

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA (Revival)

London run: Haymarket, March 5th (96 performances)

Music: Various (arranged by Frederic Austin)

Book & Lyrics: John Gay

Director: John Gielgud

Choreographer: Suria Magito

Musical Director: Frederic Austin

Producer: Glyndebourne Productions

Cast: Roy Henderson (*Peachum*), Constance Willis (*Mrs Peachum*), Audrey Mildmay (*Polly Peachum*), Michael Redgrave (*Macheath*), Linda Grey (*Lucy Lockitt*).

Notes: During the run Audrey Mildmay was taken ill and was replaced with Irene Eisinger. A week later, both



Photo by Angus McBean

Left to right: Joseph Farrington, Linda Gray, Bruce Flegg, Michael Redgrave, Audrey Mildmay & Roy Henderson

Michael Redgrave and his understudy were both ill at the same time. John Gielgud took over the role- and did the singing himself! This was the third major revival of the Nigel Playfair/Lyric Hammersmith 1920 version – and it was the seventh time “The Beggar’s Opera” had been staged at the Haymarket, the others being 1767, 1781, 1784, 1791, 1820 and 1854. This was also the first time any Glyndebourne opera production had been staged away from its Sussex home. The production ended its run on May 25th and then undertook a short provincial tour.

WHITE HORSE INN (1st Revival)

London run: Coliseum, March 20th (ended mid September due to bombing raids)

Music: Ralph Benatzky, Robert Stolz & Bruno Granichstadten

Original Book & Lyrics: Blumenthal, Kadelburg & Mueller

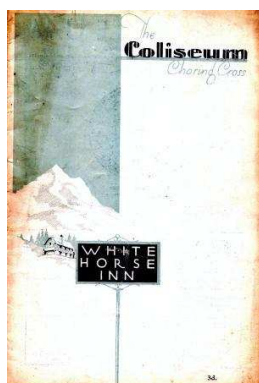
English Book & Lyrics: Harry Graham

Director: Frank C. Marshall & Prince Littler

Choreographer: Kathleen Barnard

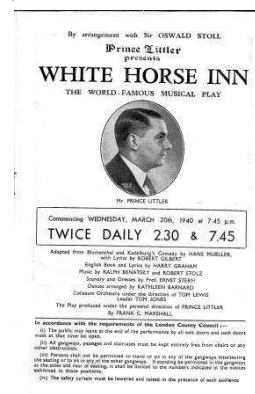
Musical Director: Tom Lewis

Cast: Nita Croft (*Josepha*), Derek Oldham (*Leopold*), Gordon Little (*Dr Valentine Sutton*), Hal Bryan (*John Ginkle*), Eddie Childs (*Sigismund*), Nancy Burne (*Ottoline*), Mary Lawson (*Gretl*)



This ran twice nightly for the first nine weeks, then from May 27th ran 9 performances a week. Like most London theatres, performances were cancelled on Monday September 9th following the heavy weekend Blitz, but the following week performances resumed with matinees only. However, the nightly bombing raids – there was an aerial attack from September 7th for 57 consecutive nights - meant the show struggled with matinees only for another week or two and then came off.

Original London run: Coliseum, April 1931





Sylvia Welling

THE SILVER PATROL

London run: New Theatre, March 20th (75 performances)

Music: Pat Thayer

Book & Lyrics: Bruce Sievie & Gene Gerrard

Director: John Fernald

Musical Director: Edward D. Griffiths

Cast: Jack Melford (*Lord Montague Rayson*),
Sylvia Welling (*Violette Gerhardi*), Alec Fraser (*Paolo*),
Gene Gerrard (*Albert Stamp*), Elizabeth French (*Jaquita Jackson*),
Eric Maturin (*Adrian de Brune*)

Songs: Tap the Time with your Shoes, Sundown Joe, Echo Through the Trees, Dream Valley, My Dreams They Never Come True, We've Been in the Family for Years, The Hotel Manager, The Dusting Brush Parade

Story: Lord Montague Rayson is holding a party to celebrate his inheritance of the Dream Valley Ranch in Petrada, South America. One of the guests, Violette Gerhardi, unhappily married to diplomat Paolo, is throwing herself at

the unresponsive Montagu. An angry Paolo challenges Montague, and in a scuffle in the dark, Paolo is shot dead. Lord Montague is acquitted, though many feel "he has got away with it", and, with his valet Albert, flies to his ranch using the pseudonym of Mr Mortimer. Here he falls in love with Jaquita Jackson, but Violette has pursued him and reveals the truth, Mortimer is really the rich Lord Montague, the man who "got away with" murder. The villainous drug-dealer, Adrian de Brune, spots an opportunity, and kidnaps Jaquita and Albert, hiding them in a mountain shack and demanding a ransom. But they are rescued by the stalwart troopers of the Silver Patrol. Finally, at a Government House Ball, Violette admits that it was she who shot Paolo, and Jaquita and Lord Montague are united for a happy ending.

Notes: Somewhat ambitiously this was scheduled for fourteen performances a week, but after a cool critical response it came off within six weeks. However the title song "The Silver Patrol" was recorded by Peter Dawson and became a wartime, patriotic hit song, referring, of course, to the RAF and not to the South American "Mountie-type" band of the original show.

PRESENT ARMS

London run: Prince of Wales, May 13th (225 Performances)

Music: Noel Gay

Lyrics: Frank Eyton

Book: Fred Thompson

Additional dialogue: Bert Lee

Director: Harry Silvester

Choreographer: Freddie Carpenter

Musical Director: Hugh Rignold

Producer: Tom Arnold & Harry Foster

Cast: George Gee (*Charlie Penny*), Bill Bennett (*Bert Pickles*),
Wylie Watson (*Syd Pottle*), Betty Warren (*Bertha Lovett*),
Phyllis Monkham (*Babette*), Max Bacon (*Issy Gimble*),
Max Wall (*Tom Carroway*), Evelyn Dall (*Peggy Brent*)



Evelyn Dall

Songs: Mademoiselle de France, Oomph, I'm All In, Lulu, Dig for Victory, Might Be (*Interpolated: It's a Hap-hap-happy Day, Faithful Forever, Now We're All Together*)

Story: Three old soldiers from the last war, Charlie Penny, Bert Pickles and Syd Pottle, are now back in khaki and back in France – leaving unfinished business back home, where Charlie and Syd are rivals for the affections and fortune of the wealthy Bertha Lovett. Things are complicated when they meet up once more with Babette, the French beauty they squabbled over back in the days of the first War. Then they are captured by the enemy, but ultimately manage to escape in time for a happy ending. Others in the story include Gimble, the Jewish tailor/soldier, and the stormy romance between Tom Carroway and the cabaret performer Peggy Brent.

Notes: Running twice-nightly, it ran for almost four months, coming off just a week before the main bombing attacks occurred.



Dennis Noble & Marjorie Browne

CHU CHIN CHOW (1st Revival)

London run: Palace, July 3rd -

(80 performances - withdrawn due to bombing raids)

Revived: Palace July 22nd 1941

Music: Frederic Norton

Book & Lyrics: Oscar Ashe

Director: Robert Atkins

Musical Director:

Cast: Lyn Harding (*Abu Hasan*), Rosalinde Fuller (*Zahrat Al-Kalub*), Marjorie Browne (*Marjanah*), Jerry Verno (*Ali Baba*), Dennis Noble (*Nur Al-Huda*), Peter Bennett (*Kasim Baba*), Kay Bourne (*Alcolom*), Sydney Fairbrother (*Mahbubah*)

Songs: I Am Chu Chin Chow of China, Serenade, I'll Sing and Dance, Any Time's Kissing Time, The Cobbler's Song, Song of the Scimitar, I Long for the Sun, I Love Thee So, I Built a Fairy Palace in the Sky.

Story: In Old Baghdad, the bandit chief Abu Hasan disguises himself as a Chinese merchant, Chu Chin Chow, to gain access to the palace of Kasim Baba. But his identity is revealed by his slave, Zahrat, and his hideout under a rock (opened only by the password 'Open Sesame') is discovered by the slave Marjhana together with her lover, Nur Al-Huda and her father, Ali Baba. After killing Kasim, Abu Hasan attends the wedding of Marjhana and Nur

disguised as an oil merchant with 40 jars supposedly full of oil. But there is a thief in every jar ready to commit more murder. However, Zahrat foils the plot by pouring boiling oil on them all and then finishes the job by stabbing Abu Hasan to death.

Notes: The original production at His Majesty's Theatre in August 1916 ran for an astonishing 2,238 performances, becoming the longest running musical in the West End, a record it held for almost 40 years, until it was finally overtaken by "Salad Days". The production made a star of Oscar Ashe, but probably owed much of its success to providing battle-weary troops with lavish spectacle, scantily-clad slave girls and a chance to forget the Great War's trenches. Its incredible success was not repeated on Broadway, in spite of Tyrone Power in the lead, where the New York production in October 1917 managed just 208 performances. This first revival in July 1940 was withdrawn two months later because of the Blitz. It returned in July the following year and played till November.

Original London production: His Majesty's, August 1916

THE CHOCOLATE SOLDIER (3rd Revival)

London run: Shaftesbury Theatre, August 20th (23 performances – withdrawn due to bombing raids)

Music: Oscar Straus

Book & Lyrics: Leopold Jacobsen & Rudolph Bernauer

English version: Stanislaus Stange

Director: Anne Croft

Musical Director: Albert Rouse

Producer: James Shirvell & Anne Croft

Cast: Bruce Carfax (*Lt. Bumerli*), Doris Francis (*Nadina Popoff*), Ella Mayne (*Aurelia Popoff*), Leo Sheffied (*Col. Kasimir Popoff*), Arthur Lucas (*Major Alexius Spiridoff*)

Notes: The run came to a sudden end on September 5th, following the heavy bombing raid. A few weeks later the cast was re-assembled for a provincial tour.

Original London production: Lyric, September 1910

First revival: Lyric Theatre, September 1914

Second revival: Shaftesbury, March 1932



August 20th 1940 - June 25th 1941

There were no new musical productions in London throughout this period because of the Blitz



ME AND MY GIRL (1st Revival)

London run: Coliseum, June 25th (208 performances)

Music: Noel Gay

Book & Lyrics: L. Arthur Rose & Douglas Furber

Director: Lupino Lane

Choreographer: Fred Leslie

Musical Director: George Windeatt

Producer: Oswald Stoll

Cast: Lupino Lane (*Bill Snibson*), Helen Barnes (*Sally Smith*), Ann Booth (*Duchess*), Barry Lupino (*Sir John*), Wallace Lupino (*Parchester*), Nita Harvey (*Lady Jacqueline*)

Notes: This was mainly the original production with a number of cast changes.

Original run Victoria Palace, December 1937

CHU CHIN CHOW (Return visit)

London run: Palace July 22nd (158 performances)

Music: Frederic Norton

Book & Lyrics: Oscar Ashe

Director: Robert Atkins

Musical Director: ?

Producer: Alfred E. Bundy

Cast: Lyn Harding (*Abu Hasan*), Rosalinde Fuller (*Zahrat Al-Kalub*), Marjorie Browne (*Marjanah*), Jerry Verno (*Ali Baba*), Noel Leyland (*Nur Al-Huda*), Peter Bennett (*Kasim Baba*), Kay Bourne (*Alcolom*), Dorothy Vernon (*Mahbubah*), Malcolm McEachern "Mr Jetsam" (*Abdullah*)

This was the same production from July 1940 – forced to leave London because of the Blitz. It was principally the same cast with one or two small changes.

Original London production: His Majesty's, August 1916



Oscar Ashe as Chu Chin Chow, 1916

LADY BEHAVE

London run: His Majesty's, July 24th (401 performances)

Music: Edward Horan

Lyrics: Frank Eyton

Book: Stanley Lupino & Arty Ash

Director: Stanley Lupino

Choreographer: Freddie Carpenter

Musical Director: Mantovani

Producer: Jack Hylton & William Mollison

Cast: Bernie Clifton (*Lew Stanton*), Sally Gray (*Fay Denver*), Stanley Lupino (*Tony Meyrick*), Pat Kirkwood (*Bonnie Drew*), Arthur Gomez (*Al Govanie*), Hartkey Power (*Jimmie Blake*), Gretchen Franklin, Oriel Ross, Sonny Ray

Songs: I'm a Nil, If This is Love I Like It, Ain't It Grand, Tell me Now, Think it Over, Fifty-Fifty, You Are the Springtime

Story: The story takes place in Hollywood where successful film-star Lew Stanton is in love with Fay Denver, a humble stand-in. She refuses to marry him because she wants to succeed in her own right, not because she is the wife of a top star. Another romantic couple are stunt-man Tony Meyrick and up-and-coming actress Bonnie Drew. They do get married, but her former boyfriend, Al Govanie, a violent gangster just released from Sing-Sing returns to claim her.

