

# WWI-RELATED VAUDEVILLE JOKES, SKETCH MATERIAL, SONGS, POETRY and MISCELLANEOUS STAGE-CRAFT

## 1914

### JOKES, PATTEN and COMEDY ROUTINES

- ▶ Vaude: "Our soldiers will never be short of food. I noticed that as they marched through the streets the other day."  
Verne: "How is that?"  
Vaude: "I saw Sargents all over the place."

• **Vaude and Verne** TT: Aug. 1914, 14. [a reference to Sargents pies]

---

- ▶ At the Princess (Sydney) during the week August 8-15 Jack Kearns [made] one of his entries with a string of [seven] stage sausages around his neck. Taking hold of them and letting the audience see what they were he would say, "I've got 'em! Seven Germans."

• **Jack Kearns**: TT: Sept. (1914), 30

---

- ▶ Claude Dampier, of the "Red Dandies" tells a story of the German Emperor.

"It happened," says Mr Dampier, "while I was on the Continent for a holiday trip. A friend and myself were on the main street of Berlin looking in a shop window in which there were pictures of the Emperor of Germany and many other celebrities of Europe. On seeing the picture of the German Emperor my friend remarked to me, 'He's a damn fool!' A squad of German police were passing just then and one of them overhearing my friend's remark, touched him on the shoulder and said, 'Come along! You'd better come to the watch house with us. You can't call the Kaiser of Germany a damn fool in Berlin you know.' My friend, trying to bluff it off said, 'I wasn't alluding to the Emperor of Germany. It was the Emperor of Austria I meant.' The policeman replied, 'No, my friend; that won't do. There's only one emperor a damn fool, and that's ours. Come along to the watch house now.'"

• **Claude Dampier**: TT: Oct. (1914), 29.

---

- ▶ "Why is the Union Jack like the moon? Because no power on earth can pull it down."

• **Claude Dampier**: TT: Oct. (1914), 36. [The *Theatre* attributes the origins of this joke to Farr and Farland]

---

- ▶
- The war has started.  
The war's begun;  
The British are making  
The Germans run.

• **Ted Tutty** TT: Oct. 1914, 35.

---

- ▶ The writer once heard "Constantinople" put to Vaude as an almost impossible word to do anything with. The Balkan War was on at the time, and Alberto Marini (really a Greek with an Italian name) was appearing at the Tivoli. Straightaway Vaude proceeded: -

Marini took me out to supper the other night and asked me to have a topical dish. So I ordered poultry. It was very cold and floating in fat. I said to Marini, "I don't think this is topical." "My dear Charlie," he replied, "don't you know that Greece is all over Turkey?" As a memento of the supper I wanted to present Marini with an opal ring. He said, "I can't take it Charlie if it is opal as I am a patriotic Greek." "What do you mean?" I asked. He replied "I can't-stant-an-opal."

• **Charlie Vaude** TT: Oct. (1914), 31

---

- ▶ Vaude: "I don't believe in coming on the stage and running down the Kaiser. There's no more harm in the Kaiser than a dose of Strychnine. In fact, he's as welcome in our house as influenza. Everything is getting so bally dear over the war. It cost me 1/6 this week for newspapers to find out what I knew last week. I smoke cigarettes in honour of the Kaiser."
- Verne: "In honour of the Kaiser?"
- Vaude: Yes. The Kaiser always had his drawbacks. The Kaiser knows very well that he'll be out of work when the war's over. In fact he cabled me and asked me if I could get him a job working by the day or by the hour."
- Verne: "Why "by the day" or "by the hour?"
- Vaude: "Well, the Kaiser never was any good at peace work. They are all going war-mad in Sydney. Even Nellie Stewart (in allusion to her return to the stage) has come to the front again. The Kaiser held a march-past of all his troops, and as they marched past the Kaiser the troops were arrested."
- Verne: "What for?"
- Verne: "For passing a bad sovereign. I saw a lovely picture the other day. It was the Germans marching through Brussels. But I noticed that the Germans kept to the mains streets."
- Vaude: "They were afraid of the alleys (allies). They're getting that drastic in this country that they're arresting all German babies under the age of twelve months."
- Verne: "What for?"
- Vaude: "Being up in arms. The greatest marathon race of modern times is now being run in Europe with record entries. Five hundred thousand Germans are running from Paris to Berlin."
- Verne: "Did you hear who won?"
- Vaude: (*pretending to read the result in a newspaper that he has just opened*) Yes. Won on his own by thirty hours. First in Berlin - the Kaiser."
- Verne: "The Kaiser must be a good runner."
- Vaude: "Yes."
- Verne: "Has he a pedigree?"
- Vaude: "Yes, he's out of Europe by First Opportunity. The newsboys are getting so religious lately. They have nothing but "War Cries." In England they're worrying very much over this war. It has turned Sir Edward - Grey; and it has made Winston Church -ill."

• **Vaude and Verne** TT: Oct. (1914), 31

---

- ▶ - "I was a soldier and I fought in a trench. Do you know what a trench is?"  
 - "Yes; one of those things you screw bolts on with."  
 - "No that's a screwdriver."

