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22. Fred Dahlinger Jr., "The Development of the Railroad Circus," *Bandwagon* 28, no.1 (Jan.-Feb. 1984): 16.
23. Ibid., 19.
24. Ibid., 17.
25. Ibid., 18.
26. W. C. Coup, *Sawdust and Spangles* (Chicago, IL: Herbert S. Stone, 1901), 66.
27. Dahlinger, "Development of the Railroad Circus," 19.
28. Dahlinger, "The Development of the Railroad Circus." *Bandwagon* 27, no.6 (Nov.-Dec. 1983): 6.
29. Janet M. Davis, *The Circus Age Culture and Society under the American Big Top* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 14.

Hysterical Historical Fun

The Last of the Old-Time Tent Shows

Dawn Larsen

THE TENT SHOW IS A largely undocumented, critically unassessed theatrical form that was highly popular from the early twentieth century through the 1950s. With its later addition of a popular character, Toby, the tent show was a major theatrical force that was responsible for perpetuating rural American theatre. The term *Toby show* denoted a traveling vaudeville-type melodramatic tent show. The character has been defined by Robert Downing as "a stock character in the folk theatre of the United States, a bucolic comedy juvenile leading man in provincial repertory companies of the Mississippi Valley and the Great Southwest."¹ Although many scholars thought the last traveling tent company retired from the road in 1963, a few companies struggled, with the assistance of private and governmental funding, into the 1990s.

One of the last surviving companies was the Rosier Players, formerly the Henderson Stock Company, from Jackson, Michigan. In 1997 Waunetta Rosier, Harold Rosier's widow, donated the Rosier Players' complete tent show to my company, the Hard Corn Players. The equipment includes a 1923-model dramatic end tent that seats 350 people, four 1942 stake trucks, three hundred scripts, costumes, painted drops (some one hundred years old), and other necessities of the road.

The nature of rural traveling popular entertainment is fleeting. There is little scholarship concerning this subject, published statistical information is scant, and although remaining troupers are willing to tell their stories, memories from fifty or more years ago are often inaccurate and increasingly transitory. Here I will first examine the character of research on tent shows, then from that perspective report my research concerning the first two owners of the historic equipment collection (Richard

Henderson and Harold Rosier), and finally discuss briefly the values and challenges associated with coupling performance reconstruction with traditional academic research, specifically performance reconstructions by the Hard Corn Players.

My 1991 thesis on the genealogy of Toby shows, "A Continuing History of Toby Shows with an Acknowledgement of the Past and Plans for the Future," made use of a limited collection of published materials and personal interviews conducted with two troupers, Lloyd "Shad" Heller and Ruth "Mollie" Heller. My trip in 1993 to the theatre history conference at the Theatre Museum in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, attended by many of the remaining troupers, highlighted the speculative nature of both published accounts of the shows and information from personal interviews. I found that much of what I had assumed was fact and used in my thesis was incorrect. Personal memories can contradict those of other performers, and in a theatrical form not generally perceived as worth archival preservation, printed artifacts are scarce and often contain incorrect and contradictory information.

There is some previous scholarship regarding Richard Henderson and Harold Rosier.² Having had the advantage of using the Rosiers' letters, personal interviews, and other archival documents from collections at the museum in Mt. Pleasant and the archives at Michigan State University, I can offer corrections to some mistaken dates and other information found in earlier studies. One research issue that I encountered illustrated the suspect nature of conducting primary research about American popular entertainment. The dates and historical information contained in the souvenir programs that were sold at later Rosier performances, 1976 through 1991, were incorrect when compared with Harold Rosier's letters. Waunetta Rosier informed me in a telephone interview that she had tried to correct the errors in the programs but that the director at the college where the collection was being used as a summer theatre program was unconcerned with the errors, believing that they would not be harmful to the audience's experience of the show. The shows were produced at Jackson Community College from 1976 through 1991 in eight-week runs of five shows per week. Obviously, the programs were intended for the performance audience, few of whom were classified as what Erik Cohen has termed "existential tourists," those who demand a realistic and authentic experience of the sort sought out by anthropologists. They were most probably "recreational tourists," likely to cheerfully suspend their disbelief when viewing historical performances.³ As long as they come away from the performance with a flavor of the historic experience, instead of requiring a purist's

authenticity, they are content that they saw a good show, and that seems to be enough for them.