Tony is passed off as Bonnie's brother, and they seek the aid of script-writer Jimmie Blake to help invalidate the "wedding" of Al and Bonnie. In the course of these plans Tony, disguised as a bride, is married to Jimmie by the short-sighted registrar. By the end Fay is a star in her own right and marries Lew, nasty Al gets his come-uppance, and Tony and Bonnie are reunited as proper man and wife.

Notes: The show ran for nine months, till April 1942, playing twice daily at 2pm and 5.15pm – a means of dealing with the threat of night-time bombing and transport problems. Two months into the run Stanley Lupino was taken ill and was temporarily replaced with Bobby Howes. Stanley Lupino did eventually return to the show and stayed for the rest of the run, but just three months later, he died, aged 48. His partnership with Laddie Cliff, who had died five years earlier, was one of the most successful of the 1930s, and with Stanley Lupino's death many people felt this was the end of a particular chapter of musical theatre.



Pat Kirkwood



Vic Oliver

GET A LOAD OF THIS

London run: Hippodrome, November 19th (698 performances)

Music & Lyrics: Manning Sherwin & Val Guest

Additional numbers: Various

Book: James Hadley Chase & Arthur Macrae

Director: Robert Nesbitt

Choreographer: Joan Davis

Musical Director:

Producer: George Black

Cast: Vic Oliver (*Vic Vandyke*), Jack Allan (*Stooge*), Albert Lieven (*Rabener*), Charles Farrell (*Borg*), Peter Bernard (*Willie*)

Songs: Venice in the Fall, Casanova, The Military in Me, Tahitian Rendezvous, Lady Here's Your Wreath, Mr Lucifer, Cavalcade of Broadway.

Story: Vic Vandyke is the part-owner and compere of New York's Orchid Room night-club, unaware that he is being fleeced by his partner, Rabener, who is secretly a top gangster. Vic and his on-stage Stooge are blithely ignorant of the gang warfare which is going on around him, with the antics of gun-toting Borg and Willie being passed off as part of a "crazy fun act". The real cabaret acts include Celia Lipton, the star singer, Jack & Daphne, a vocal act, the Cairoli Brothers, musical clowns and a conjurer, a tap-dancing act, and so on.

Notes: This was a cabaret/revue – the house curtains never fell, and there was just one set – the Orchid Room – and it was a series of sketches and scenas very tenuously wrapped around a plot of sorts. Running twice daily at 2pm and 5.15pm it ran for seven successful months, and then went out on a provincial tour with Ted Ray replacing Vic Oliver.

TWENTY TO ONE (1st Revival)

London run: Victoria Palace, February 10th (408 performances)

Music: Billy Mayerl

Lyrics: Frank Eyton

Book: L. Arthur Rose

Director: Lupino Lane

Choreographer: Fred A. Leslie

Musical Director: Mantovani

Producer: Lupino Lane

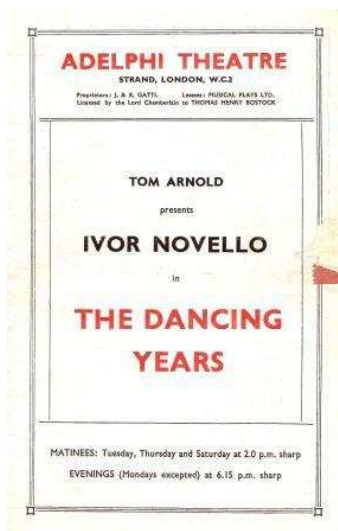
Cast: Violet Blythe (*Mrs Murgatroyd-Smith*),
Richard Dolman (*Timothy Quaintance*), Lupino Lane (*Bill Snibson*),
Lauri Lupino Lane (*Bill Briggs*), Greta Fayne (*Mary Wallington*),
Wallace Lupino (*General Wallington*), Winnie Sloane (*Lucretia Harbottle*)



Lauri Lupino Lane

Notes: This revival had a longer run and played more performances than its original production in seven years earlier.

Original London run: Coliseum, November 1935



THE DANCING YEARS (1st Revival)

London run: Adelphi, March 14th (969 performances)

Music: Ivor Novello

Lyrics: Christopher Hassall

Director: Leontine Sagan

Choreographer: Freddie Carpenter

Musical Director: Harry Acres

Producer: Tom Arnold

Cast: Ivor Novello (*Rudi Kleber*), Muriel Barron (*Maria Zeigler*),
Roma Beaumont (*Grete Schöne*), Olive Gilbert (*Cécile Kurt*),
Peter Graves (*Franzl*), Victor Bogetti (*Prince Charles Metternich*)

Notes: This first revival followed its long provincial tour, after it was forced to leave London because of the outbreak of war. This time it ran for 969 performances, again forced to close in July 1944 because of increased bombing activity. Earlier in 1944 Ivor Novello had to leave the show, having been sentenced to eight weeks imprisonment. He was found guilty of illegally

obtaining petrol for his Roll Royce car by claiming it was being used for essential war work. Miss Dora Constable, a “fan”, and an employee of Electric and General Industrial Trusts Ltd, approached him when he was refused a permit to obtain petrol for his car to take him to his weekend home in Berkshire. She suggested that if his car was leased to her employers it would be registered for official industrial use and could be made available to him for weekends. Ivor Novello claimed he believed this transfer to be bona fide and had no idea that he was breaking the law. Miss Constable’s employers knew nothing of this arrangement, though she had falsely stated otherwise. She was fined £55 with £25 costs. The judge stated that an example needed to be made in the case of Mr Novello, since he was a prominent and wealthy figure.

Having served his sentence, he was released from Wormwood Scrubs on Monday June 12th, and after a week’s break to recover, he returned to his role on June 20th. The audience was expecting to see his understudy, but no pre-show announcement was made, and the place was buzzing with rumours that possibly Novello himself was back. When he made his entrance the place erupted with cheers and a standing ovation. The audience clearly saw him as a victim and welcomed back their hero.

Original London run: Drury Lane, March 1939

BLOSSOM TIME

London run: Lyric Theatre, March 17th (107 performances)

Music: Schubert, arranged by G.H. Clutsam

Book: Rodney Ackland

Director: Robert Nesbitt

Musical Director: Tom Lewis

Producer: Tom Arnold

Cast: Richard Tauber (*Franz Schubert*), Leueen MacGrath (*Vicki*), John Deverell (*Wimpassinger*), Neal Arden (*Peter von Hohenburg*), Netta Westcott (*Archduchess*), Peter Upcher (*Max*), Charles Gillespie (*Moritz*), Darroll Richards (*Joseph*), Frank Royde (*Vogl*), Margaret Yarde (*Frau Stomp*), Bertram Dench (*Concert Manager*), Hella Kurty (*Mitzi Keller*)



Story: Schubert is hopelessly in love with Vicki, the daughter of Wimpassinger, the dancing school master, but she is in love with Peter von Hohenburg, a dashing young lieutenant. Because this is a world where music can work miracles - a dragon-like Archduchess invites a music-master to call her by her Christian name simply because she has melted under the strains of a beautiful melody; a female Colonel-in-Chief is so taken with a waltz that she instantly promotes her soldier dancing partner to officer rank - Schubert's artist friends, Max, Moritz and Joseph all try to help his quest. When the star tenor, Vogl, is forced to miss a big Imperial Concert, they persuade Schubert to take his place, hoping his beautiful voice will win the love of Vicki. With complications from his interfering landlady, Frau Stomp, and from the Concert Hall Manager and from fellow concert performer Mitzi Keller, it all ends with Schubert forced to forget the girl and return to his first love, music.

Notes: Richard Tauber had played Schubert in several productions and tours of "Das Dreimäderlhaus" in Europe, and had presented a version of it in 1933 at the Aldwych Theatre under the title "Lilac Time". The following year he had appeared in a successful film version, and now, with Rodney Ackland, he had adapted the film-script into a new version of the story – a quite different plot from "Lilac Time", with new characters and including new musical material. This new version was given the title "Blossom Time" and had played a long provincial theatre tour before coming into the Lyric. (There had been a previous version of "Das Dreimäderlhaus" performed under the title "Blossom Time" in New York in 1921. This earlier version used Schubert's music arranged by Sigmund Romberg but had never been performed in London. Although it shared the same title, this Tauber version was a completely different show.) It ran twelve weeks in London after which some of the principals stayed on at the same theatre for a production of "Land of Smiles" while "Blossom Time" returned to the provinces with some cast changes.

THE MAID OF THE MOUNTAINS (3rd Revival)

London run: London Coliseum, April 1st (224 performances)

Music: Harold Fraser-Simpson & James W. Tate

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

Book: Frederick Lonsdale

Director: Emile Littler

Choreographer: Philip Buchel & Betty Fox

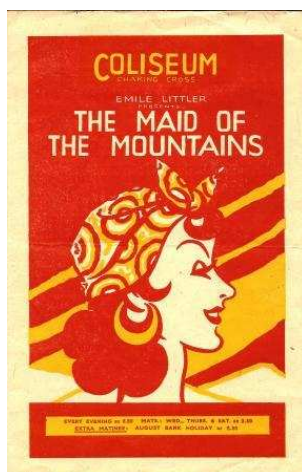
Musical Director: Michael Collins

Cast: Sylvia Cecil (*Teresa*), Malcolm Keen (*Baldassarre*), Dan Noble (*Beppo*), Sonnie Hale (*Antonio*), Elsie Randolph (*Vittoria*), Davy Burnaby (*General Malona*)

Notes: Original London run: Daly's, February 1917

First revival: Daly's December, 1921

Second revival: London Hippodrome, December 1930



FULL SWING

London run: Palace, April 16th (468 performances)

Music: George Posford, Harry Parr-Davies & others

Book & Lyrics: Arthur Macrae, Archie Menzies & Jack Hulbert

Director: Jack Hulbert

Choreographer: Buddy Bradley & Jack Hulbert

Musical Director: Robert Probst

Producer: Tom Arnold & Lee Ephraim

Cast: Cicely Courtneidge (*Kay Porter*),

Jack Hulbert (*Jack Millett*),

Kenneth Kent (*Dr Carlos*),

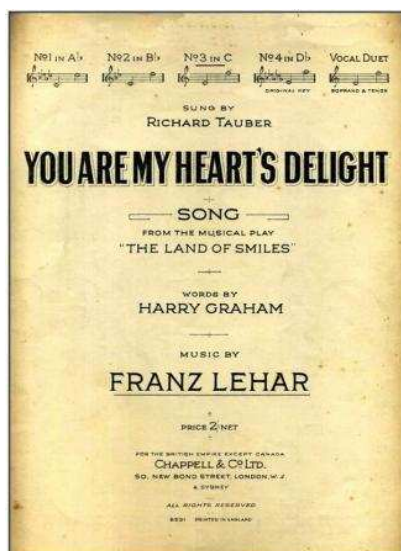
George de Warfaz (*Sebastian*),

Gabrielle Brune (*Sally*),

Nora Swinburne (*Carole Markoff*)

Songs: Shopping Eating and the Nine o Clock News, You Only Want it 'Cos You Haven't Got It, Mamma Buy Me That, Music Makes Me Mad, Love is Love Anywhere, Follow My Dancing Feet, I'm Cleo from Rio, The Empire Depends on You

Notes: This was a follow-up to the great success of "Under Your Hat". Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert played the same characters – Kay Porter and Jack Millett – and once again were on a secret mission on behalf of the War Office. This time their task was to retrieve the dossier stolen by the evil Dr Carlos and his sidekick, Sebastian. They also need to rescue their friend Sally, kidnapped by the wicked doctor. As before, they were hindered by the sultry vamp, Carole Markoff; and, as before, they were obliged to don a whole series of disguises, including being dressed as bearded sailors, etc. This was more or less the same show as "Under Your Hat" but with a different story line, and, like its predecessor, it was a great success. It ran for just over a year, closing May 29th 1943 after 468 performances.



