

Transcribed Pages from the Charles Dickson Papers

Box 3

Binder 6: Mobile Theaters, vol. 6

1.

Mob Register, Jan. 31, 1895

Captain Hooper

Early Musicians in Mobile

"The first musician of whom I have an early recollection was a man by the name of Kuhn, a piano tuner by occupation," states the writer for the "Diamond Wedding Edition." "He played fairly well on the piano."

He played on the organ in the Cathedral, the organ now in St. John's Episcopal Church. This organ is or was before it was altered one of the oldest in this country. It was purchased in Germany and imported by Bishop Portier. It had two banks of keys about fifteen stops, and no swell.

In the days when this organ was originally built, such a thing as a swell was unknown.

There was a man by the name of Hooper who sang bass in the Cathedral about the time Mr. Kuhn was organist. "He was from Boston, I think." He subsequently became captain of the Washington Light Infantry. He was passionatl(s)6.9 (.5 (y)7.6 ())6.9 (.5 5-T* [(W)5 (a)2.2)cathe

Nov 10, 1894, Nov 1895 – The Ward-James Company were seen on the Mobile stage when Mr. Warde and Mr. James co-starred in "Francisco de Remini," "Richelieu," and "Henry the Forth."

After appearing on the Mobile stage again, April 6th, 1899, Mr. Warde appeared Sep 26, 1901, before the theatergoers of the city as "Belthegor" in the play "Montebank" and at the time the Mobile Daily News states in part:

"Mr. Warde was encored a number of times and was finally compelled to come before the curtain and make a talk, which pleased the audience."

Mr. Ward made at least eleven appearances on the Mobile stage, his last engagements with the Mobile Theatre was April 4 and 5, 1910 when he presented "Timon of Athens."

Oct. 4, 1912

"[Buffalo] Bill" Col. W.F. Cody heads the Wild West Show to be in Mobile Oct. 8th.

She dressed simply f

him generously, but he was the whole show, excepting the English stage settings and the handsome dresses of the ladies, but the noted comedian kept the audience in a good humor from start to finish and his audience was glad they had an opportunity to see him again.

The Mobile Daily Item, Jan. 30, 1906

William C. Crane

Mr. Crane comes to the Mobile Theatre Monday, March 21st, 1910, presenting "Father and the Boys."

Mr. Crane has been a faithful intertainer for the Mobile theatergoers for thirty years and needs no introductory remarks.

8.

Mobile Theatre, Oct. 29, 1892

Mr. Stewart Robson was the attraction at the matinee in 'Henrietta' and was welcomed by a large audience.

Mr. Robson is the same as yore, loosing little of the twang in his voice which he attained while playing the "Two Dramias."

Mobile Theatre, Feb. 10, 1895

Stewart Robson "Leap Year" and "She Stoops to Conquer"

"Stewart Robson will have a smart brilliant audience as all the box seats for tonight were sold yesterday."

Mobile Theatre, Feb. 14, 15, 1898

Stewart Robson in "The Jucklins" and "The Henrietta."

9.

Mobile Item, Jan. 6, 1904

Blind Tom

When Tom was 8 years old, he was taken through this country and Europe and played in public to the wonder of all who heard him and the stupefaction of famous pianists.

He met Meyerbeer in Paris and heard most of the celebrated musicians of the day.

Of the later-day pianists, Joseph Hoffman afforded him the greatest pleasure. Paderewski's playing affected him so strongly that they had to take Tom away.

He has made fortunes for his guardians, who bought his slave mother with the blind boy thrown in.

At his home in a picturesque villa on the Shrewsbury River near the highlands where he resides with his guardian, a descendant of the later General James N. Bethune, who owned him as a slaver, a reporter found Blind Tom.

At first he was inclined to be skeptical as to Tom's ability to render the beautiful musical compositions that electrified the public more than a score of years ago, but he found the wonderful prodigy and freak of nature had retained his remarkable power of mimicry and retentive memory. He gave several compositions from such masters as Liszt and Gottschalk with an interpretation as skillful as those pianists who had been technically educated. His accomplishments cover a wide range.

It was also contracted and agreed that no other performance of anyb.aDod aoathdoaerasDrdaothd(Tj EM

15.

