

APPENDIX E

CLAY'S MANAGERS, STAFF AND PARTNERS

For updated biographies on these practitioners see the Australian Variety Theatre Archive:
<http://ozvta.com/> (or at Pandora <http://nla.gov.au/nla.arc-143747>)

DETAILS CONCERNING PEOPLE WHOSE INVOLVEMENT CAN BE CONSIDERED SIGNIFICANT IN RELATION TO HARRY CLAY'S ORGANISATION

This list has been compiled as part of the research conducted for this thesis, and is an extension of the information collected as part of Appendix A. The volume of material available for each inclusion has no bearing on the importance of that individual, or partnership to Clay's, but simply reflects the amount of information that was able to be located during the search. For example, while Wally Edwards is undoubtedly one of the most important figures to have been engaged by Clay, relatively little information regarding his personal details has been found so far. On the other hand, due to the invaluable assistance of Jo Mercer and Valmai Goodlet, I have been able to access quite a deal of information regarding Ms Mercer's grandfather, Ted Tutty, and Ms Goodlet's father Maurice Chenoweth.

The idea behind this survey is two-fold. First, the word limit restriction placed on this Masters thesis, has meant that much of this information, (which I believe to be pertinent to the subject at hand) had to be left out of the main body of the work. In this regard it can be seen that any discussion of the importance of Harry Clay and his vaudeville and revue company to the theatrical history of Australia must in some way include mention of these artists, managers, staff and partners. Second, it is my hope that further research into the area of Australian vaudeville and minstrelsy will be carried out, and that this, and the other appendices attached to this dissertation, will provide a useful starting point for the researcher. The lack of available reference points or knowledge concerning this particular form of entertainment and the people who took part in it has been a major hurdle to overcome in completing this project.

Table of Contents

ABBOT, A.R.	111.
BOYLE, Jimmy	111.
CAMPBELL, Jack	112.
CANNIS, Les	113.
CHENOWETH, Maurice	113.
COURTNEY, Lou	114.
EDWARDS, Wally	115.
GABRIEL, Ted	116.
HEANEY, Dick	116.
KERR, Andy	117.
KERRIDGE, Stan	118.
MORGAN, Harold T	118.
SADLER, Bill	119.
STAGPOOLE, Alec	120.
WEBB, Claude E.	121.
WHITE, James H.	121.

A.R. ABBOTT

Businessman and Partner/Secretary/Treasurer of the Bridge Theatre Co. Archibald Robert Abbott is believed to have been associated with Harry Clay from around 1901. He became a member of the partnership which formed the Bridge Theatre Co in 1913. Around 1914 he is also thought to have owned a hardware business. Abbott stayed on as Secretary for Clay's after Harry Clay's death, and most likely retained his share of the business for some time, too.

Not much is yet known about Abbott, other than his role as the Bridge Theatre Company's Secretary and Treasurer. In 1901 he is believed to have accompanied Harry Clay's first tour of Queensland, being included among the company on a shipping manifest. In this regard he most likely acted as business manager, and possibly helped finance the tour. With Clay and Harold T. Morgan he formed a partnership to build and operate the Bridge Theatre, Newtown. Abbott is also believed to have operated a hardware store at 511 George Street in Sydney around 1914, in addition to owning several properties throughout Sydney, including a building at 1/3 Denison Street across the road from the Bridge Theatre, which served as its office. He also owned 7/13 Bedford Street, Newtown; a property in Railway Ave, Eastwood (where he lived for several years prior to 1925), and is believed to be the owner of another at 8 Paisley Rd, Croyden, from 1926 onwards.

According to information included in Harry Clay's Deceased Estate File, Abbott purchased a block of land from Clay at Lot 1, Dampier Parade Sutherland in January 1917. There was never any documentation made out with regard to either Clay's purchase of the land or his sale to Abbott. Strangely, in 1953, Catherine Clay made a Statutory Declaration stating that she had only recently become aware that the same property should have been included in Clay's estate. The reasons behind this are not clear at this stage, although there seems to be some inconsistency involved in Abbott's statements to the Commissioner of Stamp Duties, in which he declared that the property was his and that all moneys had been paid to Clay prior to his death in 1925.

Abbott's role with Clay's after 1925 is not clear, although he is believed to have remained on with the company for some time after this date.

JIMMY BOYLE

Tour Manager/Theatre Manager/ Advance Rep. (1901-ca.1912,1916-1924) Born James William Boyle in Camden Town, London, in 1872. Associated with Harry Clay for some 20 years. He was the advance rep for Clay's Queensland tours from 1901 to 1903, and then tour/business manager until 1912. He also acted as Manager for the 1909 Walter Bentley, and 1911 Stanley McKay pantomime tours of Queensland. Boyle operated a business in Brisbane around 1915, while also working for C.E. King. In 1916 he acted as the Fullers Manager at the National Theatre, and during this period he also ran a private business next to the Theatre Royal. Around the end of 1916, early 1917 he returned to work for Harry Clay as the House Manager for the Coliseum, Nth Sydney, leaving to manage Eden Gardens, Manly, from 1918. He is known to have looked after the Bridge Theatre around 1923-24. Married to Nora Ann Boyle, he died suddenly on the 1st of November 1924.

Described as a "dapper little Englishman," Boyle was a longtime associate of Harry Clay's, beginning from at least around 1901 when he acted as Advance Rep for the first Waxworks tour of Queensland. In 1904 and 1905 he acted as the company's business manager, while Harry Clay ran the tour operations. When Clay temporarily retired from the Queensland tours to look after his Sydney circuit, Boyle took over both duties, continuing on in that role until 1912.

Jimmy Boyle was a popular figure in the vaudeville industry, and an extremely well-liked character within the Queensland regional centres he toured during the early decade of the 20th century. He was regarded quite highly as a reliable and hardworking manager, not only by Harry Clay, but also by many who knew him. After the 1910 tour he returned to England for a period, requiring Clay to once again tour Queensland as the company's manager. Boyle returned to take control of the business for the Stanley McKay pantomime tour of Queensland in 1911, and the following year's tour for Harry Clay.

From around 1914/15 Boyle is known to have worked for C.E. King's Brisbane theatrical enterprises while at the same time operating his own "squash shop," (refreshment room) in the city. He returned to Sydney in late 1915/early 1916 to do similar business with Fullers as their manager at the National Theatre, Sydney. He also ran a successful refreshment room next to the Theatre Royal, it being a regular meeting place for vaudevillians. Sometime around the turn of 1916/17 he returned to Harry Clay's company as the manager of the North Sydney Coliseum, where he remained until October 1918, at which time he was given the operations of Clay's newly opened Eden Garden's theatre in Manly. He stayed with Clay's until his sudden and unexpected death in November 1924, just three and a half months before his longtime friend and boss Harry Clay died. During his last years he was the House Manager at the Newtown Bridge Theatre, ca.1923-24.

