

MEDORAH

London run: Alhambra, January 22nd – March 13th (60 performances)

Music: Vada Ennem

Book & Lyrics: Denn Spranklin

English adaptation: Rupert Hazell

English lyrics: Adrian Ross

Additional numbers: John Ansell

Director: E. Dagnell

Choreographer: Will Bishop

Musical Director: John Anstell

Cast: Leo Stormont (*Sultan*), Ada Reeve (*Medorah*),
W.S. Percy (*Dadoolah*), Jamieson Dodds (*Vernon Grant*),
Leslie Stiles (*Ambassador Manston*), Margaret Campbell (*Mrs Manston*)

Songs: Tomorrow's Another Day, There's Always a Drawback, Like a Dream, Wonderful Joy, Hope Again, Love and My Soul Alone

Story: In Caravanistan beauty is measured in physical bulk, the heavier the better. The Sultan's eldest daughter, Medorah, is thin, too thin to be an eligible bride. Chancellor Dadoolah suggests she is sent to America for the purposes of putting on weight – a suggestion that delights her because she has fallen in love with Vernon Grant, the man who accompanied the American ambassador and his wife to a reception in the Sultan's palace. They meet again in Washington, and when she is summoned back to Caravanistan, Vernon secretly follows. Meantime, after various adventures, Vernon is captured and forced to work as a slave in the Sultan's household. With no hope of marrying his underweight daughter to a prince, the Sultan condemns her to marry his new slave – and thus Medorah and Vernon are happily united.

Notes: The original publicity declared that "Medorah" was jointly produced by Mr. Bernard J. Hishin and Sir Oswald Stoll, but within a week of opening, the show was subject to a legal dispute in the Court of Chancery, with Violet Melnotte claiming (and winning) half-ownership in the copyright of the English version of this Dutch original. However, the show collapsed after just 60 performances, even though it represented Ada Reeve's return to the West End, so any gains by Miss Melnotte amounted to a Pyrrhic victory.



Lorna and Toots Pounds

PRETTY PEGGY

London run: Prince's Theatre, February 3rd – June 12th
(168 performances)

Music: A. Emmett Adams

Lyrics: Douglas Furber

Book: Arthur Rose & Charles Austin

Director: Arthur Rose

Choreographer: M.Y. Olney

Musical Director: Horace Sheldon

Cast: Charles Austin (*Parker*), Wilfred Seagram (*Gerald Grey*),
Toots Pounds (*Lady Babby*), Lorna Pounds (*Peggy*),
Alfred Corfield (*Race Card Boy*)

Songs: Extra Special, Jade Maid, Tin Can Jazz, Lord and Lady,
I'm Sure We Met

Story: Parker, a humble newsboy, agrees to a temporary change of identity with millionaire Gerald Grey so that Gerald can prove his genuine love for Lady Babby. At the same time Parker himself, now pretending to be rich, falls in love with the humble flower-girl, Pretty Peggy. A sub-plot involves the attempted doping of a favourite racehorse, with Parker having to play the role of the perfect mug before affairs are straightened out. Interspersed throughout were a number of comic "set pieces" with just a tenuous connection to the plot.

Notes: This show had toured the provinces with great success from August 1919 and was brought into the West End to enjoy a four month run. Following this, it returned to the provinces and played through to the end of 1921. The composer, A. Emmett Adams, was an Australian songwriter who had moved to England with his family at the age of 15, and whose career had been boosted by the success of his song "The Bells of St Mary's".



THE WILD GEESE

London run: Comedy, February 12th (112 performances)

Music: Charles Cuvillier

Original Book & Lyrics: André Barde

Book & Lyrics: Ronald Jeans

Director: Cosmo Gordon Lennox

Choreographer: Laddy Cliff

Musical Director: Albert W. Ketelbey

Cast: May Beatty (*Dame Agatha*), Gilbert Childs (*Weekes*), Robert Blythe (*Peregrine Smith*), Jack Buchanan (*Bill Malcolm*), Phyllis Monkman (*Violet Braid*), Elsie Carlisle (*Daphne*), Hazel Hamilton, Marjorie Waterlow, Olive Groves, Winifred Dennis, Nellie Briercliff

Songs: I Never Knew, Teacup Duet, Down with Man, Thistledown, Toasts, What Do You Think? I Don't Want any Other Girl But You, Love Does Not Ask a Price

Story: Dame Agatha Boot is president of the Junior Jumper Club, where men are positively unwelcome, except for the mild-mannered Club Steward, Weekes. Peregrine Smith and his friend the Hon. Bill Malcolm “crash” the club and cause ructions with their flirtatious behaviour. The more “advanced” members vote for an anti-man campaign, and move their premises to an uninhabited tropical island (again the only man allowed is Weekes, this time forced to leave his own wife behind). As time goes by some of the ladies regret their move, and relief comes in the form of a passing yacht, and, naturally, the occupants are Peregrine and Bill. They come ashore, speedily upset the anti-man campaign, and all sail off back to civilisation – including Dame Agatha who has fallen for the amorous wiles of Weekes.

Notes: The publicity suggested this was adapted from Cuvillier's “Son Petit Frere” which had been staged in Paris in 1907. However, it has a completely different plot, and the story bears no resemblance to the original. It is possible the music was used in a completely new setting.

THE BETTER 'OLE (1st Revival)

London run: Oxford Theatre, March 1st—April 6th (48 performances)

Music: Herman Darewski

Lyrics: James Hurd

Book: Bruce Bairnsfather & Arthur Eliot

Director: Frank Collins

Musical Director: Leon Bassett

Cast: Martin Adeson (*Old Bill*), Prudence Ayton (*Victoire*), Tom Wootwell (*Bert*), Harry Roxbury (*Alf*), Richard F. Simons, Chris Birss, Dorothy Bourn, Lily Duval

Notes: This was a five-week revival

Original London run:
Oxford Theatre, August 1918





Shayle Gardner

SUNSHINE OF THE WORLD

London run: Empire, February 18th – March 27th (45 performances)

Music: Charles Cuvillier

Lyrics: James Heard

Book: Gladys Unger & K.K. Ardaschir

Director: William J. Wilson

Musical Director: Oscar Bradley

Cast: F. Randle Ayrton (*Mohammed*), Shayle Gardner (*Nadir*), Clara Simons (*Princess Shireen*), Martin Iredale (*Colonel Clavenger*), George Bishop (*Prince Gulah-i-Mulk*), Alfred Clark (*Josiah Hathaway*), Joan Byford (*Refia*)

Songs: Sunshine of the World, Little Maid of the Skies, True Love, When Your Arms Enfold Me, Famed Am I in Delhi, An Eastern King, Over Distant Mountains

Story: In 1739 the war between India and Persia is ended with a peace treaty signed by Mohammed, Emperor of India, and Nadir, Shah of Persia, though the latter insists on keeping possession of the Koh-i-Noor diamond and taking a number of hostages as guarantee of peace. The Persian Princess Shireen (“the sunshine of the world”) is under the protection of Mohammed, but she disguises herself as one of the hostages in order to get close to Nadir and find a way of revenging his supposed murder of her brother. Another of the “disguised” hostages is Colonel Clavenger, who has a double secret mission, to protect Shireen and recover the Koh-i-Noor. Other characters include Prince Gulah-i-Mulk, “a dreamer”, Josiah Hathaway, who manages to get into all sort of comical troubles, and the maidservant, Refia.

Notes: The Empire was only available until the end of March because of the planned production of “Irene”, and it seems “Sunshine of the World” could not find another suitable theatre. It closed after 45 performances, and toured the provinces for the rest of the year.

SOCIETY LTD

London run: Scala Theatre, March 24th – April 10th (20 performances)

Music: Arthur Carrington

Book & Lyrics: Arthur Branscombe

Director: Arthur Branscombe

Choreographer: George Shurley

Musical Director: Allan Grey

Cast: Dorothy MacVane (*Lady Moya Stuart*), Bromley Challenor (*Bertie Stuart*), Harry A. Meymott (*Cyrus Wyndbag*), Arthur Roberts (*Solomon Dupont*), Marie Dainton (*Lady Whyte-Chappel*), Hugh Buckler (*Captain Jack Smith*), Leslie Austin (*Buggins*), Dorothy Waring (*Lady Mollie Maguire*)

Songs: My Little Dinkadoo, The Holy Year of 1921, The Girl in a Greenaway Gown, They Call Me Simple Simon, There’s Something in the British After All, King of My Heart

Story: “Society Ltd” is the name of a musical written by Lady Moya Stuart and her brother, the Hon. Bertie Stuart. The impecunious American impresario, Colonel Cyrus Q. Wyndbag, persuades the “French” composer and ex-acrobat, Count Solomon Dupont, and Lady Whyte-Chappelle, a rich widow, to invest in the venture. The producer will be Buggins, and the leading actor will be the actor-airman Captain Jack Smith. (However, Jack is in disguise, and is actually Jack Chernside, heir to an Earldom, who was cheated out of his fortune whilst at Oxford by no less than Buggins himself! And, even more of coincidence, Jack was once in love with Lady Moya, who rekindles their love when he finally un masks himself and Buggins gets his come-uppance.) A secondary romance developed between Bertie and his sweetheart, Lady Mollie Maguire, niece of a peppery Major.

Notes: This lavish production, with its highly implausible plot, included real swans swimming on the “lake” at Lady Moya’s house, an illuminated pier and lighthouse and a “Wedgewood” themed ballroom where “Miss Dorothy MacVane. . . wore a dress leaving little to the imagination “ (The Stage). However it was a total flop, closed after three weeks and the company was declared bankrupt.



Arthur Roberts

THE SHOP GIRL (1st Revival)

London run: Gaiety Theatre, March 25th - Jan 1st 1921 (327 performances)

Music: Ivan Caryll

Original Book & Lyrics: H.J.W. Dam

Revised Book & Lyrics: Arthur Wimperis

Additional music: Herman Darewski & St John Brougham

Director: Seymour Hicks

Choreographer: Willis Warde & Fred Farren

Musical Director: Arthur Wood

Cast: Evelyn Laye (*Bessie Brent*), Roy Royston (*Charlie Appleby*), Fred Hearne (*Bertie Boyd*), Alfred Lester (*Mr Miggles*), Thorpe Bates (*Bobby Blake*)

Songs: The Charity Bazaar, Beautiful Bountiful Bertie, Foundlings Are We, The Naughty Little Twinkle in Her Eye, (*New songs - Brougham: Father, Not a Little Bit; Darewski: If You Only Knew, My Shy Love, These Days and Those Days, Is It Fair? The Guards' Brigade*)

Story: The search is on for a missing heiress to an American fortune, and she is discovered to be none other than Bessie Brent, a shop girl working at the Royal Store in London. This good fortune provided Bessie with the means and the social prestige to marry Charlie Appleby, a poor but high-born medical student. (This revival included several new songs, including "The Guard's Brigade" which Bessie sang accompanied by a 60 piece marching band of real Guardsmen!)

Notes: The original production at the Gaiety opened on November 24th 1894 and ran for 546 performances. The role of Bessie was originally intended for Ellaline Terris, but she was taken ill and the part was taken over by Ada Reeve (although Ellaline Terris later succeeded Ada Reeve.) The original was also notable for offering the very first chorus line of the celebrated Gaiety Girls. The enormous success of the London production prompted a Broadway opening in October 1895 with Seymour Hicks and George Grossmith playing their original London parts. However, this was a flop, running for just 72 performances. This first London revival had been given a new book and introduced several new characters, including the Hon. Bobby Blake, as well as some new numbers. It ran for 327 performances.



Evelyn Laye



The very first Gaiety Girls - later to become a London "institution" - from the 1894 production

IRENE

London run: Empire Theatre, April 7th (399 performances)

Music: Harry Tierney

Lyrics: Joseph McCarthy

Book: James Montgomery

Director: Tom Reynolds

Musical Director: Sydney Ffoulkes

Cast: Edith Day (*Irene Dare*),
Pat Somerset (*Donald Marshall*), Robert Hale (*Mme Lucy*),
Helen Kinnaird (*Mrs O'Dare*), Margaret Campbell (*Helen*),
Robert Michaelis (*J.P. Bowden*), Hubert Neville,
Robert Blythe, Daisy Hancox

Songs: Alice Blue Gown, The Talk of the Town, To Be Worthy of You, Castle of Dreams, Sky Rocket, The Last Part of Every Party

Story: Poor Irene O'Dare from New York's 9th Avenue works for an upholsterer and is sent to mend some cushions at the Long Island home of wealthy Donald Marshall. Donald is attracted to the talkative girl and gets her a job, along with two of her friends, to model the designs of a male fashion designer who trades under the name Mme. Lucy. Since the modelling involves passing herself as a member of society, Irene is wooed by social-climbing J.P. Bowden, but he drops her when her humble origins are revealed. Donald, however, loves her exactly the way she is.

Notes: Based on the original play "Irene O'Dare" by James Montgomery, the musical opened on Broadway in November 1919 and ran for 670 performances. Edith Day travelled to London to star in the British premiere, and was so rapturously received that she eventually moved to the UK and became a leading West End star. A film version, starring Anna Neagle and Ray Milland, was made in 1940 directed by Herbert Wilcox



Edith Day & Pat Somerset

THE LITTLE WHOPPER

London run: Shaftesbury, April 20th (53 performances)

Music: Rudolf Friml

Book & Lyrics: Otto Harbach & Bide Dudley

Additional lyrics: Clifford Grey

Director: Felix Edwardes

Choreographer: Larry Ceballos

Musical Director: John Ansell

Cast: Lily St John (*Kitty Wentworth*), Joan Clarkson (*Janet Gregor*), Evan Thomas (*George Emmett*), Lena Maitland (*Miss Granville*), F. Pope Stamper (*Jack Harding*), Eric Lewis (*Sir Willoughby Gregor*), Lena Halliday (*Lady Gregor*)

Songs: I Shall Be Calling to You, She Was a Beautiful Girl, Round the Corner.

Story: Kitty Wentworth and Janet Gregor, pupils at the Arlington Finishing School in Hampstead, have sneaked into town to meet Kitty's fiancé, the Hon. George Emmett, with romantic plans to arrange a runaway marriage. They've told "a little whopper" to their headmistress Miss Granville, who, at the last minute, decides to accompany them on their innocent "shopping" trip. While taking tea in a local hotel, the girls hide in one of the empty rooms – but these are the rooms of Jack Harding, who turns out to be a friend of George's. To make matters worse, Janet's parents, Sir Willoughby and Lady Gregor, suddenly turn up and demand to know what she is doing in a man's hotel room. Another "little whopper" is created when Kitty and Jack pretend to be man and wife to make it respectable, and more complications ensue when Kitty and George finally do elope and marry for real.

Notes: "The Little Whopper" had opened on Broadway in October 1919 with Vivienne Segal in the cast, and would run for 224 performances. Despite its success in New York it was a flop in London, even though (or perhaps because) it had been considerable "anglicised" for British audiences.



Joan Clarkson



José Collins & Claude Flemming

A SOUTHERN MAID

London run: Daly's, May 15th - February 5th, 1921 (306 performances)

Music: Harold Fraser-Simson

Lyrics: Harry Graham

Additional music: Ivor Novello

Additional lyrics: Adrian Ross & Douglas Furber

Book: Dion Clayton Calthrop & Harry Graham

Director: Oscar Ashe

Choreographer: Fred Farren

Musical Director: Merlin Morgan

Cast: Bertram Wallis (*Francesco del Fuego*), Claude Flemming (*"Dick" Rawdon*), José Collins (*Dolores*), Gwendoline Brogden (*Chiquita*), Dorothy Monkman (*Juanita*), Mark Lester (*Walter Wex*), Lionel Victor (*Todo*).

Songs: A World Without Women, A Little Job for Two, Our Cottage By The Sea, He Won't Worry Me Again, The Call of the Sea, Here's to Those We Love, I Want the Sun and the Moon, Love's Cigarette, Dark Grows the Sky.

Story: Francesco del Fuego is the leader of a vendetta against Sir Willoughby "Dick" Rawdon, whose family was responsible for evicting the natives from their land to make room for his plantations in Santiago. Francesco is in love with the gipsy singer, Dolores, but she prefers Dick Rawdon, who has arrived in his yacht. Francesco's daughters, Chiquita and Juanita, have caught the eye of Walter Wex, who owns the local café, and is assisted by Todo, his incompetent head waiter. Francesco's attempt at vengeance goes wrong : he fixes it so that Dolores is dealt the fatal card that means she of their tribe must kill their hated overlord, but instead she sets him free and runs away with him. Francesco finally declares the vendetta is over when Dick restores the land to the natives, though he has to accept that he has lost Dolores to Dick.

Notes: "A Southern Maid" had first been staged in Manchester at the end of 1917, and had played a number of provincial engagements. The delay in bringing it into London was said to be due to the success of "The Maid of the Mountains", and a decision to wait until the latter had come to the end of its run.

