

THUNDERS AND WHISPERS

The Legend of Clara Morris Who Made Theatrical History Fifty Years Ago—And A Message From Her



Clara Morris as she was 40 years ago.

By GENE COHN (NEA Service Writer)

BUCKAHOE, N. Y., Jan. 24.—"Is not Clara Morris pretty much of a legend now? A sort of Cinderella based on that amazing fifth Avenue opening night in 1875? Thus, in trembling hand, messages pain-crippled old lady of 77 from her nurse-guarded bedroom. Certainly it is a perfect setting for the passing of a "legend."

It is almost 50 years to a day since Clara Morris wrote her spectacular play in theatrical history.

Clara Morris! A name to be recalled along with Booth, Barrett, Salvini and old Joe Jefferson!

A light curtain of snow falls slowly.

Atop the hill, centering a scattered circle of old oaks, stands the peaceful, old fashioned home of the "legend." The silence of the hillside is so intense that the snowflakes seem to sound against the window panes.

Complete quiet is essential. Ears once tuned to thunderous applause are now sensitive to a passing motor. Six years of pain in a sick bed have done this.

The housekeeper tiptoes to the door. Her voice is pitched to a sick-room whisper.

No, Miss Morris cannot be seen. It is doctor's orders. And, too, she is pain-racked and sensitive. Only a few, very few intimates may see her.

Yes, it is a perfect setting for a legend! The rooms are simply furnished. Some might use the word "old-fashioned." There is not a thing to suggest the theater. The walls are bare of the usual groupings of photographs such as usually decorate the home of an actress.

"Are there things in her sickroom to recall the theater?"

"Oh, no," hastens the housekeeper. "But she does like to hear of the theater. She is like to hear of the stars and what they are doing. She is always greatly delighted when a new name comes out of nowhere and gets a great reception. You see, it was that way with her."

Almost 50 years ago Clara Morris had come from Cleveland, O., up from the dreariest poverty, through years of struggle in her first memoirs. She wrote in her first memoirs: "A red wide-eyed and poorly dressed, and out of the great west, and absolutely without one friend. She had two dresses. Neither fitted the occasion."

"That's all part of the 'legend.'" How Augustin Daly gave her a chance at the lead! How the stage snubbed the newcomer! How she made good at her first appearance in 1875 and five years later made theater history at the Fifth Avenue Theater. All part of the "legend!"

Today pain and time furnish the make-up box with which the pallor of face, the lines and wrinkles are made.

"She hasn't been outside the house for four times in eight years," the maid says. "A theater man wrote and asked her to make an appearance on the fiftieth anniversary. She wrote him of how she would like to hear the applause just once more. 'The sweetest sound this side of Heaven,' she said."

Outside the wind has whipped up. The snow sweeps against the window panes.

It was in just such a storm on March 17, 1848, that Clara Morris was born in Ottawa, Ont. A brawl was taking place just outside the house, following a factional parade. She wrote of this in her "Life on the Stage." "And so on a St. Patrick's Day of snow and rain, of riot and bloodshed, in trouble and poverty, she was born."

How different, this opening of the heart act! A peaceful hillside and silence, but for the wind and snow."

"No, she can't see anybody," went on the housekeeper.

"But perhaps she might feel well enough to write a little message to those thousands of people who will remember her," suggested the reporter.

And so, in a trembling hand, comes the first statement Clara Morris has made to a newspaper in many a year.

This is no legend speaking through the following lines. It is the voice of the theater! It is an actress' eternal message of the dramatic and the sentimental speaking through the crippled fingers of a bed-ridden old woman of 77.

Your invitation to write cannot be made to the general public," writes Clara Morris. "Why the cry would be 'What is this dramatic Barbara Fritchie wig-wagging at us?'"

"No, my good wishes must be for the honored 'old guard' of the theater. The stage first-lighters of the 70's and 70's. The dear 'I remember' of today. So, then, to each

and everyone of these play lovers, I wish beauty and the joy of health.

"I wish a mind-calming, heart-warming prosperity.

"Above all—I wish love, love! The power that makes the wheels of life go round for every mortal being.

"We are all following the sunset trail—all of us, but with hands playing and colors flying—heads up—chins in air!—and we miss none of the beauty of the trail, nor trouble much about its direction.

"From ocean to ocean I send remembrances to the Old Guard and cry with Tiny Tim: 'God bless us every one.'"

The old oaks are hung heavy with snow and the hillside is now thronged with children and sleds.

Somewhere up upon the second floor of the charming old house she is trying to sleep.

Yes, it is a perfect setting for a legend!

