TED HOLLAND

Ted Holland first came to prominence in the mid-1870s as a member of Delohery, Craydon and Holland. Invariably billed as "the Australian team," the trio, arguably the country's most popular dance act of the late nineteenth century, also operated their own companies in association for much of that time. After the partnership ended around 1902/1903, Ted Holland turned to full-time vaudeville management. He initially formed his own touring company before settling in Brisbane in 1904, where he leased the Theatre Royal from Harry Rickards. He later sub-leased the same theatre from Percy St John, operating his own shows there for six years without a break. Holland joined forces with St John in 1911 to lease the newly built Empire Theatre. Although continuing to be billed as Ted Holland's Vaudeville Entertainers, their theatrical operations traded as Holland and St John Ltd. After Holland died in early September 1914, Holland and St John Ltd continued operating under the management of Percy St John until his death the following year. The company's operations at the Empire Theatre were briefly managed by Dan Carroll until taken over by Sir Benjamin and John Fuller in late 1917/early 1918.

[For details regarding Ted Holland's career to ca. 1902, see the entry for Delohery, Craydon and Holland]

1903-1906

After the disbanding of Delohery, Craydon and Holland, Ted Holland put together his own touring vaudeville company. One of his first successes was in Brisbane in 1903, where he played a packed five-month season at the Theatre Royal. In December the following year, he returned to the Queensland capital and set about establishing a permanent presence there by leasing the Theatre Royal from Harry Rickards. The Brisbane Courier records in 1911 that Holland's timing was fortuitous, as Brisbane had not at that stage built a reputation as a show town: "As in the case of all young communities there had been a period in its history when Queensland had been practically the grave of many a sterling company, and it was left to Mr Holland to work out its salvation from the Thespians' standpoint. To this end he secured an extended tenancy of the Theatre Royal and there he started in 1904 with a vaudeville company which has continued an uninterrupted success ever since" (7 Jan. 1911, 13).

The timing of Holland's Brisbane venture was also an important factor in his initial success. A number of entrepreneurs had previously attempted to establish permanent operations in Brisbane, but had failed due to a combination of factors, notably the city's smaller population, its isolation from the southern capitals and regional circuits, and the fact that none of the entrepreneurs (apart from Percy St John) had Holland's level of experience and reputation. In the first instance, Brisbane's rapid population growth over the past decade had by the early 1900s led to an increased demand for variety entertainment. The opening up of a permanent regional circuit by Harry Clay also provided a greater incentive for performers to go to Queensland, playing dates in Brisbane and then heading north to the lucrative mining centres and expanding coastal centres. His initial association with Rickards played a key role in helping Holland secure the type of artists that he needed to cement his reputation with Brisbane audiences. The 1911 Brisbane Courier article also notes that the two entrepreneurs made an arrangement under which Holland could secure the services of some of Rickards's acts, thereby allowing him access to a continuous stream of celebrity performers from around the country. When Rickards let his lease expire in 1905, Percy St John acquired the rights to the theatre, and subsequently sub-leased it to Holland. By that time, however, Holland had established the viability of his management to both the Brisbane public and the wider variety industry and, as a consequence, he continued to attract the best performers in Australia.