Sarah Bernhardt

Mme. Sarah Bernhardt made her second appearance in Mobile at the Mobile Theatre February 1, 1892, and the Mobile Daily News critic, February 2nd, states:

"When my esteemed and much lamented friend William Shakespeare wrote 'What Fools Those Mortals Be,' he hit the nail on the head, with a 70 ton trap hammer blow. The colonel knew what he was talking about and if he was alive at this date, he would have no reason to change his opinion.

I thought of him when I saw the trap hammer at the Mobile Theatre on February 1, 1892.

There is something inexpressibly sad in the heroism of this splendid old woman making this

The Mobile Register, Nov. 9, 1913

decided to see her present "Sapho" instead of seeing the opera, and I have ever been glad I did.

19.

John L. Sullivan, 1884, 1893

Sullivan appeared on the Mobile stage in an exhibition, April 19, 1884, and at this time he had not become the world heavyweight champion. The Mobile Register of this date states in part:

"The slugging exhibition at the theatre last night was a tame affair." But the newspaper

Daily News states, in part:

Miss Morris, considered Americas leading actress, made her first of four appearances on the Mobile stage Jan. 3, 1885.

At that time, she presented "Cora."

March 11, 1894, when Miss Morris made her second appearance on the Mobile stage she presented Sardou's "Odette."

Her last appearance on the Mobile stage was Feb. 11th, 1905, with an All-Star cast presenting the play "The Two Orphans," which included James O'Neill, Mrs. Lemoyne, Mrs. Otis, J.E. Dodson, and herself.

Robert Downing

"It's a bold undertaking," states the critic of the Mobile Register "of any company in presentation here 'Julius Caesar,' a play familiar to the closest and also equally so to the audience through repeated performances by the strongest organizations ever in Mobile. We recall the early presentations when Laurence Barrett impress his picular 'Cassius.' Even more fresh are recollections of the great rendering of the McCollough company, with McCollough as Brutus, Wade as Anthony, and Lane as Cassius. In the face of all these disadvantages, it is no small need of praise to say that Downing's performance of last night was received with deep attention and with a four share of applause, etc."

Mob Register, Oct. 29, 1886

22.

James O'Neill, 1886, 1887, 1898, 1899, 1903, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1910

Mr. O'Neill's many appearances on the Mobile stage is evidence of his popularity to the theatergoers of the city during his time.

Mr. O'Neill made his first appearance in Mobile in the year 1886, and the Mobile Register Dec. 3, 1886, in refering to the play "Monte Cristo" presented at the Princess Theatre the evening previous by Miss Carry Stanley and Company states, in part:

"The play at the Princess differed from that presented earlier in the season at the Mobile Theatre by James O'Neill. Quite a number of persons in the audience were disposed to guy the forgetful and inaudible performers.

Miss Stanley, who played Edmond Dantes, was the whole play by herself last night, and brought 'Monte Cristo' through in spite of obstacles theatrical as well as physical."

23.

Lewis James, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1894, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1905, 1907

Mr. James was very popular on the Mobile stage from the very first appearance before the theatergoers of the city, who afterwards for at least eight separate occasions that he appeared before them, gave him a good reception.

He was first seen on the stage in Mobile Dec. 13, 1887, supporting Madame Modjeska; in the year 1888, he returned to the Mobile stage supporting Marie Wainwright in "Gretchen" and "Virginius." Mr. James was in the supporting caste with Madame Modjeska again on several occasions. On one occasion, Nov. 17, 1901, the Mobile Item states, in part:

"Mr. James has a commanding stage presence, speaks his lines distinctly and with power emphasis. He is a finished actor in every respect."

Dec. 5, 1903, Mr. James was seen on the Mobile stage in the play "Frederick the Great," co-starring with Frederick Ward, he taking the role of "Alexander," which he presented admirably, sustaining for himself the splendid reputation achieved in the past.

Feb. 11, 1905, Mr. James was seen on the Mobile stage with an All-Star caste, which included other than himself such celebrities of the American stage as: James O'Neill, J.E. Dodson, Mrs. Lemoyne, Mrs. Otis, Clara Morris, and others presenting the play "The Two Orphans."

March 4, 1907, Mr. James was in the supporting caste in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" with Effie Ellsler.

