

INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS: T

ARTHUR TINSLEY

(ca. 1865-1894) English-born comedian, character singer.

Arthur Tinsley came out to Australia from England in mid-1893 hoping that the climate might alleviate his consumption. According to Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, he had been stricken with the illness the previous May. A huge benefit tendered to him at the Canterbury Theatre, London, soon afterwards provided the means for him to travel to the Antipodes. "He was by then in such bad shape that he had to be carried on board the steamer," notes the *Telegraph's* writer ("Death," 4). With his health having improved during the voyage Tinsley sought and was granted an engagement to appear on Harry Rickards' circuit, starting with a season Sydney's *Tivoli Theatre*.

Arthur Tinsley made his Australian debut on 16 August as the headline attraction. Also on the bill were Noni and Kate Rickards, Horace St George, Will Akarman, Fred Davys, Georgie Devoe, Alf Lawton, Clara Spencer, Arthur Farley, and McKisson and Kearns. He remained at the Tivoli, albeit with a few short health breaks, up until 3 November, and then returned for the Tivoli's Christmas season. Among others he appeared alongside during his Tivoli engagement were American minstrel, Billy Emerson, Pope and Sayles, the Leslie Brothers, Charlie Fanning, Will Bovis and Gus Franks, Steve Adson, and Blanche Montague.

Early in the New Year the comedian had a relapse and was forced to spend several weeks confined to his bed in the Grosvenor Hotel passed away on 21 January 1894. He was reportedly aged only twenty-nine. During his last days Tinsley was looked after by both Rickards and his wife, the latter spending a good of time with him. Knowing that his days were now numbered he made a will and asked that the Rickards forward his few possessions to his mother. Although single, he was said to have been engaged to a woman back in England. Tinsley was interred in Sydney's Waverley Cemetery.

Arthur Tinsley's career in England saw him spend a long probation as a provincial chorus singer before getting a big break that allowed to become an "overnight" celebrity. The *Australian Star* records in this respect that Tinsley had been lifted from obscurity by George MacDermott who offered him a turn at the Pavillion, London. "From that time the young singer's name was made. Success followed success, and Tinsley, now in the van of his business, began to feel the killing effects of an overdose of prosperity. Then his health gave way, and Australia was looked to for restoration." The *Star* obituary goes on to record:

TIVOLI THEATRE.
Sole Lessee and Manager... Mr. Harry Rickards.
THE SAME OLD SWEET STORY :
PACKED, JAMMED, CRAMMED NIGHTLY,

[Mr. HARRY RICKARDS]

And his New Tivoli Minstrels and Specialty Co.
TO-NIGHT, WEDNESDAY, TO-NIGHT.
POSITIVELY FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY.
TO-NIGHT, WEDNESDAY, TO-NIGHT.
ENORMOUS ATTRACTIONS TO-NIGHT.
First Appearance in Australia of

[MR. ARTHUR TINSLEY.]

Arthur Tinsley	England's	Arthur Tinsley
Arthur Tinsley	Great	Arthur Tinsley
Arthur Tinsley	Representative	Arthur Tinsley
Arthur Tinsley	Character	Arthur Tinsley
Arthur Tinsley	Comedian.	Arthur Tinsley

Mr. HARRY RICKARDS
Has very much pleasure in introducing
Mr. ARTHUR TINSLEY
To his patrons, feeling confident that this TRULY
GREAT ARTIST will be a Brilliant Success.

REMEMBER,
TO-NIGHT, WEDNESDAY, TO-NIGHT,
He will appear, in addition to our
GREAT DOUBLE TIVOLI COMPANY, including
Mr. GEO. H. WOOD,
Miss Mildred Trigg, Miss L. Anderson, Miss G.
Devoe, Miss N. Rickards, Miss C. Spencer, Katie
Rickards, Miss M. Anderson, Miss L. Byron, Mr.
M'Kisson, Mr. Kearns, Miss M. Scott, Miss G. Roblin,
Mr. H. St. George, Mr. J. Lindsay, Mr. A. Farley,
Mr. W. Akarman, Mr. F. Davys, Mr. A. Lawton.

OUR BRILLIANT VOCAL BALLET—
21 Great Song and Dance Ladies 21;
And the Eminent Actor Vocalist,
Mr. HARRY RICKARDS.
Prices—2s, 1s, and 6d. Plan at Paling's. Telephone 353.

Daily Telegraph (Sydney) 16 Aug. 1893, 2.

TIVOLI THEATRE.
Sole Lessee and Manager... Mr. Harry Rickards.
THE SAME OLD SWEET STORY :
The Tivoli PACKED, JAMMED, CRAMMED Nightly,
to Witness

[Mr. HARRY RICKARDS]

New Tivoli Minstrels and Specialty Company.
TO-NIGHT, SATURDAY, TO-NIGHT,
Still Another Great Change of Programme.
More New Artists.