-
- A better worker than Mr Boyle I never met. (Harry Clay)
 - Harry Clay had a little dapper English manager [named] Jim Boyle. When a circuit went on a north Queensland tour, it was Boyle's job to write ahead and book the local school of arts. The company arrived at one small town to find no booking had been

made. One afternoon Harry Clay received Boyle's letter back from the dead letter office. It was addressed to "The Caretaker, School of Arts, Queensland." At that minute Boyle walked in swinging his cane. Clay abused him roundly till he ran out of breath. Boyle was crestfallen: "You know Mr Clay," he said, "I ought to be kicked." A happy smile lit Harry Clay's face. He jumped to his feet and delivered a mighty blow with his boot that Boyle was still rubbing days after ("Sometimes" ARG: no details).

- One of the big tasks was to offer a forthcoming attraction that would ensure a full house at the next show. [Jimmy] Boyle had the job one night. He had heard Miss Annie Jones sing privately and decided to build her up..... "Thank you for your attendance," Boyle told the audience. "I want to say that next Friday night you will be given the honour of hearing the greatest soprano voice ever produced in the country." For ten minutes he kept the audience sitting while he built up Annie Jones' reputation. After the show some of the audience came back stage: "Is this fair dinkum?" they asked. "My oath, it is." Next Friday the theatre was packed. They all came to hear the new Australian nightingale. Miss Jones was the last act. She waddled on to the stage. There was deep silence. She opened her mouth. From it came a voice so thin the orchestra leader in the pit could hardly hear it. The audience stayed still for a minute. Then all hell broke loose. The mob raged and roared. Missiles of every description were thrown at the unhappy soprano. Boyle ducked out the stage door. He could still hear the shouting as he disappeared up King Street ("Sometimes" ARG: no details).
- Jimmy Boyle once tried his strength on a punching machine. He carefully put away glasses in his vest pocket, and let go. Something went click on the floor. "I've broken the machine," said the fragile, deluded Jimmy. He stooped to the floor to look. "It's only my glasses," he murmured, picking these up, and making a desperate attempt to look as dignified as usual (TT: Aug. 1910, 6).
- Jimmy Boyle recently left Sydney for England. Among those at the wharf to see him off was the big-hearted, ever-generous Harry Clay (TT: Dec. 1910, 8).
- Among his pals Jimmy Boyle was long known as "Simple Simon." Mr Boyle once got the tip for a double at Randwick (Sydney). On his way into the city from the suburbs to back it for £500 he went into a barber's shop for a shave. The barber persuaded him the horse he was finishing with was no good, and that for this neddy he should substitute Simple Simon - then a good hurdler and steeple chaser. Mr Boyle varied the double accordingly. The two horses he was originally told to back - and intended backing, until the barber - won. So Mr Boyle, through tinkering with Simple Simon, who didn't get a place, lost the £500 that would have otherwise been his. Hence the designation, "Simple Simon." But it was Mr Boyle's luck, later on, to get back on at least one of those who were always guying him over the Simple Simon affair. This was Harry Clay. "Do you see who's starting today?" remarked Mr Clay to Mr Boyle at one of the pony-meetings. "Yes; and I'm going to back it," replied Mr Boyle, looking at his race-book. The horse referred to was Queen Bird. "Queen Bird" was another of the pet names by which Mr Boyle was known to Mr Clay. Mr Boyle took £100 to £5 on Queen Bird. It won. Mr Clay's horse was left at the post. Altogether it was a disastrous outing for Mr Clay, because he was that day betting for the first time on a dead-sure system respecting which he had got the whisper, and it wasn't until he had done in three figures that he discovered he couldn't have done worse if he had backed nothing but bookmakers' tips. So for a few days it was Mr Boyle's turn to laugh; and he made abundant use of the opportunity, too (TT: June 1915, 49).

-
- Jimmy Boyle reports excellent business at the Eden Gardens, Manly, and last week established a record house with Toyland (Ted Stanley and Co). Jimmy says that this house will certainly take some beating. It might be mentioned that Jimmy is one of Manly's foremost surfers (AV: 24 Jan. 1919, 5)
 - Mr Boyle was noticed amongst the breakers last Saturday. His fine figure looked like a Roman Gladiator as he posed in the sun (AV: 28 Feb. 1919, 9).

JACK CAMPBELL

Tour manager/advance rep. (1908,1913) Campbell was perhaps the best-known Advance Rep working in Australia during the early decades of the twentieth century. He was engaged by many entertainment organisations as both an Advance Rep and a Manager, including the Fitzgerald Bros Circus, Harmston's Circus, James Brennan, the Coleman-Taylor Pantomime Co, and Harry Clay.

Campbell is believed to have begun his association with Harry Clay in 1908, when he undertook the position of Advance Rep for the Dramatic Co tour of Queensland. Around 1912, he became James Brennan's manager at the Hippodrome in Newtown, before returning to Clay's in 1913, whereupon he again toured Queensland - this time taking on the role of tour and business manager for the interim tour between the Jimmy Boyle and Wally Edwards eras. Whether he played any further role with the company is unknown at this stage. Campbell is known to have toured Queensland in 1917 as the Advance for Taylor and Coleman's Pantomime tour. The Theatre described Campbell in 1912 as "the most popular, experienced, and reliable 'advances' in Australia" (Jan. 1912, 21).

LES CANNIS

Projectionist-operator/circuit manager/house manager. Les Cannis began working for Harry Clay ca.1912, touring Queensland for the company in 1913 and 1914 as a projectionist. He worked in the same capacity for Clay on his Sydney circuit, in addition to the role of Front of House manager, establishing himself primarily at the NBT. By 1917 Cannis was a circuit manager on Clay's NSW southern line. He continued with Clay's up until at least 1925.

Described by Australian Variety in 1917 as one of the "Heads" in Goulburn, where he goes to manage for Clay's every week, Les Cannis was an honorary member in the Goulburn Racing Club, and Vice President of several associations in that town. He was also regularly referred to as "Handsome Les" over the many years he worked for Harry Clay. Cannis is believed to have started out with the company around 1912 as a projectionist and operator. He eventually became one of Clay's principle employees over the next decade or so, working in various positions - including Front of House manager and circuit manager during the 1917-1918 period. A 1918 report also records that he had begun to involve himself in filmmaking around this period - although this was no doubt separate from his employment with Harry Clay. It is known that he was still on the company's pay role in 1925.

- Les Cannis, the handsome and ever-smiling one at the Bridge Theatre, is one of the most popular and obliging fellows one could wish to meet. Les is invaluable to Harry Clay in every capacity. It would be a good movement if the firm could place him in charge of one of their suburban houses, as he is capable of working up good business (AV: 187 1917, 13).

