A detailed illustration in a reddish-brown ink style. A man in a dark suit and striped trousers stands on a wooden ladder, painting a wall. He is holding a brush in his right hand and a bucket in his left. The wall is textured with horizontal lines. The scene is framed by a decorative border.

SHOWS
of
BY GONE
DAYS

IN MAINE
NEW HAMPSHIRE
AND VERMONT



By
CHET WRIGHT

L. JOHNSON U.S.P.

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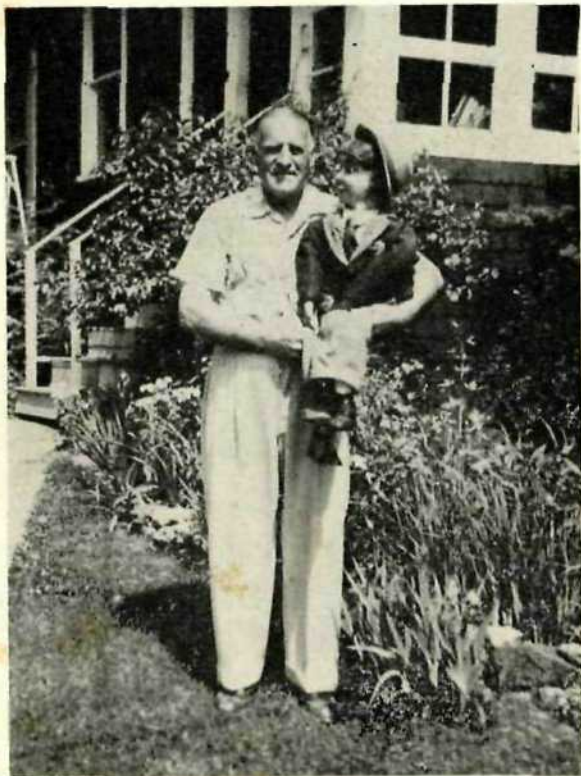
By
CHET WRIGHT
Lake Blaisdell, (Sutton) N.H.

1956

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Best Wishes
Chet. Wright



CHESTER A. WRIGHT

and "Willie" the dummy. Taken in front of his home
at Lake Blaisdell, (Sutton) N. H. July 1, 1956.

Foreword

"GONE ARE THE DAYS"

By E. F. Hannan

Few are left who remember the good old days of WHITMORE and CLARK and their popular Minstrel show that traveled the east and made their off-season headquarters in Felchville, Vt. O. A. Whitmore was born in Reading, Vt. He was the musical end of the team and played clarinet at a youthful age. At one time he traveled with Barnum's Circus, and from 1866 to 1878 he was with the minstrels which bore his name. There are few records to be found of such oldtime shows, but still living in Sutton, N. H., is a man who has kept many reminders of the old-time traveling shows, and who has become somewhat of an historian of such New England outfits.

He can tell about the Nellie Gill Players, an organization which traveled the smaller places of Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, and was very popular in small towns of its time. This smaller show historian is Chet Wright, still alive and full of oldtime show talk, at Sutton, New Hampshire. Wright has forty-two years of small town show business behind him, and his store that he conducts today (at Blaisdell Lake) is a veritable library and museum of the New England traveling show of the days of our great-grandfathers. Wright has in his collection many notes that refer to the great actor Denman Thompson whom Wright knew well and often talked with.

Thompson is remembered for his great success **THE OLD HOMESTEAD**, and every summer now one of the big events in southwestern New Hampshire is the presentation of the familiar oldtime rural comedy as given just as Thompson played it, by a cast that comes mostly from the area about Keene. Wright says, "Vermont was a good show territory for the oldtime traveling company", and one town that he praises highly for its interest of the oldtimers is Reading.

Cavendish was the birthplace of George M. Clark of the Whitmore and Clark Minstrels, and as a boy he played for dances and country huskings around home. Another oldtimer of whom you may have heard was Hank White, also born in Cavendish. It is said that White could make his face resemble anyone whom he had ever met.

As to the oldtime medicine shows that trouped Vermont and other New England States, Chet Wright's memory reeks of such shows as Healey and Bigelow Kickapoo show, Quaker Medicine Show, Tom Finn Medicine Show, Murdock's Brothers, Craig Brothers, and many others. If you wish an earful of oldtime small town Show business, and you happen in the neighborhood of Sutton, N. H., drop in on Chet Wright. - He'll know some show that your ancestors raved over, and its more than likely that he'll have a letter or photo of someone that hailed from your own town, especially if you are a Vermonter! Wright likes to talk, and best of all, you can't buy any of his show relics. He'd sell the clothes off his back first!