Billy Emerson	First Appearance at the	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	Tivoli Theatre of	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	Mr. WALTER LESTER,	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	in his Wonderful Ven-	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	triloquial Act, entitled	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	ECHOES FROM	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	WONDERLAND,	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	Reappearance at the Tivoli	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	of	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	Mr. ALF. LAWTON	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	and	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	Miss CLARA SPENCER.	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	Last Week. Last Week of	Arthur Tinsley
Billy Emerson	Kate Rickards's	Arthur Tinsley
will appear	10 Lady Club-swingers.	who has
This Evening	Continued Gigantic Success	recovered from
in an entire	of the following	his severe
Change of	Great Specialty Artists:—	indisposition,
Programme.	The Leslie Brothers	and will
Everything	The Sherwood Sisters	positively
Entirely New	La Petite Madge	appear
and Original.	Miss Noni Rickards	This Evening.
Remember.	Miss Emmie Morrison	for
Only a Few	Mr. John Whitworth.	One Week
Nights Longer		Longer.

Sydney Morning Herald 28 Oct. 1893, 2.

[Tinsley's] arrival here and his instantaneous success at the Tivoli under Mr Rickards' management are matters of which every theatre-goer is aware. Then the song was ended, and the laugh dies out when the malady unchecked compelled [him] to relinquish duty ("Death," 3).

Among Tinsley's big hits as a comic singer were "You're a Liarty," "The Rich Man and the Poor Man," and "Never Share Your Lodgings with a Pal."

Further Reference:

Corry, Marion, comp. "Arthur Tinsdale." *Waverly Cemetery's Who's Who Encore*. Waverly, Sydney: Waverly Library, 1995, 60.

"Death of Mr Arthur Tinsley." *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 23 Jan. 1894, 4.

"Death of Mr Arthur Tinsley." *Australian Star* (Sydney) 23 Jan. 1894, 3.

"Music Hall Lion: Mr Tinsley of the Tivoli, A." *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 26 Aug. 1893, 4.

TINY TOWN

(1911-1913) In 1911 Beaumont Smith purchased a European variety troupe comprising small people. Known as "Tiny Town," and invariably referred to as midgets, the troupe comprised singers, dancers, actors, acrobats, jugglers, strength acts, illusionists etc. After touring Australia, Smith departed for South Africa in mid to late-1912, playing more than 50 towns under canvas. Africa was followed by Europe, Canada, and the USA prior to returning to Australia some 12 months later for a series of brief engagements with a re-organised troupe. In all the company travelled more than 40,000 miles in its return to Sydney.

See also: [Beaumont Smith](#)

Further Reference:

"Beaumont Smith Back: Pigmy Circumnavigators. Travels of *Tiny Town - The Miracle in Australia.*" *Sun* (Sydney) 17 Sept. 1913, 4.¹

"In Quest of Midgets: Looking for the Little People - 50,000 Miles in Search." *Evening News* (Sydney) 1 Feb. 1912, 10.

"Midget World: The Facts about Tiny Townsmen." *Sun* (Sydney) 1 Feb. 1912, 6

"*Tiny Town.*" *Daily Herald* (Adelaide) 23 Oct. 1911, 6.

"*Tiny Town: A Capital Show.*" *Advertiser* (Adelaide) 23 Oct. 1911, 11.

"*Tiny Town: The Amazing Midget Village - A Chat with the Director.*" *Table Talk* (Melbourne) 7 Dec. 1911, 33.

"*Troupe of Midgets to Tour Australia.*" *West Australian* (Perth) 24 July 1911, 8.

EXHIBITION BUILDING.
 Direction The Australian Entertainments Propy. Ltd.
 Managing Director Beaumont Smith.
COMMENCING THIS (SATURDAY) AFTERNOON
 Special arrangements having been made with the Orient Company to facilitate the landing of the Circuit Accessories, which arrive by the Otway this morning, the Management is glad to announce

TWO BIG SHOWS TO-DAY.
THIS AFTERNOON, at 2. TO-NIGHT, at 7.30.
 The Exhibition Doors will be Opened to show to the full-sized world
THE QUAIN AND CURIOUS MIDGET CITY,
TINY TOWN.

Daily at 2 p.m. THIS BIG SHOW. Nightly at 7.30.
 with its Miniature Church, Shops, Post Office, and Residences.

A VILLAGE OF LITTLE MEN AND WOMEN 30 INCHES HIGH.
 The "Quietest Show on Earth. Something to make the Full-sized World Marvel.
 Direct from Europe, in its Entirety. ANDREAS ZEYBARD'S
AMAZING MIDGET CIRCUS.
 Strong Men. Jockeys. Bareback Riders. Jugglers. Wire Walkers. Clowns. Dancers.
 Singers. Globe Runners.

