THE DELAWARE, OHIO, CITY OPERA HOUSE AND ITS
NINETEENTH CENTURY ACTIVITIES

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Arts

by
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1968

Approved by

[Signature]
Adviser
Department of Theatre
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INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the City Opera House which was located in Delaware, Ohio, a small town twenty miles north of Ohio's capital city. This writer has attempted to describe the appearance of the playhouse, its operation, and to last all of the activities, dramatic or otherwise, which were held there between 1882 and 1899. To place this information about the Opera House into the context of American theatrical conditions is the second aim of the study. To determine whether or not the Delaware theatre was "typical," a summary will first be presented of the status of American theatres between 1880 and 1900, their structure, operation, and activities. Next, an examination of the appearance, operation, and activities of the Opera House will be made. Finally from a comparison of this particular theatre with theatrical conditions across America, conclusions will be drawn about typicality. Even if this cannot be established, the body of information about the Delaware theatre is of interest to local historians and to those interested in American theatrical history of this period.

Delaware, Ohio, had a population of 6,894 in 1880; this increased to 8,224 in 1890 but decreased to 7,940 in
in 1900. It was and still is the home of Ohio Wesleyan University, a small liberal arts college. In the latter part of the nineteenth century Delaware could be considered a middle-class, conservative, Protestant, Republican town in the midst of a similar rural community. Industries in the city included a chair factory, grain and wool mills, a fence company, and a cigar factory.

The people of Delaware entertained themselves by attending church socials, picnics at Greenwood Lake, school programs, the Delaware County Fair, surprise parties, musicales, strawberry and ice cream festivals, dances, skating parties, lodge meetings, debate and oratory contests, grand military displays, circus performances, parades, and baseball games.

The first dramatic entertainments witnessed in Delaware were presented by the local Thespian Society, organized in 1827. Later a Thespian Hall was built by M.D. Pettibone for the society on the lot where the court house now stands. This served as the only public hall in the city until the building of Thompson Chapel on the Ohio Wesleyan campus in 1852 and William’s Opera House in 1869.

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In the late 1870's the Delaware City Council decided that more suitable quarters were needed for the city offices so they decided to place the issue before the voters. In the spring election of 1879 the people approved a $35,000 bond to provide the initial funds for a city hall building. Soon after the city fathers decided that the building might well include an opera house; they reasoned that with Delaware's growing population, a large public hall was needed. In addition they thought that it would provide enough revenue to help pay for the building. Because of the expanded plans of the City Council, several additional bond issues had to be passed; the total cost of the building was estimated at over a hundred thousand dollars.

Not all of the citizens in Delaware were extremely happy about the building of the Opera House. Ministers and officials at Ohio Wesleyan considered the city's operation of a playhouse to be detestable. In 1884 the faculty of Ohio Wesleyan passed a rule banning attendance by students at theatrical performances given at the Opera House. The rule was enforced in 1885 by suspending fifty-nine students

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3 The Delaware Gazette, May 15, 1879.
4 Lytle, p. 118.
5 Henry Clyde Hubbart, Ohio Wesleyan's First Hundred Years (Delaware, Ohio: Ohio Wesleyan University, 1943), p. 78.
who attended the performance of Frederick Warde in Richard III.  

The corner stone of the city hall building was laid on September 27, 1879; and the theatre opened March 29, 1882. The theatre was condemned as unsafe in 1921 but was completely renovated by Ohio Wesleyan University as a Little Theatre in 1930. All activity ceased four years later, however, when in the early morning hours of February 24, the city hall was completely destroyed by fire.

The sources for this study include general and local histories of the theatre for the chapter on the conditions of the American theatre.

The information presented about the appearance, operation, and activities of the Delaware City Opera House has been obtained primarily from The Delaware Gazette, supplemented by interviews.


7 The Delaware Gazette, October 2, 1879.

8 Ibid., March 30, 1882.

9 Diem and Hunter, p. 114.

10 Edward J. Crowley, "Ring Out the Old! Ring in the New!" The Drama, 20 (April 1930), pp. 208-209.

11 The Delaware Gazette, February 24, 1934.
The visual materials included are reproduced from photographs obtained in the Gazette office. The print of the City Hall exterior was taken from a 1912 (?) painting by John Howard. The prints of the theatre interior were made from photographs published in the August 1896 issue of The Railway Reflector.

Ground plans included are submitted by the writer as purely conjectural. Their purpose is to aid the reader in visualizing some of the written description.
CHAPTER 1

THEATRICAL CONDITIONS IN THE UNITED STATES
BETWEEN 1880 AND 1900

Hundreds of theatres existed in America during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. While there were major differences among these theatres and their operations, there also were many things they held in common. This chapter attempts to describe these differences and similarities in terms of physical appearance, staging practices, production operations, and the kinds of activities which were held at the theatres.

Physical Arrangement of Theatres

American theatres during this period of time had not changed drastically in their basic structures since the middle of the century. In the last twenty years of the century, however, most playhouses had eliminated the use of a raked stage floor, very large aprons, and proscenium doors. Some provincial theatres which operated at the time did retain these conventions.12

There was considerable variation among theatres in the seating capacity, size of stage and backstage areas, number and location of boxes, and number of balconies. But basically theatre auditoriums were strikingly similar, with the horseshoe-shape being traditional.

Although different terms were sometimes applied to the various parts of the house, the main floor in most playhouses consisted of two or more private boxes on either side of the proscenium, a central seating area called the parquet or parquette, and a seating area at the sides of and behind the parquet referred to as the parquet circle. Some theatres called the parquet the "orchestra" section; the surrounding seats were called the orchestra circle.

Above the parquet (or orchestra) circle were one or more galleries or balconies. Most theatres boasted of elaborate fresco work throughout the building. The proscenium, boxes, the ceiling, and dome were painted with allegorical figures; figures of famous names in literature, music, and painting; angels; and flowers.

This material may be better understood by looking at a specific metropolitan legitimate theatre. The Castle Square Theatre in Boston was built in 1894 and contained a horseshoe-shaped auditorium. It was approximately eighty feet wide, eighty-five feet deep, and was divided into a parquette, parquette circle, two balconies, and six boxes.
The stage was forty feet wide and forty-five feet deep and contained a fly gallery.13

The Southern Theater was built in Columbus, Ohio, two years after the Castle Square. It was also horseshoe-shaped and contained an orchestra section, orchestra circle, a balcony and a gallery, and six boxes which were all on the main floor level. The auditorium was sixty-seven feet wide and ninety feet from the rear wall to the stage. The stage, thirty-two by forty-five feet, was equipped to fly scenery. Photographs of both the Southern and the Castle Square Theatres indicate elaborately frescoed auditoriums.14

Variety theatres of this period, such as Proctor's Pleasure Palace and the Gaiety Theatre in New York, were constructed similarly to the legitimate playhouses. Town hall theatres (while usually much smaller than the theatres described and sometimes poorly equipped, with little stage and backstage space or without permanent seating) had similarly constructed auditoriums.


Staging Practices

During this period the conventional method of staging a production involved the use of the flat wing-border-back drop set. This consisted of banks of wings, one behind the other, both stage right and left. Behind each bank was a flat backing; behind the last bank of wings were the back shutters.

These flats were held in place by means of lower grooves (tracks) on the floor and upper grooves atop the wings. Other available means of rigging the wings included stage braces, understage trolleys, or "forks" attached to the tops of the wings.¹⁵

As the nineteenth century progressed scenery began to be more irregular, and diagonal set pieces came into use. This paved the way for the introduction of the box set in most metropolitan theatres and in many provincial playhouses. The box set was used primarily for interior scenes; and with its development, the use of three-dimensional objects on stage began to replace painted representations. Equipment for flying scenery was developed as the use of plastic objects increased. But flies and grooves

apparently were both used in this period.\textsuperscript{16}

Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century most all theatres had a supply of stock scenery which included, for example, a mountain pass, a wood, a chamber set, a prison scene, and a palace room. Some traveling companies carried only specially painted backdrops with them on tour and used a theatre’s own stock wings and borders, appropriate or not.

The stage effects which were frequently used in American theatres of this period included representations of trains, treadmills, steam engines, fire engines, sawmills, elevators, and fire, water, snow, wind, lightning, and thunder effects.

Various methods of lighting were used in the theatres. Gas lamps were used in almost all American and European theatres by 1850. Limelight was the next innovation in lighting and was installed in some theatres. The triumph of the century, of course, was electricity; arc lights were installed as early as 1846 and incandescent lamps as early as 1881. So theatres in the 1880-1900 period were using any number of lighting methods—gas lamps, limelight, electric lights, even kerosene lamps.

As implied in the preceding discussion, the use of realistic effects and details in staging was increasing during this period. Romantic treatments were still utilized, however, and "faraway places" and natural wonders were extremely popular with audiences. Supposedly the appeal was not the realistic details themselves but the thrilling spectacle they provided.

