
G&T GAZETTE

Established 1995. Incorporating the *Edison Echo*

January/February/March

2008



Over the years, many jokes have been made by some of our members about the famed soprano Elsa Stralia and how she supposedly married the mayor of Patea. Now you can read page 10 for the true story!

50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

SATURDAY 25 JUNE 2008

As we enter the year which sees us celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of The Scratchy Record Group (SRG), Des and I are heartened by the response we have had from everyone concerning a special luncheon which we are arranging for Saturday the 21st of June. Everyone we have approached so far has endorsed the idea of a function like this and a commemorative CD. While all this lead up seems to be going along merrily, we are mindful that there are many things which we have to do without consultation. Therefore it is our intention to keep you informed of developments as we can. What follows therefore is as much as we know at present. Any changes which may occur will be addressed in the next issue of the G&T Gazette which will be the April/May/June number.

First of all the venue. We have booked the Sharella Motor Inn (opposite the Botanical Gardens) which has a restaurant and can provide what they call a three course plated lunch for \$28 per person. Drinks will be available by the glass or bottle and charged on an individual basis.

Those attending will not only be those who are currently active on our membership list but will include former members and associates by special invitation. This will boost the total number attending to between 30 to 40 inclusive of wives and partners.

A great lot of interest has been expressed in the commemorative CD which will be issued for the occasion. We have already circulated the fact that members will be asked to nominate an item that they would like included (under their name) in the CD. As well a second choice should be included in case of duplication.

We are also mindful of the fact that there are deceased members who have played an important role in the SRG and we should not forget them on this occasion. Hence founder members like Charlie Lindsay, Fred Spencer, Stan Northcote Bade, Don Cameron, Doug Galbraith and Ray Hedges will be represented on the CD with items they would have loved.

A company called Sims Sound Services in Upper Hutt, has been approached to do the preparatory work and is prepared to quote a price. Some have asked are recordings going to be played at the function. The answer to this is that some fragments from the commemorative CD might be played between courses and speeches. However, the feature of the programme will be a vocal item by two performers who have been enticed out of retirement specially for this occasion. With specially written lyrics, they will do a parody on a very popular ballad!

The Committee of Two

P.S. WE MUST HAVE YOUR CHOICE OF RECORD FOR THE CD BY THE END OF FEBRUARY. IDEALLY, IT SHOULD BE ONE WHICH YOU HAVE INCLUDED IN ONE OF YOUR PROGRAMMES OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS. DON'T FORGET TO ADD A FALL BACK SELECTION IN CASE SOMEONE HAS ALREADY NOMINATED YOUR FIRST CHOICE. PLEASE FORWARD YOUR SELECTION AND ITS DETAILS WRITTEN DOWN ON A PIECE OF PAPER TO DES WILSON OR BILL MAIN. THIS IS YOUR FINAL REMINDER!

MY FIRST SEVEN YEARS IN LONDON

by LES AUSTIN

Pat Byrne's interesting 'A Month in the old Country' has brought back many memories of my time in London, so here are a few items that I hope will be of interest to readers. How nice it was of Pat to remember our meeting after all those years.

We hear much of The Golden Age but for me it was my first seven years in London.

I sailed from Wellington on the Johann van Oldenbarnvelt the date being 16th August 1960. We sailed via Tahiti, and USA, arriving in Southampton on 24th September 1960. There was a two day stopover in Tahiti so was able to see the sights including the house of Gauguin. I left the ship in Port Lauderdale and flew to New York and stayed with a friend I had met in New Zealand. This was Philippe des Ames whose real name was Philip Ames Fein. He was the music director of the Spanish Dance company Luisillo and his Spanish Dancers who toured NZ in the 1950's. We kept in touch for a number of years but then lost touch. When I was last in New York in September 1988 I found his name in the telephone directory so called him. Shock and horror! He hadn't a clue who I was and remembered nothing about NZ so I assumed Alzheimer's had struck.