Ted Holland's entertainment invariably followed the minstrel format, with the first part semi-circle (led by the interlocutor and endmen), followed by the olio (second part specialty acts), and finally the afterpiece. The concluding section saw regular revivals of old favourite minstrel farces from the past two or more decades (many of these being stock routines known by most leading performers), mixed in with some new material written and/or adapted/localised by some of the more experienced performers engaged by Holland during the early 1900s. For example, among the more popular and perhaps best-known farces and burlesques staged between 1903 and 1906 were An M.P. for a Day, North-East Lynne, Ginger's Troubles, Dr Killall's Troubles, The Chinese Question, The Dengue Doctor, The Dual in the Forest, The Arrival of Casey, Over the Garden Wall, Tony the Tailor, Midnight Intruders, The Rehearsal, Faro the Banker, The Wise Woman, Jake Blow the Horn, The Wigmakers, Fun on the Wyandra, and The Christmas Goose (ctd. Djubal, "What Oh Tonight," Appendix E).
Although his long-term plan was to establish his operations as Brisbane's first permanent vaudeville company, Holland nevertheless sent troupes on brief tours throughout Queensland and, on occasion, down to northern New South Wales (see note below for details). He would also often provide short seasons of entertainment in nearby centres such as Toowoomba and Ipswich. Invariably billed as Ted Holland's Vaudeville Entertainers, the troupes did not consist only of performers. Few of the far-flung regional centres had access to new technologies or the products of popular culture enjoyed by their city brethren, and so travelling entertainment troupes would often bring artefacts from the city with them, including waxworks, cycloramas, the latest audio and visual inventions, and assorted technological displays. Holland's 1906 Queensland tour, for example, was billed as Ted Holland's New Vaudeville and Waxworks Company.

The Queensland tours were initially managed by Herb Moylan and comprised a similar (though not as lengthy) itinerary to Harry Clay's circuit. Although the rapidly expanding railway network allowed these early twentieth-century tours to access more and more centres over time, most troupes still required steamer transport to get them to many of the townships north of Bundaberg. Holland's tours would invariably head north to Gympie and then play seasons in the major coastal towns and mining centres through to Charters Towers. Key centres around this time also included Maryborough, Mount Morgan, Rockhampton, Mackay, and Townsville. Holland did not often travel with his touring companies, leaving the management entirely in Moylan's hands. He did on several occasions, however, send his wife to help oversee the operations.

As with Harry Clay, Ted Holland knew well the importance of engaging only quality performers for these tours and not allowing them to overstay their welcome. Both entrepreneurs had much experience with Queensland audiences and saw the state as a profitable on-going venture that increased their opportunities for attracting premium artists in a rapidly expanding and hence increasingly competitive industry. Describing the company's 1905 season in Charters Towers, the Northern Miner records, for example, that "The house was full on the rising of the curtain... A show of good even quality and not a duffer amongst them was the verdict... The management announce that there will be continuous changes of programme every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and it is safe to predict another bumper house to-night" (6 Mar. 1905, 5).
Reviews published in the *Brisbane Courier* throughout 1905 indicate that each weekly change of programme filled the theatre. The 30 January edition records, for example, that "Mr Ted Holland understands the art of catering for the public taste in vaudeville entertainments. This was evidenced on Saturday night at the Theatre Royal where every part of the house was full, and in the dress circle after the entertainment had commenced it was a case of standing room only" (7). "Novelties and fresh faces is a motto which Mr Ted Holland has adopted," wrote one critic in April the same year. "Each week brings forward its new attractions and each week the public show their appreciation of the enterprise by attending in large numbers" (10 Apr. 1905, 2). An early December programme was similarly well attended, according to the *Courier*, which noted, "The company appearing at the Theatre Royal under the management of Mr Ted Holland was faced by an enormous crowd on Saturday night" (4 Dec. 1905, 2). The Sydney-based *Theatre Magazine* also drew attention to Holland's continuing success, noting that even though he had no opposition, he still 'gives a rattling good show' (1 Aug. 1905, 6). Although Sydney based, the *Theatre Magazine* could not ignore the developments in Brisbane, reporting in its 1 May issue that "Holland's Vaudeville Entertainers are booming... Happily the management know how to cater for local theatre-goers, and work in turns that are often absurdly funny, but that is what is demanded by a certain section of the public" (10).