MAURICE CHENOWETH

Clay's manager/tenor/revue producer/straightman/music teacher. (1914, 1916-1928). Born Maurice Clayton Chenoweth on the 26 December 1881 at Aldinga, Sth Australia. He apparently began an apprenticeship as a plumber prior to becoming a Gold Medal student at the Eder Conservatorium, Adelaide. Chenoweth later toured Australasia for five years with the Westminster Glee Club, followed by a lengthy engagement with West's Pictures circuit in South Australia. He performed with the Leidertafel and Royal Philharmonic Societies, before engagements in vaudeville with James Brennan, Ted Holland, and J.C. Bain. He started with Harry Clay in 1914, and later worked with Bert Howard before an engagement on the Fuller circuit around 1916. He later returned to Clay's where he eventually worked as a theatre/circuit manager and revue producer. Upon Harry Clay's death Chenoweth became General Manager of the Bridge Theatre Co, holding that position until 1928, at which time he returned to the Fullers as a House Manager. Married to Florence Gertrude Quarrell he had two children Romney and Valmai. He died aged 87 in 1968, Sydney.

One of Australia's foremost tenors between ca.1910 to 1920, Chenoweth had a sound early musical training which saw him gain concert platform experience. Born in South Australia to Edwin George Chenoweth, a sadler from Cornwall (UK), and Esther, an organist, he undertook his musical training under Myles Seharer [sic] and Frederick Bevan (a Professor of Singing who was educated as a chorister at All-Saints Margaret St, London). Chenoweth, who was also an accomplished pianist, won several scholarships as well as scoring the highest ever points in his final examination (145 out of 150) to that date - 1902. He is known to have performed in The Messiah at the Exhibition Hall, Brisbane in December 1909 for the Brisbane Musical Union; as Arthur Donegal in Floradora for the Petersham Choral Society (Jan 1910), and in Elgar's Caractacus, presented by the Royal Sydney Philharmonic Society, Town Hall June 1910.

Around 1911 he began a career in vaudeville starting with Brennan's Amphitheatre Ltd (Bris) and the National Theatre (Syd) in 1911, and later with Ted Holland's shows at the Empire Theatre (Bris) in 1913. In 1914 he undertook engagements with both J.C. Bain and Bert Howard, as well as an initial season with Harry Clay. Following this he worked for a period of time with the Fullers and Jacky Landow. In early 1915 Chenoweth took his own concert party on tour through the NSW Northern Rivers, and around the same time was elected to an executive position with the Australian Variety Artists Federation. Towards the end of 1916 Chenoweth returned to Clay's. He then spent the next ten years with Clay, first as a tenor and straightman to a number of comics. One of these included a lengthy stint as foil to Ted Tutty during the years 1917-18, as well as some regular turns with Reg Thornton (the Kangaroosta). As a singer he also regularly partnered Harry Clay, Marshall Crosby and Arthur Morley among others.

During 1916 Chenoweth began accepting students for his own training college, offering a scholarship system to successful applicants. The following year he started producing revues for Clay's and by 1920 was to become one of the company's senior managers. He is reported in 1923 as "nightly looking after the programmes at Clay's three city venues the Gaiety, Princess and Newtown Bridge Theatres." After Harry Clay's death in 1925 he became the company's General Manager, leaving to take on the position of House Manager for the Fullers in August 1928. He continued on in theatre management for a number of years, followed in this department by his son Romney, who worked for the Tivoli organisation for many years.

Maurice Chenoweth was extremely popular within the industry, and highly regarded by both Harry Clay and his artists as an extremely versatile and tireless worker. As a singer he had few peers, being especially noted for his clear articulation. He was regarded, along with Marshall Crosby as the best singer on the Clay circuit. As the straightman to Ted Tutty, he formed one of the

more popular double acts to have performed for Clay's, leading to his reputation for versatility and adaptability. According to the Theatre he had, by December 1917, "developed into a particularly fine all-round vaudeville performer, [who] besides being always good for an enthusiastic recall for his well-delivered tenor songs [was also] at home on the stage in a multitude of other directions" (Dec. 1917, 47). He was also known to have consistently broken the company's box office records at each of the theatres he was responsible for.

-
- Maurice Chenoweth caused quite an outburst in singing "The Death of Nelson" (AV: 19 Aug. 1914, 10)
 - Maurice Chenoweth and Harry Clay were at their best in singing "Jack Crawford" and "Annie Laurie" and they went for their good work the best on the bill (AV: 26 Aug. 1914, 6).
 - Maurice Chenoweth, who was down the south coast last week in conjunction with Ella Caspers concert company, created quite a sensation with his singing. The fair-haired one was in fine form, and the audience demanded song after song from him, till in the end he had to come forward and make a speech (AV: 13 June 1917, 12).
 - Maurice Chenoweth figured as a composer at Harry Clay's Bridge Theatre last week. The opening number of the revue, "Papa's Troubles," was written by him, and if this is a sample of his work, more would like to be seen of it (AV: 27 June 1917, 3).
 - The programme at the Newtown Bridge Theatre for the week November 10-16 included an item "Chenoweth and Tutty - White and Black." In this Mr Chenoweth appeared in evening clothes, and Mr Tutty as a black-faced comedian. Such was Mr Chenoweth's work as to merit his being described as the Fred Niblo of vaudeville. Pattering with Mr Tutty he displayed an ease and confidence - to say nothing of the point he gave to every line he uttered - that imparted to the turn a distinction rarely seen in vaudeville (TT: Dec. 1917, 47).
 - Maurice Chenoweth is now well into a successful stride, and doing excellent work, producing revues for Harry Clay; in fact the latter claims the good business that is being done by the company to M.C.'s good work. During the past four months more successful revues have been staged at the Bridge Theatre than have ever been witnessed before. Maurice seems to have just what the audience's like. In the new year he has some real winners up his sleeve (AV: 14 Dec. 1917, n. pag.)
 - Maurice Chenoweth and Ted Tutty are the hit of the bill. The screams of laughter they get set aside any doubt on that point (TT: Feb. 1918, 41).
 - Chenoweth and Tutty held the stage for quite a while with their bright and bidding fair to outdo Caldwell and Crawford routine of patter, and their duets - eh; Caldwell (AV: 1 Mar 1918, n. pag.).
 - Maurice Chenoweth has now been producing for Harry Clay for 104 weeks, this in itself is a splendid advertisement for Maurice's ability; he is still Johnny Walker (AV: 14 June 1918, n. pag.).
 - Maurice Chenoweth, whose versatility is remarkable, has certainly acquired a wonderful knowledge of the vaudeville game since his association with Harry Clay (AV: 11 Oct. 1918, 15).
 - [Maurice Chenoweth] delights the house, first with "The Rivers of Love," and then "My Dear Irish Mother." Temperament and personality are largely contributing elements in Mr Chenoweth's pronounced success as a singer. He has to be accorded the further credit of being an ideal spruiker-in-general (TT: Nov. 1919, 28).
 - A tenner offered by the [Clay's] management to anybody breaking the record held by Maurice Chenoweth's bunch at this house [Gaiety] (E: 13 Apr. 1921, 15).
 - Maurice Chenoweth's company has been drawing capacity since last Saturday (E: 1 June 1921, 15).