THE LAND OF SMILES (2nd Revival)

London run: Lyric, June 18th (30 performances)

Music: Franz Lehár

Original Book & Lyrics: Ludwig Herzer & Fritz Löhner

English Book & Lyrics (New): Captain Harry Graham

Director: Felix Edwardes

Musical Director: Tom Lewis

Producer: Tom Arnold

Cast: Richard Tauber (*Prince Sou Chong*),

Josie Fearon (*Lisa*),

Hella Kürty (*Princess Mi*)

Charles Gillespie (*Capt. Rev. Rilva*),

Bertram Dench (*Chi-Fu*)

Notes: This was a new production in a new version. All the posters announced that "Mr Tauber will be singing "You Are My Heart's Delight" – the song that had caused such a sensation when he sang it in the original

London production in 1931. On this opening night it was encored three times. After a three and a half week run the production was withdrawn and started a tour.

Original London run: Drury Lane, May 1931

First revival: Dominion, May 1932



ROSE MARIE (2nd Revival)

London run: Stoll Theatre, July 16th
(149 performances)

Music: Rudolf Friml & Herbert Stothart
Lyrics & Book: Otto Harbach
& Oscar Hammerstein II

Director: Felix Edwardes

Choreographer:

Musical Director: Wolsley Charles

Producer: Tom Arnold & Bernard Delfont

Cast: Marjorie Brown (*Rose Marie*), Raymond Newell (*Jim Kenyon*), Phyllis Monkham (*Lady Jane*), George Lacy (*Hardboiled Herman*), Douglas Quayle (*Edward Hawley*), Betty Frankiss (*Wanda*)

Songs: Rose Marie The Mounties, Indian Love Call, Totem Tom-Tom, The Door of her Dreams, Only a Kiss, Hard Boiled Herman.

Story: Rose-Marie La Flamme, a singer, and fur-trapper Jim Kenyon are in love, but a jealous suitor tries to pin a false murder rap on Jim. True to tradition the Mounties get their man (who turns out to be a woman!) and Rose-Marie and Jim get off into the sunset.

Notes: The show opened on Broadway on September 2nd 1924 and ran for 557 performances. The original cast included Mary Ellis and Dennis King. The fact that there was a murder in this musical caused quite a stir at the time – as it was felt a most unsuitable thing in a “musical comedy”. The London première was at Drury Lane in 1925 with Edith Day and Derek Oldham. Its run of 851 performances made it the longest-running musical of the 1920s. A film version was made in 1928 with Joan Crawford, and two later versions both made considerable changes to the original story – a 1936 film with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, and 1954 version with Howard Keel and Ann Blyth.

This second revival came into the Stoll Theatre for a limited twelve week run as part of its national tour. It ran until October 10th, playing twice daily

Original London production: Drury Lane, March 1925

First revival: Drury Lane, September 1929



Edith Day—the original Rose-Marie 1929

Photo by Stage Photo Co



Mira Nirska leads the Totem Dance - “Totem Tom Tom” in the original 1929 production

Photo by Stage Photo Co

WILD ROSE

London run: Princes Theatre, August 6th (205 performances)

Music: Jerome Kern

Ballet music: Victor Herbert

Book & Lyrics: Guy Bolton & Clifford Grey, etc

Revised by: Frank Eyton & Richard Hearne

Director: Robert Nesbitt

Choreographer: Robert Helpman & Ann Coventry

Musical Director: Reginald Burston

Producer: Frith Shephard

Cast: Jessie Matthews (*Sally*), Richard Hearne (*Maxie*), André Randall (*Gaston de Frey*), Frank Leighton (*Tom Blair*), Elsie Percival (*Rosie Roxie*), Jack Morrison (*Diamond Jim Brady*), Linda Grey (*Lillian Russell*)

Songs: On With the Dance, You Can't Keep a Good Girl Down, Look for the Silver Lining, Sally, Wild Rose, The Schnitza Kommiska, Whip-Poor-Will, The Lorelei, The Church Round the Corner

Story: Maxie, an impoverished archduke from the Balkans, is compelled to earn his living as a waiter in a downtown New York restaurant. He is working alongside Sally, the dishwasher who has dreams of becoming a singing and dancing star, and he encourages her to go in disguise to an elegant party being given in Diamond Jim Brady's Sixth Avenue Theatre. There she passes herself off as Madame Nookerova, a celebrated ballerina, while Maxie passes himself off as a monkey-trainer. In the course of the music-hall "show within a show" Sally obtains an agent, Gaston, and a boyfriend, Tom Blair, as well as a new career as a star in the Ziegfeld Follies.

Notes: This was a revised version of "Sally" which had opened on Broadway on December 21st 1920, running for 570 performances, and then had played the Winter Garden in London from September 10th 1921, for a run of 387 performances. The original London production starred George Grossmith, Dorothy Dickson and Leslie Henson. This revised version had moved the period back to Edwardian days, and was eagerly anticipated because of the return of the ever-popular Jessie Matthews to the West End. A few weeks after opening, faced with more bombing activity and darker nights, the show was performed at 5.30 each evening, with no performance on Friday evenings. The show closed on January 30th 1943 and moved to Northern Ireland as part of a Theatre War Service Council tour.



Jessie Matthews sings "Whip-Poor-Will"

SUSIE

London run: Wimbledon Theatre, August 17th (One week)

Music: Noel Gay

Lyrics: Frank Eyton & Clifford Gray

Book: H.F. Maltby

Director: John Harwood

Musical Director: Leslie Vivian

Producer: Harold V. Neilson

Cast: Peter Cotes (*Rodney Featherstone*), Patrician Byrne (*Teddie Cartwright*), Mary Carr (*Phyllis*), Tony de Lungo (*Emmanuel Montero*), Reginald Palmer (*Jack Denham*), Reginald Purdell (*Chick Osborne*), Jean Colin (*Susie*)

Songs: Someone to Sew Your Buttons On, One Kiss, Living in a World of Make Believe, Why Do You Have to Run After Me?, Do I Have to Explain?, Wanga Wanga

Story: Rodney and Teddie Featherstone seek to resolve their financial difficulties by marrying their daughter, Phyllis, to Emmanuel Montero, a wealthy corned beef merchant from the Argentine. Jack Denham, previously engaged to Phyllis, returns from Natal with his friend Chick Osborne, and meets Susie, the Cinderella-like ward of the Featherstones. Chick spreads the story that Jack is now a millionaire from Kimberley diamond mines, and the meat merchant is rapidly dropped. But when the hoax is found out and Jack is again banished as a son-in-law, he finds he has fallen in love with Susie with whom he returns to Africa. This leaves faithless Phyllis with her meat magnate, only to discover that all his fortunes have been lost in a factory fire.

Notes: This was a revised version of H.F. Maltby's "Jack O'Diamonds" which had played the Gaiety & Cambridge Theatres in the early part of 1935. The story had undergone some changes and a number of new songs were added. It came to Wimbledon as part of what was hoped to be a pre-West End tour. However, no real interest was shown. It played one more week at Southsea, and then was dropped.



Enid Stamp Taylor

THE BELLE OF NEW YORK (5th Revival)

London run: Coliseum, September 16th

Transfer: Cambridge Theatre, December 22nd (Total: 155 performances)

Music: Gustave Kerker

Additional Music: Harry Parr-Davies & Mark Lubbock

Additional lyrics: Barbara Gordon & Basil Thomas

Book & Lyrics: Hugh Morton (C.M.S. McLellan)

Revised book: Rodney Ackland

Director: Rodney Ackland & Joan Davis

Choreographer: Joan Davis

Musical Director: Michael Collins

Producer: Emile Littler

Cast: Evelyn Laye (*Violet Gray*), Billy Tasker (*Harry Bronson*), Billy Danvers (*Ichabod Bronson*), Dimitri Vetter (*Karl von Pumpnick*), Irving Kaye (*Blinky Bill*), Enid Stamp Taylor (*Cora Angelique*), Leslie Beaufort (*Doc Snifkins*)

This was an updated version. All the hit songs of 1898 had been retained but had been given modern tempi and orchestrations. The dialogue had been modernised and the story slightly “tweaked”. It was performed at 2.30 every afternoon and with evening performances at 6pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The show transferred to the smaller Cambridge Theatre to make way for the Coliseum’s pantomime, and ran twice daily till January 9th before going on tour.

Original London run : Shaftesbury Theatre, April 1898

First Revival: Lyceum, June 1914; Second revival: Lyceum, May 1919

Third revival: Daly’s , April 1931; Fourth revival: Garrick, August 1933

WALTZ WITHOUT END

London run: Cambridge Theatre, September 29th

Transfer: Lyric Theatre, December 8th (Total 181 performances)



Jane Carr as Wanda & Ivor Sheridan as Chopin



Bertram Wallis

WALTZ WITHOUT END

London run: Cambridge Theatre, September 29th

Transfer: Lyric Theatre, December 8th (Total 181 performances)

Music: Chopin (arranged by Bernard Grün)

Book & Lyrics: Eric Maschwitz & Bernard Grün

Director: Jack Buchanan

Choreographer & Ballet Direction: Pola Nirenska, Mary Skeaping
& Anna Ivanova

Musical Director: Bernard Grün

Cast: Ivor Sheridan (*Chopin*), Betty Warren (*Zoshia*),
Vernon Kelso (*Vladimir Stowkovski*),
Jimmy Godden (*Prince Woicinski*), Jane Carr (*Wanda*),
Bertram Wallis (*Stranger*)

Songs: Let the World Go Round to Music, Don't Fall in Love

Story: Starting in 1939 with a prologue set during the German assault on Poland, the show quickly moves into flashback. Frederick Chopin, a teacher at the music academy in Warsaw, is popular with his students and especially the college maid, Zoshia. Two former students arrive: the rich Vladimir Stowkovski and the impecunious Prince Woicinski, bringing Wanda, his daughter, who would like to study singing. Chopin is ordered to teach her, but he refuses and is

dismissed from the Academy. Wanda is offended by the refusal of this arrogant young man, but later, when she meets him, he tells her his name is Joseph Fredericks and they fall in love. They return to Woicinski Castle for Chopin to give her private lessons. The Prince says it is time for Wanda to marry, and she agrees – but is horrified to learn that her father intends her to marry the wealthy Stowkovski and not “Joseph Fredericks”. Then she discovers Joseph’s real identity, and accepts her father’s choice. Chopin, now penniless returns to Paris, accepting that it is better for his music if he remains alone.

Notes: The show features the life and music of Chopin, with a number of comedy scenes – including bailiffs trying to seize the Prince’s goods and chattels, and a number of lavish ballet sequences. Although it ran for a respectable number of performances it was not universally accepted by the critics. James Agate said of the show: "To alter a composer's rhythms, key and tempi is to murder that composer. To make voices sing words that are the acme of tawdry nonsense is to destroy an exquisite reputation." (S. Times) (This was the last West End appearance of the 68 year old Bertram Wallis, a stalwart of musical theatre from early Edwardian times onwards, and known as one of the tallest men to appear on the British stage. He was said to be 6'10" tall!)

LILAC TIME (8th Revival)

London run: Stoll, October 13th (80 performances)

Music: Franz Schubert, arranged by Heinrich Berte & G.H. Clutsam

English version & Lyrics: Adrian Ross

Director: Pat Hillyard

Musical Director: Walford Hyden

Cast: Frank Titterton (*Schubert*), Irene Eislinger (*Lili*), Derek Oldham (*Von Schober*),
George Graves (*Christian Veit*) Maria Minetti (*Marini*), Rubina Gilchrist & Ella Drury (*Tilli & Wili*),
Arthur Hosking (*Count Scharntorff*)

Notes: The production played daily at 2.30pm with evening performances on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at 6pm. It closed on December 10th.

