

MRS. HAMMERSTEIN'S OWN STORY TODAY: Tragic End of a Glittering Trail



OUT OF THE PAST
Comes This Photo of Mrs. Hammerstein When She Was the Wife of Julian Swift, Wealthy Chicago Packer, Whom She Later Divorced To Marry the Impresario.

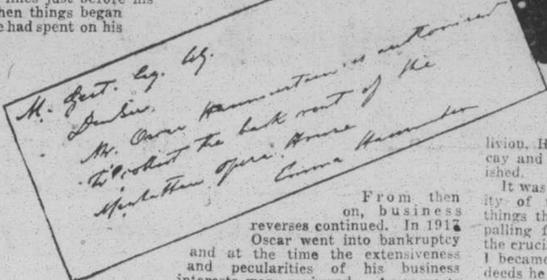
THIS is the final instalment of a series of articles by Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein, dealing with the triumphs and disasters of her colorful life.

As she concludes the story of how she first married a wealthy Chicago packer, then was the wife of the most famous impresario of his time, and finally was found penniless and forgotten, drifting about New York, amidst the scenes of her former glories.

By Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein.

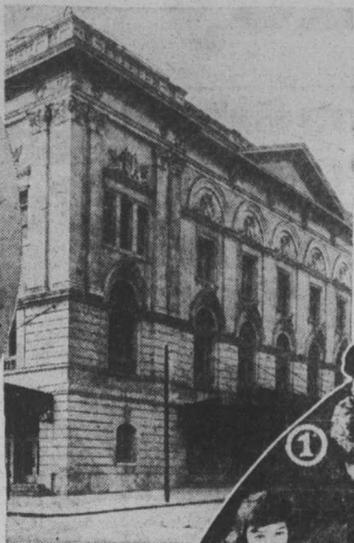
AS I come to the final chapter of my story there constantly recur to me the words Oscar Hammerstein once wrote in a letter to me: "Don't worry about the future. I want to know that there are no lines of care in your face. Bear in mind that I will always be near you in sorrow and in happiness—even unto eternity." He wrote those lines just before his London defeat. Then things began to close in on us. He had spent on his

The Letter Reproduced at Right Is Addressed by Mrs. Hammerstein to Morris Gest, the Theatrical Magnate, and Authorizes Oscar to Collect Back Rent for the Manhattan Opera House.



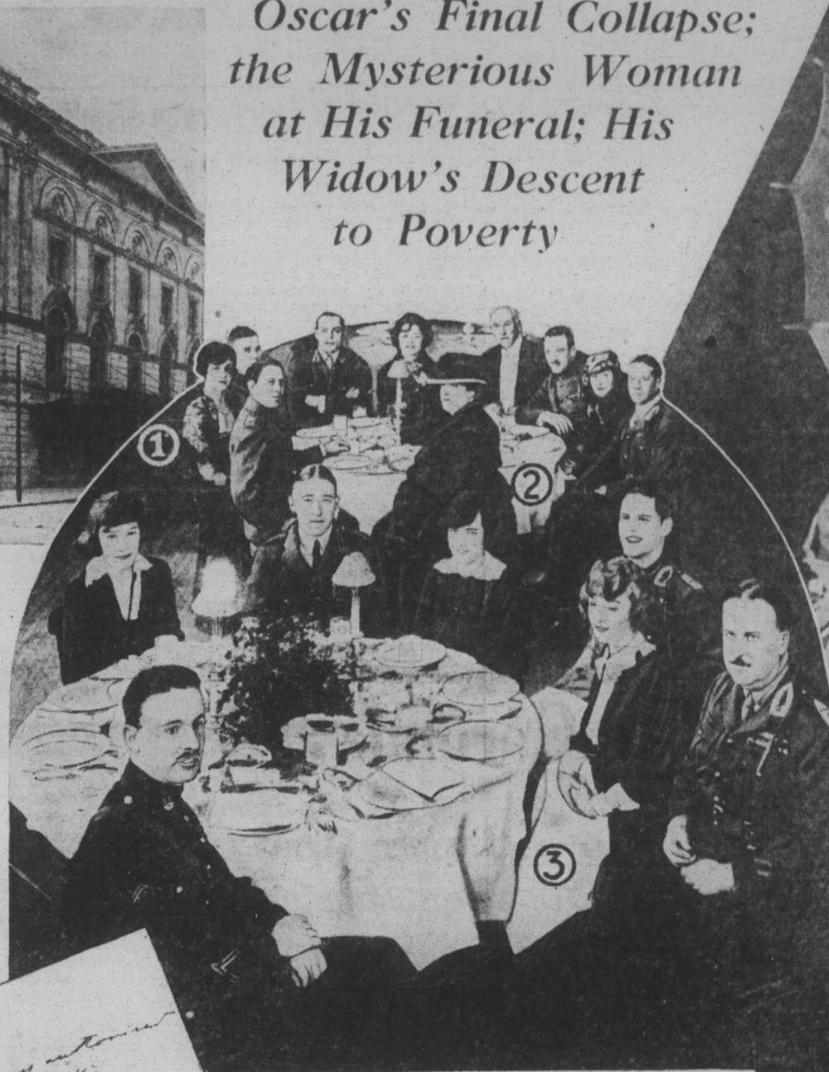
London venture all of the \$1,200,000 given him by the Metropolitan Opera Company. Upon his return to New York the United Booking Offices gave him \$225,000 in adjusting the Palace Theatre franchise. That sum he put into the ill-fated Lexington Opera House.