24.

Madame [Modjeska] made her first appearance on the Mobile stage December 13, 1887, in the play "As You Like It," and at that time the Mobile Register states, in part:

"Madame Modjeska has something of an accent, and in spirited passages speaks so quickly that the wording is not distinct. The strongest passages in the play and the best given last night was in the first act where 'Rosalind' disclaims the accusation of being a traitor to the duke who had banished her father."

Madame Modjeska, supported by Lewis James, appeared again on the Mobile stage,

ear. She was especially effective in the interview with Cardinal Wolsey and Campeius and in the death scene. Mr. Hackett as King Henry was effective. He is a young actor but he has already earned an enviable reputation.

The gowns worn by Mme Modjeska were marvels of beauty.”

26.

Miss Anna Prixley, 1887, 1890, 1893

Miss Prixley first saw light in Brooklyn, N.Y. and at an exceedingly tender age was transplanted to the Pacific coast.

She was educated with her sisters at San Jose, Calif. and the Prixley sisters were in frequent demand as singers at the convent of Notre Dame, and it was as a singer that she made her first appearance at an entertainment in San Francisco. She was offered a leading role with the Grand Opera Company of San Francisco, which toured Australia for two years.

Her last work before she became an opera singer was when she supported Joseph Jefferson twelve years ago [1878] when Jefferson was in San Francisco.

Miss Fannie Rice, MiSa15.4()0.6(b)-8co.

That she should have no better welcome – numerically speaking – is in part attributable to the fact that she is so to speak unknown here, although to say this is hardly complimentary to Mobile for Miss Lewis has been

She was best known at art lovers as the original "Hazel Kirk(e)."

Miss Ellsler, states the Mobile Register, Jan. 3, 1888, in "Woman against Woman" drew a good audience at the Mobile Theatre last night.

Nov. 1, 1891 – Miss Ellsler presented "Hazel Kirk(e)" to the Mobile theatergoers.

Nov. 2, 1894 – Miss Ellsler, supported by Frank Weston, presented to Mobilians the play "Doris" and "A Wonderous Bower." Again supported by Frank Weston, Miss Ellsler appeared on the Mobile stage presenting "As You Like It."

On March 4, 1907, Miss Ellsler made her last appearance on the Mobile stage supported by

Mr. Jake Tannenbaum, who had gone out on the platform, came back and told Corbett that there was a large crowd who would like to see him. Corbett smiled and pulling on a night shirt walked to one of the seats of the sleeper and looked out. The Mobile Theatre manager said to Corbett "Mayor Rich is out there, go out and shake hands with him."

Corbett at once pulled on a pair of trousers and in his stocking feet walked out on the rear platform where Mr. Tannenbaum introduced him the crowd.

The champion bowed and smiled his boyish, happy smile as the conductor cried all-aboard.

32.

James J. Corbett's second appearance on the stage was in March 1894. At this time, the Mobile Daily News, March 1st, states, in part:

"James J. Corbett, the new champion, interviewed by a news reporter this morning states: 'Glad to see you. I'm feeling fine, in good spirits, and weigh 198 pounds, will give a clever exhibition of sparing tomorrow evening, come around and see me.'

There was a large crowd at the Union dept this morning when the near noon L&M train arrived.

The cause was the passing through of James J. Corbett to New Orleans, in which city he will appear tonight and return to Mobile tomorrow. The champion is accompanied by W.A. Brady, Bud Woodthoid, William Delaney, and John Donaldson, and all five gentlemen left the sleeping car and reposed to the depot dining room for dinner."

Oct. 31st, 1895 – Corbett and Fitzsimmons was received by special leased wire to the ringside today.

James J. Corbett made his last appearance in Mobile on its stage as a drawing card with the minstrel of George ["Honey Boy"] Evans.

Jan. 11, 1911 – It was the privilage of yours truly to see James J. Corbett in the year 1902 while he was in route to New Orleans, where he fought John L. Sullivan a few days later to win the heavyweight championship. (TRANSCIBER'S NOTE: INTERNET RESEARCH SHOWS THAT CORBETT FOUGHT AND DEFEATED SULLIVAN FOR THE TITLE IN 1892, NOT 1902) He was passing through South Carolina on a Southern railroad train and when the train came into the depot at Greenville, Mr. Corbett came to the rear platform of his sleeper by request where he stood in his white shirt sleeves and before he went back into his car, he raised his arm and his muscle rose to split his shirt sleeve.

