
G&T GAZETTE

Established 1995. Incorporating the *Edison Echo*

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

2003

THE D'OYLY CARTE PATTER COMEDIANS - a precis of Des Wilson talk in August

When the first surviving Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera *Trial by Jury* appeared in 1875 it introduced in the character of the Learned Judge the first in a long line of what became known as the patter roles. The Judge was created by the composer's brother Frederic Sullivan (1837-1877) who had also played in the first G & S collaboration, the long lost *Thespis*. The role of John Wellington Wells in the next opera *The Sorcerer* (the first full-length G & S) was written specifically for Fred Sullivan but he didn't live to play it. He died in January 1877, aged 36.

Gilbert, Sullivan and the impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte turned instead to a well-known London entertainer George Grossmith (1847-1912). This was his first appearance on the dramatic stage but he was a big success and went on to create all the subsequent patter roles apart from those in the last three operas. Sadly for posterity he never recorded, although this would have been perfectly possible given the fact that in the early days of recording in London he was still only in his fifties. So if we wish to gain some idea of how these roles may have been performed in the earliest productions we must look to Grossmith's successors.

The first of these was Walter Passmore (1867-1946) who created small roles in the last two G & S operas *Utopia Limited* and *The Grand Duke*. He is generally regarded as Grossmith's successor, although Gilbert originally cast him in other roles such as the Sergeant in *Pirates* and the Grand Inquisitor in *The Gondoliers*. He appeared in several revivals of the operas but when the D'Oyly Carte company left the Savoy Theatre in 1903 to go on tour he remained in London where he began a long career in musical comedy, including the original production of *Merrie*

England. He made only three recordings of musical comedy (all from *The Talk of the Town*), but recorded quite a lot of G & S - a complete recording of *The Mikado* made by Odeon in 1910, and several sides for Columbia around 1912-13. His most famous recording, though, (the earliest recording of a Savoyard) is of Bunthorne's song from *Patience* made in December 1900 during a revival of the opera. It was during the run of this revival that the theatre had to be closed four times - for the death of Sullivan in November 1900, Sullivan's funeral, the death of Queen Victoria in January 1901, and that of Richard D'Oyly Carte in April 1901. Passmore's great contemporary was C H Workman (1873-1923). He began his G & S career by playing a small role in the first production of *The Grand Duke* in 1896. He remained with the company for 13 years, and was the principal comedian of the touring company for much of that time, and also at the Savoy in London in the 1906-07 and 1908-09 seasons. The following season he became an actor-manager, leased the Savoy and produced three non G & S works. It was at this time that he had a bitter quarrel with Gilbert who forbade him to appear in any of his works ever again. After the quarrel Workman appeared in the West End in several shows, including the London premiere of *The Chocolate Soldier*. In 1914 he moved to Australia where he continued his career as a performer and producer. He toured New Zealand several times. In 1922-23 he took a company on a G & S tour of India and the Far East. His wife, who was also a performer, died in Calcutta in February 1923 and Workman himself died at sea in May shortly before the steamer arrived in Hong Kong. He was just 49 years old and was buried at sea.

Workman made a long series of G & S

continued on page 8

GLEANINGS FROM HERE & THERE

There was a good response to the ever growing list of singers who have toured New Zealand and went onto make recordings. Feelings in the group are that we should limit inclusion to those who made 78s. While this might seem logical in the light of our affiliations with the recording industry, I will put off doing a cull along those lines until it is decided we have all names in the bag - so to speak.

On that topic, two readers wrote in with additions and corrections. The foremost of these was a list of about 14 new entries and ten corrections. New entries (to save you pouring through the list are) Santley, Albani, Crossley, Mills, Narelle, Lunn, McEachern, Evans, d'Alvarez, Lipkowska, Ackland, Hackett, Beuf, Stralia, O'Shea, Stevens and Williams (H).

On another entirely different note, your editorial office will not respond to those who go around moaning saying "sources for 78s are drying up!"

In September in the company of Jill, her sister Heather and Judy Belgrave, I set off to do a seven day holiday in the South Island, the highlight of which was to take in the last performance of the Wearable Art show in Nelson. As we proceeded on down through the Lewis Pass to Christchurch to visit the new Art Gallery, we stopped at every second hand or antique shop that we laid eyes on. The result of this pillaging exercise took its toll on wallets and the ability to crowd all our purchases into the station wagon. I'm pleased to report I did well on two fronts. Postcards and 78s came to my attention from every quarter and on the second to last stop in Blenheim I landed a beautiful Oak Avonia wind up portable gramophone.