The popularity of Holland's shows was very much a consequence of the skills he'd developed as a leading performer and manager during the previous two decades. His high and long-standing reputation throughout Australia and the connections he had made over the past two decades also guaranteed him access to top-quality artists, both local and international. Among the leading performers he engaged during his first four years were former partner James Craydon, American acrobat/comedian Albert McKisson (formerly of McKisson and Kearns), The Swifts English Comedy Trio, Fred Bluett, Ted Herberte, Harry Cowan (endman), Florrie and Stella Ranger, Arthur Morley, Wal Rockley, Sam Keenan Jnr, Tom Leonard, Clara Keating, Tom Edwards, Dave Warne and Lily Octavia, Joe Morris and Alf Wilson (acrobas), Dr Rowe (conjurer/illusionist), Walter Rivers and Nina Rochester, and Ida Berridge and Hal Linden. While Holland's decision to undertake an entrepreneurial career meant that his time was largely spent operating the business, he did not entirely retire from the stage, although his appearances in later years became more infrequent. During the Theatre Royal era, he often featured in the entertainment, primarily as a singer, but also on occasion in the afterpiece.

Also making regular appearances during these early years were his wife Eva (billed as Eva Wilson) and son Claude (billed as Little Claudie). One of Claude Holland's first stage performances was in 1905, when he joined his mother in the chorus of 'The Man in the Overalls.' The *Brisbane Courier* records that although "Baby Holland [was a] little toddler who could not yet articulate properly', his effort was 'greeted with a round of genuine applause" (12 June 1905, 4). A few weeks earlier, the paper's theatre critic had written of his mother, "Miss Eva Wilson showed that she is still high in public favour and was given an enthusiastic reception in each of several comic songs" (29 May 1905, 5).

**1907-1910**

Although the last four years of Ted Holland's operations at the Theatre Royal continued much as the previous three had, from late 1907 onwards he made some changes to his programmes that reflect the need for variety entertainment to not only provide continual personnel changes, but to also find new means of entertaining. The *Brisbane Courier* reports in early 1907, for example, that Holland had made a specialty of the vitagraph, the result being that "for several weeks excellent pictures have followed each other across the screen at the theatre" (7 Jan. 1907, 5). Many of the moving pictures exhibited were billed as 'Edison's Very Latest' (BC: 9 Feb. 1907, 2). He also brought north prominent thespians such as J. B. Athiswood to deliver recitations and scenes from classic drama, and increasingly engaged international acts, often straight from seasons with Harry Rickards or Williamson, Tallis and Ramicotti. One such act was Walter E. Deaves' Manikins, which staged a "wonderful and stupendous production called Christmas pantomime." According to advertising, Deaves came to Brisbane direct from King's Theatre, New York (BC: 1 Jan. 1910, 2). Another feature of Holland's entertainments around this period were the illustrated songs: musical numbers performed in front of dissolving scenes or tinted slides.

As an entrepreneur in his own right, Holland was required to travel south, primarily to Sydney and Melbourne, to scout for new attractions (BC: 21 Feb. 1907, 7). Although he still continued to arrange with Harry Rickards to send to Brisbane some of the Tivoli artists whose contracts had expired, by 1907 his reputation was such that most artists readily made themselves available for an engagement if an offer came their way. Holland, therefore, not only had the availability of international acts but was also able to provide employment opportunities for many of his fellow Australians, something he was justifiably proud of, and more so because quite a number were young Queenslanders. The *Brisbane Courier* records in its 20 July 1907 edition that upwards of 1,000 artists had been engaged by Holland during the past three years, and that salaries of £30 were not uncommon, a quite considerable amount for variety performers at that time (12).
Holland satisfied the demands of his patrons by not only providing consistently high-quality programmes but by also sustaining constant variety. The *Brisbane Courier* notes, for example, that the change of bill for 25 May comprised no fewer than twenty-five new turns (4). The newspaper also continued to report that Holland's programmes were attracting sell-out crowds each Saturday, while still maintaining large audiences during the rest of the week. "The attendance in the evening," wrote one critic, "was enormous, many failing to secure admission. In fact this condition has become so chronic at the Royal that it scarcely calls for comment" (13 May 1907, 6).

The first of his NSW operations is also believed to have been implemented in 1907, when he put together a No 2 company and opened in Newcastle in early March. The troupe comprised several members of the Brisbane company, along with some newly engaged artists (BC: 4 Mar. 1907, 5). A report in the 1 April edition of the *Brisbane Courier* indicates that Holland had sent a second company to Newcastle and the Hunter Valley in mid-March, and that these tours were approximately a fortnight in length (8).

