

Dale Carnegie

5-Minute Biographies

Author of "How to Win Friends and Influence People."



LIONEL BARRYMORE

At 26 He Was a Star; At 53 a Has-Been; At 57 the Greatest Actor in America

I was there that night in 1918 when Lionel Barrymore opened on Broadway as Milt Shanks in The Copperhead. It was a brilliant occasion, a triumph that made dramatic history. An excited audience leaped to its feet and cheered wildly and frantically through fifteen curtain calls. Fifteen years later, I had a long talk with Lionel Barrymore in the Green Room at Metro-Goldwyn-

Mayer's headquarters on Broadway. When he began talking about his struggles for recognition as an actor, I was astonished. "What? You? A Barrymore, with all the prestige and glamor of your family behind you—surely you never had to struggle!" I demanded.

He looked at me for a moment and, in his low rumbling voice, replied: "Why there ain't no such animal as you're talking about. A famous name is often a handicap."

The Barrymore kids had a strange and rather haphazard childhood. Their father, Maurice Barrymore, was one of the most charming and captivating men who ever made off-stage history with his escapades.

He would spend his last nickel to buy an animal. He used to ship bears home—bears and monkeys and wild cats and a wide assortment of dogs. John and Lionel spent one summer in a farm house on Staten Island with no one for company but an old negro

servant and thirty-five dogs of all shapes, sizes and breeds.

When Lionel, Jack and Ethel Barrymore appeared in Rasputin and the Empress, Hollywood proudly announced that this was the first time they had all played together. But Hollywood was wrong. The three Barrymores made their debut together more than forty years ago. The theatre was a dilapidated barn in the rear of an actors' boarding house on Staten Island, the audience was made up of kids from the neighborhood. Admission was a penny and the total box office receipts was thirty-seven cents. They played Camille. Ethel was the business manager and she paid Lionel and Jack ten cents each, and to their intense disgust, pocketed the remaining seventeen cents.

Neither Lionel nor John aspired to be stage stars. They both wanted to be artists, and Lionel studied art in Paris for a time.

I asked him if he was ever broke and hungry then, and he said, "Yes, lots of times, because I couldn't sell my sketches to the magazines. Of course, I could always get money by wiring home, but sometimes I didn't have enough money to send a wire. Jack and I had a studio down in Greenwich Village, too," he continued, "but we didn't have any money to buy furniture. In fact, we didn't even have a bed. So we slept on the floor; and when it got too cold, we covered ourselves with the books. There was another chap, a writer, living with us and he had a removable gold tooth; when we were broke, we pawned his tooth. I remember we tried every pawnshop on the East side but we could never raise more than seventy cents on it."

At twenty-six, Lionel Barrymore was a star, with his name flashing in bright lights on Broadway. But at fifty-three, his fame was only a memory. While his handsome brother, John, was one of the highest-paid stars in the world, and his sister, Ethel, had a New York theatre named in her honor, Lionel was earning a quiet living out in Hollywood as a director.

His friends and family were shocked. They complained bitterly that the most talented dramatic actor in America was going to

waste. But Lionel didn't complain.

He threw a skill and knowledge gained from thirty years behind the footlights, into directing pictures. He dreamed. He studied. He experimented. He was the first director ever to discover that the sound camera could be moved around the lot—a discovery that revolutionized talking pictures. He dazed the industry with such unforgettable films as Ruth Chatterton in Madame X, Lawrence Tibbett in The Rogue Song and Barbara Stanwyck in Ten Cents a Dance. He was fifty-three, and he honestly believed his acting days were over.

Just as he had resigned himself to directing for the rest of his career, he got his chance. Norma Shearer was making A Free Soul. A great actor was needed for the part of the father. Lionel Barrymore stepped in front of the camera and covered himself with glory. He won the medal of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. And then the very producers who had formerly regarded him as a "has been" fought for his services. Hit followed hit—The Yellow Ticket, Mata Hari, Grand Hotel, Rasputin and the Empress, Ah Wilderness!

I asked Lionel Barrymore if he was ever discouraged before he made his come-back in Hollywood. He replied, "No, I've been up and down all my life. Lots of people said I was through; but I never thought much about it. I was always too darn busy to worry about my troubles."

BURGH

The fourth annual Chaney reunion was held Sunday at the B. R. Chaney home place, near Crutchfield. About 200 people gathered around the table, where dinner was served picnic style. Roscoe Chaney made an interesting talk. A. O. Bray of Georgia, returned thanks. Everyone present seemed to enjoy meeting old acquaintances.

Those from a distance attending were Mr. and Mrs. Onal Chaney, Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Daley and Clyde Chaney of Castletown, Mo.; Mr. and Mrs. Banner Chaney of Chicago, Ill.; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Chaney, Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Axson and Fannie Chaney, all of Danville, Va.; Mr. and Mrs. B. R. Chaney, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Chaney and Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Chaney, all of Asheboro; Mrs. Martha Berry of Raleigh; A. C. Chaney, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Campbell, Fred Thornburg, Mrs. Iris Chaney, and Mrs. Clyde Chaney, all of Greensboro; Mr. and Mrs. Claude Griffin, Jr., E. Falk and Misses Chaney and Ruby Falk, all of Rural Hall; Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Norman of Winston-Salem; Mr. and Mrs. S. O. Maguire and family and Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Sprinkle and little son, Billy, all of Elkin; Mr. and Mrs. Newt Martin of Salem Fork, Mr. and Mrs. Chescoe Sprinkle, and Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Williams, all of Mountain Park.

Mrs. Luther Hooser of Long Beach, California, arrived here last Thursday to spend a few weeks with friends and relatives. It is her first visit here in 30

TO HOLD REVIVAL AT BOYD'S CHAPEL

A revival meeting will begin the first Sunday evening in August at Boyd's Chapel Methodist church, one and one-half miles west of Mountain Park. The meeting will be conducted by Rev. T. C. Williams, assisted by Rev. H. M. Boyd, well-known evangelist of Waynesboro. Services will continue for a

week or more and the public is extended a cordial invitation to attend.

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OLIN CHURCH IS TO OBSERVE HOMECOMING
The Methodist church at Olin will observe its twelfth annual homecoming on Sunday, August first. The pastor, Rev. D. H. Reinhardt, will deliver a sermon at 11 o'clock.
All former pastors, residents and friends are invited to attend. Dinner will be served on the ground at the noon hour. In the afternoon all visitors will have an opportunity to visit with friends. A cordial invitation is extended the public to attend.

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