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# HISTORY OF THEATRE,
## VAUDVILLE AND MOVIES IN HOBOKEN






**Volume 3**
**THE TRANSITION YEARS**
**1887–1900**
**Written & Compiled by Jim Hans**

## COVER PHOTO:

# CRONHEIM'S GERMANIA GARDEN THEATRE

**THE Germania Theatre was at 118-124 Hudson Street, between First and Second (old numbers 68 through 74). This photograph was taken some time after June 1890, a few years before it was demolished to make way for the Empire Theatre, built in 1902. This theatre was once owned by C.A. Weber, then passed to the management of Robert Wareing, who afterwards built the Hoboken Theatre downtown which later became the Lyric. After Wareing vacated the Germania it was taken over by Siegfried Cronheim, who, with some difficulty, ran it for many years.**

**Later it became the Bijou, and for a very short time, the Star. From its earliest days the building had a large open space at the rear, which was a garden furnished with tables and chairs where patrons, here as well as in the theatre, could enjoy their beer and a smoke and the show. Notice the numerous theatre posters displayed in front of the property, a practice much more common then than now. Related to this is a letter dated May 6, 1890 by Cronheim to the Board of Aldermen of Hoboken: "Gents: As I am about to rebuild and decorate the front of my theatre 68 to 74 Hudson St. I wish your honorable body would grant me a permit to put my bill board at the curb front of my house as H.R. Jacobs has in front of Wareing's Theatre..."**

**A few days later in a letter to the Mayor and Council, Cronheim altered his request by asking "permission to erect and maintain three small ornamental signs on three sheet bill posters on a line with the curb. The said signs to take the place of the large sized sign which your honorable body has been asked to grant permission to erect. Your petitioner respectfully shows that the said ornamental signs, being only about three feet wide, by about six feet high, and standing in a line about twenty five feet apart do not constitute as much an obstruction as would the larger sign." Notice in the photograph, above the double-door entrance, far left, a sign reads: "Family Circle."**

**Cover illustration of the classic stage image is from The Decorative Work of T.M. Cleland; published 1929.**

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*THE HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM*

# HISTORY OF THEATRE, Vaudville, and Movies in Hoboken Volume III, 1887-1900


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To my fleet-footed wife Beverly, always there to help in so many ways from beginning to end.

I am indebted also to the Hoboken Public Library; the S.C. Williams Library, Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken; the Jersey City Public Library: The New Jersey Historical Society, Newark; the Newark Public Library and the New York Public Library.



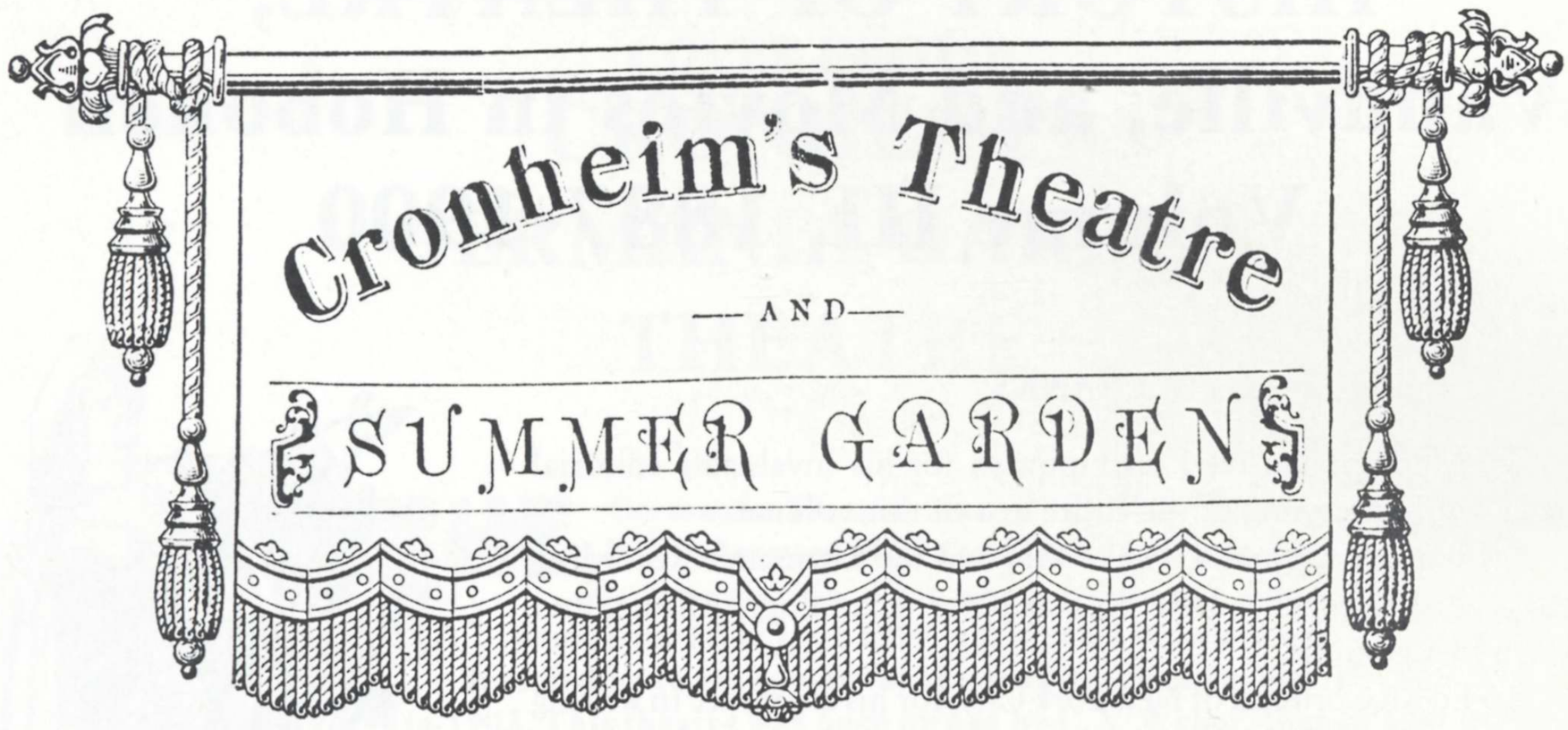


## SPECIAL MENTION

For financial donations towards the producing of this volume , we thank the following individuals from Hoboken unless otherwise noted:

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We are also grateful for the financial support from the local businesses who have advertised in this volume.
Please offer them your patronage




# PREFACE

Although over the years little has been preserved of what had been written about the theatres, entertainers, presentations, producers, and managers of the theatrical world of Hoboken, the compilers of this project have nevertheless been able to piece together enough scattered information to build a vivid and detailed picture of this vanished and colorful world.

It is amazing how active was the theatrical life of Hoboken, especially in the last decade of the 19th Century.

In this and preceding volumes of the history of theatre in Hoboken, we have tried to make clear the chronology of events by placing near the margins of the text the years in which succeeding events occurred. This arrangement, although not unique, helps show at a glance the sequence of events. As historians do not fail to emphasize, the precise date of an event is in itself a detail of minor importance, yet has a value in serving to reveal the relationship of the event to other events and aids understanding of the influence of one upon another.

We also found it essential to include from time to time a summary of events in Hoboken and in the theatre in general.

Illustrations are included that enhance one's view of the character and style of the times.

Material not found in Volume II has been added to this volume.

# INTRODUCTION

Volume I is a general introduction to the history of theatre, vaudeville, and movies in Hoboken. listing all the known theatres, cabarets, and movie houses, showing their exact locations on accurate local street maps.

Volume II covers various types of theatrical attractions presented in the formative years of Hoboken's entertainment industry, from 1820 to 1887.

Volume III begins to cover the vigorous theatrical era of Hoboken that existed until the emergence of moving pictures, about 1900.

Volume II leaves off at the time Siegfried Cronheim had recently taken over the Germania Theatre, on the west side of Hudson Street between 1st and 2nd Streets. Robert Wareing's new theatre was prospering on lower Hudson Street, where the famous actress Lillie Langtry had a special engagement in April 1887.

## LILLIE LANGTRY

Lillie admitted that her "dazzling social success went to her head" wrote Pierre Sichel in his biography of the noted entertainer called the "Jersey Lily."

"Her face," he went on, "was more familiar to country people than Queen Victoria's. Thousands of reproductions of her portraits and photographs were in circulation, her name was daily in every newspaper, she was the heroine of many fashionable novels, women scrambled to wear the Langtry bun, toque [hat], gloves, and shoes. Waiters gawked and trembled when they served her."



**A Lillie Langtry likeness from an advertisement she endorsed**

A burlesque troupe would capitalize on her title, playing the Gayety Theatre in Hoboken under the name of "Pretty Jersey Lilies." And again a "Big Beauty Chorus" of 30 girls was booked in Hoboken's Empire Theatre under the title of "The New Jersey Lillies."

# *Introduction (Continued)*

Born Charlotte LeBreton in 1852 on Jersey, one of the Channel Islands of Great Britain, she became famous on both sides of the Atlantic. It has been said that even the legendary Judge Roy Bean of Texas (called "The law west of the Pecos river" and the subject of the Gary Cooper film "The Westerner" in which Walter Brennan won an Academy Award for his portrayal of Bean) was an ardent admirer of Langtry. The village of Langtry, west Texas, in which Judge Bean sat, was named after her.

According to Sichel, Lillie later visited the town of Langtry in hope of meeting Roy Bean. "The funny old man writing to me all these years." But Judge Bean, who had changed the town's name from Vinegaroon to Langtry in her honor, had died at 78 almost a year earlier.

During the height of her popularity Lillie Langtry appeared in Hoboken for a week in three plays, "The Lady of Lyons, "A Wife's Peril," and "Pygmalion and Galatea." In describing Judge Roy Bean's saloon in Texas, Sichel states: "On one wall was tacked an old torn three-sheet [poster] of her as Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons."

Among attractions of the 1887-1888 season noted by playwright Christopher Morley in describing Hoboken theatre events in his book, "Seacoast of Bohemia*" were Bronson Howard's "The Banker's Daughter," Hoyt's "A Parlor Match," Kate Claxton and Charles Stevenson in "The Two Orphans," and Edwin Thorne in "The Black Flag." Harrigan and Hart played here, and Weber and Fields in their salad days, billed far down the variety list as knockabout comedians in "The Crazy Dutchman."

Another star was a Mme. Janauschek, who was programmed as having "Power and emotional force greater than Ristori, a nervous and fiery intensity equal to Rachel, and a skill for elaboration and finish only equalled by Sarah Bernhardt."

Just which of these glories took place in the old Germania and which in Wareings's new Hoboken Theatre remain doubtful. "When Wareing resigned the older house to Cronheim, that worthy met the competition with Teutonic vigor," states Morley. "Mr. Henry Hart, after careful study of the scrapbooks in the Hoboken Library, reports that even prize fights were staged among the beer tables of the Germania during the Cronheim regime." Siegfried Cronheim operated the Germania Theatre from about 1887 to 1892. His story is told in this volume.

JIM HANS
Hoboken, NJ
August, 1990

**Doubleday, Doran & Company, Garden City, New York, 1929, preface*

# CHAPTER 1

*Before we begin again from where we left off in Volume II, a general description of the city published in the mid 1880s will bring us back into the picture.*

"THE CITY OF HOBOKEN occupies a more unique position in many respects than any other city in the world. No other city of its size is so well known by name and so little known in fact... Four great ocean steamship lines and one of the most important trunk railroad lines have their terminals in the city. The churches, schools, hospitals, and other benevolent organizations are flourishing."

This city had grown up. An efficient police force, fire department and other municipal services contributed to the good life of the city. Electric lighting had shone along Washington Street since 1884. The uptown section of the city was beginning to thrive. The 14th Street ferry to New York had opened in 1886. That same year Hoboken was honored with the completion of an enormous elevated railroad cable-car structure extending from Jersey City Heights along what is now Observer Highway down to the Hoboken Ferry at what is now the PATH terminal. It was the first transportation system of its kind to be built in the United States.

Hoboken's population had climbed from 31,000 in 1880 to more then 43,000 in 1888. Theatre attendance had greatly increased. More music halls and cabarets opened, many social clubs became larger and more important in the life of the city. Hoboken was attracting new homeowners, new businesses, and large numbers of visitors.

## PLAYING TO PACKED HOUSES

While Thomas Edison in Menlo Park, New Jersey was enjoying the success of his phonograph, or "talking machine," as it was also called, and was about to project motion pictures, the Germania Theatre under new owner-manager Siegfried Cronheim was playing to packed houses every evening as well as Sunday and holiday afternoons.

## NICE PLUG FOR CRONHEIM'S THEATRE

References to the theatre in Hoboken pop up in the most unlikely places, such as in an article in a Stevens Institute of Technology publication related to that marvelous new invention, the phonograph.

At Stevens in 1887-1888 there was, quite naturally, much interest in Edison's "talking machine," a device that reproduced sound recorded on the surface of a wax cylinder, like its now obsolete descendant the Dictaphone.

A fictional piece of humor by one of the students makes light of German and comic operas while poking fun at the faculty. A teacher who was secretly recorded saying "Going to Cronheim's to hear 'Die Gotterdammerung'?" and "Is 'The Black Crook' coming again? We had better buy up the auditorium boxes at once." Both productions were considered out of date at the time, very much so by students. However, it must have delighted Cronheim to hear his offerings complimented on Edison's device.

## PRIOR TO THE MOVIES

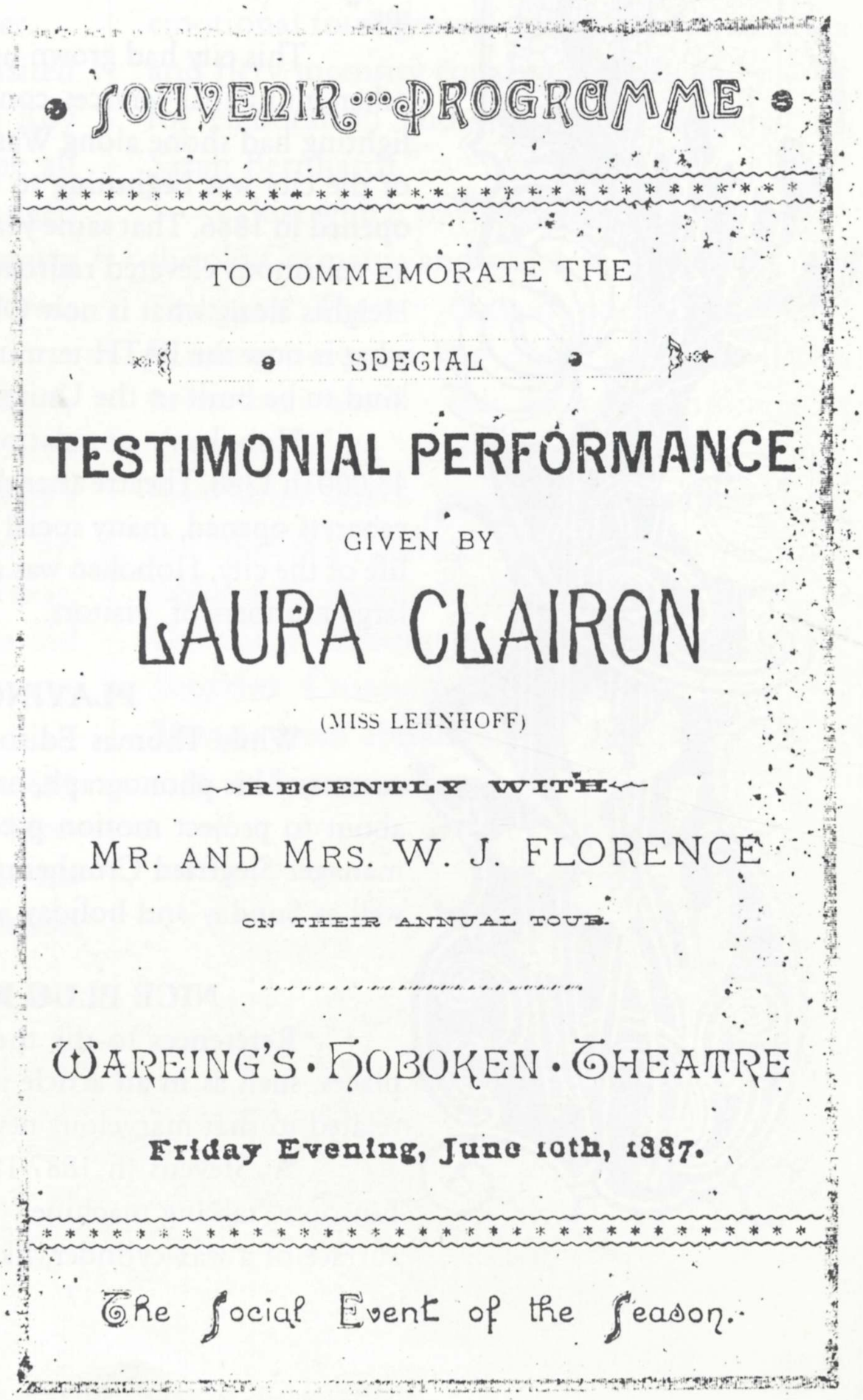
Before Edison and others introduced the moving picture projector, slides were popular. Still pictures were projected by what was then called a "magic lantern," from photographic and hand-painted glass slides.

At Stevens Institute was the popular S. Hawkridge, who billed himself as the "Philosophical Instrument maker." He had or could make magic lanterns and scientific apparatus. These included a "Collage Lantern," with slides included, for $200, a hefty sum in those days; the "Experimenter's Lantern," $75, and the "Megascope," to project a magnified image of an object, like today's overhead projectors, $50. These devices played a large role in public and private entertainment and education. Hawkridge also conducted lectures illustrated by his lanterns.

**SOCIAL EVENT AT WAREING'S THEATRE**

**In studying the 1887 souvenir program, page one of which is reproduced here, we surmise that Miss Lehnhoff of Hoboken is a young and aspiring actress. Her stage name is Laura Clairon and this is her debut in Hoboken, in the title role of "Fanchon the Cricket." She has recently returned from a successful tour where evidently her performance was special enough to warrant this "Social Event of the Season," at home .**

**Business manager for this production is her father, who also executed crayon portraits of her which graced the lobby of the theatre. We can only guess that this sort of thing was not uncommon for the times, particularly in Hoboken. For many years, C. Robert Lehnhoff, artist, lived at 730 Washington Street.**



SOUVENIR ··· PROGRAMME

TO COMMEMORATE THE

SPECIAL

TESTIMONIAL PERFORMANCE

GIVEN BY

LAURA CLAIRON

(MISS LEHNHOFF)

RECENTLY WITH

MR. AND MRS. W. J. FLORENCE

ON THEIR ANNUAL TOUR.