My First Job in the Show Business

by Chet Wright

(Tale of the LITTLEHALE - A Sutton Showman)

In South Sutton, N. H., lived a man by the name of Scott Littlehale. He lived in what is now the home of Buster West, noted stage and screen actor. Littlehale was born in Sutton, December 29, 1837. He had what was known as the "Littlehale's Museum". As a boy of 10 or 12 I worked for him at times. His show consisted of small animals such as mice, doves, guinea pigs, porcupines, rabbits, foxes, coons, woodchucks, crows, snakes, bob cats, turtles, monkeys, and a big alligator. He also had some very odd freaks - such as a white crow, a white porcupine, white woodchuck, and a white squirrel. He had some small cages about three feet long with doors on each end, and by taking off these doors and putting the cages end to end, he made one long cage which he called "Littlehale's Happy Family". In this he had guinea pigs, rabbits, mice, doves, cats, squirrels and his wonderful dog "Judy" to keep order.

Littlehale was quite a large man. He had a white horse and a buckboard, and when he got into the buckboard it nearly dragged on the ground. He would take his Museum to the Fairs in the fall, and in the winter would hire some vacant store in a large city and exhibit there two or three weeks, then move on to another city. One of his attractions was a parrot whose talk was not exactly the Sundayschool type. He used to have a little perch on the side of his ticket box for the

parrot to sit on, and when anyone came along and walked by instead of buying a ticket, the parrot would say "Cheap cus". Littlehale had an enormous mustache which he kept well-waxed. Some days he would have it combed out, tucked up under his hat and have side-whiskers; at other times he would have it combed down around and have chin whiskers!

One day, hearing an awful commotion in the henhouse, I went to see what was wrong. The

monkey had gotten out of his cage and into the henhouse, and the feathers were sure flying.

Littlehale came out - he had a great by-word -

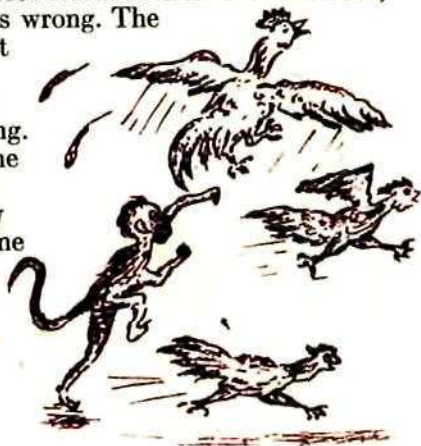
"Yes I swear damn my soul" - and he had a fine time to use it. He said to the monk

"Yes I swear damn my soul, I say, let me catch you!" Well

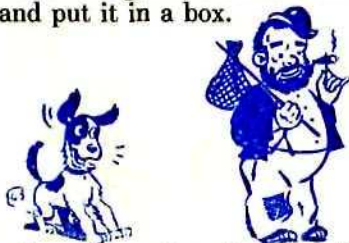
the more we chased that monk the more the feathers flew, and

when we finally caught him, we looked more like two feather-beds than any thing else.

One day, as I was working around the barn, I saw Mrs. Littlehale going to the village. . . . Shortly afterwards, Mr. Littlehale drove into the yard, got out of the buckboard and disappeared into the house. Shortly after, he came out, got into the buckboard and



drove away again. Soon Mrs. Littlehale came home from the village and went into the house. All at once I heard her scream, and running into the house as fast as I could, she told me to go upstairs and look in the bedroom. There on the floor lay two big adders - if there were more than three steps in those stairs I'm sure I never touched them. Soon Mr. Littlehale came back, went in and got a box and put the adders in it. He explained that he had caught them beside the road that morning. I also remember watching him one time get a big black snake out of a stone wall. I'll bet the snake was five feet long, and he carried it in his hands to the barn and put it in a box.



At that time there were a lot of tramps. Not far from the Littlehale's lived a man by the name of Sull Palmer. He helped me at Littlehale's at times. One day Littlehale said "Yes I swear damn my soul, I say, Sull, I want Judy to learn to chase tramps. I will fix you up as a tramp, you go up the road and I will set Judy on you". Judy took to the idea at once and Sull was having a time of it when I heard Littlehale yell "I swear damn my soul, Sull, don't you kick Judy again, let her bite you! I want her to learn how to chase tramps!"

I think about the last time he had his Museum was about 1901 at the Bradford and Newbury Fair at Bradford, N. H. I remember it well. A big storm of rain and wind came up. The wind blew off the top of the tent, and the rain came down in bucketsful. There was a hollow in the center of the tent where the alligator was. I guess the water was too much for him as he kept thrashing around until he broke the box and out he came. That puddle kept getting deeper all the while, and the more water, the better the alligator liked it. He was having a great time splashing around. This gave Littlehale another opportunity to use his favorite expression - he yelled to the alligator "yes I swear damn my soul, I say you get back in that box". For some reason or other, the alligator DID get back after awhile! In the confusion the parrot was also getting a good wetting and adding to the clamor with a few well chosen words of his own. I think this was the last show. Littlehale died in 1904 and left full instructions for his burial. There was to be "No flowers, no singing" and the coffin was to be made of two-inch oak plank. Mr. Clough and Carl Wells, the town carpenters, made the coffin according to instructions and Dan Hazen, the village blacksmith, made the iron handles. I watched him make them. Littlehale wished to be buried on the hill back of the house, between two rocks, under a big pine tree. A pipe was to be put into the ground so the snakes could come and see him. The details were carried out as he wished. Thus ends the story of one of Sutton's best known showmen - and this was also the end of my first job in show business, but the beginning of many years of my following the show circuits.