JOHNNY JONES

London run: Alhambra, June 1st – February 26th, 1921

Music: Charles Cuvillier

Lyrics: Clifford Grey

Additional numbers: Grace Vernon & Hugo Frey

Book: Harry M. Vernon

Director: Harry M. Vernon

Choreographer: Gus Sohtke

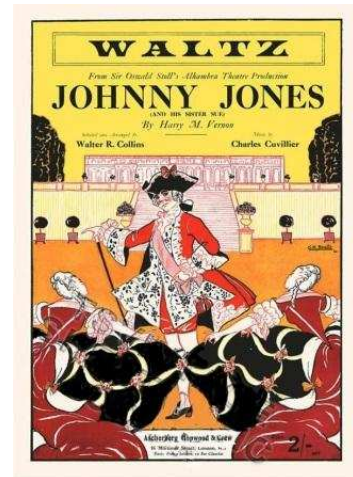
Musical Director: Herbert E. Haines

Cast: George Robey (*Johnny Jones*), Pip Powell (*Jonathan Jones*), Ivy St Helier, Clara Evelyn, Eric Blore, Netta Westcott, Harry Roxbury, Arthur Finn, Phyllis Bedells

Songs: A Littler House, Love While You May, Mary, The Persian Rag, Louis

Story: The baby Johnny was found on the doorstep of Mr Jonathan Jones and promptly adopted by that worthy man as a foster-brother to his daughter, Sue. As the years passed in the village of Rosedale Johnny's misdeeds were numerous, and the rumoured death of the village policeman led to Johnny fleeing in a "borrowed" flying machine to Paris. Pursued by a private detective, Johnny travels to Persia and Venice and is involved in a whole series of comic misadventures, until finally the detective catches up with him and tells him he is really the son of rich parents and is heir to a fortune.

Notes: More a revue than a musical, this was a star vehicle for George Robey, and ran successfully for nine months.



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

London run: Lyric Hammersmith, June 5th (1,463 performances)

Music: Various, arranged by Frederic Austin

Lyrics: Various

Book: John Gay

Director: Nigel Playfair

Choreographer: Marion Wilson

Musical Director: Nellie Chaplin

Cast: Frederic Austin (*Peachum*), Arthur Wynn (*Lockit*), Frederick Ranalow (*Macheath*), Alfred Heather (*Filch*), Arnold Pilbeam (*The Beggar*), Elsie French (*Mrs Peachum*), Sylvia Nelis (*Polly Peachum*), Violet Marquesita (*Lucy Lockit*), Beryl Freeman (*Diana Trapes*), Nonny Lock (*Jenny Diver*)

Notes: This legendary revival of the "ballad-opera" first produced at Lincoln's Inn Fields in January 1728 was an outstanding success, due not only to the tasteful new arrangements by Frederic Austin, but also the perfect intimate theatre, a superb cast and the magical décor and costumes by Claude Lovat-Fraser.

It ran for an extraordinary 1,463 performances



Violet Marquesita, Frederick Ranalow & Sylvia Nelis

OH! JULIE!

London run: Shaftesbury Theatre, June 22nd (Total 143 performances)
Transfer: Prince's Theatre, September 27th – October 23rd

Music: H. Sullivan Brooke & Herman Darewski

Lyrics: Harold Simpson

Book: Frith Shephard & Lee Banson

Director: Ernest C. Rolls

Choreographer: Fred A. Leslie

Musical Director: John Ansell

Cast: Harry Welchman (*Leoni*), Nellie Briercliffe (*Dulcinea*),
Ethel Levey (*Julie "La Soroska"*), Fred A. Leslie (*M. Courvoisier*),
Morris Harvey (*Mumps*), Mai Bacon (*Mariette*),
Davy Burnaby (*General Zonzo*), Gladys Ffoliott (*Mme Castellano*)

Songs: Oh, Cherie!, A Little Bit More, Love of Mine, Every Woman Knows,
Wonderful Days, The Road to Romance, Let us Live for Tonight, Wedding Bells



Ethel Levey

Story: The wedding ceremony between Leoni and Dulcinea is taking place in the Sicilian surroundings of the Hotel des Palmes, but things start to go wrong with the arrival of Julie, a Russian dancer, and an old flame of Leoni's. Further complications are caused by the hotel manager, M. Courvoisier, by Mumps, the hotel Boots, and by Mariette, the desk clerk. More difficulties accrue thanks to General Zonzo a flirty old reprobate, and Mme Castellano, a middle-aged coquette.

Notes: The show included some speciality dances performed by Fred Leslie and Ninette de Valois. It also represented the return to the stage of Ethel Levey, making her first London appearance in musical comedy. After three months at the Shaftesbury it transferred to the Prince's, but came off just a month later, having made an overall loss of around £16,000. Shortly afterwards the producer, Ernest Rolls, was declared bankrupt.



Marie Blanche

CHERRY

London run: Apollo, July 22nd – September 25th (76 performances)

Music: Melville Gideon

Book & Lyrics: Edward Knoblock

Director: Frank Collins

Choreographer: A.H. Majilton

Musical Director: J.B. Hastings

Producer: C.B. Cochran

Cast: Marie Blanche (*Cherry*), Wilfred Seagram (*Bill Meggs*),
Enid Sass (*Mabel Brackett*), George Ricketts (*Quain*),
Millicent Marden (*Lady Emily Staynes*), Harold Anstruther (*Lord Ledborough*),
Ada Palmer (*Dawson*), Clifford Morgan (*Evans*),
H. Stockwell Hawkins (*Joe Waple*), Marie Wright (*Liza Waple*),
Nancy Pawley (*Hon. Agatha Byfleet*)

Songs: I'm Cherry What's Known from the Borough to Bow, I Loves My Old Woman, Classes and Masses, The New World of Today, The Little Shop, Coster Rag, Why Not Forget?

Story: Cherry Burleigh, working in an East End jam factory, is being courted by Bill Meggs, who runs a fruit stall. She is angry when he seems to be paying too much attention to Mabel Brackett, and, to get her own back, she agrees with a scheme set up by Quain, a racing tout: she will claim to be the daughter of the scapegoat son of the late Earl of Ledborough, and therefore heiress to the Ledborough fortune. She manages to convince Lady Emily Staynes, her new found "aunt", and entrance Lord Ledborough, her "cousin". She moves "up West" to receive coaching from her new family, and to prepare herself for entry into society, aided and hindered by Dawson, an elderly lady's maid and Evans, the butler. However, Cherry lets herself down at her first big social "test" when the occasion is interrupted by the arrival of Joe and Liza Waple, an old coster couple. She admits her deception, and, leaving Lord Ledborough to be consoled by the Hon. Agatha Byfleet, and returns to live "happy ever after" with Bill in the good old East End.

Notes: In spite of good notices, the show failed to attract much business, and came to a sudden end after just two months. It did not undertake any touring – it just disappeared.

A NIGHT OUT

London run: Winter Garden Theatre, September 19th – June 18th 1921
(311 performances)

Music: Willie Redstone

Lyrics: Clifford Grey

Additional songs: Various

Book: George Grossmith & Arthur Miller

Director: Tom Reynolds

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Willie Redstone

Cast: Leslie Henson (*Joseph Pinglet*), Lily St John (*Marcelle*),
Fred Leslie (*Maurice Paillard*), Austin Melford (*Maxime*),
Phyllis Monkman (*Victorine*), Dave Burnaby (*Matthieu*),
Stanley Holloway (*René*), Elsa MacFarlane (*Kiki*),
Stella St. Audrie (*Mme. Pinglet*)

Songs: It Will All be the Same in a Hundred Years, Over the Garden Wall, In the Russian Way, Any Moonlight Night, The Misses is Going Away, Bolshevik Love, Ragpickers' Dance

Story: Henpecked sculptor Joseph Pinglet is taking advantage of his wife's absence and decides to go out for the night. Marcelle, engaged to the architect Maurice Paillard, is angry that her fiancé is too busy to take her out for the evening, so she agrees to accompany Joseph. They go to the disreputable and "haunted" Hotel Pimlico, only to be joined by Paillard, his bashful nephew Maxime, and the flighty maid, Victorine. Also in attendance are Matthieu, the lawyer and his four young daughters, together with René, Pinglet's assistant and his chief model, Kiki. The Hotel is raided and they all end up in the police cells. A great deal of farcical misunderstanding ensues before all is solved.

Notes: Adapted from "L'Hotel du Libre Echange" by Georges Feydeau and Maurice Desvallieres, the original play had been a great success for the Gatti Brothers at the Vaudeville in 1896, running for an astonishing 531 performances. The musical version by Willie Redstone and Clifford Grey interpolated a number of additional songs by Arthur Anderson & Melville Gideon, Cole Porter, Weston & Lee, and Philip Braham. It received the most glowing notices, and lavish praise was heaped upon Leslie Henson as "one of the greatest assets for success that the London stage can provide at the present moment". It ran for nine months.



Fred Leslie

THE NAUGHTY PRINCESS

London run: Adelphi, October 7th (268 performances)



Lily St John & George Grossmith



Lily St John & Yvonne Arnaud.

THE NAUGHTY PRINCESS

London run: Adelphi, October 7th (268 performances)

Music: Charles Cuvillier

Lyrics: Adrian Ross

Book: J. Hastings Turner

Director: J.A.E. Malone

Choreographer: Gus Sohlke

Musical Director: J

Cast: Lily St John (*Princess Sophia*), Leon Morton (*Prince Gospodar*), W.H. Berry (*King Michael*), George Grossmith (*Prince Ladislas*), Amy Augarde (*Countess Kittisch*), Yvonne Arnaud (*Chiquette*), Philip Simmons (*Hippolyte Flamèche*)

Songs: Satisfaction, Years Ago As I Ought to Know, Great-Great-Grandmother, I Was a Good Young Man, Hush Hush, Etiquette

Story: The very “modern” Princess Sophia of Panoplia refuses to marry Prince Gospodar, a union urged by her father, King Michael, for political reasons. She wishes to leave the palace and take up painting. The King persuades his nephew, Prince Ladislas, to disguise himself as the painter Flamèche, and introduce Sophia to the Parisian *vie de bohème*. He hopes a few weeks of such living will bring her to her senses. Sophia and her chaperone, Countess Kittisch, eagerly join “Flamèche” in Paris, but things get complicated when Ladislas meets an old flame, Chiquette who has since married the real Flamèche. Then the disguised King Michael secretly arrives in Paris to see how things are progressing. In all the confusion, Sophia falls in love with her bohemian artist, Ladislas. To her delight she learns the Bohemian painter is really a Prince, and therefore she and Ladislas can marry and keep everyone happy.

Notes: Adapted from “La Reine s’amuse” by André Barde, Cuvillier’s musical version was first produced in Marseille in 1913 and then in Paris in 1918 (the delay before an English version was caused by the First World War.) For the London production the role of the young Prince was played by George Grossmith, who was now 46 years old, “wearing a golden wig and trying to look as youthful as possible”.

THE LITTLE DUTCH GIRL

London run: Lyric, December 1st (215 performances)

Music: Emmerich Kalman

Original book & Lyrics: Bela Jenbach & Leo Stein

English Lyrics: Harry Graham

English Book: Seymour Hicks & Harry Graham

Director: Seymour Hicks

Choreographer: Willie Warde

Musical Director: Jacques Heuvel

Cast: Martin Iredale (*Prince Paul*), Maggie Teyte (*Princess Julia*), Jack Hulbert (*Captain Posch*), Lauri de Frece (*Baron Bomba*), Cicely Debenham (*Countess Eloise*), Lawrence Caird

Songs: In the Spring, Women Always Get Their Way, The Courtier, I’m Tired, It’s a Wonderful Land, The Dreamland Lover, The Bridal Hour, Prince of My Maiden Fancies

Story: Crown Prince Paul of Sarragon has been betrothed since infancy to Princess Julia, the Grand Duchess of neighbouring Sylvania, but he would like to prolong his bachelor freedom. So, on the day proposed for the wedding he sends his equerry, Captain Posch, to explain why he is missing. However, Sylvania’s Lord Chamberlain, Baron Bomba, induces Posch to honour an old law and to go through the ceremony as a proxy for Paul. The Princess is not pleased, and decides to track down her missing “husband”. Julia and her lady-in waiting, Countess Eloise, disguise themselves as nieces of a Dutch innkeeper with Bomba forced to play the role of innkeeper’s servant, and they board Prince Paul’s yacht for a series of comic misunderstandings and complications. True to form, the Prince will end up with his “little Dutch girl”, and Posch will marry Eloise

Notes: Kalman’s “Das Hollandweibchen” (“The Little Dutch Girl”) had opened in January 1920 at the Johann-Strauss Theater in Vienna, where it ran for more than 450 performances. It was rapidly taken up all over Europe, and the title song, a sweeping waltz, became enormously popular and is still heard frequently today.



Maggie Teyte



SYBIL

London run: Daly's, February 19th – December 10th (347 performances)

Music: Victor Jacobi

Original book: Miklos Brody & Ferenc Martos

English Book & Lyrics: Harry Graham

Director: Seymour Hicks

Choreographer: Fred Farren

Musical Director:

Cast: José Collins (*Sybil*), Huntley Wright (*Poiré*), May Beatty (*Margot*), Noel Leyland (*Captain Petrov*), Harry Welchman (*Grand Duke Constantine*), Jean Stirling (*Grand Duchess Anna Pavlovna*)

Songs: Love May Be a Mystery, The Letter Song, The Colonel of the Crimson Hussars, A Cup of Tea, Lift Your Eyes to Mine, Girls You Are Such Wonderful Things

Story: In pre-Bolshevik Russia, Sybil, a Parisian singer, is fulfilling an engagement for the impresario Poiré and his wife Margot. Sybil's lover, Captain Petrov, has for her sake deserted his regiment and is possibly facing the firing squad. In order to save him, Sybil is forced into impersonating the Russian Grand Duchess Anna Pavlovna in the hope of obtaining a pardon. Her aristocratic impersonation is so convincing that she is ardently wooed by a real Grand Duke, Constantine. Complications arise when the real Grand Duchess Anna turns up, and promptly starts to woo Captain Petrov. However, by the end of the show matters are resolved: Grand Duke Constantine saves Captain Petrov by giving him a passport which allows him to leave the country and marry Sybil. At the same time Constantine and the Grand Duchess Anna have rekindled their old love.

Notes: Victor Jacobi's "Szbill" had opened in Budapest in February 1914 and was a great success, with the song "Illúzió a szerelem" (Love May Be a Mystery) becoming a great hit. George Edwardes bought an option on the show for London, but was forced to abandon the idea of staging the work of an enemy alien when the war broke out. Jacobi, himself in London, was forced to leave Britain and move to neutral New York, where the show was staged in January 1916 and ran for 168 performances.

The London production had to wait until the end of the war and the end of the "Maid of the Mountains" run.

As always, there was a universal welcome for any performance by José Collins, and, despite a rather cool notice in *The Stage*, any show with José Collins was critic-proof. It ran through the rest of the year, playing 347 performances.

José Collins in Sybil;



THE REBEL MAID

London run: Empire, March 12th – June 18th (114 performances)

Music: Montague Phillips

Lyrics: Gerald Doddsdon

Book: Alexander M. Thompson

Director: Robert Courtneidge

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Howard Carr

Cast: Clara Butterworth (*Lady Mary Trefusis*), Thorpe Bates (*Derek*), C. Hayden Coffin (*Lord Milverton*), George F. Ide (*Sir Stephen*), William Cromwell (*Bunkle*), Robert Laing (*Prince William of Orange*), Walter Passmore (*Solomon Hooker*), Betty Chester (*Abigail*).

Songs: Are My Lanterns Shining?, This English Land, Sunshine and Laughter, Shepherdess and Beau Brocade, Unavailing Little lady, When a Dream of Love you Cherish, The old-fashioned Cloak, Sail My Ships Serving Maidens merry, The Fishermen of England.

Story: In 1688 Lady Mary Trefusis is secretly plotting to depose King James II in favour of Prince William of Orange. Unknown to her, a fellow conspirator is her childhood sweetheart, Derek, the son of Lord Milverton. Sir Stephen Crespigny, an agent for the King, discovers the plot, though local fishermen help Derek escape. Sir Stephen threatens that if Mary does not marry him, she will be tried for high treason and Derek will be shot the moment he is seen. Naturally Derek comes to find Mary, is seized and at the point of execution when the timely arrival of Prince William saves him. Mary, the rebel maid, surrenders to Derek and they serenade the fishermen of England, who have saved his life and England's liberty. A comic subplot involves Derek's servant, Solomon Hooker, falling in love with Abigail, Lady Mary's maid, who is being pursued by Bunkle, the landlord.

Notes: Although the book and the plotting were somewhat cumbersome and plodding, the music was enthusiastically received, and the song "The Fishermen of England" was a rousing success. The show only managed a three month run at the Empire, but went on to become a staple of amateur musical societies for many years to come. (The leading role was specially written for Clara Butterworth – her husband was the composer, Montague Phillips.)