33.

Mobile Theatre Jan. 7, 1890

Miss Mattie Vickers

The sale of seats for Miss Mattie Vickers opens tomorrow morning.

34.

Miss Blanch Walsh

36.

Alabama and Maurice Barrymore

A play written by Augustus Thomas first acted on April 1, 1891, at the Madison Square Theatre, New York.

"The South is the more picturesque part of the American Republic. The old social order at the South was more romantic, pictorial and interesting than any social order at the North is now or ever has been. Thomas chose wisely in choosing a Southern plantation for the scene of his play.

The investiture of the piece was delicious. You could see the large stars hanging in the deep, dark sky; the still streamers of gray moss, and the great faus palms and you could smell the scent of magnolia on the evening breeze, people charmed by langur of repose. The social complexities and changes of sorrows resultant of the Civil War were skillfully made a background of the picture.

The play 'Alabama' treats it fairly, indicating without either partisan motive or aggressive morality the community of interest that should bind all section of the Republic into one nation.

'Alabama' was produced with a cast which included several of the ablest and most accomplished and interesting actors of the period, including Maurice Barrymore, the father of Ethel, Lionel, and John Barrymore."

"The Alabama"

"'The Alabama' was presented again last night to a fair audience. The performance went off with the smoothness and effect that characterized the play at its initial performance Monday night," states the Mobile Daily News, Oct. 28, 1891.

37.

E.H. Southern, 1892, 1905, 1908-1912

Mr. Southern (TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: RESEARCH INDICATES THAT THE NAME COULD ALSO BE SPELLED SOTHERN) was a song Edward A. Southern and "like father, like son" became one of the most famous of American actors.

41.

Al G. Fields Takes the Amusement People by Storm

Sep 25, 1894

Day before yesterday, the genuine colored man has taken this city of Mobile and yesterday and last night the artificial colored man had possession.

Al G. Fields' Columbian Minstrels gave a street "Cake Walk" that was glorious and the colored people themselves were willing to concede that for genuine pomp and parade, that of Thursday [of their own] was not in it.

The minstrel's street parade was so grand and imposing that the effect was to pack Staub's Opera house [or the streets] for a mile in every direction.

The galleries were stuffed for fully half an hour before the artists came out in a burst of song and the blare of trumpets a grand ovation went up from an audience which came there

Eight big acts of merit will be seen, following the first act, etc., which are filled with melodious jingles and fun.

George Primrose in his new dancing conception "Dancers Past and Present," etc.

43.

Mr. Dan Emmit (EMMETT), Mr. Dixie Himself

Dan [Emmett] was born in Mt. Vernon, Ohio, in the year 1815. He was christened Daniel Decatur [Emmett] by his parents, who were Southern people. His father [in the War of 1812] marched from Detroit, being one of six riflemen ordered to Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Young [Emmett] learned the printers trade on the Mt. Vernon Gazette, but in time he developed a roving disposition and enlisted in the U.S. Army. But his father was displeased and had him discharged for being under age.

His duties with the show consists of conducting the orchestra while they play and while the vocalists sing the songs that made Dan [Emmett]

'Bean Brunnel' Friday, 'Parisian Romance' Saturday matinee, and 'Prince Carl' Saturday night, etc."

March 10, 1900, Mr. Mansfield presented "Cyrano de Bergerac" to the theatergoers in Mobile and on that occasion the Mobile Register states:

"Rostand's great drama was presented last night to the largest and most valuable audience of the season, the sign 'Standing Room Only' being exhibited as soon as the ticket office was opened. The lowest price for a ticket was one dollar."

March 14, 1903, Mr. Mansfield appeared on the stage in Mobile in "Julius Caesar." The Mobile Item at this time states, in part:

"Mr. Mansfield was given liberal applause, but there were those who were not enthusiastic over his portrayal of the noblest Roman of them all. The fault found was that he seemed to be affected and did not lose his individuality. Dorothy Hammond made an excellent 'Portia.' Rear Admiral Higginson, North Atlantic Fleet of Pensacola, was seen in a box at the theatre, accompanied by several officers.