WAREING'S · HOBOKEN · THEATRE

**Friday Evening, June 10th, 1887.**

The Social Event of the Season.

## 1888 HOBOKEN ELKS– THEATRE-RELATED

Written in the history of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Hoboken Lodge No. 74 is the following account of the club's beginnings, as related to Robert Wareing, proprietor of the Hoboken Theatre. "It is practically the outgrowth of the Robert Wareing Benevolent Association which held its meeting in a room in Cronheim's Theatre.

The idea of converting this association into a lodge of Elks was first conceived by Charles P. Greer, a member of Syracuse Lodge, and Rounseville Williams of Providence Lodge." Both Greer and Williams were associated with Wareing's Hoboken Theatre (soon to become Jacob's Hoboken Theatre) and held respectively positions of treasurer and leader of the house orchestra.

These gentlemen and others put together a long list of would-be Elks, and after a dispensation to organize an Elks lodge in this city was granted, Hoboken Lodge No. 74, B.P.O.E was founded on January 29th, 1888, in the assembly rooms at 73 Hudson Street, directly across from Cronheim's Theatre. Building numbering has since changed, 73 Hudson Street would today be between 1st and 2nd Streets on the East side of Hudson Street).

One of the original Elks members was Harry W. Semon, the personal representative of H.R. Jacobs, the new owner of the Hoboken Theatre on lower Hudson Street.

The first entertainment committee of the Hoboken Elks gave a benefit performance under the auspices of the lodge on February 7, 1889 in Jacobs' theatre.

It is relevant to note that the original national Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was founded "by members of the theatrical, minstrel, equestrian and musical profession."

## FATHER OF THIRTY CHILDREN

In Morley's "Seacoast of Bohemia" we find "a reminiscent citizen signing himself Old Timer, recalling in the Jersey Observer of December 20, 1921 the Cronheim era mentions 'a large Juno-like woman' who sang only in German, and who was sometimes accompanied by a Robert Gantzberg, who had a show of his own around on Washington Street between First and Second Streets, and who, "Old Timer" declared, was the father of thirty children.

"But the peer of all who sang," writes this humble antiquarian, "was a young colored girl of possibly twenty years, slim and rather good-looking, and with a truly beautiful voice. She would stand on the stage serene and self-possessed and sing, apparently without any effort. Her voice was rich, clear and full-throated. Its liquid melody affected even the most callow among her audience. Years later she was known as the 'Black Patti' [after Adelina Patti, 1848-1919, a coloratura soprano who was the best-known and highest paid singer of her day] but had by that time become temperamental and would break her engagements."

## 1888 GANTZBERG'S THEATRE

Robert Gantzberg's theatre, for a time called Gantzberg's Music Hall, was at 127 Washington Street for many years. During its day it was the "Showplace of Hoboken." Later it was called the Orpheum.

The second story of the building was composed of balconies overlooking the main floor. Today the building at that site houses offices; for a number of years the Salvation Army occupied the premises.

On Monday, February 20, 1888 the theatre caught fire at 4:20 in the morning. According to police reports,Otto Labes, aged 31 years, born in Germany, a married man and a musical director at Mr. Gantzberg's theatre, jumped through the window of the theatre while it was burning and sustained fatal injuries." He was taken to the station house at City Hall and attended by Doctors Steadman, Helfer and Chabert– he died 20 minutes after arriving at the station house.

Gantzberg's son Otto, aged 12 years, was slightly burned and was attended by Dr. Helfer and sent to St. Mary Hospital. Florence Nagili, aged 25 years and Alexis Plolmer aged 27, both musicians at Gantzberg's Theatre was slightly cut and bruised while escaping from the theatre during the progress of the fire.

A fire alarm from box 14 told the story of the burning of Gantzberg's theatre and the frame house south of it (also some damage to Mr. Hirtler's building). Cause of fire – unknown.

Mayor August Grassmann commented at the time: "The Gantzberg theatre might have resulted in a serious conflagration had the elements not aided the heroic efforts of our brave firemen." It took four hours to put out the fire.

## JACOBS' HOBOKEN THEATRE

It appears that H. R. Jacobs took over Wareing's Hoboken Theatre sometime between April of 1887 and October 9th of that same year. Admission was 10 and 20 cents. Reserved seats were 30 , 50 and 75 cents. Matinees were every Wednesday and Saturday, and also at this time on Sunday.

It is not known what became of Robert Wareing; it is believed he died before 1893. Listed in the 1893 city directory is Mrs. Robert Wareing residing at 1210 Garden Street.

Full-fledged plays and musical comedies were the order of the day at the Hoboken Theatre. For the week ending Sunday evening, October 16, 1887, George Learock played in the "Romantic picturesque play, Beacon Lights!" The cast was not skimpy, eleven named actors and an unknown number of "soldiers, Mexicans, and miners" filled the stage at various times during the performance. For the week ending Sunday, November 6 was booked the Kimball Musical Comedy Co. under the management of H. R. Jacobs himself and was presented to be "the brightest, the wittiest, and most sparkling musical comedy ever written by Jessop and Gill."

While Jacobs was sole manager of the Hoboken Theatre he also sub-leased the Thalia Theatre in New York. That theatre was well-known as the Bowery Theatre until 1879. German plays and operas were the attractions at the Bowery until 1888 when Jacobs took over the house for a year.

Gradually Jacobs acquired a chain of popular playhouses, which extended through many cities. The Third Avenue Theatre at 31st Street in Manhattan was his flagship theatre for the enterprise. The Third Avenue was a cheap-price house, at which the attractions were "melodramas and sensational plays."




**This interesting masthead for an early Hoboken Theatre program dated October 16, 1887, reproduced above, was drawn by Hoboken Evening News artist J. Henchy.**

## 1888 INTERESTING PARTICULARS OF THE HOBOKEN THEATRE

Besides Jacobs as proprietor and manager of the Hoboken Theatre, the executive staff included a local representative, treasurer, advertising agent, stage carpenter, musical director, chief door-keeper, master of properties, stage door-keeper, a calcium and electrical effects person and a gas man. At this time the theatre was evidently still being lighted by gas, although electricity was being used for some stage effects.

The ticket office was open continuously from 9 AM to 10 PM for the sale of reserved seats, which could be secured six days in advance. Matinees usually began at 2:15 PM and evening performances began at 8:15.

Among the regular notices posted in the house

were "Attaches are not allowed to applaud the performance. Any demand or acceptance of payment for seats by ushers is an imposition. Patrons are requested to report any such demands, and any inattention on part of the attaches to the Box Office."

Other announcements included "The toilet room for ladies will be found at the north side of the main lobby with a female attendant." No mention of a men's toilet.

Women as patrons of the theatre were less frequent in those days and besides, men did not want to be told where their rest- rooms were located.

Management's desire for an increase in attendance by women and children were evident at this time: "Read Carefully!! Especial attention is called to the WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY MATINEES at 2:15 PM which are especially designed for ladies and children, who can thus attend and avoid the crush of the evening performances. Ladies may rely upon every attention being paid to their comfort and convenience, and in visiting this theatre without escort will be treated by every attache with the greatest courtesy."[Apparently an "attache" was some kind of theatre attendant.]

It was well known in theatre circles at this time that producer B. F. Keith was helping to bring about the transformation of vulgar "variety" shows into decent "vaudeville" entertainment (Keith later had some 34 theatres in his big-time vaudeville circuit, including one in Hoboken, the Empire).

Keith knew that variety and decency were not incompatible, that women and children liked a diversified form of entertainment. Keith opened the original of the "modern" type of vaudeville house in Boston in 1882; it was the first to present the best possible bill that could be secured, with all the objectionable elements eliminated.

## QUICK EXIT

The Hoboken Theatre (later the Lyric) was a well-designed theatre as Jacobs clearly pointed out: "NOTICE: our patrons are respectfully requested to retain their seats until the fall of the curtain when all the doors on both sides of the entire front of the house will be opened for exit, enabling the audience to leave the building in less time than from ANY OTHER HOUSE IN THE WORLD."

Did Jacobs consider the Hoboken Theatre his favorite? This is what the management had to say about the entertainment: "The plays given at H.R. Jacobs' Hoboken Theatre will be presented by regular traveling organizations, and are the same as played at high-priced theatres in other cities. In most popular-priced houses the companies engaged are hastily organized and but partially drilled. As the management of this house controls theatres in many other cities, it is thus enabled to secure the best attractions for their patrons."

Another notice that was posted in the theatre at this time was the following: "It is earnestly requested that the patrons of this Theatre will refrain from eating peanuts, it mars the performance and annoys the audience. This rule will be enforced." On the streets of Hoboken vendors sold roasted shelled peanuts from carts for many years.

Yet another notice presented by the management of the Hoboken Theatre reveals the hurried life of the city during these years: "READ AND REFLECT–Our patrons will kindly await the final going down of the curtain before preparing to leave their seats. It should be remembered that a majority of the audience desire to hear the last word spoken, and are frequently prevented from so doing by those who invariably make their exit from the Theatre with unnecessary haste."

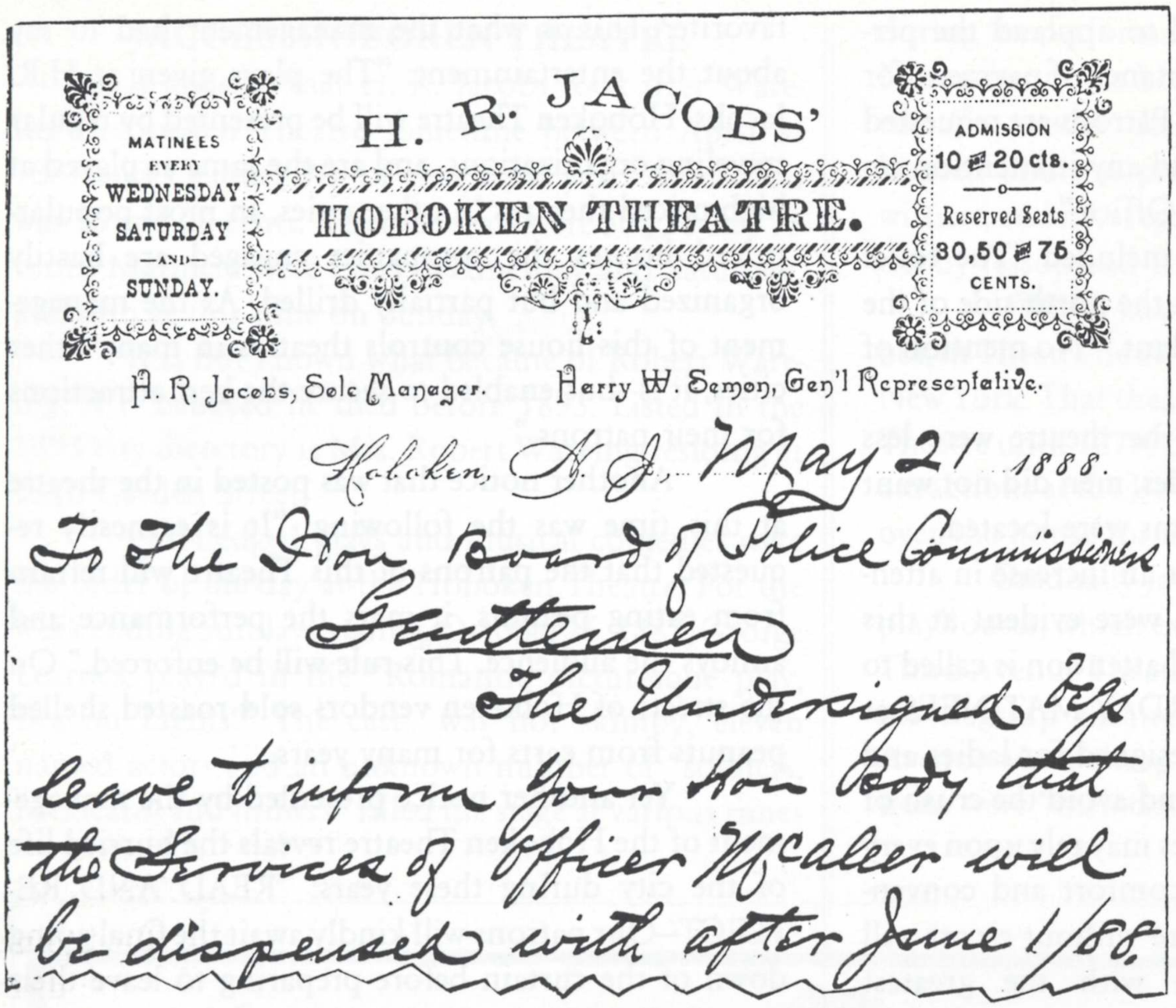
"The celebrated" Sohmer Piano "is used in this theatre exclusively" states an ad in one of the Hoboken Theatre programs. For a time an organ, from H. Pinder, 15 Coles Street, Jersey City, was also used.

## THEATRE TUNNEL

In a number of programs was a small ad for the "Hoboken Theatre Tunnel," a drinking place under the theatre! Later it was called simply "The Tunnel." It has been said by old timers that there was a tunnel under the old Victor Hotel that passed under Hudson Street to a basement saloon beneath the Terminal Building at 70 Hudson, owned by Danny Marrotta, constructed about 1910. If true, perhaps it was part of that same Hoboken Theatre Tunnel.

## 1888 BETWEEN THE ACTS

Another drinking place advertised was "The Resort," serving Milwaukee Beer on draught and "Lunch Between the Acts." It was customary with


MATINEES EVERY WEDNESDAY SATURDAY —AND— SUNDAY.

H. R. JACOBS'

HOBOKEN THEATRE.

ADMISSION 10 & 20 cts. —o— Reserved Seats 30,50 & 75 CENTS.

H. R. Jacobs, Sole Manager. Harry W. Semon, Gen'l Representative.

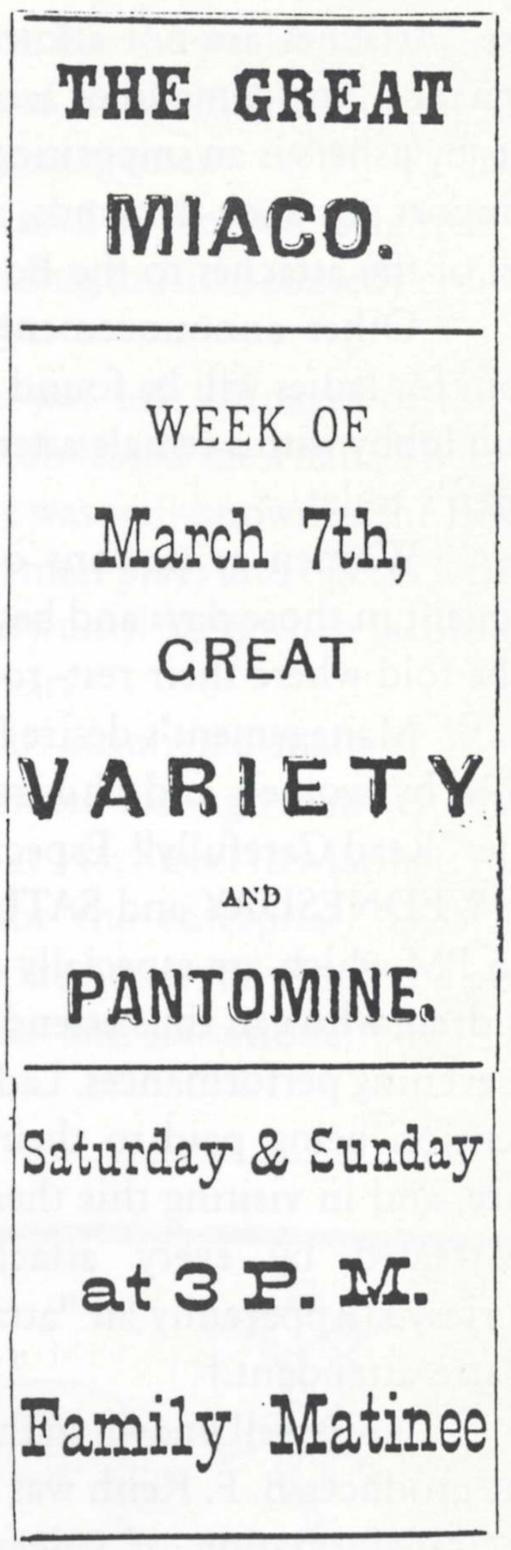
Hoboken, N. J., May 21 1888.

To The Hon Board of Police Commissioners

Gentlemen

The Undersigned begs leave to inform Your Hon Body that the Services of Officer McAleer will be dispensed with after June 1/88.

**Reduced portion of a letter from the Hoboken Theatre Representative, Harry Semon, to the Hoboken Police Commissioners asking to dispense with services of police officers on duty.**


THE GREAT

MIACO.

WEEK OF

March 7th,

GREAT

VARIETY

AND

PANTOMINE.

Saturday & Sunday

at 3 P. M.

Family Matinee

**(Right) Cronheim's Theatre house ad from a February, 1887 program.**

most saloons for many years to offer a free spread of finger food, laid out to encourage the thirst of beer drinkers. "The Resort" was near the theatre on the southwest corner of Newark and Hudson Streets, later the site of the Hudson Trust Company.

In a letter dated May 21, 1888, the Hoboken Theatre's General Representative, Harry Semon, announced he would, after June 1, dispense with the services of the police officer on duty at the theatre,"owing to the falling off in business since the warm weather commenced, and also having to close the theatre on Sundays – we have no fault whatever to find with officer McAleer, but it is absolutely necessary to curtail our expenses in every department – and we can only afford to employ one officer for the balance of this Season."

As with the many saloons of the city, theatres would almost always open on Sundays. Although there was an old law on the books against such a practice, it usually was not enforced; as we shall see later.

Harry Semon was responsible for publishing the theatre program which announced the current and coming shows, listing the cast of characters, etc. It was larger than today's theatre programs, a little smaller than a tabloid newspaper, averaging eight pages, loaded with ads and printed in black and white like most publications of the time.