The announcement that he would re-enter the New York field was a surprise to the Metropolitan. He tried to circumvent the \$1,200,000 agreement by saying he would produce opera in English at the Lexington. But just as his opera house was seven-eighths finished, he was served with papers in an injunction suit brought by the Metropolitan to restrain him from producing opera in any language. Thus the Lexington was turned into a vaudeville and motion picture house.



HIS FOLLY
The Philadelphia Opera House, Built by Oscar Hammerstein. It Was There He Introduced His Opera Company to the Pennsylvania Metropolis, But the Venture Proved a Failure.

THEY WERE GAY
A Dinner Given by Mrs. Hammerstein in Honor of Ogden Pell, Well-Known New York Society Man, During Early Days of the War. 1, Vera Brand, the Operatic Star; 2, Mrs. Hammerstein; 3, Ogden Pell.



Oscar's Final Collapse; the Mysterious Woman at His Funeral; His Widow's Descent to Poverty



A Recent Photo of Mrs. Hammerstein. Note the Defiant, Determined Look With Which She Faced a World That Ignored Her Former Prestige and Wealth.

From then on, business reverses continued. In 1912 Oscar went into bankruptcy and at the time the extensiveness and peculiarities of his business interests were reviewed. As respects the nature, magnitude, complexity and variety of his operations, Oscar was a unique bankrupt. He required the services of at least a dozen firms of lawyers, but he had only one bookkeeper!

His enemies took advantage of this to pester him. He fought valiantly and desperately to the end. One day, when the black shadows of death began to gather about him, Oscar rose from his sick bed, against my remonstrances, and went to his office at No. 151 West Thirty-eighth Street, a ramshackle affair located over a garage. It was then that he surveyed the remnants of the palaces he had built upon the sand and in a rage penned a letter to his attorneys denouncing all his enemies.

But on a dark day in August, 1919, this man—who was once worth \$10,000,000 and who had built thirteen magnificent theatres in his time—died practically penniless. It was just a few

months before the expiration of his agreement with the Metropolitan. In his death everything passed into oblivion. His opera schemes fell into decay and his wonderful inventions vanished.