I saw the sights of New York in 1960 and with great luck was able to get into the old Metropolitan Opera House for a performance by The Royal Ballet of "The Sleeping Beauty" with Fonteyn. I also met

up with NZer Alexander Grant, a principal of the Royal Ballet, who took me onto the stage - so there!

The bloody ship was a day late arriving in England which meant I missed the one concert the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra gave under Mraivinsky. Programme was the Shostakovich 8th.. This concert was broadcast by the BBC and the recording is now available on BBC Records. I did however hear the Leningrad Orchestra under a young Gennadi Rozhdestvensky in an all Tchaikovsky programme with Rostropovich at the Royal Albert Hall. My first visit to Covent Garden was in October 1960 for a complete "Ring" Cycle conducted by Rudolf Kempe with Birgit Nilsson and Hans Hotter. Allow me to jump ahead to January 1964 although I must mention a visit to the Theatre Royal Drury Lane to see "A Funny Thing Happened on the way to the Forum" starring Frankie Howard with Kenneth Conner, Jon Pertwee, Robertson Hare, and Eddie Gray.

To give an indication of what musical life was like at any given time in London in the 1960's and 70's I've chosen the first two months of 1964. January got off to a good

start at Covent Garden with Shostakovich "Katerina Ismailova, better known today as "Lady Macbeth of Mtsenk" with Marie Collier, Charles Craig, John Lanigan, plus a host of Garden regulars. Conductor was Edward Downes. Two nights later it was to Sadler's Wells for "La Belle Helene" with what I would call a house cast. The conductor was John Matheson. Again two nights later, a recital at the Royal Festival Hall (RFH) by Regine Crespin with Gerald Moore.

On the 16th January, there was a memorable concert being the 100th Anniversary of the birth of Richard Strauss. Karl Boehm conducted the Philharmonia Orchestra and Schwarzkopf sang the final scene from "Capriccio" in costume loaned by the Vienna State Opera. On the 18th of January I went to a recording session by the London Symphony Orchestra under Georg Solti of Mahler's 1st Symphony. Then on the 20th it was to Covent Garden for Britten's "Billy Budd" with Peter Glossop, Richard Lewis, Forbes Robinson, John Shaw and our very own Inia Te Wiata. Solti was the conductor.

The 11th January was the first of two performances I attended of "Tosca" with Maria Callas, Tito Gobbi and Renato Cioni. The other was 5th. February. An unforgettable experience. Callas while sticking to the production did little things different from the first performance such as at end of Act 2 one really thought she had forgotten where she put her gloves. Little things like that enhanced her performance, and despite what our late friend Ray Hedges has said, Callas certainly had a voice that carried. There followed a Brahms cycle at the Royal Festival Hall (RFH) by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Karajan, all four symphonies plus the 2nd. Piano

concerto with Geza Anda and the Violin Concerto with Christian Ferras. February 7th. was a Lieder Recital by Schwarzkopf with Geoffrey Parsons, followed 5 days after the second "Tosca" by "Rigoletto" with Glossop, Anna Moffo and Carlo Cossutta. Solti conducted. Then came an "Aida" with Vishnevskaya, Jon Vickers, Giulietta Simionato, John Shaw. Bryan Balkwill conducted. The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra when Constantin Silvestri was their conductor were occasions not to be missed. Soloist was Mariaheidi Rautavara who sang Beethoven's "Ah Perfido" and Wagner's "Wesendonck Lieder." I thought her rather ordinary. Saint-Saens 3rd Symphony raised the roof. This was an RFH concert but heard them again at Croydon's Fairfield Hall when the soloist was Colin Horsley who played the Rachmaninov 2nd. Piano Concerto.

At Sadler's Wells on the 18th of February was my first Janacek opera "The Makropoulos case" with the great Marie Collier. Charles Mackerras conducted. In the 1960's a highlight was the annual St. Pancras Festival when one heard some, for then, quite rare operas. This occasion on 25th. February was Verdi's "Aroldo". No big names here except for Noel Mangin in a smallish role. The following night at the RFH was Pierre Boulez conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra. A programme of Haydn, Weber and Debussy. Clifford Curzon played the 4th. Piano Concerto by Beethoven. The following night was a "Macbeth" at Covent Garden with Cornell Macneil, Amy Shuard and Charles Craig. Mario Rossi conducted. Looking further through my diary I find that March 1961 was just as amazing. Maybe readers would put up with a further instalment. Oh such Memories!

