

The Andrews Opera Company

20 Years of Opera From a Rail Fence Circuit

Interesting History of Medford's Pioneer Musical Family in One Night stands in the Middlewest Many Years Ago as Told by Ed Andrews to Charles Hyskell.

No. V.

In every man's life comes, from time to time, an interval when he seems to face a crisis. One of these appeared to the Andrews opera family, when it closed its season late in 1884. Our career as an opera company was apparently at an end.

I had married a musician, Irene White, and we settled at Mankato, Minn., where George Andrews and I became managers of the Mankato theater and booked traveling companies, among them the Fay Templeton Opera company, the Abbie Carrington Opera company and others. The Carrington company gave scenes from grand operas. My wife, who had just recovered from an attack of typhoid, attended the Carrington performance against the advice of her physician. A relapse followed and she survived only two days. She was buried in the St. Peter cemetery, beside my mother.

When spring came we gave up the theater and became agents of Dyer Brothers, of St. Paul, to sell their pianos. They located me at Delano, where I organized a choral society. Out of this grew the germ of an idea, new at that time, which ultimately put us back into the opera business permanently. We gave a concert that fall, assisted by two Minneapolis women, Constance Hein, a pianist, and Harriet Hobbs, a soprano. Constance Hein was blind. Yet she afterward went to Germany and became the favorite pianist of the Empress Dowager, mother of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Johnny Bohan, a local editor, and I were sponsoring the choral society's concert and we had guaranteed the salaries of the professional performers. We didn't want to lose money and so we went around and induced the townspeople to sign up in advance for tickets. The result was that we had a packed house and made some profit.

Thinking over this plan later I asked myself if such a system would work for an opera company on the road.

It would, and did.

Here and there are newspaper men with the urge for a higher expression in art. In that day they didn't have typewriters and a mere lead pencil was more in the nature of hard labor. John MacIntyre, an able reporter on a daily paper, published by Alden J. Blithen in Minneapolis, had the opera bee and he put it on us with a lease on the Pence Opera house.

With Mac's assistance we organized a real opera company, headed by Marie Roe, soprano, and Henri Leront, tenor; a second comedian, by name Charlie Gilbert; Fanny McIntyre, a character woman, and others, all from Chicago. Billy Matchet was our musical director and a very good one.

We picked up a good chorus from Chicago and Minneapolis. This was the first time we had a regular orchestra—nine pieces, the director playing piano. We played Minneapolis five weeks and sent Lucian Wakefield out on the road making dates and listing advance sales. Then we moved over to St. Paul for another successful run. We charged 75, 50 and 25 cents admission and took in an average of \$1000, and upwards.

The start, over the states of the upper Mississippi valley, playing "Pinafore," "Chimes of Normandy" and some of the older standard operas. It was at this time that we abandoned horses and took to the railroads.

Marie Roe, a good singer and actress, had got her experience with the Holman Opera company of Canada. Among others that Mrs. Holman put into the business were Perogni, whose real name was John Chatterton, at one time husband of Lillian Russell, and Roland Reed, long a popular comedian throughout the west. Miss Roe was with our company six or seven years and retired from the stage when she married an insurance man at Des Moines, Iowa. Some years afterward we played Des Moines. Our prima donna was ill and unable to sing in "Mafiana." I went out to the farm to see Marie and found her wearing a pair of rubber boots in a rain-soaked chicken yard, surrounded by sunflowers in full bearings.

"You are certainly doing a big bit here in 'Patience,' but you're booked this evening for the star part in 'Mafiana,'" I said to Marie. She went into the city with me and sang the part very beautifully that night.

Henry Leront was an important person in the history of the Andrews Opera company. He had been a tenor in the Paris Opera Comique, and came to this country first with Mme. Soudine, who was the first prima donna to popularize French light opera here. Leront was a finished opera singer, and I have never seen a greater interpreter of the French operas. When he joined us he was a bit too mature and gray around the temples for Broadway roles.

He taught George Andrews and me how to act and stage the French light operas, and more than anything else he taught us phrasing. In which he was a consummate artist. He avoided directing us in the Gilbert and Sullivan operas and was quick to see that Gilbert could not be tampered with.

"Gilbert's idea of comedy is always to play the role as if you were in a

peck of trouble," he said. And that is the basis on which I worked with it throughout my career.

After closing our season in St. Paul in 1884 we took our profits and fitted out an elaborate "Mikado" production. To this company we added some members of the Andrews family, notably Florence, who became the outstanding Katsihs in this opera. Alice Andrews Clayton became musical director. Fred Clayton understood Ko-Ko with me, later becoming a fine all-round comedian. I have never seen his equal as Farmer Rocco in "Mascot" and Brother Pelican in "Falke."