SHOW TIME MEMORIES

Sherburne, Vermont.

Sherburne, Vt., a small village at the foot of Mendon Mountain, was always a good show town for my show. We could always look for a full house. The hall was up over the blacksmith shop - what a place for a hall, there was always a lot of smoke and soot. The first time we were there a man came up the stairs, said "My family are coming - count them." I counted -- seventeen children -- and if I had waited until another year I would have had eighteen admissions! There was an old couple sitting up front whom we were quite amused to watch - a little old lady and a man with a big beard. When we went back to our boarding house after the show, Mrs. Wright inquired of the landlady who the old couple were. She told us that it was Mrs. "So-and-So" and her son! The son with the big beard was only nineteen years old!

I used to like to go up to Mr. Spaulding's store and hang around, for he was a jolly old fellow and there was always a lot of the old natives with "windshields" sitting around the stove. They were always telling stories about one thing and another, and one day the subject of fog came up. One old man said the worst fog he ever saw was up on Mendon Mountain when they were moving their steam mill up on top of the mountain. *They got their mill up and their camps, and the next day they brought up some boards to build a barn for the horses.* He said it was so foggy that they had to

light their lanterns in order to see to drive the nails. Well, they finally got it all finished and put the horses in the barn, but when they got up the next morning they found the roof gone. Come to find out, they had nailed the roof right onto the fog!

The stage ran from Woodstock up through the Bridgewater, Sherburne, over Mendon Mountain, down into Mendon and into Rutland. One day I was talking to the old stage driver as he changed horses at Sherburne. He told me he left Woodstock at four o'clock in the morning and got back there at nine o'clock at night. Said he hadn't missed a trip in twenty-four years. How's that for a rugged old Vermonter?

One spring when I was showing there, Mr. Spaulding the old store keeper, told me if I wanted to come up to store the next day, that the barber from Rutland was coming over to cut the natives' hair and trim their whiskers. They had him come once a year. Never did I see so many bearded men! There were no bald heads in those days. They were real old timers, but all had a heart of gold!

Thetford Center, Vermont.

We have often thought of the big long sign on top of the horse sheds at the old store. It said "Caskets and Horse Furnishings". We were playings there one night. It was a cold night. We went to the old hotel for supper and after eating, got ready to go to the Hall. We



looked at the thermometer and it was 25 below zero. I told the young fellow that was with me to go to the Hall and keep the fires going, and about nine to feed the dogs and let them out for a run, then to lock up the Hall and call it a day. I had no idea anyone would come out on such a night. We went to bed early, but a little after eight o'clock a boy came up to tell us that *the people were beginning to come to the show*. We got up and went down to the Hall. The horse barn was full, and there was a big crowd in the Hall. A lot of them had come ten and twelve miles to see the show. People were sure rugged and healthy in those days for it took courage to drive that far in such weather.

After the show we had a dance. There was a big tall stove that went halfway to the ceiling, and the back end sat on a big block of wood. I guess they were swinging their partners too hard, for down came the old stove. It was red hot, and down came a lot of the funnel with it. The men rushed out and got some snow to put out the fire and cool off the stove; the ladies cleaned up the soot as best they could, then the men put the old stove back up, built another fire, and the dance went on again! They danced until about half past twelve and all had a fine time, and went home singing "After the Ball is Over".

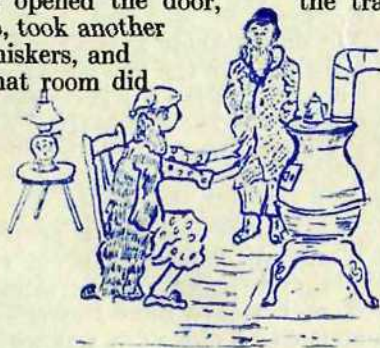
Stormville, New York.

On our way from Arthursburg, N. Y. to play Stormville, we went by a large building that said "Odd Fellows Hall". That was the name of the hall where we were to play, but there was no town that we could

see, only two or three houses. I called at one of the houses to find out if we really were in Stormville and they said yes. I asked "where is the town?" and they told me it was up the road a little over a mile. When I asked how the Hall happened to be so far away from the village, they told me that a wealthy man had built the big building when he thought the railroad was coming thru there, and he thought the rest of the town would follow. However for some unknown reason, they decided to build the town a mile further up the road. It was a big place, hotel, store, and a big beautiful hall and a big stable out in back. None of the buildings were in use except the hall. We made our headquarters in the hotel in the village, and next morning went down to the hall quite early. We had been there only a few minutes when the dogs started barking. Looking out of the windows we saw the place was nearly surrounded by New York State police with their bloodhounds. We were certainly surprised and rather scared, but an officer came into the hall and told us not to worry. He said that Harry K. Thaw had escaped from Sing Sing prison in the night, and they were searching for him. They certainly gave that old building a going-over, even went up into the attic. Stormville was only twenty miles from Sing Sing. They found nothing - but we heard later that Thaw was captured in New Hampshire, and while he was held here by the law, was kept in the Eagle Hotel in Concord. While there he was guarded by a Bradford man, Del Stevens, - who later became Bradford's Chief of Police.