LOU COURTNEY

Film and limelight operator/advance rep/juggler/equilibrist/spruiker. (1904-c1926) Courtney is first known to have worked for Harry Clay in 1904 as the Queensland tour's Advance Rep. Prior to this he is believed to have worked in various theatrical areas, once as an actor in Her Majesty's Dramatic Co (ca.1893). As Clay's Queensland Advance Rep he apparently toured in that position until 1907, after which he began to operate the company's film and limelight projectors, in addition to occasional performances as an equilibrist. Courtney is also known to have performed the same duties on Clay's Sydney circuit until around 1915 or so, at which time he joined the war effort, serving some time at the front. He returned to Clay's after the war, taking on the position of House Manager at the Bridge Theatre for some period after Harry Clay's death.

Lou Courtney was another of Harry Clay's long time employees, and an essential component in his success, particularly during the early years of his Queensland operations. Versatile and reliable, Courtney, like others of his kind working in the vaudeville/minstrel era, found his niche in the industry by virtue of his ability to adapt to new challenges, in whatever area was

required. Originally working in serious theatre, he is known to have toured Queensland in 1893 as part of Her Majesty's Dramatic Co, a troupe which also included a young Albert Baily. In 1904 he began his association with Harry Clay, taking care of the Advance Rep duties for Clay's Queensland tours. In 1908, he took over the operation of the film and limelight projecting on these tours, continuing to do the same on Clay's Sydney circuit until he joined the war effort sometime around 1915/16 (he would have been in his late thirties). After the war, in which he spent some time at the front, Courtney returned to Clay's, taking on the job of spruiker at the Gaiety around 1920, replacing Joe Lashwood. He became House Manager at the Bridge Theatre after Harry Clay's death in 1925.

-
- 6 Sept: Opening night of Her Majesty's Dramatic Company at the School of Arts, Charters Towers. The company includes: Albert Bailey, James South, H. Norman, Flossie Stanhope, Nellie Harland, Carrie Hubert, H. Hubert and Lou Courtney (NM: 6 Sept. 1893, 1).

WALLY EDWARDS

Baritone/stage and tour manager/interlocutor/illustrated songs/endman. A respected minstrel singer, Edwards toured Queensland in 1898 with J.L Travers Continental Vaudeville Co, along with Harry Clay. He began his association with Harry Clay's company around 1902, touring the state on no less than fourteen occasions, the last five as Tour and/or Business Manager. Edwards also acted as circuit manager for Clay on his South-western line (primarily the Blue Mountains and mid west area of NSW) between 1916 and 1919. In addition to his managerial activities Edwards also continued to perform as an entertainer, either in the role of singer or interlocutor.

Wally Edwards' early life and career remains to date somewhat of a mystery. It is possible that he initially came from north Queensland, where the name W. Edwards is noted in relation to an amateur minstrel company, the Black Diamond Minstrel and Variety Co around the Charters Towers region (ca.1894-1895). W. Edwards, in the advertising for these shows was apparently both a singer and Music Director (NM: 13 Nov. 1895, 1). The first accurately documented appearance of Wally Edwards to date is, however, in 1898 when he accompanied the J.L. Travers' Continental Vaudeville Company through Queensland, along with Harry Clay and family, performing solo turns as well as duets with Clay.

Edwards' first engagement with Clay's organisation was to be in 1902, when he was employed as a baritone and endman for the Waxworks and Vaudeville tour of Queensland. He later specialised in Illustrated Songs, gaining a reputation in the northern state as one of the company's most popular personalities, touring annually up until 1907, followed by a tour in 1909, and then from 1912 to 1918. During the last five tours he was employed as both Tour Manager and/or Business Manager.

Around 1909 Edwards was engaged as the interlocutor at the Amphitheatre (Syd), in addition to his vocal duties as an illustrated singer. Back on Clay time by 1912, he continued to perform as an entertainer, turning to management duties in 1916 when Harry Clay began his NSW country circuit. Edwards took on the management duties for the South-western Line, primarily the Blue Mountains and mid-West area up until 1919, in addition to his Queensland tour duties - he having assumed the tour manager role from 1914.

By 1918 Edwards had all but retired as a performer, only returning to the stage in guest appearances. In July 1919, he was reported to have been in a bad state of health for some time, being given a benefit at the Princess "by his life-long friend Harry Clay" that month (AV: 18 July 1919, 3). In 1920 he returned to the stage for Joe Archer's benefit.

There are no references regarding Edwards' career between 1920 and 1927, however, it is more than likely that he remained in a management position for Harry Clay on either one of his suburban or country circuits, or perhaps for some period of time at the Bridge Theatre. In 1927, he was recalled by the company to take on another Queensland tour, with headline act Nellie Kolle.

Highly respected within the industry for his experience and reliability as a vaudeville manager, Edwards was also considered one of the finest local bass-baritones around. The Theatre wrote of him: "Wally is as robust of voice as he is of person - which is saying a deal. When he attacks a high note the atmosphere fairly vibrates and trembles like an hysterical girl who has seen a ghost" (Nov. 1909, 59). Bert Howard, too, remembers Edwards as giving him the advice which led to his instigating the highly successful Sunday film screenings at the old Gaiety Theatre in Castlereagh St.

-
- Wally Edwards, the portly interlocutor at the Amphitheatre has a singing voice containing the penetrating qualities of a shell fired from a battleship... It may have only been a coincidence; but one night recently, when his vocal chords were working at high pressure, he filled the Amphi with such an amount of sound that a loose brick in the far end of the building flew fairly out and half-way across the street, and narrowly missed killing a red-headed policeman as it fell (TT: Nov. 1909, 59).

* Mr Edwards has so often toured Queensland with Mr Clay, from year to year, that he's as well known up that way as the principal himself. Evidently Mr Edwards' singing agrees with him, because he keeps so broadening out that, if he continues in the same manner, Mr Clay will have to give him a special stage all to himself. Slide and patriotic songs always were Mr Edwards' speciality (TT: May 1916, n. pag).

TED GABRIEL

Clay's stage manager (ca.1914-1929). Edward Gabriel, another long-time employee of Harry Clay's, was very much a Newtown Bridge Theatre identity, being associated with that venue for almost the entire period it was operated by Clay's. Gabriel is known to have continued at the theatre at least up until the end of 1930.

Often Referred to as "Handsome Ted," Ted Gabriel was often referred to by many in the industry ("they are all handsome at Clay's" an Australian Variety scribe once wrote), was with little doubt the most popular employee at the Newtown Bridge Theatre according to any within the industry. This was not only for the capable manner in which he organised and "put on" the shows for Harry Clay, but primarily for his agreeable disposition, (mentioned quite often in the pages of the trade journals over the years). Gabriel, whose duties were considerable, was said in 1914 to have had "a personality that will win everyone's regards. He is ever attentive, and most obliging, and the Bridge Theatre are most fortunate in securing such a steady, good fellow as Ted" (AV: 11 Nov. 1914, n. pag.). He stayed on at the Bridge Theatre after it was leased to Harry Kitching in 1930, being mentioned in a report by the NSW Fire Brigade as being the manager on duty when a small fire broke out in the stage area of the theatre.