When I began with the idea of reprinting this court case in Dunedin involving KUBELIK vs GORITZ from the Otago Witness, I had no idea how drawn out it would be in terms of space. As well, I should have known that as far as our readership is concerned, how it would go down like a lead balloon! So to save face, I intend skipping about 5-6 full column lengths of court proceedings and instead finalise this article with the judges summing up and jury decision. I hope this meets with everyones approval. Ed.

KUBELIK vs GORITZ PART 2

OTAGO WITNESS 22 September 1909

When the court resumed on the 16th it remained for his Honor to sum up to the jury.

His Honor said the first thing the jury had to determine was whether, on February 20, 1906, the contract alleged in the statement of claim was entered into between the plaintiff and the defendant. It was a kind of contract which need not necessarily be in writing, so that if a final verbal contract was established then, as the defendant did not carry it out, the plaintiff was entitled to damages. The question of damages would only arise if the jury was satisfied, that a final contract was entered into. His Honor referred to the earlier agreements between the parties. He also referred to the contract for the American tour. It was in pursuance of this contract that Kubelik and his party went to America. The occurrences in America relating to the conversations upon the Australasian tour were next touched upon. It was evident that on January 11th 1906, Kubelik had made up his mind to go to Australia, His secretary (Junkermann) in a letter to Gorlitz said "Kubelik has made up his mind to go to Australia". The tone of other correspondence of that time certainly went against the statement made by both Kubelik and Junkermann, that Gorlitz was at that time a man of drunken habits, because Junkermann could hardly have proposed entering into an Australasian tour with a man of intemperate habits. It was apparent from the correspondence that Junkermann, who managed Kubelik's business, wished Gorlitz to join him

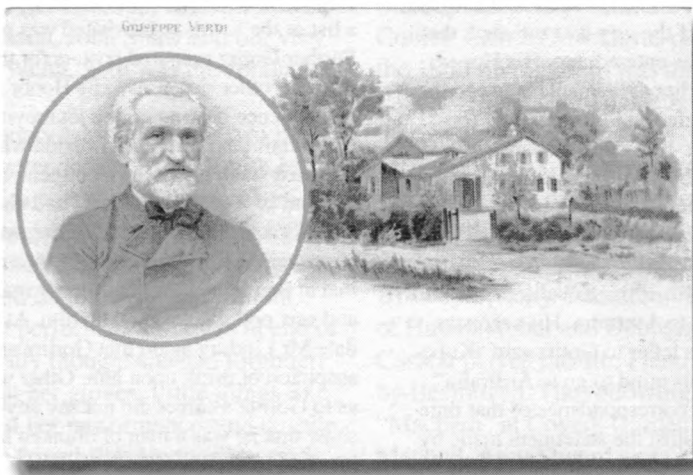
in undertaking the tour. The jury had to decide whether the verbal contract was a final one, complete in all its terms, that Gorlitz should accompany Kubelik to Australia. The terms were to be those of the American contract. It was to be regretted that the evidence of Schwabe (the accompanist) had not been obtained by either side. Schwabe was said to be an honorable man, and he was present at the interview at Chicago when, it was alleged, the verbal agreement was entered into. When the party met in San Francisco the tour of Australasia was still being discussed. It was also discussed at Denver, and a list of the towns to be visited was prepared. Further Gorlitz prepared posters for the tour and incurred other expenses. His Honor referred to the evidence bearing on the journeying of the party until their arrival in London when Kubelik departed suddenly to the Continent, reading the account of it given by Gorlitz and also that of Kubelik and Junkermann. Dealing with Gorlitz's character, he said there was the circumstance that at San Francisco Mr Lindsay met Gorlitz and saw nothing wrong with him, At a later date Mr Lindsay again met Gorlitz and saw no suspicion of drink upon him. Other witnesses as to Gorlitz's career did not say anything to show that he was a man of drunken habits. The jury had to decide whether there was something more than mere negotiations for a contract - not only that Kubelik had made up his mind to go to Australia, and intended to get Gorlitz to go with him, but that on February 20 1906, he made an absolute bargain with Gorlitz, complete in every respect, that Gorlitz should accompany him.