Some of the more significant artists engaged by Holland between 1907 and 1910 were Frank Herberte, Florrie and Stella Rangers, Mr Kilburn-Heron (vocalist), Stewart and Stirling (sketch artists), Will Wynand (eccentric comedian), Ted Herberte, Carden Wilson (impersonator), Lulu Eugene (serio-comic), Arthur Morley and Elsie Bates, Art Slavin, Emil Amiel (internationally acclaimed equalibrist, by arrangement with Harry Rickards), Joe Morris and Alf Wilson, Joe Rox, George Pagden, Post Mason, Tom Dawson, Carlton and Sutton, George Sorlie, Amy Blackie, the Phillip Sisters, Albert McKisson, Arthur Tauchert (McKisson and Tauchert were partners ca. 1910), Delavale and Gilbert, Yorkshire comedian Denis Carney, Ida Berridge and Harry Linden, the Driscoll Brothers (Bob and Alf), Hanco (Australia's "handcuff king"), Clara Keating and Claude Golding, Phyllis Faye, Olga Pennington, Charles Fanning and Georgie Devoe (as Fanning and Fanning), Bert Desmond, Ted Tutty, Little Sadie Gale and her father Sam Gale, Jack Ralston (one of Australia's premiere baritones), Essie Jennings, Ward Lear, and Slade Murray. While few of these names are recognisable today, all were well known throughout Australia and New Zealand at this time, while all but a few continued their careers well into the 1920s. (Dawson, Blackie, Fanning, Golding, Mason, Murray, and Sam Gale all died during the 1910s, while Devoe is believed to have retired following the death of her husband Charles Fanning).

In 1909, Holland briefly operated a second entertainment venture under canvas. Situated directly opposite the Theatre Royal, it was called the Hippodrome Picture Palace (TT: Mar. 1909, 9). The following year, Holland boasted a double strength company, along with the latest moving pictures (BC: 26 Mar. 1919, 2). 1910 also saw the announcement of a new theatre to be built in Brisbane, which would be leased and operated mutually by Holland and Percy St John. Part of the reason for moving, according to Holland, was that it had become increasingly difficult for companies to get dates with the limited accommodation that the Royal provided (BC: 4 June 1910, 12).

Holland ended his tenure at the Theatre Royal on 3 January 1911 and subsequently transitioned to the Centennial Hall for eleven nights, pending the opening of the Empire Theatre on 14 January. Situated in Albert Street, a few doors down from Queen Street, the Empire was promoted as "one of the coolest, best appointed and most thoroughly equipped theatres in the Commonwealth," reports noting that for its size there was nothing to equal it any other Australian state (BC: 7 Jan. 1911, 13). The Empire was not small, however, seating as it did some 1600 people (ctd. TT: June 1913, 29).

1911 also saw Holland forced to compete for the first time in the city precinct against considerable opposition, when James Brennan's Vaudeville Entertainers, under the management of Queensland-born comedian J. C. Bain, opened for an extended season at the Theatre Royal. Having spent the past the previous six years virtually un-opposed, Holland was not surprisingly nervous about the situation and reportedly made an appeal to his loyal Brisbane public to continue supporting 'their own show' [see Historical Notes and Corrections' below for further details and the *Theatre* magazine's response]. Reports published throughout the year appear to indicate, however, that Holland and St John did...
not suffer any loss of custom, perhaps because Brisbane by then was able to support several variety establishments without undue pressure on each management. This is supported by the fact that Edward Branscombe also invested in the city that same year, opening up the Cremorne Garden Theatre on the opposite side of the Brisbane River. As his Costume Comedy Company offered a more refined entertainment, weighted more heavily towards singing and dancing than towards broad comedy, it attracted a more affluent class of patron to Holland's clientele, and hence neither establishment effectively competed with each other.