-
- Ted Gabriel is an acrobat all right. At the Bridge Theatre - where, by the way, he is a permanent fixture - he strolls into the orchestral well, and putting one hand on to the stage he is the next moment up there on both feet. Amazing is the ease and agility with which he appears to get about in his duties as a stage-hand. Mr Gabriel strikes one as being able, when the occasion requires it, to do the work of just about six ordinary men (TT: Dec. 1914, 39).
 - The Handsome Ted (they are all handsome at Clay's) is doing splendid work for the firm lately. He is one of the best dispositioned men we have met, and also knows all there is to be known about the business. He is immensely popular with artistes playing the Bridge Theatre (AV: 6 June 1917, 9).
 - Some actor: Ted Gabriel got a chance to distinguish himself when Lester Brown put him into a sketch at the Bridge Theatre. Years to come, when Ted is being interviewed by the great dailies, he will tell of the wonderful success he made in the day gone by (AV: Oct. 1917, n. pag.).

DICK HEANEY

Doorman/usher/Randwick Racecourse gatekeeper/house manager/singer. Employed for over 37 years at Randwick as a gate-keeper and associated with Harry Clay for some 30 years.

Described in 1922 as "right-Bower to Harry Clay" (E: 11 Jan. 1922, 20), Dick Heaney was reportedly "one of the best-known and popular gate-keepers at Randwick, where he... enjoyed an uninterrupted engagement for thirty-seven years." Australian Variety wrote further that "Mr Heaney has been intermittently associated with Mr Clay for a period of twenty-five years" (15 Apr. 1920, 3).

Equally well-known at the Bridge Theatre, the popular, stout gentleman (Heaney was reportedly some 17 stone), was installed as House Manager in 1918. Australian Variety noted that "the management could not have made a better judgment. He handles the large audience on Saturday's and week nights in a most capable manner, and finds seats for them when it seems impossible" (4 Oct. (1918): 12).

Despite his reputation for handling all classes of trouble should it be required, Heaney was reportedly a quiet and tactful man. And in addition to this role with Clay's, he was also on occasions called upon to deputise for any singing turns which failed to make it to a performance.

-
- Dick Heaney is going to make application to the Lord Mayor to endeavour to have the corner of Park and Pitt Streets (the Victoria Picture Theatre side) christened "Nip Corner," which is little wonder, as all the "bums" and "dead-beats" in creation seem to "work" this particular spot, and it would be a fine thing if the police got a move on and "vaggged" some of these pests, who are sometimes confused with the large number of inoffensive pros (AV: 18 July 1917, n. pag)
 - A real singer - Dick Heaney is one of Clay's right-hand men. Furthermore, he has a voice, but few know it. Last week he deputised for a performer at a concert, when he sang "Mother Machree" and "When Irish Eyes are Smiling." In response to several recalls, he sang "Turn Back the Pickle-factory and Give me Yesterday" (AV: 1 Feb. 1918, n. pag).
 - Dick Heaney is a well-known figure at Newtown, and very popular with the patrons of the Bridge Theatre. Dick has never any trouble with the audience. If there should, however, happen to be a little row, Dick has only to come in, and like magic, there is quietness. A tactful fellow, he knows his work in handling all classes. Dick, by the way, goes about sixteen stone so no one will take the risk! (AV: 15 Feb. 1918, n. pag.).

ANDY KERR

Bookmaker/Theatre Owner and Lessee/Vaudeville Entrepreneur. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland ca.1886. Known as the "Coogee Bunyip" in later years he started out as a telegraph operator on the N.B. Railway at age 12 before emigrating to Australia ca.1901. He soon became involved in the horse racing game, initially as a bookie, and later also as an owner. In 1917 Kerr became the manager of Australian Variety, in addition to taking over the management of the Boomerang Theatre, Coogee. He partnered Harry Sadler as a director at the Gaiety Theatre (Oxford St) in late 1918, becoming the manager in mid-1919 upon Sadler's death. Following this he joined forces with Harry Clay to run the Gaiety from around late 1919.

Andy Kerr, the Coogee "Bunyip," was renowned throughout Australia as the "Longest Odds Bettor in the World," and apparently received more unsolicited commendation from the sporting press and public than all the other turf agents combined (AV: 8 Set 1915, 16). Having arrived in Australia as a 15 year old, with his previous experience only as a telegraph operator for the N.B. Railway, Kerr immediately interested himself in the racing industry, starting as a fledgling bookie on the "Outer" before eventually graduating from this unenviable position to the "Flat" and from there to the "Ledger" and finally to the "Paddock," where he achieved considerable fame and fortune. According to newspapers of the day Kerr revolutionised betting in Australia by offering £100 to £1,000 to 1 straight-out on a pony event. By 1915 he had a small army of clerks, bag holders and bodyguards, and in 1916 at Flemington the Sun recorded that in doing a "roaring business... it was impossible to get near him. Sight-seers obstructed those who wished to speculate" (AV: 12 Apr. 1916, advert. n. pag.).

In April 1917 Kerr became the Manager of Australian Variety and Show World in partnership with Editor Martin C. Brennan. Sometime later that year he expanded his business interests when he became the Managing Director of the Boomerang Theatre, Coogee, a 1500 seat venue presenting both film and vaudeville, and carrying a full orchestra. The following year, in early December, Kerr joined forces with Harry Sadler, taking on the role of Director at the Gaiety Theatre, in Oxford Street, and being heavily involved in the theatre's renovations. It is understood that Kerr looked after the business affairs while Sadler involved himself in the day to day running of the theatre and the organisation of the artists.

In 1919, following Sadler's death, Kerr took over the management of the Gaiety on his own for some months before joining up with Harry Clay, who had been providing artists for the theatre from around the beginning of the year. It is apparent that he became an official partner with Kerr in October. While Clay's association with the Gaiety is the most well-known, the theatre was in fact known for several years as Kerr's Gaiety. He is believed to have continued on in management positions with both the Gaiety and Australian Variety well into the 1920s.

Apart from his varied business interests, Kerr was involved quite liberally in many charities, "his beneficence [being] a by-word within the Sydney community... For the war and patriotic funds alone he has given close on £1,000, and he has never yet been known to turn a deaf ear to any legitimate appeal in the cause of charity" (AV: 19 Apr. 1916, n. pag.). He is also known to have, on occasion, graced the stage in cameo appearances, one such event causing Australian Variety to report that "Mr Kerr nightly receives an ovation. And he deserves it!... His little part is done without the least affectation. He comes on keenly, speaks clearly, and moves easily and naturally" (9 May 1917, n. pag.).

As with many of the other artists and managers who have been included in this Appendix section, much remains to be found with regard to Andy Kerr's later career. It is not known, for instance, when he relinquished his hold on the Gaiety Theatre. Indeed, his relationship with both Clay's and Australian Variety require further investigation in order to establish the extent and length of his involvement. As to his career as a leading Australian bookmaker, this too remains unknown.

- His long odds prices up to as much as 2000 to 1 on a straight-out pony event makes the Grabbing Tote blush (Mudgee Guardian - qtd AV: 31 Mar. 1915, 2).
- The only man in the world who lays and pays £1,000 to £1 straight-out on day race (Sportsman - qtd AV: 8 Sept. 1915, 16).