### 1888 THEFT AT THE HOBOKEN THEATRE

Harry Semon had his share of problems keeping a watchful eye on the theatre, especially dealing with kids. On a Tuesday around 1 PM, August 28,

1888, out of school for the summer and hanging around town were Joe Remani of lower Adams Street and Joe Rossi of Grand Street between Sixth and Seventh. Both were 15 years old. According to old police records they were arrested by "Citizen Henry Price of Garden Street on complaint of Harry Seamon of Jacobs' Theatre."

The charge was larceny in stealing his dog." We don't know much about Harry W. Semon other than that he married in Hoboken on August 26, 1885 to a Julia Melrose. The event was later announced in a sports and theatrical publication, so he must have been known in the theatre world.

## 1889 "OBNOXIOUS LAW"

Siegfried Cronheim, proprietor of the Germania Theatre, was also at this time complaining about the State law prohibiting opening on Sunday, which was now being locally enforced. "My business has suffered to such an extent, that I am compelled to reduce expenses in my theatre," he wrote in a letter to the Board of Police Commissioners of Hoboken dated February 25. "I therefore wish and request you to dispense with the services of the Special Police Officer." Cronheim was blunt and to the point.

"Should at a future time which I sincerely hope this obnoxious law is repealed I would gladly employ an officer again." Suffice to say the law, at least locally, was not enforced for very long. Cronheim had all along been operating on Sundays. On the letterhead of the Germania Theatre (from a letter dated August 30, 1887), it states: "All artists engaged at this Theatre are expected to perform Seven Nights each week and Sunday Afternoon; and also on the Afternoons of all Holidays, without extra charge."

Other conditions set forth by the management to the performers were anything but lax:

### PERFORMERS CONDITIONS AT CRONHEIM'S THEATRE

"All artists engaged at this establishment will send in their acts at least one week in advance, with lists of properties, etc., and report for rehearsals on Monday morning at 11 o'clock sharp.

"All artists engaged are expected to assist in acts and afterpieces, besides doing their specialties."

The terms or conditions of agreement were certainly in favor of the house. "The management reserves the right to cancel and terminate an engagement, with forfeiture of all claims for services, after a single appearance of an incompetent, or one grossly excessive in making terms, or for drunkenness, or neglect of business.

"Performers will bear in mind that this Theatre is a family resort, and artists accepting engagements consent to be governed by this rule and all other rules of the establishment, without further contract."

### THE NIGHT OWLS

Although the Germania Theatre claimed to be a family resort, a burlesque company was booked there for a week commencing October 8, 1888. However, to be sure, burlesque was quite tame in those days and was a representation of satire, irony, ridiculous humor and buffoonery. Part of the program presented by "The Night Owls Burlesque Company" consisted of selections sung by various artists "concluding with a grand vocal Coyote." It was here that the management placed a special notice: "Particular attention is called to the New Wardrobe worn in this scene costing upwards of $3000.00."

Also listed on the program was "Our Mammoth Olio" (a medley, or collection of various pieces); and "The clever character impersonator, Mr. John Carroll. An act full of ginger and songs up to the times." Plus:"The greatest of All Rope Dancers, Miss Capitola Forrest, in a novel act introducing her HOOP OF FIRE."

## 1890 HOBOKEN A POPULAR PLACE TO VISIT

We should remind the reader that Hoboken had by this time evolved, from a daytime family resort (from 1820) to a popular day and night place to visit; to the various theatres, beer gardens, variety halls, cabarets, and saloons, especially now on Sundays when in New York all such places were closed. Only a few out-of-the-way places across the river opened on that special day of the week.

The New York Times of February 17, referring to Hoboken on Sundays, says, "To the thirsty person who exhausts his energies in looking for side doors in New York it (Hoboken) is a hilariously joyous place. Such a person doesn't have to go hunting around for drawn window blinds and a solemn front to be sure of

HIRSCHBERG, The LEADING HATTER. Fall Styles now Ready. { 158 Washington, cor. 4th St.

# Hoboken Theatre.

H. R. JACOBS' PROPRIETOR & MANAGER

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME — JOS. LOEWENHERZ PUB'R

G. DIETERICH, N. Y.

Vol. II WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 23, 1889. No 23.

KRANICH & BACH
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Most reliable for Fine Tone, Finish, and Absolute Durability.
Warerooms: STECK HALL, 11 E. 14th STREET, NEW YORK.

## PROGRAMME.

## Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday,

**AND MATINEE WEDNESDAY.**

Engagement of

# Mr. Thos. J. Farron

In Joseph Murphy's Irish Comedy,

# "HELP."

(In three Acts)

Under the management of CHAUNCEY G. PULSIFER.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Tracy Randall, alias Walter Robbins | Mr. Walter R. Jennison |
| Captain Waldro, a retired sea captain | Mr. Geo. H. Rexford |
| Amos Wireback, an English swell | Mr. Wallace Jackson |
| Nubbles, an ex-convict | Mr. Geo. D. MacIntyre |
| Chas. Waldro, son of Captain Waldro | Mr. Walter B. Woodall |
| Simon, a servant | Mr. A. H. Bosworth |
| Shivers, Captain of the Smugglers | Mr. Chas. Saunders |
| Rusty Bob | Mr. Robert Forrester |
| Star of the Force | Mr. N. Florence |
| Messenger | Mr. Wellington |
| Rev. Dr. Morling | Mr. A. H. Barnes |
| Elinor Robbins, a deserted wife | Miss Laura Booth |
| Lillian Waldro, Ned's Sweetheart | Miss Lillian J. Charteris |
| Miss Fannie, Lillian's friend | Miss Florence Germaine |
| Mother Kit, keeper of the den | Mrs. Hooley |
| Master Willie, Elinor's child | Mamie Spalding |

Mr. Thos. J. Farron .... AS .... Ned Daley, Michael O'Gaff, Pat O'Shaughnnesey, Christopher Vonleibenstein, Hildia, (The Strawberry Girl)

J. P. J. Cather ..... Treasurer | Geo. H. Rexford ..... Stage Manager

Continued on 3d page.

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THE CELEBRATED
PIANOS SOHMER PIANOS
Are at present the most popular and preferred by the leading Artists.
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FIRST-CLASS
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—AND—
UPRIGHTS.
WAREROOMS:
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The New York Store,
MARTIN BEREL, Prop.,
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HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY.
FOR
Bargains in Ladies and Gents Furnishings, Fancy Goods and Notions.

DO YOU USE IT?
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TRUE FAIR AND SQUARE MARK
THIS LABEL IS ON THE BEST RIBBON MADE.

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CALENBERG & VAUPEL Pianos
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4711 COLOGNE WATER.
THE FINEST AND LOWEST PRICED GOODS IMPORTED.
WHITE ROSE GLYCERINE SOAP. 4711

**First page (reduced) of the Hoboken Theatre program for the week ending February 23, 1889, presenting the Irish comedy "Help" in three acts, with quite a large cast numbering at least 17 performers. By this issue (Vol. II, No. 23) the masthead was changed, the new artist being from New York. The new publisher was Joseph Loewenberg, securing mostly New York ads for the front page.**

getting into a saloon [or any place of amusement]. All he has to do is to look for a lager beer sign and go in under it, or if such exertion is too much for him, any policeman will direct him to a place wherein beer and incipient large heads go rollicking along hand in hand."

## LIVELY SUNDAYS

Places of amusement and the like know no Sunday law in Hoboken.

"All time to them is money-making time," said the New York reporter, "and when it happens to lap over into the Sabbath hours, they don't care; they just keep open in the old-fashioned way and their proprietors welcome the straggling visitor, let him come from the far interior of Jersey or from the license-stricken island of Manhattan. So long as he is able to come in and send a nimble coin dancing into the coffers of the establishment he is welcome and all the liquid refreshment that the place affords is his."

The State law at this time which provided for the arrest and punishment of those who were found guilty of being open on Sunday has existed for "a long, long time," as put by the Times, "and, in fact is so old that people interested laugh at it."

The New York Times article mentions two places in Hoboken, which in violation of the law, afford amusements on Sunday "to that particular class of Jerseyman who are opposed to most things lawful...The first and perhaps most entertaining of places is an engaging resort...called 'Cronheim's Theatre,' which is 'run'—a very apt verb—by Mr. Siegfried Cronheim, a political power in Hoboken."

It is not known just how powerful Cronheim was in Hoboken politics, but he seemed to be on good terms with those in high positions and his resort theatre was very popular at this time.

The New York Times reporter appears impressed by his visit to Cronheim's Theatre, and presents his personal observation in a most entertaining, but sometimes snide manner: "It is a theatre really and truly, and is the theatre which some very strange scenes are enacted."



**TYROLIAN PERFORMERS AT THE DEUTSCHER CLUB (GERMAN CLUB) (UNION CLUB), HOBOKEN, 1889**
**(Photo courtesy of Hoboken Public Library)**

**THE DEUTSCHER CLUB**

**There were many social clubs that had been formed in the city by this time and theatrical activities were very much a part of these organizations. One of the first with any type of theatre dated to the early days of the Deutscher Club. (The name was changed to the Union Club during World War I.) The historic building at Sixth and Hudson Streets has recently been greatly altered.**

## CRONHEIM'S SUNDAY PERFORMANCE DESCRIBED

"The Sunday performance begins at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and is a most edifying one," the Times article continues: "Some persons prefer it to an afternoon service in church. The curtain, which for a time has been almost invisible from the rear of the house, owing to the cloud of smoke coming from alleged cigars which rises up before it, goes up in a wild hurrah from a pathetic orchestra and discloses a human semicircle composed largely of female limbs and blackened male faces, and this religious sight stirs the audience which fills the auditorium with enthusiasm.

"Even before a word has been uttered on the

stage the Christian element before it pounds its beer glasses on the edges of its seats and yells with Roman fervor." One can almost picture a wild-west air about the place. The descriptive New York Times piece continues: "Then a gentleman adorned with a set of bones and boundless confidence in himself executes a symphony in C and the orchestra accompanies him in a way which suggests recollection of a peculiarly unfortunate gentleman named McGinty, who history relates, had a singular dislike to remaining above the ground for any very long period." He doesn't seem to have been very popular if the orchestra drowned him out. However the crowd is having a fun time regardless of the performer with the set of bones.

"This edifying selection is concluded amid tremendous demonstrations of approval, and the applause is coincident with the arrival in the orchestra of great tin trays carried by waiters bearing foaming beakers of that malty beverage which Hoboken consumes in such quantities every Sunday.

"The trays cleared and the waiters paid, and the audience is ready to listen to the colicky strains of 'Way Down upon the Su- wanee River' sung with immense creative power by six females who once doubtless were young, but who, since that happy time, with a desire for more beer, which is commendable from the bar-keeper's point of view.

"They get the beer, and are stirred up again by a gentleman who acquired a voice in constantly being on intimate terms with a fog horn, and who relates in pathetic verse the sad story of a military person who always lifts his hat to his boarding house butler on the grounds that a soldier is ever prompt to salute a person of superior rank. This gentle hymn—you can almost hear the decorous accompaniment of the organ—lifts the person in the orchestra into the seventh heaven of delight, and the beer comes in larger glasses. Even the vigilant policemen—two of them—who stand in the bar-room, which serves as an entrance to the theatre, feel called upon to drink after this outburst of religious feeling, and beer is good enough for them."

The average man on the Hoboken police force has seen the theatre and saloon open for seven days and seven nights in the week for so long, and has been in the habit of enjoying the benefits to be derived from them for such a lengthy period, that were the law preventing this sort of thing to be enforced he would regard it as a sort of personal dig to himself.

## NO PRETENSE OF OBEYING THE STATE LAWS

Meanwhile, this kind of "saintly" entertainment on Sunday at Cronheim's continued until 5:30 or 6 o'clock and began again at 8. "The doors are wide open, and only the fraction of a dollar and a desire to get in are necessary to gain admission," states the New York Times.

## 1890 ACTORS DRINK ON STAGE OF KNICKERBOCKER GARDEN

One door north of Cronheim's at 80 Hudson Street (old numbering system) was Boyle's Knickerbocker Garden, where the same sort of service was conducted, as at Cronheim's and where the entertainment provided for the audience was perhaps of a



**1889 FASHION OF THE DAY**
**Contemporary sketch of a young lady used in an advertisement in Harper's Magazine published at this time. She is perhaps of a type that might have frequented one of the popular theatres in Hoboken.**

# CRONHEIM'S

THEATRE & SUMMER GARDEN,

HOBOKEN, N. J.

Never Closed. Open all the year round. Every Night and Holiday Matinees.

**As the advertisement above states, Cronheim's Theatre was open on Sundays, and Cronheim was not ashamed to announce the fact. The ad was one of the larger in the 1890-91 city directory.**

"tougher" quality than that of Cronheim's.

It is not known just how large a place the knickerbocker Garden was, But it was common Practice (as is today) to start out in a single store and later expand to an ajoining building on either side if business warrants it. As it has been said that Boyle's (listed at 80 Hudson Street) was next door to Cronheim's (74 Hudson Street) , one can assume it took in two or three addresses on the block.

In referring to Boyle's, The New York Times of February 17 wrote: "In here the ladies and gentlemen on the stage would consider themselves insulting if they refused an offer to drink, and enticing looking glasses of beer go over the footlights and down their throats with surprising alacrity.

[Also like Cronheim] "Mr Boyle enjoys an immunity from the consequences of law breaking which is accorded to few persons in Hoboken," claims the Times reporter. "In his delectable establishment things occur of which even New Jersey policemen disapprove, but they shrug their blue shoulders and steadfastly regard the dirt on the ceiling while the audience laughs with exceeding merriment and rejoices in the fact that Boyle's is 'run' by a relative of the Recorder—the chief police magistrate of the city."

Although at this time the population was 43,649, Hoboken in many respects still had the character of a small town and with that a close-knit community of interrelated residents; a situation that persists today.

The article of February 17 concludes: "The Chief of Police in Hoboken told a Times reporter yesterday that is was no use trying to stop the selling of liquor on Sunday or to close the theatres and concert gardens on that day in Hoboken. There was a law against it, he said, but it 'came pretty near being a dead law, and what's the good.' The saloons had been open every day as long as he could remember and probably would keep open."

## BOYLE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A HUSTLER

Cronheim's Theatre and Garden (at 68-74 Hudson Street (between 1st and 2nd Streets) and Boyle's Knickerbocker Garden (at 80 Hudson Street), were "only two places of the kind in Hoboken," according to the Times, "and there are half a dozen resorts of the same beneficent character." Michael H. Boyle, who appears to have been a hustler, was in the "theatre" business in Hoboken for only a short while.

He started out as a meat salesman in 1887 while living on lower Hudson Street; next year he was into "liquors" at 80 Hudson Street (old number) and soon after moving his residence to 90 Hudson Street he opened the Knickerbocker at 80 Hudson which lasted less than three or four years. During this time he lived on Garden Street and then Hudson Place.

A lawsuit was brought against Boyle for not paying his rent for two months "from June 1st 1889 to August 1st 1889 at the sum of seventyfive dollars per month, for the use and occupation of all that certain brick building situate No. 80 Hudson Street, Hoboken, N.J. and Eleven Dollars and thiry-five cents for Water Rents, being the charge for water used in the above premises for the term of six months ending July 31, 1889."

## "HOLE IN THE WALL"

So-called "dives," or lower class places of amusement were not limited to Hoboken at this time. In the first week of 1892 the police in New York were investigating a great number of these "dives," one known as the "Excise Exchange" in the Bowery and one on Fourth Avenue called the "Hole in the Wall," a term which later was commonly used to refer to any small, down-and-out, or run-down place.

## 1890 LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS PROTEST

Meanwhile, raids instituted by law-abiding citizens were made on Cronheim's and Boyle's and on concert halls and saloons which were "run" on Sunday so openly. The proprietors had been arrested and their cases laid before that dignified body known as the Grand Jury. "Sheriff Davis, who has hundreds of friends in Hoboken—classed among the persons who prefer Cronheim's and Boyle's to churches—has a singular power in arranging the personnel of Hudson County's Grand Jury, and somehow or other Hudson County's Grand Jury has failed to see anything contrary to the law in the charges made against these gentlemen. Indictments have never been made, the policed shake their sagacious heads, ponderously obsesrve 'What can we do!' and away go the saloons and concert halls sailing along without harm or interference."*

**The New York Times, February 17, 1890.*

## 1890 THE MAYOR RESPONDS

In Spring 1890 Mayor August Grassmann recomended amending City ordinances to license theatres "by extending the same to concert saloons and other places of amusement which are provided with a platform or stage although not having a curtain or screen."

Evidently these cabarets, as they much later would be called, were doing as good a business as the regular theatres such as Jacobs' Hoboken Theatre and Cronheim's. Although, as we have read, Cronheim's was a real theatre, with a curtain, it was operating more as a concert saloon.

The Mayor coninued: "A number of such places are operated here, which obtain their patrons from certain classes of our residents as well as non-residents, and because no admission fee is charged, are liberally patronized, to the detriment of our legitimate playhouses. I believe that a fee of $50 would be willingly paid for a license, which can be revoked at any time in case of any violation of law, and which would also entitle the proprietors to charge an admission fee if they choose, in order to reject disorderly and disreputable perons."

The annual (from June to June) license fee to keep a playhouse in the city was at this time $250. Although this amount had been admitted by the Mayor to the council two years earlier to be a heavy tax, there was little appreciation or sympathy for those presenting public entertainment in the city. The Mayor's reasoning was clear: "This heavy tax will perhaps decrease the number of applicants for a license, but will nevertheless largely increase the revenue previously derived by our city from that source."*

## 1892 CRONHEIM SENT TO JAIL

Cronheim's theatre within a year's time has been labeled such a lawbreaking place that even his powerful friends could not prevent him from being sent to jail. "The fact that Siegfried Cronheim, the owner of a variety den in Hoboken," begins a follow-up article in The New York Times on January 8, 1892, "who has been repeatedly arrested for repeated violation of the Sunday law, retained Leon Abbett, Jr., a son of the Governor, to appear for him when he was arraigned in the Court of Sessions yesterday, did not serve to overawe Judge Lippincott at all.

"Cronheim's place is one of the eyesores of the city, and the church people and everybody else that is decent in Hoboken think that it might be closed Sundays at least. Cronheim has been keeping it open for the rabble, and during the day and evening has entertained the youth of the town with what he calls 'performances.'