It is also important to report that the character of the audience has changed over the seventeen years that I have either been performing or producing Toby shows. Most patrons that had previously attended historic shows as children have passed on. Generally, my contemporary audiences do not attend the shows to remember nostalgic childhood experiences as their grandparents or parents did. Instead, they come to learn about the entertainments their elderly relatives spoke so enthusiastically about, as well as to be entertained. Therefore, I believe it is imperative to strive to report the most accurate information that I can discover about the Henderson Stock Company and Rosier Players so that future scholars (academic or otherwise) researching these two representative and reputable companies will be provided with credible data.

In my company's mission statement I profess that my company "strives to preserve the tent theatre tradition." I must know, in as much detail as possible, what that history is in order to preserve it. It defeats the purpose to produce plays as a performance methodology for research if the archival and artifactual information that I have to draw from is incorrect or contradictory. Therefore, I must use additional information that I gather from unpublished sources, including letters, interviews, and programs, to provide an accurate picture of the tent-show tradition.

Richard Henderson was the founder of the longest running and, at this date, last of the old-time tent repertory companies. Born in Portland, Michigan, on June 25, 1876, Henderson began a career in acting when he joined the William H. Hartigan theatre company in 1897. According to a 1936 article by Hayden Palmer in the *State Journal*, "Given two parts at four o'clock in the afternoon, he rehearsed them once and played the two roles at a performance the same evening."⁴

Henderson founded the Henderson Stock Company on December 8, 1898, in Otsego, Michigan, with the intention of temporarily employing himself and his out-of-work actor friends. Although touring theatre companies were numerous at that time, Henderson found his business quickly grew to be successful, and he chose to make the company a permanent business endeavor. Harold Rosier asserts in a letter to William Slout: "I remember Dick Henderson telling me that from 1910 to 1920 there were 40 professional stock companies in Michigan alone. . . . He said that nearly every town in the state had an opera house and many companies played the opera houses in the winter and in summer would go under canvas."⁵

The Henderson Stock Company did not regularly perform in tents,

choosing to play in opera houses instead.⁶ According to an undated and unreferenced fragment of a newspaper article from Waunetta's personal collection, the early Henderson Stock Company traveled by train and played stock in opera houses.⁷ Moreover, in a letter to me Waunetta remarked, "Dick didn't like it [playing in a tent]. He didn't like worrying about the weather constantly. Working opera houses was easier. He liked to sleep in the mornings."⁸ Richard Henderson insisted on a high level of professionalism, preferring to present what he deemed "legitimate" theatre, not Toby or parody of melodrama, both then popular genres. Although some might conjecture that he used this language as a device to better market his product, research suggests that he strongly believed that the plays he presented were superior, more true to the legitimate theatre tradition than were those of his competitors. A section of a newspaper article in the Mt. Pleasant collection described Henderson and his philosophy of theatre: "Dick Henderson religiously adhered to the legitimate theatre. He was an actor of the old school. . . . And he would never countenance the old drama being made the butt of any jokes. He refused all offers to play in 'The Drunkard,' when that play was picked as prime burlesque of the old school of the theater. He wouldn't be a party to making light of what he considered sacred."⁹ Because of his philosophy, his company became known as one of the finest "high-class" repertoire companies in the Midwest. A 1936 Palmer article shows that Henderson's slogan reflected that ideal: "The company produces plays of the better class."¹⁰

Other reputable showmen touted Dick Henderson as a top-notch actor. Neil Schaffner, for example, "never saw a Broadway actor who . . . measured up to Dick Henderson in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*."¹¹ Harold Rosier maintained that Henderson was not only a fine actor but that he was ahead of his time. While most other rep actors were using a very broad melodramatic style, especially for *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (an enormously popular play in its day), Henderson played the eponymous character in a very subtle way. Henderson wore two little dots of black grease paint near the inside corners of his eyes that, while turned away during the transformation, he would smear under his eyes to give them a sinister, sunken look. Along with mussing his hair and striking a menacing posture, according to Harold's story, when Henderson quietly turned and gazed out into the house, the effect was so frightening that people fainted. While this may seem an outrageous claim, perhaps without the contemporary desensitizing visual nature of movies and television, experiencing the transformation through the play for those audiences at that time period might be compared to participating in virtual reality entertainment today. Both experiences could be overwhelming.