It was on that day that the dire reality of the inconstancy of material things thrust itself upon me with appalling force. While death ticked off the crucial moments at Oscar's bedside, I became conscious that the gigantic deeds he had achieved and their worldly rewards were fleeting. And something of myself seemed to go out, too, like a candle in the wind. At first there were difficulties in arranging a funeral. Arthur Hammerstein, Oscar's son, and Morris Gest, the producer, and I decided the public would want to see the remains of so great an impresario. Through the efforts of Otto Kahn, Oscar's deadliest rival in the opera world, Henry Morgenthau, former United States Ambassador to Turkey, and Felix Warburg, the famous financier, consent was obtained to have services in Temple Emanuel.

On the day of the funeral I succeeded in reaching John McCormack, the tenor. I knew it would have been my husband's wish that McCormack sing at his funeral. It was Oscar who had enabled McCormack to win fame in America. And McCormack's singing of "The Lost Chord" at that funeral was something never to be forgotten. Meanwhile, as millionaires, famous artists and others sat in sorrow at the passing of this genius who once was an immigrant boy, a mysterious lady in black wept bitterly, audibly, unreservedly in a back pew. She was pointed out to me later at the grave as Miss Frances Lee, once a well-known singer. The opera world has heard nothing of her now for many years.

It was strange to see Miss Lee at the funeral, for I recalled that it was she who had figured in a spectacular suit against Oscar, in which she demanded \$100,000 because he had failed to keep his promise to make her an opera star. I recall now some of the letters Oscar wrote to her long, long ago, before he married me. He gave me some of these to preserve. He wrote eloquently and philosophically, but it will be noted that sometimes he had a curious habit of referring to the person he was addressing as though he or she were a third party. One letter to Miss Lee in particular is handy to quote in part as follows:

"The only thing you admit is that you have hired a rig. You never told me it was probably none of my business. When a woman loves a man devotedly she has no secrets. You are the only person in this great wide world that I confide in and everything to you letters of late, however, have been stereotyped in character and cold and when I thought of the last one my blood stormed through my veins and I lay still in my bed praying to be struck dead. I knew I was going to be struck dead. I knew I was going to be struck dead."

Thus Oscar—writing of himself to someone he adored. How delightfully ego-centric. It was this egotism that helped to carry him to fame. So far as adversity is concerned I had plenty of it after his death. I sought in vain to retrieve some of his vanished wealth. With Fortune Gallo, head of the San Carlo Opera Company, I made an unsuccessful effort to produce light opera. Then I attempted an ambitious plan to import French opera and French stars—remembering that my husband had been the pioneer producer of French works on the American operatic stage. Appeals for cooperation and assistance were sent to many, many prominent persons who had known Oscar well—but in most cases they did not meet with much sympathy. Then I turned to friends, but in

vain. Little by little I began to realize that the times had changed, that a cycle—the cycle of wealth, social power and popularity—was passing for me. There remained but one more blow and it did not fail to come. Previous to my husband's death he had been quarreling with his daughters, Stella and Rose. They were angered because he tried to sell the Victoria Theatre. For one thing, they feared he would put the money into more opera schemes. They claimed they were entitled to the income provided by their mother—which came out of profits of the theatre and other interests in the Hammerstein-Amusement Company.

When Oscar learned of his daughters' fulminations he was not the least bit disturbed. He giggled with delight. "I have been supporting my daughters right along," he said to me. "Now that they have two husky American fellows for husbands, let the young men work for them! I don't care what any of them say, I am not going to emulate King Lear."

Then followed court proceedings in abundance. They reached up to the day Oscar Hammerstein died and extended for two years to one terrible day for me.

On that day I was evicted from my apartment in the Manhattan Opera House, which had been willed to me, and upon which Stella and Rose

brought foreclosure actions. Although Oscar Hammerstein, at one time worth nearly \$10,000,000 made me his sole legatee and executrix in his will, it remained for a news paperman to find me on a bench in Central Park.

I was deserted, distraught and penniless. In my purse I had exactly three pennies. Now I was pondering, not with too much deliberation, on the next step in my chaotic career.

When I said I was deserted I meant that most of those human friends of mine had forsaken me. However, one friend remained steadfast through all my tribulations—Teddy, my ten-year-old colt.