Clara Butterworth



Miss RENÉE MAYER

FAUST ON TOAST

London run: Gaiety, April 19th – 30th (14 performances)

Restaged: Gaiety, May 12th – 28th (20 performances)

Music: Willie Redstone & Melville Gideon

Book & Lyrics: Frith Shephard & Adrian Ross

Additional numbers: Ralph Benatzky, Dick Henty, Louis Breau, Ray Henderson

Director: Tom Reynolds

Choreographer: Willis Warde & Ben Taylor

Musical Director: Arthur Wood

First Cast: Jack Buchanan (*Faust*), Renee Mayer (*Marguerite*), Heather Thatcher (*Valentine*), Robert Hale (*Mephistopheles*), Maisie Gay (*Martha*), Nancie Lovat (*Siebel*), Morris Harvey (*Wagner*)

Second cast: Jack Buchanan (*Faust*), Maidie Andrews (*Marguerite*), Heather Thatcher (*Valentine*), Tom Walls (*Mephistopheles*), Maisie Gay (*Martha*), Nancie Lovat (*Elsa*), Morris Harvey (*Wagner*)

Notes: This was a burlesque, with Faust as an old time opera star who fancied Marguerite, the "sweetheart" of the movies. Marguerite's agent was her brother, Valentine, determined to stop her abandoning her career and running off with the rejuvenated Faust, in spite of the machinations of Mephistopheles. Wagner was portrayed as an impoverished musician, and Martha as a flirtatious devil-chaser. The show interpolated numerous songs, including ones from "Faust-Up-To-Date" which had been a hit at the Gaiety in 1888. "Faust on Toast", performed in rhyming couplets, was a major flop, booed on the opening night, universally condemned by the critics, and taken off after two weeks. Over the next twelve days the show was re-cast, re-written and re-opened. The rhyming couplets had gone, the movie-land scenes significantly reduced, new scenes and dances were introduced, and the show was less of a burlesque and more of a revue. Although an improvement, it lasted just three weeks. The overall losses were said to be just under £20,000.

MARY

London run: Queen's Theatre, April 27th – July 9th (85 performances)

Music: Louis A. Hirsch

Book & Lyrics: Otto Harbach & Frank Mandel

Director: William J. Wilson

Choreographer: Gene Richards

Musical Director: Herman Finck

Cast: Maidie Hope (*Mrs Keene*), Ambrose Manning (*Mr Goddard*), Alec Regan (*Jack Keene*), Mabel Sealby (*Madeleine Francis*), Evelyn Laye (*Mary Howells*), Ralph Lynn (*Gaston Marceau*)

Songs: That May Have Satisfied Grandma, Anything You Want to Do Dear, Every Time I Meet a Lady, Down on that Old Kansas Farm, The Love Nest, Waiting, Deeper

Story: Mrs Keene of Long Island, a rich widow, is informed by her trustee Mr Goddard, that she has lost all her money through the bankruptcy of a Trust company. Her son, Jack, wants to marry Madeleine Francis, who is really a penniless fortune-hunter, though he is loved all the time by Mary Howells, his mother's secretary. Jack is enthusiastic about his new business scheme, selling small model houses just large enough and affordable for young newly-weds— an invention of his colleague, Gaston Marceau, a French designer. The only person who supports this idea is Mary – but before anything can happen, Jack has to go to Kansas to retrieve the family's fortune. The model house idea comes to nothing in Kansas, but a plot of land he acquires turns out to hold a large oil-well. He returns, a rich man, only to learn that both Madeleine and Mary are inclined to marry an objectionable but very rich young bounder, Tommy Boyde. After much to-ing and fro-ing, all ends well, with Jack marrying Mary, Madeleine marrying Tommy, and even Mrs Keene settling down with Gaston.

Notes: "Mary" had originally opened in New York in October 1920 where it ran for 220 performances. As far as London was concerned, the plot of this show was almost incidental to a display of acrobatic dancing, a spinning-rope speciality act, pupils from the Italia Conti school, live doves and a series of comedy scenes, involving Gaston's fractured English. A team of six speciality dancers were listed with names like Waltzing Winnie, Two-Step Tom, Toddling Tessie, and Whirlwind Willie. It had a short run of just over two months.



Maidie Hope

THE GIPSY PRINCESS

London run: Prince of Wales, May 26th (Total 220 performances)



Mizzi Günther, the original Sylvia



The Broadway version

THE GIPSY PRINCESS

London run: Prince of Wales, May 26th (Total 220 performances)
Transfer: Strand, October 3rd – December 3rd

Music: Emmerich Kalman

Original Book & Lyrics: Leo Stein & Bela Jenbach

English Book & Lyrics: Arthur Miller and Arthur Stanley

Director: William J. Wilson

Choreographer: Monsieur Jean Richards

Musical Director: Robert Cox

Cast: Sari Petras (*Silva Varescu*), M. de Jari (*Prince Ronald*), Mark Lester (*Count Feri*), Billy Leonard (*Lord Boniface*), Phyllis Titmus (*Countess Stasi*), Leonard Mackay (*Prince Leopold*), Lindsey Gray (*Princess Anita*)

Songs: Live, Love, Laugh, The Ladies of the Chorus, Love Alone, Fill a Glass, I Was Born a Romany, To Love and to Be Loved, Noblesse Oblige, The Swallow Song, How Could I Know? , Nobody Else , A Hundred Years From Now

Story: Hungarian cabaret singer, Silva Varescu, departing on an American tour, leaves behind two heartbroken admirers: Prince Ronald and Count Feri . The Prince has even signed a promissory note to marry her on her return in three months' time, unaware that his parents have contracted for him to marry Countess Stasi back home in Vienna. On her return ,hearing of his engagement, Silva pretends she has married the English Lord Boniface ("Boni"), because Ronald has failed to keep his promise. Ronald's father, Prince Leopold, objects to him marrying a cabaret singer whom society will always regard as a mere gipsy Princess, – but if she will divorce Boni, and then marry Ronald, she will already have a title from her former marriage, and that will satisfy the family. Offended by this snobbery, Silva turns her back on them. Meantime Boni has fallen in love with Stasi, who now wishes to get out of her arranged marriage to a man she does not love. All is resolved when Count Feri recognizes Ronald's mother, Princess Anita, as a retired cabaret singer from Budapest whose star once shone prior to Sylva's time. Ronald's mother joins the two couples, Sylva/Ronald and Boni/Stasi, as they all gather for a happy ending.

Notes: Kalman's "Die Czardasfürstin" opened in Vienna in November 1915 and was an enormous success, with productions following all over Central Europe. (It remains hugely popular today and is regularly revived in Austria, Hungary, Germany and Russia.) In 1917 it was "revamped" for New York as "The Riviera Girl" by Guy Bolton and P.G. Wodehouse and additional songs by Jerome Kern, and even though the action was changed to Monte Carlo, contemporary anti-Viennese and German sentiments were blamed when it flopped after just 78 performances. (Though possibly the very poor adaptation might have contributed as well.) London had to wait until 1921 for its British premiere, this time in a version by Arthur Miller and Arthur Stanley, which was more successful than the American version, and managed a six month run. It was not until 1981, with a new translation by Nigel Douglas, and a much praised production at Sadler's Wells, that "The Gipsy Princess" at last became recognised as one of the great masterworks of 20th Century operetta.



The wedding scene: Sari Petras and M. de Jari, centre

MY NIECES

London run: Queen's Theatre, August 19th (Total 171 performances)
Transfer: Aldwych October 4th – January 14th, 1922

Music: Howard Talbot **Lyrics:** Percy Greenbank

Book: Percy Greenbank and Philip Braham

Director: Donald Calthrop

Choreographer: Jack Buchanan & A.H. Majilton

Musical Director: Howard Talbot

Cast: Binnie Hale (*Betty Culverwell*), Ralph Lynn (*Percival Todhunter*),
Marjorie Gordon (*Pamela Jessop*), E.Louis Bradfield (*Algernon Crutchfield*),
Henry Wenman (*Rear-Admiral Jessop*), Jack Rooke (*Pringle*)

Songs: My Algernon, When you are Wed to the Boy of Your Heart, When You are
Twenty-One, Oh Angelique, A Way We Have in the Navy, A Sailor's Life.

Story: Betty Culverwell leads a double life: by day she's the director of a girls' finishing school, but at night she supports her wastrel husband, the Hon. Percival Todhunter, by working as an actress. Over Christmas, Percival and the schoolgirls, throw a party where, unknown to Percy, one of the girls, Pamela Jessop, is celebrating her secret marriage to Algernon Crutchfield. The party goes with a bang - literally - for Pringle, the boot boy, who is addicted to fireworks, sets fire to the school forcing the whole party to transfer to the nearby house of Percival's friend, Rear Admiral Christopher Jessop, who is also unaware of his daughter's marriage. Naturally, being a musical comedy, all is eventually brought to a satisfactory and happy ending.

Notes: Based on "The Schoolmistress" by Arthur Wing Pinero, the show underwent some changes during its initial six week run at the Queen's. A completely new character was introduced enabling Sam Wilkinson to perform a speciality drunk act; Ralph Lynn's role as Uncle Percy was given a great deal more comic business; and several songs were replaced with interpolated "improvements".



Binnie Hale



George Grossmith, Leslie Henson
& Heather Thatcher

SALLY

London run: Winter Garden, September 10th (387 performances)

Music: Jerome Kern **Ballet music:** Victor Herbert

Lyrics: Clifford Grey & various

Book: Guy Bolton

Director: George Grossmith

Choreographer: Jack Haskell

Musical Director: John Ansell

Cast: Alaric Arnée (*Pops Schendorff*), Leslie Henson (*"Connie"*),
Dorothy Dickson (*Sally*), Molly Ramsden (*Mrs Ten Broeck*),
Gregory Stroud (*Blair Farquar*), Seymour Beard (*Jimmie Spelvin*),
George Grossmith (*Otis Hooper*), Heather Thatcher (*Rosie Rafferty*),
Ernest Graham (*Richard Farquar*)

Songs: On With the Dance, Sally, Wild Rose, The Schnitza Kommiska,
Whip-Poor-Will; (*Lyrics: B.G. DeSylva - Look for the Silver Lining*),
(*Lyrics: Anne Caldwell - The Lorelei*), (*Lyrics: P.G. Wodehouse - You
Can't Keep a Good Girl Down, The Church Round the Corner*).

Story: "Pops" Schendorff owns an inn in downtown New York, where he employs the exiled Grand Duke Constantine of Czechogovinia (*"Connie"*), as a waiter, and Sally, a foundling recommended for a dishwashing job by Mrs Ten Broek, a wealthy social worker. Blair Farquar, a millionaire's son, and his friend Jimmie, visit the restaurant and are much taken with Sally, who has dreams of becoming a singer. Connie arranges for her to perform at the Inn, where she is spotted by Otis Hooper, a theatrical agent and his fiancée Rosie Rafferty. Otis is in trouble because his client, Mme. Nookerova, a famous French ballet dancer, has pulled out of her engagement at a party being given by Richard Farquar, Blair's father. Since no one knows what Mme. Nookerova looks like, he persuades Sally to pretend to be the ballerina. A whole series of misunderstandings, mistaken identities and complications arise, but finally Sally is offered a job in the Ziegfeld Follies, and the finale sees the multiple weddings of Sally and Blair, Mrs. Ten Broek and Connie, and Rosie and Otis.

Notes: "Sally" opened on Broadway on December 21st 1920, and ran for 570 performances, starring Marilyn Miller.

NOW AND THEN

London run: Vaudeville, September 17th - November 19th (76 performances)

Music: Philip Braham

Lyrics: Reginald Arkell

Book: John Hastings Turner & George Graves

Director: Dion Titheradge

Choreographer: A.H. Majilton

Musical Director: Philip Braham

Cast: George Graves (*George Gridd*), Joyce Barbour (*Barbara*), Roy Royston (*Lord Henry*), Eric Stanley (*John de Bablocke*), Laura Cowie (*Queen Elizabeth*), Harold Deacon (*Earl of Essex*), Alfred Bennett (*Walter Raleigh*), Miles Malleston (*Shakespeare*).
(*Later addition:* Beatrice Lillie as *Moll Pavement*)

Songs: If Some Great Queen You Knew, Ladies in Waiting, The Fashions Change Every Day, Love is Higher than the Mountain Tops,

Story: George Gridd, a parvenu millionaire, has bought Bablocke Hall from the impoverished Lord Henry Bablocke-Blythe, and even though his daughter Barbara is in love with the titled but penniless Lord, George deems him an unsuitable prospective son-in-law. A mishap whilst using the telephone during a storm sparks the intervention of John de Bablocke, the family ghost, and all three are transported back to the days of Good Queen Bess. The Queen, the Earl of Essex, Walter Raleigh and William Shakespeare are visiting Bablocke Hall where the Queen takes a fancy to young Henry, and, when he turns her down, she orders Henry and Barbara to be executed. In order to prevent this, George blurts out his consent to Henry and Barbara's marriage. Things immediately restore to the present day 1920s, and to the pre-arranged fancy-dress ball with its Elizabethan theme. A chastened George confirms his agreement to the marriage.

Notes: With its dances ranging from gavottes to foxtrots, and its jokey anachronisms enabling George to suggest a story-line for Shakespeare's as-yet unwritten "Hamlet", this was an expensively costumed extravaganza. However, it did not please the critics nor the audience. Immediately after the opening night re-writing and re-staging took place, with alterations being rehearsed in the daytime and added that same evening. The major change was to introduce a completely new character, Moll Pavement, played by the revue comedienne, Beatrice Lillie. After just two months it was decided to end the run.



Beatrice Lillie

THE GOLDEN MOTH

London run: Adelphi, October 5th – June 3rd 1922 (281 performances)

Music: Ivor Novello

Book & Lyrics: Fred Thompson & P.G. Wodehouse

Director: Austen Hurgon

Musical Director: Ernest Longstaffe

Cast: Robert Michaelis (*The Blackbird*), W.H. Berry (*The Marquis*), Nancie Lovat (*Aline*), Thorpe Bates (*The Captain*), Arthur Bawtree (*M. de Crillon*), Cicely Debenham (*Rose*), Sylvia Leslie (*Zozo*)

Songs: Romance is Calling, My Girl, Lonely Soldier, Dartmoor Days, The Villain of the Piece, The Island of Never-Mind-Where, Give Me a Thought Now and Then, Dear Eyes That Shine

Story: The Golden Moth in Paris is the haunt of two villains, "The Blackbird" and "The Marquis". The heroine, Aline, the daughter of the wealthy De Crillon, changes clothes with her maid, Rose, and visits the Golden Moth where she is temporarily fascinated by the Blackbird, and meantime Rose, passing as her mistress, is being pursued by the Marquis. Aline's betrothed, "The Captain" is wrongly arrested for the theft of Aline's diamonds—the real thief is the Marquis—but he escapes and attends Aline's 21st birthday party, where the Blackbird and The Marquis (the latter disguised as a bejewelled dowager) raid the ballroom and steal all the ladies' jewels. In between all these goings on there have been passionate Apache dances, and a sub-plot where the Blackbird's jealous mistress, Zozo, tries to give him away. All is finally resolved appropriately but somewhat perfunctorily!

Notes: This was an adaptation of the old melodrama "Robert Macaire", a staple of the Lyceum Theatre in the 19th century - the title role had even been played by Henry Irving in 1888. An earlier musical version was "Erminie" (1885). This new version was a hit because of the star performance by W.H. Berry. It was the first show for which Ivor Novello wrote the whole score.

CAIRO

London run: His Majesty's, October 15th – June 3rd 1922 (267 performances)

Music: Percy Fletcher

Book & Lyrics: Oscar Ashe

Director: Oscar Ashe

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Percy Fletcher

Cast: Oscar Ashe (*Ali Shar*), Fedora Rozelli (*Zummurud*), Courtice Pounds (*Abu Yaksan*), Shayle Gardner (*Sultan Al Malik-al-Nasir*), Cecil Humphreys (*Prince Nur-al-Din*), Conway Dixon (*Wazir Al Khasib*), Julian Cross (*Wazir Abu Shamah*), Frank Cochrane (*Wei San Wei*), Gracie Leigh (*Wei Wei Shu*), Lily Brayton (*Princess Sharazad*).

Songs: Chinaman's Song, Hast Thou Been to Mecca?, The Story of the Sphinx

Story: Ali Shar, a Persian strong-man and wrestler, has come to Cairo with his daughter, Zummurud, his clown, Abu Yaksan, and duenna. He gets caught up in a local power struggle between the good Sultan Al Malik-al-Nasir, and the evil Prince Nur-al-Din, whose henchmen include Wazir Al Khasib, Wazir Abu Shamah, Wei San Wei and Wei Wei Shu. The Sultan falls in love and marries Zummurud, but the wicked Nur-al-Din kidnaps her, and uses her as bait to lure the Sultan to his death. Nur-al-Din is also being pursued by Princess Sharazad, out to avenge herself on the man who killed her son. Finally Ali Shar kills Nur-al-Din and his gang whereby justice is achieved and peace is restored.