“Cold Storage” - Barnet, Vermont.

The old hotel in Barnet, Vt., was known by all the show troupers and traveling men (drummers they were called in those days) as one of the coldest hotels in the country. I know the room we had had some of the glass gone out of the windows. They had those old fashioned slat beds - a slat would fall out every hour so you would know what time it was! A traveling man stopping there one night, woke up in the night so nearly frozen that he put on his fur coat, went down into the office, turned up the old kerosene lamp, built a fire in the stove and pulled his fur coat up over his head to try to get warm. . . The old town doctor had been called out to doctor a family at the lower end of the village; it was a bitter cold night, and as he came back by the hotel, he saw the light on and thought he would stop by and get warm. The doctor had long white whiskers and they were covered with ice. As he opened the door, the traveling man looked up, took another whiskers, and what room did look at the frosted gasped “My God, you have?”



Perkinsville, Vermont.

We were showing in the old Richardson Hotel in Perkinsville. During the afternoon before the show, a young man came in the hall and said he thought he could be quite a blackface comedian if he had a chance.



He asked if he might come in that evening and put on his act so we told him to come ahead. When he appeared in early evening, I gave him my can of black and told him to help himself. He wanted to know if it would be alright if he didn't black his neck and ears, so I told him "sure, suit yourself". When he went on stage his head

looked more like the head of a zebra than a blackface comedian. We didn't know how long his act was to run, but by the noise in the hall we knew *it wasn't going to be long, and it wasn't!* I guess that was his first - last - and only public appearance! At least, we never heard of him on Broadway!

Reading, Vermont.

Probably it is safe to say that no more show people nor shows came out of any small town than out of Reading, Vermont! Theodore Allen, the greatest cornetist of his day --- Tony Pastor --- Blind Dexter --- George Clark, the greatest clown of his day was with

the old Barnum Circus --- Hank White's Minstrels --- Broadway Minstrels --- Whitmore and Clark's Minstrels --- French's Overland Circus --- all came out of Reading, Vt. I have Hank White's old banjo in my museum. It was used by him before the Civil War.

Corinth, Vermont.

We were playing in the old Hall over the Schoolhouse in Corinth, Vt. We had played there before and many times had been told tall tales of an old hermit who lived up in the mountains, but we had never seen him. In the hall, there was a dressing-room on one side of the stage, but none on the other as the stairs came up on that side. There was a little hallway with one door that opened into the Hall, and another that opened onto the stage. Mrs. Wright and I were doing an act called "The Robbers of the Glengarlic Mountains", and Mrs. Wright was on the stage. When my cue came I opened the door on my side of the stage and walked in - and came face to face with the old hermit who had opened the stage door by mistake, and walked onto the stage. I looked bad enough, and he sure was no beauty! I guess we both frightened each other. He didn't know just what to do, but some of the natives who knew him came up on the stage and took him down into the audience. He had never been in the Hall before. So we saw the old Hermit after all. And went on with the show.!

Philmont, New York.

The janitor of the Town Hall in Philmont told us about the time a show (or was it a show?) came there. First, a man came and put out hand bills all over the town saying "WE ARE COMING -- TOWN HALL" and the date. They came on that date, and again put out hand bills all over town saying "WE HAVE COME".

As there had been no show in town for some time, the Hall was crowded that night. When it was most time for the show to start, one of the men gave the janitor a little change and asked him to take in what more came in up until show time. Then told him in about ten minutes to come in and pull up the curtain. He did - and there was another big sign across the stage, it said "WE HAVE GONE!" And they had! With all the money they had collected for admissions! He said that no show had dared to come there again for a long time. They had probably "Gone With the Wind."

Marlboro, New Hampshire.

We were showing in Marlboro one Saturday night and thought it would be a good chance to come over home for Sunday. So I asked the old janitor if we could leave our baggage there until Monday morning - all but the dogs - as we were playing the Scenic Theatre in Keene on Monday, and would come for the baggage then. He said it would be alright so I asked him where I could pick up the keys when we came back on Monday. He said "Take the keys with you", and he gave

me a big bunch of keys. He said there were keys to about everything in town on the ring, but he said "There won't nobody want to get in anywheres until you get back". I said "Are the keys to the firehouse here too?" He said "Yes, but there won't be any fires until you get back".

East Braintree, Vermont.

