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A NEW PORTRAIT OF ANNA PAVLOVA, THE FAMOUS RUSSIAN DANCER WHO IS AGAIN CAPTIVATING NEW YORK AUDIENCES
AT THE CENTURY WITH HER WONDERFUL ART

THE STORY OF THE CASTLES



Mr. and Mrs. Castle in their New York home



The First to Build Substantial
Castles in the Air
By ELROY FOOTE
Mother of Mrs. Castle

Photos Copyright Ira L. Hill's Studio

Mrs. Castle and her pet dog



Mrs. Castle in one of her latest dancing frocks



Mrs. Castle with two of her dogs

IN'T she too sweet for anything?"

She ought to be. Look at them clothes!"

"I like this one best where he's holdin' her so lovely and smilin' down on her. Don't seem's tho' it could be true what you hear about 'em, does it? They say they never speak off the stage an' he lives at Castle House an' she on Lexington Avenue, an' she's the most unhappy girl in New York."

"Serves her right for marryin' an actor, and an English one at that. You know she ain't nobody. Her father kept a drug store on Third Avenue an' her

name was Schloss, Irene Schloss. She's one of us all right. She went on in the chorus in Lew Field's show, an' bein' so pretty she got a chance at dancin'. She's made good, all right. My! how I'd love to dance with him!"

"You know what it 'ud cost, don't you? I guess he charges every time he dances with anyone. My chum's sister is waitress in a house on Madison Avenue where the folks goes to these swell places an' dances, and one mornin' my chum says her sister heard the master grumblin' about the price of the night before at this 'Sans Souci' restaurant Mr. Castle runs—Sans Souci, you know, is French for 'I should worry'. He says to the Mrs.: 'The bill's big enough to take in a lesson in that dance you had with Castle.' She just laughed an' said it was cheap at any price, an' that he was gettin' his money's worth, too, and not complainin' when he was there all right."

"Well, anyway, they're lovely. Let's go an' see 'em in the movies to-night."

The present writer—mother of the much-discussed dancer—stood among the crowd stationed before the big window of a shop on Thirty-fourth Street, which had on exhibition a collection of pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle, and listened to the comments. There have been no professionals in our family,

and I am quite unused to the careless handling of one's name and character which people think permissible when one adopts a public career. Hence this attempt to clear up some of the mist of ignorance and prejudice regarding the origin and habits of Mrs. Vernon Castle.

She was born in New Rochelle in the same house and home she was married from, and where I still live. Dr. Hubert Townsend Foote was her father, and he practiced medicine in the office of his father, Dr. Edward Bliss Foote on Lexington Avenue, the house now owned and occupied by the Vernon Castles when in town. Mrs. Castle's mother was born in New Haven, Conn., and her father—David Stevens Thomas—was a journalist of some local reputation. Mrs. Castle's maternal grandmother was a Goldthwaite, of Massachusetts, the genealogy of the family going back to Pilgrim days. A few years ago a Dora Goldthwaite was a popular actress in the South and West. Mrs. Castle's grandmother on her father's side was a Bond, of Boston, a woman noted in New York club circles for her brains and executive ability. She was treasurer of Sorosis for a period of fourteen years.

As to the happiness of the



Photo Rotch

Mrs. Castle in her wedding gown



Irene Castle at the age of seven with her pony "Dolly"

ELROY FOOTE
Mrs. Castle's mother

rich on a subject that should be lovable son-in-law, I must state to be desired to be ideal. een sense of rhythm and a love walk alone she would beg to be ttle feet to the strains of *Ta-ra-*ade popular by Lottie Collins.

stage début in y little fairies, ngles and gold lls in her little mine as any ghter. Would he little ballet-to them? And stay on in the ? I am not nk in my attic packed away. as a "Queen." e had left vivid ar-old-mind as like, and I had red velveteen flannel ermine me Tussaud's

of London. Even at that early r own taste in matters of dress,

the private school in the Parish and later St. Gabriel's Episcopal rished the tutilage for Irene's vironment did not suit Irene for

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himself, ughter ch she ly, for ovable.

Her birthday parties were unique, for she insisted on having as guests every child that caught her fancy. I remember the consternation of some of the mothers because for two successive years a little colored girl was one of the invited, and Irene's delight when the second year little Ruby won the prize in the birthday cake. From the primary Irene graduated to the High School. Two seasons of this and we thought best to take her with us to Mexico and Cuba, rather than leave her behind with relatives or in boarding schools.