It was not open to either of the parties to say that any stipulation, however trifling, should be inserted in a written contract which had not been verbally agreed to. There was no reason why persons should not make a verbal binding contract, although they might stipulate that the conditions of that contract should be afterwards reduced to writing. The fact that parties contemplated that there should be a written contract was certainly some evidence to show that matters had not reached absolute finality, but were still in the stage of negotiation. The law as to written contracts following upon verbal negotiations was stated in *Roesiter v. Miller* by Mr Justice Blackburn (LR., 3 Appeal Cases, 1151), as follows:— "It is a necessary part of the plaintiff's case to show that the two parties had come to a final and complete agreement, for if not there was no contract. So long as they are only in negotiation either party may retract; and though the parties may have agreed on all the cardinal points of the intended contract, yet if some particulars essential to the agreement still remain to be settled afterwards there is no contract. The parties in such a case are still only in negotiation. But the mere fact

that the parties have stipulated that there shall afterwards be a formal agreement prepared, embodying the terms, which shall be signed by the parties, does not, by itself, show that they continue merely in negotiation. It is a matter to be taken into account in construing the evidence and determining whether the parties come to a final agreement or not. But as soon as the fact is established of the final mutual assent of the parties so that those who draw up the formal agreement have not the power to vary the terms already settled, I think the contract is completed". That judgement stated the law is very clear. His Honor also reflected to the principle on which to assess damages if the contract had been broken.

The Jury retired at 12.5 pm., and returned at 1-25 p.m, with a verdict for the plaintiff for £1250 damages.

Judgment was entered for the plaintiff accordingly; certificate for special jury for day and a half extra at 15 guineas: six-guineas for two days and a half for second counsel; costs of interlocutory proceedings and commission to be fixed by the Registrar, if necessary.



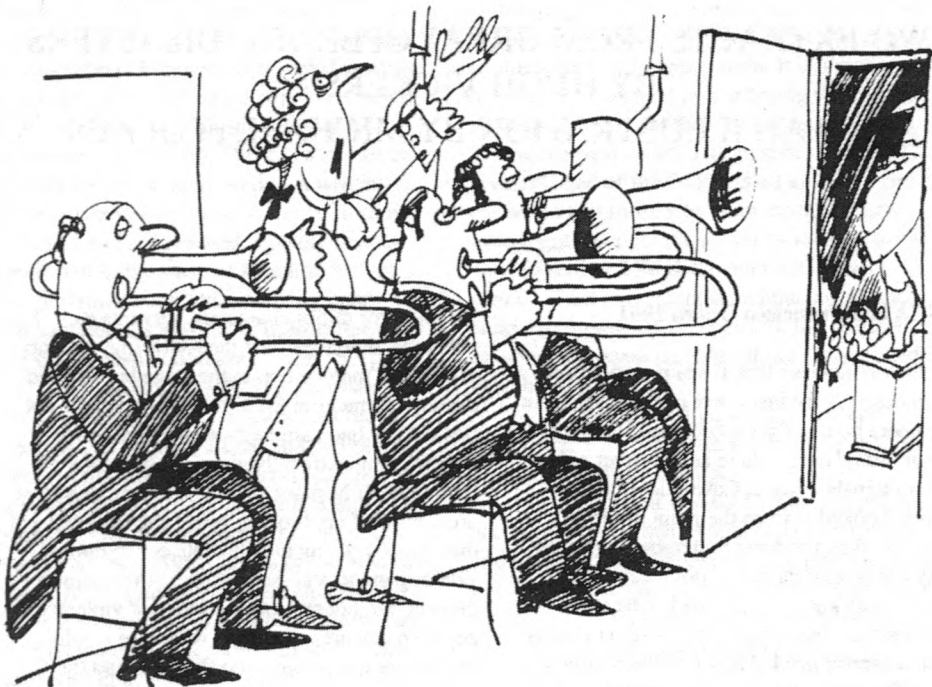
One of the most treasured music postcards in my collection is this beautifully coloured one of Verdi. It was posted from Wellington on the 25th of April 1906 to Miss K. McIntosh who lived at 17 Featherston Terrace, Wellington. For reasons best known to the sender, there was no message inscribed on the card. All the better in this instance as the delicate image might have been marred by a wandering pen over the image. The building featured is thought to be a portion of the Villa Saint'Agata.