Notes: The show, originally called "Mecca", was written to cash in on the success of "Chu Chin Chow", but the latter kept running and running. Rather than wait any longer, it was decided to open it on Broadway. It was, perhaps, the greatest spectacle and most lavish production ever staged in New York. The hard-to-please critic Alexander Woolcott in the New York Times wrote: "Mecca is a gorgeous show – the work of a man who has in him something of Diaghileff and something of P.T. Barnum. Here is something that all theatregoers in America will enjoy. It is a sumptuous pageant." It opened on Broadway in October 1920 and ran for just 130 performances, closing in January 1921. The choreographer was Michael Fokine. The show's title ran into trouble in London – with the Lord Chamberlain banning the word "Mecca" so as not to offend British citizens who were of the Muslim religion. Despite Oscar Ashe's protestations that London already had Mecca cafes, Mecca coffee, Mecca cigarettes and even "Mecca ointment, a cure for piles", he was forced to change the title to "Cairo". It was just as lavish and spectacular as the American production, and the notorious bacchanal sequence led to public protests of indecency from the Church and the Promotion of Public Morality Committee. In spite of this (or because of this?) the show ran eight and a half months, and, even though it was the most expensive show staged in London to date, Oscar Ashe announced it had closed with a profit of £12,000.



The notorious Bacchanal scene which led to protests of indecency

LITTLE GIRL IN RED

London run: Gaiety, December 10th – January 7th 1922
(33 performances)

Music: Edouard l'Enfant

Book & Lyrics: Harold Simpson & Arthur Stanley

Additional Music: Claude B. Yearsley

Director: William J. Wilson

Choreographer: Espinosa & Mlle Olivette

Musical Director: Arthur Wood

Cast: Mark Lester (*Hyacinth Borel*), Margaret Bannerman (*Suzette*), Billy Leonard (*Salimac de Flavigny*), Arthur Margetson (*Hubert*), Ralph Roberts (*Yoshino*), Mai Bacon (*Lili Touplin*), Amy Augarde (*Mme St Martin*)

Songs: Love in December, A Little Bit of Loving, Blue Bird of Happiness, Mirror Mirror

Story: A giddy old roué, Hyacinth Borel, wishes to marry his niece, Suzette, to an impossible wealthy ass named Salimac de Flavigny. Suzette, however, has her heart set on Hubert Faverolle. Hubert, like her father, is a bit of a flirt and frequents the somewhat disreputable Café Kobo and its equally disreputable Japanese proprietor, Yoshino. Suzette goes there in disguise to see exactly what Hubert is up to, only to find a very tipsy Salimac is there as well. Hubert starts flirting with Suzette thinking she is someone else, and Salimac falls into the clutches of Lili Touplin, a cabaret girl.



Margaret Bannerman

Notes: Adapted from “La Petite en Rouge” by Maurice Lupin, this was a very troubled show. It seems to have run out of money before it opened, and was saved at the last minute by “a cheque for £2000 being handed over by a backer at a coffee stall in Piccadilly at 2am”. The supper party to mark the first night was “given, ostensibly, by a rich young man about town, though there are some doubts as to whether he ever knew he was the host. The chorus girl in whom he was interested did not attend the party; she went off with another swain”. (From “The Footlights Flickered” – the memoirs of W. Macqueen Pope). A fight broke out, with chairs being thrown about, and the police were called to calm things down. Indifferent reviews, delays in the performers receiving their money, backstage rivalries, and a poor quality show meant the show came to an abrupt end after just over three weeks.

THE MAID OF THE MOUNTAINS (1st Revival)

London run: Daly’s, December 26th—February 4th, 1922 (51 performances)

Music: Harold Fraser-Simpson & James W. Tate

Lyrics: Harry Graham, F. Clifford Harris & Arthur Valentine

Additional songs: Max Darewski, lyrics by Clifford Grey & Arthur Anderson

Book: Frederick Lonsdale

Director: Oscar Asche

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Merlin Morgan

Cast: José Collins (*Teresa*), Bertram Wallis (*Baldassarre*), Peter Gawthorne (*Beppo*), Edward D’Arcy (*Antonio*), Mabel Sealby (*Vittoria*), Alfred Wellesley (*General Malona*)

Notes: The original production at Daly’s opened on February 10th 1917 and ran for an astonishing 1,352 performances. Next to “Chu Chin Chow” it was the biggest hit of the War Years and made a star of José Collins. A Broadway production opened in September 1918 and, incredibly, closed after just 37 performances! No show of the time emphasised more the difference between British and American audiences. The show was revived in London in 1921 again with José Collins in the lead. A film version was made in 1932 with Nancy Brown and Harry Welchman.

Original London run: Daly’s, February 1917

JENNY

London run: Empire, February 10th – April 1st (66 performances)

Music: Haidée de Rance

Lyrics: Harry Grattan & John Plunkett

Book: Harry Grattan **Additional numbers:** Leslie Stuart

Additional Lyrics: Arthur Anderson & Arthur Stanley

Director: William J. Wilson

Choreographer: J.W. Jackson

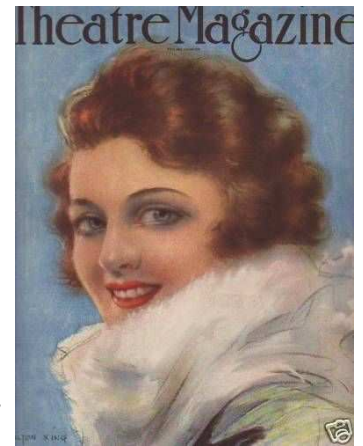
Musical Director: Arthur Wood

Cast: Shaun Glenville (*Mozart Wagg*), Reginald Sharland (*Jack Trender*), Kittie Kirwan (*Miss Cloot*), Edith Day (*Jenny*), Maidie Andrews (*Regina*), Edna Bellonini (*Patricia*), Maidie Hope (*Mrs Wagg*), Billy Leonard (*William Rowan*), Alfred Austin (*Blades*)

Songs: Joy of Life, Shall Us, By and By, Jenny Wren, Lonely, Cutey, London Cries, A Matter of Position, My Little Dog, Muffins.

Story: Mozart Orpheus Wagg, a millionaire musician, offers Jenny, a young servant girl working at Miss Cloots' Girls School, a chance of a singing career. Encouraged by two schoolgirls, Regina and Patricia, Jenny accompanies Wagg and his wife to London, where he passes Jenny off as an Italian artiste. He also enlists his secretary, William Rowan, to help keep Jenny and her admirer Jack Trender apart, since their blossoming romance could hinder her career. Just as Jenny hits international fame, Wagg is reduced to bankruptcy due to the failure of his gold mine, and is reduced to writing music-hall songs for the comic, Blades. Jenny, now a world star, buys the useless mine for £20,000 and presents the money to Wagg, and, of course, marries Jack by the end of the show.

Notes: This show was intended to be a follow-up to the successful "Irene", but it was in trouble from the start. During rehearsals Robert Hale departed and Shaun Glenville was brought in as a last-minute replacement. The show received very poor notices and even poorer audiences, coming off after 66 performances, after which the management was sued for unpaid royalties to the composer and the lyricist, and various other unpaid administration bills.



Edith Day



Phyllis Dare

THE LADY OF THE ROSE

London run: Daly's, February 21st - May 12th 1923 (514 performances)

Music: Jean Gilbert

Original Book & Lyrics: Rudolph Schanzer & Ernest Welitsch

English Book: Frederick Lonsdale **English Lyrics:** Harry Graham

Director: Fred J. Blackman

Choreographer: A.H. Majilton

Musical Director: Merlin Morgan

Cast: Roy Royston (*Count Adrian Beltrami*), Phyllis Dare (*Countess Mariana*), Huntley Wright (*Suitangi*), Harry Welchman (*Colonel Belovar*), Leonard Mackay (*Baron Sprotti-Sprotti*), Ivy Tresmand (*Sophie Lavalle*),

Songs: With Me It's Got to Be, I Like a Change, My Silhouette, I Love You So, Catch a Butterfly While You Can, Call to Arms

Story: The revolutionary Count Adrian Beltrami changes clothes with his elderly friend, Suitangi, in order to escape the soldiers of Colonel Robert Belovar. The Colonel is much struck by the beauty of Adrian's wife, the Countess Mariana, and by her resemblance to the "Lady of the Rose" portrait on the wall. A captured "spy" is brought in (none other than Adrian in disguise) and Marianna pleads for his release, only for the drunken Colonel to

offer to spare Adrian's life in return for the Countess's honour. She has 24 hours to consider. In a dream the lady in the portrait comes to life and tells the Colonel "women cannot be bought; they must be wooed". The next morning Mariana confesses her love for Adrian, and the Colonel recognising the strength of true love, takes his leave. A subplot involves the Baron Sprotti-Sprotti and his troupe of ballet-dancers, led by Sophie Lavalle.

Notes: The original title of this show was "Die Frau im Hermelin" (The Lady in Ermine) and it had been first staged at the Theater des Westens in Berlin in 1919. Although it had been well received in both Berlin and Vienna, the London run of over 500 performances far exceeded its Continental popularity

HIS GIRL

London run: Gaiety, April 1st – June 10th (81 performances)

Music: Ernest Longstaffe & Max Darewski

Lyrics: Claude E. Burton

Book: Austen Hurgon & F.E. Thomas

Additional numbers: Ivy St Helier & Eric Blore

Additional lyrics: Athur Anderson

Director: Austen Hurgon

Musical Director: Arthur Wood

Cast: Walter Gay (*Earl of Laughden*), Bobbie Blythe (*Algy*), Patricia Malone (*Lady Diana*), Stanley Lupino (*James Hicks*), Arthur Margetson (*Geoffrey Custance*), Hilda Bayley (*Susan Buckett*), Dorothy Bourn (*Lady Anne*), Tony de Lungo (*Count del Rossi*), Margaret Bays (*Barbara*), Bryn Gwyn (*Bodkin*).

Songs: We Always Follow a Father, Spring Trot, I'm Going to Put my Hair Up in the Morning, The Joy of a Dancing Hour, Love Waltz, Wine of Love, Yesterday

Story: The Earl of Laughden's seven children - his son Algy and six daughters – always follow father's instructions, hence the eldest daughter, Lady Diana, is engaged to marry the nouveau riche James Hicks even though her real love is the dashing but impoverished Hon. Geoffrey Custance. However, James's former sweetheart, the parlour-maid Susan Buckett, is not prepared to give him up that easily. Eventually, as expected, James ends up with Susan and Diana with Geoffrey. Other characters include Lady Anne and her hot-blooded Sicilian, Count del Rossi; James's young sister, Barbara; and the much put-upon Butler, Bodkin.

Notes: Following its somewhat cool critical reception, some new songs were added and the second act underwent major re-writing. By early May Cecily Debenham, the established comedienne, had joined the cast along with May Carpenter in an attempt to boost the humour. However audiences did not improve, and the show was taken off after two and a half months.



Hilda Bayley



Billy Leonard

LOVE'S AWAKENING

London run: Empire, April 19th – May 20th (37 performances)

Music: Eduard Künneke

Original Book & Lyrics: Herman Haller & Dr Rideamus

English Book & Lyrics: Adrian Ross

Director: Edward Laurillard

Musical Director:

Cast: Juliette Autran (*Countess Francesca*), Edouard Lestan (*Lorenzo*), Harry Brindle (*Father Filippo*), Marjorie Godwin (*Tonio*), Vera Pearce (*Marietta*), Amy Augarde (*The Housekeeper*), Betty Chester (*Nella*), Billy Leonard (*Dr Pedantius*)

Story: The Italian Countess Francesca Della Rosa, long widowed, is gradually re-awakened to love by Lorenzo, an artist employed to paint a picture called "A Marriage Feast". Lorenzo tries to get her to pose as the Goddess of Love for the painting but she steadfastly refuses on religious grounds, supported by her padre, Father Filippo. Meantime love is awakening elsewhere in her household: her son, Tonio, experiences the kisses of Marietta, one of Lorenzo's models; and Nella, the housekeeper's niece, is much taken with the private tutor, Dr Pedantius. Francesca finally accepts a chaplet of roses by way of showing her consent and her love for Lorenzo.

Notes: "Wenn Liebe erwacht" opened in Berlin in September 1920, and was considered to have somewhat "adventurous" music. The English critics emphasised the "foreign" style, and pointed out this was an Italian story set to music by a German, and with the leading man (Edouard Lestan) being Turkish. It had a very short run in London, and quickly disappeared.



WHIRLED INTO HAPPINESS

London run: Lyric Theatre, May 18th – December 16th (252 performances)

Music: Robert Stolz

Original Book & Lyrics: Robert Bodanzky & Bruno Hardt-Warden

English Book & Lyrics: Harry Graham

Director: Fred J. Blackman

Choreographer: A.H. Majilton

Musical Director: Cuthbert Clarke

Cast: Austin Melford (*Horace Wiggs*), Reginald Palmer (*Lord Brancaster*), Lily St John (*Florence Horridge*), Tom Walls (*Albert Horridge*), Frances Wetherall (*Mrs Horridge*), Mai Bacon (*Delphine de Lavallière*), Billy Merson (*Matthew Platt*)

Songs: New Moon, Catch Your Man, The Smart Set, That's the Way It's Done, The Land of Heart's Desire

Story: Horace Wiggs, a hairdresser's assistant, is forced to impersonate a certain Lord Brancaster and, in that aristocratic guise, to woo and win the love of Florence Horridge. The couple are first thrown together at the Majestic Music Hall where the real Lord has arranged to meet Florence, a perfect stranger to him. Complications arise when Florence and her new found lover are discovered by Florence's father, Albert, a self-made millionaire, who is at the music hall as the potential lover of the French star dancer, Delphine de Lavallière. Delphine had been jilted by the real lord and when she hears "he" is in attendance, she is out for revenge. They all are invited to the same party, where they are accompanied by Matthew Platt, a ticket-taker at the Music Hall, and where everything comes to a farcical head. Eventually, of course, it is all sorted out

Notes: This was an adaptation of Stolz's "Der Tanz ins Glück" which had premiered in Vienna in October 1921, and its success led to further productions all over Europe. It was well received in London, and ran for seven months, followed by an extensive provincial tour.

PHI PHI

London run: London Pavilion, August 16th – December 9th (134 performances)



Clifton Webb, June & Stanley Lupino - Phi Phi 1922

PHI PHI

London run: London Pavilion, August 16th – December 9th (134 performances)

Music: Henri Christiné **Original Lyrics:** Francis Solar & Albert Willemetz

English Book & Lyrics: Fred Thompson & Clifford Grey

Additional songs: Herman Darewski, Chantrier, Cole Porter

Director: Frank Collins

Choreographer: Edward Dolly & the Dolly Sisters

Musical Director: I.A.D'Orellana

Cast: Clifton Webb (*Phi-Phi*), June (*Aspasia*), Jay Laurier (*Meander*), Vera Freeman (*Dido*), Evelyn Laye (*Helen*), Alice O'Day (*Mrs Meander*), Walter Williams (*Captain Ardimedon*), Arthur Roberts (*Charioteer*). Stanley Lupino (*Messenger Boy*)

Songs: Always Tell Your Wife, I'm the Smartest Girl in Greece, Smiles and Tears, Innocence (*Darewski*: That's Another One Gone, A Chicken, Beautiful Greece; *Cole Porter*: The Ragtime Pipes of Pan)

Story: In Ancient Greece, Phidias the sculptor ("Phi-Phi"), has engaged Aspasia to pose as a model for "Innocence", a work commissioned by the henpecked poet, Meander. Aspasia's charms do not endear her to Dido, Phi-Phi's wife, nor to Mrs Meander, and most certainly not to Helen, the jealous wife of Captain Ardimedon, another ardent admirer. The seemingly "innocent" Aspasia bamboozles all three men and their wives, before she ends up with the modern day Mercury, in the form of the Messenger Boy. In the course of their adventures we learn how the Venus de Milo lost her arms, due to Aspasia and a mishap with a sweeping brush!

Notes: "Phi-Phi" opened in Paris just two days after the ending of the Great War. It was an enormous success, running well over a thousand performances and has remained a favourite in France with several major revivals over the years. The English version was a hopeless mess, with a new libretto, songs swapped around with their lyrics often changing the meaning, scenes re-arranged, and several inferior interpolated numbers. It lasted just three and a half months.



Harry Tate

THE SMITH FAMILY

London run: Empire, September 6th – December 9th (133 performances)

Music: Nat D. Ayer

Lyrics: Clifford Grey

Book: Clifford Grey, Stanley Logan & Philip Page

Additional scenes: Wal Pink

Additional Music: Rudolph Nelson

Director: Gus Sohlke & Stanley Logan

Musical Director: Leonard Hornsey

Cast: Harry Tate (*Sammy Smith*), Connie Ediss (*Mrs Smith*), Ella Retford (*Edna*), Tom Tweedly (*Albert*), Harry Beasley (*Horace*), Billy Caryl (*Prince of Hylaria*), Basil S. Foster (*Frank Upton*).