Further evidence supporting the claim that Brisbane's population could support multiple venues comes from the relationship formed between Holland and St John, Branscombe and McCallum which saw them form a consortium to build the Palace Gardens in 1912. Situated at the riverside corner of Ann Street and North Quay, the open-air venue was initially managed by Holland and St John under the auspices of Palace Gardens Ltd. The following year Edward Branscombe Ltd bought the freehold property and the venue subsequently came under the control of fellow-consortium partner John N. McCallum.

It is not clear whether Holland's leasing arrangement with Harry Rickards continued with Hugh D. McIntosh following Rickards's death in 1911. It is known, however, that Holland established a similar arrangement with James Brennan and the Fullers sometime around April/May 1913. The Theatre magazine reported on the "amalgamation," suggesting that it was advantageous to Holland and St John's patrons because it gave them the opportunity to see the 'best of the artists imported by the Brennan-Fuller firm' (June 1913, 29). Among the better-known Australian performers engaged by Holland and St John between 1911 and 1915 were Courtney Ford and Ivy Davis (as members of the Vagabond's troupe), Sharratt and Lang, Maurice Chenoweth, the Two Driscolls (aka the Driscoll Brothers), Will Raynor, Sadie Gale and her mother Myra (as Sadie and Gale), Carrie Moore, Alf Lawrence, Les Warton, and Ernest Pitcher.

In May 1914, Holland and St John were taken to court by one of their employees, Charles Whaite. A former vaudeville performer who had been engaged by the firm as stage manager, Whaite claimed that he had been wrongfully dismissed, and asked for £100 in owed salary. The situation is believed to have come about after Whaite was accused by another of the company's employees of taking bribes from performers to have them placed in better positions on the Empire's programmes. Evidence given by Whaite before the court indicates that his complaint was directed largely at St John and not Holland, whom he described as a "very considerate man" (BC: 22 May 1914, 4).

Although the judge found in favour of the plaintiff, the amount he received was only £22/10, with the cost of the two-day trial paid by the defendants.

The court case and resulting publicity is believed to have created a great deal of stress for Holland, resulting in several months of ill health. Although reports published after his death indicate that his friends had become anxious about his failing constitution, his passing in the end was unexpected. Described as a most popular man and a keen sportsman, "Jums" Holland was also well-known for his charitable nature and his love of horses (which he owned and raced). His funeral comprised one of the largest-ever gatherings of people for such an occasion in Brisbane, with many of Australia's leading variety figures in attendance, including his former partners Tom Delohery and James Craydon, Harry Clay, Dan and E.J. Carroll, George Birch, Percy Dix and Reuban Baker, Martin Brennan, J. C. Bain, and Wirth Bros. Numerous past and present artists from the Holland and St John stable also attended.
The Empire Theatre continued to operate for another year under Percy St John's management, until he passed away in October 1915. With both partners deceased, E. J. and Dan Carroll temporarily looked after the theatre while arrangements were made with both men's families. The leasing arrangement with the Fullers, not surprisingly made, their transition as managers of the Empire a smooth one. When the Holland and St John lease expired in early 1918, Fullers' Theatres took full control of the establishment, and it eventually came to be known as The Fullers' Empire Theatre.

Ted Holland was survived by his second wife Eva (nee Wilson), who had formerly worked in variety as a serio-comic, and son Claude who went on to carve out a career in the entertainment industry as a variety performer, actor and radio producer. While Ted Holland made provision in his will for his wife to buried with him, this did not eventuate. Eva Holland's (nee Wilson) whereabouts after 1914 are yet to be determined.

Testament to Ted Holland's position as one of Brisbane's two leading variety entrepreneurs of the early twentieth century is the fact that not only was he the first manager to set up a permanent company in the Queensland capital but such was his dominance in the heart of the city that no other organisation except for Edward Branscombe and John N. McCallum (Cremorne Theatre), saw any advantage in going up against him on a permanent basis.