All told I returned with about 50 78s averaging just slightly over \$1 a record. It is my intention to make these the subject of my next presentation in February. While I don't want to disclose what you will be in for, I can say I bagged a mix of classical, jazz and music hall with only one recording being sung in a language other than English!

For those intending a holiday in the top of the South Island, I'd recommend visits to two shops for 78s. One is in Rangiora and the other is just outside Blenheim. If pressed for further details regarding location of these shops, I can be persuaded to yield vital information under duress!



THIS MUST BE WHAT GRANNY PLAYED
HER POP RECORDS ON, FIDO!

One of the spoils from the South Island.

As this is the final issue for 2003, I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

19-20TH CENTURY CLASSICAL VOCALISTS WHO
TOURED NEW ZEALAND AND MADE
GRAMOPHONE/PHONOGRAPH
RECORDINGS.

(3rd Revision)

When I first floated the idea of making a list of classical vocalists who toured New Zealand and had gone onto making recordings, the fruits of this were published in 2000 (Vol.6 no.3). Since then I have received a number of additions from friends across the Tasman that make a reissue imperative. While I am slightly suspicious of a number of new entries, I am unable to set aside time to check out these by going through newspaper files and the like. Therefore what you see is not a closed file and further nominations for this list along with any correction that may come to light are very welcome.

Ackland, Essie (c) 1923	MH
Ainsley, Irene(c) 1908 Auckland	NZ Graphic
Albani, Emma (s) 1907	MH
Alda, Frances(s) 1927 Cyril Towsey (pno)	Taimre
Althouse, Paul (t) 1925 (with Arthur Middleton)	
Arral, Blanche(s) 1906	JNK
Austral, Florence(s) 1930 1934 1936 John Amadio	JNK
Baillie, Isobel(s) 1940 1948(w.Nat.Orch.)	WM & RHC
Badioli, Carlo (bs) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company.	
Basiola, Mario(b) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company	WM
Berthald, Barron (t) 1901 in Musgrove's Grand Opera Company	
Beuf, Augusto (bs) 1925	MH
Black, Andrew(bs) 1907 North Island Leopold Premyslav (pno)	NZ Graphic
Blackham, Joyce(m-s) 1960s Guest with NZ Opera Company	
Borg, Kim(bs) 1961	JNK
Brunskill, Muriel(c) 1957 J C Williamson Gilbert and Sullivan Company.	
Buckman, Rosina(s)1922 D'Oisly (tenor) Kahn (pno)	Taimre
Butt, Clara(c) 1908 1913 1921-22 1926 Rumford (baritone)	Taimre
Cantelo, April (s)	
Capelli, Tino(t) 1918 w.Amadio,Cesaroni,Bedford & Whittle-pno.	WM
Calve, Emma(s) 1910 Gasparri (tenor) Pintel (pno) Truda (flute)	Taimre

Cassinelli, Antonio(bs) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company	
Castagna, Bruna(m-s) 1932 in Williamson Imperial Grand Opera Company	
Castles, Amy (s) 1910 in J C Williamson's Grand Opera Company	
Chaliapine, Theodore(bs) 1926 Rabinowitsh (pno) Hilda Sutton (vn.)	WM
Clabassi,Plinio (bs) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company	
Collier, Frederick (bs-b)1920 in J C Williamson Grand Opera Company	
Comedy Harmonists 1937	WM & RHC
Crooks, Richard(t) 1939 Frederick Schauwecker (pno)	WM
Crossley, Ada (c) 1903, 1910	MH
Curtin,Phyllis(s) 1968	
Dagradi, Leopoldo(t) 1917 in Gonsalez Opera Company	
Dal Monte, Toti(s) 1926 1928	WM
d'Alvarez, Marguerite (m-s) 1922	MH
Dawson, Peter(b) 1910 1915 1931 1942 1946 1949	RH & DW
Dearth, Harry(bs-b) 1919	
De Bernardi,Oreste (t) 1932 in Williamson Imperial Grand Opera Company	
Deller, Alfred(ct) 1964 w.consort ?	JNK
Di Stefano, Giuseppe(t) 1967 Ivor Newtown (pno)	WM
Dobbs, Mattiwilda (s) 1959*, 1968	
Dolores, Antonia(s) 1895-?	JNK
Dolukhanova, Zara (m-s)1966 1969	JNK
Don Cossack Choir1956	WM
Dowd, Ronald (t) 1954* in National Opera of Australia	
Dufault, Paul (t) 1913	
Duncan, Todd(b) 1946 1949 1960 (?)	JNK
Elkins,Margreta(m-s) 1954* National Opera of Australia(Recorded with Sutherland).	
Elms, Lauris(c) 1957*	
Evans, Amy (s) 1920, 1928 (with husband Fraser Gange)	MH
Falkner, Keith(b) 1956	JNK
Forrester, Maureen (c) 1969	
Gafni, Miklos(t) 1948 & 1956 Henri Penn (pno)	Hart & RHC
Galli-Curci, Amelita (s)1925 1932 Samuels (pno)	Taimre
Gange, Fraser(b) 1920 1928	JNK
Glaz, Herta 1947	RHC
Granforte, Apollo(b)1932	JNK
Hackett, Charles (t) 1923	MH
Hammond, Joan(s) 1932 (Williamson Op.Co.),1946	RHC