The Coogee Bunyip

King of the fielders is he,
Odds that are longest he'll lay.
Gets through his work in a trice,
Finds it a pleasure to pay.

Randwick will find him this week,
Look for his stand - ninety-nine.
Where he'll do business with all-
Taking your quidlets and mine.

Andy's a mighty fine "sport,"
Foremost in doing good turns.
Sticks, like a brick, to his pals,
Just go and ask Charlie Byrnes.

That's why the Bunyip's well-liked,
Friends he has got in galore.
May he keep going as now,
Each week will bring dozens more.

(AV: 29 Sept. 1915, n. pag)

- The man from Coogee did an enormous business. He told the punters that any money he misses throwing into his men's bags they could have. Needless to say, he missed nothing (Table Talk - qtd AV: 12 Apr. 1916, n. pag).
- He writes tickets and handles money faster than any man seen in Victoria. The clients round his ring were often ten deep (Judge - qtd AV: 12 Apr. 1916, n. pag).
- What the May issue of the Theatre magazine says of the "Coogee Bunyip" as an actor: Andy Kerr in his few lines has simply to be Andy Kerr. Whilst Mr Kerr is the on the stage you realise more fully than ever how completely Mr MacDonald fails to get the sporting touch.... Mr Kerr nightly receives an ovation. And he deserves it! He is giving his services, wholly out of friendship for Mr Drew, and with no other object than helping along a good cause. His little part is done without the least affectation. He comes on keenly, speaks clearly, and moves easily and naturally. Mr Kerr is just giving a study that would be the despair of many a professional actor (AV: 9 May 1917, n. pag.).

STAN KERRIDGE

Baritone/character vocalist/manager, NBT. Stan Kerridge is first known to have been associated with Harry Clay when he toured Queensland in 1907 as a baritone and specialist illustrated singer. He again toured in 1910. One of the country's leading character vocalists he was, however, forced to retire in 1912 due to health problems which affected his voice production. He is believed to have spent much of the next 10 years involved in various commercial interests, before returning to the entertainment industry as a manager for Harry Clay at the Bridge Theatre, Newtown. He remained with the company until it closed in late 1929.

As with so many artists and people involved in vaudeville, much of Stan Kerridge's life remains unknown. The first reference found regarding his career is his association with Harry Clay's 1907 Queensland Waxworks and Comedy Co tour, in which he performed as a singer. Along with Wally Edwards and May Reade, he was one of the specialist illustrated song artists. The Northern Miner of that year describes one of his turns thus: "Mr Stan Kerridge's best was 'Like the Rose you're the Fairest Flower,' with beautiful dissolving effects, the rosebud slowly opening to the perfect flower" (30 May 1907, 5). He again toured the northern state in 1910. During this later period Kerridge had begun to build a reputation as one of the country's leading character vocalists, until a severe nasal problem forced his permanent retirement from the stage in 1912/13. In December of 1913 he was given a benefit at St George's Hall, Newtown, organised by Bert Howard.

While it is not clear as to what Kerridge did during the next 10 years, Everyone's in 1925 indicates that he had been "engaged in commercial pursuits" for some time (28 Jan. 1925, 32). In December of 1924, he returned to the entertainment industry, taking on the managerial role at the Bridge Theatre, Newtown, after the death of the previous manager, Jimmy Boyle. Kerridge is known to have stayed on with the company until it folded its operations in late 1929.

Stan Kerridge, according to a number of reports (and as seems to be the case with most of Harry Clay's other managers) was well-liked and respected for his reliability and professionalism. An incident in 1925, in which Rosie Rifle, a sharp-shooting artist, ran a ramrod through her hand at the Bridge Theatre, was noted in Everyone's. Kerridge's prompt assistance, and knowledge of first aid, which he had apparently studied, reportedly prevented serious complications from setting in (4 Mar. 1925, 32).

Whether Kerridge stayed on at the Bridge Theatre after the company leased it to H.R. Kitching in late 1929 is unknown. However, a NSW Fire Brigade report indicates that by December 1930, the theatre's manager was Bill Sadler, and so it can be assumed that he may well have left sometime during or shortly after Clay's closed its Newtown operations.

HAROLD T. MORGAN

Business partner/solicitor/J.P./alderman/mayor. A prominent Sydney solicitor and businessman, Harold Thomas Morgan was also an Alderman, representing the Enmore Ward in the Newtown Council from around 1891, becoming Mayor in 1895, 1902, 1907-1910, 1918-1920. In addition he acted as a Notary Public and Commissioner for Affidavits for New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland. In 1912, he and fellow businessman A.R. Abbott joined with Harry Clay to form the Bridge Theatre Co which built the Newtown Bridge Theatre. He remained a silent partner until at least the time of Clay's death in 1925, and is believed to have remained so for a number of years after. Two sons, Alfred T. and Harold E. Morgan also became solicitors, the latter handling the affairs of Catherine Clay up until her death in the early 1960s.

While there remains quite a deal more to be established with regard to Harold T. Morgan and his career, his association with Harry Clay seems to have been a long and fruitful one. The earliest record of his involvement in the entrepreneur's career and personal life is in the handling of the Clays' purchase of 218 Glebe Point Road. Whether or not he was one of several people to finance Clay's early career ca.1901, when the entrepreneur initially began running his Queensland tours is unknown. But it is likely that they did indeed begin an association around this time. Morgan was already an established legal name Sydney as well as being an alderman in Newtown. He also took on the role of Mayor for the first time in 1895. Around this period, too, Harry Clay's

managerial career in Newtown was also bringing him to the fore in terms of public recognition. Morgan's business address for some time was:

Harold T. Morgan & Sons
Solicitors and Notaries
74 Pitt Street (btw Martin Pl and Hunter St)
PO Box 195 G.P.O.

One son, Alfred T. Morgan: BA. LL.B was both a solicitor and Commissioner for Affidavits for South Australia, Tasmania, and Fiji, while another, Harold E. Morgan, (also a solicitor) became Commissioner for Affidavits for New Zealand and the Western Pacific. The only anecdotal reference to Morgan in any of the trade magazines found so far is in 1917, when Australian Variety records:

Harold Morgan, an alderman for Enmore for many years, and one of the directors of Clay's Bridge Theatre Ltd was very much in evidence with his gorgeous motor car during the week, giving artists a lift home after the show. Making as he did, a special trip of it each evening, shows thoughtfulness to an extent which will be long remembered by many, and for which too much thanks cannot be given him. The car, it might be mentioned, is one of the best in Australia (AV: 15 Aug. 1917, n. pag).

BILL SADLER

Manager/performer. Brother of Harry Sadler, William started out as a doorman for his brother at the Princess ca.1916-17, and around the same time as a performer on Harry Clay's circuit. In 1918 he became the manager of the Coliseum Theatre, North Sydney, and later handled similar positions in a number of Clay's theatres, including the Bridge Theatre Newtown, and Princess Theatre in the city. After his long engagement with Clay's, Sadler spent some considerable time with the Tivoli organisation as House Manager. His great claim to fame in Australian theatre history, however, was his role in suggesting the name "Mo" for Roy Rene and Nat Phillips' partnership as Stiffy and Mo (recognised as one of Australia's greatest comic partnerships). In turn the name "Mo" became the signature identity for Australian theatre's yearly honour, the Mo Award. Sadler is known to have continued with Clay's as a manager until the company folded, and then worked on at the theatre as manager for a period of time during the early 1930s, including Harry Kitching's time at the theatre.

