



BIG OPERATION—Vincent Sardi, right, and his son, Vincent Jr., are shown at a table in Sardi's New York City restaurant. Sardi Sr., 75, turned the business of feeding actors into a \$1 million a year operation. During his childhood, he says, he was considered the "black sheep of the family." (UPI Telephoto)

Vincent Sardi Turns Feeding of Actors Into Big Business

New York City — Vincent Sardi, who turned the feeding of Broadway actors into a \$1 million a year business, politely passed up eating the lunch at which he was the host.

"I just had my 75th birthday and it is time to slow down," he said, looking more like a school teacher in his dark rimmed glasses than the man who has made Sardi's restaurant a Broadway landmark.

"No, I am not dieting," he added quickly, noting his dislike of the practice.

"Perhaps it is because I am Italian, but too many ladies today look like scarecrows. They do not eat enough."

And Sardi knows his ladies, having been on a first name basis with virtually every feminine star of the Broadway stage since he opened his restaurant in 1921. (However, he insists on calling them by their last names.)

Fed for Free
He once stuffed oysters with caviar for Gertrude Lawrence, tossed garlic salad for Katherine Cornell and fed Celeste Holm for free in the days before she was a theatrical success.

"I have opened up savings accounts for lots of young actors and deposited money for them," Sardi recalled.

"I have always given them food — but not drink — on credit. I never have gotten stung."

It is difficult to pinpoint which came first in Italian-born Sardi's life: his interest in the restaurant business or in actors.

He admitted that from his childhood in Canelli, Italy, he was regarded as "the black sheep of the family" and wanted to leave home. By the age of 14 he was dishwashing for his room and board in a small London restaurant. He spent the first shillings he earned on the theater.

But it was not until years later when working as a waiter at Barthold's Inn, New York City's best theatrical hotel, that he came face to face with the actors. That was when he met his wife Jenny.

Held Several Jobs
He married her in 1911 and confided his ambition to open a theatrical restaurant. For the next ten years Sardi held several jobs simultaneously to lay the financial groundwork for his dream.

It came true in 1921 with the opening of the restaurant at 246 West 44th st. Several years later he moved it to 234 West 44th st. in a building built by Producer Lee Shubert. The oak paneled room was reminiscent of London where the young restaurateur had spent his formative days.

Recently Sardi's East was

opened at 123 East 54th st. to cater to the east side residents who had frequented the Broadway place.

Sardi's son Vincent manages both restaurants. The elder Sardi — known to all, including many Broadway celebrities, as "Mr. Sardi Sr." supervises the lunchtime traffic at the east side restaurant because "the west side one is so crowded I can't take it."

Mrs. Sardi, his first chef and still his favorite cook, remains in their Manhattan, Long Island home.

"She is my main reason for success," he said. "She was hardworking. She had faith in me. That was how we did it together," he said, his Italian accent still strong.

He mentioned his wife with especial fondness.

Virtually Inseparable
After nearly 50 years of marriage the Sardis are virtually inseparable. They spend their time either at home or with their theater friends. Since they have moved to the suburbs their theater going is confined mostly to the opera on alternate Monday nights.

"My husband prefers to eat at home rather than in a restaurant," Mrs. Sardi said.

"He is not particular about his food and will eat almost anything I prepare."

Sardi has been criticized by some for giving theatrical atmosphere precedence over the elaborateness of cuisine in his west side restaurant.

The food is acknowledged to be good, but Sardi himself admitted that "there is no doubt that the theater has been our main attraction."

"The theater people will always come first and ahead of our other customers," he said.

Fluoridation Faces McMinnville Vote
McMinnville — (UPI) — Fluoridated water, a recurring problem here, may be headed for more trouble even though it was approved by the voters in a general election.

A petition seeking another vote on fluoridation has been presented to the city council. The measure for fluoridation was approved in the November election.

The council said it would meet next Tuesday to set an election date.

The petition had been circulated by a group called the "Pure Water Committee."

McMinnville approved water fluoridation once before, in 1956, but the proposal was defeated at a second election.

Jonas Chickering was the first American to make a pin-point with a full iron frame. It was produced in Boston in 1837.

Police Round Up Overdue Borrowers Of Library Books

East Orange, N.J. — Came the knock on the door, the flash of authority, the midnight ride to headquarters — and 14 persons faced the desk sergeant on charges of failing to return overdue library books.

"I felt like Public Enemy No. 1,321," said William Ansley, 36, a salesman. The arrest broke up a bridge game at Ansley's home.

"They treated us like we just robbed the First National Bank," said James Washington, a Civil Service employee at the Pictorial Arsenal, Dover, N.J.

Ansley and Washington were two of seven persons fined \$25 each Tuesday under a new East Orange ordinance providing penalties up to \$200 for failure to return library books. One person was fined \$15 two others were acquitted and four more will get hearings later.

The 14 were arrested on

warrants signed by Harold Roth, director of the East Orange Library. Roth said ample overdue notices and certified letters had been sent out, but that none of the offenders replied. He said books were four months to a year overdue.

Magistrate William P. Wilkins said the fines were imposed not because the books were overdue, but because authority had been defied.

"I'm going to see my lawyers," said Robert Golden, one of those fined \$25.

Washington said it was midnight when a man came to his door.

"He told me he was a policeman, showed me the summons and said I was under arrest," Washington said. "I asked couldn't he take the books. He told me he didn't work for the library."

"We went over to another fellow's house, picked him up

and went down to headquarters."

"They slammed us in a cell, allowed us one phone call and told us bail was \$100. The book (an auto repair manual) was worth only about \$7. About 3 a.m. they put another fellow in jail for assault and battery and his bail was only \$25."

Washington said that after paying his fine, he took all his library books back and told them "I don't think I'll have any further need for the public library."

Ansley said the officers broke up his bridge game and "insisted on me going with them and posting bail. They wouldn't take a check." He called the affair "absurd."

One of those fined, James P. McCann, employed by a Wall Street firm in New York, said his daughter had taken out a book on his library card and never returned it. He paid the \$25.

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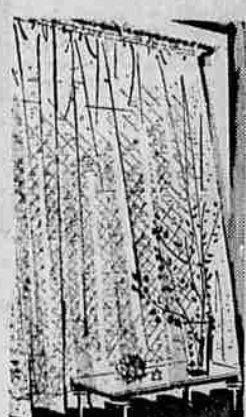
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