SEE ALSO
- Percy St John
- Empire Theatre
- Holland & St John
- Palace Gardens
- Delohery Craydon & Holland
- Claude Holland

TED HOLLAND’S ENTREPRENEURIAL STYLE

1. THEATRE ROYAL (1904-1910): The following quotations provide insight into Holland's operations at the Theatre Royal, located at 80 Elizabeth Street.

Mr Ted Holland's Vaudeville Entertainers had a very substantial and highly appreciative audience on Saturday night... if the management erred at all - and probably the audience was ready to acquit them of any fault in that regard - it was in the generosity of the bill of fare. An audience kept interested and amused for rather more than two and a half hours at popular prices may fairly consider itself liberally dealt with (BC: 13 Feb. 1905, 3).

Mr Ted Holland's Vaudeville Company played to an audience as large and appreciative as ever. Encores were the rule for every item, and sometimes the recalls were double and treble. As usual the programme was a varied one, comprising bright dancing, songs humorous and pathetic, and original 'knockabout' business. Some of the artists have had quite a long spell with the company, but there was nothing in the reception accorded them to indicate that their popularity was on the wane (BC: 18 Sept 1905, 7).

Novelty is the dominant feature of the programme... The tendency appears to be to depart from the stereotyped form of "turn" and to substitute something unique. Even the endmen [Mr Tambo and Mr Bones] are showing a partiality for a change, and many of their "burnt-cork" songs are replace by witty monologues (BC: 2 Oct 1905, 7).
A souvenir card containing portraits of Mr and Mrs Holland and Master Claude Holland were distributed as mementoes of the close of a year which has been one of the most successful that the theatrical history of Queensland can show (BC: 26 Dec. 1905, 3).

Mr Holland's tenancy of the Theatre Royal is now well in its third year and during that time the business has steadily improved until today the 'Royal' is one of the most popular pleasure resorts in Brisbane. The secret of the steady improvement is undoubtedly Mr Holland's system of providing frequent changes. He has brought to Brisbane many first-class artists, and the object which he had before him was to provide a refined entertainment suitable to all classes (BC: 21 Feb. 1907, 6).

Several things marked the opening of the 172nd week of [Ted Holland's] Revellers. [one was] a gorgeous new 10 page program, profusely brightened with blocks and capitably got up by Cameron, Laing and Co under Jim Carberry's direction (TBRS: 5 Apr 1908, 8).

Holland's drop scene at the at the Theatre Royal (Brisbane) is a marvellous example as to what extent a curtain can be disfigured with advertisements. In this respect, it must certainly be discredited with the world's record. The mores the pity, seeing that on the whole Ted puts on a good show, and that such a horror as the curtain could be remedied without any great cash loss to Edward (TT: May 1910, 7).

Ted Holland does not believe in a dainty, tinkling little bell to ring on his items. He has something that sounds like a cross between chimes of a town clock and the clang, clank of a bullock bell. One of the minor defects of this composite article is that the person who hears it for the first time is apt to bolt in terror from the theatre in the belief that a fire has broken out. Bu they get used to some queer things up Queensland way. They even appear to have got used to "Teddy's" bell (TT: May 1910, 9).

The public continues to respond generously to the efforts of Mr Ted Holland to keep up the reputation of the Theatre Royal for a first-class entertainment. One of the features of business at this theatre is the manner in which the matinee performances have grown in popularity, and it is becoming evident that the upper parts of the house will soon have to be made available for patrons on such occasions, instead of confining them to the ground floor only (BC: 14 Nov. 1910, 6).