"Last week he was arrested and put under $1,000 bail. But Sunday told the same story about him again, and after eluding Judge Lippincott's officers for some days he was finally rearrested yesterday. Leon Abbett, Jr., asked Judge Lippincott to admit him to bail; but the court insisted upon refusing bail and sent the variety dive manager to jail."

## JUDGE LECTURES CRONHEIM

"You have been defying the law in this State and in New York," Judge Lippincott of the Hudson County Court, a Harvard graduate, said to Cronheim [according to The Times]. "you were driven out of New York State. In your place in Hoboken you have harbored law-breakers of all kinds."

## BRUTAL PRIZE FIGHTS

The Judge continues to lash out at Cronheim: "Your house is the scene of the most notorious and brutal prize fights, and all this apparently has been carried on with the sanction of the Hoboken authorities. They have abetted you in so doing. The court thinks that the authorities have tried to shield you and that the warrant was not issued in good faith. You know what the court told you last week, and you should know also that the court never makes idle threats."

Here the Judge explains that if the "good citizens" of Hoboken would make complaints against the officials who have abetted Mr. Cronheim, the court would grant the warrants "with the greatest of pleasure."

## 1892 THE JUDGE BRINGS THE GAVEL DOWN ON CRONHEIM

"The court now orders your committal to jail. Constable, take him away," continues The Times of January 8.

Later in the day Judge Lippincott vocally gave

** Mayor Grassmann's Inaugural Message, May 5, 1890.*

Hoboken "everything but a recommendation" the New York paper said. In court a man named Winthrop, who had been convicted of larceny, had said that though he attended occasional prize fights, he tried to lead a "respectable" life.

"A man who attends prize fights," said the Judge, "is just as near the criminal classes as any man can be." Now, the Judge is overcome by his own emotions; as he faces the man before him; he said: "Hoboken, where you were arrested, is noted for violation of law—a locality where the people will some day rise up and make use of lynch law[!]"

Later Judge Lippincott administered a scathing rebuke to the members of the Grand Jury for not indicting various Hoboken theatre proprietors for giving Sunday performances. "The court feels impelled to call the attention of the public to the fact



**Leon Abbett, Jr. A son of the popular Governor, Abbett was attorney for Siegfried Cronheim when just 24 years old. In 1891 he moved from Jersey City to Hoboken and opened an office in the Second National Bank building on River Street at Hudson Place. At about this time be built a fine home for himself and his wife at 905 Hudson Street.**

that without indictments there can be nothing but a maladministration of justice and an inability on the part of the courts to punish offenders against the law."

## 1892 CRONHEIM'S VARIETY HALL SOLD.

"A deed filed in County-Register Fielder's office at the Court House on Jersey City Heights yesterday indicates that Siegfried Cronheim has sold his place in Hoboken to Ludwig Kuenstler of New-York, for $35,000." said The New York Times March 19. "The deed covers Cronheim's variety hall, that has been such a scandal for years into the good people of the city. Cronheim ran the place in open defiance of law, even on Sundays, and apparently under the protection of the Grand Jury."

## JUDGE DIES ON BENCH

"It was he [Cronheim] whom Judge Knapp was denouncing when he fell dead on the bench," continued The Times article. "Subsequently the Grand Jury had the audacity to go into court without a bill of indictment against the offender; and it was only after Judge Lippincott, continuing Judge Knapp's course reissued to treat with the Grand Jury until they had acted on the case, that that body presented the defiant variety man for trial.

Cronheim found it difficult to find bail after his indictment, and now he has apparently concluded that the best thing for him to do is to go out of business."

## 1892 CRONHEIM GOES TO PRISON IN STYLE

The New York Times of April 26 reported that "Siegfried Cronheim, the convicted Hoboken dive keeper whom...the Grand Jury protected till Judge Knapp's death, was taken to the penitentiary at Snake Hill* yesterday to serve a six-month's term." Snake Hill, also noted for many years as the house for the insane, was in the middle of the Jersey meadows west of Jersey City.

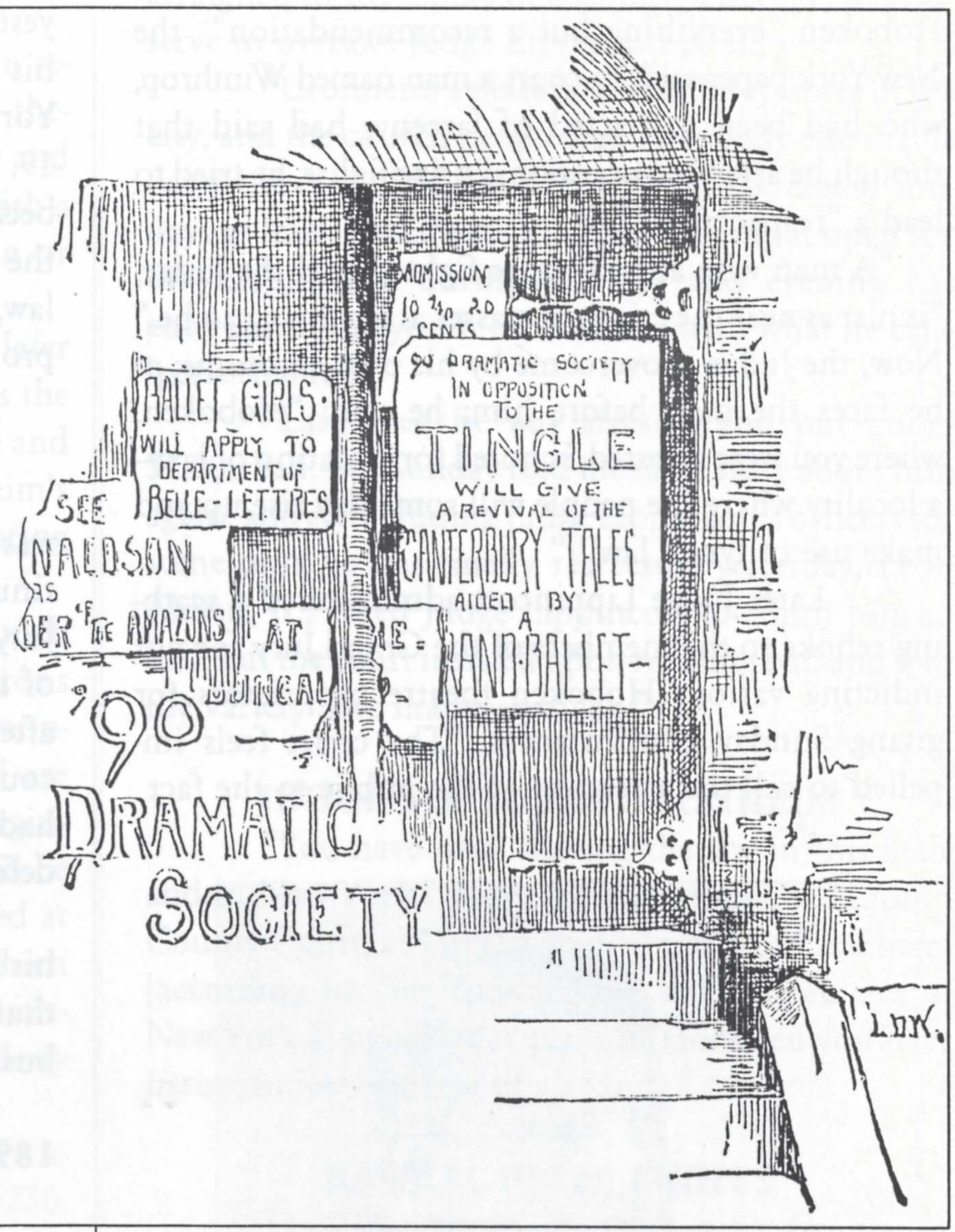
**Snake Hill is properly named. The Indians called it by a name which means "the home of snakes," and all the early colonists gave the place a wide berth notwithstanding that its wood-crowned heights sheltered many acres of highly productive soils. They kept away, however, because the marshlands, which border the peculiarly sloped hill that rises like a buttress from the dead level of the wide meadow tract, was literally infested with huge black water snakes, many of them 12 to 15 feet long.*

*Fifty years ago, the author hiked across the old Secaucus road to the famous home of the snakes, on what was then called a "snake hunt," in company with Carl Semler, a youthful naturalist, who bore an excellent reputation among his youthful friends because he never hesitated to seize a snake with his bare hands.*

*During that trip hundreds of huge snakes were seen lying half in and half out of the ditch bordering the Secaucus road, and Carl repeatedly demonstrated his courage and dexterity by grabbing the largest of these found lying asleep in the midday sun. One of these big*

**1890 THE "TINGLE TANGLE"**

**According to a heading of the Stevens Institute Dramatic Society, reproduced here from a school publication, the Class of '90 present "A Revival of the Canterbury Tales, Aided by a Grand Ballet," in "opposition to the Tingle Tangle," as Cronheim's Garden Theatre was called, although perhaps only by Stevens students. Six members of the society are listed. Noticeable in the drawing among the torn notices on the doors is one poster reading: "At the Bungaloo." The Bungaloo was another Hoboken theatre (as we mentioned in Volume II) that was in operation for at least five years, "But this is not so well known to us," reveals a Stevens student, "Dame Rumour says that is not a strictly first-class place, and is seldom visited by students, except on rare occasions when the Tingle is closed."**




*fellows measured more than 8 feet, and although he grabbed it near the neck and immediately started swinging its heavy body, the snake was strong enough to wrap itself about his arm. Carl killed it by crushing its hissing and gaping head against a rock in the roadway.*

*On another occasion while investigating the Hackensack river side of Snake Hill, in a row boat, at the outbreak of a fierce summer squall, and just after a 16-foot sturgeon had jumped from the river not more than 6 feet away to fall back into the water with a splash which drenched the occupants of the boat, the Snake Hill shore line was found actually, not figuratively, alive with huge snakes, some of them actually scintillating with the bronze-like blackness characteristic of these reptiles when in the best condition. For not less than a quarter of a mile of shore line, the steep bank was a mass of hissing, squirming villainous water snakes, almost all of them black. Snake Hill was certainly well named by the aborigines as the home of Snakes.*
*–History of the Municipalities of Hudson County, Vol. I, pg. 369*

[Could Snake Hill be the prominence now called "Fraternity Rock" near the New Jersey Turnpike?–author.]

The expose of The Times continues: "Handed his sentence a week ago Cronheim has been treated at the county jail like a guest rather than a convict."

"When he left for the penitentiary yesterday, instead of being bundled into the van with other convicts, a coach was called and he was driven from one prison to the other in style.

"He has high hopes that the Court of Pardons will abate his term," Nothing more is heard of Cronheim's fate after this, other than that he is listed in a later city directory as a salesman living in Jersey City.

# CHAPTER 2

## 1891 MEANWHILE, ANIMAL ACTORS AT JACOBS'

For many year, animals were a great attraction on the live stage of the larger theatres, particularly animals that could perform. Trained horses were good drawing cards for Jacobs' Theatre, as indicated in this review (and following ad) from the Jersey City newspaper, The Argus, Wednesday, February 25.

**–AMUSEMENTS–**

JACOBS' HOBOKEN THEATRE—this popular theatre was crowded last night.

H. R. JACOBS'

# HOBOKEN ° ° ° ° ° ° THEATRE

H. R. JACOBS, Sole Manager.

The People's Favorite Playhouse.

*Every Evening during the Week.*

*Usual Matinees.*

Prices : 15c., 25c., 35c., 50c., 75c., $1.00.

**Stevens Life,Jan. 1891**

James H. Wallich, as the Cattle King, was the attraction. It is a strong play depicting life on the border. There are many stirring scenes, and the company is a good one. The famous acting horses Raider, Charger, Texas, and Pete are great features of the play. It runs to-night. Commencing tomorrow night, J. H. Wallich, in his greatest success "The Mountain King," for the balance of the week. Beginning March 1, Bobby Gaylor in the Irish Arab.

For the Hoboken theatre crowd, 1891 was a sad year; three old-time theatre performers died in Hoboken during the year. James Riley, ex-minstrel, died February 1; Ernestine Cartzen, variety performer, died Febraury 25; and theatre performer Adolph Katzer died August 6.

## 1892 THE QUARTET CLUB

Hoboken at this time was undergoing various improvements. The horse-drawn street cars, serving the mile- square city since 1860, were changed to electric trolleys. The Hoboken Singing Society, organized June 12, 1859 and noted throughout the metropolitan area, erected its own building at 1009-1015 Washington Street. The cornerstone had been laid October 28, 1891. The next day the story in the newspapers revealed that "The Club is 30 years old and has 165 members, most them are well-to-do, and so they decided to have a large clubhouse, which will also be one of the ornamental buildings in Hoboken."

It was a five-story structure, designed in the Nurenberg style. The singing room was on the first floor along with a meeting room, library and cafe. On the third floor was the large hall and a smaller one, where on festive occasions the halls could be made into one by removing a partition. The other floors could be fitted up for lodge rooms, janitors' apartments, etc.

The building was later turned into a theatre. The Gayety opened here about 1907, and was renamed Strand a few years later. The very eminent building was demolished in 1931 to be replaced by the present mock-tudor apartment house.

## MYSTERY THEATRE (THE THALIA)

Listed in numerous directories from 1888 to 1905 under Hoboken Theatres is the "Thalia," at 87 River Street. And although the Hoboken address numbering system changed in 1892-93, the Thalia Theatre continued to be listed at 87 River Street.

It is a mystery where exactly this theatre was. The old Second National Bank building is at 77-81 River Street at Hudson Place. The old post office, constructed in 1892, was at 91 River Street as is the present one. The only building between is the Hoboken Land Building at One Newark Street, which was erected in 1887.

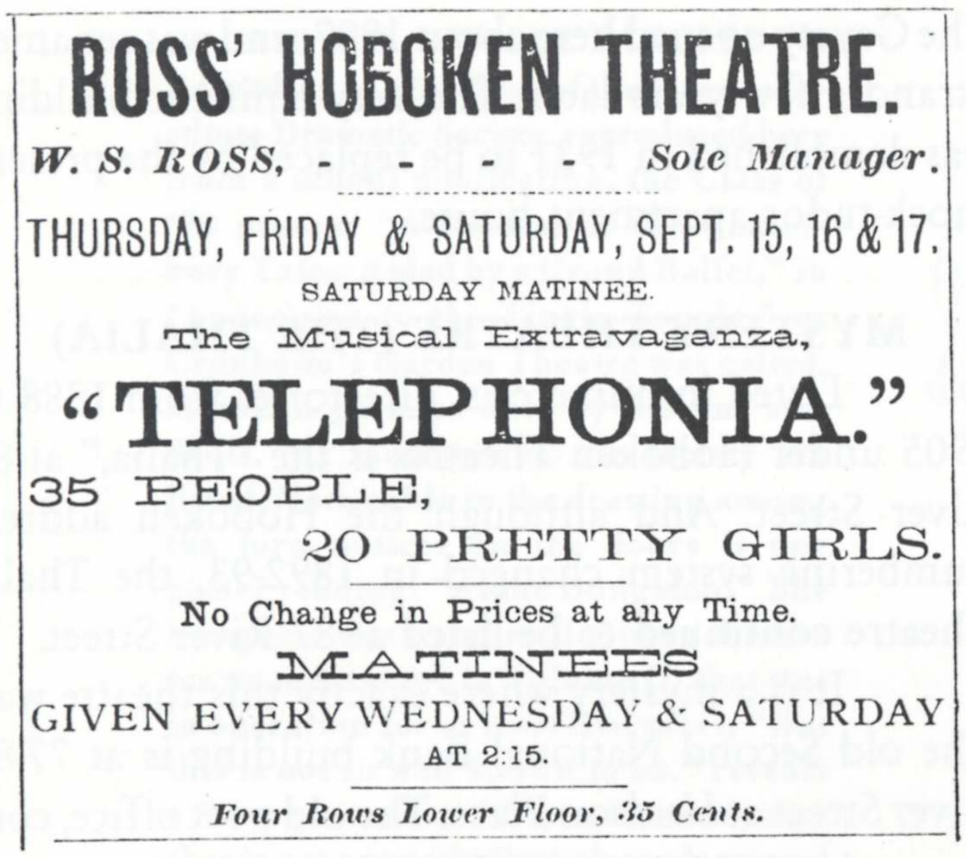
## 1892 ROSS' HOBOKEN THEATRE

However popular the Hoboken Theatre was at this time, the season of 1892-93 saw a new name connected with it. Shows now managed by Wilson S. Toss offered a variety of acts that made up an evening's entertainment such as in the fall of 1892 when there were no fewer than 13 live acts presented!

Included in program were, "Hoboken's Musician, Mr. Valentine Bruckner- Selections on Tumblers and Zither; Foster and Lewis, Comedy Sketch Artists; Hoboken's Knickerbockers, Hart and Tompkins, The long and short of Darkened Mirth; Jersey's own Comic Singer, Mr. George H. Rehill; A. O. Duncan, America's Premier Ventriloquist; Texarkansas, the greatest Wing and Buck Dancer extant; and The Ali Brothers, Arab Gun Spinners, Acrobats and Boxers."

Like most theatre publications at the time, advertisements were placed among the list of acts. Prominently placed was an ad announcing "C. Robert Lehnhoff, Portraits." Lehnhoff was once business manager of the Hoboken Theatre. As a portrait artist he was active for many years. In 1922 he had a studio

at 70 Hudson Street, and lived at 80 River Street. The reader will recall that his daughter made her acting debut at this theatre five years earlier.


ROSS' HOBOKEN THEATRE.

*W. S. ROSS,* - - - - *Sole Manager.*

THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY, SEPT. 15, 16 & 17.

SATURDAY MATINEE.

The Musical Extravaganza,

"TELEPHONIA."

35 PEOPLE,

20 PRETTY GIRLS.

No Change in Prices at any Time.

MATINEES

GIVEN EVERY WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY

AT 2:15.

*Four Rows Lower Floor, 35 Cents.*

**Local newspaper ad, September, 1892**

## 1892 MUSICAL AT THE HOBOKEN THEATRE

Newspaper reviews of Hoboken theatrical productions appeared as far away as Philadelphia. This is what the Philadelphia Inquirer had to say about the "musical extravaganza" that manager Ross was to present September 15, 16, and 17: "The opening attraction was 'Telephonia,' styled on the program as a new extravaganza in two continents and four acts...played by a company of strength and excellence.