Specific archetypal data concerning tent shows are not often preserved, yet they are crucial for the historian conducting primary research or those attempting to use performance methodology as research. It is often this kind of information that is most difficult to procure as the artifacts (show bills, ticket stubs, posters) were disposable. Early Henderson show bills in various collections advertised 10-20-30 shows, which refers not only to the prices of the seats but also to an entire genre of theatre.¹² Later show bills reflected higher 25-35-50 cent prices. Show bills advertised, "Ladies free on Monday nights, if reserved before 6:00 o'clock [*sic*]," and "Doors open at 7:30. Performance at 8:05." One show bill advertised, "Pig to be given away Saturday Night!" Most often, the Henderson season opened in June and closed in November.

Henderson's company was a stock operation, and like most stock companies of that era, it functioned as a collective. According to Waunetta's April 21, 1998, letter, "The Henderson show always played 'commonwealth.' At the end of the week, the expenses were paid and the remainder was divided among the cast. Harold said one week he got eight dollars and one week, in the tourist towns in Northern Michigan, he got eighty dollars." Trouping was difficult, and according to Harold, "Sometimes they wouldn't do too good in a town, he [Henderson] would have just enough money to put the trunks and cast on the train and he would have to walk to the next town."¹³

Henderson retired from the road in 1934. He died at 2:15 p.m. on Friday, November 15, 1935, of a heart attack. He was survived by his wife, Fannie, and an aunt, Katherine Henderson. According to Waunetta, Fannie tried to continue the company as manager but found the road was too much for her and sold the company to the Rosiers in 1937, although she traveled with them as an actress until she retired in 1940.

To better understand how Harold Rosier's philosophies compared to Henderson's, Waunetta provided a quote she thought indicative of Harold, whose standard remark after viewing most modern performances was, "That would never play in a tent show. . . . They should think of the families!"¹⁴ Concerned, like Henderson, with the quality of his productions, though in a more ethical sense, Harold Rosier made his living in rural traveling theatre for more than sixty years. Rosier was born November 12, 1912, in Leslie, Michigan. His performance career actually began by way of the visual arts as many of his paintings were on display in his father's bakery. A chautauqua artist that was passing through Leslie recognized Harold's talent and offered to teach him chalk-talking, a popular chautauqua entertainment.¹⁵ Harold wrote in his notes: "He showed me how to make my own chalk, what kind of paper to use and gave me other tips on presenting a chalk talk." Chalk-

talking consisted of telling a story while rapidly drawing a picture with hands and, in Harold's case, feet, that would culminate in a surprise illustration that was often a fundamental symbol representing the moral of the story. Richard Henderson saw Harold perform his chalk-talk act in a school assembly and later in the week as an actor in a Leslie high school play. Thinking Rosier a multitalented performer, Henderson hired him after the play performance on June 10, 1934.

Harold was a versatile actor. The following statement was inscribed in one of his scrapbooks, above a June 25, 1934, show bill featuring his picture: "It wasn't long before I was a featured performer with my picture on their [Henderson's] showbills."¹⁶ According to Waunetta, "[Harold] played comedy, juvenile and heavy leads."¹⁷ However, Harold's granddaughter, Laura Lyn Rosier, quoted in the Lennox paper, maintained that "grandpa stunk as an ingénue, and by the end of that season, he was Toby."¹⁸

In the Slout letter Harold remembered his days with the Henderson show and discussed why he thought tent rep declined:

My experience in show bus, was the very last of the old time stock companies. . . . The old shows were dying out then very fast, the "talkies" were cutting in, but perhaps the old shows would have died out anyhow, however I believe the directors and managers were at fault too for not keeping up with the time, managers would fight over territories, stage sets became very old and sloppy . . . but even then I used to make \$75.00 a week when the average man would be making \$15.00.¹⁹

Harold played through the 1934 season with Richard Henderson but soon chose to go out on his own as an entertainer.

Waunetta and Harold were married on June 7, 1935. Harold had previously booked a three-day rep for the following summer, the first season for the new Harold Rosier Players. Harold had an idea to rewrite the famous prohibition melodrama *Ten Nights in a Barroom* to include local patrons. He pitched the show to Dr. D. L. McBride of the Michigan Anti-Saloon League, and they toured it from September through November 1935. Additionally, while sponsored by the Michigan Anti-Saloon League, according to a show bill in my collection, Harold chalk-talked, and they performed portions of *The Living Dead*, another popular prohibitionist play.