Ted Holland, with Percy St John runs the Empire Music Hall (Brisbane). Some time ago the Empire made a working agreement with the Fuller-Brennan directorate, from whom they now get all their star acts: "At present we are placing more than 200 acts a year from the south. We never play an act more than two weeks... We let off one act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville and Charters Towers. Towns like Ayr and Bowen are also wanting to come in.... The Empire is a well-built theatre, with a seating capacity of 1650, and we can play to 3s, 2s and 1s, with a 4s reservation. The Theatre Royal for a first act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville and Charters Towers. Towns like Ayr and Bowen are also wanting to come in.... The Empire is a well-built theatre, with a seating capacity of 1650, and we can play to 3s, 2s and 1s, with a 4s reservation. The Theatre Royal for a first act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville and Charters Towers. Towns like Ayr and Bowen are also wanting to come in.... The Empire is a well-built theatre, with a seating capacity of 1650, and we can play to 3s, 2s and 1s, with a 4s reservation. The Theatre Royal for a first act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville and Charters Towers. Towns like Ayr and Bowen are also wanting to come in.... The Empire is a well-built theatre, with a seating capacity of 1650, and we can play to 3s, 2s and 1s, with a 4s reservation. The Theatre Royal for a first act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville and Charters Towers. Towns like Ayr and Bowen are also wanting to come in.... The Empire is a well-built theatre, with a seating capacity of 1650, and we can play to 3s, 2s and 1s, with a 4s reservation. The Theatre Royal for a first act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville and Charters Towers. Towns like Ayr and Bowen are also wanting to come in.... The Empire is a well-built theatre, with a seating capacity of 1650, and we can play to 3s, 2s and 1s, with a 4s reservation. The Theatre Royal for a first act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville and Charters Towers. Towns like Ayr and Bowen are also wanting to come in.... The Empire is a well-built theatre, with a seating capacity of 1650, and we can play to 3s, 2s and 1s, with a 4s reservation. The Theatre Royal for a first act a week to the Carroll and Birch northern circuit, which means a four weeks engagement in Queensland for most visiting artists. The Carroll and Birch northern circuit is becoming a fine proposition. The towns it takes in are Ipswich, Gympie, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsvi...
Australian born and trained trio of comedians, dancers and sketch artists. Their first appearance in Brisbane was at the Albert Hall Adelaide Street afterwards the Gaiety Theatre and since dismantled. Some little time after the team, refusing many tempting offers to visit other lands headed companies of their own with which they toured this and other States until 'Delohery' Carydon and Holland came to be regarded as the standard in their business. It is nearly 15 years now since the team disbanded and Mr Holland went into management on his own account.

His large Queensland tour closed in 1909 at Brisbane Theatre Royal with a continuous season of five months something unique then in Queensland vaudeville annals. His idea of establishing a permanent vaudeville show in Brisbane entertained for a number of years before then took shape and was put into effect in 1904 when he secured an extended lease of the Theatre Royal. The show ran with continuous and marked success until the end of 1910 when it was removed to the new Empire Theatre where its previous success has since been excelled.

As an artist Mr Holland was a prime favourite always, his humour being as keen as it was wholesome, whilst as dancers he and his comrades of the team were above comparison. Always a straightgoer, 'Ted' was beloved and honoured by all who knew him. He was a keen sportsman and an ardent supporter of the turf having several times raced horses of his own. He was 53 years of age and leaves a widow and one son (R: 9 Sept. 1914, n. pag.).

3. Holland was referred to throughout his career as Ted. Although the inscription on his grave and burial records record his Christian name as Edward, the Brisbane Courier's report on the 1914 legal dispute with Charles Whaite refers to his name as Edwin (see 26 May 1914, 4).

4. Both the Truth (Bris) and Brisbane Times refer to Holland's company in reviews published ca. 1908 as the 'Royal Revellers.' No reviews published in the Brisbane Courier bear this name, however. All advertisements identified in these three newspapers show that the company was known as Ted Holland's Vaudeville Entertainers. No explanation for the different names is yet forthcoming.

5. Although Holland's reign as Brisbane's leading entrepreneur between 1904 and 1914 cannot be disputed, there were a number of other entertainment companies operating in Brisbane during this period. These included (in addition to Edward Branscombe/John N. McCallum at the Cremorne Garden and James Brennan) Edward Carroll's Summer Continentals (Woolloongabba Sports Ground, Ipswich and Dutton Park) and irregular entertainments staged at the Gaiety Theatre, Exhibition Hall, Centennial Hall and the Theatre Royal.