It was a good show town for us, we had been there two nights and were showing in the hall under the church. It was a town full of young people - a fine bunch of boys and girls. As it was a rainy day, the young fellows hung around the blacksmith shop and played checkers. I went over to the shop to watch, and the boys asked me to have a dance after the show that night. I asked them if they allowed dancing in the hall. They told me that they never had before, but stumped me to go and ask the minister if we could have a dance. I agreed and was told that he lived across the road from the church. They didn't think I would dare to ask him! I went up to the house and rapped on the door which was opened by a stern old man in a long black coat. I explained to him who I was, *and that I had been giving entertainments* for two nights at the hall, and that the young people had asked me to get his permission to hold a dance after the evening entertainment. Putting his hand over his heart, he exclaimed "A dance under our sacred church! What are our young people coming to?" After he had recovered slightly from the shock, so that I could talk to him, I told him we had planned to charge 35 cents each for tickets to the dance, and were going to give

the church half of it. At that he came to in a hurry, and said "Yes" and tapped me on the back and said he hoped we would have a big crowd. When I went back and told the boys they could hardly believe it. There was an old fidler in the town that the boys got to come and play, and together with Mrs. Wright, they furnished the music. We had a packed house, and everyone seemed to have a wonderful time. Next morning I went over to the minister's and gave him his share of the money - as I remember it, it was nearly eight dollars! He took it, thanked me, and said he hoped we would come again. He was really a nice old man but had got into a rut and it was hard to get out of it again. We played there after that and he came over to the hall to see me and we had a nice visit.

Prince Wentworth.

Prince was quite a character. He was with the Al Martz Show for many years. At the time of the big fire in Bangor, Maine, Prince was in Boston. He had some small hand bills printed, took his fiddle, and went up and played the small towns around Bangor. He told the natives he had lost everything in the Bangor fire. He was playing one night in a hall under a church. There were big posts in the hall to hold up the stairs. When people would ask him how many were in the show, he would say two. Prince told me, "I would sell tickets with one hand, and reach around the post and take them in with the other hand"!

Al Martz

No show ever traveled through Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, that was better known than Al

Martz. He traveled these states for many years, and there weren't many towns that his show hadn't played.....Martz was with my show in 1914. We were playing in the Hall in Harrisville, N. H., over the Winn Bros. store. We had just got into town and were unloading our baggage. Al had got his trunk off the load and up into the dressing room when a boy came into the hall and wanted to know if we had a man by the name of Al Martz with us. I asked him why he wanted to know, and he said "I went to his show the last time he was here and paid him twenty-five cents, - it wasn't worth over fifteen". Martz sure got a big laugh out of that.

The Henry Family Show.

The Henry Family from North Ferrisburg, Vermont, were a very talented family, and they always gave a fine show. We met them several times years ago when we used to play the old hall over the store in North Ferrisburg. Mr. Henry was one of the finest scenery painters in the country. He used to paint scenery for the use of the hall. It was wonderful, and many halls through Vermont and New Hampshire would have had no scenery had it not been for Mr. Henry. They showed in West Fairlee, Vt., all one winter. The copper mines were running at that time and the town was on the boom. He painted all the scenery for the Town Hall, also the walls and ceiling - a wonderful job. Then he moved up to the Mason's Hall on the third floor of the building. We were taken up to the Masonic Hall by one of the Selectmen - what a beautiful piece of work. There was a large center piece painted on the ceiling of the Hall. It was called the most beautiful Masonic Hall in the country.

Chairs Gone!

I went to see about booking a little town in New York State. Inquiring at the Village Store to find if there was a Hall in the village, I was told to see the Selectman. I went to his house, and he told me that there was a hall and it could be rented for the show. He took me over to see it. It was a fine hall but only a few chairs were in sight. I asked him if there were more chairs - he answered "Well, we did have a lot of chairs at one time, but I guess the janitor has been using them to build the fire with!" In another small town I asked the old janitor of the hall if there had been a show there lately. "Yes", he replied, "There was a show here two or three weeks ago with 'shifting pictures!' "

Cressey and Dane

Will M. Cressey was born in Bradford, N.H. on Oct. 29, 1863. To quote from his little booklet "At the End of the Road" - "I can remember that as I looked out of the window I saw a country road winding up the hill past our house, and disappearing over the top of the hill beyond. And I can remember as I lay there, not having anything else to do, I wondered where that road went; what strange places it passed through, and by, and where the end of it was. Two years later I got my first licking - for running away - UP THAT HILL. After I was retrieved and brought back, father asked me what I was looking for up there. I told him I was hunting FOR THE END OF THE ROAD. And for the next fifty years that was my life - hunting for the end of the road!"

Because actors TRAVELED - Will Cressey decided

to become an actor. In the first company he joined he met Blanche Dane, who loved traveling as much as he did, and they were married. They traveled the length and breadth of the United States as headliners - always sharing the "Star" dressing rooming - with the Keith Circuit in the East and the Orpheum in the West, then decided to go to Europe. Here they toured the Continent, then decided to keep on going - around the world - visiting every country along the way, ending up at last in California, and from there back to New Hampshire - only to find that the ends of the road met there, - just where they had started from! They built a beautiful home on Lake Sunapee, but along came the War in 1914, and they joined "Our Boys" on the fields of France as "Y" entertainers. Here Mr. Cressey "got mixed up with a lot of German gas, and weighing 132 pounds, and with a set of scorched lungs", was taken back to the States by his wife. Because of the damaged lungs he could not stand the cold winters of New Hampshire, so again they went in search of "The End of the Road".