Original London production: Lyric Theatre, December 1922

First Revival: Lyric, December 1925; Second Revival: Daly's December, 1927

Third Revival: Daly's Theatre, 1928; Fourth Revival : Lyric Theatre, May 1930

Fifth Revival: Globe, December 1932; Sixth Revival: Alhambra, December 1933

Seventh revival: Coliseum, July 1936

DU BARRY WAS A LADY

London run: His Majesty's, October 22nd

Transfer: Phoenix, December 22nd (Total: 178 performances)

Music & Lyrics: Cole Porter

Book: Herbert Fields & B.G. Dr Sylva

Director: Richard Bird

Choreographer: Joan Davis

Musical Director: Harry Collins

Producer: Tom Arnold & Harry Foster

Cast: Arthur Riscoe (*Louis Blore*), Frances Day (*May Daly*), Frances Marsden (*Alice Barton*), Jackie Hunter (*Charley*), Bruce Trent (*Alex Barton*), Teddy Beaumont (*Harry Norton*)

Songs: It Ain't Etiquette, Love Beckoned in 52nd Street, Come On In, Do I Love You? Give Him the Oo-La-La, Well Did ya Evah?, It was Written in the Stars, Katie Went to Haiti, Friendship

Story: Louis Blore was the washroom attendant in a swanky New York club, and totally smitten with May Daly, the glamorous star of the club's cabaret. Now he has won \$75,000 on the Irish sweepstake he quits his job and goes all out to impress May. However, she is in love with a married man, Alex Barton, unhappily married to Ann. Charley, Louis's replacement, suggests that Louis slip Alex a Mickey Finn, but Louis messes it up and accidentally drinks it himself. In his drugged dream Louis becomes King Louis XV of France, May is Madame du Barry, Charley the Dauphin, Ann is a lady-in-waiting and Alex is a peasant who wrote a rude song about The King and Du Barry. After a series of dream adventures Louis wakes and realises that Alex is the man for May and uses his winnings to pay for Alex's divorce from Ann, and decides to go back to his old job.

Notes: The original Broadway show opened on December 6th 1939 starring Ethel Merman, Bert Lahr and Betty Grable and ran for 408 performances. During the Broadway run Ethel Merman was succeeded by Betty Allen, Gypsy Rose Lee and Frances Williams – whilst Betty Grable was whisked off to Hollywood to become a top star. The London production transferred from His Majesty's to the Phoenix to make way for Jack Hylton's pantomime "Jack and Jill" with Arthur Askey.



Photo by Fred Daniels

Frances Day as May Daly



LET'S FACE IT

London run: Hippodrome, November 19th (348 performances)

Music & Lyrics: Cole Porter

Book: Dorothy & Herbert Fields

Director: Charles Henry

Choreographer: Joan Davis

Musical Director: George Windeatt

Producer: Tom Arnold & Jack Waller

Cast: Joyce Barbour (*Maggie Watson*), Noele Gordon (*Nancy Collister*), Babette O'Deal (*Corneila Pigeon*), Bobby Howes (*Jerry*), Leigh Stafford (*Eddie*), Jack Stamford (*Frankie*), Pat Kirkwood (*Winnie*), Pat Leonard (*Jean*), Zoe Gail (*Muriel*)

Songs: Farming, Everything I Love, Ace in the Hole, You Irritate Me So, Let's Not Talk About Love, A Little Rumba Numba, I Hate You Darling, A Lady Needs a Rest, I'm Taking My Steppes to Russia (Interpolated: Melody in 4F)

Story: Three disgruntled matrons, Maggie Watson, Nancy Collister and Cornelia Pigeon, having grown suspicious of their husbands' numerous hunting trips, hire three rookies from the nearby Camp Roosevelt army base for an evening of fun and games. The boys are Jerry, Eddie and Frankie. Comic complications arise when both the husband and the soldiers' neglected girl friends turn up: Winnie, Jean and Muriel.

Notes: The Broadway production opened October 29th 1942 and ran for 547 performances, starring Danny Kaye in his first starring role, Eve Arden and Vivian Vance. The interpolated "Melody in 4F" was specially created for Danny Kaye and his rapid-delivery gimmick. This English production had opened a long tour some five months before coming into London, and then settled down for an excellent West End run of 348 performances, ending on June 12th 1943. A film version with Bob Hope, Betty Hutton and Eve Arden was released in 1943.

THE DESERT SONG (3rd Revival)

London run: Prince of Wales, January 16th (Eight week season)

Music: Sigmund Romberg

Book & Lyrics: Oscar Hammerstein II, Otto Harbach & Frank Mandel

Director: James Shirvell

Musical Director: King Palmer

Producer: James Shirvell

Cast: Harry Welchman (*Pierre Birabeau*), Eleanor Fayre (*Margot Bonvalet*), Frederic Bentley (*Bennie Kidd*), Phyllis Baker (*Azuri*), Sidney Pointer (*Sid el Kar*), Victor Standing (*Capt Paul Fontaine*), Olive Rose (*Clementina*), Helen Barnes (*Susan*)

Notes: This revival was announced as being for a limited eight week run, finishing the middle of March, and then becoming the second of James Shirvell's two separate "Desert Song" tours in the provinces.

Original London run: Drury Lane, 1927

First revival: Alhambra, June 1931

Second revival: Coliseum, September 1936

OLD CHELSEA

London run: Princes, February 17th (95 performances)

Music: Richard Tauber

Additional music: Bernard Grün

Lyrics: Walter Ellis & Fred S. Tysh

Book: Walter Ellis

Director: Edward Stirling

Choreographer: Lydia Sokolova

Musical Director: Serge Krish

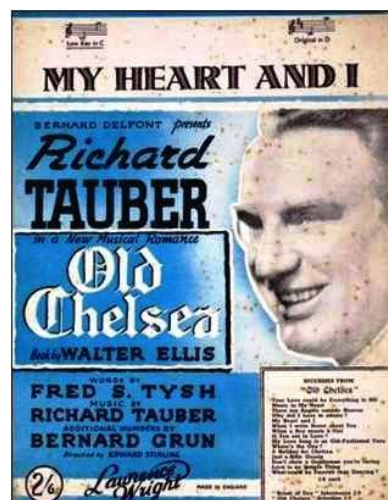
Producer: Bernard Delfont

Cast: Richard Tauber (*Jacob Bray*), Nancy Brown (*Nancy Gibbs*), Francis Robert (*Lord Ranelagh*), Carole Lynne (*Mary Fenton*)

Songs: My Heart and I, There are Angels Outside Heaven, If You Are in Love, Just a Little Gossip

Story: Jacob Bray is longing to have his opera performed, and things look promising when the star soprano, Nancy Gibbs sings extracts to her wealthy lover, Lord Ranelagh, and he agrees to put up the money. During rehearsals Jacob falls in love with Nancy, and this soon becomes an open secret in the theatre world, and when word gets to Lord Ranelagh he asks Nancy to pull out of the performance. She refuses but at the last moment hears that Ranelagh has been injured in a riding accident, and informs Jacob that her love for Ranelagh must come before the opera. Faced with losing both his love and the production of his opera, a distraught Jacob is saved when young Mary, the backstage milliner, is able to step in, take over the leading role and lead everything to a happy ending.

Notes: This had been on a provincial tour for some time, including a Christmas season at Edinburgh, and despite its great success outside London, the West End audiences were polite rather than enthusiastic. Tauber had a magnificent tenor voice, but he was rather portly, had a heavy accent in his spoken dialogue and was not a very impressive actor. Provincial audiences adored him, but this show only managed a two and a half month run, ending on May 1st after 95 performances before returning to its successful tour. It did return to the West End for one week in February 1944.



THE MERRY WIDOW (4th Revival)

London run: His Majesty's, March 4th (302 performances)

Music: Franz Lehar

Lyrics: Adrian Ross

Book and Adaptation: Basil Hood

Director: William Mollison & Cyril Ritchard

Choreographer: Robert Helpman

Musical Director: Bernard Grün

Producer: William Mollison & Cyril Ritchard

Cast: Madge Elliott (*Sonia*), Cyril Ritchard (*Danilo*), Nancy Evans (*Natalie*), George Graves (*Popoff*), Charles Dorning (*Vicomte Camille*), Grant Tickle (*Marquis*), Carol Raye (*Frou-Frou*)

Notes: The production had undergone some revision and updating, and most significantly the final act in Maxim's had become a kind of cabaret, interpolating a line of Can-Can dancers, and Strauss's Gold and Silver Waltz. The show included topical references to clothes rationing, compulsory wartime feminine registration and the like. The novelty was George Graves as Popoff – playing the same part he had performed nearly forty years earlier.

The show ran for 8 months, giving way for the Christmas pantomime, and then went on a 12 week ENSA overseas tour, with a specially designed cut-down set, but with Madge Elliott and Cyril Ritchard remaining in their roles.

Original London productions: Daly's, 1907 (with Lily Elsie & Joseph Coyne)

First revival: Daly's, May 1923 (with Evelyn Laye & Carl Brisson)

Second revival: Daly's, Touring version returned in 1924 (Nancie Lovat & Carl Brisson)

Third revival: Stoll Theatre, April 1932 (Helen Gilliland & Carl Brisson)



Madge Elliott as Sonia, the Merry Widow



Nita Harvey

LA-DI-DA-DI-DA

London run: Victoria Palace, March 30th (318 performances)

Music: Noel Gay

Book & Lyrics: Stanley Lupino, Barry Lupino & Arty Ash

Director: Lupino Lane

Choreographer: Buddy Bradley, John Regan & Fred A. Leslie

Musical Director: Mantovani

Producer: Lupino Lane

Cast: Wallace Lupino (*Mr Digbat*), Winnie Sloane (*Mrs Digbat*), Greta Faynes (*Greta Digbat*), Nita Harvey (*Nita Digbat*), Violet Blythe (*Lady Baston*), Leslie Weston (*Mr Ellis*), Lupino Lane (*Bill Stub*), Willie Black (*Angus McTavish*)

Notes: This was pretty much the same team that had made “Twenty to One” a hit, and included several of the principals from “Me and My Girl”, and was therefore very much a formula Lupino Lane show. It was a revised and re-written version of “That’s a

Pretty Thing” which had been a moderate success at Daly’s in 1933. It had the same story about false diamonds, and after a very similar first act plot, the second act moved into Lady Baston’s night-club allowing a series of cabaret acts and sketches to take place. Mr Ellis, the club’s compere introduced a musical clown act, a burlesque levitation act, a dancing act, and a cabaret singer, after which the action moved to the Scottish residence of Angus McTavish in order to resolve the plot of missing and fake diamonds. The Scottish finale enabled a grand Highland dancing finale. This was clearly an attempt to cash in on the established formula, and although the trio of star names remained popular, the show itself managed just six and a half months.

Original version: Daly’s, November 1933 under the title “That’s a Pretty Thing”

SHOW BOAT (1st Revival)

London run: Stoll Theatre, April 17th (264 performances)

Music: Jerome Kern

Book & Lyrics: Oscar Hammerstein II

Director: James Moran

Choreographer: Max Rivers

Musical Director: Reginald Burston/Albert W. Leggett

Producer: Prince Littler

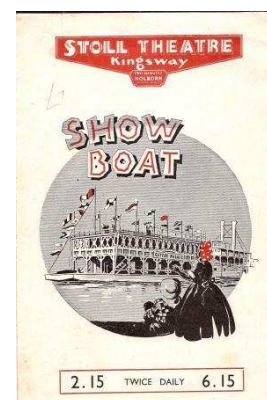
Cast: Gwenyth Lascelles (*Magnolia*), Bruce Carfax (*Gaylord Ravenal*), Mark Daly (*Cap’n Andy*), Pat Taylor (*Julie La Verne*), Hester Paton Brown (*Parthy*), Malcolm McEachern “Mr Jetsam” (*Joe*), Lucille Benstead (*Queenie*), ylvia Kellaway (*Ellie May*), Leslier Kellaway (*Frank Schultz*), Robert Elson (*Steve Baker*)

Songs: Ol’ Man River, Make Believe, Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Man of Mine, Life Upon the Wicked Stage, Why Do I Love You?, Bill

Story: This is the story of Magnolia Hawkes and Gaylord Ravenal from their first meeting on the Natchez levee in the mid 1880s, to their reunion aboard the “Cotton Blossom” in 1927. In between they fall in love, act in showboat productions, marry, move to Chicago at the time of the 1893 World Fair, lose their money because of Ravenal’s gambling addiction, and separate. Magnolia then becomes a musical-comedy star on Broadway. Secondary plots involve the relationship between mixed-race Julie and showboat leading man Steve, and the harsh life of Negro dockworkers represented by Joe.

Notes: Based on Edna Ferber’s novel, this is one of the most significant musicals of them all. It is notable for its integrated plot and for being the first musical to deal with love between different races. It dealt with “real” issues - alcoholism, poverty, gambling - and integrated them into the kind of show which up to then had been a frothy, glamorous frivolous escapist form of entertainment. The original Broadway production ran for 572 performances in New York’s Ziegfeld Theater in 1927, followed by the London premiere with 350 performances at Drury Lane in 1928. The first London production featured Edith Day, Cedric Hardwicke and Paul Robeson.