Finally a brief mention of the staging methods used in minstrel shows and variety-vaudeville shows should be made. Richard Moody suggests that early minstrels uniformly depicted Negro cabins, cotton patches, levees, and boats on a river. In the later years of the century, more "purely decorative" sets were used.17

Variety halls made use of stock scenery for most all the acts it presented. "Conversation acts" and monologues were most often played in front of a street "in one" ("a set or drop in the first entrance").18

Production Operations

In terms of production there was no one typical American playhouse; there were several. Specialized


theatres included legitimate theatres, minstrel theatres, burlesque theatres, melodrama theatres, and variety-vaudeville theatres. In addition there were the hundreds of town hall theatres which presented all kinds of dramatic offerings in addition to lectures, concerts, and meetings. Of course, even the specialized theatres were not opposed to presenting entertainments outside their speciality: legitimate theatres often presented variety shows, and the "popular" theatres sometimes booked legitimate productions.

Although a discussion about the nature of minstrel and variety shows will be presented later, there should be some mention of the theatres which produced these entertainments almost exclusively.

There were ten minstrel theatres in New York during the 1850's, but this number had been reduced to four in 1872. A new minstrel hall was opened in 1886 by Lew Dockstader who operated it for three years. New York was not the only city which had minstrel theatres; Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Boston, and Hartford all had resident minstrel companies.19

In 1881 Tony Pastor opened his famous Fourteenth Street Theatre, devoted solely to variety shows. Soon similar theatres were opened in New York and included the

19Moody, pp. 46-49.
the Globe, the Olympic, and the Theatre Comique. In 1887 B.F. Keith took over the Bijou Theatre in Boston, which he operated as a continuous-performance variety house. In the next ten years there were similar theatres in thirty cities throughout the northeast section of the United States. Circuits of vaudeville theatres began to be organized in the 1890's and remained in operation during the heyday of vaudeville in the twentieth century.

Until about 1868 theatres throughout America supported local stock companies which with the aid of visiting stars, provided the dramatic entertainments for the towns. By this date only the largest cities could support stock companies, and by 1887 only four such companies were in existence: the Boston Museum Company, the Albert Palmer Company, the Augustin Daly Company, and the Lyceum Theatre Stock Company.

The system of presenting entertainments which replaced the visiting star-stock system was called the

20 Foster Rhea Dulles, America Learns to Play (New York: Peter Smith, 1952), p. 218.


22 Edward Mammen, The Old Stock Company School of Acting (Boston: Trustees of the Public Library, p. 11.)
combination system. This consisted of a "star" and a company of actors who traveled as a unit to present shows in theatres throughout the country. Originally the companies performed one play in one-night stands; later some companies offered a repertory of plays in one-week stands. By 1880 there were fifty road shows touring the country, and by 1900 this number had increased ten fold. This "explosion" resulted from the growth of the railroad, a doubling of the population in the United States between 1870 and 1900, and the application of big-business practices to theatrical operations.23

The ultimate in big-business methods was achieved when the Theatrical Syndicate was formed by Abraham Erlanger, Charles Frohman, Al Hayman, Marc Klaw, S.F. Nixon (Nirdlinger), and J. Fred Zimmerman in 1896. This group was organized to control the major theatres in the country and to book entertainments in them. Their effort was successful for many years.

In revolt against the commercialism of the theatre in America and against the poor performances in poor plays by many of the road companies, a new stock system evolved in 1894. In that year James F. Neill established the Lyceum Theatre Stock Company in Denver, which was a

stationary company of actors (no stars) which performed in theatres for a period of time ranging from a month to an entire season. Usually a single play was performed for a full week. This pattern of operation established by Neill was followed by many theatres for many years.  

**Plays**

Just as in staging procedures, there was an increasing use of realistic elements in plays during the latter part of the nineteenth century. But many of the dramas written in this period were still based on the romantic tradition of adventure and exciting spectacular events. Because the theatre of this time was a theatre of actors, there were few great American plays written. Indeed some dramas were so strong in "specialties" interspersed throughout the action and so weak in plot that they may be classed as variety entertainments.

By 1880 the Indian plays of Edwin Forrest no longer were produced, and the Yankee character (New England rustic) dramas were on the wane. Nevertheless new forms of native American dramas began to be written after a standard was established in a play written by Bronson Howard


25Moody, p. 110.
entitled Saratoga.\textsuperscript{26}

Some of the forms of native drama written and produced during this period included dramas of the Western frontier, melodramas, farce-comedies, Civil War dramas, type-character comedies (Irish, Germans, and Negroes, for example), and sentimental plays.

Other plays produced frequently were imported English plays, European translations, equestrian dramas, and Shakespearean revivals.

Finally a note should be made about the phenomenal success of one particular play, \textit{Uncle Tom's Cabin}, which appeared not only in theatres but also in halls, showboats, and churches. In 1879 there were approximately fifty "Tom shows" on the road; in the 1890's this number had increased to almost 500 companies. Extravagance reigned supreme in these shows in regard to costumes, scenery, and the bands that traveled with the groups. Parades were even given in the afternoon preceding the evening's performance.\textsuperscript{27} A fad of the 1880's were "double" Tom companies with either two Marksbes and two Topsies or two Evas and two Toms.


\textsuperscript{27}Hughes, pp. 300-301.
Other Activities

As indicated previously there were many other kinds of entertainments which appeared in theatres at this time. One of the most popular of these was the minstrel show. By the 1870's the form of the show had been set. The first part consisted of dialogue and songs, the dialogue being carried on by the end men (Mr. Tambo and Mr. Bones) and the Interlocutor, the straight man. The songs were sung by the chorus who sat in a semi-circle on stage just in front of the band. Part two consisted of an olio followed usually by one of three things: a parody of a legitimate drama, an extravaganza, or a variety show. The minstrel show was in its prime between 1850-1870 when there were hundreds of companies on the road. From 1880 to 1896 the number of troupes declined from thirty to ten. As stated before minstrel shows were presented in specialized minstrel theatres, in legitimate theatres, and in town hall theatres.

Variety-vaudeville entertainments developed from entr'acte specialties presented during legitimate dramas and were expanded into entire shows, which were first presented in concert halls, museums, and saloons and

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28 Ibid., p. 310.
29 Moody, p. 49.
eventually in special variety theatres, legitimate houses, and in town hall theatres. Acts presented in variety shows included serio-comic singers, comedians, acrobats, dancers, contortionists, impersonators, bone soloists, change artists, plate spinning and balancing artists, bicycle riders, roller skaters, dramatic artists, magicians, jugglers, ventriloquists, silhouette artists, and trained animals. One-act plays were also presented.

The burlesque show was first popularized by Lydia Thompson and the British Blondes and was standardized in the 1870's by M.B. Leavitt and his Rentz-Santley company. The usual form was made up of songs and gags followed by an olio which in turn was followed by a burlesque or after-piece. It was closely related to the other variety entertainments of the period, but its special attraction was the female leg. In the 1890's the large cities had theatres devoted almost exclusively to burlesque shows. Traveling companies also visited legitimate and variety theatres and town hall theatres.

Town hall theatres across the country were centers of community life and consequently held conventions, religious services, meetings, elocutionary entertainments, lectures, concerts, military displays, athletic exhibitions, trained animal shows, political rallies, and local talent entertainments in addition to plays, minstrels, variety shows, and burlesque shows.
The preceding discussion provides a summary of what kinds of American theatres were operating between 1880 and 1900, what they looked like, how they operated, and what activities took place in them.
CHAPTER 11

A DESCRIPTION OF THE DELAWARE CITY
OPERA HOUSE

Location

The Delaware City Opera House was located in the north end of the second floor of the City Hall, which stood at the southeast corner of Main (Sandusky) and William Street. In the print of the City Hall (Figure 1) the north section is stage right. The building stood on a lot approximately 103 feet (on William) by 145 feet (on Sandusky).30

The theatre itself was approximately 100 by 62 feet; the stage was at the east end. Other "rooms" in the City Hall were provided for the city prison, the fire department (complete with sleeping quarters for the firemen and a stable and granary for the horses), the city council chamber and police court, a Citizen's Hall, several city offices, and a fireproof vault.31

30 The Delaware Gazette, May 15, 1879.
31 Ibid., July 10, 1879.
FIGURE 1

THE EXTERIOR OF THE DELAWARE CITY HALL
FIGURE 2

THE INTERIOR OF THE OPERA HOUSE
CONJECTURAL PLAN OF THE STAGE AND MAIN FLOOR
CONJECTURAL PLAN OF THE GALLERY
The Auditorium

A detailed description of the theatre which accompanied the opening night review in The Delaware Gazette provides most of the information available about the physical appearance of the Opera House. Some of this information is confirmed by a study of the interior photographs (Figure 2). Figures 3 and 4 are conjectural plans of the main floor and gallery to further illustrate the material.

The main entrance to the house was on Sandusky Street (stage left foreground in Figure 1). On both sides of the entrance were large gas lamps. Inside was the main hall, to the left of which was the ticket office. The Gazette article states that four wide stairways led to the folding doors which opened into the auditorium. Figure 2 indicates the doors were at the south end of the auditorium. Actually there were two winding stairways fitted with landings. A single stairway led from the upper hall to the gallery section.