CHAIRS IN PARKS GROUPED IN TWOS

LONDON, Jan. 24.—(AP)—Remittance of money long owed to various departments of the British government is not unusual, but M. W. Shanley, the chair king of London, who has placed thousands of chairs about the city's parks which he rents for two pence each, has received from America his first remittance money.

Most of the chairs are placed in groups of two, but it was an eye for business, not a desire to befriend lovers, that dictated the grouping, according to Mr. Shanley. He noted that people generally went about in twos, and that groups of three or four were much in the minority. So he arranged his chairs accordingly.

Mr. Shanley's business is the only one of its kind in England, and was established by his father 80 years ago. Shanley now owns more than 150,000 chairs and employs a large force of men to go about collecting the tuppenny rental. Receipt tickets are given, and the occupant may retain the chair the entire day for his two pence.

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YOUTHS ARE GLAD TO RETURN HOME FROM ADVENTURES

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 24.—(AP)—

The tale of the disillusionment of an expedition of 20 Americans, mostly young men from southern California, who left here last May to seek romance and adventure in secluded byways of the Orient, was told by the last of the party, who recently returned home here. They, as had the rest of the group, made the return trip by a devious route, doing menial tasks aboard steamers after having been stranded for months at Singapore, where their romantic complexes were shaken by fever and privation.

The returning adventurers offered a strange contrast to the debonair party which set sail on the President Van Buren with the intention of obtaining motion-pictures among the queer folk and animals in the wilds of the Orient. An "ape-man" was to be filmed for the benefit and enlightenment of American audiences. The itinerary included a side trip to the Isle of Bala, where a few choice scenes were to be taken of the inhabitants offering 1,000 babes to their gods on an altar of fire. These pictures were to be sold on the expedition's return.

Mr. Winther Leads The party was headed by Carl P. Winther, and associated with him was William Bala, who professed to have had experience in the Orient. The former's wife and little daughter, a child of 10, were with the party and shared its hardships.

The voyage to Manila passed without incident, but at Singapore their troubles began. Money sent by Los Angeles backers arrived late, and the travelers were without funds. When it did arrive disbursements started. Then the backers backed down and out, and a local hotel turned the Americans into the street.

The American consul helped as much as he could, and arranged for living quarters in an unused hotel. But the condition of the adventurers steadily became worse. Several were attacked by fever.

No Odd Jobs Heroic methods were used to raise funds, but there were no odd jobs in Singapore for Americans or Europeans. W. E. Boerg, of Peoria, Ill., secretary of the expedition, who had been something of an amateur boxer, had an idea that he might earn a few dollars by fighting in one of the frequent cards at the athletic club in the European colony.

Boerg obtained a match with Harry Smythe, a Chinese boxer notwithstanding his English name, but on the day of the fight came down with fever. He insisted, however, on climbing into the ring and lasted four rounds, which enriched the expedition's coffers by \$40 in Mexican money.

A few months ago the exodus from Singapore began, every man for himself, and they filtered into Los Angeles and home singly, or in twos and threes. All are now safely back in the United States except Winther and Bala, who remained in Singapore.

Snow-White Horses To Draw Carriage Of Pope Pius XI

BUDAPEST, Jan. 24.—(AP)—The stud of Count Esterhazy, one of the best blood horses in Hungary, has been singled out to supply the six snow-white, spotless horses that are to draw the coach in which Pope Pius XI is to ride during the holy year celebration at Rome in 1925.

An Italian commission visited all the leading studs of Hungary recently in order to select the horses desired by the Pope. There were plenty of beautiful specimens to be found, even horses that at first sight seemed white. But in each case some dark speck was discovered on them. Count Esterhazy's stud was the only one that had absolutely snow-white horses.

upon the second week of his return to favor at the mighty Warlitzer, will be heard in a solo rendition. Mr. Hainsworth will also provide the musical background for the prologue and has prepared an unusual atmospheric accompaniment to the picture, "The White Moth," featuring Barbara La Marr and Conway Tearle.

Both the prologue and Mr. Hainsworth's organ solo will be presented as features of the evening entertainment, for three nights, starting Monday, and will occur at 7:30 and 9:35 each evening.

SCENE IN FILM PLAY "YOLANDA"



Marion Davies and Ralph Craven in Hellig Attraction of This Week

Feature Prologue to Precede Rex Play

An elaborate presentation feature preceding "The White Moth" featuring Mr. and Mrs. Sid Woodhouse, of the Cinderella dance studio, is the prologue now being prepared for next week, starting Monday at the Rex.

In a stage setting, under the management promises will surpass any past effort in design and lighting, the Woodhouses will enact an atmospheric dance drama portraying the plight of the proverbial moth in its ever fatal quest of the candle's golden flesh.