The next several years provided Harold and Waunetta with valuable performing experience. They continued three- to five-day reps in the summer until 1937, when Harold bought the entire Henderson Stock Company for 350 dollars. The collection consisted of a 1933 REO Speed

Wagon, scenery, scripts, costumes, scrapbooks, props, and sets. The Rosiers asked Fannie Henderson to travel with them since she was a seasoned trouper. She was a member of the troupe from 1937 through 1940. Waunetta notes, "We were young and just getting started. She was a big help to us."²⁰

Their territory was the traditional route taken by the Henderson show, one of only seven companies still operating in that territory in the late 1930s. The regular tour ran from June to September and included seventeen to twenty communities. The troupe then played circle stock in the off-season from 1937 through 1939, using Leslie and Mason or Litchfield, Michigan, as their home bases.²¹ Leslie and Mason were home bases for a first tour lasting six weeks, and Litchfield was center for a second tour lasting six weeks. The Rosiers worked for several years in theatre and in other private endeavors, taking periodic breaks from the traveling theatre business. In the spring of 1966 the Rosiers bought the Collier Show, an Illinois tent theatre operation, for fifteen hundred dollars and brought the equipment back to Michigan.

The Collier Show had been a variety entertainment company from Farmer City, Illinois, that specialized in three-act plays, vaudeville, magic, and music. Additionally, the show carried a Toby comic but did not produce Toby plays. The Collier collection consisted of a 1941 Chevy pole truck, a 1946 Dodge chair truck, three hundred old blue chairs, ten-foot scenery, props, scripts, and the tent trailer. The show had been stored since 1955. The equipment was in bad repair, and Harold spent all of 1967 repairing the trucks, cutting the ten-foot tall scenery to eight feet, and repainting the chairs.

Rather than traveling like the early tent shows, the Rosiers performed their shows in stationary settings the first few years. The Rosier's first season performing in the tent was in 1968 near Jackson, Michigan, at the Stage Coach Stop at the Irish Hills, a historic tourist attraction near Tecumseh, Michigan. The Rosiers presumed that since they had never traveled with a tent, a stationary season might be a favorable way to learn more about canvas. They stayed for two summer seasons, performing historic rep and Toby shows under canvas, as well as commenting on the historical nature of the shows and characters within the performance.

Deciding in 1974 that they were ready to travel, they booked eight towns near Jackson, Michigan, beginning with Springport. Those towns were on the old Slout circuit, so the audiences were familiar with tent shows and accepted the Rosiers—evidenced by ample ticket sales. They played those same towns until 1975, when Harold suffered a heart attack, which forced him to discontinue traveling and focus instead on the 1976

bicentennial celebrations in surrounding towns. Because the strenuous effort of pitching the tent endangered Harold's health, the troupe performed in community performance spaces, doing slide shows, historical lectures, and a few acts from the tent show until it hired Gerry Blanchard, theatre professor at Jackson Community College, as director during the 1976 season. Waunetta maintained in a June 1998 email, "We played eleven towns, all packed houses." After the 1976 season the Rosiers donated the show to Jackson Community College in Jackson, Michigan, hoping that the college would preserve the equipment, as well as the tent theatre tradition. They retired to Florida that winter only to be contacted the next spring by Blanchard, seeking their help for the summer tent season. They returned to Michigan and Harold taught, directed, and acted for the college in their summer theatre until his death of an aneurysm in the middle of a library show on June 2, 1980. Gerry Blanchard directed the show until 1986. Waunetta and granddaughter Laura Lyn Rosier continued with the show—acting, directing, and operating it until 1991.

My Hard Corn Players, a derivative of the Henderson Stock Company and Rosier Players, using Collier family equipment, directed by a woman who learned the craft from the Heller Toby show, will celebrate in 2005 the 107th birthday of the genesis of an evolved popular entertainment company. I reconstruct Toby shows as a performance methodology for historical research that I can apply to make the shows more engaging to modern rural audiences, a process that perpetuates the Hard Corn Players as a viable theatre business. Each reconstructed performance of a Toby show that I have participated in generated more information, which in turn generated more questions. These questions need answers, thus the need for more performance reconstructions.