Seats in the auditorium were divided principally into three sections. The "parquet" was located directly in front of the stage and in the center of the house. It was constructed on "a gentle inclined plane," sloping down to

32Ibid., March 30, 1882.
33Dorothy B. Bauder, personal interview.
34Charles E. Radcliffe, personal interview.
the orchestra circle and was surrounded by a rail three feet high (indicated in Figure 2). The parquet was fitted with 156 "Andrews' patent folding opera chairs, richly upholstered with cardinal plush." Each chair had a hat rack and foot rest.

At the rear of and on either side of the parquet was the "dress circle." This section appears to be slightly raked. It contained 388 patent chairs which had "red leather backs and black walnut bottoms."

Just above the dress circle was the "gallery," supported by "gilded iron columns." This section was apparently greatly raked and contained 506 chairs each of which had "perforated wood backs and bottoms." The aisles in this and the other sections were covered with carpeting. (See Figure 2.)

In addition to the parquet, dress circle, and gallery, patrons could obtain seats in one of the four boxes, two on each side of the stage, as shown in Figure 2.

The boxes were decorated in "palatial style" by Halm, Bellows, and Company, Columbus, Ohio. Across the top of each box extended a lambrequin (valance) from which hung "Turk satin" curtains "trimmed with heavy silk bullion fringe and tassels." Behind these and hanging to the floor of the box inside were curtains of the same satin material. Finally behind these were a pair of silk curtains "looped back...with highly finished gilt chatlaines." Inside the
box were "large gilt hooks" to pull back the curtains.

**The Ceiling and Dome**

The ceiling of the auditorium was "one grand profusion" of art. At the four corners of the house were "bust pictures" of Longfellow, Byron, Dante, and Mozart. Each of the gentlemen was painted in colors true-to-life and surrounded by wreaths of flowers.

A balustrade surrounded the base of the ceiling dome. Higher up and in the background, blue sky was represented; in the foreground were clouds. Upon these clouds the figures of Comedy, Tragedy, Music, and Literature ("with attending Cherubs") were painted.

The main chandelier hung from a center piece below the dome. It contained "hundreds of cut glass pendants" and was lighted by seventy-two gas burners.

**The Stage**

At the top of the boxes and forty feet above the stage floor was the top of the proscenium arch, in the center of which the face of Shakespeare was painted, as shown in Figure 2. Along the "stationary" proscenium were borders of various colors tied off with golden cords to represent "tapestry and drooping curtains."

The stage was thirty-two feet wide and thirty feet deep. It contained two single and two double traps. In 1892
the stage was refloored. It may have been at that time that all but one of the traps (downstage center and approximately six feet by thirty inches) was eliminated.

The stage was furnished with two drop curtains which slid up and down on wire ropes. An architectural scene was painted on one of the curtains; the other represented "a view of the city of Bagdad, with the palace of the Khedive of Egypt in the foreground."

**Backstage Areas**

Off-stage, stage right, stood the prompter's and stage manager's desks, just in front of the first wing. Also in the stage right area were the gas keys, which regulated the gas supply to the jets; the "electrical apparatus," which lighted the jets; and several "speaking tubes," connected to various parts of the house and stage areas.

Doors were located both stage right and stage left which led to the dressing rooms, trap room, orchestra pit, and auditorium. From stage left there was access to the property room.

Above the stage was the fly gallery, which was reached by a flight of stairs. "From here the curtains, scenes, borders, border lights, stage chandeliers, etc., are

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35 *The Delaware Gazette*, August 26, 1892.

36 Homer D. Blanchard, personal interview.
worked by means of hundreds of ropes." The curtain gallery was above this and even higher (sixty feet above the stage floor) was the rigging loft.

Below the stage was the trap room, which contained pulleys, windlasses, and ropes. Off this room were five dressing rooms. And to the left of the trap room was the green room.

Equipment

Many scenery pieces were available for use in productions, each containing between eight and twenty-one components. They were used with "numerous wings" and "appropriate borders." A partial list of the scenes included:

1. Three arch fancy interior
2. Center door fancy interior
3. Two door fancy interior
4. Center door plain interior
5. Two door plain interior
6. Kitchen
7. Palace
8. Prison
9. Street house exterior
10. Cottage exterior
11. Ancient street
12. Garden scene set with magnificent balustrade, statuary, marble steps, and flower vases
13. Wood scene
14. Landscape
15. Mountain scene
16. Cut woods
17. Ocean scene

In addition, the theatre had the following set pieces in stock:

1. One rustic bridge, forty-two feet long, ten feet high, consisting of eight pieces.
2. Two old-fashioned picket fences, twenty-five feet long
3. Four rustic banks
4. Four flower vases, four feet high
5. Two life-size statues representing goddesses
6. Two fancy boats with appliances for propelling them across the stage
7. One graveyard scene, containing monuments and tombstones
8. Two stone walls, twenty-five feet long
9. One large corner brick house
10. One balcony scene
11. Two rustic cottages, large and small
12. Three rows rough waters, twenty-five feet long
13. Two stumps
14. Two pieces of ground row
15. One large bay window
16. Two sets of screens
17. Two witness boxes
18. One judge's stand
19. One jury box
20. Two garden balustrades
21. One large set tree
22. One fancy parlor mantel
23. One kitchen mantel
24. One garden wall with old-fashioned carriage doors
25. Six pieces of tall rocks
26. One rocky bridge, twenty feet long
27. One large waterfall
28. One cave
29. One hollow tree
30. Two pairs of fancy pedestals

**Lighting**

There were reportedly 310 gas jets in the theatre. Several lamps can be seen in the auditorium in Figure 2. On the stage there were "four rows of border lights for use in tableaux and transformation scenes."

Ten years after the theatre was opened the City Council voted to install electric incandescent lights throughout the building and to put electric arc lights in the lower and upper halls and in the Opera House dome.\(^37\)

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\(^37\)The Delaware Gazette, March 15, 1892.
The Theatre Management

The management of the Opera House was under the supervision of the Delaware City Council. Initially the theatre was staffed by two amusement managers, a stage carpenter, technical assistants, and ushers. The number of ushers may have varied according to the type of performance held, but in 1890 the "permanent staff" consisted of four ushers and one programmer downstairs and five ushers and one programmer in the gallery. In 1883 special policemen were added to the staff to keep order during the entertainments.

Financial Operations

At the time of the Opera House opening the City Council had set a fee of $50 to book the hall. This was soon changed, however, when the following rent schedule was adopted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theatrical troupe--one night</th>
<th>$40</th>
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<tr>
<td>two nights</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>three nights</td>
<td>100</td>
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38 Ibid., March 30, 1882.
39 Ibid., November 19, 1890.
40 Ibid., November 22, 1883.
41 Ibid., March 27, 1882.
42 Ibid., August 17, 1882.
Lectures--night. .............................................. $25
day. ......................................................... 20

Concerts--night. .............................................. 30
day. ......................................................... 15

College and church activities--night. ......................... 25
day. ......................................................... 20

Three years later another rent schedule was approved.43

Foreign shows--one night. .................................... $35
two nights. .................................................. 60
three nights. ............................................... 90

Foreign concerts--night. ..................................... 25
day. ......................................................... 20

Foreign lectures--night. ..................................... 25
day. ......................................................... 20

College entertainments. ...................................... 15

Political meetings. ......................................... 15

Home entertainments (admission free or ten cents) .......... 10

From 1883-1889 City Council received yearly rental incomes ranging from $1400 in 1883 to $2243 in 1889.44

43Ibid., February 17, 1885.

44Ibid., March 29, 1890.
CHAPTER 111

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CITY OPERA HOUSE:
1882-1899

From the time of its opening until the end of the nineteenth century, the Delaware City Opera House served as a center of many different kinds of activities. Its official "theatre season" extended from September until May; few activities were held during the summer months.

The activities which took place at the theatre can be divided for convenience into five categories: plays; variety entertainments; lectures and reading programs; concerts; and meetings, assemblies, and contests. To establish the number of performances in each of these categories, the following statistics are submitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1885-89</th>
<th>1890-94</th>
<th>1895-99</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plays</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety entertainments</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures, reading programs</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerts</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings, assemblies, contests</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures, converted to percentages, show the relative frequency of the various categories.
From a study of these figures it is apparent that plays held the boards more often than any other category of activity throughout these years. The number produced grew from 116 in the 1885-89 period to 147 between 1890-94; this number fell to 115 in the last period of the century. Compared to the total number of activities, however, plays grew percentage-wise from 29% to 39% to 53% in the periods mentioned.

The number of variety entertainments presented decreased somewhat through the years; but the proportion of variety entertainments produced increased slightly during the period from 1895 to 1899.

The number of lectures and reading programs; meetings, assemblies, and contests; and concerts decreased drastically during the century. There was a decrease percentage-wise in all three categories as well.

A major factor which explains the general decrease in activities during these years at the theatre was the building of Gray Chapel in 1893\(^45\) on the Ohio Wesleyan campus. Until its construction the university had presented

\(^{45}\)Hubbart, p. 98.
and sponsored many lectures, reading programs, concerts, and meetings. These kinds of activities were presented at Gray Chapel after its construction; the Opera House thus lost many bookings.

Although the appendixes list all of the theatre's activities from 1882 to 1899, the rest of this chapter will attempt to summarize those activities and their production.