My daughter never had to pass through the awkward age. Her progress through the most crowded room never meant upsetting of anything or anybody, least of all herself. A ready wit made serious discipline difficult, and many a good scolding was wound up abruptly by a hasty retreat on the part of her parents because of this. Irene greatly dreaded pain or any suffering, and was essentially a "mother's baby." She would run to me when corrected and, throwing her arms around my neck, cry out in fear, "You don't love me!" In this she was a contrast to her older sister, who preferred climbing trees and falling out of them, and even being punished rather than not climb.

Knowing Irene's timidity toward hurts as a child, I marvel every day over the courage she has developed in recent years toward suffering. To Irene Foote a fall off her bicycle or pony or a bump on the stairs meant heart-breaking wails and sobs. As Mrs. Vernon Castle I have twice seen her walk calmly to the elevator in the hospital that was to lay her on an operating table under the sickening fumes of ether, waving her hand and smiling a cheery "I'll see you later" to us; never shrinking from the pain she must undergo before she could walk out again.

Seeing some unusually good fancy dancing at a charity performance, I was delighted to learn that the teacher lived and gave her lessons in New Rochelle. Dr. Foote believed in developing any talents his children gave signs of possessing, and he gladly



An early portrait of Irene Castle



cliffe House,

Mr. and Mrs. Castle horseback riding at their country home



Beechmont, New Rochelle, where the dancer was born and brought up



Photo White

Charles Hopkins Mrs. Hopkins Russ Whytal
SCENE IN ALFRED SUTRO'S COMEDY "THE CLEVER ONES" NOW AT THE PUNCH AND JUDY THEATRE

placed Irene with Miss Rosetta O'Neil. She has been the only teacher Irene has ever had, and to her careful and consistent classical training I attribute much of the grace and charm of my daughter's dancing.

It was on the day of the third lesson under Miss O'Neil when Harold Forbes—well known in vaudeville circles—came into the class looking for candidates for a "Radium dance" he wished to introduce in a charity minstrel show. Irene was one of the first to attract his attention, and he appealed to me for permission to enter her as one of his "pony ballet." As Miss O'Neil was willing, I gave my consent.

A "skirt dance" of English origin was also one of her rôles, and the next few weeks were full of excitement. I was appointed chaperone, and that was no sinecure, for it meant criticising and endeavoring to improve the length, hang and fit of the costumes which were made by fond mothers at home. Each dress was, of course, constructed to show off to best advantage the charms of Gladys, Gertrude or Grace, quite independent of any "chorus or unity" of purpose. But the night of the dress rehearsal was filled with many heartaches when it was realized that the "Radium dance"—so much advertised, as it had been a favorite on Broadway a season or two previous—was danced on a pitch dark stage, only the phosphorous painted jumping ropes, shoes and caps being visible to the audience, and the whereabouts of Gladys, Gertrude or Grace only discoverable by counting from this or that end.

Many amateur events followed this, in all of which Irene took her honors with the same nonchalance that she does to-day. I became very critical, and Miss O'Neil often told me I was more difficult to satisfy than the audience. As Irene hated real work, I would stand with a hot head and cold feet in the wings, fearful of a mis-step, knowing she had shirked many hours of preparation; but the mis-step rarely came, and if it did was so cleverly covered by some interpolation that it did not detract from the beauty of the whole.

This lack of application was a great trial to Dr. Foote, who greatly admired his little daughter's dancing and imitations, but always feared failure if ever put to the real test of money-making. How we regret that he could not have lived long enough to see the outcome of the struggles Irene and Vernon went through

in Paris, and which were to result in a form of dancing admired and copied all over the world!

Spanish dances lent themselves particularly well to Irene's lines—or should I say she adapted herself best to that form of dancing? During her visit to Mexico and Cuba, a Spanish dancer gave her lessons in the correct use of the castanets. Bessie McCoy's *Yama Yama* dance was also a favorite, and on one occasion of her giving it, Mrs. McCoy was kind enough to ask Irene if she had not made a study of her daughter to be so well able to imitate her every move. Irene's reply, that she had seen Miss McCoy dance but once, and had to limit her study to photographs, caused great surprise.

About this time I made a most serious mistake. I sent Irene to a very fashionable finishing school. It came near being the finish of her happiness as well as mine. Thrown into association with a class of very rich girls, who were allowed by their parents to have large allowances of money, as well as credit in the shops of the near-by towns, Irene was made the very unhappy recipient of favors and entertainments which she could not repay. Dr. Foote did not believe in allowing young people to handle carelessly sums of money, and refused flatly all appeals for an income that would permit repaying in kind the flowers, candies, theatres and even jewelry that were heaped on Irene by her friends. When a telegram from a sorely distressed aunt informed us in Mexico that Irene had taken matters into her own hands and run away from school, I am afraid I was guilty of the obvious "I told you so."