Soon my predicament became known through others—for I was too proud to reveal the secret of my distress. There were several who came to my aid. That night I did not go back to my shabby room in lower Columbus avenue. John Hoagland, the baking powder king, who remembered me when Mayfair would have spread purple rugs for me, was kind to me. The rest of my story is merely the anti climax of shattered hopes and defeat. The dream (for that is all it is now) of wealth, triumphs, happiness, has faded. The best I've known has gone. Nothing—not even despair—remains.

THE REST IS SILENCE
As Mrs. Hammerstein Stands Above Her Husband's Grave (the Photo Above Was Taken Soon After His Burial) She Reflects Upon the Colorful Pageant of His Triumphs and Defeats. At Left is the Monument Erected Later Over His Grave. The Name of Mrs. Hammerstein Has Since Been Removed From It.

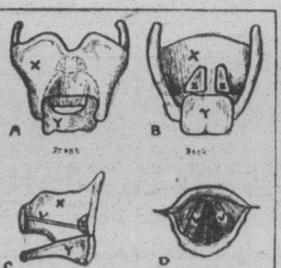
HUMAN MECHANICS How Talking and Singing Are Produced

By HERBERT L. HERSCHENSOHN, (Physician and Surgeon)

THE voice-box, called the larynx, is an expansion of the upper part of the wind-pipe, the trachea. It is composed chiefly of two large cartilages, the thyroid cartilage (commonly called the Adam's Apple), and the cricoid cartilage which lies immediately beneath it. The thyroid cartilage is somewhat V-shaped and resembles a partially opened book that has been set on end. The cricoid cartilage looks like a signet ring, the narrow band being in front, the wide part being behind, between the two open ends of the thyroid cartilage.

Resting on top of the cricoid at the back are two little cartilages called the arytenoids. They are not tightly fastened to the cricoid but are free to move inward toward each other, or outward away from each other, in much the same way that garage doors open and close.

The vocal cords are merely bands of tissue which run along the side walls of the larynx, one on each side, from the front to the back. The attachment in front is to the thyroid cartilage. The rear attachment is to the arytenoid cartilages.



These Sketches Illustrate the Appearance of the Voice-Box from Different Angles. The Cartilages Are the Thyroid (X), the Cricoid (Y) and the Two Small Arytenoids (Z). The Vocal Cords (V) Are Shown in Fig. C in the Positions for Normal Breathing. The White Dotted Lines in Fig. D Indicate Their Position When Speaking.

brought directly into the path of the air. As the air strikes the cords, they are made to vibrate. In order to vary the pitch of the sounds made it is necessary to correspondingly vary the degree of tightness of the vocal cords. The vocal cords are brought into and taken out of action by means of muscles which are attached to the arytenoid cartilage. When a sound is produced these cartilages move inward

toward each other, so that the vocal cords are drawn away from the voice-box, permitting the breath to strike and vibrate them. The closer the cartilages approach each other, the tighter the cords become and the higher the pitch. It is the continuous change in pitch of the words we utter which gives color to speech. Those who are unfortunate enough to have some affection of the vocal cords which interferes with the variation in pitch talk in a monotone.

The longer and heavier the vocal cords are, the lower the voice. The larynx of a man is larger than a woman's. Consequently, the cords are longer and heavier. This explains why man possesses a voice which is lower in pitch and huskier.

Almost everyone is familiar with the experiment of striking a tuning fork and then placing it over a jar and noticing the resonance and fullness of tone which is produced. The resonance for the voice-box is made possible by the spaces which are built above it, the mouth and the nose. In nasal catarrh, when the passages through the nose are obstructed, the voice loses an important resonance chamber. We say the individual is talking through his nose. Actually, however, he is talking without the use of his nose.

It is nothing short of miraculous that a mechanism can be so highly perfected that in a rapid succession of split seconds, the muscles and cartilages can so arrange themselves that sounds of predetermined character and pitch can be made.