After trying many cities in Florida, they fell in love with St. Petersburg, and here they built their seventh and final home - naming it "At the End of the Road" - a road that had started in New Hampshire and had run clear around the world.

Here Will M. Cressey awaited his last curtain call, leaving instructions that he was to be cremated, and his ashes taken up in an airplane and scattered to the four winds over his beloved Tampa Bay. This last request was carried out by a young cousin of his,

Carl F. Cressy, now living in Bradford, N. H. A picture of "Cressey and Dane" still hangs in the Bradford Town Hall, and he is well remembered by many of the older inhabitants.

Besides being a wonderful actor, Will Cressey wrote many sketches and plays, one of the best-known plays being "Town Hall Tonight". On every one of these programs appeared a picture of the Bradford Town Hall. He also played many seasons in "The Old Homestead."

In The Good Old Days!

We could get good board for \$3.00 a week and the halls rented for 50 cents per night. We almost always could get moved from one town to the next for \$1.00. There were old time fiddlers in every town and they were all good. We could get them to come and play for a dance after the show for a ticket to the show. There were good bands in lots of towns in those days too. And we could get them to come and play in front of the Hall before the show if we gave them all a ticket to come to the show. Most everyone loved to dance in those days - young and old. We were showing in Halifax, a little town in Southern Vermont. We counted nine old people on the floor at one time that were eighty-seven years old - and they could sure step it out. One thing that seemed strange to us in this little town was that a man owned the store on one side of the street, and his wife owned the competitive store on the other side of the street. Nothing like keeping all the business in one family!

Not All Alike!

Years ago I called a Mr. Richardson in Moultonboro, N. H. to see about hiring the Hall for our show. He said "We have had shows enough lately - and they were no good - so we don't care to let the Hall." I said "I hope you don't think all shows are alike", but he still insisted they did not want to rent the hall. I said "Your name is Richardson, isn't it?" When he answered "Yes" I said "Well they hung a man by the name of Richardson in Massachusetts last week for murder, I hope all Richardsons aren't alike!" He said "All right, when do you want the Hall?" We made our arrangements and went there to show. He asked us to stay at his house and he liked the show so much that we played there several times after that.

Tent Show Days.

In all the years that we had a "tent show" we had only one "blow-down" and that was in Greenville, N.H. when we were setting up. It looked rather stormy but we kept hoping that we wouldn't have a storm as *it was pretty soft ground for tent stakes.* That night, however, as the show was just about half through, up came a quick storm with plenty of rain and an awful wind. We were lucky as it took down only about half of the tent over where the bleachers were, but not over the big stage. The crowd packed in under the part that didn't come down, taking it all in good spirits, and the men took hold and helped us hold down the rest of the tent until the short storm was over. Then they helped us set up the tent. It wasn't damaged, and best of all, no one got hurt. We went

on with the rest of the show and thanked them for their wonderful help. A grand crowd of real people!

That same season we were showing in East Weare, N. H. We moved in on a Sunday and intended to get in town and all set up early, but we were delayed. Our lot was in back of the church and we got there just as the people were coming to church. The pastor came over and said he would appreciate it if we didn't set up the tent until after the services were over. We told him we would be glad to oblige him, we could see that he was a fine earnest man. After the services were over, we saw him coming over to the lot with a bunch of boys. The pastor as well as the boys took hold and help set up the big tent and all the bleachers. They were all good workers. The cook tent was already up so we had them all come in for lunch. They were a bunch of hungry boys. I guess they had never eaten in a tent show cookhouse before. When they had finished and were ready to go, the pastor came and thanked us and said they had all certainly had a fine time and would all be at the show the following night. Sure enough, they all kept their promises and were all there - a wonderful bunch - East Weare always was a good show town!

Potter's Exhibition Out Of Potter Place, N.H.

Mr. Potter owned quite a lot of land at the time they were building the so-called Northern Railroad. The railroad had quite a lot of trouble trying to get a right of way across Potter's land, so he finally told them if they would call the station "Potter Place" they could have the right of way. I have a ticket in my

museum of Potter's Exhibition, dated 1801. It was given to me by Phiney Fellows of Salisbury, N. H. in 1928. Mr. Fellows was 91 at the time. He used to be Mr. Potter's advance man when he was a young fellow.

One on Cleaves - The Magician.

Cleaves had been with my show for several seasons. We were playing St. Johnsbury Center, Vermont. During the performance, he borrowed a watch during his act. As it happened, it was a watch belonging to the village blacksmith. After he had finished with it, he went down into the audience to give it back, but on the way had the bad luck to drop it. He picked it up off the floor and gave it to the blacksmith who was pretty mad. Cleaves told him he would see him after the show to make it right with him, but the blacksmith went right on home without waiting. I guess Cleaves didn't sleep much that night. Next morning as we were packing up to leave, in came the blacksmith. "Where is that magician who borrowed my watch?" I called Cleaves from backstage, and he came out shaking like a leaf - that blacksmith was a big man! The blacksmith said "You are the one who borrowed my watch last night?" Cleaves said "Yes, that was a good watch, and I'll pay to have it repaired, how much will it be?" "How much do I owe YOU," the blacksmith said - "last night was the first night it has run without stopping in six months!" They shook hands and the blacksmith said he hoped he would meet Cleaves again sometime.