Songs: Waltz of Yesterday, What a Lady Would Do, Zuyder Zee, Where the Blue Bird Sings, Writing in the Sky

Story: Sammy Smith, with his wife and three children, Edna, Albert and Horace, are one happy but impecunious music-hall family. Sammy is offered a challenge: if he can make the hypochondriac and depressed Prince of Hylaria laugh, he will receive a big reward. The family entertain the Prince to no avail in various parts of London until a cranky old reader in the Brixton Free Library succeeds, by explaining his pet theory that all civilisation will collapse when the first worm turns. Once the Prince starts laughing, it's goodbye to bath-chair and hello to his pursuit of pretty girls, starting with Edna, who is already engaged to the wireless engineer Frank Upton. Sammy and his wife become rather snobbish when Sammy receives the Order of the Guinea Pig and millions of Hylaria currency, only to be brought to earth when he discovers that according to the rate of exchange this is worth nine shilling and fourpence. However, good news is forthcoming – Sammy has been offered a two week booking at the Gravesend music hall.

Notes: "The Smith Family wobbles rather irritatingly between musical comedy and revue. . . its thoroughly good plot-idea has been allowed to run to seed" (The Stage). The nature of the story allowed several of the cast to "do their turns" as part of the story, and Harry Tate was a natural for the role of a seaside comic. It was engaging enough to manage a three month run in London and then undertook a provincial tour, playing successfully in variety theatres.

THE CABARET GIRL

London run: Winter Garden, September 19th - August 11th 1923
(361 performances)

Music: Jerome Kern

Book & Lyrics: George Grossmith & P.G. Wodehouse

Director: George Grossmith

Choreographer: Jack Haskell

Musical Director: John Ansell

Cast: Geoffrey Gwyther (*Jim Paradene*),
Miss Fortescue (*Marchioness of Harrogate*),
Dorothy Dickson (*Marilynn Morgan*),
Norman Griffin (*Mr. Gravinns*), George Grossmith (*Mr Gripps*),
Peter Haddon (*Marquis of Harrogate*), Ernest Graham (*Vicar*)

Songs: First Rose of Summer, Journey's End, Dancing Time,
Shimmy With Me, Looking All Over for You



Dorothy Dickson & Geoffrey Gwyther

Story: James ("Jim") Paradene, nephew of the Marchioness of Harrogate, is in love with Marilynn Morgan, an out-of-work chorus girl presently auditioning for the Gravinns & Gripps new cabaret show "All Night Follies". Jim has another problem, he cannot inherit his father's fortune until he is married with the trustees' approval – and the trustees are the Marchioness and her starchy son, the Marquis. James persuades Gravinns to join in a deception: they will pretend James and Marilynn are married, and invite the trustees and the local "nobs" to Gripps's country mansion, passing it off as belonging to Marilynn. Due to a lack of local "nobs", the cabaret performers pretend to be aristocrats and Gravinns passes himself off as the Vicar. The Marchioness approves of Marilynn until the real Vicar turns up and exposes them all. Marilyn makes a clean breast of all, formally turns down Jim and returns hastily to London. Jim, of course, follows - determined to marry the girl and declaring "d----m the inheritance!"

Notes: The first performance was originally scheduled for September 14th with Leslie Henson in the lead comic roles of Mr Gravinns. He was taken seriously ill on the morning of the planned premiere, and the show was cancelled to allow Norman Griffin time to learn the part. The show opened five days later and was a great success. Leslie Henson took over his original role in January 1923, and Norman Griffin then took the show on tour.



Dorothy Shale

THE ISLAND KING

London run: Adelphi, October 10th – February 24th 1923 (160 performances)

Music: Harold Garstin

Book & Lyrics: Peter Gawthorne

Director: E. Lyall Swete

Choreographer: Phyllis Bedells & Zelia Raye

Musical Director: Jacques Heuvel

Cast: Peter Gawthorne (*Prince Karam*), George Bishop (*John Fairchild*),
W.H. Berry (*Oppy Hopkins*), Dorothy Shale (*Princess Poppala*),
Nancie Lovat (*Mary Baynham*), Louis Pounds (*Lady Baynham*),
Townsend Whitling (*Maru*), Conway Dixon (*Prince Ozama*)

Songs: The Girl in the Old Home Port, My English Rose, Will-I-am of Normandy, Whoops We Go Again, There's Nothing Like a Change

Story: There are three possible "kings" of the Etaria Island: Prince Karam, the legal heir; John Fairchild, R.N. who has won the kingdom in a bet with the Prince; and Chief Petty Officer Hopkins, Fairchild's batman who has flown in advance to the island, and the amazed population, who have never seen a plane before, have declared him their new king. There are three potential "queens": Princess Poppala, the intended wife of Prince Karam; Mary Baynham, Fairchild's fiancée; and Lady Baynham, the elder aristocrat. Additional characters are Maru, a kind of wizard, and the High Priest Ozama, as well as the Pirate Captain Jackson, who is really Prince Karam in disguise, and a cabin boy who is really Mary in disguise. When all is finally sorted out, it is left to 'Oppy Hopkins and the Princess Poppala to run the island, and for the others to be happily paired as appropriate.

Notes: The production managed a four month run and a short tour, but it ultimately was a troubled show. There were several disputes about the original financing and contracts, and Peter Gawthorne, in his role as actor/ author/ producer, ended up losing money

THE LAST WALTZ

London run: Gaiety, October 7th - June 9th, 1923
(240 performances)

Music: Oscar Straus

Original Book & Lyrics: Julius Brammer & Alfred Grünwald

English version: Robert Evett & Reginald Arkell

Director: Sir Charles Hawtrey

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Hubert Bath

Cast: Amy Augarde (*Countess Alexandrowna*),
José Collins (*Vera Lisaveta*), Alfred Wellesley (*General Krasian*),
Bertram Wallis (*Prince Paul*), Kingsley Lark (*Jack Merrington*)
Billy Leonard (*Baron Mekowitch*), Vesta Sylva (*Babuschka*),
Violet Marley (*Annuschka*), Cecile Bishop (*Hannuschka*),
Molly Harben (*Petruschka*)

Songs: I'll Get No Peace, Vision of Love, Love is a World of Romance, Just for a While, Love the Minstrel, The Last Waltz, Captain of his Soul, Red Roses

Story: The widowed Countess Alexandrowna, with five daughters of marriageable age, has arranged a betrothal between her eldest, Vera Lisaveta, and the elderly General Krasian. Vera was subject to an objectionable and unwanted overture from the autocratic Prince Paul of Vandalla, but fortunately a passing English officer, Lieutenant Jack Merrington, was on hand to put a stop to the harassment. But now the Prince has issued a warrant for Jack's arrest. Vera sets up a plan for Jack to flee the country, but, as a matter of honour, he refuses to break his parole. The Prince threatens Vera with punishment for aiding a criminal, and

says that Jack will be shot – unless Vera agrees to marry the Prince himself. Vera makes an emotional appeal to his better nature, and, by beseeching him to be a King worthy of his subjects, and to act like a gentleman, he is contrite, asks for forgiveness and arranges to pardon Jack. As part of the further denouement, the General agrees to marry Vera's widowed mother, and, of course, Vera and Jack will marry each other. (A sub-plot deals with finding husbands for Vera's four sisters, the youngest of whom, Babuschka, ends up with the flirtatious Baron Mekovitch.)

Notes: "Der letzte Walzer", premiered in Berlin in February 1920, was a total triumph soon to be performed all over Europe. In May 1921 it was staged in New York where it ran for 185 performances in a version by Harold Atteridge and Edward Delaney, with additional music by Al Goodman. For London it underwent yet another translation and adaptation, this time by Robert Evett and Reginald Arkell, and ran for 240 performances. It received a notable publicity boost when José Collins sang "The Mirror Song" on the British Broadcasting Company's new wireless service.



ANGEL FACE

London run: Strand, October 11th – 21st (13 performances)

Music: Victor Herbert **Lyrics:** Robert B. Smith

Book: Harry B. Smith

Director: Norman J. Norman

Musical Director: Frank Waterhouse

Cast: Violet Elliott (*Zenobia Wise*), Enid Saas (*Vera*), Tyler Brooke (*Arthur Griffin*), Winifred Barnes (*Betty*), Ellis Holland (*Ira Mapes*), Eric Blore (*Tom Larkins*), Mabel Sealby (*Tessie Blythe*), Miles Malleison (*Professor Barlow*), Kate Phillips (*Grandma Larkins*), George Gregory (*Detective Slooch*)

Songs: I Might be Yours Once in a While, Someone, Angel Face,

Story: Mrs Zenobia Wise has a problem: custom requires that the eldest daughter, Vera, must be married before the younger ones can enter the marriage market. But Vera, with a permanent “code id ‘er dose” is not easy to dispose of. The best hope lies in Arthur Griffin, a harum-scarum young sculptor, but Betty, the youngest of the sisters, thinks Vera would be better off with Ira Mapes, an eccentric entomologist. Ira shares rooms with Tom Larkins, a composer with a terribly jealous sweetheart, Tessie Blythe. Added to the mix is the cranky old Professor Barlow, who thinks he has discovered the elixir of youth, and tries it out on Tom’s grandmother. Betty gets mistaken for the rejuvenated Granny, and when a mysterious baby appears, Tom is led to believe it is the very much rejuvenated Tessie. To solve the mystery of the baby, enter Slooch, a detective who learnt all his craft by mail-order course.

Notes: Based on the play “The Elixir of Love” by Zella Covington and Jules Simonson, this was one of Victor Herbert’s rare flops, playing just 57 performances on Broadway at its premiere in December 1919. It fared even worse in London, collecting some of the worst notices in a long time – mainly criticising the ridiculous plot – and running for just 13 performances.

DÉDÉ

London run: Garrick, October 17th (46 performances)

Music: Henri Christiné

Original Book & Lyrics: Albert Willemetz

English Book: Ronald Jeans

English Lyrics: Donovan Parsons

Additional numbers: Philip Braham

Director: E. Holman Clark

Choreographer: Jack Hulbert & Carl Hyson

Musical Director: K. Ernest Irving

Cast: Guy de Feuvre (*Robert le Bas*), Stafford Hilliard (*Chausson*), Joyce Gammon (*Odette*), Joseph Coyne (*Dédé*), Gertrude Lawrence (*Denise*), John Doran (*Leroydet*)

Songs: If I Had Only Known, Trouble Never Troubles Me, Not My Day, No Names, All Roads Lead to Love, The Entertainment Tax, Tango (*Philip Braham*: There’s a Proper Time, Collecting Girls

Story: Robert le Bas has bought a shoe-shop from Monsieur Chausson, even though the shop is a dead loss. The real motive is to provide a secret rendezvous for Robert’s series of romantic liaisons. The latest, Odette, unknown to Robert, happens to be Mme. Chausson! Robert appoints his impoverished friend Dédé as the nominal manager of the shop, not realising that Dédé will spend a fortune re-vamping the premises, and introducing shoe-parades featuring his chorus-girl friends from the Casino de Paris. When Odette’s suspicious husband trails her to the shop, Odette has to disguise herself as a dummy, and watch in indignation as Robert kisses his secretary, Denise, in order to put Chausson off the scent. Since Denise really loves Robert, all is sorted out quite properly at the end of the show. (A sub-plot sees old Leroydet, Dédé’s lawyer, disguising himself as a pageboy in order to stage a robbery at the shop.)



Mistinguett & Maurice Chevalier

Notes: This was the second of Henri Christiné’s enormous hits in Paris to be butchered for its English language production. The original Paris production in November 1921 starred Maurice Chevalier, making his first appearance in operetta after his sensational cabaret engagement at the Casino de Paris with Mistinguett the previous year. It was a great hit in France, but a complete failure in London.

BATTLING BUTLER

London run: New Oxford, December 8th
(Total 238 performances)
Transfer: Adelphi, March 5th 1923- June 23rd 1923

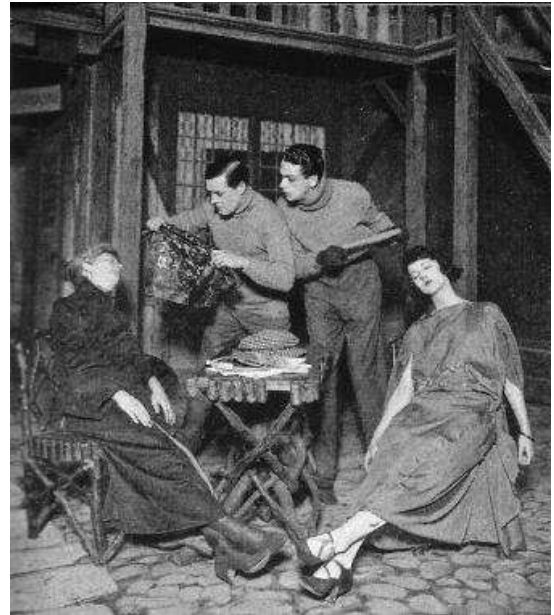
Music: Philip Braham **Lyrics:** Douglas Furber
Book: Stanley Brightman & Austin Melford
Additional numbers: Donovan Parsons & Melville Gideon
Director: Dion Titheradge
Choreographer: Jack Buchanan
Musical Director: Philip Braham

Cast: Jack Buchanan (*Alfred Butler*),
Sydney Fairbrother (*Mrs Alfred*), Peggy Kurton (*Marigold*),
Fred Groves (*Battling Butler*), Sylvia Leslie (*Bertha Butler*)

Songs: Why Can't I?, We Both have an Axe to Grind, Growing Up Time, Marigold, Piccaninny.

Story: Alfred Butler lives with his wealthy older wife in remote Little Thatchley, but every so often he likes to pop into town and meet his old pals. To get him “off the hook” he tells everyone he is the boxer “Battling Butler”, and must periodically go off to prepare for a fight. On this occasion his wife decides to check up on him, and follows him to his hotel, forcing him to go through all manner of training exercises to keep up the pretence. To make matters worse, Alfred’s young ward, Marigold, has boasted of his achievements to some friends who happen to know the real boxer. Thus, the real Battling Butler, with his wife, Bertha, turns up to see what is going on. The two women fight over which of them is married to Battling Butler, and when the real boxer discovers all, he arranges it so that Alfred really does have to fight. Luckily Alfred’s would-be opponent is knocked out in the preliminary fight, and Mrs Alfred hears the cheers and believes her husband has won. Lesson learned and his wife still in blissful ignorance, Alfred heads back home, his secret intact.

Notes: There was an opening night drama when Phyllis Titmus was taken ill and was unable to go on as “Marigold”. Peggy Kurton took over at very short notice and played a few days until Phyllis Titmus had recovered. “Battling Butler” was one of the rare shows of the 1920s “going the other way” – starting in London and then transferring to Broadway. It was produced in New York in October 1923 and ran for 312 performances. Although it had the same basic story, it had undergone a great deal of adaptation, and was performed under the title “Mr Battling Butler”



Sydney Fairbrother, Fred Groves,



Viola Tree

ARLEQUIN

London run: Empire, December 21st – January 20th, 1923
(35 performances)

Music: André Gailhard
Original Book & Lyrics: Maurice Magré
English version: Louis N. Parker
Director: Albert de Courville
Choreographer: Léonide Massine
Musical Director: Kennedy Russell

Cast: Godfrey Tearle (*Arlequin*), Dennis Neilson-Terry (*Pierrot*),
Jane Grahame (*Columbine*), Rosina Filippi, Viola Tree,
Leonard Shepherd

Notes: Described as a “comedy fantasy in three acts and two dreams” this had been successfully staged in Paris in 1921 – but London hardly knew what to make of it. If they were expecting a “commedia dell-arte” knockabout comedy, they were presented with a rather dark and somewhat moving tale of Michaela, a once virtuous village girl betrayed by Arlequin, abandoned and left to a life of shame. Other elements of the story involved a troupe of strolling players in seventeenth century Venice, and the whole thing was magnificently staged, superbly costumed, and accompanied with some astonishing

ballet interludes. Its “Gates of Death” allegory, where Arlequin has to face the consequences of his deeds, was felt by some to sit uncomfortably with the rest of the show. It was both a *succes d’estime* and a quick flop.

LILAC TIME

London run: Lyric Theatre, December 22nd (626 performances)
Music: Franz Schubert (adapted by Heinrich Berté & G.H. Clutsam.)
Book & Lyrics: A.M. Willner & Heinz Reichert
English Book & Lyrics: Adrian Ross
Director: Dion Boucicault
Musical Director: Clarence Raybould

Cast: Courtice Pounds (*Schubert*), Clara Butterworth (*Lili*), Percy Heming (*Von Schober*), Edmund Gwen (*Christian Veit*)

Songs: Hark Hark the Lark, Under the Lilac Bough, The Golden Song, Serenade, My Sweetest Song of All, Oh the Maytime is a Gaytime, Just a Little Ring, Four Jolly Brothers, Dream Enthralling, When Skies Are Blue.