As a prelude to the prologue, Robert V. Hainsworth, who enters

DOUARNENEZ GAINS NAME OF STORMY PETREL OF COAST

Douarnenez is running true to form. Newspapers say the town is waving the red flag in the face of the Republic of France, but the Bretons have been known to display the same restive spirit at various times in the past, according to a bulletin from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic Society.

"Though the Bretons, in the heart of whose homeland so many of the American doughboys landed when they disembarked at Brest, are peaceful and home-loving, they have sometimes rebelled. In the fifth century a brother-in-law of Duke Francis II wrote his kinsman: 'Monsieur, I declare to God, I would rather be the ruler of a million of wild boars than of such a people as are your Bretons.'

People Pious The cursory traveler would not suspect the sleepy little village, whose fishing smacks with their red and brown sails and blue and brown fish nets make its waterfront a happy haunt of artists of all nationalities, of being susceptible to emotional outbursts. But the dangerous waters of the ocean have given them a lively but melancholy imagination, obstinate determination, and a piety as distinguished as their bravery.

In those early days the little seaside town, with their counts and other dignitaries, sometimes as important as bishops, like those of Rouen, or even their dukes like those of Nantes, had more individuality than they boast today. But Douarnenez, with about 15,000 people, is one of the most active of the sardine fishing centers along the Breton coast.

Its location is ideal—on a beautiful bay bay nicked out of the westernmost peninsula along the French coast, with a snug little harbor of its own called Pore de Rosemeur behind the mole of which the small sail boats go for shelter. And the Breton men will tell you "I like my boat better with my sail and my arms for motors."

Land of Pardons "About 30,000 religious enthusiasts rub elbows in the Douarnenez streets with artists and natives during the latter part of August of each year, for the last Sunday in the month is the Pardon of Sainte Anne-la-Palud. The various 'Pardons' of Brittany, festivals during which indulgences are granted—and the numerous wayside shrines have combined to give this portion of France, which is at the same time both patriotic and alien, the sobriquet of 'The Land of Calvaries and Pardons.'

"In this day of the world-wide use of the plain business suit and standardized dress for American and European women, the customs and costumes of Brittany, like those of the island of Marken in The Netherlands, give an opera bouffe effect, which the gorgeous sunsets, the wild sea, the rock-bound shores, and the great mountains and plains dotted with menhirs only accentuate.

Legend Embodied "The intenseness of the land and the people is at once so evident that Lalo immediately saw in its legends the basis for his opera 'Le Roi d'Ys.' The story goes that King Gradlon of the ancient walled city of Ys, which stood on the shores of the Bay of Douarnenez, had a beautiful daughter who was the wickedest person in the city. The King had been warned by his counselor, St. Corenthin of Quimper, but one night while her father slept Dahut stole from around his neck the gold key which unlocked the gates of the dykes and locks of Ys and gave it to one of her lovers. Shortly afterward torrents of water flooded the city, the King took his daughter on the saddle behind him and fled, but a voice commanded him that she must be left behind. The King alone escaped, the city and all its inhabitants being submerged beneath the waters of the Bay of Douarnenez.

"Douarnenez means literally, the land of the isle, from the Ile Tristan just off the coast, named for the valiant Tristan of Leonais, one of the knights of the Round Table. Once the island's interest was religious but now it is commercial, since the old days its priory has been superseded by a lighthouse and a sardine factory.

Concernous and Douarnenez are the Gloucester, Massachusetts, and the Rockport, Maine, of the French coast, each vying with the other for the importance of being the best-known fishing center.

"For the commissaires nothing rivals the Brittany sardine, which is so simply prepared for market

that it is a wonder that some other people have not captured and standardized the product. The 'corporal's stripes,' or the 'cavalry corporals,' as the little fishes are called in France, are packed in the familiar tin boxes, heated oil is poured over them, the boxes are soldered and then boiled for about an hour, and the harvest of the sea is ready for the discriminating epicures of the world."

New Law Against Use of Explosives In Burglary Asked

NEW YORK, Jan. 24.—(Special)—In view of the wave of criminal operations against banks a more universally drastic law against burglary with explosives is proposed by the American Bankers' association through its committee on state legislation. As made public here the recommended law provides that any person who, with criminal intent, breaks into any building and attacks a vault "by the use of nitroglycerine, dynamite, gunpowder or any other explosive, shall be deemed guilty of burglary with explosives." It also promises punishment by imprisonment for a term of not less than twenty-five nor more than forty years. In regard to this law the bankers' statement says:

"The operations of the 'Yeggman' or 'Yeg' type of bank burglar call for punishment of unusual severity and this is not provided by the ordinary statutes against burglary in states where the above law does not obtain. This proposed law defines the crime of burglary with explosives and provides such a severe penalty that the existence of the law in any state should act as a deterrent against the commission of this crime.