Leront's work with us being concluded, he accepted a place as stage manager with an eastern company. Charlie Gilbert became our stage manager—and a good one, too.

In that season our leading tenor was Charlie Dennis. Through a music teacher's introduction while we were playing at Sioux City, a young lady came to sing for me and her voice was so good that I engaged her for chorus work. Soon she was singing small parts. She developed so rapidly, both as singer and actress that before the season ended she was our prima donna. This young lady was Nan Wilkinson, who a year later became my wife, and ultimately lost her life in a railroad wreck.

In our repertoire at that time was "Girolo-Girofia," composed by a Frenchman, Charles Lecocq, text by Vanloo and Aterrier, first produced in Brussels in 1874, and the next year in the Park theater, New York. In this country it was almost the first important production involving the comic portrayal of drunkenness on the stage. We had to stop-pedal the revelry to avoid a walk-out by our esteemed temperance customers, who formed a considerable element that always patronized the Andrews Opera company because of its known Methodist origin.

Nan Wilkinson's exceptional voice and her vivacious artistry as an actress, were always depended on to put over the difficult role of Girofia, a daughter of the grandee, Don Bolero Alcaranzas.

He has betrothed Girofia to Marazquin, a banker, who loaned him a lot of money; and Girofia to a pirate, Mourzook, who has long been coolly levying tribute on the Don. Mourzook is an original rafter who would rival present-day racketeers.

On the wedding day Girofia marries the banker, but Girofia is abducted by rival pirates and when Mourzook arrives to find no bride he is in a terrible rage. In the Don's desperation Girofia is introduced as Girofia to Mourzook and her extra wedding is set for the next day.

The wedding festivities in the second act became a spree in which even the double bride became tipsy. Drunkenness as comedy material has always been of questionable utility and to be really effective has to be tempered with art to the nth degree. But when the entire cast goes whiffed the job becomes a near-tragedy for any self-respecting stage manager.

(To be Continued)

EMERGENCY MEAL PROBLEM SOLVED COOKING SCHOOL

The uninvited guest! the unexpected visitor! that "bogy" of every housewife, the emergency meal, when there is "nothing in the house." How often that combination has made happiness fly out of the window and turned a surprised spouse into a henpecked husband.

"The test of an efficient housewife, as with a business man, lies in her capacity to meet an emergency," says Hester Heath, popular home economist, who will come to Medford Wednesday to conduct the Mail Tribune's cooking school, "and it is the duty of Mrs. Housewife, as her husband's help-meat, both in the home and in business, to do just as much as she can to meet such emergencies as rush meals graciously."

"The only thing necessary," Miss Heath continued, "is for the housewife to prepare herself with a repertoire of quick recipes and have on hand products that will permit her not only to serve a meal that will reflect to her advantage, but one that will permit her to greet her husband's guest with a smile of welcome and appreciation."

"Pity the poor husband who is greeted by a tirade of abuse and imagined martyrdom when he presents an unexpected guest. Pity the poor housewife whose culinary training is so limited that under such circumstances she can hardly control a fit of hysteria and a good cry. Her usual reaction is to serve a meal with the aid of a can opener and a visit to the delicatessen store. Under such circumstances, the guest leaves conscious of the fact that before he is out of earshot, the opening guns of a domestic war will be well underway."

"Of course," said Miss Heath, "it is a great help to have an emergency shelf to fall back on, but it is even more important to know just what to keep on that shelf. There are innumerable ways of stretching salads made for two to accommodate four, and 'doing things' to two chops so that everyone will have plenty."

An intimate knowledge of housewife's problems make Miss Heath's programs of vital interest to every woman reader of this paper. If you are not a subscriber, do not hesitate to come. This Happy Kitchen program is sponsored by us entirely for you. It is YOUR cooking school and we invite you to make it so by attending every one of the lectures. They will be held at the Craterian on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons from two to four o'clock.

PINCHOT SUPPORT OF G. O. P. SENATOR NETTLES FARLEY

WASHINGTON, Oct. 6.—(AP)—A yawning chasm opened today between Governor Clifford Pinchot, who has been called a "Roosevelt Republican," and Postmaster General Farley, the president's chief political aide.

The capital set up and took notice as Farley assailed the Pennsylvania governor for coming out for the re-election of Senator David A. Reed, Republican.

Observers noted that Farley's statement criticizing Pinchot for a "political somersault," was issued after the postmaster general had talked with President Roosevelt.

Governor Pinchot, an old Bull Moose, sought last spring to "rest the Republican nomination from Reed, who is widely regarded as a spearhead of the regular Republican attack on the national Democratic administration. Pinchot was defeated. The Democrats nominated Joseph P. Guffey.