46.

Miss Dressler made at least five appearances on the stage in Mobile.

Her first great success, however, was in "The Stag Party" in 1895.

Dec. 2, 1905, Miss Dressler appeared on the stage in Mobile, accompanied by Charles Bigelow, Joe Webber, Sam Collins, Trixie Friganza, Bonnie Magin, Erminie Earl, and others

48A.

Marie Dressler, May 23, 1910

Miss Marie Dressler has made a discovery; two of them in fact. The first is that Tillie Blobbs has a soul; the second is that President Taft is the greatest man in the world.

You see, Tillie Blobbs is the household drudge in the play "Tillie's Nightmare," in which Miss Dressler has been playing, and it would seem but allow Miss Dressler to tell it:

"And Tillie – plain Tillie Blobbs, has a sou. That's what gets me when I'm playing the part.

It's the soul of the poor drudge that appeals to me most of all. I should like to play her seriously and make folks cry, but I realize that the public expects me to be funny and that it pays its money for laughter, not for tears.

You should have seen President Taft laugh in Washington. I wanted to climb into his box and hug him. He was immense. And Mrs. Taft was lovely. I shall never forget the way she stood up in the box with Mr. Taft and applauded at the end of the play. And when the President was leaving the theatre, he said to the manager, 'A great show, eh!' That's the second time he ever said anything like that. And to think that those suffragettes had the nerve to hiss a man like that! He took

Miss Fisher, Miss Clare Bell Jerome, Alfred Hickman, Sydney Toler, and Nance Bonville are mentioned as taking part in this comedy.

Nov. 15, 1905, Mr. Daniels appeared on the stage in Mobile as "Sergent Blue" in the comedy of that name.

The last appearance of Mr. Daniels before the theatergoers of Mobile, when he accompanied Weber and Field, Feb. 8, 1913, to Mobile and was seen in their play "Hokey Pokey." The Mobile Register at this time states, in part:

to the "Cosmic Dance of [Siva]" by Mr. Shawn. Miss St. Denis who is recognized the foremost exponent of grace in this country presented Pele, a symbolic structure. She is the languorous, firey embodiment of the volca

"Mr. Nat Goodwin, supported by Miss Maxine Elliott [his wife] will be seen at the Mobile Theatre, Feb. 26 and 27

Miss Olga Nethersole made her first appearance on the Mobile stage December 8, 1906, in "A Rag, A Bone, and A Hunk of Hair," Rudyard Kipling's factive translation of Burne Jones "Vampire," and at that time the Mobile Item states, in part:

"She will be long and favorably remembered in Mobile. Her acting, superb in its finish, was satisfactory in detail, and fortunately she found a man, Mr. Frank Mills as "Jean (illegible)" an actor whose artistic qualities and capacity were such as to measure up with the demand of the separation Miss Nethersole has left behind her, a reputation that is lasting and as an actress she will be long and favorably remembered in Mobile."

Mobile Item, Dec. 9, 1906

The applause of thousands, etc. "If I had my life to live over again," said Miss Nethersole, as she [sat] in the parlor of her private care, "The Nethersole," "I would be a wife and mother rather than seek a career on the stage or in any other profession.

I have sacrificed the natural joy which is the right and privilege of every woman, and for what? A money-making pace on the stage."

"A childless woman," continued Miss Nethersole, "lives a shorter life than the woman who has continued the thread of life in the life of another. Not only my blood sister, but all my sisters of the world who have married will have more everlasting lives than I. Perfect marriage must be the ideal life, and I believe and hope the education of women is tending towards that day, etc."

The Mobile Item, Oct. 31, 1909

56.

Karle Bellow , 1894, 1906, 1909, 1911 (TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: INTERNET RESEARCH INDICATES NAME IS ACTUALLY KYRLE BELLEW)

Mr. Bellow made his first appearance on the stage in Mobile, Dec. 3, 1894, at which time he co-starred with Mrs. Potter in "Carmille." (TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: INTERNET RESEARCH INDICATES PRODUCTION IS ACTUALLY "CAMILLE")

June 6, 1906, Mr. Belew made his second appearance before the theatergoers of Mobile in a play entitled "Rifles," a detective story, told in speech and action.

