

SLADE MURRAY

Slade Murray began his professional career in the UK in the early-1880s. He toured Australia in 1889 for F. M. Clark and later found engagements as a burlesque and pantomime actor with Williamson, Garner and Musgrove, Harry Rickards and the Cogill Brothers. He returned home in the mid-1890s but came back in 1905 for Harry Rickards. Up until his death in 1913 he was also largely associated with the Fullers, Ted Holland, Harry Clay and James Brennan.

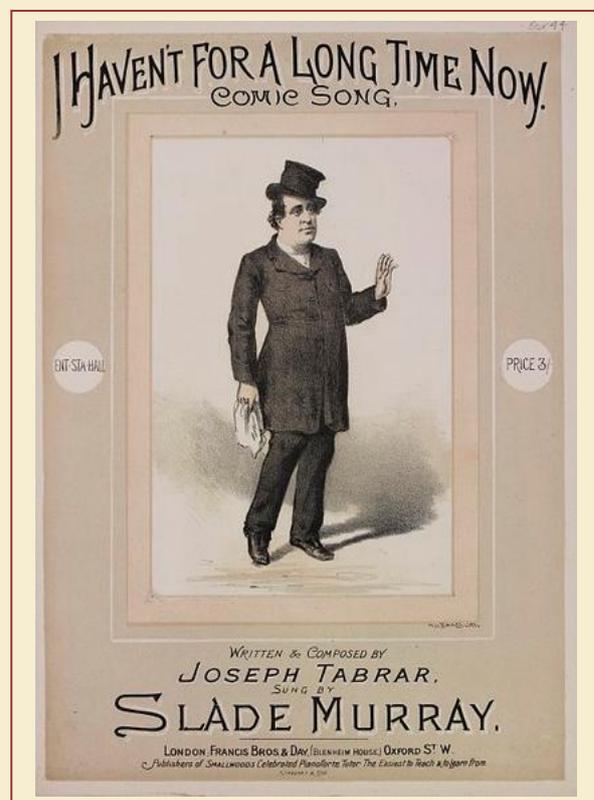
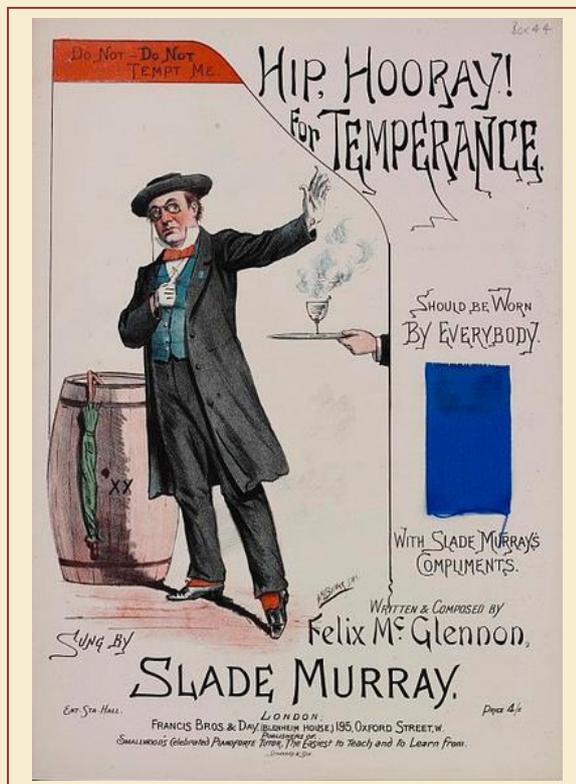
Born William James Gartell in London, Slade Murray started out his working life as a compositor for the Croydon *Chronicle*. Later, while working as a ship store foreman for Sir Andrew Lusk, he performed at amateur concerts, which led in 1883 to his first performance on a music hall stage. Within a year he had signed to an agency and was securing engagements at four of the leading London theatres. He also wrote this first hit song, "Far Far Away" that same year. It went on to be performed throughout Great Britain for some two years and established Murray as both a leading songwriter and singer.

In 1889 Frank Clark invited him to tour Australia. He then worked as a burlesque actor for Williamson, Garner and Musgrove, and featured in their 1889 pantomime *Aladdin*. During 1890s he again worked for Clark, as well as Harry Rickards, the Cogill Bros, and Williamson and Musgrove, while also operating his own troupes – the Gaiety Burlesque Co (1890/91), Crusaders (1892), New Lyric Combination (1893), 'Up-to-date' Specialty and Burlesque Combination and Oxford Co (1894). His other pantomime appearances included *Cinderella* (1890), *The Forty Thieves* (1891) and *Little Red Riding Hood* (1892).

Source: Victoria and Albert Museum



Murray returned home in the mid-1890s but in 1905 came back to Australia for Harry Rickards. He remained in the Antipodes, touring New Zealand for the Fullers in 1907, and appearing for Ted Holland, Harry Clay and James Brennan until 1911. He died in 1913, some two years after contracting dengue fever.



Source: Victoria and Albert Museum

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