Little has yet been found with regard to Bill Sadler's earlier life, (as with his brother Harry) other than they are known to have had two other brothers, Victor and Sid. Bill is believed, however, to have started out in theatre sometime prior to or during 1916 with Harry Clay on his Sydney suburban circuit as a performer. Charles Norman, who knew Sadler well, records in When Vaudeville Was King that Sadler had "been a performer touring with the Harry Clay circuit... [and that he came from the same school of thinking as Clay] so they learnt their values well" (245).

In 1916, after his brother Harry had taken on the Princess Theatre management for the Fullers, it is believed that Bill became doorman/cum house manager/cum actor, at the venue. Australian Variety recorded in 1916 that "Bill Sadler, brother to manager Harry (of the Princess Theatre) is becoming particularly useful in the farces played at the George Street vaudeville house. One of these days William will be gazetted as a regular actor" (6 Sept. 1916, 7). Around this time, Bill Sadler made his mark in Australian theatre history by giving the newly formed partnership of Roy Rene and Nat Phillips its name. Rene required a stage name to compliment Phillips' "Stiffy" character, and being at a loss, Sadler, according to Rene, is supposed to have said, "Why don't you call yourselves Stiffy and Mo?" (Rene 62-63).

Sadler's reliability and work ethic brought him much praise throughout his career, aspects which Harry Clay also recognised from the start. He was still house manager at the Princess for his brother at the time Clay took over the lease in early 1918, retaining his position there under the new management. After successfully taking over the reins of the theatre while Clay was away in Western Australia, he was given the job of running the Coliseum Theatre in North Sydney, after that venue's manager, Jimmy Boyle, took on the responsibilities for Eden Gardens Theatre at Manly. Australian Variety reported Sadler's first week as the Coliseum's new manager, noting that he "must have been pleased with himself last Saturday night. It was his first night as manager...., and it was a record house, no doubt due to the fine manner in which Will had the district billed during the week" (11 Oct. 1918, 13).

Sadler remained at the Coliseum for many years and later managed the Bridge Theatre in the last days of its operations under the Clay banner. He stayed on in the same position for Harry Kitching for an undetermined period, and is known to have been associated with the theatre at least until December 1930, having been recorded in a NSW Fire Brigade report as the manager at that time. During the 1930s he had a long-time association with the Opera House/Tivoli Theatre, apparently becoming something of a Sydney theatrical landmark. He is, for example, known to have gone into partnership with a south coast entrepreneur by the name of Boland, who owned the Wollongong theatre which Harry Clay had used for his shows for a number of years. Sadler and Boland leased the Opera House for some time, running their own shows there to some success. He was also at one stage heavily involved with the careers of Queenie Paul and Mike Connors, being induced by the pair to join forces with their new set up. Charles Norman records that it was said of Bill around this time that:

[He] pasted his shares [in the company] inside his bowler hat - and very sensible. He had heard there was a big-take-over taking place. Bill then assigned himself as stage doorkeeper and sat pat until the right price came up for his shares. He remembered his training with the bag-carrying Harry Clay. I'm told that Bill never raised his hat to a soul during the take-over time (246-247).

Sadler, according to Norman, raised "a fine family, mostly boys, and one, Ray, became the treasurer for the Shovel for years. Some of the others entered show business" (247).

In his day [Bill] Sadler had been a performer touring with the Harry Clay [NSW country and suburban] circuit. Mr Clay himself was a shrewd showman. When travelling through the country with his shows you would see this significant figure in front of the theatre or hall with a bookmaker's bag slung over his shoulder, taking the money and giving the necessary tickets. Harry trusted no man. Bill Sadler came from the same school of thinking. So they learnt their values well (Norman 246).

ALEC STAGPOOLE

Vaudeville performer/scenic artist/set designer. Alec Stagpoole was for several years part of a family act known as The Stagpooles. He retired from the stage around 1915 to become a scenic artist, principally with Harry Clay, where his studio resided at the rear of the Newtown Bridge Theatre. He was also a freelance stage and set designer. His daughters Ula and Elvie were also vaudeville performers, with Elvie in particular being well-known as a solo artist and in partnership with her husband Charles "Ike" Delavale. His brother Ted, was a partner with Alec in the original Stagpooles lineup, and is known to have toured America around 1917/18.

Alec Stagpoole's early career is another unknown, apart from the fact that he and his brother Ted formed the nucleus of a family act which also included Madge Stagpoole. They are recorded as having returned to New Zealand with the Fullers in 1907 after an absence of some three years, and are known to have been still performing in 1915, playing an engagement at the National Theatre (Syd). Australian Variety noted that "their well-remembered act is meeting with great success. As before, the wonderful acrobatic ability of Ted Stagpoole is the big laugh maker" (17 Mar. 1915, n. pag). The troupe is believed to have adapted its act on occasions, being billed variously as the Three, or the Four Stagpooles, in addition to just simply, the Stagpooles. They are also known to have played all the major centres in Australia, and for both the Tivoli and Fuller organisations. Not all reports of the act were kind, however, as a 1915 review indicates. "The Four Stagpooles have the most idiotic and ridiculous sketch ever played in vaudeville. If a good team like this is going to pull this kind of hash, well they ought to enlist" (AV: 17 Feb. 1915, 9).

Alec Stagpoole retired from the stage sometime in 1915 in order to take on duties as Harry Clay's resident scenic artist. As with many vaudeville performers, versatility was a prerequisite for maintaining any semblance of a career. Alec is not the only Stagpoole to have had artistic abilities, as his brother Ted is believed to have involved himself in scenic building, too. A 1907 account reports that he burnt himself severely on the head, face and hands with melted glue at the Auckland Opera House, but with no permanent injury expected.

In so far as Alec is concerned, however, he almost immediately came in for praise for his work, with Australian Variety making comment towards his work shortly after he began his engagement as Clay's scenic artist.

Alex Stagpoole was responsible for the excellent scenery at Harry Clay's Bridge Theatre on Saturday night last. The stage looked better than it ever looked before, and was well worth the trouble spent. Alex is turning out some first-class work at his studio, in the Bridge Theatre, and any artists requiring additions to their act in the way of scenery or props should lose no time in seeing Alex Stagpoole (24 Nov. 1915, 17).

Stagpoole's work also saw him designing settings for commercial companies like Grace Brothers (AV: 27 Oct. 1915, n. pag.) and private organisations such as W. Yinson Lee, organiser of a 1916 Chinese procession in Sydney (TT: Apr. 1916, 32), in addition to his work with Clay's and individual artists. By 1916 Stagpoole was being assisted by one of his daughters Eululie [sic], and had invented a fire-proof scenery known as "Noburn" (AV: 9 Dec. 1916, n. pag.) which was passed by the Metropolitan Fire Board. Another invention was his system of utilising scenery to advantage by allowing it to be folded up into small sections without affecting the material (AV: 31 May 1916, 9).