TWO EXTRACTS FROM GREAT OPERATIC DISASTERS BY HUGH VICKERS WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL FFOLKES

TOSCA San Francisco Opera 1961

One must remember that Tosca is very often the Cinderella - the last opera of the season - in a big opera house. This is because it is thought to be an 'easy' opera; there are in effect only three principals - Tosca, Cavaradossi and Scarpia. Looked at from the point of view of an over worked producer under great pressure, ninety per cent of the battle obviously lies in the principals knowing the work - the other participants amount only to the first-act chorus (some rehearsal needed here), the second-act choir (off-stage thank God) and the third-act execution squad (no problem, they don't sing...). Alas, it is thus that fatal errors, hideous disasters, are engendered. On this particular occasion that innocuous firing squad was composed of hurriedly enlisted and highly enthusiastic college boys from the local campus, totally ignorant of the story and constantly worrying the producer with their 'When do we come on? What do we do?' His answer was an invariable, 'Wait, wait — I'm working with the principals'. In the end, a combination of illness and a desperately tight schedule led to the cancellation of the dress rehearsal and the appearance on the opening night of the execution squad itself only five minutes after their first and only consultation with the producer. He was still in a hurry, but felt he had given them enough to go on - 'O.K., boys. When the stage-manager cues you, slow-march in, wait until the officer lowers his sword, then shoot'. 'But how do we get off?' 'Oh - well, exit with the principals'. (This is the standard American in-

struction for minor characters, servants etc.). The audience, therefore, saw the following: a group of soldiers marched on to the stage but stopped dead in its tracks at the sight of two people, not one as they had assumed - a man and a woman both looking extremely alarmed. When they pointed their hesitant rifles at the man, he at first drew himself up, looking noble and resigned, but then started giving inexplicable conspiratorial sidelong glances at the woman ... they pointed them at her, but she made a series of violently negative gestures - but then what else would she do she was about to be shot? Should they, perhaps shoot them both? But then they would hardly be standing so far apart - anyway, the opera was called Tosca, it was evidently tragic, the enormous woman on stage was presumably Tosca herself solemn funeral music was playing, the officer was raising his sword.... Thus it happened. By a perfectly sensible process of logical deduction they shot *Tosca instead of Cavaradossi*. To their amazement they then saw the man, some twenty yards away, fall lifeless to the ground, while the person they had shot rushed over to him crying (we must remember this was in vivid American translation), 'Come on, baby, get up, we gotta go'. What could they do? They had shot one of the principals - though admittedly the wrong one - and their next instruction was '*Exit with the principals*'. In disbelief they watched as, first, Spoletta and his minions burst on to the stage and Tosca - could it be true? took up her position on top of the battlements. She jumped, and there was only one thing for it - as the curtain slowly descended the whole firing-squad threw themselves after her....



Don Giovanni King's Theatre, Edinburgh, 1949

Fortunately it is not usually obvious to opera spectators at the Edinburgh Festival that the theatre in which they are sitting is itself a technical disaster. Naturally it is the Italian technicians who find the most difficulty - I remember the entire technical staff of the San Carlo Theatre of Naples walking out in despair after trying to set up the lighting for Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur* all night only to find that on a dry Edinburgh Sunday there wasn't even a drink to be had. But even though the back stage has been greatly improved, the shallow orchestra pit continues to present an insoluble problem of balance between singers and orchestra.