"The play opens at Genoa, Italy, in 1492, on the eve of a holiday, with a great chorus and dance. During the scene there is a capital topical song and dance by Kulumbus and Malone, entitled 'You Can Guess;' an incantation and startling appearance of Telephonia, the vision of Kulumbus; duet, "When Love Is Nigh," etc. In rapid succession you are led by bright dialogue and catchy songs from Spain to America."

[Editor's note: With the anniversary in 1992 of Christopher Columbus' discovery of America it may be fitting to somehow acquire a script of this 1892 musical with the possibility of staging a revival in Hoboken after all these years.]

The review of "Telephonia" continues: "The remainder of the play is located in this country, opening at Coney Island and thence to Brooklyn, ending with a trip to Chicago, of course taking in the World's Fair. It is bright throughout, full of specialties, catchy music, songs and dances, and lots of the latest rib-tickling witticisms." The Hoboken cast included 35 people, with 20 "pretty girls."

## 1894 PRESS CLUB BENEFIT AT THE HOBOKEN THEATRE

On Thursday evening, January 4, a benefit was given at Ross' Hoboken Theatre by the highly esteemed Hoboken Press Club. (The press was greatly represented in Hoboken at this time with various newspapers and other publications established here. And a number of editors and publishers having their home here as well.) For this special evening, the theatre was "handsomely decorated". . According to an article in a Stevens Tech publication,* their "efforts were rewarded by a full house of the elite of Hoboken."

The Stevens Banjo and Mandolin Clubs took part, by special request of the Press Club. The article continues:

The Banjo Club musicians were "slightly nervous" in the first piece, and were "unfortunate in having the full depth of the stage behind them, which made the general effect somewhat flat, but they came out well on the second piece, the gradual crescendo of 'The Coon's Patrol' being particularly effective.

"Miss Christine Schultz-Wichmann followed with two soprano solos which were appreciated to the extent of a handsome bouquet; after which Mr. Marshall P. Wilder convulsed the audience to the verge of hysterics, with his humorous sketches, the chief of which was the representation of a complete opera.

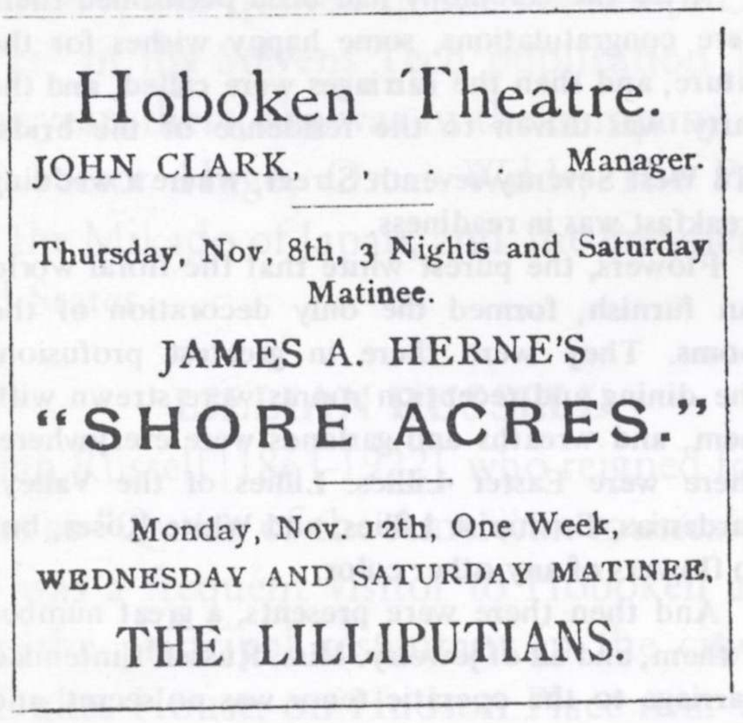
"Miss Clara Webb followed with two difficult piano solos, both magnificently rendered for a young lady of fourteen. After the customary bouquet, Mr. Howard Starrett introduced his "family of blockheads," showing great ventriloquistic ability through their agency." Next, Miss Lehnhoff-Walther gave recitations. It seems that the daughter of noted Hoboken artist C. Robert Lehnhoff had added a name to her own perhaps because by now she was married.

**The Stevens Life, Vol. V, No. 8, Jan 10, 1894*

After Miss Lehnhoff, the Hoboken Quartette Club rendered "Abendfeier" and "Von Rhein," with good effect; and two classes of the Hoboken Turn Verein closed the first part with some clever gymnastics.

It was reported that the second part, "commenced with a Dramatic sketch, entitled "Drifted Apart," by Miss Rose Markey and Mr. Harry King, the only fault of which was that it was somewhat long for fine soprano solos by Mrs. Lancaster-Schultze; after which, Mr. Wilder gave more humorous stories suggesting to an imaginary friend through an imaginary telephone that he should bring his bed [when] visiting the Hoboken Theatre.

"Stevens Mandolin Club followed, rendering only one piece owing to the shortness of time. They, too, were slightly nervous at the start, but the audience were much pleased with 'Emma Polka.' The club had the advantage of the Banjo Club in having scenery close behind them, which considerably increased the body and volume of the notes. Miss Hattie Tidd gave a fine rendering of Vieuxtemps' 'Polanise,' on the violin, and Mr. Starrett concluded with some 'shadowgraphy' [shadow-casting], duly appreciated by the small remainder of a once-large audience. This closed


Hoboken Theatre.
JOHN CLARK, . . . Manager.
Thursday, Nov, 8th, 3 Nights and Saturday Matinee.
JAMES A. HERNE'S
"SHORE ACRES."
Monday, Nov. 12th, One Week,
WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY MATINEE.
THE LILLIPUTIANS.

**The Stevens Life, Oct. 1894**

a most enjoyable evening, the only fault of which was a somewhat unnecessary length of the programme."

## 1894 THEATRE HOLDS STEVENS' GRADUATION EXERCISES

The largest theatre in town, the "Hoboken," was always in demand by various organizations for any number of purposes, such as commencement exercises for Stevens Institute.

The following program is reproduced from a page in The Stevens Life, June, 1894.

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES took place on Thursday, June 21st, at 8 P. M., at the Hoboken Theatre. The house was crowded by the students and their parents and friends.

The programme was as follows:

Overture, "Stradella," Von Flotow.
Prayer, Rev. Wm. R. Jenvey.
Introductory Remarks, President Henry Morton.
Selection, "Fencing Master," De Koven.
Salutatory Address, Joseph G. H. Cottier.
March, "High School Cadets," Sousa.
Address to Graduating Class, Mr. J. Hector Fezandié, M.E.
Waltz, "Symposia," Bendix.
Announcement of Prizes. Conferring of degrees.
Intermezzo, "Cavalliera Rusticana," Mascagni.
Valedictory Address, Oliver Ellsworth.
Selection, "Carmen," Bizet.
Benediction, Rev. Wm. R. Jenvey.
Selection, "Robin Hood," De Koven.

As will be seen from the programme, Prof. Wall did not attend; so this year Rev. Wm. R. Jenvey spoke the opening prayer.

President Morton then made a few introductory remarks, telling the story of an Englishman who went to India and, on returning home decided to go back and there built up a great nation.

## 1893 GERMANIA THEATRE REMODELED

Meanwhile, new owners had taken over the Germania theatre and remodeled it during the summer of 1893; the Hoboken Evening News of August 15 provides an interesting account of the opening night: "Messrs. Martell and Fanlon's Germania Theatre on Hudson Street opened what promises to be a most successful theatrical season at their cozy little playhouse last night. The theatre has been thoroughly overhauled and decorated, making it one of the prettiest and coziest places of amusement in the State.

"The house was packed to the doors – it really reminded one of old times when the late Robert Wareing managed the theatre so successfully. Messrs Martell and Fanlon are thoroughly experienced in their line of business and it is their determination to bring the resort up to the old standard." [The term "resort" was used for "theatre" in Hoboken for many years, perhaps a leftover of the days when all of

Hoboken was a "resort."]

"The balcony was thronged with prominent men and their wives," reported the Evening News, "No one need now entertain any scruples against taking his family to the Germania, objectionable people are not admitted under any consideration." The reporter continues his praise of the old theatre with new life: "The performance last night was one which has never been equalled in excellence in this city. Every member of the company is an artist in his or her particular line and the audience regretted when the show was over. A feature of the performance was the specialty of master Herbert La Martine who is but seven years old and was formerly with Brady's 'After Dark' company – his dancing is phenomenal."

Famous playwright Dion Boucicault's romantic spectacular "After Dark" was first produced in London in 1867. The following year it played at Niblo's Garden in New York. It was revived by William A. Brady in the early 1890s and it is said that Mr. Brady, a highly acclaimed actor of his time, played the role of "Old Tom" in the Hoboken production.

In 1928 literary figure Christopher Morley revived this old melodrama at the Rialto Theatre (on the site of the Germania). "After Dark," at the Rialto enjoyed the longest run of any production in Hoboken's theatrical history (36 weeks). At the time it was the longest-running drama in America.

## 1894 QUEEN OF COMIC OPERA, MARRIES IN HOBOKEN

The famous stage star Lillian Russell contributed much of the glitter and glamour of the Gay Nineties. Her jewelry collection was famous in the

### FAIR LILLIAN WEDS IN JERSEY

### SHE AND PERUGINI MARRIED BY A HOBOKEN JUSTICE.

**In Private Life The American Queen Of Comic Opera, Who Has Been Known As Helen Leonard, Miss. Russell, Mrs. Brahan, And Mrs. Solomon, Is Now Mrs. John Chattorton–**

They are Married–Fair Lillian and Perugini! The event has been a shining mark for speculation as to whether it would really occur, and there has been a deal of talk as to where it would take place, if it took place at all.

There was a legal complication. Brought about by Miss. Lillian's first marriage and subsequent divorce, and lawyer A.H. Hummef endeavored to untangle it by seeking the advice of Justice Barrett.

The result of it all was a quiet marriage yesterday in Hoboken at the residence of Justice Moeller, who performed the ceremony. The Justice lives at 513 Garden Street.

The time and place were kept a secret from every one, except near relatives and a few intimate friends. Arrangements were quietly made with Justice Moeller and when the carriages arrived yesterday forenoon, that official was ready to tie the knot which made Miss. Helen Leonard - Lillian Russell - Braham - Soloman, Mrs. John Chattorton.

Shortly before 10 o'clock in the morning a carriage drew up before the residence of Justice Moeller. From it emerged E.P. Peiper, the singer's secretary who assisted the bride to alight . . .

Another carriage had preceded this one. In it was the groom who is known on the stage as signor Perugini and elsewhere as John Chattorton. .

The party was escorted to the reception room. There the simple ceremony which ushered Miss. Russell upon her third matrimonial venture was performed.

A sequined-silk peach-blossom gown, which seemed to blush at the futility of its efforts to match the glow on the singer's cheeks formed the costume of the bride. Her blonde head was crowned by a jaunty little french hat, which was the same color as her dress. A rich sealskin cape was worn over the costume.

After the ceremony had been performed there were congratulations, some happy wishes for the future, and then the carriages were called, and the party was driven to the residence of the bride, 318 West Seventy-seventh Street, where a wedding breakfast was in readiness.

Flowers, the purest white that the floral world can furnish, formed the only decoration of the rooms. They were there in greatest profusion. The dining and reception rooms were strewn with them, and wreaths and garlands were everywhere. There were Easter Lillies. Lillies of the Valley, Gardenias, Eucharist Lillies, and White Roses, but no flowers of any other color.

And then there were presents, a great number of them, and all of jewelry. Miss. Russell's intended marriage to the operatic tenor was no secret, and many of her admirers sent dazzling gifts. There were diamond tiaras and sunbursts, pearl necklaces with pendant turquoises, and many other costly baubles which actresses like so well.

Perugini and Miss. Russell are both engaged to the same company at the casino. They will appear there to-night as usual in their respective roles. A wedding tour to Europe is contemplated, but the pair will not sail until June.

**N.Y. Times Jan. 22, 1894**

theatre, and she was called "The beautiful girl with the golden voice and golden hair," and wore the title "the best-known woman in America."

Tony Pastor heard her sing when she was still Nellie Leonard, and engaged her for his vaudeville show on Broadway, changed her name to Lillian Russell, and within a week New Yorkers were flocking to hear a woman of "wonderful personality," a "symbol of feminine charm." When she married in 1894 for the third time, it was front page news in The New York Times.

*[See reproduction of that story on preceding page.]*

When Miss Russell married John Chatterton, who sang under the name of Signor Perugini, Chatterton was playing the male lead in "The Princess Nicotine," and at each performance the two were united in a stage wedding.

It was said at the time that the romance – which culminated in their Hoboken wedding – was fostered by astute press agents. At any rate, they lived together only a short time, after which Miss Russell permitted Perugini to sue for divorce.

It was in the 1890s that Lillian Russell made her stunning debut as a Weber & Fields star by singing a"coon song" for the first time in her career. As evidence of her popularity, in 1883, she, along with Lily Langtry, was quoted in the column, "Universal Remarks" in the Stevens Tech publication The Bolt for that year; there, she was in the company of Mark Twain, Victor Hugo, Oscar Wilde, The Prince of Wales, the Mikado of Japan, and the President of the United States.

## LILLIAN RUSSELL

Lillian Russell [1861-1922], who reigned for nearly 40 years as "Queen of the American musical comedy stage," was a frequent visitor to Hoboken at Dukes House, the principal restaurant in the city at that time. Dukes House, on Hudson Place near the ferry (now site of the Baker Building on Lackawanna Plaza), with Mrs. Huncke as proprietor, was "The most attractive and best- managed restaurant in the State of New Jersey." It was also patronized regularly by John L. Sullivan, Jay Gould, William K. Vanderbilt, Diamond Jim Brady and actor Nat C. Goodwin. [Nathaniel Carr Goodwin (1857-1919), billed as "America's Foremost Actor," and "Prince of burlesque."] Lillian Russell's career was marked by her being mistress to



**Lillian Russell at the height of her fame.**
**Picture from an old scrapbook, Hoboken Public Libr**

financier Diamond Jim Brady. Brady, a railroad millionaire, built an opera house at 23rd Street and Eighth Avenue in New York for Lillian Russell which included a secret private tunnel under 23rd street between the opera house and Miss Russell's residence.

**1894 ROSS OF THE HOBOKEN THEATRE RETIRES.**

In the Hoboken Evening News January 22 it was reported that "Wilson S. Ross, for severfal years lessee and manager of Wareing's Hoboken Theatre, retired absolutely from any conneaction with the place."

"Counselor [Edward] Russ, representing Mrs. Wareing, completed all negotiations. Mr. Ross surrenders the lease without consideration, in fact he gave all his business and office effects to liquidate his indebtedness. Mr. Ross, who paid $5,300 rent per annum has been very unfortunate for the last two years and has lost money. Mrs. Wareing has decided to run the theatre for the balance of the year and will put her son in the box office and have Mr. [John] Clark, an old theatrical man, as manager of the Hoboken Theatre."

**1895 RENOVATED GERMANIA THEATRE TO HAVE FIRST CLASS VARIETY**

**ORCHESTRA LEADER ASSUMES NEW MANAGEMENT**

Presently [February 9, 1895], it was announced that William Morrison, who has been connected with the Germania Theatre as leader of the orchestra for the past two years has asssumed the management of the theatre. "He wishes to inform the public that next week the place of amusement will be closed during which time he intends to make some extensive alterations such as placing a new heating apparatus, chairs, decorations and scenery and renovate the house throughout," it was claimed in the Hoboken Evening News.

"On Monday evening, February 18, the theatre will be opened with a first class variety combination" (The entertainment at that time was of a vaudeville type although the term did not come into general use until a few years later.) "Mr. Morrison will spare no expense to make his place of amusement one of the best. The prices will be reduced to 10, 20, and 30 cents, box seats 50 and 75 cents."

The rival Hoboken Theatre, on Hudson Street

Hoboken Theatre.
JOHN CLARK, . . . Manager.
The only First-Class Theatre in the City
Playing all Standard Attractions.
Popular Prices 15c. to $1.00

**Stevens Life, March 1895.**

a couple of blocks south, was the more popular theatre in Hoboken at this time, and competition was keen. The theatre business in general in Hoboken seems to have been in a slump, and not without its problems. "Those purchasing admission tickets [at the Germania} will hereafter be compelled to stand upstairs in the gallery and not on the orchestra floor thus doing away with the crowd that congregated at the entrance to the orchestra."

Mr. Morrison, it was reported, had a "good combination" booked for next week but cancelled the engagement in order that he could make the above needed alterations. The Hoboken Evening News stated the situation and wished the musician well.

"Notice of the attraction to appear Monday evening February 18 will appear in this paper some time during the coming week. We wish Mr. Morrison success in his venture for he deserves it as he is very popular and a first class theatrical man having had companies of his own for several years."

# CHAPTER 3

**THE END OF AN ERA– GERMANIA THEATRE RECHRISTENED THE BIJOU**

After being closed for a week during which time extensive alterations, repairs and decorations were made, "The Germania theatre, rechristened the Bijou, opened yesterday afternoon under the management of Mr. William C. Morrison, who for several years has been leader of the Orchestra," reported the Hoboken Evening News, February 19, 1895, which

again encouraged the new manager:

"Should Mr. Morrison follow the line he has mapped out and carried into execution last night, that of furnishing nothing but first class attractions, he cannot fail to make a success of his venture. At the opening performance yesterday afternoon [he] was called before the curtain, he responded with a brief speech in which he outlined the future policy of the house which is to furnish nothing but first class attractions at poular prices.

"The show last night [Feb. 18] taken as a whole could not be excelled, each performer being extremely clever in his or her particular line. The programme opened with the Inmans in a very funny sketch in which they sang and danced themselves at once into favor with the large audience. They were heartily applauded, as were: Nellie Parker, Frank and Kitty Cushing, V.A. McCormick. The show winds up with a series of living pictures and they were heartily applauded last night."

## 1895 LIVING PICTURES

The reader might ask, what are "living pictures"? As the name implies, this popular form of entertinment in the late 19th Century consisted of performers striking a group pose reproducing a popular painting or sculpture, and holding it as a spotlight illuminates them briefly. While the stage went dark, the group would take another pose replicating yet another popular painting or statuary group, and the light would go on again.

Audiences loved these "stage pictures," as they were also called. (See in this section an 1895 advertrisement for the Lyric theatre, formerly the Hoboken theatre, announcing "Marvelous Stage Pictures.")