Furthermore, a 'Yeggman' once convicted and sentenced under this statute is placed where he can do no further harm for a long time, and each conviction lessens the menace from this dangerous class of professional criminals. Statutes quite recently passed in Iowa, Wisconsin and other

states are designed to cover the more modern form of bank burglary through electricity, gas and other schemes. It may be wise to adopt these additional provisions."

A number of states, it is pointed out, are without laws covering this subject, or have milder statutes, while acts similar to the measure as proposed are already in force in sixteen states.

The WHITE MOTH

AGNES AYRES

MONDAY TUESDAY

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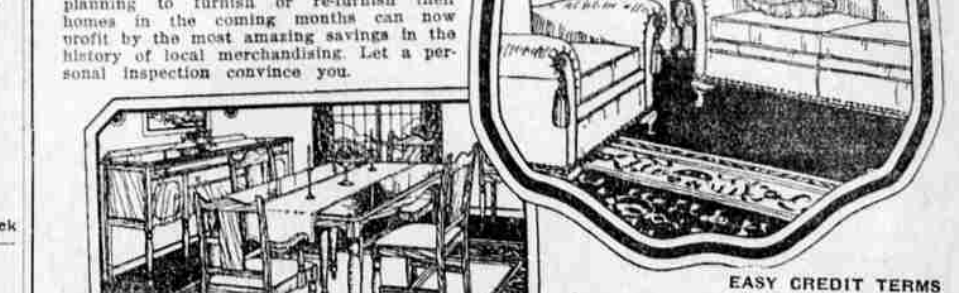
The CASTLE

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Scene from Dante's "Inferno" at Rex next week-end.

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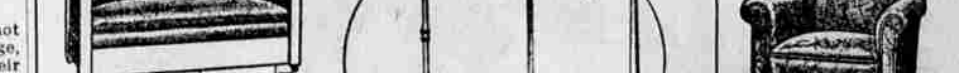
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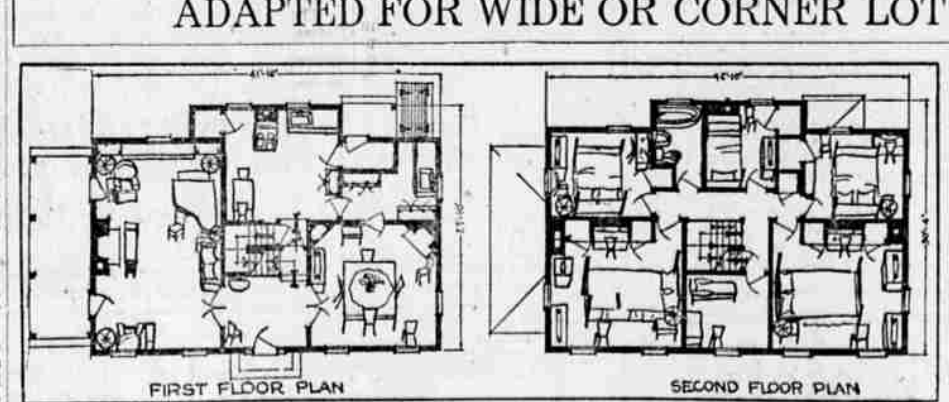
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YOU can build this imposing home on an ordinary sized lot, if it is a corner one where you can use the length for the front. It would also look especially well in the suburbs, surrounded by considerable ground.

There are eight main rooms besides pantry, hall, bath and a large sleeping room. A stair is provided, leading to the attic, where other rooms might easily be finished off.

Top-hat siding was chosen as the exterior material, though others may be used. The overhang of the second story is an effective feature. For best results the shutters and roof should be painted the same color.

On the first floor there is a splendid living room adjoining the open porch. It has windows on three sides. One end of it is a library corner, with bookcases and a window seat between.

The fireplace is on the long outside wall, and across from it is a long inside wall space, best where it is wanted for the large pieces of furniture.

Fresh doors are used between the hall and the rooms adjoining it at each side. The dining room is charming with a corner fireplace and a quaint corner china closet—both in Colonial design.

There is a large pantry with commodious dressers and a sink where dishes may be washed out of the kitchen. The kitchen itself is large and is equipped with dresser, work-table, sink, range, built-in ironing board and broom-closet.

There is an outer entry for the fire-box. The basement steps lead off the kitchen, directly below the main

stair—which, by the way, is accessible from the kitchen also.

Five bedrooms with excellent closets are arranged in a most efficient manner upstairs to conserve every possible bit of space. Two of them have built-in dressing tables that are beautiful as well as convenient.

This home can be built in the average city, for about \$2780, figuring 35 cents a cubic foot.



Courtesy, Curtis Companies, Clinton, I.