The Hutchinson Family.

The Hutchinson Family Quartette came from Milford, N. H. There were sixteen children, all inheriting in various ways the musical talents of their parents. They were always welcome through New Hampshire as well as all over New England. When in 1842 they dared to invade New York City, the New York Tribune said "We have never listened to sweeter melody". Encouraged by their success, they then ventured into the then-known west, and after that sailed for Europe. During the Civil War they sang in Army Camps and were always greatly welcomed.

Nick Glynn.

My book would not be complete without a mention of Nick Glynn, New Hampshire's grand old minstrel man. Nick's home was in Concord, N. H. Nick had been a minstrel man all his life and had been with all the best old-time minstrel shows. He was with my show several times and would always bring down the house. Nick would walk out on the stage in his baggy pants and white frock coat, look down at the floor for a minute, then shake his head and say "A married man don't live longer, it just seems longer!" One season when he was with me, I also had Princess Zelda, a very clever mind reader. After Nick's blackface act was over, and the Princess came on, he would go over and sit on one end of the stage up front. Pads were given out for people to write their questions on, - and they asked a thousand and one different things! After they had written their questions, they would

come up and give them to Nick, who in turn, walked over and gave them to the Princess, one after the other, as fast as she could answer them. It was in late November and we were showing in the old Town Hall in Greenfield, N. H. It was a bitter cold night, the wind was blowing a gale and the windows were rattling, when a note was given to the Princess she would read it, then put her hand up to her forehead to think. Nick sat there as quiet as could be - then put his hand up to his forehead as the Princess did and said "I can see a hard cold winter!" It brought the house down, but nearly busted up the act!

We were showing in Hillsborough, N. H., and went into the Valley Hotel for supper. There was a banquet of some kind on and the dining room was full. We gave our order and sat waiting to be served. The old bar was still there but I guess it hadn't been used in years. After eyeing it for a few minutes, Nick called the waitress over and asked to speak to the manager, Mr. Gould. Mr. Gould came over and said "What's the matter, Nick?" Nick says "Mr. Gould, when are you going to open up that bar?" It brought a big laugh from all over the dining room.

Nick died in Concord in 1949 at the ripe old age of eighty-five years.

Walter Kittridge.

Another New Hampshire man that was a very popular entertainer was Walter Kittridge. He was born in Reeds Ferry, N. H. He wrote many songs, his most famous one being, - "Tenting on the Old Camp Grounds".

I have a poster in my museum where he gave an entertainment in the church in South Sutton, N. H. Thursday evening, August 5, 1873.



**SHOWS THAT PLAYED IN
Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire
In By Gone Days**



(You might wonder how so many shows could get a living. You must remember that the population in most of these small towns was more than double what it is today!)

Hayward & Redpath Magic Lantern Show
Lyman Howe Moving Picture Show
Powers Moving Picture Show
Charlie Lindall Moving Picture Show
C. A. Wright's Moving Picture Show
Howard, The Drummer Boy (*out of Stoddard, N. H.*)
Barnard Moving Picture & Vaud. Show
Storey & Reynolds Tent Show
Pecor & Monroe Comedy Co.
Prince Wentworth Entertainers
Ethel May Shorey Rep. Show (*out of Maine*)
Eddie Erickson Royal Comedy Co.
Al Martz Big Show
Kemp Komedly Show
Kennan Variety Show
Musical Howards
Vailes Show

Comical Tom
Charlie Fales Picture & Vaudeville Show
Billy Lyons Down South (*Colored*)
J. C. Rockwell Sunny South (*Colored*)
Luciers Minstrels
Shepard Family Show
John Vanarnum Minstrels Tent Show
Swiss Bell Ringers
DeRue Bros. Minstrels
Guy Bros. Minstrels
California Minstrels
Hogan Magic Show
Harry and Dolly Woodward Show
Alabama Troubadours
Croxford Players
Boston Ideal Comedy Company
Fritz Hamilton "Ten Nights in a Bar Room"
Josie Gibson Big Variety Show
Crukshank Entertainers
Bill Brown Old Colored Minstrels
John Percival Hypnotic Show
Tylers Dog Show
Peter Murray Show
Richards Magic Show
Henry Family Show (*Ferrisburg, Vt.*)
Bill Ely Magic Show
Cleaves Magic Show (*Strafford, Vt.*)
Pickering Family Show
Martz & Brunell Variety Show
Harry Livingston Show
Linn Dog Show
Harmon Players