In all of Mr. Bellow's appearance(s) at different times, he has never presented plays other than dective stories, with abondance of suspense.

Jan. 30-31, Miss Page and her company filled an engagement on the stage in Mobile when she presented "A Bachelor's Honeymoon."

Miss Page enjoyed a long career as an actress in stock companies from the early nineties and in her latter years, she filled prominent character roles of old ladies in plays on the scene as late as the mid twentieth century.

January 30th, 1911, of Miss Mable Page, the Mobile Item states, in part:

"Mobile will have the opportunity to see this well known actress in what is said to be the best fitting and most appropriate comedy in which she has ever appeared anywhere."

57.

Jan. 15, 1898, Mr. Reed was seen on stage in Mobile as Fosco Wales in a play entitled "A Man of Ideas."

The part that Mr. Reed plays is that of a boomer in a western city with plans to build a trolley car line.

The Mobile Daily News, Jan. 15, 1898, states, in part:

"It is one of the characters which Mr. Reed plays so well and he gives it the right touch."

Miss Isadora Rush is an admirable foil to the comedian, and she dons the dress of

"Rosalind," she presents a picture which might hardly be beaten.

Mr. Reed also presented to the theatergoers of Mobile during that engagement "The Wrong Mr. Right."

Jan. 15, 1898, Mr. Reed returned to Mobile with his leading lady, Isadora Rush, and presented to the theatergoers of the city two plays: "His Father's Boy" and "The Rong(sic) Mr. Right."

April 26, 1895, Susa's (SOUSA?) Band gave a concert in Mobile.

Sep 14, 1895, James B. Mackie in "Grim Cellar Door."

Sep 28, 1895, "A Trip to Chinatown"

Oct. 9, 1895, A Mr. Palmer presents "Trilby" were the attractions at the Mobile Theatre.

58.

Miss Della Fox a Great Success
Mobile Theatre

"A large audience welcomed Miss Fox and her company at the Theatre last night. In many particulars, the performance was the best of the season.

Miss Fox, who was introduced to Mobile in the boy part in 'Wang,' possess dramatic talent which the earlier part gave her no opportunity of displaying, and it is safe to say that last night she won over many persons who were not wholly pleased with her performances in 'Wang.' She does the female role admirably."

Mobile Register, Feb. 29, 1896

Mr. Jefferson de Angelis

The chief comedy part was that of "Gilbard," played by Mr. Jefferson de Angelis.

Miss Della fox, a former wife of De Wolf Hopper, with whom she also had a stage experience, began tasting the sweets of being a full fledged and successful star in 1894. She scored in New York at the Casino in "The Little Trooper," an operetta which was the work of at least six men, to crowded houses every night.

The Mobile Daily News, October 25, 1896, states:

"Della Fox and her company sang her 'Fleur de Lis' Friday evening to a large and fashionable audience, and 'The Little Trooper' to a good audience."

59.

Jefferson de Angelis, Jan. 15, 1904

Mr. de Angelis, who made his first appearance Feb. 29, 1896, in the Della Fox Company, will be seen on the Mobile stage January 15th in his own company, eight years later.

Mr. de Angelis played the chief comedy part of "Gibard" and Della Fox played the boy part of "Wang" in her show of the former date.

De Angelis was at his best and when on stage he kept the audience in excellent humor, at times arousing the heartiest laughter.

The company is strong in that it includes three clever female soloists and three or four entertaining male voices. De Angelis, of course, held the center of the stage, but not all the time, as the others were given a full chance to show their good qualities, etc.

"Safe on a Peaceful Man of War," with Miss Annabelle Whitefield and Miss Anna Laughton, was one of the hits of the evening in singing, dancing, and acting.

The audience gave every evidence that the performance was highly enjoyed, etc.

Mobile Register, Oct. 24, 1911

60.

Jefferson de Angelis and His Merry Widow

Lyric Theatre, Oct. 21, 1922

61.

Lyric Theatre, Friday and Saturday, Mar 1, 1912

Mr. Hopper, of course, was the center of attraction, and he was only assisted by Mrs. [Marguerite]