These pictures were described at the time as "made up using real live people in various poses. No tint or shade which the artist had introduced was to be omitted. The combination of colors, in dress, etc., had to be faithfully reproduced on the stage. The relation of one figure to another had to be the same." [Partially draped nudes were popular.]

"Unimportant objects should not overbalance the principal figues." The living pictures had to tell precisely the same story as the painting. It was said that the stage electrician was the real artist in this case. His lights were everything. If a certain effect was to be produced, he must place more light here, a shadow there, a tint at this point, a deeper tinge at that. The electrician was to keep in mind that the subordinate figures are to be in shadow, and at the same time strongly enough defined to allow an audience to take in every "lineament" of their form. If they were just so strong, then the highly lighted figures at the front must be all the stronger.

How was it done? The secret lay in the fact that "living pictures" were examples of highly exaggerated lighting effects. The electrician had to remember that shadow depresses and light tends to make the object come forward.

## 1895 CHANGES AT THE BIJOU

Evidently William Morrison's role as manager of the new Bijou Theatre was short-lived, for in May 1895 a Joseph H. Phillips was named manager. However, his stay at the theatre was also brief. On May 20 it was announced in the Hoboken Evening News that "Mr. Joseph Phillips, Manager of the Bijou Theatre, has decided to retire from the management of that house and will be succeeded by Sol Weinthal, proprietor of the Imperial Music hall on Washington Street."

The Imperial was at 118 Washington Street for many years. As admission was free, the music hall was more in the line of a cabaret, the forerunner of the modern nightclub. Some variety acts were also performed there.

## COLLIGAN'S IMPERIAL MUSIC HALL

John Colligan had a lease on the building at 118 Washington Street from May 1, 1895 to May 1, 1898 for $125 a month. However low a rent that may appear to us now, at that time it was considerable. Due to Colligan's failure to pay the rent for August 1896, he was given "three days notice" by the landlord, one Caroline C. Jordan, "to quit or pay rent."

The more official statement was to the Constable who was "commanded to require John P. Colligan Jr. to remove from the premises, or that he...appear before the District Court of the City of Hoboken, at City Hall...to show cause why possession of the premises should not be delivered to [the landlord]."

## 1895 IMPROPER PERFORMANCE AT THE BIJOU?

It is not known why there was such a quick turnover of these theatre managers. Perhaps in the

case of Phillips it had something to do with his controversial theatrical offerings. The Evening News, May 20, informed the public that "The performance to take place at the Bijou this week has excited some of our uptown citizens and it is possible that its first presentation tonight shall have several critical sponsors present.

"The billboards throughout the city have been covered with posters representing so-called harem scenes. Chief of Police Donovan says that Manager Phillips has assured him that there will be no improper feature."

## 1895 MORALS OF THE CITY

The morals of the city continued to be in some question, perhaps they were brought to light by the no-nonsense Reverend Henry T. Beatty, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church on Hudson Street, (now a parking lot) and leader of the local "law and order league," who said on May 19 that he would have a representative present to see if the performances warranted the making of a complaint against the management of the house to the grand jury.

Later this same year, the good Reverend, along with Pastors Jenvey and Richardson, failed in their attempt to prevent Colonel Robert C. Ingersoll, distinguished jurist, writer, and orator from making an address in the Hoboken Theatre on the Bible. The press claimed, "Every seat was taken and there was no disorder." Ingersoll was popular in Hoboken; on December 19 he also gave a talk at the Quartette Club hall.

## 1895 THE ELYSIAN PAVILION

Whatever problems Manager Phillips had at the Bijou, they must have had some relationship to the shortness of his stay there. Four days later on May 24 it was announced that he would "at the close of this week sever his connection with the house and on Monday next assume the entire management of [Gustav] Hauser's Oriental Garden on 14th Street near Hudson Street [50 14th Street]. The concert hall or cabaret on the ground floor of Hauser's was re-named "Elysian Summer Garden" or "Elysian Pavilion," as called in an advertisement in The Observer in December.

The Hoboken Evening News said the firm name would be "Phillips and Hauser." They also reported that "Mr. Phillips is a hustler and a first class businessman and the new venture should prove a success." Phillips at this time lived at 1306 Bloomfield Street. His rent for the hall, conveniently near the 14th Street ferry terminal, was $165 a month.

**Elysian Pavilion**
Fourteenth St. near Hudson, Hoboken.
J. H. PHILLIPS, Prop.
GRAND ARRAY OF TALENT.
FREE! FREE! FREE!
A Grand Entertainment Every Evening at 8 o'clock.
ADMISSION FREE.

**Colligan's Imperial Music Hall**
118 Washington Street, Hoboken.
MADELINE MARSH
TILLIE AUSTIN
DOLLY SHANNON
MAY SMITH
MAMIE CURTIS
MIKE SMITH
Matinee Saturday, 2.30 p. m.
Admission. Free.

**Star ★ Theatre**
—THIS WEEK—
Regular Matinees, Monday, Thursday & Saturday.
ADA DIXON
MODEL - BURLESQUE - CO.
Introducing two of the latest burlesques, TA AND TARTAR and a WARM RECEPTION.
Next Week—Al. Reeves Vaudeville Co.

**Local newspaper theatre listing advertisements, Dec. 1895**

## 1895 STAR THEATRE

As for the Bijou, it reopened again, this time as the Star Theatre, specializing in burlesque and vaudeville. Some top names and acts were presented; Al Reeve's Vaudeville Company was billed in December. Al was often labeled "New York's Favorite Comedian." However, the old theatre was in its last days, and some time after this it closed down for good. Later

it was demolished to make way for the much larger Empire Theatre, which opened in 1902.

## 1895 HOBOKEN THEATRE CHANGES ITS NAME TO LYRIC

Meanwhile Hoboken's most popular theatre also undergoes some changes. "Next season the theatregoers of this city will see a change in management of the Hoboken Theatre," states the Evening News, May 21. "John Clark, who was manager for the past two seasons, has severed his connection with the house. Mr. George Hurtz, a well-known New York theatrical man, will assume the management. He is a brother of Frank Hurtz, manager of the Euclid Opera House, Cleveland, Ohio. The theatre will be thoroughly overhauled and many changes will be made. The gallery will be divided and there will be separate entrances to the gallery and orchestra. The stage will be enlarged, the dressing rooms renovated, and a new drop curtain will be one of the many important improvements. Mr. Hurtz intends to secure nothing but the best New York attractions. The lowest priced seat will be 25 cents. The name of the theatre will also be changed and will in the future be known as the Lyric."

## 1895 GREAT THEATRE TO BE

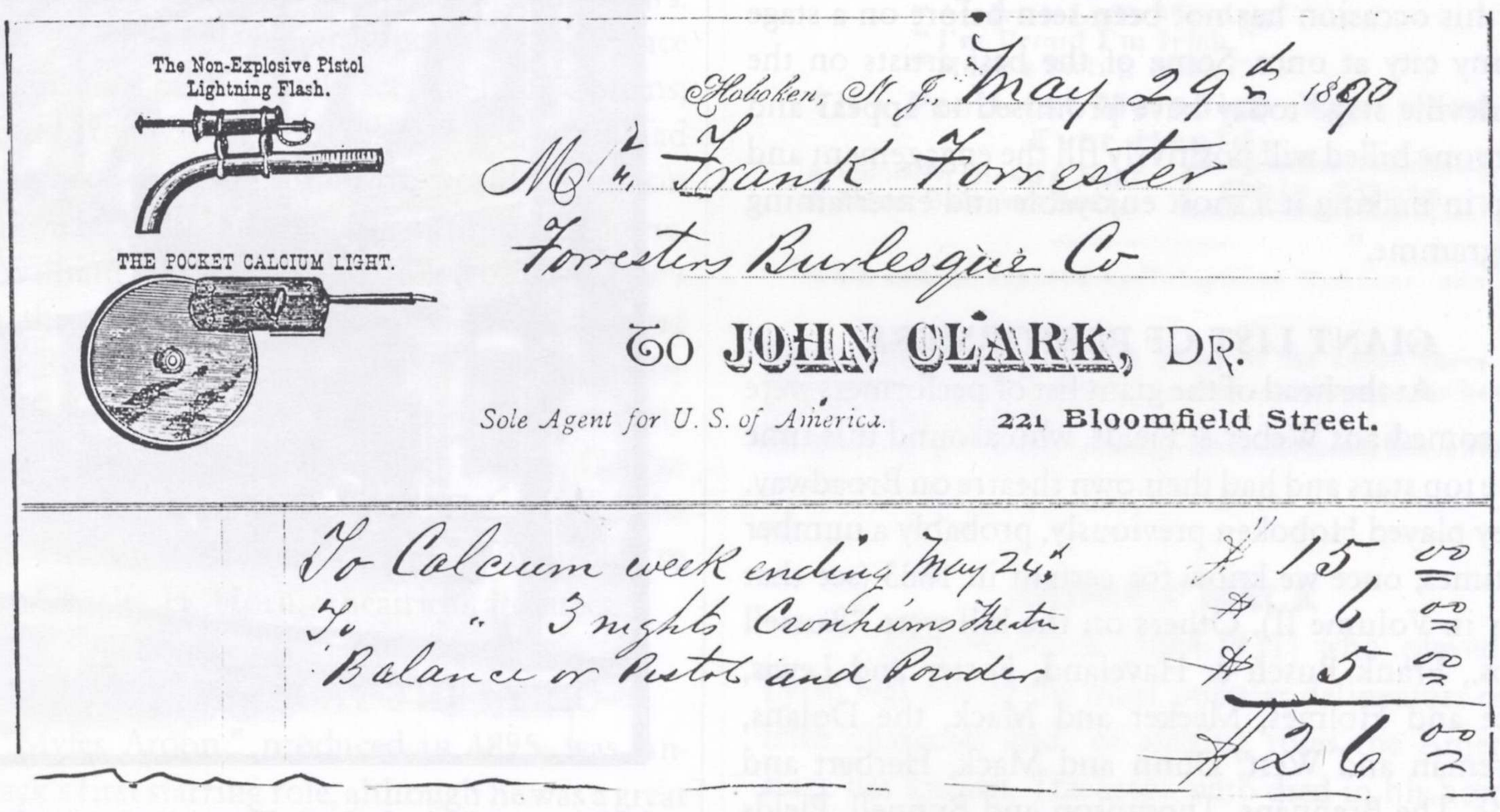
By mid June workmen were ready to make the proposed alterations in the Hoboken Theatre, or the Lyric as it was soon to be called. "The Hoboken Land and Improvement Company has taken hold of the theatre," reported the Evening News June 18, "and will make many improvements that will place it on a par with New York playhouses. The vestibule will be carried out to the front twelve feet and covered with a sloping roof.

"A great improvement will be the widening of the stairs leading to the balcony which at present are dangerously narrow and rickety. The manager's office will be greatly enlarged and a house will be constructed in the rear which will serve as a dressing room proving a great contrast to the present quarters."

## L-SHAPED PROPERTY

It has been said that the dressing room in the rear of the lot was accessible from the Hudson Place side of the L-shaped property, from which the audience was also able to leave the theatre on that side, fronting Hudson Place. Today a single-story building occupies that frontage behind the old Victor Hotel.

"Numerous other alterations will be made




**Above: Billhead of John Clark, Hoboken dealer of the Theatrical Non-Explosive Pistol Lightning Flash and the Pocket Calcium Light used for stage effects. It appears that in May 1890 he rented to Frank Forrester of Forrester's Burlesque Company the use of the Calcium Light for the week ending May 24 and the same for three nights' use at Cronheim's Theatre. Forrester also owed on a flash pistol and powder. Clark would soon sue Forrester in Hoboken District Court for non-payment of this bill, the sum of which the equivalent today would be a few hundred dollars.**

**Clark at this time lived, and presumably did business, at 221 Bloomfield Street (house numbers have since been changed), his house, which still stands, is now 533. Clark would take over the management of the Hoboken Theatre in 1894.**

under the supervision of Mr. George Hurtz, the able theatrical man. Mr. Richard Stevens (of the famous Stevens family), prominent in the Hoboken Land and Improvement Company, said the company took possession of the theatre as mortgage-holder to protect itself as much back interest was not forthcoming. Mr. Stevens said, 'We did not foreclose, however, and the holder of the second mortgage will still share in the profits if there are any.' (Evidently at this time some theatrical enterprises were an art form not unlike today's, struggling for small financial return.)

'Very extensive alterations will be made and an amount much over $5000 will be expended, just how much I do not at present care to state. The whole matter has been placed in Mr. Hurtz's hands and we are confident in his ability as a theatrical manager that every improvement for a modern playhouse will be executed.' "

However, before alterations were to begin on the old theatre, one last gala evening was to take place, according to the June 24 Evening News: "A monstrous bill will be tendered for Mr. John Clark, a very popular ex-manager of the Hoboken Theatre at that house next Wednesday evening by his friends and patrons. The array of talent which has been secured for this occasion has not been seen before on a stage in any city at once. Some of the best artists on the vaudeville stage today have promised to appear and everyone billed will positively fill the engagement and help in making it a most enjoyable and entertaining programme."

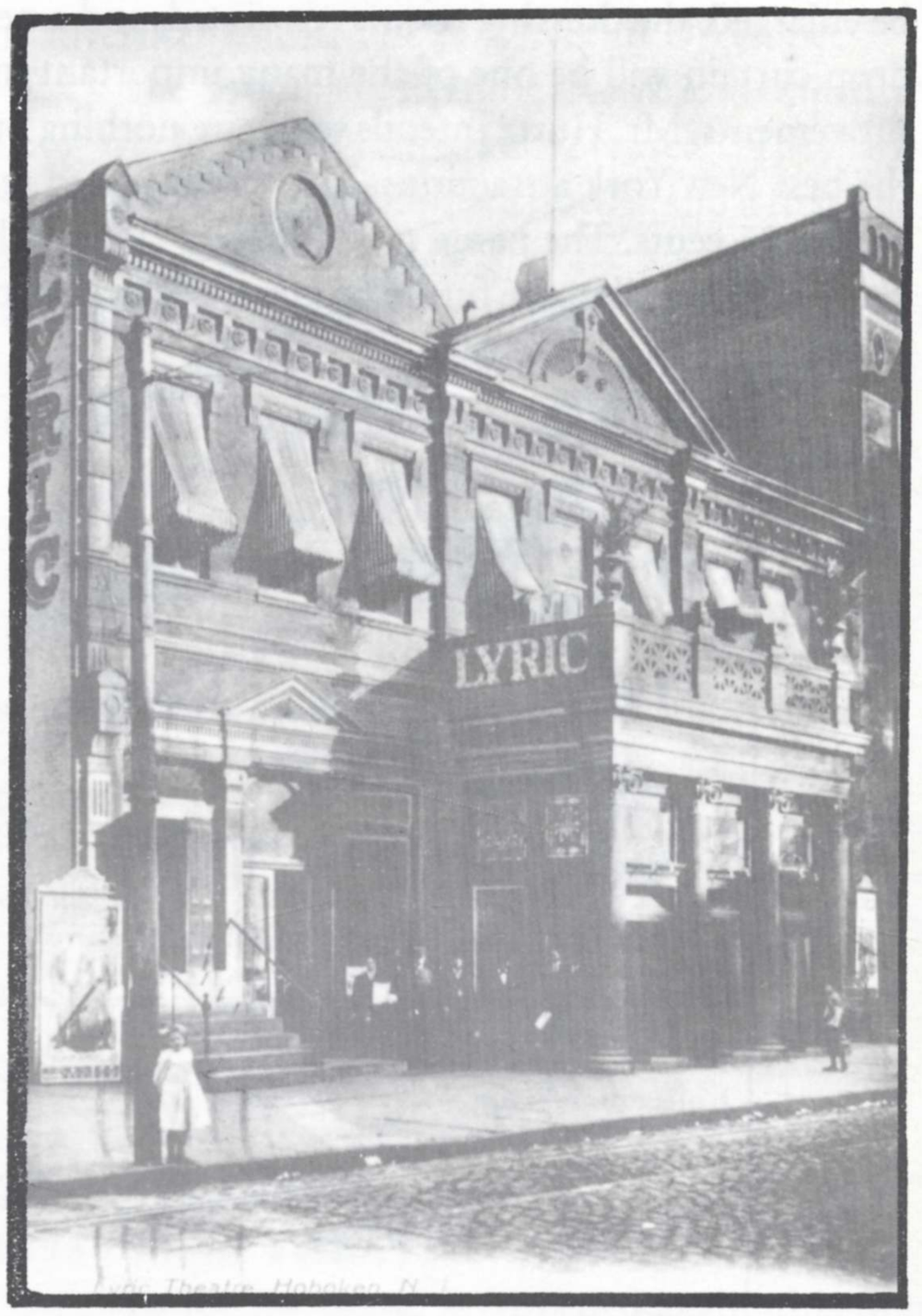
## GIANT LIST OF PERFORMERS

At the head of the giant list of performers were the comedians Weber & Fields, who around this time were top stars and had their own theatre on Broadway. They played Hoboken previously, probably a number of times; once we know for certain in 1883 (see that year in Volume II). Others on the bill were "Russell Bros., Frank Busch & Haveland, Foster and Lewis, Rice and Holmes, Meeker and Mack, the Dolans, Foreman and West, Dunn and Mack, Herbert and Lane, The Brennans, Thompson and Bunnell, Fields and Woolly, Haley and Sanford, O'Meaga & Gordon, Philip C. Heck, Edward King, George Leslie, De Bar, Harry Ricketts, John Sheehan, Louis Dittman, Louis Miller and members of the Hoboken Turn Verein."

The Hoboken Turn Verein was a physical culture society well-established in Hoboken since 1857, originally located on Washington Street just north of the old Napoleon Hotel which was on the northwest corner of First Street. Later, a school of the society which taught the German system of gymnastics was for many years on Park Avenue two doors north of the Hoboken Public Library. Their best gymnasts probably appeared this special Wednesday evening, June 26. The school had classes for both male and female gymnasts from "ages six to over 30 years."