Original London run: Drury Lane, May 1928



THE VAGABOND KING (2nd Revival)

London run: Winter Garden, April 22nd
(94 performances)

Music: Rudolph Friml

Lyrics: Brian Hooker

Book: Brian Hooker, Russell Janney
& W.H. Post

Director: Robert Nesbitt

Choreographer: Joan Davis

Musical Director: Bob Wolly

Producer: Tom Arnold and Lee Ephraim

Cast: Webster Booth (*Francois Villon*),
Syd Walker (*Guy Taborie*),
Anne Ziegler (*Katherine de Vaucelles*),
Henry Baynton (*King Louis XI*),
Tessa Deane (*Huguette du Hamel*),
Arthur Ellis (*Thibaut*),
Sara Gregory (*Lady Mary*)

Notes: This was considered to be a major achievement in the wartime West End. In spite of all the shortages of material and manpower this was lavishly costumed, with a large cast and orchestra, and quite outstanding scenery.



Photo by John Vickers

Anne Ziegler & Webster Booth

It had a pre-London tour which opened in Blackpool in February, but Webster Booth was taken ill after just two performances, and Victor Standing (who had played the role in earlier years) stepped in as an emergency replacement. Webster Booth was unable to return for nearly two weeks. Because Victor Standing was already committed to a new tour of "Rio Rita", a third performer - Derek Oldham - appeared as Francois Villon - three different leading men in the first week of the show! By the time the show came to London it was announced that "In order to relieve the considerable vocal strain on Mr Booth and Miss Ziegler, their parts are played at Thursday matinees by Dennis Noble and Maria Eisner." In spite of its critical acclaim, it ended its London season on July 10th, after just twelve weeks and 94 performances

Original London run: Winter Garden, April 1927 ; First revival: Coliseum, March 1937



Photo by John Vickers

THE LISBON STORY

London run: Hippodrome, June 17th

Withdrawn after 492 performances due to bombing raids)

Repeated: Stoll Theatre, October 17th 1944 (54 performances)

Music: Harry Parr-Davies

Book: Harold Purcell

Director: Alexander Marsh & George Black

Choreographer: Wendy Toye

Musical Director: Debroy Somers

Producer: George Black

Cast: Patricia Burke (*Gabrielle Girard*), Jack Livesey (*David Warren*), Lawrence O'Madden (*Mike O'Rourke*), Eleanor Fayre (*Lisette Sargon*), Albert Lieven (*Carl von Schriener*), Mansel Durham (*Pierre Sargon*), Noele Gordon (*Louise Panache*), Czeslaw Konarski (*Evil*).

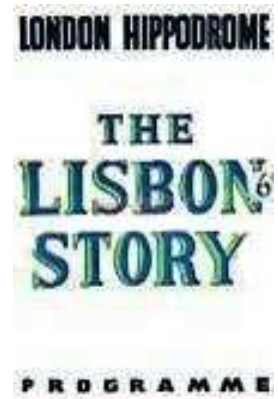
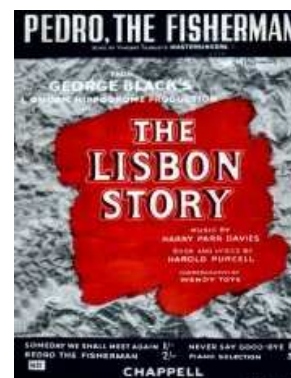
Cast changes-1944 repeat: Maria Elsner (*Gabrielle Girard*), Barrie Livesey (*Mike O'Rourke*), Hilary Allen (*Lisette Sargon*), Karel Stepanek (*Carl von Schriener*), John Turner (*Evil*).

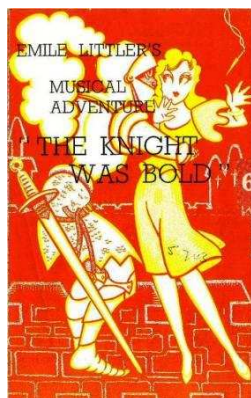
Songs: Pedro the Fisherman, Someday We Shall Meet Again, Never Say Goodbye, For the First Time I've Fallen in Love, Follow the Drum, Happy Days, A Serenade for Sale.

Story: In wartime Paris singing star Gabrielle Girard is parted from her lover David Warren of the British Foreign Office when he is posted to Washington. By chance they meet again in neutral Lisbon, where David and co-agent Mike O'Rourke are caring for Lisette Sargon, whose scientist father hopes to be smuggled from France with important secrets for the allies. Unfortunately, he is captured and imprisoned by Von Schriener, a Nazi Cultural representative whose job it is to persuade exiled and distinguished artists to return home and resume their careers. Gabrielle declines his professional and romantic overtures until he agrees to release Sargon on condition Gabrielle becomes his mistress. There follows an attempt by David and Mike to smuggle Gabrielle, Sargon and Lisette to London but it goes wrong and ends with a furious Von Schriener shooting Gabrielle. She dies as the Germans flee to the sound of Allied bombs and the chorus sing an ever-swelling Marseillaise.

Notes: This stirring story was enhanced with two spectacular dance scenes – one in Portugal, with Spanish peasant and bolero rhythms, and one as a Good and Evil ballet. Its critical reception was mixed – it was too dark

for a musical comedy, and having the heroine killed at the end was revolutionary! But the public loved it, and one song, "Pedro the Fisherman" – put in to cover a scene change – became a huge hit. The show ran more than a year, but closed suddenly along with most other West End theatres, due to renewed heavy bombing. It went on a tour, but came back into London to the Stoll Theatre in October for a further run. With several changes of cast and the ongoing bomb threat, it managed some six weeks, closing on December 2nd.





THE KNIGHT WAS BOLD

London run: Piccadilly, July 1st (10 performances)

Music: Harry Parr-Davies

Lyrics: Barbara Gordon & Basil Thomas

Book: Harriet Jay, Emile Littler & Thomas Browne

Director: Emile Littler & Maxwell Wray

Choreographer: Philip Buchel

Musical Director: David Fish

Producer: Emile Littler

Cast: Fred Kitchen Jnr (*Sir Brian Ballymote*), Gerhard Kempinski (*Otis B. Lloyd*), Enid Stamp Taylor (*Sue Lloyd*), Robert McLachlin (*Dean Pottlebury*), Peter Yardley (*Herald*), Sonnie Hale (*Sir Guy de Vere*), Adele Dixon (*Rowena Brown*), Claud Allister (*Wittle*),

Songs: Whoopee Diddle-di-Dum, Where the Rainbow Ends, I Go on Whistling, Mother Nature, Halfway to Heaven.

Story: The guests arriving at Sir Guy de Vere's Beechwood Castle for the annual regatta include Dean Pottlebury and his eleven daughters, together with Sir Brian Ballymote and two Americans - Otis B. Lloyd and his daughter, Sue. The Americans would like to buy the castle, which is mortgaged to the hilt, but Rowena Brown, in love with Guy but pursued by Sir Brian, tries to persuade him not to sell. During the regatta Guy gets soaked, and his faithful manservant Wittle insists on Guy getting into a restorative mustard bath. Guy falls asleep - and dreams he is back in medieval days. "Saint George for England" cries the Herald; "Saint Pancras for Scotland" cries Sir Guy. His many hilarious adventures in medieval land show him how to keep the castle, solve his problems and win the maiden - which, of course, he does when he wakes up and brings everything to a happy conclusion.

Notes: This was based on the famous 1907 farce "When Knights Were Bold" by Charles Marlow (a pen-name for Harriet Jay). During its pre-London tour it was performed with the title "Kiss the Girls" but reverted to a more familiar name for West End. However, it was a one-week flop: the story was too dated, the humour too juvenile, and Sonnie Hale clearly working much too hard in his efforts to put some life into the show. Everybody loved the comedy song "Whoopee-Diddle-Di-Dum" - but not much more.

IT'S TIME TO DANCE

London run: Winter Garden, July 22nd

Transfer: Lyric Theatre, December 7th (259 performances)

Music & Lyrics: Various

Book: Douglas Furber & L. Arthur Rose

Director: Jack Buchanan

Choreographer: Buddy Bradley

Musical Director: George Windeatt

Producer: Jack Buchanan

Cast: Jack Buchanan (*Willmott Brown*), Elsie Randolph (*Marian Kane*), Fred Emney (*Lord d'Arcy*), Marjorie Brooks (*Conchita d'Alvarez*), Buddy Bradley (*Himself*), Mabel Twemlow (*Lady Dorothy*), Anthony Howard (*Jim Anthony*)

Songs: I'm Looking for a Melody, Marihuana, Rhythm College, Yankee Doodle Came to Town, There's Scandal in the Nursery Rhymes, Look What You've Done

Story: Willmott Brown, a young man of leisure, has his clothes stolen whilst he is bathing, and in his replacement attire he is mistaken for the leader of a gang of crooks. He is saved from arrest because the noble detective Lord d'Arcy recognises him, but then insists on Willmott Brown continuing with this disguise in order to help capture the gang. As a result he is forced to snatch a diamond necklace from the neck of fiery Conchita d'Alvarez, has to disguise himself as a classical violinist, dance at the Buddy Bradley Dance Academy, cope with Lady Dorothy, his fussy aunt, and talk his way out of a violent death at the hands of his gang. He also, of course, has to find the time to woo and win Marian Kane, the love of his life, who is hotly pursued by the real gang-leader, Jim Anthony.

Notes: This was Jack Buchanan's return to the West End after a seven year absence, and this old-fashioned glamorous piece of nostalgia was received with delight. It closed on February 28th 1944 after a run of 259 performances, and immediately began a provincial tour. However less than five weeks later it had a cancelled week because the Manchester Opera House had suffered bomb damage. London's Winter Garden Theatre was empty, so the show returned to London for just one more week. This extra week turned out to be the very last time Jack Buchanan and Elsie Randolph appeared in a London musical.



Jack Buchanan

SUNNY RIVER

London run: Piccadilly, August 18th (2 months)

Music: Sigmund Romberg

Book & Lyrics: Oscar Hammerstein II

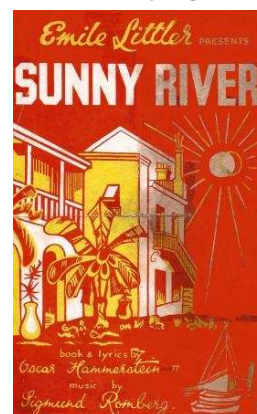
Director: Maxwell Wray

Choreographer: Cleo Nordi

Musical Director: Michael Collins

Cast: Denis Noble (*Jean Gervais*), Evelyn Laye (*Marie Sauvinet*),
Ena Burrell (*Cecile Marshall*), Bertram Wallis (*George Marshall*),
Bernard Astell (*Drunken Man*), Lolita (*Edith Day*), Lionel Trim (*Street Singer*)

Songs: Along the Winding Road, She was a Creole Belle, Can You Sing? Time is Standing Still



Story: Set in New Orleans between 1806 and 1815, the young political idealist Jean Gervais has fallen in love with Marie Sauvinet, a singer at the Café des Oleandres, and he has bought a little house for her. Because of her obvious talents she is awarded a scholarship by the Louisiana Club and is enabled to go and study singing in Paris. Cecile Marshall, the daughter of the lawyer George Marshall, by subtle scheming and falsehood, manages to separate the pair. Marie goes to Paris and Cecile eventually marries Jean. Five years later Marie returns as a famous prima donna, and realises that Jean was the love of her life. They plan to move into the little house, but when they get there they find the inert body of Cecile, and are told by a drunken reveller that she is full of remorse for tricking Jean into marrying her, and collapsed with sorrow. Whilst Jean is helping her, Marie changes her mind and decides to slip away again. Four years later Marie is back only to discover that Jean has been killed in action. The widowed Cecile, realising how her scheming has kept them apart, presents his sword-sash to Marie as a keepsake.

Notes: This was a spectacular show, starring the ever popular Evelyn Laye, and welcoming back Edith Day to the West End after an absence of ten years. In many ways it was an attempt to create another “Show Boat”. However, it did not succeed. Having its hero killed at the end, and denying the show a happy ending was considered to be a bit too “downbeat” for the times – although the lack of a happy ending had not affected the popular “Lisbon Story”. It managed a two month run and was then withdrawn.