Story: In Old Vienna the young composer, Franz Schubert, writes a beautiful love song dedicated to his beloved Lili. But he is too shy to sing it himself, and asks his best friend, Baron von Schober, to sing it to her. Sadly she falls in love with the Baron instead of poor Franz, who has to find consolation in their happiness - and in his music. Sub-plots tell of Lili's two sisters, Tilli and Willi and their boyfriends; a temperamental prima-donna and a jealous Count.

Notes: Based on the 1916 Viennese operetta "Das Dreimäderlhaus" by A.N. Willner and Heinz Reichert, this was first staged in New York under the title "Blossom Time" in 1921, in a musical arrangement by Sigmund Romberg. The English premiere ignored the Romberg scoring, and used the original Heinrich Berté arrangements with some new ones by G.H. Clutsam. It was an enormous success and would be frequently revived in future years.



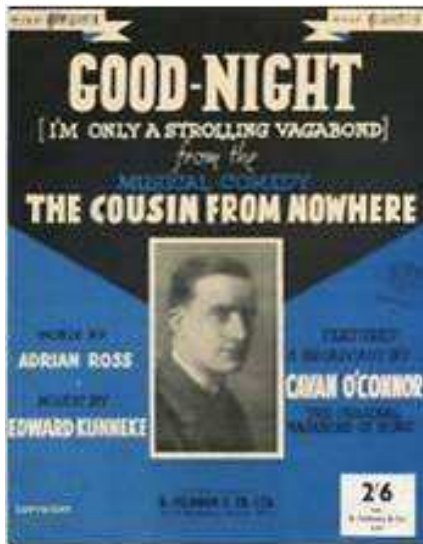
POLLY

London run: Kingsway, December 30th (324 performances)
Music: Various, arranged Frederic Austin
Lyrics: Various
Book: John Gay, adapted Clifford Bax
Director: Nigel Playfair
Choreographer: Espinosa
Musical Director: Eugene Goosens

Cast: Lilian Davies (*Polly*), Pitt Chatham (*Macheath*), Adrienne Bruine (*Jenny Diver*), Muriel Terry (*Mrs Peachum*), Percy Parsons (*Vanderbluff*)

Story: This is a kind of sequel to "The Beggar's Opera" and tells the story of Polly Peachum's adventures in the West Indies. Macheath has been transported there and is living bigamously with Jenny Diver, the harlot from the first play who had betrayed him. Polly goes to the West Indies looking for Macheath. The play ends with Macheath being executed, and Polly marrying the Indian prince Cawwawkee, after her period of mourning.

Notes: The play was not produced on stage during Gay's lifetime, as the chief minister Walpole found the satire in "Polly" much more blatant and strong than the first play. Its stage premiere took place on 19 June 1777 at the Haymarket Theatre. There had been revivals in 1782 and 1813 at Drury Lane, after which it disappeared. This revival came on the strength of the success of "The Beggar's Opera" at the Lyric Hammersmith.



THE COUSIN FROM NOWHERE

London run: Prince's Theatre, February 24th (3 months)

Music: Eduard Künneke

Book & Lyrics: Herman Haller & Rideamus

English Book & Lyrics: Fred Thompson & Adrian Ross

Additional lyrics: Robert C. Tharp, Douglas Furber

Director: Felix Edwardes

Choreographer: Jack Buchanan

Musical Director: J.A de Orellana

Cast: Helen Gilliland (*Julia*), John E. Coyle (*Roderick*), Jimmy Godden (*Joseph Edam*), Walter Williams (*Gerard*), Roy Royston (*Adrian van Piffel*), Cecily Debenham (*Frida*)

Songs: I'm Only a Strolling Vagabond, Magical Moon, I Drink to your Laughing Eyes, Castle of Dreams

Story: In Holland, Julia van Outen and her cousin Roderick promised to look at the moon each night and think of each other while he goes to Java to seek his fortune. Seven years later Uncle Joseph Edam wants to marry off Julia to his nephew, Gerrard, or possibly to Adrian van Piffel, son of a fellow-trustee. Meantime Roderick seems to have forgotten all about her. Julia and her friend Frida pretend to be servants when a stranger arrives at a house he thinks to be an inn. The stranger turns out to be Gerard, who immediately falls in love with Julia, and, hearing from Frida the story of Roderick, declares that he is the same Roderick, newly returned from Java. The rival Adrian by means of cables to Java, proves Gerard is an imposter, and the real Roderick turns up. In an attempt to find out what is going on, Roderick pretends to be Gerard returning from Central Africa.

Notes: "Der Vetter aus Dingsda" premiered in Berlin in April 1921 and was rapidly taken up for performances in Vienna and other major European cities. It had been produced on Broadway just one month before the London opening, but the New York version, under the title "Caroline", was set during the American Civil War.



Walter Williams (centre) & Helen Gilliland (seated)

STOP FLIRTING

London run: Shaftesbury, May 30th (Total 224 performances)

Transfer: Queen's, July 28th

Transfer: Strand, October 22nd – December 15th

Music: William Daly & Paul Lannin

Lyrics: Arthur Jackson

Book: Fred Jackson (adapted by Fred Thompson)

Additional songs: George Gershwin & Arthur Francis (*)

Director: Felix Edwardes

Choreographer: Gus Sohlke

Musical Director: Jacques Heuvel

Cast: Teddy Lawrence (*Fred Astaire*),

Susan Hayden (*Adele Astaire*), Jack Melford (*Perry Reynolds*),

Vivian Marden (*Marjorie Gordon*), Mimi Crawford (*Marjory*),

Henry Kendall (*Geoff*), George de Warfaz (*Count Spinagio*),

H.E. Hignett (*Joseph*)

Songs: Every Day, I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise, Oh Gee Oh Gosh, The Whichness of Whatness,

Story: Americans Teddy Lawrence and Susan Hayden are guests at a weekend party in the English countryside. Their host is Perry Reynolds and his fiancée, Vivian Marden, who openly flirts with Teddy, and almost every man. The jealous Perry decides to test her fidelity by faking his own death in a plane crash. However, Vivian figures all this out and ratchets up her flirting, knowing that Perry is spying on her. A subplot has Marjory, Perry's ward, in love with Geoff, but being pursued by the gigolo, Count Spinagio, with the shenanigans overseen by Joseph, the perfect English butler.

Notes: Originally staged in New York under the title "For Goodness Sake", the show starred Fred and Adele Astaire. It opened in February 1922 and ran for 103 performances. The London production was given a new title – "Stop Flirting". After the future King Edward VIII saw it, the Astaires were propelled into the European artistic and social limelight. (*) Arthur Francis was an early nom de plume for Ira Gershwin.



Fred and Adele Astaire



LITTLE NELLIE KELLY

London run: Oxford Theatre, July 2nd – February 16th, 1924 (263 performances)

Music, Book & Lyrics: George M. Cohan

Director: Frank Collins

Choreographer: Edward Dolly

Musical Director: Charles Gebest

Cast: Miss June (*Nellie*), James B. Donovan (*Captain John Kelly*),

Henry de Bray (*De Vere*), Roy Royston (*Jack Lloyd*),

Ralph Whitehead (*Jerry Conroy*), Sonnie Hale (*Sidney Potter*),

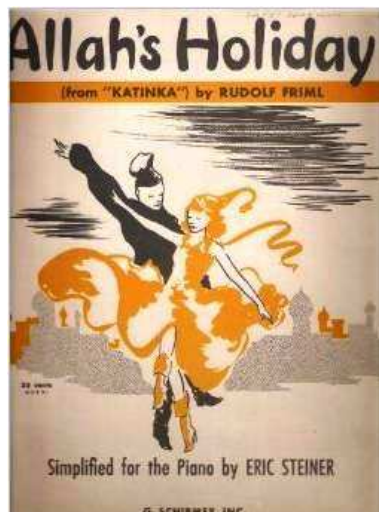
Maidie Hope (*Mrs Chesterfield Langford*), Anita Elson,

Clifford Heatherley, Forde Sisters.

Songs: Nellie Kelly I Love You, You Remind Me of My Mother, All in the Wearing, Dancing My Worries Away, Till My Luck Comes Rolling Along, They're All My Boys, The Voice in My Heart, The Busy Bees of DeVere's, The Dancing Detective.

Story: Nellie, the daughter of New York police cop, Captain John Kelly, works in DeVere's Department Store, where she is admired by the young millionaire and man-about-town Jack Lloyd. However, she is already loved by Jerry Conroy, a labourer who, like her, is Irish. When she refuses Jack's request for a date, prompted by his friend, Sidney Potter, he invites all the store's employees to a party at the Fifth Avenue house of his aunt, Mrs. Chesterfield Langford – this way he might get to know Nellie better. Jerry sneaks into the party uninvited and during the evening, a valuable string of pearls belonging to Mrs. Langford is stolen. Suspicion falls on Jerry, while Jack pursues Nellie. In the end Jerry is cleared and, of course, Jack has to accept that Nellie belongs in the arms of Jerry.

Notes: Written, produced and directed by George M. Cohan, the show opened in Boston in July 1922, and then enjoyed a long run on Broadway. The English production enjoyed a six and a half month run in London and then went on a provincial tour.



KATINKA

London run: Shaftesbury, August 30th (108 performances)

Music: Rudolf Friml

Book & Lyrics: Otto Harbach

Director: Tom Reynolds

Choreographer: Edward Dolly

Musical Director: J.A. de Orellana

Cast: Helen Gilliland (*Katinka*), Peter Gawthorne (*Boris Strogoff*), George Bishop (*Ivan Dimitri*), Joseph Coyne (*Thaddeus Hopper*), Evelyn Drewe (*Olga*), Binnie Hale (*Helen Hopper*), Dennis Hoey (*Arif Bey*), Fred Wright (*Herr Knopf*).

Songs: Vienna Girls, One Who Will Understand, In a Hurry, Charms are Fairest When Hidden, Allah's Holiday, I Want All the World to Know, Rackety-Coo!, I Want to Marry a Male Quartet, I Can Tell By the Way that you Dance Dear.

Story: In the Black Sea resort of Yalta, reluctantly following her mother's wishes, Katinka marries Boris Strogoff, the Russian Ambassador to Austria, although she is really in love with his attaché, Ivan Dimitri. After the wedding, Thaddeus Hopper, a rich American, helps her escape to Istanbul where Ivan and the servant Petrov hope to trace Olga, Boris's first wife who has chosen to live in a harem rather than stay married to him. If they can find Olga, they can get Katinka's marriage annulled.

Katinka is staying in Hopper's rooms, and the arrival of Hopper's wife, Helen, causes complications when she becomes suspicious of the arrangements. Hopper has arranged for Katinka to be hidden in the harem of Izzet Pasha, but Arif Bey, Pasha's warden, mistakenly carries Mrs. Hopper off to the harem instead of Katinka. Worse follows, for a visiting café proprietor, Herr Knopf, is in Istanbul looking for women to work in his new Café-Turkois in Vienna. Helen and Olga are amongst those he takes back with him. Once back in Vienna, Olga reveals her true identity, the Hoppers are reconciled, Katinka's marriage to Boris is annulled, and she and Ivan are reunited.

Notes: This was a popular success in New York in December 1915, running for 220 performances, but like many American musicals of this time, due to the War and the post-War economy, it was forced to wait several years before being staged in London. It had an initial try-out in Leicester in March, and then with significant re-casting was re-created for London.



May Naudain in the wedding scene in the New York production of "Katinka"



Heather Thatcher & Leslie Henson

THE BEAUTY PRIZE

London run: Winter Garden, September 5th – March 8th, 1924
(214 performances)

Music: Jerome Kern

Book & Lyrics: George Grossmith & P.G. Wodehouse

Director: George Grossmith

Choreographer: Fred A. Leslie

Musical Director: John Ansell

Cast: Jack Hobbs (*John Brooke*), Dorothy Dickson (*Carol Stuart*), George Grossmith (*Flutey Warboy*), Heather Thatcher (*Lovey Toots*), Leslie Henson (*Odo Philpotts*), Sheila Courtney (*Mrs Hexal*).

Songs: Honeymoon Isle, Moon Love, Non-Stop Dancing, It's a Long Long Day, Meet Me Down on Main Street, Lazy, You Can't Make Love by Wireless

Story: John Brooke, a rich young Englishman, and Carol Stuart, daughter of a wealthy American, meet at a ball where they both pretend to be poor, fall in love, and get engaged. Then John is horrified when his secretary Flutey Warboy shows him Carol's photo in a newspaper – she is an entrant in a beauty competition to win a rich husband. John doesn't know that Carol had nothing to do with this, and the photo was submitted by her admiring milliner's assistant, Lovey Toots. On their wedding day Odo Philpotts arrives,

saying Carol has won the competition and he is the prize. Mrs Hexal, Carol's scheming chaperone, tells John that Carol is really an heiress and must be after a rich husband. John furiously scolds Carol, who, in a fit of pique, announces she will marry Odo. John retaliates by threatening to marry Lovey. Flutey finds a way of sorting it all out, involving fake telegrams saying both John and Carol have lost all their money, and they are now both poor – and back where they thought they were at the start of their relationship. This, of course, leads to the appropriately happy endings all round.

Notes: In spite of indifferent notices and criticism for a rather weak book, the show managed a six month run.

HEAD OVER HEELS

London run: Adelphi, September 8th – December 15th (113 performances)

Music: Harold Fraser-Simson

Lyrics: Adrian Ross & Harry Graham

Book: Seymour Hicks

Director: Seymour Hicks

Choreographer: Willie Warde

Musical Director: Jacques Heuvel

Cast: W.H. Berry (*Alf Wigg*), Alfred Beers (*Gisardi*), Marston Garsia (*Chevalier Sanguinetti*), Arthur Pusey (*Dick Bythesea*), Mary Ellis (*Jenny*), Mabel Sealby (*Little Bounce*)

Songs: Tricks of the Trade, Up Again, Winking

Story: Alf Wigg, who works as a tumbler at a circus, is mistaken for Gisardi, the circus proprietor. Chevalier Sanguinetti is chasing Gisardi for outstanding money, and for compromising Mme. Gisardi. Hurricane Harry, a burly boxer, is also after Gisardi, who diddled him over a land purchase. To escape their clutches, Alf disguises himself as the heir to a Scottish Dukedom. However, the real heir, Dick Bythesea, is hiding his true identity so he can pursue Jenny, the "sweetheart of the ring". At the end of the show Dick will get his Jenny, and Alf will end up with Little Bounce, his own clown sweetheart.

Notes: The basis of the show was the opportunity for W.H. Berry to appear in numerous disguises and display his many talents as juggler, acrobat, quick change artist, clown and Scottish sword-dancer. In between times the stage was filled with circus scenes, a bearded lady, a dwarf, horses, dogs and donkeys. It was all too much, and, apart from some praise for the indefatigable Berry, the critics dismissed it as lacking in a decent story, lacking worthwhile songs, and being a major disappointment.



Mary Ellis

CATHERINE

London run: Gaiety, September 22nd – March 29th, 1924
(217 performances)

Music: Tchaikowsky, arr. Robert Evett & Josef Klein

Original Book & Lyrics: Bela Jenbach & Oscar Friedmann

Book & Lyrics: Reginald Arkell & Mme Frédérique de Grésac

Director: Matheson Lang

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Merlin Morgan

Cast: José Collins (*Marta – Catherine*), Robert Michaelis (*Menshikoff*), Bertram Wallis (*Peter the Great*), Billy Leonard (*Count Vasili Bronin*), Amy Augrade (*Sonya*), Mark Lester (*General Stepanovitch*).

Songs: The Lily and the Sun, You Can Always Tell a Russian, I Am a Simple Maid, Love Letters, Our Love's Tale

Story: Marta, the fiery peasant girl from Marienburg, arrested for insubordination, entrances General Menshikoff, and is taken to his palace where she learns social graces, and how to read and write, and where the couple fall in love. For political reasons Czar Peter the Great requires Menshikoff to marry a pre-chosen Countess. He wishes to elope with Marta, but a gipsy fortune-teller warns her that if they do, then Menshikoff will die. Because of her love for him, Marta refuses to elope, and, now known as Catherine, she becomes a lady in waiting in the Czar's Palace, where in a magnificent ceremony, she marries the Czar and becomes the Empress of Russia. Alongside the main story, there is a secondary love story between Count Vasili Bronin, the fumbling Secret Service official and the Countess Sonya; a failed intrigue plot by the incompetent General Stepanovitch; and the eventual happy marriage between Menshikoff and his chosen Countess.