**Plays**

The plays presented at the Opera House were produced primarily by traveling companies. One-night stands were most frequently produced, but through the years there were more and more companies which offered a weekly repertory of shows (Monday through Saturday plus matinees on Wednesday and Saturday). There were none of these repertory companies during the 1882-84 period; eight during 1885-89; twelve during 1890-94; and ten during 1895-99. Some of these companies were the Melville Sisters, the Baldwin Comedy Company, and John Himmelein’s Ideals Company.

The number of home talent play productions increased from five in the 1890-94 period to thirteen in the 1895-99 period. Productions included *State's Evidence; The Queen's Lace Handkerchief; Susie Cobb; Caprice; The Old Homestead; Shaun Aroon; and Bessie Barlow, or What We Did*
to Papa. Both these home talent productions and traveling shows were often billed as benefits for local groups.

There were many types of drama classified in the nineteenth century; representatives of these types which played the Opera House are listed here.

Among the melodramas presented were *Lights of London*; *The Sea of Ice; East Lynne*, with Ada Gray; and *Niagra, the Adventuress*, with Rose Eytinge.

Comedies included *Two Johns*, *A Bunch of Keys*, *Charley’s Aunt*, and *Skipped by the Light of the Moon*. So-called “type-character” comedies included *One of the Finest*, with Gus Williams; *Alvin Joslin*, with Charles Davis; and *Karl*, with Charles Gardner. Comedy-dramas included *Our Summer Boarders*, *The Emigrants*, and *The Limited Mail*.

Some of the comic operas produced were *Olivette*, *Patience*, *La Mascotte*, and *The Magic Slipper*. Plays classed as musical comedies included *Fun in a Boarding School; Wild Oats; A Social Session*; and *Oh, What a Night*.

Representative titles of frontier dramas produced were *A Square Man*, *The Danites*, *Across the Continent*, and *The Flower of the Forest*.

Military plays included *The Captain’s Victory*, *A Fair Rebel*, *Gettysburg*, and *True to the Heart*.

There were only five Shakespearean productions given at the Opera House during the nineteenth century.
They were *Macbeth* and *Othello*, both starring Thomas Keene; *Richard III*, with Frederick Warde; *Hamlet*, with James Owen O’Connor; and *The Merchant of Venice*, with Elihu Spencer.

Finally it should be noted that there were eleven productions of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* during the entire period. The number decreased from two productions during the 1882-84 period to one during 1885-89 but increased to three during 1890-94 and five during 1895-99. Some of the Tom companies were C.H. Smith’s Double *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* Company (two Topsys and two Markses), Stetson’s Big Original *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* Company, and Davis and Busby’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* Company.

From an examination of the complete list of plays presented at the Opera House, the most frequently produced types of dramas were melodramas, comedies, and comic operas. These types held the lead from the opening of the theatre until the end of the century. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was the one play produced most often (eleven times); other popular plays were *Alvin Joslin* (five performances); *Oh, What a Night* (five); *A Midnight Call* (five); *Two Johns* (five); *Faust* (four); and *The Two Orphans* (four).

Some of the better-known actors who appeared at the theatre and who have not been mentioned previously included Kate Claxton, J.K. Emmett, Robert Downing, Janauschek, Minnie Maddern, Hortense Rhea, and Pat Rooney.

Some of the most thrilling scenes produced on the
Opera House stage during these years (primarily in melodramas, war dramas, frontier dramas, and equestrian dramas) included The Horse Race, the Great Fire Scene, The Aurora Borealis, The Terrible Snow Storm, Wreck of the Saratoga, London at Sunrise, The Burning Train, and Mammoth Cave. Special scenic "wonders" seen at the theatre were an iron mill, a threshing machine, a steamboat, a snow plow, and a revolving lighthouse.

Variety Entertainments

Among the many kinds of variety entertainments which were held at the Opera House, the most popular productions of road companies were minstrels. There were nine minstrel performances during the 1885-89 period; there were seven in the period between 1890 and 1894; and there were twelve performances in the last period. Of these three were home talent minstrel productions. Duprez and Benedict's Gigantic Minstrels offered end men, banjoists, clog dancers, vocalists, comedians, and plantation shouters. Other road companies that came to Delaware were Al G. Field's Minstrels, Hi Henry's Minstrels, Callender's Colored Minstrels, J.H. Haverly's Minstrels, Rice and Hooley's Minstrels, and Duncan Clark's Lady Minstrels.

Variety shows increased during the theatre's operation from two during 1885-89 to six during 1890-94 to
eleven during 1895-99. Some of the specialty performers who often appeared in these shows were comedians, travesty artists, singers, dancers, mimics, and high wire artists. Some of the companies which brought variety shows to the Opera House included the Rentz Santley Novelty Company, the Dublin Dan Novelty and Specialty Company, and the Hopkins Trans-Oceanic Star Specialty Company.

Pantomime companies presented entertainments only in the first few years of the theatre’s operation. They were Tony Denier’s Tri-Mammoth Pantomime Company, George H. Adams’ Humpty Dumpty Pantomime Company, and Billy Burke’s Humpty Dumpty Company.

Only three road shows advertised they were true burlesque companies. They were The London Gaiety Girls’ Burlesque Company, Semon’s Colossal Extravaganza Company, and May Davenport’s Folly Burlesque and Gaiety Company.

In addition to these entertainments traveling troupes presented magic and mesmerism shows; trained animal shows (dogs, horses, goats); and athletic exhibitions (boxing and wrestling, weightlifting and statuerposing).

Home talent productions of variety entertainments included not only minstrels and variety shows but also Ohio Wesleyan literary society entertainments and Delaware public school entertainments. Local groups also presented a Dairy Maid’s Festival (fancy drills and specialties), a Merchant’s Carnival (drills, music, specialties, and
tableaux), a burlesque entitled "Beneficent Order of Zealous Yahoos," and musical-variety shows entitled "Down by the Sea" and "Our Boarding House." Four unique productions (Hiawatha, Ben Hur, "The Story of the Reformation," and "The Life and Times of John Wesley") were composed of a lecture, music, and tableaux.

**Lectures and Reading Programs**

Lectures given at the Opera House were on such diverse subjects as politics, religion, temperance, travel, literature, war, science, and history. Most of the illustrated lectures were on the subject of travel. Many of the lectures were presented by Presidents Payne and Bashford of Ohio Wesleyan in their University lectures.

Some of the better known individuals who lectured in the theatre were Russell Conwell (in his "Acres of Diamonds"), Bill Nye, Eli Perkins, William McKinley, and Belle Boyd (the "Rebel Spy").

Among the several people who gave reading programs were Mark Twain, James Whitcomb Riley, and James E. Murdoch.

**Concerts**

Concerts included vocal and instrumental groups, glee clubs, bands, and bell ringers. Probably the most notable musician who appeared at the theatre was Victor Herbert,
who conducted Gilmore's Famous Band in 1896.

Town and university musical groups presented many of the concerts, including several Mother Goose concerts (children's entertainments) during the first few years the Opera House was in operation.

**Meetings, Assemblies, and Contests**

Activities in this final category included town meetings, political meetings and rallies, conventions, religious services, temperance meetings, memorial services, reunions and anniversary celebrations, commencements, Decoration Day services, and oratorical contests. Of these the most frequently held were political meetings, commencements, and oratorical contests. The only temperance meetings were held between 1885 and 1889; during that period there were nineteen of these meetings held.
CONCLUSIONS

A number of conclusions may be drawn by comparing the physical structure, operation, and activities of the Delaware, Ohio, City Opera House with the structure, operation, and activities of theatres throughout America in the latter nineteenth century.

1. In terms of the physical appearance of American theatres in this period, the most common design of the auditorium was horseshoe-shaped. Houses were elaborately decorated and contained a parquet section, a circular arrangement of seats at the rear and sides of the parquet, a balcony or balconies, and several private boxes. The City Opera House exhibited these characteristics. It was horseshoe-shaped; elaborately frescoed; and had a parquet, a dress circle, a gallery, and four boxes.

2. The American theatres during the late nineteenth century were equipped with stock scenery, which included components for the typical method of staging scenes: the wing-border-backdrop sets. Wings were commonly held in place by grooves or other methods of rigging. In this period, many theatres also had facilities for flying scenery. The City Opera House had a large supply of stock scenery which included backdrops, wings, borders, and set pieces.
Although there is no indication whether or not the stage was equipped with grooves, there were facilities for the flying of scenery. Thus the staging methods of this theatre can be considered typical.

3. Methods of lighting in American theatres varied in this period, but the most popular were gas lamps and electrical incandescent lights. The City Opera House made use of gas lamps until 1892 when the house was converted to electricity.

4. Entertainment in American theatres were provided primarily by traveling combination companies. There were a handful of local stock companies in this period that made use of the services of visiting stars. The "new" stock companies employed a resident company who performed a play a week and stayed in a particular location for some period of time, ranging from a month to an entire season. Entertainment at the Opera House was provided by traveling road companies and infrequently by home talent groups.

5. Dramas produced in American theatres in this period were of various kinds. They included melodramas, farce comedies, comic operas, frontier dramas, war dramas, equestrian dramas, type-character plays, imported English and Continental plays, and Shakespearean revivals. All of these kinds of plays were presented at the City Opera House; melodramas, comedies, and comic operas were the most frequently produced. Plays were not booked with balance in
mind; this practice continued throughout the century. Thus, if a citizen in Delaware wanted to see a play, he was forced to settle for whatever was available.