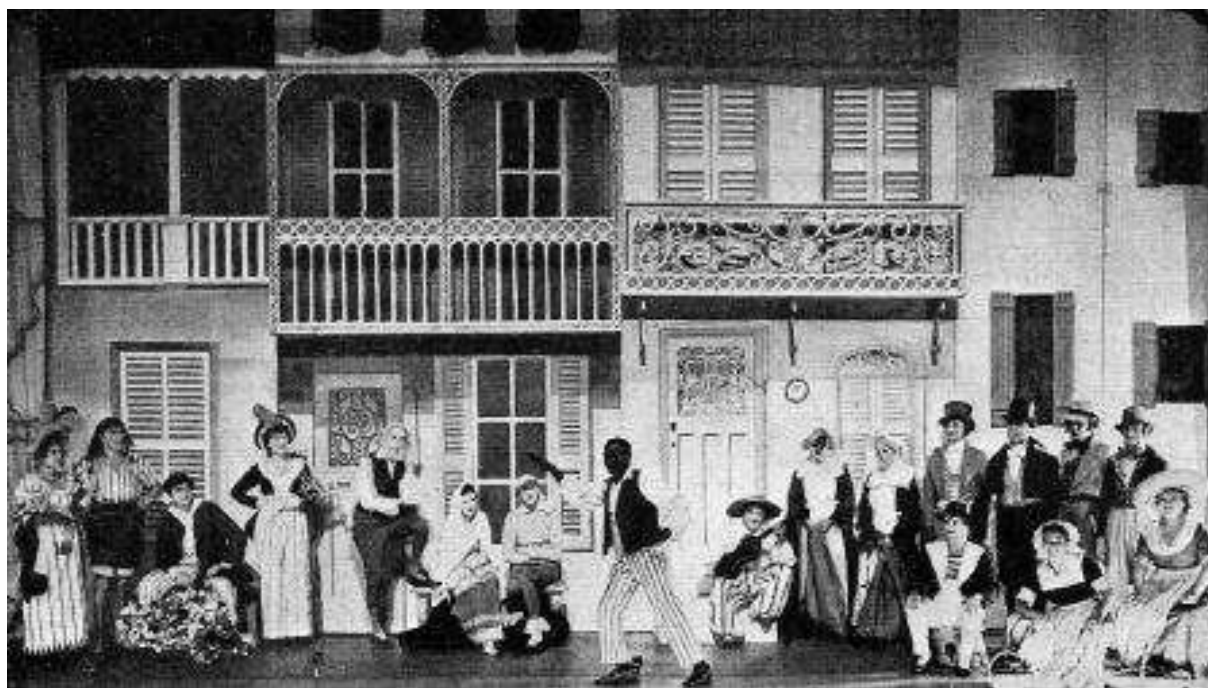


Photo by John Vickers

Lionel Trim and company

SOMETHING IN THE AIR

London run: Palace, September 23rd (336 performances)
(closed July 8th 1944 due to bombing activity)
Re-opened: Palace, October 5th 1944 (163 Performances)

Music: Manning Sherwin

Lyrics: Harold Purcell & Max Kester

Book & Lyrics: Arthur Macrae, Archie Menzies & Jack Hulbert

Director: Jack Hulbert

Choreographer: Buddy Bradley & Jack Hulbert

Musical Director: Robert Probst

Producer: Tom Arnold & Lee Ephraim

Cast: Jack Hulbert (*Jack Pendleton*), Cicely Courtneidge (*Terry Porter*),
Ronald Shiner (*Sgt. Austin*), Robert Holmes (*German Pilot*)



Songs: The Air Force Didn't Want Me, Here is the Place where Your Heart Is, It'll Take a Lot of Getting Used To, You Happen Once in a Lifetime

Story: Jack Pendleton, a wealthy young society man, has just failed to marry his sweetheart, Terry Porter, because they have both joined the forces: he is a groundsman in the RAF and she is a WAAF based in Jack's country house. Many of Jack's servants are also in the forces and occupy

higher ranks than their old master, causing much amusement. However, Jack and Terry are suspected of being German spies, and in order to capture the real spy, they are obliged to don all manner of disguises, working as hat-sellers, as cockney costers, and Edwardian relics. Finally the real spy, attempting to kidnap an RAF scientist, is tracked down to a U-Boat and Jack and Terry, aboard a small speed-boat succeed in ramming and sinking the submarine.

Notes: The Jack Hulbert/Cicely Courtneidge combination was a sure-fire winner. After a nine-month run it was forced out of London by the increased bombing raids, but returned a few weeks later, picking up where it left off, and running until February 24th 1945.

THE LOVE RACKET

London run: Victoria Palace, October 21st ; Transfer: Prince's Theatre, April 8th 1944



THE LOVE RACKET

London run: Victoria Palace, October 21st; Transfer: Prince's Theatre, April 8th 1944
(closed July 8th 1944 due to bombing activity after 324 performances)
Re-opened: Adelphi Theatre, December 23rd 1944 (36 Performances)

Music: Noel Gay

Lyrics: Frank Eyton, Barbara Gordon & Basil Thomas, Leslie Gibbs

Book: Stanley Lupino

Director: William Mollison

Choreographer: Freddie Carpenter

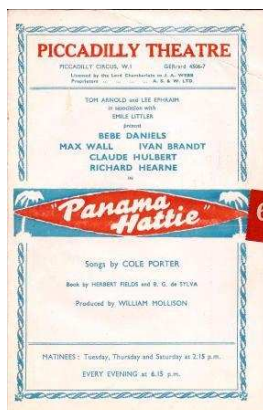
Musical Director: Freddie Bretherton

Cast: Harry Milton (*Johnnie Stanton*), Carol Raye (*Jane Denver*), Roy Royston (*Jimmie*),
Valerie Tandy (*Minnie*), Arthur Askey (*Tony Merrick*), Peggy Carlisle (*Bonnie*), Finlay Currie (*Samuel T. Kelly*),
Hugh Morton (*The Stranger*)

Songs: I've Got You Covered, So Much to Remember, Two Dirty Old Men, I'm You-Minded, Homeward Bound, Reaching for the Moon, Happy Days, A Greek Idyll

Story: Three married couples in Hollywood: Film star Johnnie Stanton and his wife Jane Denver, film-writer Jimmie Blake and his wife Minnie Master, and film-director Tony Merrick and his wife Bonnie Drew are struggling to finance their latest film, when an offer comes from rival film-maker, Samuel T. Kelly. He will pay for their film in return for the loan of Jane Denver to star in Kelly's production of "Reaching for the Moon". Jane doesn't like the idea of working for another studio, and then a stranger arrives liberally throwing bank-notes around, and announces he is the author of "Reaching for the Moon" and retains all the screen rights. Samuel T. Kelly is forced to withdraw, and both films will be financed for Tony Merrick and his colleagues.

Notes: This second posthumous libretto by Stanley Lupino was a kind of sequel to the earlier "Lady Behave" which had successfully played nine months at His Majesty's the previous year. The same three couples who were married at the end of "Lady Behave" now appear in "The Love Racket" – though basically only their names and their marriages continue. The Lupino role was now played by Arthur Askey in his first musical comedy. It was a big hit but was forced to withdraw because of the new bombing raids in the summer of 1944, and went on an ENSA tour, returning to London for a three-week twice-daily Christmas season.



PANAMA HATTIE

London run: Piccadilly Theatre, November 4th
(308 performances)

Music & Lyrics: Cole Porter

Book: Herbert Fields & B.G. De Sylva

Director: William Mollison

Choreographer: Wendy Toye

Musical Director: Harold Collins

Cast: Bebe Daniels (*Hattie Maloney*),
Ivan Brandt (*Nick Bullett*), Max Wall (*Eddy Brown*),
Claude Hulbert (*Vivian Budd*),
Richard Hearne (*Loopy Smith*),
Frances Marsden (*Florrie*), Jack Stanford (*Joe Briggs*),

Georgia MacKinnon (*Leila Tree*), Betty Blacker (*Elizabeth Bullett*),
Marian Pola (*Chiquita*)

Songs: Visit Panama, My Mother Would Love You, I've Still Got My Health,
Fresh as a Daisy, Let's Be Buddies, Make it Another Old Fashioned Please.

Story: In Panama City the ebullient night-club owner, Hattie Maloney, is engaged to marry the blue-blood divorce Nick Bullett. However, Nick has an eight year old daughter, Geraldine, and marriage is out of the question until Geraldine approves. Along the way Hattie frustrates an enemy plot to blow up the Panama Canal and gets mixed up with three crazy sailors in the persons of Joe, Eddy and Loopy.

Notes: The Broadway production was the first to give Ethel Merman top solo billing, and opened on October 30th 1940, running for 501 performances. The English version was notable for the first time Richard Hearne appeared as "himself" rather than as the "old man" character associated with him. A film version was made in 1942 starring Ann Sothern and Red Skelton, and the London production opened in November 1943, with a run of 308 performances.



Bebe Daniels

ARC DE TRIOMPHE

London run: Phoenix, November 9th (222 performances)

Music: Ivor Novello

Lyrics: Christopher Hassall

Book: Ivor Novello

Director: Leontine Sagan

Choreographer: Keith Lester

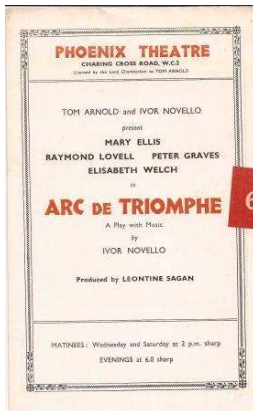
Musical Director: Harry Acres

Producer: Tom Arnold and Ivor Novello

Cast: Mary Ellis (*Marie Forêt*), Peter Graves (*Pierre Bachelet*), Raymond Lovell (*Adhémar de Janze*), Hilary Allen (*Giselle*), Elisabeth Welch (*Josie*), Nesta Ross (*Francoise/Agnes Sorel*)

Songs: Paris Reminds Me of You, Dark Music, Easy To Live With, Waking or Sleeping, The Shepherd's Song, Man Of My Heart, France Will Rise Again, I Wonder Why, Josephine

Story: Marie Forêt, a rising opera singer, rejects the love offered by both Pierre Bachelet and the impresario Adhémar de Janze for the sake of her career. When she achieves stardom she returns to find her real love, Pierre, only to discover he has been killed in the First World War. She hides her sorrow by turning wholeheartedly to her career, both entertaining the troops and as a prima donna in the world of opera. Finally we see her ready to retire from the world of the stage but Adhémar tries to rob her of her farewell performance in the role of Joan of Arc. Adhémar has given this role to his niece, Giselle. However, Giselle tactfully develops a sore throat and Marie gives her farewell performance.



Notes: The non-availability of a bigger theatre meant this latest Ivor Novello show lacked the spectacle and lavish scenery of its predecessors. It also lacked Novello himself, and his regular team of Muriel Barron, Roma Beaumont, etc. However, the by now obligatory contralto solo was included and Olive Gilbert sang it on the opening night. Soon she managed to double the role – appearing in “The Dancing Years” at the Adelphi, and then taking a quick taxi ride to the Phoenix to sing “I Wonder Why” in the character of Agnes Sorel in the last-act “Joan of Arc” opera. Mary Ellis and the Novello name was enough to keep it running until the following July when renewed heavy bombing closed most of the West End.



Mary Ellis

Photo by John Vickers

OLD CHELSEA (1st Revival)

London run: Winter Garden, February 1st (6 performances)

Music: Richard Tauber ; **Additional music:** Bernard Grün

Lyrics: Walter Ellis & Fred S. Tysh; **Book:** Walter Ellis

Director: Edward Stirling; **Choreographer:** Lydia Sokolova

Musical Director: Serge Krish

Producer: Bernard Delfont

Cast: Richard Tauber (*Jacob Bray*), Elisabeth Aveling (*Nancy Gibbs*), Francis Roberts (*Lord Ranelagh*), Olga Gwynne (*Mary Fenton*)

Notes: This turned out to be Richard Tauber’s last appearance in the West End. He continued touring, increasingly suffering from arthritis, and in 1946, after appearing in a film version of “The Lisbon Story”, he travelled to New York to stage his own production of “The Land of Smiles” under the title “This is My Heart”. It flopped and left him with huge personal losses. He was forced to spend six months touring the USA, Canada, Central and South America in order to pay off his debts. In April 1947, Tauber returned to London and sought medical attention for a persistent cough. He was eventually diagnosed with lung cancer: one lung was already useless and the other nearly so. The Vienna State Opera was in London for a short season at the Royal Opera House – their first visit since the war – and they invited Tauber to sing one performance with his old company. On September 27th 1947 he sang the role of Don Ottavio in “Don Giovanni” a small part with two incredibly difficult arias needing perfect technique and breath control. A live recording of that final performance exists and reveals a tone of undiminished focus and steadiness, with somewhat shortened phrasing. A week later, he underwent an operation to remove his left lung, but it was too late. He died on January 8th 1948 at the age of 57.