Hislop, Joseph(t) 1931	
Huder, Maria (m-s) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company	
Infantino, Luigi(t) 1957 Angelo Campori	WM
Johnson, Gertrude (s) 1917 in Gonsalez Opera Company	
Kipnis, Alexander(bs)1938(?)	WM
Lawrence, Majorie(s)1949	RHC
Lehmann, Lotte(s) 1939	RHC
Lenghi-Cellini (t) 1923	
Lewis, Richard(t) 1957	
Light , Alan (bs) 1954* in National Opera of Australia	
Lipkowska, Lydia (s) 1923	MH
Lois, Vittorio (t) Fonotipia and HMV DB1320	
Los Angeles, Victoria de(s)1956/1957 Maurice Till (pno)	WM
Lunn, Kirkby (c) 1912	MH
Marone, Albino (bs)1932 in Williamson Imperial Grand Opera Company	
Marshall, Lois(s) 1957	RHC
McCormack, John(t)1912 1913-1914.Buckman(sop) Kaufmann (bs) Clay (pno)	
McEachern, Malcolm (bs) 1918	MH
Melba, Nellie(s) 1903 1909 1903 Kirby (tenor) Dawson (piano) 1909 Bourne (pno) Lemmone (flute)Ranalcw (baritone) Miss Whittle (pno)	Taimre
Meyer, Kerstin (m-s) 1963 & early 1970s	
Middleton, Arthur(b)1925 with Althouse	WM
Midgley, Walter(t) 1949	JNK
Mills, Watkin (bs) 1905	MH
Misciano, Alvino (t) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company	
Mummery, Browning (t) 1920 in J C Williamson Grand Opera Company	
Moncrieff, Gladys(ms)1918-1961	JNK
Narelle, Marie (s) 1907	MH
Nash, Heddle(t) 1940	WM
Nordica, Lilian(s) 1913	DW
O'Shea, Alfred (t) 1928	MH
Pagliughi, Lina(s) 1932	WM
Peerce, Jan(t) 1960s	JNK
Piccaluga, Nino (t) 1924	
Poletti, Olga (s) 1928 in Gonsalez Opera Company	
Power, Stella(s) 1920s	WM
Pringle, Lempriere (bs) 1901 in Musgrove's Grand Opera Company	

Raisbeck, Rosina(s)1947	RHC
Ripley, Gladys(c) 1940	WM
Robeson, Paul(bs) 1950s	WM
Rumford, Kennerly(b)see Butt	
Russell, Ella (s) 1901 in Musgrove's Grand Opera Company	
Santley, Charles (b) 1890	MH
Saville, Frances (s) 1881 in Simonsen opera company	
Schipa, Tito(t) 1937 1950 (?)	JNKRHC
Schock, Rudolf (t) 1949 with Werner Baer (pf)	
Schwarzkopf, Elizabeth(s)1970s Maurice Till (pno)	WM
Snazelle 1890s	JNK
Souzay, Gérard(b) 1959 Dalton Baldwin (pno)	WM
Stralia, Elsa (s) 1925	MH
Streich, Rita(s) 1960 1966 1968	JNK
Stevens, Horace (bs)1934	MH
Te Wiata, Inia (bs) 1958 NZ tour	RHC
Thill, Georges(t) 1947	RHC
Thomas, Edna(c) 1925	JNK
Thomas, John Chas(b)1947	RHC
Tibbett, Lawrence(b)1938	JNK
Titta, Enzo (b) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company	
Vallin, Ninon(s) 1947 1949 Werner Baer (pno)	JNK
Valobra, Cesarina (s) 1932 in Williamson Imperial Grand Opera Company	
van Kesteren, John(t) 1985	
Walker, Norman(b) 1952	JNK
Watson, Richard (bs) c.1951 & 1957 in J C Williamson Gilbert and Sullivan company	
Watts, Helen (c) 1970	
Webb, Yvonne(s) 1944 w.Nino Marotto	RHC
Williams, Harold (b)1939	MH
Woytowicz, Stefania(s) 1967	
Zagonara, Adelio(t) 1949 in J C Williamson Opera Company	
Ziegler/Booth(s-t) 1948	RHC