Wright & Lombard Tent Show
 Reynolds Dog Show
 Dions Uncle Tom's Cabin Show
 Robinson Bros. Uncle Tom's Cabin Show
 Geo. Hoyt Show (*out of South Sutton, N. H.*)
 Chapin Comedy Company
 George Bragg Show
 Geo. M. Brown Co. (*Ruben in New York*)
 J. B. Swafford Pavilion Show
 Bards Tent Show
 Nellie Gill Players (*out of Vermont*)
 McNalley Variety Show
 Sterling Bros. (*Tom Show*)
 Coyne Magic Show
 Renfo Alley Tent Show
 Hank Wallace Tent Show
 Prof Ozark Magic Show
 Belmont Bros. Show
 Ullie Akeston Rep. Show
 Burros & Belmont Show
 Heffener-Vinson Stock Co.
 Littlehale's Traveling Museum (*out of Sutton, N. H.*)
 Gladys Clark Stock Co.
 Pearl Young Players
 Prof. G. H. Irving Punch & Judy Show
 Knickerbocker Stock Co.
 Reno Ten Nights in a Bar Room
 Ketrot Bros. Uncle Tom's Cabin Show
 Billroy Comedians (*Tent Show*)
 Barlows Kentucky Girl Rep. Show
 Prof. Wilson Show (*Colored*)
 Ed Davis Show (*Tom Show*)



The Gold Dust Twins
 The Burgess Players
 Jim Coleman Show
 West & Ritter Show
 Charlie Fox Show
 White & Young Show
 Achers & Ardoes Show
 Hubert Bros. Vaudeville Show
 Art Snow Show
 Estelle Dyer & Co.
 Grace De Vere Stock Co.
 John H. Fagon Show
 DePue Stock Co.
 Ed Brown Wagon Show (*out of Bath, Maine*)
 L. B. Barlow Show
 Brown Vaudeville Show
 Jack Mann Show
 Johnney Mack Show
 Frank Lane Magic Show
 Beatrice Throne Players
 Whitmore & Murray Show
 Moore & Maxwell Show
 Carrol & Canes Show
 Llewellyn Stock Co.
 Bennet & Moulton Stock Co.
 O. H. Andrews Artist Chalk & Crayon Painting
 F. O. Jamson - Prof of Magic
 Chet Scribner Magic Show
 Penn Players
 Hank White Minstrels (*from Reading, Vt.*)
 Whitmore & Clark Minstrels (*from Reading, Vt.*)
 Broadway Minstrels (*from Reading, Vt.*)

A replica of one of my old Show Bills 

Pawnee Bill Indian Medicine Show
Dr. Bailey Medicine Show
Quaker Medicine Show
Dr. Morgan Medicine Show
Dr. C. F. Nelson Medicine Show
Royders Medicine Show
Dr. Lithgo Medicine Show
Tom Finn Medicine Show
Donnley Family Medicine Show
Allie White Medicine Show
Dr. Armond Medicine Show
Charlie Smith Medicine Show
Andy's Medicine Show
Wood's Medicine Show
Jack Lombard Medicine Show
Craig Bros. Medicine Show
Murdock Bros. Medicine Show
Dr. Sanford Medicine Show
Jerry Franz Medicine Show
Capt. David Lee Medicine Show
Jiminey Family Medicine Show
Ba-Ha-Ni Indian Medicine Show
Kikara Remedy Company (*out of Hillsboro, N. H.*)
Wright's Oregon Indian Medicine Show
Grey's Glass Blowers Medicine Show
Dandro Medicine Show
Indian Chief Buckhorne Medicine Show

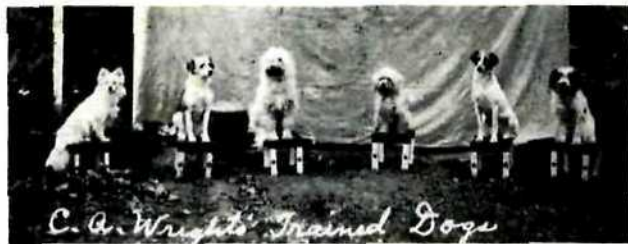
I have the handbills of a great many of these shows in my Museum, - stop in and see them!

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Little Lost Child

The Tie That Binds

Old Jawbone

If the Wind Had Only Blown the Other Way

After The Ball

Across The Bridge of Gold

Where the Sil'vry Colorado Winds Its Way

When We're Dancing Check to Check

Will You Love Me in December As You Do In May

No One Else Can Take Your Place

A Little Child Shall Lead Them

Georgia Rose

Old Gray Bonnet

You'll Never Know How Much I Miss You

If I Had My Way

Fare Thee Well, Molly Darling

All Aboard For Blanket Bay

Please, Mr. Conductor

Shadows of the Pines

If The World Were Ruled By Girls

Won't You Come Over To My House?

Sunny Tennessee

The Blue and The Gray

Where The Morning Glories Twine

Old New Hampshire Home

Ain't you coming back to Old New Hampshire, Molly?

The Black Sheep Loves You Best of All

She Was Bred in Old Kentucky

and many others