Original London run: Princes, February 1943

SOMETHING FOR THE BOYS

London run: Coliseum, March 30th (60 performances)

Music & Lyrics: Cole Porter

Book: Herbert & Dorothy Fields

Director: Frank P. Adey

Choreographer: Jack Billings

Musical Director: Van Phillips

Producer: Bernard Delfont

Cast: Evelyn Dall (*Blossom*), Daphne Barker (*Chiquita*), Bobby Wright (*Harry*), Harry Moreny (*Colonel Grubbs*), Leigh Stafford (*Rocky Fulton*), Marianne Davis (*Melanie*)

Songs: See That You're Born in Texas, When My Baby Goes to Town, When We're Home on the Range, Could It Be You?, Hey Good Lookin', He's a Right Guy, I'm in Love with a Soldier Boy, There's a Happy Land in the Sky, By the Mississinewa.

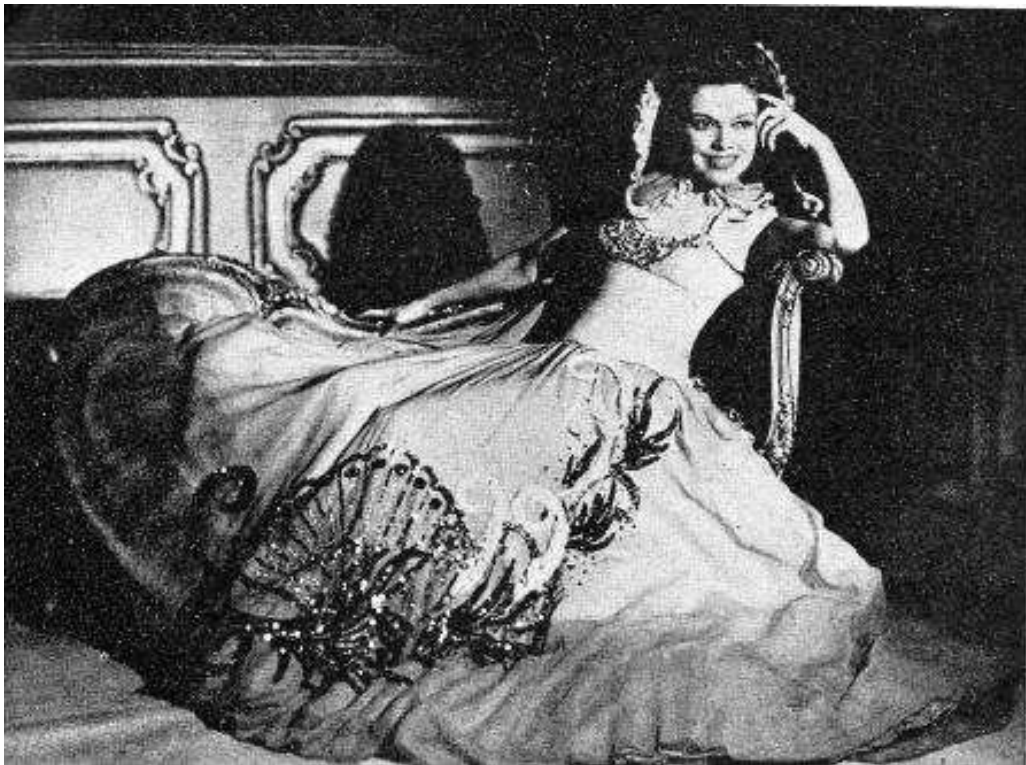
Story: Three cousins, Blossom, Chiquita and Harry, inherit a Texas ranch that is next to a military base. Blossom works in the war department, Chiquita is a night club performer, and Harry Hart is a carnival pitchman. Although none of the cousins know each other, they join together to convert the ranch into a boarding house for soldiers' wives. However, Lieutenant Colonel Grubbs thinks the activities at the house are suspicious and he tries to close it down. Meanwhile, Blossom and Rocky Fulton, a bandleader in the Army band, begin a romance, much to the displeasure of his fiancée, Melanie.

Notes: The musical opened on Broadway on January 7th 1943 starring Ethel Merman in her fifth Cole Porter musical. It ran for exactly one year and 422 performances. The British production began a pre-London tour over Christmas in Glasgow, and moved into London at the end of March. However, it came off very quickly, running just seven weeks and odd days, closing on May 20th



THE LILAC DOMINO (Revival)

London run: His Majesty's April 5th (withdrawn July 8th due to air raids); Repeated: September 14th



Pat Taylor as Georgine

THE LILAC DOMINO (Revival)

London run: His Majesty's April 5th (withdrawn July 8th due to air raids)
Repeated: September 14th (withdrawn for pantomime season)

Music: Charles Cuvillier

Additional songs: Howard Carr & Donovan Parsons

Lyrics: Robert B. Smith

Book: Harry B. Smith

English adaptation: H.C. Sargent

Director: Maxwell Wray

Choreographer: Freddie Carpenter

Musical Director: Freddie Bretherton

Producer: Jack Hylton

Cast: Billy Holland (*Cornelius Cleveden*), Elizabeth French (*Leonie Forde*),
Graham Payn (*Elliston Deyn*), Pat Taylor (*Georgine*),
Bernard Clifton (*Andre d'Aubigny*), Leo Franklyn (*Prosper*),
Richard Dolman (*Norman*), Henry Norman (*Carabana*)

Songs: No Fools Like Old Fools, We Girls Don't Like Them Shy, Let the Gypsies Play, My Fate, This Seems to Me a Tricky Business, For Your Love I Am Waiting, A Pretty Pair, Bells of Bon Secour, Dancing, Dancing, What Has Gone, Seek Find Love's Blind, All Line Up in a Queue



Graham Payn & Pat Taylor

Story: At the Baccarat Hotel in Florida, during a masked ball, everyone is amazed by news that the wealthy old Cornelius Cleveden has found a new young bride, a widow named Leonie Forde. However, it seems Leonie is more interested in Cornelius's shy young step-nephew, Elliston Deyn, who has been promised to Gaston's 18-year-old daughter Georgine. Georgine arrives masked and identified only as the "Lilac Domino". Meanwhile, three young men, André, Prosper and Norman, have lost heavily at cards. They agree that one must seek a wealthy bride in order to repay their gambling debts. The Hon. André d'Aubigny is chosen by the roll of dice to do the marrying. Fortunately, he has already fallen in love with a girl in a lilac domino. However, Georgine learns of the dice game, believes that André is wooing her only for her money, and breaks things off with him even though she returns his love. Carabana, a permanently tipsy gypsy violinist helps to solve the complications and unite the lovers. All ends happily.

Notes: "Der lila Domino" was first performed in Leipzig on February 3rd, 1912, and was regarded as a flop. Entitled "The Lilac Domino" with an English libretto by Harry B. Smith, lyrics by Robert B. Smith, and additional songs by Howard Carr and Donovan Parsons, it opened on Broadway on October 28th 1914, and this time was a success. A revised version was presented in London at the Empire on February 21st 1918 (later transferring to the Palace) and ran for 747 performances, closing on December 13, 1919, an extraordinarily long run at that time. The original London cast included R. Stuart Pigot as Cornelius Cleveden, who died in his dressing room after 565 performances – not having missed a single one. This revised version had changed the location from Nice and Monte Carlo to Florida, and had changed the names of most of the characters.

Original London run: Empire Theatre, February 1918 (transferred to Palace Theatre)



MEET ME VICTORIA

London run: Victoria Palace, April 8th (117 performances)
(withdrawn July 8th due to air raids
Returned: Victoria Palace, Oct 14th (134 performances)

Music: Noel Gay

Lyrics: Frank Eyton

Book: Lupino Lane & Lauri Wylie

Director: Lupino Lane

Choreographer: Max Rivers

Musical Director: Mantovani

Producer: Lupino Lane

Cast: Lupino Lane (*Bill Fish*), Phyllis Robins (*Dot Hawkins*), Dorothy Ward (*Loretta Zelme*), Wallace Lupino (*Dad*), Lauri Lupino Lane (*Jim*), Violet Blythe (*Lady Brayne-Hare*), Doreen Duke (*Claire*)

Songs: You're a Nice Little Baggage, Under the Clock, Many Happy Returns, When Bill is the Bridegroom and I am the Bride

Story: Bill Fish, a cheerful porter at Victoria Station, hopes to marry Dot who runs the refreshment stall, but he needs £100 and promotion to the rank of stationmaster before this can happen. A couple of conmen offer him an easy £100, but get him drunk and marry him off to Loretta Zelme, a circus strong-woman who



needs a British husband to be able to stay in the country. He comes round on the honeymoon train, realising he is supposed to be at Dot's birthday party. After a series of adventures he manages to get to the party, having escaped from the train and exposed the crooked gang of traffickers in citizenship. As a reward, he is promoted to the rank of Stationmaster. The marriage to Zelma is annulled, and he ends up happily preparing to marry Dot. Other characters in the tale are Dot's Dad, Jim, Dot's boxing-mad brother, Lady Brayne-Hare and her daughter, Claire.

Notes: The familiar Lupino family, - and the return of Dorothy Ward, absent from West End musicals since 1931 – meant this was eagerly awaited and a popular success. After three months, along with most West End shows, it was forced out of town because of the new spate of bombing raids. When it returned in October the mood seemed to have changed slightly, and it only managed another three months, closing at the end of January 1945.



Dorothy Ward & Lupino Lane

Photo by John Vickers

SIX PAIRS OF SHOES

London run: Playhouse, April 10th (23 performances)

Music & Lyrics: Various

Book: Monica Disney Ullman

Director: Leontine Sagan

Musical Director: Harry Roy

Producer: Claude Soman

Cast: Monica Ullman, Betty Huntley-Wright, Georgina Cookson, Valentine Dunn, Anna Kemp, Gerald Gray, Paddy Browne, Moira Lister, Hariette Johns.

Notes: This was a strange hybrid: it was set in a cabaret club, with cabaret acts being performed, but at the same time incorporating a story of spies and espionage. The author, who began her career as a cabaret showgirl, appeared in this show as a cabaret artist named "Billie". Others included Paddy Browne from the Windmill Theatre and a young unknown Moira Lister, who would later go on to biogger things. It mystified the critics and confused the public. It came off very quickly.

JILL DARLING (1st Revival)

London run: Winter Garden, April 21st (67 performances)

Music: Vivian Ellis

Lyrics: Desmond Carter

Book: Marriott Edgar

Director: Arthur Riscoe

Choreographer: Philip & Betty Buchel

Musical Director: Pat Thayer

Producer: Arthur Riscoe, Alfred Zeitlin & Paul Murray

Cast: Arthur Riscoe (*Pendleton Brooks/Jack Crawford*), Frank Royde (*Colonel Crawford*), Carole Lynne (*Jill Sonning*), Percy Coyte (*Police Sergeant*), Bobby Delaney (*Bobby Jones*), Marjorie Sandford (*April Crawford*), Joan Barclay (*Jean*).

Notes: This revival earned reviews along the lines of “There is nothing funnier on the stage today than Arthur Riscoe” but it remained in London for only a short while before moving to a provincial tour.

Original London run: Saville Theatre, December 1934

THE STUDENT PRINCE (2nd Revival)

London run: Stoll Theatre, May 23rd—June 24th

Music: Sigmund Romberg

Lyrics & Book: Dorothy Donnelly

Director: Frank P. Adey

Music Director:

Producer:

Cast: Bruce Trent (*Karl Franz*), Marion Gordon (*Kathie*), Harry Brindle (*Dr Engel*), Cyril James (*Lutz*), Marjorie Macklin (*Princess Margaret*), Arthur Clarke (*Capt. Tarnitz*), Bernard Albrow (*Detlef*), Bryan Johnson (*Asterberg*)

Songs: Golden Days, Come Boys Let's All be Gay Boys, Drinking Song, Deep in My Heart Dear, Serenade, Just We Two, Gaudeamus Igitur

Story: Set in 1860, Crown Prince Karl Franz of Karlsberg has been promised in marriage since childhood to the Princess Johanna. His grandfather, King Ferdinand, sends him to Heidelberg University where he will live incognito like a regular student, under the watchful eye of a kindly mentor, Doctor Engel, and his snooty valet Lutz. At the University Karl falls in love with a waitress, Kathie, who works at the Inn of the Three Golden Apples. They consider eloping, but Karl suddenly becomes King and must return and honour the arranged marriage with Princess Johanna (who is also in love with another man, Captain Tarnitz). He returns to Heidelberg two years later but discovers that youth cannot be recaptured and the past must be left in the past, although his true love will always be Kathie.