Reconstructed performances of any historic form are valuable in two ways. First, performance reconstructions challenge the ways that we think and write about historic performance. Historical reconstruction goes both beyond and hand in hand with written scholarship to provide valid information for the scholar. Historian Robert Sarlos believes that reconstructions and only reconstructions get at the "transitoriness" of a performance. He maintains that although the performance cannot produce an exact replica of the historic event, "it will bring all participants, including spectators, closer to a sensory realization of the style and atmosphere, the physical and emotional dynamics of a bygone era than can mere reading."²² Sarlos believes performance is a way of knowing and that each participant (audience member, actor, or technician) will learn something more effectively by performing their respective roles than by merely reading about the event.

Second, the information generated can be employed to make future reconstructions more applicable to contemporary audiences. Entertainment value does matter. If we did not care if we entertained the audience, then the audience would not buy future tickets and the reconstruction experiment, whatever result we desired, would be over. Reconstructions can never "recreate" history. Moreover, most popular forms, including tent shows, burlesque, circus, and vaudeville, were forms that continually evolved. As historic audiences' ideologies changed, the successful companies changed to accommodate them. Harold maintained that companies failed if their managers did not change with the times.²³ My reconstructions must be fashioned to take into account the contemporary rural audience and its particular palate while striving to maintain the flavor of the historic performance. What material works now may not have worked then, but it still carries the same "spirit" of the experience. Similarly, what worked then, for example racially biased humor, does not work now, and the historic material must either be omitted or altered. We are very careful in my company to explain that the performance is not an exact replica of a historic tent-show performance. Thus, I attempt to create an exquisite illusion of history built on my informed yet personal readings of history that generate valuable performative experiences for my contemporary rural audiences.

Further, reconstructions of the Toby tent-show genre, as well as other popular entertainment forms, are important specifically because those forms, which have been routinely marginalized and excluded, are forms that represent the common culture. Popular entertainment, from before the time of the Roman circus to contemporary television sitcoms, provides a valid barometer of its culture. Because popular entertainment reflects the culture "at large," it is imperative that scholars attend to it. Toby tent shows represented the ideologies of rural American culture in the twentieth century.

The Hard Corn Players is the only company that I know of in the United States attempting to reconstruct and thus perpetuate Toby shows within the historic tent environment. Most current popular entertainment reflecting rural values comes from this genre. The Toby character and his ideological roots are and were reflected in popular television shows such as, *The Andy Griffith Show*, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *McCloud*, *Dr. Quinn: Medicine Woman*, and *Northern Exposure*. All contain a Toby-related archetype. Certainly, Andy Griffith was a Toby, smarter than he looks, relying on rural values to defeat crooks and fight off those "wild girls from Mt. Pilot." A further stretch, Ed, on *Northern Exposure*, a simple native of that location who espoused rural traditional values and innocence, could be considered a Toby derivative. Movies

such as *Babe*, *Field of Dreams*, and *Titanic* all reflect the idea that the rural folk, with their inherent values, are role models to aspire to. In Tennessee, where we perform, Tobies abound. The Tennessee Pride Sausage company's logo is a red-headed, freckle-faced boy in overalls. Although Toby shows did not invent agrarian values, they certainly reflected and represented them for rural Americans for nearly 140 years. On television and in most movies, reflected in archetypal logos, good still wins through honesty, integrity, and virtue.

My company performs a Toby play I wrote called, "How Now White Cow or You Can Put Your Shoes in the Oven, but That Don't Make Them Biscuits." Although I wrote the plot portion of the script, what we call "plot bits," I incorporated historic sketches found in the Rosier script collection between the plot bits. I modernized the show by integrating, as the historic companies did, regional and local information into the comedy. Additionally, I found it necessary to write the female characters "smarter," to locate them on the same playing field as the male characters, because I am a female actor-manager and because women's roles have changed and are changing, even in the rural South. I reflected the changes by heightening the matriarchal rural family emphasis in plot portions that I wrote to fashion more assertive rural female characters, characters that were considered the heroines of the stories. I found this was in keeping with many of the historic comic sketches found in the Rosier collection.