6. Evidence of Holland's position as Brisbane's leading variety entrepreneur can be seen in relation to two other major organisations being either unable to compete (the Hugh D. McIntosh's Tivoli organisation) or unwilling to compete (Harry Clay). McIntosh's attempts to establish a foothold in Brisbane were constantly thwarted, and rarely did any of his companies remain long. Although his seasons were presented in theatres near the Empire, his class of entertainment was not as attractive to the popular culture audience that attended Holland's entertainments. In this respect, McIntosh's direct competition was more likely Edward Branscombe (and later John N. McCallum). No record of Clay's Vaudeville Company ever playing a season in Brisbane during his eighteen annual tours of Queensland (1901-1918) has been found. The only companies he is believed to have sent to the city were dramatic troupes (1908 and 1909). [See Clay Djabal, "Harry Clay and Clay's Vaudeville Company 1965-1930"]

7. Fred Gray, of the act Gray and Graham, reportedly wrote an article for a New York newspaper in 1911 in which he claimed that the only people who count in Australian vaudeville management were Harry Rickards, the Fullers, and Ted Holland. While not disagreeing with the claims regarding these three entrepreneurs, The Theatre: An Illustrated Monthly did take exception to Gray's "slanderous allegation" that James Brennan's Amphitheatre Ltd was a fill-in organisation to be avoided. The magazine pointed instead to Gray's history of indiscretions while touring Australia, noting, for example, that Gray even had to "humble himself to Mr Holland to the extent of apologising for his misbehaviour, in black type, through the columns of the Ipswich (Q) press, a knuckledown that is possibly without parallel in the history of the vaudeville profession of Australia" (May 1911, 12).

The Theatre's marked support of James Brennan and its often condescending critiques of Holland's operations suggests a degree of bias towards the Brisbane-based entrepreneur. In a paragraph published early in 1911, the magazine records, for example:
Ted Holland appeals to the Brisbane public to "support their own show." Of course this is intended as a hit at James Brennan and his Managing Director, James Bain. Mr Bain can claim that he is a native of Ipswich (Q), that he is the best comedian ever turned out of that state, and that he has risen to the management of a bigger theatrical business than any other Queenslander. On the other hand, what distinctively Queensland claim can Mr Holland make, beyond the fact that he was on a lovely wicket in Brisbane for years and years, and only succeeded in making such use of it that he has now, with the advent of a little legitimate competition, to start squeaking in the way above indicated (Feb. 1911, 34).

The reference to James Brennan is in regard to the season then being staged by Brennan's Vaudeville Entertainers at the Theatre Royal.

8. An article published in the Brisbane Courier a few days prior to the Empire Theatre opening contains a quite detailed description of the theatre (see "New Empire Theatre" 7 Jan. 1911, 13).

**REGIONAL TOURS CHRONOLOGY (Ted Holland)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tour Description</th>
<th>Note</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>(Th Royal, Bris; * &gt; five-month season).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>(Regional Queensland tour; ca. Apr-May *).&lt;br&gt;NB: Queensland itinerary incl. (Theatre Royal, Gympie; 19 April - *).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>(Regional Queensland tour; ca. Mar-Apr. *) • (Town Hall, Toowoomba; 31 July - *).&lt;br&gt;NB 1: Queensland itinerary incl. (Theatre Royal, Charters Towers; 4 Mar. - *). • (Theatre Royal, Gympie; 14 Apr. - * &gt; return season).&lt;br&gt;NB 2: The No 2 company returned to Brisbane by 17 Apr., with several members of the troupe joining the Theatre Royal company for that night's performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>(Regional Queensland tour; ca. Mar.-May*).&lt;br&gt;NB: Queensland itinerary incl. (Mount Morgan; 20 April - *).</td>
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<td>1907</td>
<td>(Newcastle and Hunter Valley tour; 2 Mar. - *). • (Queensland sectional tour; ca. 18 July - Oct. *).&lt;br&gt;NB: No details of the three-month Queensland tour have yet been identified (ctd. BC: 20 July 1907, 12).</td>
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**FURTHER REFERENCE**