While details regarding Stagpoole's career from around 1920 remain unclear, he is known to have continued in Clay's employment up until at least the mid 1920s, Charles Norman recalling him being at the Bridge Theatre during his own career with the company. Stagpoole was apparently well respected for his work with vaudeville scenery and props, being known to have designed equipment for some of the leading acts in Sydney during his career, including Leonard Nelson and Jim Romaine.

• Alex Stagpoole is kept quite busy at his studio at Clay's Bridge Theatre, Newtown, and is turning out some first-class work. He has just finished making and fitting up a stage for Grace Bros., Ltd. Anyone wishing to add to the tone of their act, Alex will be pleased to hear from them, as he is sure he has something that will suit you (AV: 27 Oct. 1915, n. pag.).

- Alex Stagpoole, the scenic artists, is now specialising in "dye work," a new system of utilising scenery to advantage. This latest invention allows the scenery to be folded up very small, and does not affect material. A trip to Clay's Bridge Theatre, Newtown would be well worth the visit, particularly to those who desire new scenery at a minimum of cost (AV: 31 May 1916, 9).
- Eululie [sic]¹ Stagpoole [Alex's] daughter is an able assistant doing most of the designing and painting of the scenery. Some of her work is seen in the appearance of a huge Xmas Cake on the opening this week. Alex is the inventor of "Noburn," the fire proof scenery (AV: 29 Dec. 1916, n. pag.).
- * Alex Stagpoole is responsible for the drop-curtain which Leonard Nelson has in use at the Majestic Theatre. Any artists thinking of adding to their offering should consult Alex, he has some excellent and original ideas (AV: 25 July 1917, 3).

CLAUDE E. WEBB

Advance Rep/film and theatre manager/theatre lessee/journalist. Born in Launceston (Tasmania), Webb became involved in the entertainment industry at age 17 as Treasurer for the Lynch Family of Bellringers. Three years later he became Alfred Dampier's Advance Rep, followed by a similar position with Charles Holloway. He later toured the USA with Olga Nethersole before returning to Australia where he established himself as one of the leading Advance Reps in the country. In 1909 Webb was engaged by Harry Clay to prepare the way for Walter Bentley's Queensland tour, and in 1914 is known to have spent some time in Brisbane looking after the interests of the George Willoughby Dramatic Co and Kings Dramatic Co. In later years he settled in Adelaide where he became the city's leading picture and theatre house manager, running at first the York Theatre, and around the 1930s, the Strand and Lyric theatres.

Perhaps one of the best-known, if not one of the most respected Advance Reps and Picture showmen in the early decades of the twentieth century, Claude Webb's career began at age 17 working on the Lynch Family's Victorian tour. He was then engaged by Alfred Dampier as an Advance Rep for his Dramatic Co. He later he toured the USA for a period of some four or five years with Olga Nethersole, before taking an absence of leave to travel through Alaska and the Yukon with a team of fur buyers.

On returning to Australia Webb again found engagements as an Advance Rep, taking on the responsibility for Harry Clay's Walter Bentley tour of Queensland in 1909. Around 1914 he was to handle the affairs of George Willoughby's Dramatic Co. and King's Dramatic Co. during their Queensland/Brisbane seasons. Webb eventually made a name for himself in Adelaide, where he spent some considerable time managing a number of picture houses and theatres in that city, up until at least the early 1930s. He is also known to have contributed articles to several trade journals during his career, including one for an Adelaide paper in 1925, on the US picture industry as seen through an Australian's eyes.

JAMES H. WHITE

Theatrical agent/journalist/vaudeville entrepreneur. "Whitie," as he was most often referred to, began his career as a burgeoning entrepreneur before establishing himself as a journalist. He later combined both careers, notably as a theatrical agent operating out of the offices of Australian Variety around 1915-16, in addition to being employed as a journalist for the magazine with his regular column "Whitie." He became a manager for Harry Clay's Vaudeville Enterprises in 1916, running the business out of Clay's offices in the city. White continued as a theatrical agent throughout the 1920s, and joined forces with Bert Howard around 1928/29.

White's early life and career are unclear at this time, however, he is known to have entered into management around 1902. He put together a company for shows at Liverpool on the outskirts of Sydney, where he said he had "secured a financier (a Greek waiter) with a Fiver" and with which he proceeded to "select a company of a dozen... next securing 500 two-coloured day bills, [and] putting the same out at Liverpool, where [he] had booked the hall for a Tuesday night two weeks hence." With his financier pulling out a few days prior to the show, and having spent his last 10/- on dodgers, White apparently still needed to find the fares to get his company to the show. "Never at any previous or subsequent period in my life" wrote White, "do I ever recollect feeling quite so miserable." To add to his woes a circus had turned up unannounced in the township bringing unwanted competition to his first foray as a showman. In the end, however, a severe storm developed into tornado type conditions, ripping the circus tents to shreds and allowing White's show to catch the locals to himself. The end result was a house record, cash profit in his pocket, and a greater desire to continue in the business (AV: 17 Jan. 1917, n. pag).

White later began to make his mark as both a young manager, and a writer for the Hawklet, being its Sydney representative. "In addition to representing James Donnelly's tabloid companies," noted Australian Variety in 1914, "he is the sole agent for the Musical Gardiners and other acts" (19 Aug. 1914, 6). Initially he operated his small entrepreneurial business at 183 Pitt Street, sending acts to various managements such as the Szarka Brothers at their Enmore Theatre. By 1915 White was conducting business through the Australian Variety Booking Agency, in partnership with editor Martin C. Brennan. White's clients included at

¹ Eululie, most likely this is a misprint for Eulalie

this time T.M Halls Lyric Theatre, Goulburn; R.L Baker's Stadium, Rushcutters Bay; Thornton's Mascot Theatre, Rosebury; and Harry Clay's Bridge Theatre, Newtown.

In early 1916 White had established a business relationship with artist/manager Joe Lashwood, the organisation being known as the Lashwood-White Theatrical Booking Agency, with operations having expanded quite considerably. However, in August 1916 he accepted an offer from Harry Clay to become manager of Clay's newly opened theatrical booking agency. The Clay/White relationship was to continue for a number of years. In 1921, and under his management, the agency's name was changed to the Australian Theatrical Bureau. It is not known whether Harry Clay continued his association past this point or not. It had for some time, though, been referred to unofficially as "White's Agency." It is unlikely, however, that Clay would have ceased his involvement in the venture prior to his stroke in 1925 as by all accounts it had continued to be the major source of vaudeville supply for both artists and companies requiring their services well into the mid 1920s.

During the 1920s as well as his agency operations White also continued to turn his hand to management running shows at several theatres including, in 1925, the Strand Theatre, Leichhardt. By the late 1920s (around 1928/29) White joined forces with Bert Howard, managing his Sydney circuit while the "Droll" was recuperating from a serious illness.