Notes: This was a magnificent spectacle. The wedding scene claimed to be the most expensive ever staged in London, with José Collins' wedding dress made entirely of sequins and said to require three people to carry it (although José Collins wore it with ease!) The wedding procession, to the tune of the 1812 Overture (with an organ supplementing a full orchestra) was a major talking point. It played six months to full houses and was talked about for years to come.



Robert Michaelis



Renee Reel

OUR LIZ

London run: Alhambra, November 5th – One week

Music: Jack Waller & Pat Thayer

Book & Lyrics: Herbert Clayton & Con West

Additional songs: Hero de Rance & Laura Leycester

Director: Tom Walls

Musical Director: Sonnie Walter

Cast: Leslie Hatton (*Geoffrey Mannering*), Renee Reel (*Lizzie Pickles*), Penny Clive (*Mrs Pickles*), Herbert Darnley (*Mr Pickles*), Jack Barty (*Alf Pickles*), W.A. Haines (*Lord Mannering*), Nellie Dade (*Lady Duff Manners*)

Songs: Bring Back the Good Old Days,

Story: The Hon. Geoffrey Mannering, out of sheer family pique, proposes to the "skivvy", Lizzie Pickles, and causes uproar when the differing kinds of societies come into contact with each other. Mr and Mrs Pickles, and her brother, Alf, rehearse their "posh" manners prior to a visit from the Geoffrey's father and aunt, the stiffly aristocratic Lord Mannering and Lady Duff Manners, and argue about the "proper" way to serve the winkle tea. Poor Lizzie finds the whole business quite impossible and dismisses her dreams of moving into the world of the rich people. Shortly after, Alf "clocks" £5,000 in a newspaper competition, and the whole family, holidaying in Monte Carlo, is mistaken for the rich American Vanderhoff family who are said to be in the town.. The Mannerings are also in Monte Carlo, and Lord Mannering urges a meeting between Miss Vanderhoff and Geoffrey in the hope of arranging a suitable union. Liz changes back into her old skivvy clothes for this meeting, and successfully proves that Love is more important than money, and that Lord Mannering of Mannering Towers may yet take winkles with his afternoon tea.

Notes: This was a touring production aimed at the twice-nightly variety houses, and came into the Alhambra as a one-week filler. It went on to have a successful provincial tour through 1924.

MADAME POMPADOUR

London run: Daly's, Dec 20th - Jan 31st, 1925
(469 performances)

Music: Leo Fall

Original Book & Lyrics:

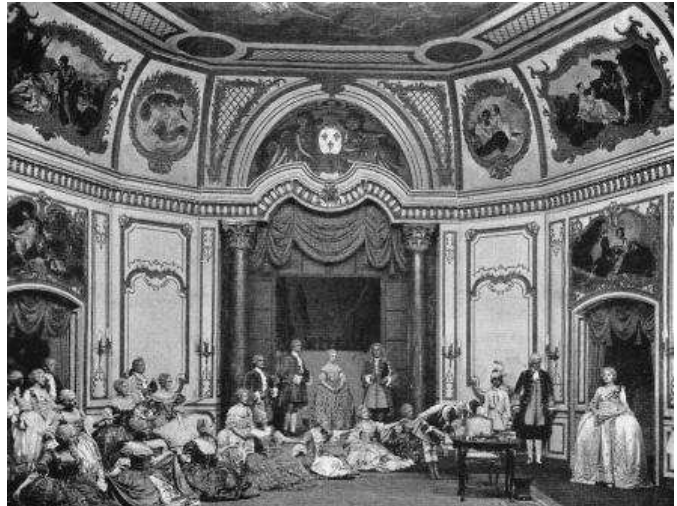
Rudolph Schanzer & Ernst Welisch

English Book & Lyrics:

Frederick Lonsdale & Harry Graham

Director: Fred J. Blackman

Cast: Derek Oldham (*Count René*),
Huntley Wright (*Josef Calicot*),
Enid Stamp-Taylor (*Madeleine*),
Evelyn Laye (*Madame Pompadour*),
Bertram Wallis (*Louis XV*)



Songs: Carnival Time, Love me Now, By the Light of the Moon, If I were King, Love's Sentry, Tell me What your Eyes were Made For, Two Little Birds



Story: Count René and his friend, the poet Josef Calicot, have taken rooms in The Nine Muses, an inn in Paris, having come to the city for some fun at the Carnival. René, who has left his wife, Madeleine, at home, is immediately attracted to one of the masked ladies at the ball, and she returns his playful flirting. However, she is revealed to be Madame Pompadour, and René is placed under arrest. She gains him a reprieve, but demands in return that he must accompany her as her personal bodyguard and that his friend, Josef, must write a special play for her birthday.

Meanwhile, René's wife arrives, in search of her missing husband, and Louis XV wants to catch his mistress together with her lover. But clever Madame Pompadour is able to avoid detection, as she presents René's wife as her sister.

Notes: This operetta opened in Berlin in September 1922 and was a great success in Vienna, Paris and London, but its New York production was a flop.

ALMOND EYE

London run: New Scala, December 26th – January 12th 1924
(24 performances)

Music: Frederick Rosse

Book & Lyrics: Joe Farren Soutar & Arthur Veasey

Additional lyrics: G.W. Wyndham

Director: C. Barnard Moore

Choreographer: Maureen Moore

Musical Director: Jacques Greebe

Cast: Joe Farren Soutar (*Amarak el Deeb*), Herbert Eisdell (*Ya-Mao*),
Lillian Davies (*Princess Ai-Lien*), Gracie Leigh (*Cha-Ku*),
Ivan Berlyn (*Abdul Kozan*), Howard Radleigh (*Prince Moohan*)

Songs: Still I Have Faith, Oh Dearie Me, Personality, Nobody Seems to Want to Love Me Now

Story: This was a mixture of “Aladdin” and “Chu Chin Chow” with bits of “The Mikado” thrown in, and told the story of a pair of lovers, the poor Ya-Mao and the wealthy Princess Ai-Lien, being threatened by the Moorish villain Amarak el Deeb and aided by the comic mother, Cha-Ku.

Notes: With a cast of 48, including supernumeraries and some very lavish scenes in Egypt and China, this was an expensive production described as “rambling and indeterminate and involved at times to the point of tedium” (The Stage). It was a disaster, and came off in just three weeks. It was later subject to a libel case when the theatre proprietor was sued for his statement : “I know that the artists have not been paid. It is a regular disgrace.” The producers argued that all the artists had been paid, and the statement was damaging to their reputation. (However, they were forced to admit that the supernumeraries, scenery painters, lyricist, costumiers and others had not yet been paid – but argued that they did not count as “artists” in a theatrical sense!)



Joe Farren Soutar

THE THREE GRACES

London run: Empire, Jan 25th– May 10th
(123 performances)

Music: Franz Lehár

Original Book & Lyrics:

Carlo Lombardo & Dr. A.M. Willner

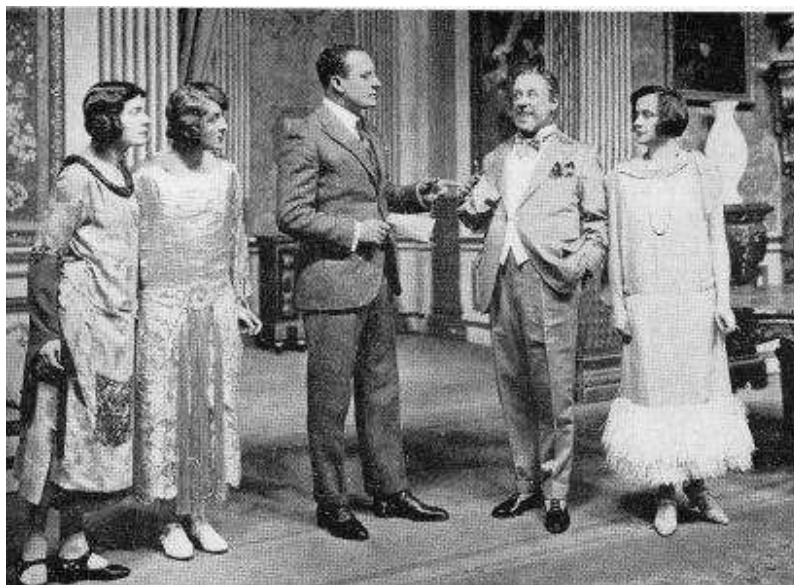
English Book & Lyrics: Ben Travers

Director: Tom Reynolds

Choreographer: J.W. Jackson

Musical Director: Jacques Heuvel

Cast: Winifred Barnes (*Countess Helene*),
Thorpe Bates (*Duke Charles*),
A. Scott-Gatty (*Count Pommeroy*),
Vera Freeman (*Tutu*),
Sylvia Leslie (*Charlotte*),
Morris Harvey (*Willem van Vuurwater*),
Johnny Dooley (*Bouquet*)



Vera Freeman, Maidie Andrews, Thorpe Bates, W.H. Berry and Winifred Barnes.

Songs: Dared I Say, My Romance,
Three Graces, All That Is Mine, Snow
Song, Dear Home, Turn Fate Turn,
Natural History, Gigolette, Bambolina, Poor Old Love, Bouquet

Story: The ownership of Castle Nancy has been subject to protracted litigation – it is claimed by the families of the young Countess Helene and by the long-absent Charles, Duke of Nancy. Helene’s uncle, Count Pommeroy has written a play called “The Three Graces” and wishes to stage it at the Castle. He wants Helene to play Venus, and her friend Tutu to play Diana. The role of Minerva has been written for his special love, Charlotte, the daughter of Dutchman Willem van Vuurwater. To play Adonis he has engaged the Parisian actor “Max Rory”, and for the low comedian, an actor called Bouquet. “Max Rory” is really Duke Charles in disguise, hoping to find a way of advancing his claim on the castle. During the course of the performance “Max” falls in love with Helene, and Toutou and Bouquet have a flirtation, whilst Charlotte’s wandering eye infuriates her father. After much confusion and complication, Charlotte is reined in, Toutou reunited with her husband, and Charles and Hélène finally resolve the litigation problem by deciding to marry. (*This version of the story varies in several ways from the original plot, and later English adaptations remain truer to the original.*)

Notes: The original, Franz Lehár’s “Der Stargucker” (The Stargazer), with book and lyrics by Fritz Löhner, was not a success in Vienna at its premiere in January 1916 but the music appealed to an Italian producer, Carlo Lombardo, who persuaded Lehár to re-use much of its music in a completely new story, written by Lombardo himself. This new show, “La Danza delle libellule”, was first performed in Milan in September 1922 and was a great success. It was subsequently translated into German as “Der Libellentanz”, and into English by the popular playwright, Ben Travers. However, it only managed a three month run, during the course of which Maidie Andrews replaced an indisposed Sylvia Leslie.

STOP FLIRTING (1st Revival)

London run: Strands, March 28th - August 30th (Total 194 performances)

Music: William Daly & Paul Lannin

Lyrics: Arthur Jackson

Book: Fred Jackson (adapted by Fred Thompson)

Additional songs: George Gershwin & Arthur Francis (*)

Director: Felix Edwardes

Choreographer: Gus Sohlke

Musical Director: Jacques Heuvel

Cast: Teddy Lawrence (*Fred Astaire*), Susan Hayden (*Adele Astaire*), Jack Melford (*Perry Reynolds*),
Helen Gilliland (*Marjorie Gordon*), Mimi Crawford (*Marjory*), Brian Buchell (*Geoff*),
George de Warfaz (*Count Spinagio*), Stephen Ewart (*Joseph*)

Notes: Fred and Adele Astaire had returned from a booking in New York and were available for this five-month revival of the previous year’s success. (*) “Arthur Francis” was a pseudonym for Ira Gershwin

OUR NELL

London run: Gaiety, April 16th – August 16th (140 performances)

Music: Harold Fraser-Simson & Ivor Novello

Lyrics: Harry Graham

Book: Louis N. Parker & Reginald Arkell

Director: Arthur Bouchier

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Merlin Morgan

Cast: José Collins (*Nell Gwynne*),
Arthur Wontner (*King Charles II*),
Muriel Pope (*Louise de Kerouailles*), Robert Michaelis (*Tom Miles*),
Faith Bevan (*Mary*), F. Reginald Bach (*Old Soldier*),
Walter Passmore (*Jericho Mardyke*), Amy Augrade (*Prudence Mardyke*),
Miles Malleson (*Timothy*)

Songs: (*Fraser-Simson*: A Broth of a Bhoy, Love Me a Little Bit, Pretty Kitty Clive of Twickenham, Deep as the Sea, Pretty Kitty Clive, Goodnight.)

(*Ivor Novello*: Our England, The Land of Might Have Been, The Kingdom I'll Build For You.)



Story: When the orange-seller Nell Gwynne starts her (innocent) relationship with the Merry Monarch, King Charles II, it infuriates the previous favourite, Louise de K rouailles. She and her colleagues arouse the King's jealousy by suggesting something is going on between Nell and the romantic young poet, Tom Miles. Tom, however, always remains true to his country sweetheart, Mary. Nell, temporarily ignored by the King, is visited by a poor old soldier, and is moved by his distress. When the King comes to make peace with Nell, she inspires him to do something about his faithful veterans, and he agrees to build a special home for old soldiers on the fields of Chelsea. A comic sub-plot involves Jericho Mardyke and his wife Prudence, with their apprentice, Timothy. As punishment for insulting the villainous Duke of Buckingham, Jericho and Timothy end up in the stocks and the pillory, on the receiving end of rotten fruit.

Notes: Several years earlier Harry Graham and Harry Fraser-Simson had written a musical called "Our Peg", the story of the actress Peg Woffington. It had opened in Manchester at the end of 1919 and toured for several months in 1920. They now returned to that show, with a completely new book, but with the old songs rearranged and given new lyrics, and the actress Peg Woffington replaced with Nell Gwynne. It was, more or less, a "new" musical. Despite the presence of Jos  Collins, it did not really catch on, and after five months of just average business it was taken off and undertook a short tour.

TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT (1st Revival)

London run: Winter Garden, April 21st – August 30th (139 performances)

Music: Paul Rubens

Lyrics: Paul Rubens & Percy Greenbank

Additional Songs: Jerome Kern

Additional Lyrics: Desmond Carter

Book: Fred Thompson

Director: George Grossmith

Choreographer: Carl Hyson

Musical Director: John Ansell

Cast: Ethel Baird (*Beatrice Carraway*), Basil Foster (*Robin*), Adrienne Brune (*June*), George Grossmith (*Dudley Mitten*), Heather Thatcher (*Victoria*), Leslie Henson (*Henry*), Roy Byford (*Montagu Lovitt-Lovitt*), Sylvia Hawkes (*Daisy de Menthe*), Albert Brouett (*Pedro*), Leigh Ellis (*Alphonse*), Guy Fane (*Albert*), Stella St. Audrie (*Mrs Lovitt-Lovitt*)

Songs: The Boot's Shoe, I'm a Millionaire, I'd Like to Come to Supper, I'd Like to Bring my Mother, The Only Way. (*Interpolated*: They Didn't Believe Me, Any Old Night) *Added songs*: Round the Corner, I Love You, I Think I Could Love You, It's You Dear, Katinka.

Original London production: Gaiety, April 1915



Miss June & Jack Buchanan

TONI

London run: Shaftesbury, May 12th – December 13th
(248 performances)

Music: Hugo Hirsch

Lyrics: Douglas Furber

Book: Douglas Furber & Harry Graham

Additional numbers: Stephen Jones & Harry Graham

Director: Herbert Bryan

Choreographer: Jack Buchanan

Musical Director: Thomas Tunbridge

Cast: Fred Groves (*Prince Paul*), Douglas Furber (*Tscharkeff*),
Elsie Randolph (*Folly*), Charles Stone (*Von Koompf*),
Miss June (*Princess Stephanie*), Jack Buchanan (*Anthony Prince*),
Bobby Blythe (*Hector*).