6. Various kinds of theatres existed in these years according to their activities and included legitimate playhouses, minstrel theatres, variety theatres, burlesque theatres, theatres specializing in melodrama, and town hall theatres. The Delaware theatre can be considered one of the latter.

From these conclusions it is evident that in terms of appearance, staging practices, and plays produced, the Opera House was typical of most all American theatres from 1880-1900. In terms of its activities and operation, it was typical of the hundreds of town hall theatres of the period across the country. It attracted few stars and few of the best-known companies; but it served as the center of the Delaware community, and it served this purpose well.
APPENDIXES
APPENDIX 1

OPERA HOUSE ACTIVITIES: MARCH
1882-DECEMBER 1884

Information about the activities held at the Opera House which are listed in this and the other appendixes was found in issues of The Delaware Gazette. This newspaper published weekly editions from its founding until December 1883 and daily editions beginning January 1884.

Plays


3. April 7: McKee Rankin as Alexander McGee and Kitty Blanchard as Billy Piper in The Danites.


5. April 20: C.H. Smith’s Double Uncle Tom’s Cabin Company, starring Sam Lucas. Included in the cast were two Topsys and two Markses, two trick donkeys and eight Siberian blood hounds.

6. April 26: Two Orphans.
7. April 29: Charles Davis in *Alvin Joslin*. This play was billed as "the only true representative of the New England Farmer." 180 laughs were guaranteed in 180 minutes.


10. June 5: The Corinne Comic Opera Company in *The Magic Slipper*. An advertisement for the show urged the citizens to come watch Corinne out "riding in her golden chariot drawn by a pair of...Shetland ponies."

11. September 25: John Thompson, comedian, in *Around the World*.

12. October 16: A play presented by the "Child of the State" combination.


17. November 31: Louis and Alice Harrison in *Viva; or a Sister's Sacrifice*, a romantic drama.


21. December 23: The Herman-Draper Dramatic Company in *One Hundred Wives*.

22. December 28: Ben Maginley in *A Square Man*, a drama of Western life.

23. February 16, 1883: *Hazel Kirke*.


25. February 26: Helen Blythe in *Only a Farmer's Daughter*.


27. March 15: *Fogg's Ferry*.


29. March 29: Kate Claxton in *Two Orphans*.

30. April 16: Charles Davis in *Alvin Joslin*.

31. May 10: Frederick Warde in *Damon and Pythias*.

32. May 11: The Madison Square Theatre Company in *The Professor*.

33. September 27: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

34. October 3: Ada Gray in *East Lynne*.
35. October 9: Gus Williams in *One of the Finest.*
36. October 17: Janauschek in *Zilah, or the Hebrew Mother.*
37. October 19: Carrie Swain, comedienne, in *Cad, the Tom Boy.*
38. October 25: Minnie Maddern in *The Puritan Maid.*
39. November 17: Louis Harrison and John Gourlay, comedians, in *Skipped by the Light of the Moon.*
40. November 26: Rentfrow's Jolly Pathfinders in *Six--Peas in a Pod--Six.*
41. November 29: Jennie Calef in *Little Muffets.*
42. December 4: *Our Summer Boarders,* comedy-drama by Elliot Barnes.
44. January 26: M.B. Curtis, comedian, in *Sam'l of Posen.*
45. February 7: Charles Gardner in *Karl.*
46. February 16: Frederick Warde in *Virginius.*
47. March 1: Mr. and Mrs. George Knight in Bronson Howard's comedy, *Baron Rudolph.*
48. March 6: Ellani Comedy Company in *Fun in a Boarding School,* musical comedy.
49. April 2 and 3: Shook and Collier's production of *Lights of London!*, melodrama.
50. April 17: Charles Davis in *Alvin Joslin.*
51. May 2: Baker and Farron, German comedians, in Chris and Lena.

52. September 22: Lizzie Evans in Dew Drop, an Idyl of the Coast of Wales.


54. October 11: Smith, Waldron, Cronin, and Martin's Grotesque Comedy Company in Early in the Morning.


56. November 18: The Rentfrow Jolly Pathfinders in Scraps. This production used a steamboat.


59. December 20: Thomas Keene in Macbeth.

60. December 29: Evans and Hoey's "Meteors" in A Parlor Match, by Charles Hoyt.

Variety Entertainments


4. December 9: The William Harris Great Triple Sensation (a variety show; a border drama entitled *Nick of the Woods*; and a street parade).


15. February 14: Chrestomathean literary society entertainment (oration, valedictory, debate, and orations).

16. February 18: Henrietta Davis, tragedienne,
supported by Crawford’s Band and Mendelssohn Vocal Club.


18. February 29: Zetagathean society entertainment.

19. March 15: Duprez and Benedict’s Gigantic Minstrels. Performers included end men, banjoists, cloggists, comic and sentimental vocalists, comedians, song and dance men, and plantation shouters.


22. December 4: James H. Wallick’s equestrian entertainment, "The Bandit King," with the horses, Bay Raider and Roan Charger.

Lectures and Reading Programs

1. April 23, 1882: The Reverand A.A. Wright on "The Old Bible or the New Bible: Which?"

2. October 23: Benjamin Taylor on "What Made Him Do It?"

3. October 27: John Gough on "Temperance."

4. February 18, 1883: Ohio Wesleyan University lecture by President Payne.

5. April 21: University lecture by President Payne.

6. May 27: President Payne on "Temperance."

7. June 7: Joseph Cook on "Ultimate America."


10. December 7: Joseph Cook on "Seven Modern Wonders of the World."

11. December 18: James Whitcomb Riley in readings from his work.


14. February 10: President Payne on "The Supernatural Among Men."


**Concerts**

1. April 21, 1882: The Vokes family, singers.


5. September 5: Donavin's Famous and Original Tennesseans, vocalists.
6. October 17: Grand Concert Company of the College of Music of Cincinnati.

7. November 9: Mother Goose concert.

8. February 17, 1883: The Royal Hand Bell Ringers.

9. April 26: Emma Lathrop, vocalist, and company.

10. June 26: Concert by the Ohio Wesleyan Music Department.


15. April 15: Delaware Choral Society concert.

16. May 22: Concert by the Orpheus Club of Columbus.


Meetings, Assemblies, and Contests


2. June 8: Delaware High School commencement.


5. September 23: Commencement of Professor Michael’s Pen Art Hall.

8. June 2: Republican meeting.
14. April 4: Program in honor of the return of Company K.
15. May 30: Decoration Day services.
18. October 4: Prohibition meeting.
19. October 9: Republican meeting.
22. December 17: Athenaeum Society anniversary.
23. December 18: Oratorical contest.
APPENDIX 11

OPERA HOUSE ACTIVITIES: JANUARY
1885-DECEMBER 1889

Plays

1. January 9, 1885: Flora Moore, comedienne, in *A Bunch of Keys*.
2. January 15: Charles Gardner in *Karl, the Peddler*.
4. January 29: Dominick Murray in *Soaped from Sing Sing*, melodrama.
5. February 6: Kate Claxton in *The Sea of Ice*, melodrama.
7. February 26: Jennie Calef in *Fanchon*.
8. February 27: Bartley Campbell’s *The Galley Slave*, a love romance.
10. April 9: Crossen’s Company in *The Banker’s Daughter*.

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11. April 13 and 14: Constance Stanley in *Ingomar* and *Colonel's Daughter*.

12. April 24: Oliver and Kate Byron in *Across the Continent*. Scenes included The Terrible Snow Storm, The Great Fire Scene, and The Picturesque Railroad Station.


14. October 16: Rose Eytinge in *Niagra, the Adven-turess*, romantic melodrama.

15. October 29: Frederick Warde in *Richard III*.


19. March 1: Snook and Collier’s Union Square Theatre Company in *Storm Beaten*. Calcium light effects used represented the Aurora Borealis.


22. April 9: Horace Vinton in *Silver King*. A double stage and revolving scenery were used.

24. September 15 and 16: Le Clair (female impersonator) and Russel in *A Practical Joke*.

25. September 29: Daniel Sully in *Daddy Nolan*.


27. October 23: Charles Davis in *Alvin Joslin*.


29. November 20: James Owen O'Connor in *Hamlet*.


31. December 25: Marion Abbott in *Only a Farmer's Daughter*.

32. January 31, 1887: Frank Daniels in *A Rag Baby*.

33. February 15: Arthur Rehan's Company in *Nancy and Company*.

34. February 26: Frank Jones in *Si Perkins*, melodrama. Stage equipment included a working threshing machine.


36. March 8 and 9: Charles Thornton in *Tried for Treason*.

37. April 15: Bella Moore in *A Mountain Pink*.


39. Bennett English Opera Company in *Bohemian Girl*. 
40. August 31: Sisson and Cawthorn's Comedy Company in Little Nugget.