It is pleasurable to report that a few old hands of the SRC were recently privileged to meet up with Ilmar Taimre and his family who were paying a brief visit to Wellington. One fruitful outcome from this was his desire to receive future copies of the Gazette. This increases our Australian subscribers to three!

recordings for Odeon in 19 10 which show off his vigorous and energetic style, a strong contrast to the more laconic Passmore.

Probably the most famous of the G & S patter men was Henry Lytton (1865-1936). While he was still a 17 year old schoolboy he married Louie Henri who was in the chorus of a touring G & S company. He passed himself off as her "brother", and it was in this guise that he auditioned successfully with the company. In his early years he played a wide variety of roles and was much admired by Gilbert. But between 1903 and 1906 he was in musical comedy, appearing alongside Walter Passmore in the original production of *Merrie England* in which he introduced the famous song "The Yeomen of England". In 1907 He returned to the D'Oyly Carte company which by this time had formed a permanent team of players. He was principal comedian from 1909 until his retirement in 1934 and was knighted for his services to G & S. He first recorded in 1901 - a lot of musical comedy and a duet from *Iolanthe* with his wife (her only recording). Between 1925 and 1932 he sang in five of the complete G & S opera recordings made by HMV (one acoustic and four electric). It is tragic that the Gramophone Company generally regarded Lytton as unsuitable for recording purposes so we have nothing of many of his most famous roles such as the Lord Chancellor, Major-General Stanley and Jack Point.

His successor was Martyn Green (1899-1975). He was the son of William Green, a prominent tenor of late Victorian and Edwardian days and a quite prolific early recording artist. After service in the first World War and work in touring musical comedies, he joined D'Oyly Carte in 1922 as a chorister and small-part player. He became Lytton's understudy in 1925 and succeeded him in 1934. The company was shut down during World War II during which time Green appeared in musical comedy in the West End and then did war service in the RAF. He rejoined

D'Oyly Carte after the war and stayed until 1951 when he left for America. It was during this immediate post-war period that he made some of the best-known of all G & S recordings and became, probably, the most familiar G & S voice on records. This was the Decca series of the complete operas, amongst the earliest LP issues (the first of them also appeared in 78 form). You can find him also on two pre-war HMV 78 sets. Green was a master of vocal characterisation with a quite different sound for each character he was playing. His use of *parlando* - moving effortlessly from speaking some words to singing others - is quite brilliant and it's generally agreed that he was the best of all of the singers of the demanding patter songs with crystal clear articulation and absolutely no muddying of consonants or syllables.

Next came Peter Pratt (1923-1995) who, like Green, started as a chorister (in 1945). He succeeded Green in 1951 and left in 1959. He recorded the last two operas in Decca's mono series (*The Sorcerer* and *Princess Ida*) and the first two of their stereo re-makes (*Mikado* and *Pirates*).

Almost the last of the line was John Reed (b 1916) who joined D'Oyly Carte in 1951, understudied Peter Pratt and took over from him in 1959. He appeared in New Zealand when the company undertook an Australasian tour in 1979 and played *The Mikado* in Wellington. It was during that tour that he announced his retirement, but by this time the company was on its last legs. John Reed is the most widely recorded of them all, and the only one to have recorded the roles in all of the operas, several of them twice.

To complete the story we should remember Reed's successor James Conroy-Ward who played the parts until the company's final demise in 1982. Incidentally, he played Ko-Ko in the Wellington Saturday matinee of *The Mikado*. He appears in some small roles in the John Reed recordings.