Songs: They Never Ask Me Twice, For My Friend, Business is Business, Take a Step, Don't Love You, Hey Ninny Nonny

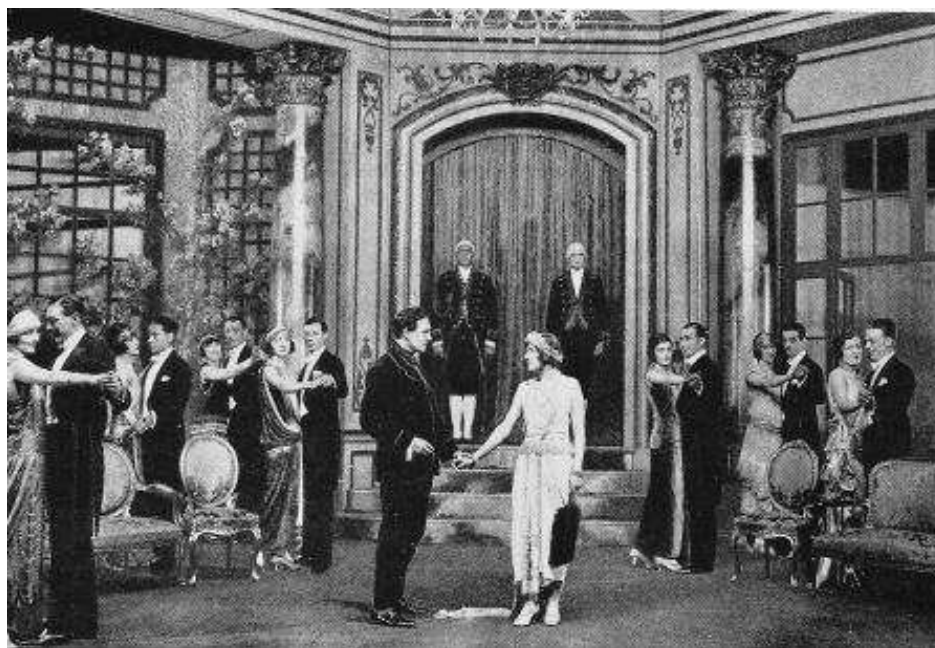
Story: The Balkan state of Mettopolachia has three political parties vying for power: The Ruling Classes, represented by the ambitious Prince Paul; the Middle Classes, represented by the Russian Tscharkeff and his lady friend, Folly; and the People, represented by Von Koompf,

a Republican. The rightful Princess Stephanie, caught in all this intrigue, chooses the Englishman tradesman Anthony Prince, who owns a costume hire business, to help her. She appoints her "Toni" Colonel of the Hussars and eventually he becomes her consort, even though throughout he has been pushing his friend, Hector, as more suitable for the job.

Notes: This show had been on the road for almost a year, having opened at Hanley in August 1923. It was always planned to come into London, but when Jack Buchanan was offered a New York engagement with André Charlot, it was decided to replace him with Leo Franklyn, keep the show in the provinces, and wait for Buchanan's return before taking the show to London. During its many months on the road, the show underwent much re-writing, and when it opened at the Shaftesbury it was said to bear scant resemblance to the original. A number of the critics felt this was primarily a dancing show with the thinnest of plots, but the magic name of Jack Buchanan kept it running for 248 performances.

THE STREET SINGER

London run: Lyric, June 27th – May 3rd 1925 (360 performances)



Harry Welchman and Phyllis Dare

THE STREET SINGER

London run: Lyric, June 27th – May 3rd 1925 (360 performances)

Music: Harold Fraser-Simson

Lyrics: Percy Greenbank

Book: Frederick Lonsdale

Additional numbers: Ivy St. Helier

Director: E. Lyall Swete

Choreographer: Fred A. Leslie

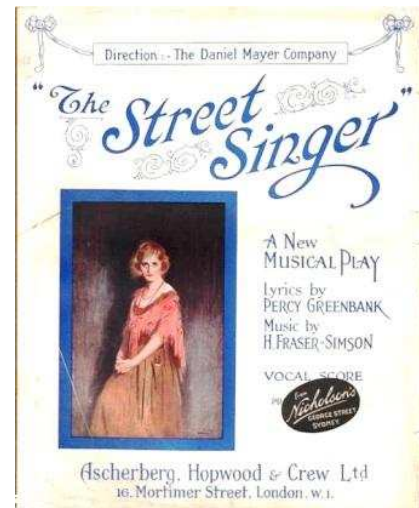
Musical Director: Howard Carr

Cast: Phyllis Dare (*Yvette*), Harry Welchman (*Bonni*), Hector Abbas (*Levy*), A.W. Baskcomb (*Francois*), Julie Hartley-Milburn (*Violette*)

Songs: Don't Judge By Appearances, Heart's Desire, Just To Hold You In My Arms, 'Ow I 'Ate Women, Dancin' Around, Take Life As It Comes, Follow Yvette, That's the Sort Of Man!

Story: The Duchess of Versailles has fallen in love with the impoverished and untalented painter, Bonni. She disguises herself as Yvette, a street singer, makes contact with her beloved, and soon they become lovers. She then arranges to buy all his paintings through the art dealer, Levy. Bonni thinks he has found fame at last and that his genius has been recognised. At the height of the carnival, he receives a summons to meet his unknown patron and so he leaves his little street singer and goes to where fame and fortune beckon. However, he soon regrets his actions and tears up the Duchess's cheque for his last painting and slashes the picture - a portrait of his lost Yvette - only to find that the Duchess and the street singer are one and the same. A happy ending. The comic sub-plot involved Francois, a misogynistic valet, and a sprightly young widow, Violette.

Notes: The London production was a great success, and subsequent touring productions kept the show alive for several succeeding years.



MIDSUMMER MADNESS

London run: Lyric Hammersmith, July 3rd (115 performances)

Music: Armstrong Gibbs

Book & Lyrics: Clifford Bax

Director: Nigel Playfair

Choreographer: Espinosa

Musical Director: Alfred Reynolds

Cast: Frederick Ranalow (*Pat Nolan/Pantaloon*), Marie Tempest (*Mrs Nolan/ Mrs Pascal*), Marjorie Dixon (*Chloe Mobin/Columbine*), Hubert Eisdell (*Harlequin*)



Songs: Laughter and Song, Alack Pantaloon, Poor Tired Businessman, When I Was Young

Story: Mr Pat Nolan and his wife (afterwards Pantaloon and Mrs Pascal), are members of a company of four players engaged to perform "The Mollusc" in the garden of a nearby pub. The other players are Harley Quinn and Chloe Mobin (afterwards Harlequin and Columbine) They decide to abandon the chosen play and perform instead their new fantasy, "Midsummer Madness" – a kind of modern-day Harlequinade.

Notes: With a cast of just four and an orchestra of ten this was an odd combination of old and new, and very much to the taste of the audiences who had been intrigued by the Lyric Hammersmith's revival of "The Beggar's Opera". It ran for 115 performances.

Hubert Eisdell as Harlequin

POPPY

London run: Gaiety, September 4th (150 performances)

Music: Stephen Jones & Arthur Samuels

Lyrics: Dorothy Donnelly, Howard Dietz, Irving Caesar

Book: Dorothy Donnelly

Director: Julian Alfred

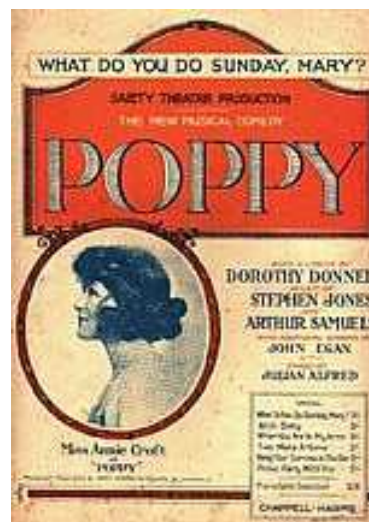
Musical Director: Leonard Hornsey

Cast: William Lugg (*Squire Delafield*), Helen Ferres (*Countess Vronski*), W.H. Berry (*Professor Eustace McGargle*), Annie Croft (*Poppy*), Albert Le Fre (*Amos Sniffen*), Reginald Sharland (*William Herbert*), Eddie Morris (*Mortimer Pottle*), Luella Gear (*Mary*), Mabel Durnant (*Sarah Tucker*).

Songs: (*Jones/Samuels*: Stepping Around, The Girl I've Never Met, Two Make a Home, When Men are Alone, Minstrels on Parade, Chose a Partner) (*Samuels/Dietz*: Two Make a Home, Alibi Baby.)

(*Jones/Caesar*: On Our Honeymoon, What do You Do Sunday Mary?)

(*John Egan*: Hang Your Sorrows in the Sun, The Dancing Lesson, A Picnic Party with You)



Story: In an 1870s English village, the annual horticultural show and fairground is being held under the auspices of Squire Delafield and Countess Vronski. The Countess bought her title with some of the money she inherited from Jeremiah Foster – she received the money because no trace could be found of Jeremiah's daughter, Kitty, who ran away to join a circus. When Professor Eustace McGargle, a fairground huckster and card-shark, hears this story, he attempts to pass off his foster daughter, Poppy, as the daughter of Kitty Foster, and therefore the true heiress. He is aided in this scheme by Sergeant Amos Sniffen of the local constabulary. It turns out, of course, that Poppy is indeed the true heiress and she is restored to affluence and to the arms of her young admirer, William Herbert. Other characters in this tale are the American lawyer, Mortimer Pottle and his daughter, Mary, and Sarah Tucker, who employs Poppy as her household drudge.

Notes: This musical premiered in New York in September 1923 and made the name and reputation of W.C. Fields who was the original Eustace McGargle. The show was considerably "anglicised" for London, and ran successfully for 346 performances.

PRIMROSE

London run: Winter Garden, September 11th – April 25th 1925 (255 performances)



PRIMROSE

London run: Winter Garden, September 11th – April 25th 1925 (255 performances)

Music: George Gershwin **Lyrics:** Ira Gershwin & Desmond Carter

Book: George Grossmith & Guy Bolton

Director: George Grossmith

Choreographer: Laddie Cliff

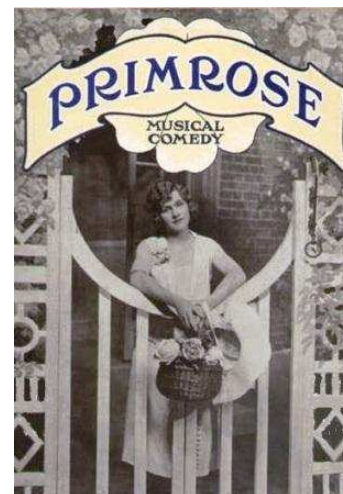
Musical Director: John Ansell

Cast: Margery Hicklin (*Joan*), Guy Fane (*Sir Benjamin Falls*), Percy Heming (*Hilary Vane*), Leslie Henson (*Toby Mopham*), Heather Thatcher (*Pinkie Peach*), Claude Hulbert (*Freddie Falls*), Vera Lennox (*May Rooker*), Muriel Barnby (*Lady Mopham*)

Songs: The Countryside, Wait a Bit Susie, Naughty Baby, This is a Life for a Man, Some Far Away Somewhere, That New-Fangled Mother of Mine, Boy Wanted, I Make Hay While the Moon Shines

Story: Joan, the ward of old Sir Benjamin Falls, is in love with Hilary Vane, a novelist whose latest story, “Primrose”, is based on Joan herself. Their playboy friend, Toby Mopham, arrives with Pinkie Peach, a girl he met and proposed to at a drunken champagne party. When Joan sees Pinkie in Hilary’s arms she storms off in a huff and immediately accepts an offer to marry Freddie Falls, her silly-ass cousin. In reality Pinkie had fainted, and Hilary caught her – but Toby has used it as an excuse to break off his engagement. In the Hotel Splendide in Paris, Pinkie and her muscular brother are pursuing Toby, who disguises himself as a German professor and manages to sort it all out: Hilary and Joan back together, Freddie with a girl called May Rooker, and Toby himself reconciled to Pinkie. They all go to Toby’s mansion in Park Lane, which his mother has turned into a night club to keep her errant son at home o’ nights.

Notes: George Grossmith, who wrote the book, and directed the show, wanted to cast himself as Hilary Vane, but George Gershwin insisted on having a “proper” singer for the role. Percy Heming had sung many major opera roles as well as von Schober in “Lilac Time”, so he was offered as an alternative to Grossmith, who always remained slightly aggrieved that he had not been considered good enough!



Dorothy Dickson

PATRICIA

London run: His Majesty’s, October 31st (Total 160 performances)

Transfer: Strand, March 2nd - 28th, 1925

Music: Geoffrey Gwyther

Book & Lyrics: Denis Mackail, Arthur Stanley & Austin Melford

Additional Lyrics: Greatrex Newman

Director: Dion Titheradge

Choreographer: Max Rivers

Musical Director: Stanley C. Holt

Cast: Arthur Chesney (*Augustus Wentworth*), Mary Leigh (*Elizabeth*), Billy Leonard (*Ogden Scales*), Cicely Debenham (*Miss Smythe*), Ambrose Manning (*Peter Rumble*), Dorothy Dickson (*Patricia*), Philip Simmons (*John Bradshaw*), Max Rivers

Songs: Just Around the Corner, If I had Only Known Dear, Every Second Monday, Wedding Bells, Pair of Eyes, I’m Twenty-One Today, There’s Happiness for you and I.

Story: Elizabeth’s diamond bracelet and her father Augustus’s secret plans for his latest invention have both gone missing. They call in a detective, Peter Rumble, who is enthusiastically helped by Miss Smythe, Augustus’s secretary. Suspicion falls on Patricia, the niece recently arrived from America, especially when she is caught embracing her chauffeur, John Bradshaw. All is finally resolved: the bracelet was simply mislaid; the secret plans were mistakenly scooped up by Elizabeth’s fiancé, Ogden Scales; and Patricia and John are genuinely married but have been keeping it secret. Happy ending all round.

Notes: The show opened to indifferent reviews and it was decided to take a risk and broadcast one whole act of the show on the wireless – a controversial move at that time. As a result business picked up and the show ran four months at His Majesty’s though the decision to transfer it to the Strand turned out to be a mistake, and it came off after a five month run.

TILLY

London run: Alhambra, November 3rd,
One week only as part of tour.

Music: Haydn Wood and Jack Waller

Lyrics: Bert Lee & R.P. Weston

Book: Herbert Clayton & Con West

Musical Director: John Esmond

Cast: James Prescott (*Richard Mainwaring*),
Maudie Dunham (*Tilly*), Gwen Clifford (*Mrs Welwyn*),
Lawrence Caird (*Lucius Welwyn*), Harry Gould (*Percy*),
Irene Andrews (*Amelia Welwyn*),
John Doran (*Sir Abel Mainwaring, M.P.*),
Joan Travers (*Lady Mainwaring*),
Arnold Richardson (*Samuel Stillbottle*)



Maudie Dunham

Songs: I Wish I'd an 'Arder 'Eart, I Wish We'd Met in the Days When We Were Young, Swank, Just Because We Never Knew

Story: In this Cinderella story, the rich and wealthy aristocrat Richard Mainwaring has fallen in love with Tilly Welwyn, the daughter of a working class family who run a boarding house. When Richard first meets Tilly's family – mother, father, Lucius, brother Harry, and sister Amelia - they try, disastrously, to go all “la-di-dah”. Then he takes Tilly to his family mansion to meet his parents, Sir Abel and Lady Marian Mainwaring. That starts off just as badly, with his mother strongly disapproving of the couple's union, but they are aided by the cunning butler, Samuel Stillbottle. Ultimately their love grows stronger as they overcome their differences, and love conquers all

Notes: This musical version of Ian Hay's play “Tilly of Bloomsbury” had opened in Leeds in July, and had been touring ever since. It was originally intended for the twice-nightly variety theatre circuit, but always had an eye on a London date. It managed just the one week as a filler at the Alhambra, though it spent a very successful eight months on the road.



Courtice Pounds

THE FIRST KISS

London run: New Oxford, November 10th (43 performances)

Music: Pablo Luna **Original Spanish Book & Lyrics:** Paso y Abati

English Book & Lyrics: Boyle Lawrence

Director: William J. Wilson

Musical Director: Henry Gibson

Cast: A. Clifton Anderson (*Caliph of Damascus*),
Gregory Stroud (*Prince Nurriden*), Desirée Ellinger (*Princess Mariposa*),
Percy Parsons (*Zu-far*), Courtice Pounds (*Ben Ib-ben*),
C. Denier Warren (*Ali Mon*), Aimée Bebb (*Fateema*)

Songs: The First Kiss of Delight, A Thing of Dreams, Pilgrim as Prince, Kismet 'Tis Written, Hope is in My Heart, Love's a Naughty Boy, I Am the Cadi

Story: The Caliph's son, Prince Nurriden, while still an infant, was formally betrothed to a young girl, Princess Mariposa, who was subsequently kidnapped and carried to Spain by Zu-Far, a Corsair Chief. Now an adult, Prince Nurriden goes to Spain as a pilgrim, and as such is debarred from buying slaves for his harem, though the girl whom he purchases in Seville's Square of the Crooked Streets, ostensibly for another, eventually turns out to be the very person to whom he had been

betrothed. Their first kiss seals their true love for each other. Other characters in the story are Ben Ib-Ben, a doctor in Seville; Ali Mon, the Cadi, or Chief Magistrate; and Fateema, the Duenna of Marketable slave girls.

Notes: “El asombro de Damasco” was a “zarzuela” – a Spanish lyric-dramatic genre that alternates between spoken and sung scenes, with the singing comprising operatic and popular songs alongside Spanish dance forms. The work premiered in Madrid in September 1916, and the English version, “The First Kiss”, had toured the provinces before coming into London. The English version introduced new songs from Luna's more recent success, “Benamor”. It played just 43 performances and was the first “zarzuela” to be performed in London's West End. (It was to be another 75 years before another zarzuela was staged: “The Girl with the Roses” at the Bloomsbury Theatre in 1999)