Of course, this upset all our plans. Dr. Foote could not return to the States at that time of year, so, after much cabling, it was arranged to have my daughter sent down to Havana, where we would meet her. On our way across the Gulf we assured ourselves that all was well by means of the wireless, and by it we learned that Irene, accompanied by her married sister, was on board the *S. S. Havana*. We also learned that, coming from Vera Cruz at that time of the year, we would be obliged to spend six days in quarantine on the hill overlooking the city. Mr. and Mrs. Columbus Smith, good friends in Havana, could be relied upon to meet our girls, and the day after we were landed on the hill we had the somewhat doubtful pleasure of seeing the *S. S. Havana* drop anchor in the harbor below us and watching through

field glasses the landing of our daughters, so near and yet so far away. After we were liberated we all went to the Isle of Pines, a favorite resort of the Doctor's, and there, riding horseback over the pretty island, bathing in the beautiful Caribbean Sea and enjoying generally the glorious climate that isle possesses, we finished the most "nervous" winter I ever remember to have spent.

The following summer, at the New Rochelle Yacht Club, Vernon Castle was introduced to Irene Foote, and another page was turned in her life-book.

The mother of two unusually attractive girls, I had weighed in the balance many young men. I liked Vernon Castle very much. He gave every evidence of having brains and breeding; and as he was surprisingly like Irene's father at the same age, in physique and charm of manner, I could not blame my daughter for accepting his very marked attentions. A summer of yachting, dancing and swimming followed, and when cold weather threatened and Dr. Foote had to start South again, he had given a somewhat reluctant consent to an engagement. But Vernon had to promise to save up money sufficient for the needs of a young couple. We did not intend our little girl should have to support a husband. I knew that Vernon would always be a bread winner, and I was not an ambitious mother. I wanted my daughter to have all the love and thoughtful care that I had been fortunate enough to have in my married life, and I felt sure it lay in the power of this clean-limbed, alert-minded young lover to give it to her.

A trying winter spent in New York by the two girls under the eyes of their aunt and uncle did not change my opinion, and so when spring came, bringing us back to New Rochelle and home, and Vernon insisted that he could not wait any longer, I used all the influence I possessed to get Dr. Foote to overlook the small size of the nest egg Vernon had been able to lay by and let the children marry. Reminding him of our similar financial status when we were married, and the fact that neither of us had suffered, or our children been deprived of health or education, did more to accomplish my purpose than any of the children's pleas in their own behalf, and on the 28th day of May, 1911, Irene Foote was married to Vernon Castle Blythe—his family name—in the bride's home, by the Rev. Dr. Marshall, pastor of the Congregational

Church in New Rochelle. It was a pretty but rather sad ceremony, for my husband was so ill that he was barely able to stand up long enough to give his daughter away.

Vernon still had a short time to play in "The Hen Pecks," and it was not until a little later that he was able to take his bride over to England and introduce her to his family. They received her with open arms and proved to be the delightful family we had surmised. A visit I made last year in London to the home of Lawrence Grossmith, a very clever comedian much loved in public and private life, whose charming wife—known on the English stage as Coralie Blythe—is Vernon's sister, showed me an adorable family, brilliant and cultured and most devoted one to the other. I spent happy weeks surrounded by every comfort, petted and spoiled as though I were really one of the family, and I came in touch with a charming atmosphere of refined *camaraderie* known only in professional circles.

On their return home Vernon brought with him his youngest sister, Marjorie, and she spent the rest of the summer with us in "Beechmont," New Rochelle, going back to England only after the road tour of "The Hen Pecks" broke up in January, she having filled a small singing rôle in it, and Irene a tiny "looking" part, in order to remain with Vernon. He had signed a contract for a *Revue* in a Paris theatre, and in January, during our absence South, my children sailed for France, taking with them Walter, an old and faithful servant of mine. Father thought this an extravagance, but Walter often proved a "life saver," his dog-like devotion and cheerfulness in time of need, as well as his ability to cook and make a meal out of things he could buy for a couple of francs, proving of inestimable value. Those were terrible times, I know. Although Irene wrote but little of her serious plight, and made as much as possible of the amusing side of it, I felt keenly that all was not well with my children in that foreign land, surrounded by strangers and none too well acquainted with the intricacies of customs and language. The production of the *Revue* was postponed from week to week. Funds were exhausted and salary in advance had to be encroached on. When finally the show did open it was a disappointment to the public and heartbreaking to the Castles. They hated the class of work they were asked to do, and though both