12 DAINTY MIDGET PONIES HAYATI HASSID,
 and Miniature Carriages. The Smallest Man in the World.

Register (Adelaide) 21 Oct. 1911, 2.



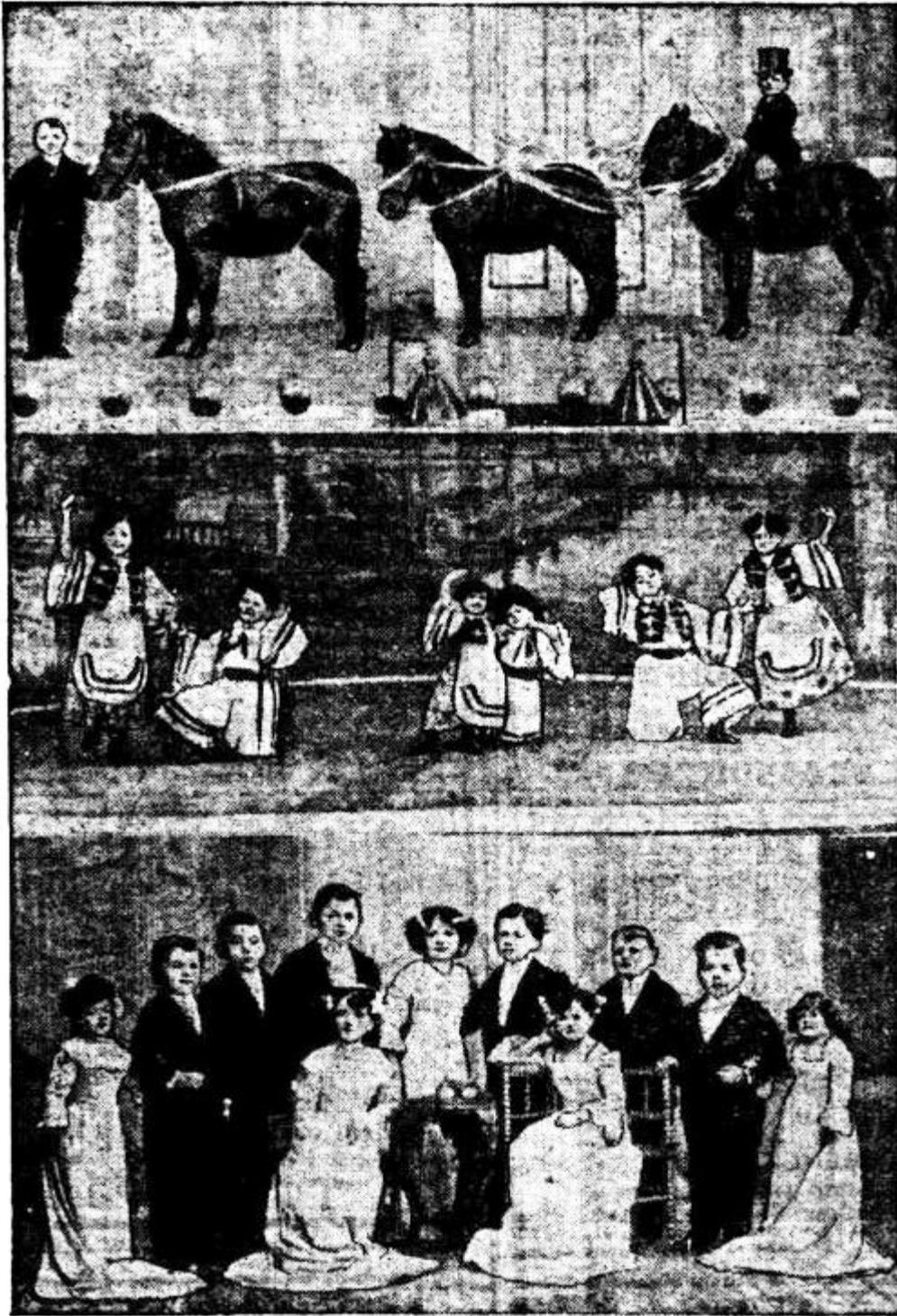
Chronicle (Adelaide)
20 July 1912, 32.

Daily Herald (Adelaide)
21 Oct. 1911, 11.



¹ This same article was republished in other Australian newspapers. See for example: "Beaumont Smith Back: Travels of Tiny Town." *Mail* (Adelaide) 20 Sept. (1913), 13.

TINY TOWN



THE MIDGETS SHORTLY TO APPEAR HERE.

Leader (Melbourne) 16 Sept. 1911, 58.

000

First published: 13/02/2014 • Last updated: 18/02/2021

NB: The URL for this PDF will change each time it is updated. If you wish to cite or link to this record please use the following:

Clay Djubal. *Australian Variety Theatre Archive*, International Tourists: T.

<http://ozvta.com/ozvta.com/international-tourists/>