The Don Giovanni was the Glyndebourne version but conducted by Rafael Kubelik, who became obsessed with the relationship between the Commendatore on his pedestal in

the churchyard and the three trombones which accompany his pronouncements. After spending the morning trying various vantage points behind the stage the bass, David Franklin, who was hungry for lunch facetiously suggested that he sing it from the Gents lavatory in the passage to the greenroom. It worked so well that Kubelik, with Carl Ebert, Jani Strasser and other members of the Glyndebourne staff, insisted on the trombones playing there with him; despite the cramped conditions, out came exactly the echoing other-worldly sound required. But, alas - on the first night the unprecedented occurred - a mechanical system in the King's Theatre actually carried out its allotted task. The long-defunct automatic flush system sudden came torrentially to life at the exact moment of '*rider finirai pria dell'aurora*' - and since the performance was being broadcast, B.B.C. Third Programme listeners were deluged even more powerfully than the spectators.

Talking of the Commendatore, it seems that dressing for the part can be a far from pleasant experience. Encased in canvas robes stiffened with size to suggest the marble, one still has to undergo the ordeal of the white make-up. Franklin relates how at Glyndebourne

in 1938 one of the design assistants started flicking blobs of yellow paint at his face.

'What's that for?' he asked as one struck in his eye. 'Well, you're a statue, aren't you?' 'So?' 'Pigeons!'



This postcard of Maurice D'Oisley came from Ray Hedges. Ray got a lot of Rosina Buckman material through the late George Morrison, whose wife was related to the famous soprano. George was very dismissive of Maurice, stating that he was a great burden on Rosina, when her own health was on the decline. According to George, Maurice was absolutely helpless around their house in Hampstead. "He couldn't do anything, including boiling water".

Women in the News

GOSSIP OVER THE TEACUPS

AMONG OURSELVES

Miss Ethel S. Jones, who has been studying art in Sydney during the past year, has returned to the Dominion.

Many friends in the Auckland district will hear with sincere regret of the death of Miss Queenie Clarke Johnson, which occurred suddenly when she was staying with some friends in Christchurch. Miss Clarke Johnson had been living with her brother, Mr. Noel Clarke Johnson, for some time, and was on her way home after a holiday visit in the South. She was one of the kindest and most popular people and will be much missed by a large circle of friends.

Returning to New Zealand this week from her annual visit to Sydney is Mrs. Lamartine Dwan, of Ross Cras, Lower Hutt, Wellington. Mrs. Dwan has many friends across the Tasman who give her a very warm welcome, and, being a great lover of Sydney and the outlying beauty spots, she has done a great deal of motoring during her holiday.

Rarotonga, one of the loveliest of the South Sea islands, has been chosen as a happy hunting-ground by Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Thompson and their two daughters, the Misses V. and G. Thompson, of Mervale, Christchurch, who will leave Wellington by the Maunganui on May 10 for a short holiday there, returning to New Zealand on May 27 by the Makura.

MUSIC AND TRAVEL

Two of the happiest and most excited people in the Dominion at the moment are Miss May O'Byrne and her brilliant young pupil, Miss Janetta McStay. They will set off together to-morrow for London, where Miss McStay has



SINGER'S ROMANCE

Madame Elsa Stralia, a noted Australian soprano, arrived in Wellington by the Monowai from Sydney last week. She has come to New Zealand to be married to Mr. Adolph Christensen, of Patea, and will take up permanent residence in this country. In an interview, Madame Elsa Stralia and Mr. Christensen, who met her in Wellington, said that the wedding would not take place for several months. They first met at Patea about four months ago, on the



MADAME ELSA STRALIA

occasion of Madame Elsa Stralia's last visit to the Dominion. "It was love at first sight," she said, in describing the circumstances of the meeting. "After having become known to each other for only three days we became engaged."

Madame Elsa Stralia was accompanied by Miss Ruth Mann, of Wellington, a young singer for whom she predicts a future, and the girl's aunt, Mrs. Mackenzie Forbes, of Wanganui. Now that New Zealand was to be her home, Madame Elsa Stralia added, she intended to do all she could to assist young New Zealand singers.