(Continued on page 154)



Photo Strauss-Peyton

ARLINE BOLLING

This clever actress is now appearing in "September Morn," on tour



White

CHARACTERS IN "THE MAN WHO MARRIED A DUMB WIFE," AT WALLACK'S THEATRE

THE STORY OF THE CASTLES

(Continued from page 115)

of them—Vernon especially—received good notices in the Parisian journals they were anything but happy. Some kind friend and instrument of fate invited them to supper at the Café de Paris. Dainty dressing is imperative there, and of Irene's wardrobe nothing fresh remained but her wedding gown. Donning that, she, and her always immaculate husband, sallied forth with empty pockets and stomachs to what was to prove the turning point in their career.

Someone who had seen them do their "turn" in the "Revue," and who suspected them capable of still better things, asked them to dance. Monsieur Louis, the manager, gave his permission, and tucking up her train and with their hearts in their mouths they began their first *cabaret* dance. It must have been very different from what they can do now, but it pleased, and the guests applauded. A waiter brought a hundred franc note to Vernon, with a request from a bearded Russian to dance again. His gentlemanly instincts shocked, Vernon was about to send it back with the statement that they would be charmed to dance again for the gentleman for nothing, when the more practical wife gave him a pinch under the table and reminded him that she was tired of fried eggs if he wasn't, and if he didn't swallow his pride and keep that twenty dollars she would never speak to him again. Whether it was the reminder of the eggs or the threat, the result was a gracious smile to the Russian, and they danced again, throwing in an extra step or two for the tip. Monsieur Louis was so delighted at their success that he made them an offer then and there, and, at what



Mr. and Mrs. Castle's home at Manhasset, Long Island

seemed to them a princely salary, they became regular dancers at the supper hour at the Café de Paris. Dear Monsieur Louis! He certainly has been a kind friend to my children and I shall always be grateful to him, whom I know, and to the "bearded Russian" whom I do not know, for setting their feet on the path that has led them to fame.

Dr. Foote and I had just begun to get encouraging letters about their affairs and he was wondering if any of his dreams of Irene as a "success" were coming true when my poor husband died, and our happiness was clouded for a while. The doctor hated all evidence of mourning and had insisted that all things should go on after his death as before.

The fame of the Castles spread, and private drawing rooms were opened to them. They went over to England for two weeks and were kept very busy doing their American dances for private entertainments. Upon their return to New York they signed a contract with Charles Dillingham to appear in "The Lady and the Slipper." Vernon's part in



Irene Castle at the age of ten when she appeared in a "pony ballet" at a benefit

this was a very poor one—Irene's also—and Mr. Dillingham kindly released them for the time.

Then in Louis Martin's Café on Broadway they began just such as successful a season as they had in Paris. Dancing there every night for supper and private soirées was not enough to satisfy Vernon, and he began giving lessons. He proved to be a wonderfully clever teacher, and made an impression on the style of dancing that everyone has reason to be grateful for. In the midst of that winter came "The Sunshine Girl," and its splendid success. They danced in that until the weather got warm and Irene wilted in it, as she always does in the heat. She could not get the management to promise a near date for closing, and feeling worn and sick she finally flatly refused to dance another step, and did what she had threatened to do—engaged her passage for Europe. Vernon was far too conscientious for that, and remained two weeks longer, patiently drilling a man to take his place.

I believe it was the fact of this trip, taken across the ocean on separate steamers, that gave rise to the rumor that "the Castles are separated all but legally." I was in Paris at the time and was much relieved to find that the ocean voyage had given Irene a good rest. A little later we were joined by Vernon and again they began dancing for Monsieur Louis at the Café de Paris. Even greater success was theirs then, but soon after the races, Irene suffered considerably with a re-occurrence of the trouble she had in New York. A contract for the Deauville season in August was important, and after much family and many professional consultations it was decided to enter a private hospital in Paris and be operated on by a noted French specialist. That period is still a



Irene Castle at fifteen when she took up Spanish dancing and gave imitations of Lotta Faust

nightmare to all of us, and only a strong constitution and good nursing brought my "little girl" out comparatively well and strong enough for the Deauville season. A series of teas at the Pré Catelan in Paris wound up a season of wonderful success, artistically and financially.