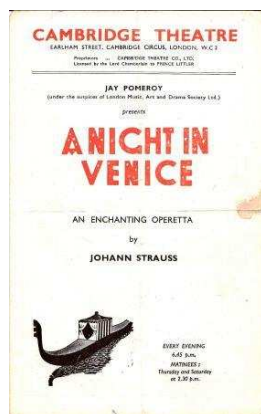
Notes: The original novel “Karl Heinrich” by Wilhelm Meyer-Forster was adapted into a play called “Alt Heidelberg”, and Rudolf Bleichman’s English translation was a big hit in New York around 1900. In 1924 Dorothy Donnelly and Sigmund Romberg turned it into the longest-running Broadway musical of the 1920s (608 performances). The London production at His Majesty’s Theatre opened on February 3rd 1926, but closed after 96 performances. It was said to be “too German” and too close to the end of the Great War for London audiences, although a subsequent UK tour was extremely successfully. It was revived in London in 1929 from November 7th to December 28th.

This second revival also had a short run - though this time it was criticised not so much for its “German” aspects, as for its shortage of a first-class male-voice chorus, something not easily come by during the war years.

Original London run: His Majesty’s February 1926

First revival: Piccadilly Theatre, November 1929





A NIGHT IN VENICE

London run: Cambridge Theatre, May 24th (withdrawn July 8th due to air raids)
 Revived: Phoenix Theatre, Nov 28th

Music: Johann Strauss II; **Original libretto:** F. Zell & Richard Genée

Lyrics: Dudley Glass;

Book: Lesley Storm

Director: Leontine Sagan

Ballet sequences: Pauline Grant & Darmora

Choreographer: Freddie Carpenter

Musical Director: Mark Lubbock

Cast: Henry Wendon (*Duke of Urbino*), Dennis Noble (*Caramello*), Daria Bayan (*Annina*), Josephine Yorke (*Barbara*), Jerry Verno (*Pappacoda*), George Howe (*Delacca*)

Story: The Duke of Urbino has a passion for ladies. Caramello, barber to the Duke of Urbino and disguised as a gondolier, plans to take the beautiful Barbara to his master, but she has another assignation and sends in her place the fisher-girl Annina – Caramello's girlfriend! While Annina is perfectly happy to be given to the Duke, Caramello realizes his mistake and does his best to keep Annina and his master apart. All ends well enough when the Duke returns Annina to Caramello, appoints him steward in his household and Caramello and Annina are married.

Notes: The original musical was premiered in Berlin on October 3rd 1883 and was a flop, but just six days later was performed in Vienna to great acclaim (thanks to considerable re-writing of the libretto in the meantime. An English version played on Broadway in 1884 and 1900, and Erich Korngold was responsible for a major re-working of the piece when it was revived in Vienna in 1923 with Richard Tauber in the cast. However, in spite of its great success throughout Europe, this was its British premiere – and again this was a revised version. (In 1976 it would appear in yet another version, re-written by Murray Dickie, for a production at the Coliseum for the English National Opera.) The problem has always been the weak libretto – the music has never failed.



Henry Wendon (Centre) & Josephine Yorke (on balcony)

Photo by Tumbridge-Sedgewick



Celia Lipton

THE QUAKER GIRL (2nd Revival)

London run: Coliseum, May 25th
 (withdrawn July 8th due to air raids – 52 performances)
 Repeated: Stoll Theatre, Feb 8th 1945 (68 performances)

Music: Lionel Monckton; **Lyric:** Percy Greenbank & Adrian Ross

Book: James T. Tanner (revised: Emile Littler)

Director: Emile Littler

Choreographer: Phyllis Blakston

Musical Director: Tom Lewis

Producer: Emile Littler

Cast: Celia Lipton (*Prudence*), Billy Milton (*Tony*), Pat McGrath (*Charteris*), Ivy St Helier (*Madame Blum*), Jack Meyer (*Prince Carlo*)

Notes: This was an updated version, revised by Emile Littler. After six weeks the run was interrupted by bombing, and the show then toured the provinces and returned to London at the Stoll Theatre in February, 1945 for an eight week run. It then resumed its highly successful tour which lasted up to December 1948.

Original London run: Adelphi, November 1910

First revival: Garrick Theatre, May 1934

THE GIPSY PRINCESS (1st Revival)

London run: Saville, June 14th (Limited season)

Music: Emmerich Kalman

Book & lyrics: Leo Stein and Béla Jenbach

Revised English version: Arthur Miller & Arthur Stanley.

Director: Laurence Green

Cast: Tessa Deane (*Sylvia*),
James Etherington (*Prince Ronald*),
Phyllis Hunter (*Stasi, Countess Vadja*),
Edward Baxter (*Earl of Easton*), Jimmy Godwin (*King Edwin*),
Ruth Maitland (*Queen Anita*)

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

Story: The gipsy singing star Sylvia Matyi is about to leave for an American tour, to the despair of Prince Ronald. He cannot accompany her since he has been re-called to his regiment in Vienna, but proves his love by signing a document saying he will marry her as soon as she returns in three months. Unknown to Ronald, his parents, King Edwin and Queen Anita, have arranged a marriage between him and his cousin, Stasi, the Countess Vadja. Sylvia is horrified to hear about this, assumes Ronald has cheated on her and travels to America accompanied by Earl Easton, acting as her manager.

As the end of three months approaches, there is a party to announce that Ronald and Stasi are now to be formally engaged. Ronald and Stasi are good friends, but Ronald has never understood why Sylvia deserted him, and is desperately hoping for news from America. Unexpectedly Sylvia and Easton turn up to the party, and to cover her hurt feelings Sylvia pretends she and Easton are happily married. Ronald is furious at Easton's treachery – and it is obvious that that he and Sylvia are still in love, and just as obvious that Stasi and Easton have fallen for each other at first sight. Thanks to a secret revelation, an unexpected solution presents itself and the classic happy ending ensues.

Notes: “Die Csárdásfürstin” was premiered in Vienna in November 17th 1915, and was staged in New York on September 24th 1917 under the title “The Riviera Girl” with book and lyrics by Guy Bolton and P.G. Wodehouse. The Broadway production ran for 78 performances. The first London production was at the Prince of Wales Theatre on May 20th 1921 in yet another version, this time with book and lyrics by Arthur Miller and Arthur Stanley. It transferred to the Strand Theatre on October 3rd and ran until December 3rd - a total of 224 performances. It remains one of the most popular operettas throughout Europe where it has been frequently revived over the past century, and the 1934 film version with Marta Eggerth is regarded as one of the greatest hits of the European cinema.

This version had been updated with references to the current war, and all the names of the characters had been Anglicised (the original hero was Prince Peter von Leydersheim, son of Prince Leopold; the Earl of Easton was originally “Boni”, Count Bonifaska). These changes did not really improve the work, but the music saved the show. It had a long, triumphant provincial tour, and came into the Saville for a limited season in between touring dates.

The undoubted sensation of this production was the tenor James Etherington, making his West End debut. He was acclaimed as a most important discovery—an operetta tenor with a superb voice and one who could also act. Over the next few years his career would include leading roles in “Gay Rosalinda”, “Goodnight Vienna” and “The Bird-Seller” - until the shock of his sudden death in June 1944.

Original London run: Prince of Wales May 1921 (transfer: Strand, Oct 3rd),



Photo by Fred Daniels



Madge Elliott & Cyril Ritchard

THE MERRY WIDOW (5th Revival)

London run: Coliseum, September 19th

Music: Franz Lehár; **Lyrics:** Adrian Ross

Book and Adaptation: Basil Hood

Director: William Mollison & Cyril Ritchard

Choreographer: Robert Helpman

Musical Director: Bernard Grün

Producer: William Mollison & Cyril Ritchard

Cast: Madge Elliott (*Sonia*), Cyril Ritchard (*Danilo*), Georgina (*Natalie*), Frank Tickle (*Popoff*), Edward Boleslawski (*Vicomte Camille*), Doreen Duke (*Frou-Frou*)

Notes: This was the 1943 production with some cast changes, back in London following an overseas ENSA tour and provincial bookings.

Original London production: Daly's, 1907 (with Lily Elsie & Joseph Coyne)

1st revival: Daly's, May 1923 (with Evelyn Laye & Carl Brisson)

2nd revival: Daly's, Tour returned in 1924 (Nancie Lovat & Carl Brisson)

3rd revival: Stoll Theatre, April 1932 (Helen Gilliland & Carl Brisson)

4th revival: His Majesty's March 1943 (Madge Elliott & Cyril Ritchard)

JENNY JONES

London run: Hippodrome, October 2nd (153 performances)

Music: Harry Parr-Davies; **Lyrics:** Harold Purcell

Book: Ronald Gow (from stories by Rhys Davies)

Some revisions: John Jowatt (Ronald Millar)

Director: Hugh Miller

Choreographer: Wendy Toye

Musical Director: Bobby Howell

Producer: George Black

Cast: Sydney Bland (*Morgan Jones*), Mary Waterman (*Jenny Jones*), Ronald Millar (*Penry*), Carole Lynne (*Dilys*), Robert Sydney (*Paul*), Jimmy James (*Jimmy Armstrong*)

Songs: My Wish, Yet Another Day, Where the Blue Begins, After All, Why Worry?

Notes: This was an odd assembly of episodes from the stories of Rhys Davies, with no consistent plot, just a series of individual stories linked by location and sentiment. Welsh coal-miner Morgan Jones is famous for raising a family of 18 children, and intends to raise the total to 21. To do this he must marry again – and by the end of the show he has achieved both objects. His step-daughter, Jenny Jones, leaves the valley and her sweetheart, school-teacher and musician Penry, and returns a few years later with enough money to finance a local production of his opera “Episode in Havannah”, which tells the story of one of Nelson’s sailors and his love affair with the daughter of a Spanish grandee. Young Dilys and her boyfriend Paul are given the opportunity to sing a number of duets; the Northern comedian Jimmy James is a visiting coal-miner from Newcastle able to add some comedy scenes; and there’s a dream sequence telling the story of the Legend of St Ceiriog; and a scene with acrobats!



Photo by Tunbridge-Sedgewick



During its provincial try-out George Black called upon Ronald Millar (who was playing Penry – but was also beginning to establish himself as a writer) to do some urgent re-writing to save the show, which was an unfocussed muddle. The London opening was postponed for a week to enable the re-writes to be rehearsed. The show opened to reasonable notices, but ran just three months. This turned out to be the last show presented by George Black. He died in March 1945, a month short of his 55th birthday.

MERRIE ENGLAND (2nd Revival)

London run: Winter Garden, October 19th (52 performances)

Music: Edward German

Book & Lyrics: Basil Hood

Director: Harry Knight

Choreographer: Alison Maclaren

Musical Director: Herbert Lodge

Producer: Reginald Fogwell & Will Hammer

Cast: Gladys Palmer (*Queen Elizabeth*), Walter Midgely (*Walter Raleigh*), Victoria Campbell (*Bessie*), Reginald Gibbs (*Earl of Essex*), Charles Hawtrey (*Walter Wilkins*)

Notes: The young Charles Hawtrey appeared in this show. This revival was not a great success, and was not helped by the ongoing threat of rocket attacks and the second prolonged “blitz” on London. The production closed on December 2nd after just 52 performances.

Original London run: Savoy, April 1902

First revival: Prince’s Theatre, September 1934



Walter Midgely

“Flying bombs”

From June 1944 London was subject to attack by V-1 rockets. At its peak more than one hundred V-1s a day were fired at London and the Southeast, with an overall total of 9,521 attacks. Beginning in September 1944 these were supplemented with the more powerful V-2 rockets—and this second “Blitz” lasted until the last launching site was overrun in March 1945. The death and destruction toll was very high, and led to the second lengthy period of theatre closures in the West End.