• **Kelly and Pollack**: TT: Nov. (1914), 35

---

- ▶ In "A German Invasion," a farce at the National (Sydney): -
- Mrs John Bull (Tilly Dunbar) to Billy Fixem, an Australian rabbit-seller (Phillips): If you keep this German away from the house - (the German by the way is after Mrs John Bull's daughter) - I'll give you £10.
- Billy Fixem: I'll do it for nothing, and give you a pair of rabbits into the bargain.

• **Nat Phillips** TT: Nov. (1914), 36

---

- ▶ - Vaude: "German soldiers can't march on an empty stomach."  
 - Verne: "Of course they can't."  
 - Vaude: "No; they need a battlefield to march on."

• **Vaude and Verne** TT: Nov. 1914, 14.

---

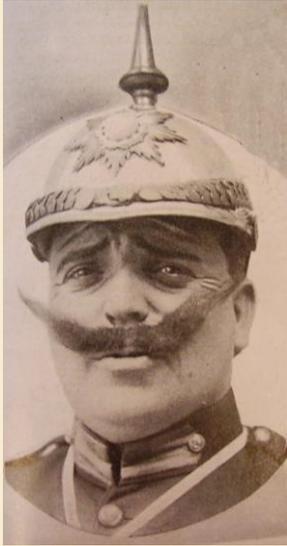
- ▶ - Vaude: "Every Australian should be sent to the front, even the babies."  
 - Verne: "Babies? What would you do with them?"  
 - Vaude: "I would put them in the infant-ry."

• **Vaude and Verne** TT: Nov. (1914), 36

---

- ▶ - Comic: "The war won't last long!"  
 - S. MAN: "Why?"  
 - COMIC: "Because it was made in Germany."

• **Mooney and Holbein** TT: Dec. (1914), 43



**Tivoli Follies (Dec. 1914)**

"Jack Cannot as the Kaiser before the war was declared [left] and as he looked after the first German reverse [right]"

Photographs by Arthur Martin

Centre: Jack Cannot as a sailor

*Theatre Jan. (1915), 49.*

## SONG LYRICS AND POETRY

- **"Fight for the Land that Bore You."**
  - Performed by Marshall Crosby (Dec. 1914)
  - Harry Clay's Bridge Theatre Ltd (Bridge Theatre, Newtown).
  - Ctd. TT: Jan. 1915, 44.
- **"Sons of Australia"**
  - Performed by Marshall Crosby (Dec. 1914)
  - Harry Clay's Bridge Theatre Ltd (Bridge Theatre, Newtown).
  - Ctd. TT: Jan. 1915, 44.
- **"Boys In Khaki, The."**
  - Performed by Jack Cannot (Dec 1914)
  - Tivoli Theatres Ltd (Tivoli Theatre, Sydney)
  - Ctd. TT: Jan. 1915, 48.
- **"They're on Their Way to Germany."**
  - Performed by Jack Cannot (Dec. 1914)
  - Tivoli Theatres Ltd (Tivoli Theatre, Sydney)
  - Ctd. Jan. (1915), 48.



**The Babes in the Woods (Christmas 1914)**

*Theatre Jan. (1915), 49.*

Cartoon by Harry Julius

## MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- ▶ There was a very abrupt termination to the jokes George Bowker had it in his mind to up on Williams and Warner, described in the National (Sydney) programme as "the two crazy Frenchmen with the Irish names." Said George to one of them quietly, "You are Germans - aren't you?" The explosion was instantaneous. George was threatened that if he ever repeated the "insoolt," in any form he would be shot on the spot. "And" says George in tremblingly speaking of the affair, "he meant it, too!"

- George Bowker TT: Sept. (1914), 28

---

- ▶ "Ted Tutty, a bigger riot than the war, causes more sensation and his cross talk with Harry Clay is a feature of the programme."

- **Ted Tutty** AV: 12 Aug. (1914), 4.

---

- ▶ One mercy that France is spared is that the German bands march in the rear of the columns. - "Columbia State."

- TT Dec. (1914), 26.

---

- ▶ War cable from Sir George Reid: - "Snow is impeding operations in both theatres." Our own experience tells us that "snow" in a theatre is always most unwelcome.

- TT Dec. (1914), 26.

---

- ▶ *The Babes in the Woods* (pantomime): First staged at the Adelphi Theatre, Dec. 1914.

Staged in two acts, the production included such specialty scenes as: The Expeditionary Force; Allies March; Flag Tableaux; The Great International Military Scenes ("The Rock - 1815" and "The Rock 1915"); and The Grand Concluding Spectacle ("1916 - Peace, Prosperity and Plenty").

---

- ▶ Three farces identified by name from late 1914 are, *The Gasman*, *The German Spy* and *The German Invasion*.

- See Nat Phillips AVTA biography.

---



### **The Babes in the Woods (Christmas 1914)**

"Behind at the panto: The Kaiser fraternises with one of the allies."

*Theatre* Jan. (1915), 49

Cartoon by Harry Julius.