## 1895 "ONE OF THE HANDSOMEST IN THE STATE."

In keeping abreast of the improvements, for August 13 headlines in the Evening News read: "Hoboken Theatre Each Day the House is Made More Handsome." The Hoboken paper kept on top of what




**Seating capacity in the Lyric Theatre was more than 1,800. In the photograph, two billboards flank the sides of the theatre near the exits. On the second floor a door to the outside balcony can be seen between the window awnings. Eight decorative stained glass windows surround the entrance below.**

**A decorative pillar from the Lyric's facade still remains against the north wall. The carved brownstone can been seen in the above photo, which is from a postcard published about 1905.**

was happening and reported that "The dingy drapery and ornaments that had seen years of service in this once popular house have been removed and pretty elaborations are taking their place. Every day Manager Hurtz and his capable assistant William Black are found at the theatre giving instructions that will tend to make the theatre one of the handsomest in the state when complete. A new ceiling has been made and balcony rail changed, new paper will decorate the walls. The new drop curtain is almost completed. It is a most beautiful work of art. It represents a scene in the opera Don Giovanni, and the work performed is very creditable to that clever artist, Mr. [Logan] Reid."

It is difficult to imagine why the success of a theatre in Hoboken at this time was not more predictable. There certainly was the opportunity for an audience; more than 10,000 people moved into Hoboken between 1890 and 1895. It was the greatest five-year population increase in the city's history.

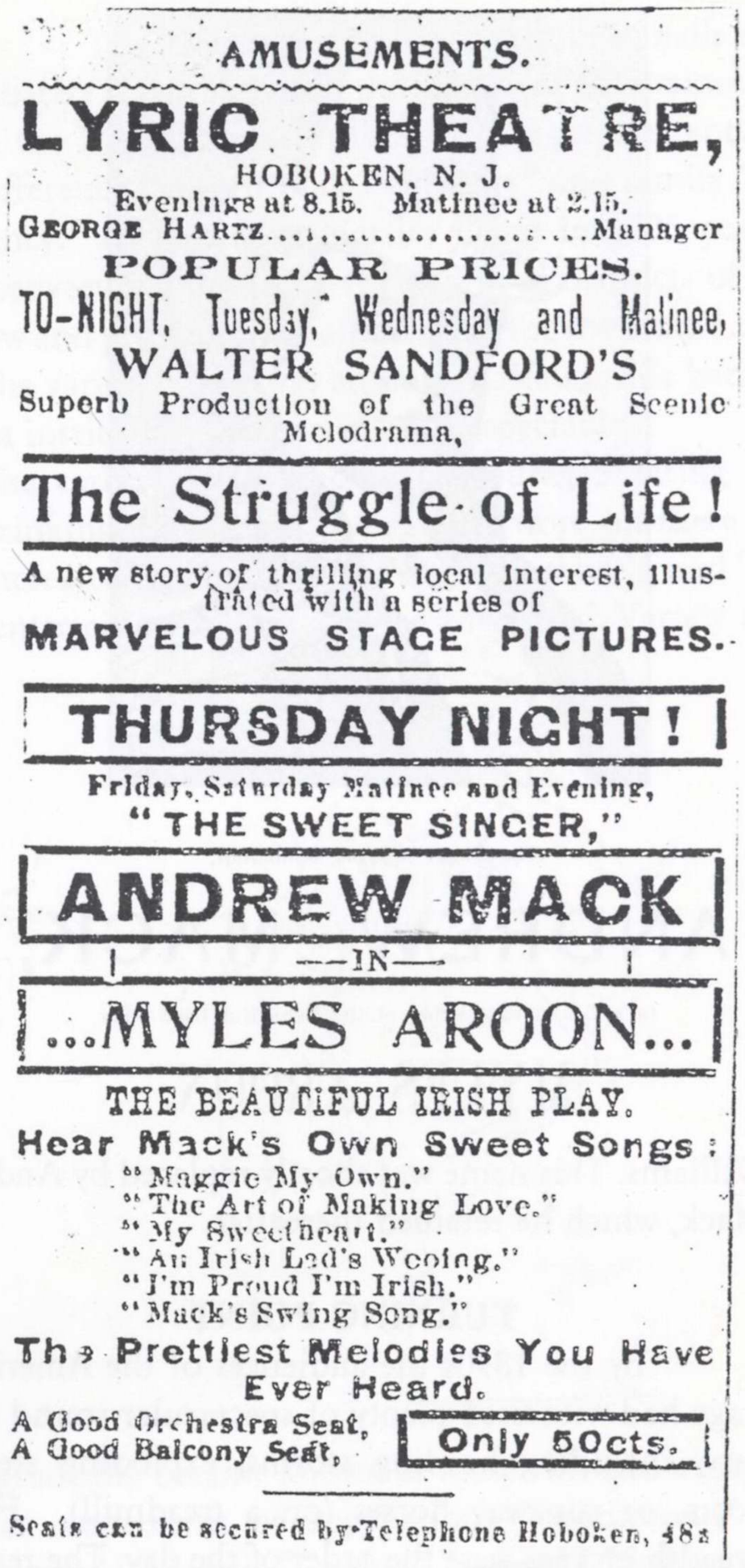
### THE LYRIC THEATRE

The Lyric, formerly the Hoboken Theatre, was on the east side of Hudson Street near Hudson Place on what is now a vacant lot next to the Santa Fe Yacht Club restaurant in the former Victor Hotel. The Hoboken theatre, after being remodeled in 1895, flourished under the name of Lyric for many years. George M. Cohan played this popular showplace when he was part of his family act The Four Cohans; the first play that George Broadhurst ever wrote had its try-out here; Bob Fitzsimmons, world champion boxer, played "The Honest Blacksmith" at the Lyric.

William Jennings Bryan spoke from the Lyric's stage in three of his campaigns for President, and Theodore Roosevelt also spoke here. Years later many performers who became famous played their early days at the Lyric: Buster Keaton, Jack Benny, George Burns & Gracie Allen, and others. The style of the building was "modern French," and it was erected to plans by Charles H. Horn, theatrical architect.

### 1895 ANDREW MACK AT THE LYRIC

"Myles Aroon," produced in 1895, was Andrew Mack's first starring role, although he was a great hit in another play earlier the same year called "Ivy Leaf." In "Myles Aroon" he played the title role, a young Irish gardener. The scenes are in Westmeath, Ireland, in the present day. The "beautiful Irish play" was booked at the Lyric for four performances.


AMUSEMENTS.

LYRIC THEATRE,

HOBOKEN, N. J.
Evenings at 8.15. Matinee at 2.15.
GEORGE HARTZ.....Manager

POPULAR PRICES.

TO-NIGHT, Tuesday, Wednesday and Matinee,
WALTER SANDFORD'S
Superb Production of the Great Scenic Melodrama,

The Struggle of Life!

A new story of thrilling local interest, illustrated with a series of
MARVELOUS STAGE PICTURES.

THURSDAY NIGHT!

Friday, Saturday Matinee and Evening,
"THE SWEET SINGER,"

ANDREW MACK

—IN—

...MYLES AROON...

THE BEAUTIFUL IRISH PLAY.
Hear Mack's Own Sweet Songs:
"Maggie My Own."
"The Art of Making Love."
"My Sweetheart."
"An Irish Lad's Wooing."
"I'm Proud I'm Irish."
"Mack's Swing Song."
The Prettiest Melodies You Have Ever Heard.

A Good Orchestra Seat, A Good Balcony Seat, Only 50cts.

Seats can be secured by Telephone Hoboken, 48a

**Besides the popular Andrew Mack at the Lyric, there were "Marvelous Stage Pictures" (see above, and under the heading "1895 Living Pictures").**
**Local newspaper theatre listing advertisement, Dec.1895**

### ANDREW MACK

Andrew Mack [1864-1931] who played the Lyric, was one of the most popular delineators of the Irish character and of singing roles the American stage has known. The actor, who died in his home in Bayside, Queens, was a member of the Lambs Club for several years. He was born in Boston, his real name being William Andrew McAloon, and after singing and jigging on street corners, he made his professional debut at the age of 13, under the name of Andrew



The Sweet Singing Comedian,

# ANDREW MACK,

In a Grand Production of the Beautiful Irish Play,

## "MYLES AROON."

Williams. This name was shortly replaced by Andrew Mack, which he retained thereafter.

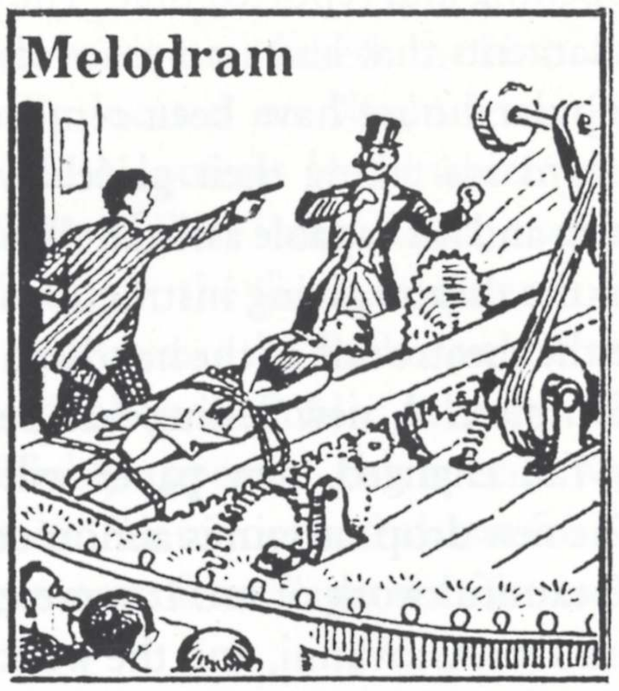
### TURNING POINT

By the 1890s the audiences of the American stage had witnessed plenty of spectacular sound and fury, including howling storms, exploding steamboats, or runaway horses (on a treadmill). Hairbreadth escapes were the order of the day. The rescue scene was to melodrama what the strip-tease later became to burlesque: without several per show, patrons would have demanded their money back—indignantly. As a consequence, the "scenic artist" and his crew of painters, carpenters, and mechanics were as important to boxoffice success as the playwright, director, and performers themselves.*

In Hoboken most of the large theatrical productions were presented at the Lyric (and the Hoboken Theatre), although, even Cronheim had staged some grandiose productions at the Germania.

The following is only a partial tableau taken from a five-act melodrama presented at his theatre in February 1887. It gives the reader an idea of the

* E. M. Halliday, "Curses, Foiled Again!"
American Heritage, *December, 1963, Pg. 13.*




amount of action that took place on the stage at this time, and for years to come.

**SYNOPSIS OF SCENERY AND INCIDENTS**

TIME – THE PRESENT.

**ACT I**– The Gulf of Mexico in the distance. The fugitive smuggler. The murder. The vow of vengeance. Wentworth, "the American." The attempted abduction. Foiled. The Marriage. The departure. The Storm. The ship. The explosion. The Fire and Wreck.

**ACT II**–The open sea. The life boat. The castaways. Desperation. Cannibalism. At the point of death. Saved.

**ACT III** – A street in New York City. The conspirators. House and grounds of O'Connor, Harlem, N.Y. The masquerade party. Singing and dancing. "The Rescue," one of the most thrilling word pictures of a fire scene ever presented upon any stage. The denouncement. The "bigamist." Dismay. The Oath of Wentworth.

**ACT IV.** – Sitting Room in Wentworth's house. The dude and dudess. The mourner. Moving in. A trunk and drunk. The vindication. The proof.

**ACT V** – The strike. A strike struck. The rascals alarmed. The certificate of death. Rear of Ryland's saloon , on the south shore of Staten Island. In the toils. Baffled. The attempted murder. Arrival of the police boat. The capture. The struggle. The fiendish resolve. The burning house. Imprisoned in flames. Rescued.

And you thought there was too much violence on TV!

# CHAPTER 4

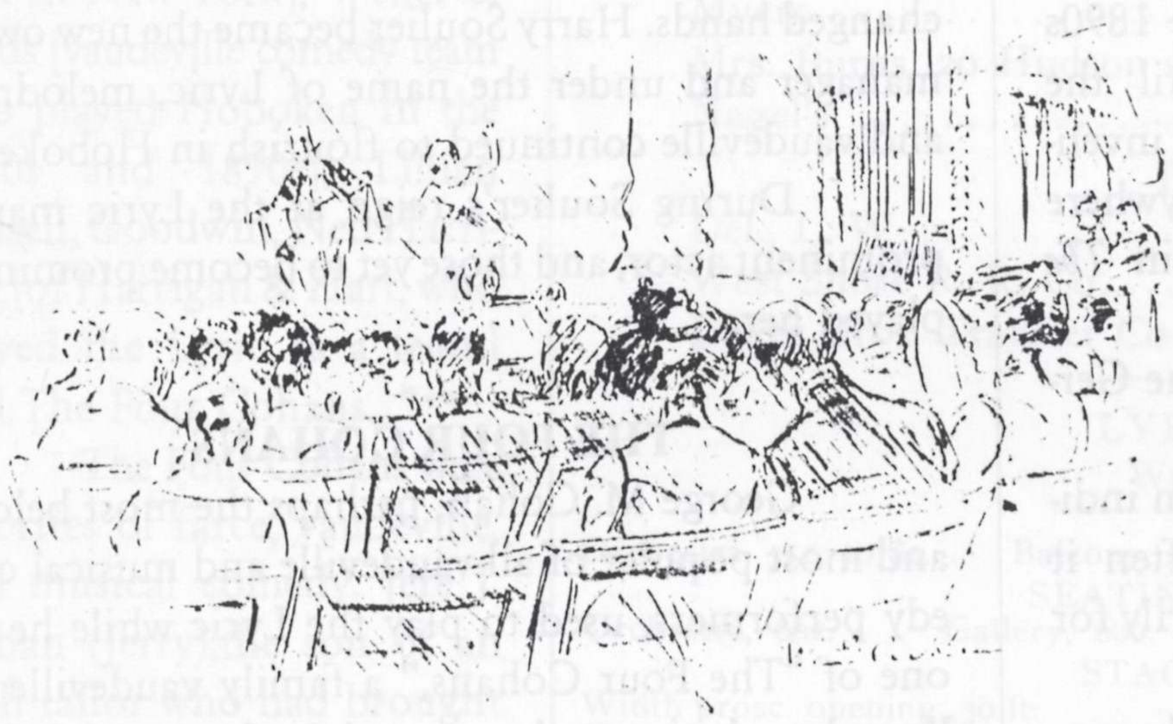
### STAGE LIGHTING

Stage lighting technology had advanced in the past decade more than it did in all its preceding history. This was due in large measure to electricity, which from its very nature offers advantages never

obtained from gas, which had been used for stage lighting for so long. With the application of electricity to the stage, individual effects, such as water ripples and volcanic eruptions became possible and the late victorians made full use of what electricity could do.

The new advances in stage lighting gave the theatre new life. Never before had the legitimate stage and its performers presented themselves so dramatically. The average theatre-goers approved of the changes, which more than ever separated the legitimate theatre from the variety show or"vaudeville," as that term had begun to come into vogue.

As the variety type of entertainment became more refined, shows were shifted from the beer-gardens and cabarets to the regular theatres"





**The drawings on this page are by William Glackens, who executed them to illustrate an article titled "The Vaudeville Theatre"– for the Oct. 1899 issue of Scribner's Magazine.**

## VARIETY TO "VAUDEVILLE"

Vaudeville, which evolved from the traveling shows of the 18th century, had its origins in this country in beer halls and cabarets. The French word "vaudeville" (which stems from the French phrase "Vaux-de-vire," and originally meant popular satirical songs, that were composed and performed during the 15thCentury in the valleys or "vaux" near the French town of Vire in the province of Normandy), was linked to several playhouses and troupes in this country and in Hoboken in the mid-19th Century. But it was not until about the mid-1890s that the term began to replace the so-called "variety." (it was not until 1905 that the word "vaudeville" first appeared in *The New York Times*–Index.)

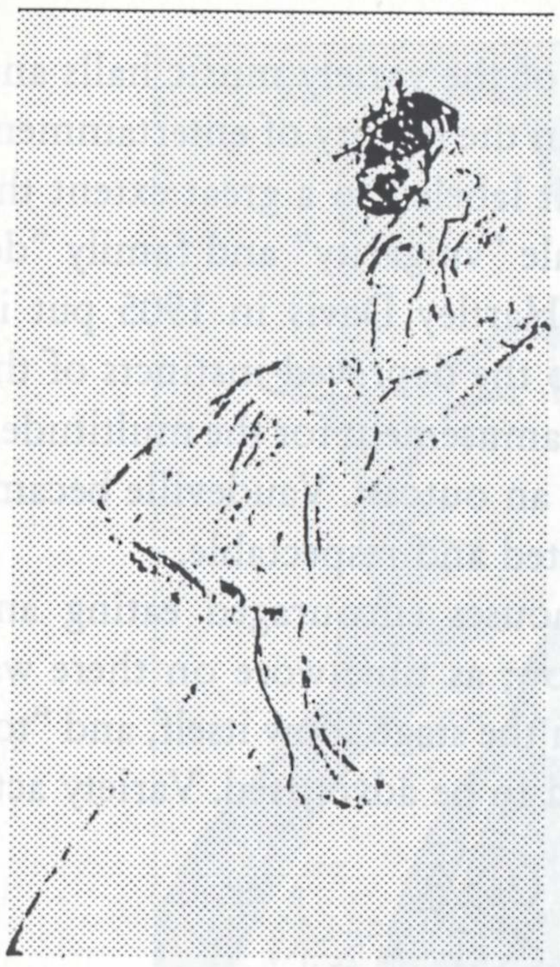
The evolution of the variety music halls and cabarets is significant in the history of entertainment in the United States. It labeled to a great extent the difference between male "vulgarity" and family "decency." As journalist Hartley Davis in 1905 put it, "between pandering to the depraved instincts of the few and proving clean amusement for the multitude." The variety show was an outcast. Vaudeville became an institution, respected and respectable.

The early "variety" houses encouraged eating and drinking during a show; as time wore on there was increased emphasis on the stage show itself, and "top entertainment" began to be advertised. Variety acts gradually became known as vaudeville and weregiven an assortment of appellations–"continuous," "advanced," "electric," "polite," "refined," "fashionable," and "legitimate," to mention a few – many of them stemming from a concerted effort to make it a family entertainment.*

## ARTIST WILLIAM GLACKENS

Glackens, who must have been familiar with the theatre and music halls of Hoboken, later exhibited with George Luks, Everett Shinn and Ernest Lawson of the "Ash Can School" and with "The Independents" including artists Stuart Davis and Robert Henri, all of whom painted street life in the metropolitan area at the turn of the century. Lawson had painted Hoboken. Davis had a studio in Hoboken for a time. Robert Henri exhibited in Hoboken and so-

**Bernard Sobel, "A Pictorial History of Vaudeville,": Citadel Press, N.Y., 1961, p. 24.*



cialized with Hoboken artists Glenn O. Coleman and Henry Glintenkamp, both of whom sketched the many saloons, music halls, and theatres of Hoboken.