NEW ZEALANDERS ABROAD

Recent letters from Miss Elworthy, of Pareora Cottage, Timaru, and from Miss Nan Bond, of Dunrobin, Southland, tell us that they were there in the South of France and intended returning to England for the Silver Jubilee. They are going to motor all July and August and then will make London their headquarters till they sail for New Zealand in the Ormonde on December 8.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Doidge are spending a holiday with the former's relations in Vancluse, Sydney, before continuing their journey to New Zealand, where they will stay with Mrs. Doidge's family. Mr. Doidge is a shining example of making good on one's own initiative, for from modest journalistic beginnings, he became managing director of the Beaverbrook Press in London.

COSY NIGHTDRESS

—of Durability



• J

G3—A WASHABLE NIGHTDRESS in Floral Design style with sleeves finished with Neat hemstitch also tie at waist. Colors: Sky, Pink, Pale Blue, etc.

O.S., with Skirt

G6 illustrates a V NECK SHORT SLEEVED NIGHTDRESS in soft, warm Cotton Interlock, finished with bands. Colors: Cream/Sky, Cream/Pink, Cream/White, etc.

G4 depicts COMFY PYJAMAS OF DURABLE COTTON LOCK with V neck and short sleeves finished with pockets, tucked in top. Trousers with elasticated width legs, finished band at foot. Colors: Cream/Pink, W. size.

G5—The outside figure at right wears a COMFORTABLE TWEED JACKET IN TAILOR MADE CUT with long inset sleeves, roll collar, belt at waist. Facings are shown in contrasting shades. Colors: Medium legs finished band at foot. Colors: Sky, Pink, White with White or Sky, Sage/Lemon; White with Pink, Salmon or Nil with Lemon or White. S.W. and W. sizes.

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Carl Loewe
geb. 1796; gest. 1869.

Ass: Janos-Photographie von Prof. Dr. Heinrich Buchtauer,
Verlagsbuchhandlung "Mannsche" in Berlin W. 8.

Here it is from the horses mouth! Let all speculation regarding her connections with Patea be silenced by this unequivocal statement of intent!

Collecting postcards of musicians is a very time consuming business. Although I have been looking for additions to my collection for several years, I don't think I have more than 20 cards that I can feel happy with. As can be expected, the Germans are very proud of their composers. Most of the cards I have were printed there during the first decades of the 20th century.

ELSA STRALIA
Records
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A Few Selections from the Complete List.

12 inch Double-Sided Records.

- 7322 } Invitation—Waltz Song (*Anita Owen*)
 } O Lovely Night (*London Ronald*)
- 7323 } Goodbye (*Tosti*)
 } Waltz Song from "Tom Jones" (*German*)
- 7324 } Il Bacio (*Arditti*). In English
 } O Lovely Night (*London Ronald*). Duet with Frank Mullings
- 7325 } Sing, Joyous Bird (*Phillips*)
 } Bird of Love Divine (*Wood*)
- 7326 } The Star-Spangled Banner (*Key*). With Full Chorus
 } Ah! Che Assorta in Dolce Incanto (Grand Valse) (*Venzano*)
- 7327 } I Wonder if Love is a Dream (*Foster*)
 } It is only a Tiny Garden (*Haydn Wood*)
- 7328 } Soul of Mine (*Ethel Barnes*)
 } OBERON: Ocean, Thou Mighty Monster (*Weber*)
- 7329 } ERNANI: Ernani, Ernani, Involami (*Verdi*). In Italian
 } IL TROVATORE: Tacea la notte placida (*Verdi*). In Italian
- 7330 } FAUST: Jewel Song (*Gounod*). In Italian
 } CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Voi lo sapete (*Mascagni*).
 } In Italian
- 7331 } Annie Laurie
 } Home, Sweet Home (*Payne*)
- 7332 } CARMEN: Micaela's Air—I Said Naught Should Frighten
 } Me Here (*Bizet*). In English
 } CARMEN: My Mother I Behold—Act 1. (*Bizet*). In English
 } Duet with Frank Mullings.

For Complete List See Columbia Record Catalogue.

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