41. September 15-17: Hardy and Young Comedy Company in The Bad Boy and Van, the Virginian.

42. October 3-8: Rinehart Opera Comedy Company in Red Riding Hood, The Waif's Luck, The Spring Chicken, and other plays.

43. October 21: Stetson's Big Original Uncle Tom's Cabin Company.

44. December 1: Charles Hoyt's A Tin Soldier.

45. December 30: Mlle Rhea in Camille.

46. February 16, 1888: Aiden Benedict in Monte Cristo.

47. March 20-24: Home talent production of True to the Heart, war drama.


49. September 21: Murray and Murphy, comedians, in Our Irish Visitors.


51. October 15: Across the Continent.


53. November 15: Pat Rooney in Pat's New Wardrobe.


55. November 29: Charles Davis in One of the Old Stock.
56. December 6: Kate Castleton in *A Paper Doll*.
58. December 29: Billy Barry and Hugh Fay, comedians, in McKenna's *Plirtation*.
59. January 17, 1889: George Ober in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.
60. February 19-23: Baldwin Comedy Company in *The Danites*; Kathleen Mavoureen; Fanchon, the Cricket; Killarney; and *A Double Marriage*.
61. March 1: Aiden Benedict in *Monte Cristo*.
62. August 26-31: Melville Sisters in *Queen's Evidence, Romany Rye, Black Diamonds, Bessie's Burglar, His Sweet-Heart*, and *My Geraldine*.
64. September 13: Aiden Benedict in *Fabio Romani*. One scene showed the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.
65. September 26: J.W. Morrissey English Grand Opera Company in *Faust*.
66. October 2: Charles Davis in *One of the Old Stock*.
67. October 9: J.B. Polk, comedian, in *The Silent Partner*.
68. November 18-23: David Ramage's Standard Theatre Company in *A Celebrated Case, The Octoroon, Michael*
Strogoff, Ten Nights in a Bar Room, Bessie's Burglar, and Only an Actress.

**Variety Entertainments**

1. February 7, 1885: Chrestomathean Society entertainment.
2. February 24: "Camp Fire" exercises by the Grand Army of the Republic (songs, recitations, and tableaux).
6. April 4: Delaware Educational Bureau entertainment.
8. December 9: Pat Rooney and his New York Star Combination, Brass Band, and Orchestra.
9. December 14: Billy Burke's Humpty Dumpty and All-Feature Company.
10. January 5, 1886: James Wallick's equestrian show, "The Bandit King."
32. April 9: Home talent pageant entitled "The Crowning of the Queen of Fame."
34. December 14: Billy Rice and Burt Shepard's
Minstrels.


36. March 8: Zetagathean Society entertainment.
37. March 14: Public school entertainment.
38. March 18-20: Professor D.M. Bristol's trained horses.
39. April 3: Professor Gentry's trained dogs.
40. April 11-12: Home talent burlesque entitled "Beneficient Order of Zealous Yahoos."
42. April 27: Y.M.C.A. entertainment.
45. October 17-18: Merchant's Carnival (music, fancy drill, specialties, tableaux).
46. November 11: May Davenport's Folly Burlesque and Gaiety Company (living statuary, specialties, burlesque sketches).
47. November 28-29: Home talent Thanksgiving entertainment.
48. December 9-10: Professor D.P. Hurlburt's trained horses and dogs.
49. December 14: Duncan Clark's Lady Minstrels.
Lectures and Reading Programs


2. January 31: George Townsend on "Thomas, the Doubter."

3. February 10: Mark Twain and George Cable in a program of readings.


5. February 28: Will Cumback on "The Invisible Some People."

6. March 1: Will Cumbadk on "Self Sacrifice."

7. March 21: Wallace Bruce on "Native Mettle."


9. April 19: University lecture by President Payne.

10. May 5: Thomas Trueblood in a recital of portions of Hamlet.

11. May 21: Joseph Cook on "England and America as Allies and Competitors."

12. June 14: Missionary address.


14. September 22-23: Illustrated lecture by Philip
Phillips.

15. October 18: Sermon by the Reverend J.F. Fahs.
16. October 20: Bob Burdette on "Pilgrimage of the Funny Man."
17. October 25: University lecture.
18. November 15: Sermon by Dr. Orth.
20. December 20: President Payne on "The Incarnation, the Central Fact of History."
23. February 4: Lecture by Mary Livermore.
24. February 18: Dr. James Hedley on "The Sunny Side of Life."
25. March 2: Major H.C. Dane on "Naval Battles of the Rebellion."
26. March 18: George Wendling on "Saul of Tarsus."
27. April 8: Professor W.C. Richard on "Oxygen."
28. April 10: Dr. Ort on "The Hero of the Sixteenth Century."
29. May 4: The Reverend P.C. Henson on "Gunnery."
30. May 9: George Wendling on "The Immortality of the Soul."
33. June 20: Lecture by the Right Reverend Bishop
Watterson.

34. August 29: Lecture by the Reverend Mr. Vogt on temperance.

35. October 24: President Payne on "What Should Be Done with the Saloons?"


37. December 4: Major H.C. Dane on "Up the Rhine and Across the Alps with a Knapsack."

38. December 5: University lecture.

39. December 17: Illustrated lecture by Captain J.T. Long on "Gettysburg."

40. December 20: Colonel I.P. Sanford on "Old Things and New."

41. January 18, 1887: Lecture by Colonel L.F. Copeland.

42. January 19: Justin McCarty on "The Cause of Ireland."


44. February 6: University lecture.

45. February 14: Dr. A.B. Leonard on political prohibition.

46. February 21: John Miller on "Love, Courtship, and Marriage."

47. March 13: Lecture by Dr. Pratt on the Sandwich
Islands.

48. April 17: University lecture by Bishop W.F. Mallalieu.

49. April 20: General Lew Wallace on "Turkey and the Turks."

50. June 12: Address by Dr. McCabe.

51. June 20: Bishop J.F. Hurst on "The Revenge of History."

52. September 30: H. Coulter Brinker, elocutionist.

53. October 2: Lecture by Mrs. Trego on temperance.

54. October 24: Mary Livermore on "Superfluous Women."

55. November 3: The Reverend Joseph Parker on "Clocks and Watches."

56. November 10: Frank Smith on "In and Out of Andersonville."


58. November 15: Professor R.L. Cumnock, elocutionist.


60. December 10: W.H.S. Aubrey on "The Personality of Gladstone."


63. March 5: Lecture by the Reverend Sam Jones.
64. October 5: Lecture by Thomas Mc Dougal.
65. October 9: S.K. Donavin on "John Brown."
66. October 18: W.J. Knight on "The Andrew Raiders."
67. October 22: Sam Small, evangelist, on "From the Bar Room to the Pulpit."
69. November 12: Dr. A.A. Willits on "Sunshine, or a Happy Life."
70. December 4: The Reverend Joseph Cook on "Does Death End All?"
71. January 5, 1889: George Wendling on "Popular Delusions."
72. January 7: Lecture by B.K. Bruce.
73. February 5: Russell Conwell on "Acres of Diamonds."
74. February 9: Illustrated lecture by H.H. Ragen.
75. February 18: Colonel J.P. Sanford on "Walks in Rome."
76. February 25: Briscoe's illustrated lecture on "Battle of Gettysburg."
77. March 5: C.F. Underhill, elocutionist, with "An Evening with David Copperfield."
78. April 9: George Kennan on "An East Siberian
Convict Mine."

79. April 19: Bishop Vincent on "That Boy's Sister."

80. April 30: General J.S. Jones on "The Power and Value of Opinion in Government."


82. May 14: Bishop Newman on "A Thousand Miles on Horseback."

83. May 27: Illustrated lecture by Jenness Miller on "Correct and Artistic Dress."

84. November 7: The Reverend Joseph Cook on "Free Church; Free School; and a Free State."

85. November 10: University lecture by President Bashford.

86: November 12: President Bashford on "Our Neighbors on the Other Side of the Sea."

87. November 24: University lecture.

88. December 17: The Reverend F.W. Gunsaulus on "Savonarola."

**Concerts**


2. January 14: Concert under the direction of Rienzi Thomas.

5. April 17: Delaware Educational Bureau concert.
8. November 17: Concert by Medora Emerson.
15. March 16: Ellis Family, bell ringers.
18. April 29: Grand War Concert.
20. June 3: Musicale by Miss Larimore and pupils.
22. September 27: Musical entertainment by "Baby Bell."
27. April 5: Bernhardt-Listemann Concert Company.
29. May 19: Crawford Band concert.
32. November 26: Mendelssohn Quartette Company.
34. December 19: The Noss Family, musicians.
38. May 10: Musicale by Miss Larimore's pupils.
40. September 27: Home talent concert.
42. December 11: Caradog’s Rhodda Glee Club.
45. March 6: Mrs. Alice Shaw, whistling prima donna, and company.
47. May 4: Jules Levy, cornetist, and company.
49. July 2: Musicale by Miss Larimore's pupils.