## AMERICA'S FAVORITE PASTIME.

The vaudeville theatre, next to baseball, became America's favorite pastime during the 1890s and lasted until the arrival of radio in the 1930s. It was an American invention." There is nothing like it (vaudeville) anywhere else in the world," wrote Edwin Milton Royle in *The Vaudeville Theatre*–, "it is neither the
Cafe Chantant, the English music-hall, nor the German Garden."

Sometimes the vaudeville theatre was an individual and independent enterprise; more often it belonged to a chain of theatres designed primarily for entertainment of the middle class.

A vaudeville program at this time usually consisted of six or eight acts (years later, as many as 15 or 16), with the star performer last or next-to last. A typical program consisted of a comic or comedy skit, a juggler, a magician, a pantomimist, a team of acrobats, a dancer or group of dancers, a singer, and very often a one-act play!*

## 1896 TWO COMEDY STARS AT LYRIC THEATRE

Sat. Aug 29 – J. Sherrie Mathews and Harry Bulger, who have been well known on the variety stage, made their debut as stars in comedy at the Lyric Theatre this date. The comedy was called "At Gay Coney Island," by Levin C. Tees. This first production was presented for charity, according to an article in The New York Times– the following day. The scenes are laid in New York, Sheepshead Bay, and Coney Island. The play was "bright and witty" claimed the reviewer, "with many very amusing situations, affording opportunity for the display of the fun-making ability of Messrs Mathews and Bulger; a number of humorous, pathetic, and sentimental ballads, and some unique dances were introduced, and endorsed heartily by the audience. Mathews and Bulger scored a success. The play was thoroughly enjoyed by the large audience."

In 1897 the New Jersey State Exempt Firemen's Association chose the Lyric Theatre in Hoboken for their Eleventh Annual Convention. It was held on Wednesday, May 19.

## 1897 HARRY SOULIER'S LYRIC

Around 1897-1898 the Lyric Theatre again changed hands. Harry Soulier became the new owner-manager and under the name of Lyric, melodrama and vaudeville continued to flourish in Hoboken.

During Soulier's reign at the Lyric many a prominent actor, and those yet to become prominent, played here.

## THE FOUR COHANS

George M. Cohan, perhaps the most beloved and most popular of all vaudeville and musical comedy performers, used to play the Lyric while he was one of "The Four Cohans," a family vaudeville act. Years later he jumped to overnight fame and fortune on Broadway as the author, composer and principal performer in a lively song-and-dance show called "Little Johnny Jones." For many years thereafter he appeared in a dozen or more of such productions, all of his own creation.

Cohan, composer of "Yankee Doodle Dandy," really was born on the Fourth of July. The year was 1878. In 1889 he named his family stage group "The Cohan Mirth Makers." Early-on the family took its own brass band from town to town to parade the streets to draw attention to their appearance at the local vaudeville palace.

Cohan and his wife, at the time they were married (1899) were friends of Lillian Russell (who had married in Hoboken in 1894). It was these years and earlier that the family probably played Hoboken. It was a time when stars were part of Hoboken's theatrical world, such as Lily Langtry (who performed at the Lyric in 1887), Nat C. Goodwin (a popular actor who favored the Dukes House on Hudson Place in

*Charles W. Stein, The New York Times– January 25, 1987.

Hoboken), actress Maxine Elliott and playwright George Broadhurst (who had tried-out his first play at the Lyric). Lillian Russell was the belle of the Great White Way. And it was Nat Goodwin who Cohan thought "was the greatest actor he had ever seen."*

Years later George and Nat became close friends. The world George loved most was "the world of Rector's [restaurant in New York], Weber & Fields [vaudeville comedy team who played Hoboken in the 1880s and 1890s], Lillian Russell, Goodwin, Ned Harrigan [of Harrigan & Hart, who played the Lyric as a team] and The Four Cohans..."**

The Four Cohans were favorites of farce, vaudeville, and musical comedy. Jere J. Cohan (Jerry),the son of an Irish tailor who had brought his family to the new country about the middle of the last century, was a veteran of the minstrels. He made his first appearance on stage at the age of eleven, an old "trouper" in the real sense. He put little Georgie in the act before the child was ten years old and it was always a family affair– they wrote all their own lyrics and dialogue, created all their own dances.

Cohan, shortly after he was married, wrote a cong hit for Sam Bernard of the Broad-

*"*Ward Morehouse, "George M. Cohan, Prince of the American*

**John McCabe, "George M. Cohan: The Man Who Owned Broadway"*

## 1896 JULIUS CAHN'S OFFICIAL THEATRICAL GUIDE 1896

HOBOKEN, N. J.
(Population, 260,000.)

THEATRES.

Lyric Theatre.....William Black, Mgr.

NEWSPAPERS.

"Hoboken News" (daily).....J. R. Hanchey.
"Hoboken Observer" (daily).....Thos. M. McKeon.
"J. C. News" (daily).....Wm. Luby.
"Journal" (daily).....T. H. Hoar.

HOTELS.

Washington.....$1.50 and $1.25
Myers ..... 2.00
Mrs. Burns, 20 Hudson street..... 1.00
Nagel's ..... 2.00

RAILROADS.

Del., L. W.....George A. Griffith.
West Shore R. R. Co.....Charles Lambert.
Luker Bros. Transfer Co.....54 Gregory St., Jersey City.

---

LYRIC THEATRE.
William Black, Mgr.

PRICES.

Orchestra, 35c. to $1. Balcony, 25c. and 35c. Gallery, 15c. Admission, 25c.

SEATING CAPACITY, 2,006.

Orchestra, 662. Gallery, 600. Balcony, 244. Admission, 500.

STAGE DIMENSIONS.

Width prosc. opening, 30 ft.
Height prosc. opening, 30 ft.
Footlights to back wall, 30, ft.
Curtain line to footlights, 3 ft.
Distance between side walls, 72 ft.
Distance between fly girders, 40 ft.
Stage to rigging loft, 60 ft.
Depth under stage, 10 ft.
3 traps, star, vampire and sink.
7 in orchestra.
Leader, Louis Volyer.
Stage carpenter, W. H. Mohn.
Scenic artist, Logan Reid.
Property man, N. H. Slie.
Printing required, 15 stands, 100 3-sheets, 500 1-sheets, 250 ½-sheets.
Dates read, Lyric Theatre, Hoboken, N. J.
Edward Cook, adv. agt.
Harry Cushman, billposter.

**1896 LYRIC THEATRICAL GUIDE**

**Above is a page reproduced from Julius Cahn's Theatrical Guide for 1896, listing for Hoboken only the Lyric Theatre, although there were others, of a sort. There are numerous interesting details among the "Stage Dimensions," however we are not certain of their accuracy since there are a few evident errors on the page, such as Hoboken's population given as 260,000 (instead of the correct 54,000); The Hoboken Evening News was under the direction of John R. Henchy (not Hanchy). Of the hotels listed, both the Meyers and Naegeli's were misspelled (perhaps the information had been gathered by telephone).**

**The Meyers was on the southeast corner of Hudson and Third Streets and directly across was Naegeli's, which later became the Grand Hotel. These and other hotels were in the heart of what was then, and for years, known as the Hotel Quarter. Many travelers about to embark on a voyage to Europe on one of the great transatlantic ocean liners with their Hoboken piers and berths nearby, would stay overnight and perhaps attend the theatre and enjoy the night life here, which at this time was very active.**

**As for Mrs. Burns' hotel listed at 20 Hudson Street, we know it was a boarding house. Edward Phalon, proprietor of the Washington Hotel, at 51 Washington Street at Ferry Street (now Observer Highway), advertised "Special Rates for the Theatrical Profession."**

way Theatre for his show "The Silver Slipper." Bernard wanted a topical song of some kind. He telegraphed Cohen of his needs, and the next morning's mail brought "I'd be Satisfied With Life."

One of the choruses mentions a famous woman who lived in Hoboken:

*"Champagne fountains sprinkling at my feet;*
*Pierrepont Morgan waiting on the table,*
*Sousa's band a-playing while I eat,*
*If I only knew how stocks would go in Wall Street*
*And if Hetty Green would only be my wife;*
*Then I know that I'd be satisfied with life. "**

**The Sunday Telegraph–, New York, Sept. 18, 1904.*

Had Cohan really known Hetty Green, he may not have wanted her as his wife. Called "The Witch of Wall Street," Green was the richest woman in America at the time, and possibly the most miserly. She lived in Hoboken in the late 1890s, and later on and off at various addresses such as the "Yellow Flats" at Washington and 12th Streets, and Bloomfield Street, until just before her death in 1916. It was that song, a favorite of Cohan's, that later suggested many others along the same line.

"Mr. Broadway," as Cohan was called, wrote two of America's favorite songs, "You're a Grand Old




**1898 cover of one of Harry Soulier's Lyric Theatre programs which averaged about fourteen pages. Loaded with advertisements it was the forerunner of today's playbill although much larger(8 1/2 x 11") It was the size of todays news magazines.**

Soulier's
Lyric Theatre
HOBOKEN, N.J.



Nat Goodwin.

Flag," and the World War I "Over There."

Dion Boucicault, the 19th Century Irish playwright, was a model for young George M. Cohan. John McCabe tells us that "George appeared in two plays of Boucicault and remembered them as the kind of theatre that gave him the deepest satisfaction. 'Boucicault,' Cohan is quoted as saying, 'is the model for me of what a good playwright should be. He tells the story quickly, he gives you some basic, exciting emotion, good plot twists, with a lot of laughter and some charming songs, and, above all, thank God above all, Boucicault is fun.'"

Boucicault's plays inspired George to write beyond the sketch form.*

*John McCabe, *"George M. Cohan: The Man Who Owned Broadway."*

Telephone Connection.
R. KIRCHGESSNER
Artistic Decorator, Costumer and Badge Maker
Costumes for Theatrical Tableaux, Concerts, Parties, etc.
Flags, Banners and Society Goods
Decorations for all Occasions. Committee Suits a Specialty. Canopies put up
421 WASHINGTON STREET
We do Union Work. HOBOKEN, N. J.

**Robert Kirchgessner opened his store in September 1899 and for many years offered costumes and decorations for local theatrical productions. Robert was the grandfather of George Kirchgessner of Hoboken. The store is still in business under the proprietorsh ip of George and his wife Delores. It is the oldest store on Washington**

The best ever seen at a variety show.—NEW YORK JOURNAL.
FOUR COHANS
HIGH CLASS VAUDEVILLE ARTISTS
HELEN, JERRY, JOSEPHINE AND GEORGE M. COHAN
IN THEIR SUPERB COMEDY SPECIALTY HITS
"Money to Burn," "The Professor's Wife" (Copyrighted), and "Running for Office."
JOSEPH F. VION, Sole Agent,
42 WEST 30th STREET (Cor. Broadway), NEW YORK.

**Advertisement in The New York Clipper Annual for the 1899-1900 season.**

Years later, in the 1920's, a Boucicault melodrama would inspire the literary figure Christopher Morley while operating Hoboken's Empire Theatre (built on the site of the Germania in 1902) as the "Old Rialto," to revive Dion Boucicault's 1860s "After Dark; or Neither Maid, Wife Nor Widow." Morely also leased the old Lyric Theatre.

The Lyric remained closed for many years and was torn down some time after 1946 It was purchased in 1946 by B. J. Lucarelli, class of 1929 Stevens Institute graduate, to be turned into a supermarket but nothing came of it.

The July Stevens Indicator for 1946 stated that the property was assessed at $57,000 and was acquired by the City in 1936 on a tax lien. It was stated that the theatre was built in 1873, however there has not been substantiation of that.

## 1900

By 1900 the City's population would rise to 59,364, up from 43,649 in 1890. The theatre in Hoboken would continue to flourish for years to come.

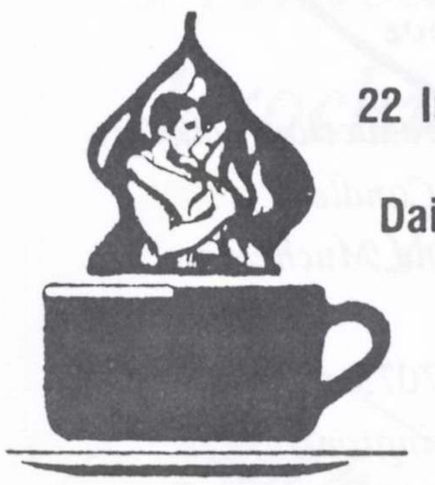
*THE END*

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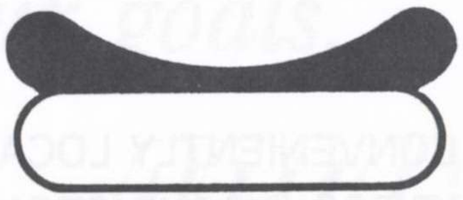
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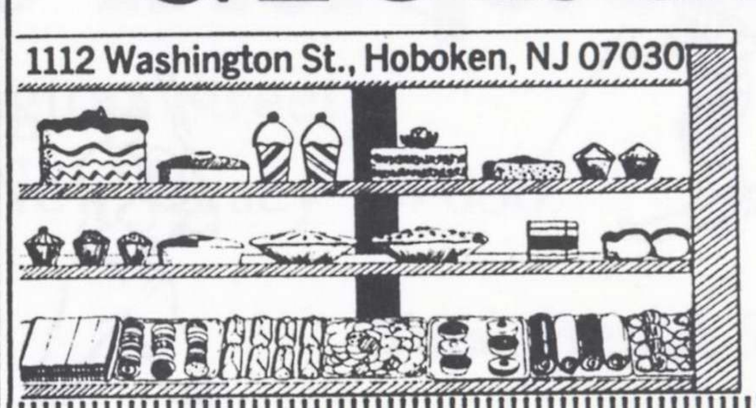
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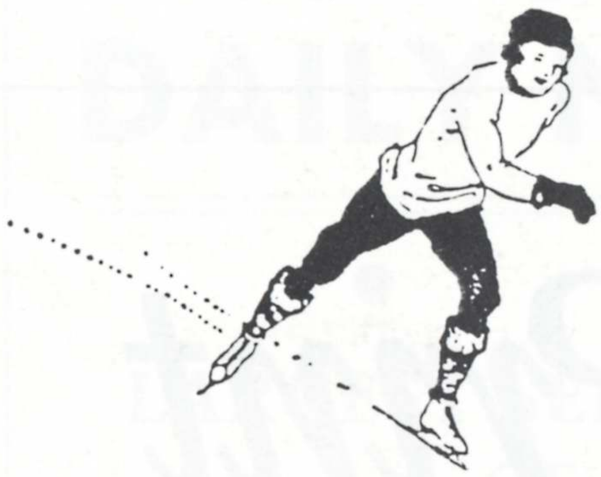
528 WASHINGTON ST. - - HOBOKEN, N. J. 07030





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PUMA

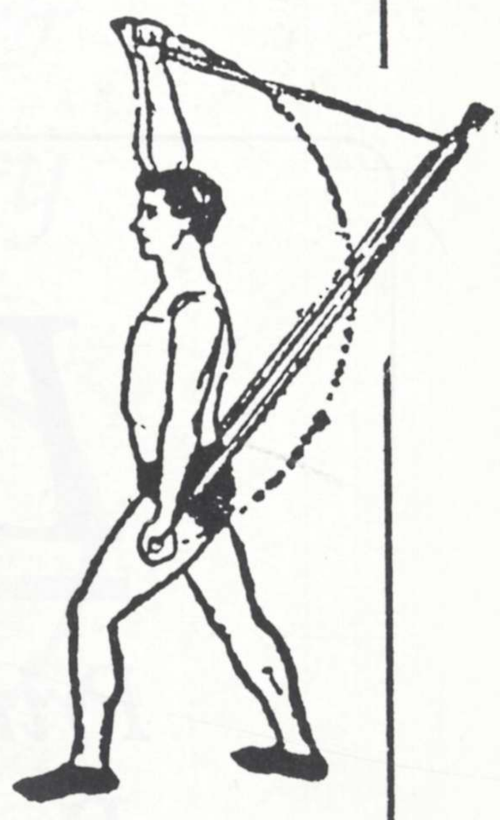




ATHLETIC SHOES

ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

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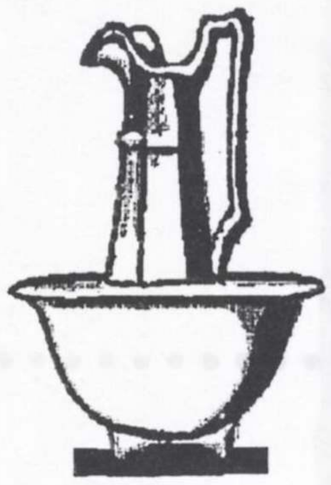




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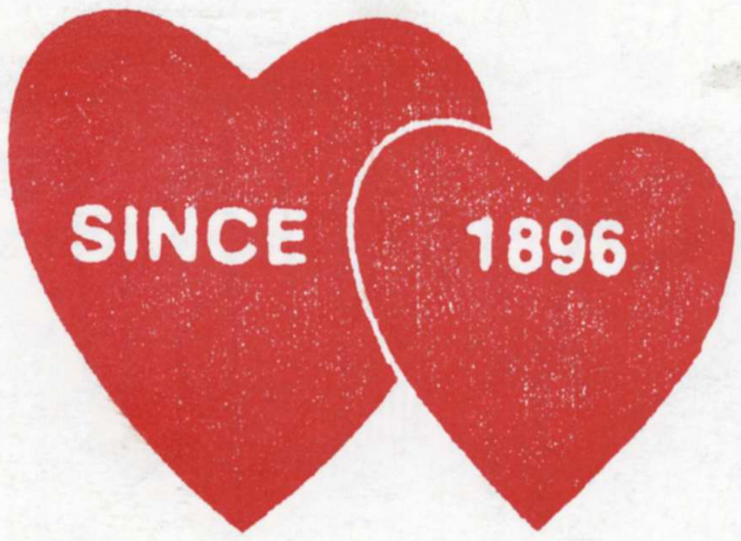



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