



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Owen Mortimer collection**

1953-1999

Sc MG 424

Processed by Andre Elizee, March 1991, through the Schomburg NEH Automated Access to Special Collections Project.

## Summary

**Creator:** Mortimer, Owen

**Title:** Owen Mortimer collection

**Date:** 1953-1999

**Size:** 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Gift of Owen Mortimer, ca. 1991.

**Abstract:** This collection consists of exhibition and biographical materials relating to Ira Aldridge, and correspondence between his daughter, Amanda Aldridge, and biographer Owen Mortimer.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Owen Mortimer collection, Sc MG 424, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

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## Creator History

Owen Mortimer is the biographer of Ira Aldridge, the free born African-American actor who achieved fame in Europe for his interpretation of Shakespearean roles from the 1820s to his death in 1867. Mortimer began collecting materials on Aldridge after his migration to the United States in 1946, some of which were exhibited at the Chicago Public Library in 1954. His biography, *Speak of Me As I Am: the Story of Ira Aldridge*, was published in 1989. Owen Mortimer is a native of Australia.

Amanda Christina Elizabeth Aldridge, or Amanda Ira Aldridge (1866-1956), was a British opera singer, teacher, and composer, who performed under the pseudonym of Montague Ring; born in Upper Norwood, London, she was the third child of Ira Frederick Aldridge.

## **Scope and Content Note**

This collection consists of exhibition and biographical materials relating to Ira Aldridge, and correspondence between his daughter, Amanda Aldridge, and biographer Owen Mortimer.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American actors  
African Americans -- Biography  
African Americans in the performing arts

### **Names**

Aldridge, Ira Frederick, -1867  
Mortimer, Owen  
Ring, Montague

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence with Amanda Ira Aldridge 1953-1955
- b. 1 f. 2 *Speak of Me as I Am* reviews 1995  
Also includes address given by Mortimer to celebrate publication of the book.
- b. 1 f. 3 *Queen Victoria's African Actor* 1999  
Includes Mortimer's manuscript and review of the book.
- b. 1 f. 4 *Memoir, Of Art and Love: An Australian Memoir* 1998  
Includes manuscript of Mortimer's memoir.