Meetings, Assemblies, and Contests

1. May 24, 1885: Worship service.
5. June 18: Ohio Wesleyan commencement.
6. August 1: Democratic County Convention.
7. August 8: Memorial services for General Grant.
8. September 16: Republican meeting.
10. October 9: Republican meeting.
11. November 5: A "pronouncing bee" (contestants would attempt to pronounce words spelled for them by a chairman).
13. February 9, 1886: Town meeting.
15. March 10: Republican meeting.
16. March 12: Knights of Labor meeting
17. April 1: Young Men's Republican Club meeting.
18. April 15-20: Temperance meetings.
19. April 22-23: Temperance meetings.
20. April 25: Delaware Temperance Union meeting.
22. May 2: Delaware Temperance Union meeting.
24. May 31: Memorial Day services.
27. June 27: Temperance Union meeting.
28. June 29: Temperance Union meeting.
30. August 16: Republican County Convention.
31. September 4-5: Temperance Union meeting.
32. September 19: Temperance Union meeting.
33. October 1: Republican rally.
34. October 7: Republican rally.
35. October 10: Temperance Union meeting.
36. October 28: Republican meeting.
37. November 11-12: District Temperance Congress.
38. December 16: Ohio Wesleyan Oratorical Contest.
39. February 17, 1887: The State Oratorical Contest.
40. March 28: Democratic County Convention.
41. March 31: Citizens’ meeting on the closing of the saloons.
42. April 11: Temperance meeting.
43. May 30: Memorial Day services.
44. June 18: Ohio Wesleyan Academic Department exercises.
47. June 29: National Inter-Collegiate Association Oratorical Contest.
50. August 27: Democratic County Convention.
51. October 13: Republican meeting.
52. October 16: Memorial services for Bishop Harris.
53. October 19: Republican meeting.
54. October 25: Republican meeting.
55. November 1: Republican meeting.
56. November 2: Democratic meeting.
57. November 6: Democratic meeting.
58. November 7: Republican rally.
59. May 18-21, 1888: Ohio State Medical Association Convention.
60. May 30: Memorial Day services.
62. June 22: St. Mary’s School commencement.
63. August 6: Republican County Convention

64. November 2: Republican meeting.

65. November 16: Republican meeting.


68. May 30: Memorial Day services.


70. June 27: Welcoming program for Ohio Wesleyan's President Bashford.

71. August 12: Republican County Convention.

72. August 19: Democratic County Convention.

73. August 22: Twentieth Regiment O.V.V.I. reunion.

74. October 14: Town meeting.

75. October 16: Democratic meeting.

76. October 21: Republican meeting.

77. December 16: Citizens' meeting.
APPENDIX III

OPERA HOUSE ACTIVITIES: JANUARY
1890-DECEMBER 1894

Plays


3. January 19-25: Lilah and Edwin Stuart's Theatre Company in An Unequal Match; Peg, the Little Witch; Slasher and Clasher; Camille; A Vagabond Heroine; and The Ironmaster.


5. February 17: Howell and Gebert's Company of Comedians in The Kindergarten.

6. February 20: Our German Ward.


11. March 24: Alfred Kelcy in *Casey's Troubles*.

12. April 8: Andrews' Opera Company in *Falka*.

13. April 9: Murray and Murphy in *Our Irish Visitors*.


22. December 2: W.K. Reed's Company in *She*.

23. December 29: Reeves' English Operatic Burlesque Company in *Faust*.


25. April 8: *The Two Johns*.

27. September 2: John Palmer in *Last Days of Pompeii*.

28. September 7-12: George Hayes and LeVelles Metropolitans in *Meg, the Outcast; Moonshiners of Georgia; Brother and Sister; Trial of Honor;* and *The Son of Monte Cristo*.

29. September 26: Vernona Jarbeau in *Starlight*.

30. October 15: F.G. Campbell's Company in *Gettysburg*.


32. October 29: *Hand of Fate*, melodrama. Stage equipment included a snow plow and a railroad engine.

33. November 4: Russell's Comedians in *The City Directory*.


37. January 18: Uncle Josh Comedy Company in *Joshua Spruceby*.


42. February 12: Delange-Rising Comedy Company in Tangled Up.


44. February 25: Pat Rooney in Lord Rooney.

45. March 8: E.B. Fitz in A Breezy Time.


47. September 5-10: Howard Wall's Company in Cub the Romp; Corporal Corinne; A Midnight Call; Chick; Dad's Girl; Our Angel; and Rags, the Wildcat.


50. January 24-25, 1893: Sam Young's Zeb.


52. February 8: Two Johns.

53. February 14: Ed Davis' Uncle Tom's Cabin Company.


56. March 9: John Griffith in Faust.

57. March 10: A Fair Rebel, military comedy-drama.

58. March 20-25: Curtiss Comedy Company in Jason

60. May 4: Home talent production of The Captain’s Victory, war drama.
61. May 15: The Captain’s Victory.
62. June 2: Garrick Club of Columbus in Young Mrs. Winthrop.
63. September 13: Barney Ferguson in McCarthy’s Mishaps.
64. September 16: Lottie Williams in Ole Olson.
65. September 25-30: Howard Wall’s Company in The Buckeye, Little Detective, A Midnight Call, At the State Capital, Little Wildcat, and All Fool’s Day.
66. October 7: Stair and Nicolais’ production of A Barrel of Money. One scene included an iron mill at work.
67. October 10: Lillian Kennedy in She Couldn’t Marry Three. Stage equipment included a lighthouse.
68. October 16: A Social Session, musical comedy.
70. November 4: Home talent production of The Captain’s Victory.
71. November 6-10: T.B. Alexander Company in The Son of Monte Cristo; Meg, the Outcast; True to the Last; and Damon and Pythias.

73. November 28: May Smith-Robbins in Little Trixie.

74. December 8: The County Fair. This show presented a horse race on the stage.

75. December 11-16: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wayne and company in Forgiven, La Belle Marie, Queena, The Lady of Lyons, and Rip Van Winkle.


77. January 22: Stetson’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin Company.

78. February 2: Francis Hodgson-Burnett’s Company in Little Lord Fauntleroy.

79. March 17: Robert Downing’s Tally Ho Company in Tally Ho.


81. September 12: Jule Walters in Side Tracked.


83. October 17: Donnelly and Firard, comedians, in The Rainmakers.
84. November 12: M.B. Leavitt’s *Spider and Fly*.
85. November 24: James Mackie in *The Side Show*.
86. December 12: Rosabel Morrison in *Faust*.

**Variety Entertainments**

1. February 1, 1890: Athenaeum Society entertainment.
2. February 21: Chrestomathean Society entertainment.
8. October 16: Barlow Brothers’ Modern Minstrels.
16. December 1: Haworth's "Big Show on a Trip to Ireland" and the Dublin Dan Novelty and Specialty Company.

17. December 5: Clionian Society entertainment.


23. March 10: Frank Howard (comedian, vocalist, dancer, specialist) and company.

24. March 17: Delaware High School mock commencement entertainment.

25. April 6-7: Snodgrass and Sherman's educated horses, goats, and dogs.


29. September 26: Nellie Brown, impersonator of characters in Jack, the Fisherman.


32. March 11: Joint literary society entertainment.


34. April 20: High school entertainment entitled "World's Fair."

35. April 26: Leland Powers, impersonator of characters in *The Rivals*.


37. June 17: Joint literary society entertainment.

38. December 22-23: Professor D.M. Bristol's trained horses.

39. February 17, 1894: Joint literary society entertainment.

40. March 16: Home talent minstrels.

41. March 30: Gorton's Famous New Orleans Minstrels.

42. April 12: Home talent entertainment.

43. May 18: Hi Henry's Famous Minstrels.

44. June 15: E.P. Elliott, impersonator.

45. June 16: Joint literary society entertainment.


48. September 10: Professor Stock and company in a program of "Magic and Music."
49. September 18: Grand Athletic Exhibition (wrestling and boxing).

50. October 29-30 and November 1: Home talent production of Ben Hur in tableaux and pantomime.

**Lectures and Reading Programs**

1. January 6, 1890: Professor John Demotte on "The Lighthouse, the Sentinel of the Sea."

2. January 10: Eli Perkins on "Why Do We Laugh?"


5. February 2: University lecture.

6. February 5: Daniel Dougherty on "Orators and Oratory."

7. February 15: Lecture by John Clarke.


10. April 6: University lecture.

11. April 10: The Reverend Howard Henderson on "The Swords of Grant and Lee."

12. June 2: General W.H. Gibson on "Along the Lines."

15. December 4: Major Henry Dane on "Life in Australia."
16. December 9: Dr. F.W. Gunsaulus on "A Chapter in the History of Liberty."
17. December 15: J. White McCammon on "A Visit to the Homes and Haunts of Eight American Authors."
19. April _, 1891: Robert Nourse on Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.
20. April 29: Lecture by Bill Nye.
21. May 14: Mr. Rosenzweig on "Jerusalem as It Is."
23. May 23: The Reverend James Stalker on "The Preacher as Thinker."
24. June 29: The Reverend G.W. Henderson on "Animation and Success."
26. October 20: Dr. E.H. Hyatt on "Protected American Industries" and "Honest Money."
27. October 24: George Wendling on "Saul of Tarsus."
31. December 8: The Reverend Thomas Dixon, Jr., on "Backbone."