Recently Pinchot made a speech in Wilkes-Barre in which, Farley said, he expressed "his definite purpose to aid in the reelection" of Reed.

"Governor Pinchot's political somersault is, to say the least, a trifle bewildering," Farley added. "In his speech announcing his return to the Republican party, he proclaimed his high regard for and deep confidence in President Roosevelt and the president's policies."

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Marion Marsh Heads Cast Craterian Picture

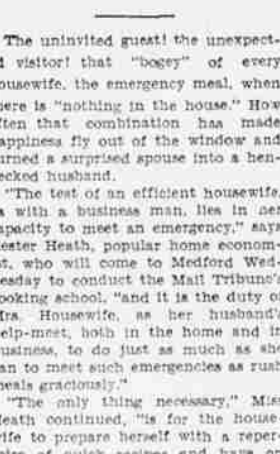


Gene Stratton-Porter's famous novel of Indiana country life, "A Girl of the Limberlost," comes to the Craterian theater today in the screen version that recaptures the luscious charm of the pre-war days in American rural life.

Marion Marsh, playing the title role, is the girl who fights for the things she wants despite the many obstacles thrown into her path by her mother, played by Louise Dresser. Ralph Morgan is the kindly uncle and Helen Jerome Eddy plays the part of the aunt. Also featured in the cast are Henry B. Walthall, grand old character star in the role of Dr. Ammon, Edward Nugent, Gigi Parrish and Barbara Bedford.

Estimated to have been read by more than 12,000,000 persons, and with a book sale of 1,780,000 copies, "A Girl of the Limberlost" is practically the life story of its author, Gene Stratton-Porter, who experienced a great deal of diversity as depicted both in the book and in the picture.

"Bolero" at Roxy Today



All the elements that made Maurice Ravel's "Bolero" one of the most exciting and popular of modern musical compositions, at last have been captured by the motion picture camera and translated into the language of the screen. It is in "Bolero," opening today at the Roxy theater.

With George Ratt, Carole Lombard, Sally Rand, Frances Drake, the film interpretation carries the same excitement and emotional appeal, so evident in the music.

Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Anderson are leaving on the Shasta today for Minneapolis where they will spend the next three weeks visiting relatives and friends. Mr. Anderson, who is manager of the Safeway store located at Main and Holly, stated that it has been five years since he has seen his relatives.

"Andy," as he is familiarly known here says he has been too busy in the past to take a real vacation. It has taken long hours of work to build up the comparatively small Safeway store of five years ago to the large modern food market of today.

Walk upstairs and save \$10. Banker's gray suiting, \$21.50, made to measure. Klein the Tailor.

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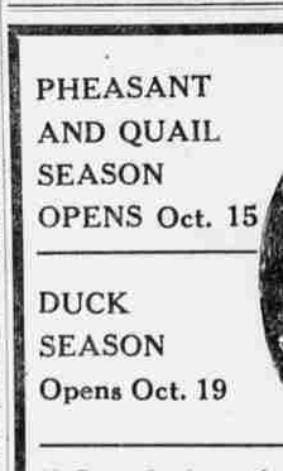
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Ursula Parrott Story At Rialto



Featuring Frank Morgan and Blinnie Barnes, a newcomer to the American films but who made a decided hit as the second wife of Henry VIII in the picturization of the famous monarch's life, "There's Always Tomorrow" plays today and Monday at the Rialto theater.

The story is by Ursula Parrott, who has won a reputation for her keen insight into the lives and loves of married couples. It pictures two years in the life of a typical American father of five children whose sole function seems to be that of "a meal ticket," not only to the children but also to the mother and wife. The existence of the family is tranquil until a girl who understands the husband's father re-enters his life, gay and hilarious in the earlier reels, the film-play builds to one of the most tense situations created on the screen in some time.

"Hollywood Party" at Studio



"Hollywood Party," an hilarious romance staged as a spectacular musical extravaganza with an all-star cast, is the film attraction at the Studio theater today.

The large cast of stars includes Jimmy Durante and Lupe Velez.

Stabilized Prices Aid To Consumers Says College Man

Present day trends toward price stabilizing are frequently beneficial to the consumer in the opinion of Professor R. A. Roberts, member of the teaching staff at the University of California College of Commerce, a well-known authority on merchandising.

"With prices becoming more stabilized," said Professor Roberts in a recent speech before a convention of manufacturers and retailers, "the emphasis in selling must be on the basis of quality and service. Reputable merchants and manufacturers are striving to give consumers products of honest merit and stressing the necessity of an understanding service toward the buying public."

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