While in Paris, Miss Elsie de Wolfe and Miss Elizabeth Marbury had been interested and active in furtherance of the Vernon Castles' success, and, upon their return to New York, Miss de Wolfe helped materially to make a "go" of the restaurant which Vernon was to open by decorating it in her inimitable style, and Miss Marbury saw possibilities in their future far beyond what had been their ambition. Their installation at the head of Castle House followed, and under the guiding hand of one of the cleverest of business women their affairs have prospered.

This winter they have worked still harder and their vogue is greater than ever. In the musical comedy, "Watch Your Step," at the New Amsterdam, they dance at each of the eight performances, and are one of the chief features of the production. A night club to be called the Castle Club, is now being organized, which will meet at two o'clock A.M., and carry their Terpsichorean efforts well into dawn. And lest their consciences accuse them of indolence, the pair, as indefatigable as graceful, dance at tea time on the theatre roof dedicated to their use. On matinee days, then, the four dances at each performance of the play aggregate eight. The Castles in the Air add four more to the number, to which a pair or more of dances at tea time add two. Thus the daily dances of the Vernon Castles are sure to be ten. On matinee days they will certainly be fourteen. In less than two years they have danced themselves into an annual income that they themselves find it hard to compute, but that considerably exceeds that of the President of the United States. Indubitably the goal of Irene Castle's ambition is accomplished. Three years ago she said "I hope the dancing rage will have five years of life. I shall retire when I am twenty-five, and live in the country. I shall have children and we will live the life of a country gentleman and his family. I shall have all the outdoor life I want and all the dogs and horses." Already the strenuous life of dancing from noon to dawn is relieved by every seventh day spent in their home in the country. That home is at Manhasset, on Long Island. But the most popular dancing pair in America dwell not on its spacious beauty, its nearness to Long Island Sound, but on the fact that it has enough kennels for their twenty-four dogs and sufficient stable space for their five horses.

Even at the hospital for her four days' detention, Mrs. Castle had a wee, long-haired, bead-eyed canine named Wallops, the name much larger and more formidable than its possessor, for companion. True, the hospital rules forbid the presence of dogs. But Mr. Castle smuggled tiny Wallops thither under his coat, and Mrs. Castle's smiles and pleadings secured an extension of the presence of her friend and comforter.

This is the story of Vernon and Irene Castle, the first who built substantial Castles in the Air.



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Lady Duff Gordon

A Flashlight Interview with Lady Duff Gordon on Fashions for the Stage by a Mere Man

LADY DUFF GORDON: "You find me taking my five o'clock tea, old English fashion—but come right in. THE THEATRE MAGAZINE? what a lovely magazine!"

MERE MAN:

LADY DUFF GORDON: "I understand that you have an article on Mrs. Vernon Castle in your next number—and, of course, you want to see the gowns I am making for her—charming artist! And how beautifully she wears her gowns—I love to work for her. I am making three new gowns, one of pussy willow black and white silk, a white net dress, and one of pink meline."

MERE MAN:

LADY DUFF GORDON: "What do you think of this wide skirt? Quite a novelty—a friend of mine landed from Europe and had a gown made by one of the leading couturiers of Paris, and she says the dresses still cling."

"Do you remember the pictures of Marie Antoinette?"

MERE MAN: "I certainly do."

LADY DUFF GORDON: "Is not this dress a reminder of those days?"

MERE MAN:

LADY DUFF GORDON: "Do you also remember that some twenty years ago they used to call the dress 'à l'Anglaise'? Now this style is purely 'à l'Américaine.' I do think American women are perfectly lovely—they are more than attractive."

MERE MAN:

LADY DUFF GORDON: "Let me look at that number of THE THEATRE MAGAZINE. What a stunning picture of Elsie Macray! I don't know her but I should love to make a dress for her, her face is so inspiring. Florence Walton—she is also a dear. Frieda Hempel, of the Metropolitan—I've just made some gowns for her."

MERE MAN:

LADY DUFF GORDON: "I wish I might entertain you longer, but here I am, pulled at all sides!" (This remark was followed by the entrance of several assistants)—"Is this dress finished, Lady Duff Gordon?"—"Please, Lady Gordon, we would like your attention just a moment."

LADY DUFF GORDON: "In this country one must certainly rush—I am going to finish the three gowns for Mrs. Vernon Castle, and I want to see them first in THE THEATRE MAGAZINE before anywhere else!"

MERE MAN: Gracefully bows.

Exit.