32. December 21: Frederick Losey, dramatic reader.

33. January 14, 1892: Max O'Rell on "America as Seen through French Spectacles."

34. January 23: Illustrated lecture by Roberts Harper on "Around the World in a Man-o'-War."

35. January 30: Edward Eggleston on "Old American Life."

36. February 4: Henry Tewksbury on "The Championship."

37. March 1: The Reverend T.F. Clark on "Knapsack Tour through Northern India and China."

38. March 12: Robert McIntyre on "Buttoned Up People."


40. March 14: Lecture by Samuel Phelps Leland.

41. April 9: The Reverend H.W. Bennett on "Grit and Gumption."

42. April 10: University lecture.

43. October 10: Prohibition lecture by Colonel W. G. Bain.

44. October 21: Columbus Day address by President Bashford.


46. November 21: The Reverend Frank Bristol on
"Bard of Avon."

47. December 2: Frank Carpenter on "Portrait Talk."


50. December 11: Dr. Frank Russell on "The Personal Responsibility to Church Members in Active Committee Work."

51. December 12: Mr. Emmet on "The American Indian."

52. January 9, 1893: Lecture by Mr. Stagg, ex-Yale pitcher.

53. February 16: Henry Watterson on "Money and Morals."

54. February 23: Colonel L.F. Copeland on "Seeing the Elephant."

55. March 31: S.P. Leland on "Visit to Pompeii."

56. April 10: The Reverend Thomas Dixon, Jr., on "Fools."

57. April 13: James Hedley on "Wanted: A Man."

58. April 16: University lecture.

59. May 14: University lecture.

60. May 18: Mary Kolbe, child elocutionist.


63. December 2: Anna Shaw on "The Injustice of
Chivalry."

64. December 9: Theodore Clark on "A Knapsack Journey from New York to Central India."


66. January 30: Henry Herbert on "A Day and Night in a Volcano."


68. March 2: Levan Handy on "Patrick Henry."

69. May 19: George Wendling on "The Man of Galilee."

70. May 29: General Gibson on "The American Civil War."

**Concerts**

1. March 7, 1890: Mundell Sisters Vocal Quartet.
2. April 21: Schubert Quartet.
5. May 15: Musicale by Miss Carrie Larimore's pupils.
15. November 5-6: Mother Goose concert.
24. September 16: Concert by the Smith Sisters and the Columbian Bell Ringers.
27. November 17: Mendelssohn Quintette Club.
30. February 4: Temple Quartet.

32. April 15: Lotus Glee Club.
33. April 24: Charles Jacobus, pianist.
34. June 6: Ariel Sextette.

38. April 13: Temple Quartette.
40. June 1: Ariel Sextette.

Meetings, Assemblies, and Contests

3. May 25: Memorial services.
5. May 30: Decoration Day services.
8. June 26: St. Mary's School commencement.
10. September 1: Republican County Convention.

12. December 7: The Elks' "Lodge of Sorrow" program.


14. March 1-2, 1891: Delaware County Sabbath Conference.

15. March 5: Scientific Temperance Contest.


17. May 30: Memorial Day services.


21. October 3: Republican meeting.

22. October 12: Republican meeting.

23. October 19: Citizens' meeting.

24. October 28: Republican meeting.

25. December 17: Ohio Wesleyan Oratorical Contest.


27. May 29-30: Decoration Day services.


30. September 2: Democratic County Convention.

31. October 7: Republican rally.

32. October 24: Republican meeting.
33. November 3: Republican rally.
34. November 7: Republican meeting.
36. January 20, 1893: Memorial services for Rutherford B. Hayes.
37. February 22: University memorial services for Rutherford B. Hayes.
38. February 24-25: Farmers' Institute.
40. May 26: Inter-Collegiate Oratorical, Essay, and Debate Contest.
41. May 30: Memorial Day services.
42. June 8: High school commencement.
43. August 7: Republican County Convention.
44. September 21: Republican rally.
46. March 3: Oratorical contest.
47. March 12: Republican County Convention.
48. May 30: Memorial Day services.
49. June 7: High school commencement.
50. June 19: St. Mary's School commencement.
51. July 16: Public discussion on "The Labor Question."
APPENDIX IV

OPERA HOUSE ACTIVITIES: JANUARY
1895-DECEMBER 1899

Plays

1. January 3, 1895: Elmer Vance’s The Limited Mail.
3. February 4: Stetson’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin Company.
5. March 18: Charley’s Aunt, under the direction of Charles Frohman.
8. May 16: Ohio State University Dramatic Club in She Stoops to Conquer.
10. September 16-21: Howard Wall’s Musical Comedy
Company in *Little Wildcat*, *By Baby Hands*, *Jane*, *A Midnight Call*, *The Dashing Widows*, and *Ole Oleson*.

11. October 21-26: Carrie Louis Company in *The Buckeye*, *The Two Orphans*, *A Bowery Belle*, *Lasca*: or *It Is the Law*, *Lady Fortune* and *Penelope*, and *A Fair Rebel*.


18. February 15: Stetson's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Company.

19. March 30-April 4: Howard Wall's Comedy Company in *In Dixie Land*, *Little Wild Cat*, and other plays.

20. April 18: May Smith Robbins in *Little Trixie*.


Rip Van Winkle; and A Great Wrong.


27. June 7, 1897: Home talent production of Caprice.


29. September 30 and October 1: Home talent production of Graybrook Farm, or a Race for Congress.

30. October 14: Christopher, Jr., comedy.


34. January 3, 1898: Thomas Keene in Othello.

36. January 27: **A Bunch of Keys.**

37. February 5: Robert Downing in *Ingomar* and *The New Gladiator.*


39. April 19-20: Home talent production of *Bessie Barlow,* or *What We Did to Papa.*

40. April 28-30: Peters and Green Musical Farce Comedy Company in *Finnigan's Fortune* and *The Lying Square.*

41. May 19: Mina Gennell, supported by home talent, in *An Irishman's Luck.*

42. September 26-October 1: Wilson Theatre Company in *The Galley Slave,* *The Middle Man,* *The Two Orphans,* *The White Slave,* *Kidnapped,* and *Her Nephew from Boston.*

43. November 19: Murray and Mack in *Finnigan's 400.*


45. December 15: Fitz and Webster's Company in *A Breezy Time.*

46. January 10, 1899: Home talent production of *The Old Homestead.*

47. January 24: Sharp and Flatt, comedians, in *The Late Mr. Early.*

48. February 1: Stetson's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Company.

49. February 11: Nellie McHenry in *A Night at the
Circus.

50. March 16: Rice and Barton's comedy, McDoodle's Flats.


52. May 2: J.C. Lewis in Si Plunkard, rural farce-comedy.


54. October 5: Lincoln Carter's Under the Dome.

55. October 23: Lewis Morrison's production of Faust.


57. November 9: Davis and Busby's Uncle Tom's Cabin Company.


59. December 29: Gebest Sisters in Don't Tell My Wife, tarce.

Variety Entertainments

1. March 14, 1895: Home talent program of "song, music, and speech."


5. September 24: Ladies’ Operatic Minstrels.
6. December 5: Norris Brothers’ trained ponies and dogs.
13. July 22: Al G. Field’s “Darkest America.” In the company were thirty camp meeting shouters, forty Mobile buck and wing dancers, twenty hoodoo charm workers, and twenty piccaninnies.
19. February 12, 1897: Winton the Wonder, magician, and a company of vaudeville performers.


25. October 13 and 15: Home talent entertainment entitled "The Life and Times of John Wesley" (illustrated lecture with music and tableaux).


27. December 15: Charles Barney (strong man), C. Edmund Neil (impersonator), and a company of musicians.


32. November 3 and 11: Home talent entertainment by the Fortnightly Spinsters Club.


34. February 21, 1899: Home talent minstrels.

35. May 4: May Festival entertainment.

37. September 30: Home talent children's entertainment entitled "Mystic Midgets."

38. October 18: Russell's Comedians, comedy and novelty company.

Lectures and Reading Programs


3. May 14: Francis Murphy, prohibition orator.


6. May 19: The Reverend J.H. Lozier on "Your Mother's Apron Strings."

7. January 12, 1897: Professor Warren Moorehead on "Archaeology."

8. January 14: Colonel George Bain on "The New Woman and the Old Man."


10. May 3, 1898: Belle Boyd, the "Rebel Spy," in a narrative of the Civil War.

11. December 2: Illustrated lecture by the
Reverend P.A. Baker on "The Inside of the Saloon."

12. February 12-17, 1899: Temperance lectures by Mrs. Lake.


Concerts


5. November 14: Royal Bell Ringers.


9. April 23: Concert by Leotta and company.


15. October 6: Boys’ Industrial School Band.


Meetings, Assemblies, and Contests

1. May 9, 1895: Elderly Ladies' Oratory Contest.
2. June 14: Ohio Wesleyan School of Oratory commencement.
4. August 5: Republican County Convention.
5. October 15-16: Ohio Conference of Charities and Correction.

8. June 16: Ohio Wesleyan School of Oratory commencement.
10. September 29: Republican meeting.
11. October 15: Republican meeting.
12. April 10, 1897: Oratorical contest.
13. October 11: Republican meeting.
15. October 23: Democratic meeting.
16. April 22, 1898: Oratorical contest.
17. August 8: Republican County Convention.
18. October 3: Republican rally.

19. October 18: Republican meeting.


21. October 20: Republican meeting.
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