There are two main challenges I face in successfully perpetuating this tradition through performance reconstruction. First, it is increasingly difficult to keep the historic equipment maintained. The trucks all need new engines, and I store them outside in the weather under tarps because I cannot find a space big enough and cost-effective enough to store them indoors. We have to replace wooden tent poles, canvas sections of the tent, and stage house equipment regularly because of the weather. Federal and state arts granting programs are of little help, as their criteria regard the historic equipment as capital expenses, which neither type of agency funds.

The other challenge involves what I call "teaching new dogs old tricks." Because young theatre students have no contemporary frame of reference for this type of comedy and because the scripts do not read well, it is a challenge to teach this type of comedy. I have found it helpful to show them old Marx Brothers movies, Grand Old Opry comedy videos, and Looney Tunes. I learned to time the comedy like historic actors did: by seeing my mentors perform and then imitating their comedy techniques. This worked well for me because as a young actor I performed my character during a very long season in front of live audiences.

I was able to continually polish my comic technique by trial and error. This is why I continue to play one of the female roles in my Toby play, to give my actors a mentor. However, my student actors only get a five-week rehearsal period to perform five shows. They do not have the time necessary to hone their skills. Returning actors are much better the next year because they have had five nights of experience with a live audience.

It is my ultimate challenge to strive to successfully reconstruct for a modern audience a relevant, thus entertaining, traveling tent-show experience. Coupling traditional academic research methodologies, while striving for greater accuracy of information, with data obtained from performance reconstruction methodology, which seems to evolve and become more valuable every time we reconstruct, provides me further questions to joyfully pursue and my contemporary rural audiences the finest spirit of a particular historical experience, an entertaining participative encounter with history.

Notes

1. Quoted in Phyllis Hartnoll, ed., *The Oxford Companion to the Theatre* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 17.
2. See Robert Dean Klassen, "The Tent-Repertoire Theatre: A Rural American Institution" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1969); John S. Lennox, "The Rosier Players" (unpublished essay from the Theatre Museum in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa); and William L. Slout, *Theatre in a Tent* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1972).
3. Erik H. Cohen, "Who Is a Tourist? A Conceptual Clarification," *Sociological Review* 22, no. 4 (1974): 547.
4. Hayden R. Palmer, "The Rep Show Travels On," (*Lansing, Michigan*) *State Journal*, Nov. 29, 1936, 2:2.
5. Harold Rosier to Bill Slout, March 15, 1965, Rosier Papers, Theatre Museum, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.
6. Opera houses were actually community performance spaces often found on the second or third story of a storefront usually located on the town square. They were given the name "opera house" to lend the establishment respectability, as the term *theatre* was often burdened with immoral or unethical connotations. For more on opera houses see Bruce Speas's chapter in this volume.
7. Stock companies were companies that remained in a town and performed a single play, possibly for a week or two, before changing their bill to another play.
8. Waunetta Rosier Oleferchik to author, April 21, 1998.
9. Undated newspaper clipping, Mt. Pleasant Theater Museum, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.
10. Palmer, "Rep Show Travels On," 2:2.

11. Neil E. Schaffner, *The Fabulous Toby and Me* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 196.

12. Collections research included the Rosier Players Collection at Michigan State University, Rosier Players Collection at Theatre Museum in Mt. Pleasant, and the collection that came to the author with the Rosier equipment collection.

13. Rosier to Slout, March 15, 1965.

14. Waunetta Rosier Oleferchik in email to the author, June 16, 1998.

15. Chautauqua was a form of intellectual entertainment prevalent from 1826 to 1927.

16. Rosier scrapbooks, Rosier Players Collection, Michigan Traditional Arts Research collection, Michigan State University Museum.

17. Waunetta Rosier Oleferchik, interview by author, April 1998.

18. Quoted in Lennox, "The Rosier Players," 10.

19. Rosier to Slout, March 15, 1965.

20. Waunetta Rosier Oleferchik, "The Rosier Players Past and Present" (unpublished essay in Theatre Museum, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, 1991), 2.

21. *Circle stock* refers to playing a circle of towns around a home base. A circle stock company would usually perform the same play to the circle of towns one week, then switch to a different play to perform for the same circle of towns for the next week.

22. Robert Sarlos, "Performance Reconstruction: The Vital Link between Past and Future," in *Interpreting the Theatrical Past: Essays in the Historiography of Performance*, ed. Thomas Postlewait and Bruce A. McConachie (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), 199.

23. Rosier to Slout, March 15, 1965.

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