler, who

provided him with free lessons. Later that same year, Morrison toured Europe, where he played a Command Performance for King George and Queen Mary, Mexico, Canada, and other portions of the United States.

By the mid-1920s, Morrison's touring entourage included Cuthbert Byrd, Desdmona and Leo Davis, Hattie McDaniel, Eugene Montgomery, Theodore Morris, Jimmy Lunceford, and Andy Kirk. (Other well-known musicians with whom he shared an affiliation include Duke Ellington, Nat King Cole, Scott Joplin, Al Jolson, Jelly Roll Morton, Tommy Dorsey, Paul Whiteman, and Quincy Jones.)

While not touring, he gave lessons in his Denver home to pupils even if they could not afford to pay him. Additionally, Morrison volunteered as an assistant to both vocal and instrumental teachers at Whittier Elementary, Cole Junior High, and Manual High Schools. He resided at 2558 Gilpin Street and, when not engaged actively in musical endeavors, worked as a salesman for Consolidated Industries (Highland Memory Gardens), where he received accolades as the top salesman for 1965. A complete list of Morrison's other honors appears in the collection.

He died on 05 November 1974.

- extracted from a biographical clipping held at the Blair-Caldwell Library

Container Listing

Box 1

Box 1	FF1	Advertising for G. Morrison and his Jazz Band	1920s-1940s
Box 1	FF2	Correspondence	1934 and 1941
Box 1	FF3	Cosmopolitan Club 36 th Annual Dinner Program	3/11/1967
Box 1	FF4	Denver Public Library	2/1966
Box 1	FF5	<i>Denver Young Men</i> (Volume 22, Number 37)	5/07/1931
Box 1	FF6	Flyers where G. Morrison and his Orchestra appears	undated
Box 1	FF7	George Morrison and his Orchestra information	undated

Box 1	FF8	Inaugural Ball: Governor Arthur Seligman (New Mexico) Program	1/01/1931
Box 1	FF9	Letterhead from the G. Morrison Casino	undated
Box 1	FF10	Mortuary Fan: Granberry	undated
Box 1	FF11	Newspaper Clippings: Ads for George Morrison and his Band	undated
Box 1	FF12	Newspaper Clippings: George Morrison, Sr.	1920s-1970
Box 1	FF13	Newspaper Clippings: Other	1920-1930s
Box 1	FF14	Notes taken during oral history interview with Marion Morrison Bailey (daughter)	undated
Box 1	FF15	YMCA: Glenarm Branch: 4 th Annual Membership Campaign Program	1930

Broadsides/oversize

Folio 1

George Morrison, Sr. accompanied by daughter and son	undated
George Morrison, Sr. and his Rigadooners in Platteville, Colorado	undated
George Morrison, Sr. and his 11 colored artists in Denver (arena 5 th and Broadway)	undated
The Colored Paul Whiteman and his 12 Rigadooners Greeley, Colorado	undated
Fiddler George Morrison and his boys Historic Windsor Hotel	3/07/1941

George Morrison and his Orchestra undated

Photograph: George Morrison, Sr.
(oversize) undated

Proclamation of Emancipation (Copy) undated