

Wives of Fannie Brice Lift 'Nicky' Arnstein From Rock Pile

Music Box Revue Now Has Daughter of Guard in Cast

"Master Crook" Relieved of Hard Labor at Leavenworth After Wife's Plans Consummated.

By Universal Service. (Copyright, 1925.) Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 3.—"Nicky" Arnstein, the shiftiest master crook of recent reports, again has demonstrated his genius for wiggling out of tight situations.

For years the authorities fenced and squirmed and worried as Arnstein baffled punishment with a seemingly unending series of evasions, escapes, delays, technical defenses and equivocations. At last a sigh of relief came when his last subterfuge was exhausted and "Nicky" finally was locked behind the barriers of the federal penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth.

But it wasn't by any means his last gasp. Came an offer to get a pardon or shortening of sentence for Arnstein in return for his "turning up" several million dollars in stolen securities. Arnstein was taken to New York, where he lived in a costly hotel with Sidney Lee, a guard at the prison.

Back to Prison. Arnstein held out for too much, however, and back he went, although his journey and the weeks in luxury counted as part of his prison term. By this time the government officials were thoroughly hot under their collars, and word went to Leavenworth to put the recalcitrant, irritating Arnstein on the rockpile, reserved for the "hophheads." United States convicts of lowest degree. Before his trip east, Nicky had enjoyed a comparatively easy office assignment.

On the coal pile, just as bad, went Nicky, for the first time in his long and labyrinthine career of crime really "up against it."

As everyone knows, Nicky's wife is Fannie Brice, the \$3,000-a-week comedienne. She is still loyal, devoted and faithful with courage and patience for the first time in the circles of the Broadway night life circles. Here was an "angle"—no, Nicky hadn't played his last card.

Fannie made a hurried trip to Fort Leavenworth. She met the officials, charmed them with her famous personality, did extravagant welfare work for the poor confined devils—and went because her Nicky—such a

Vaudeville Actress Aids Husband



Fannie Brice.

husband, and such a gentleman!—had to shovel coal with drug peddlers and unspeakable hoodlums.

"Officed" From Washington. But—Warden Biddle was obdurate. He had been "officed" from Washington. Nothing could be done. Fannie wept, even long after she went back to New York, and opened in the Music Box Revue, one of the smart girl shows.

She had met Lee also. And, while at Fort Leavenworth, had met Lee's pretty and talented daughter, Lucilla Mehaffy Lee. It will go on the stage. To her, of course, the advent of such a luminary as Fannie Brice was a thrill and a dream come true.

Fannie made no end of a fuss over Lucilla. She had the girl dance for her, trained her to go on in an entertainment for the prisoners (in which the great comedienne herself was not allowed because it was deemed bad policy to have the wife of an inmate so appear), and Fannie applauded and had not enough words to express how charmed she was with Lucilla Lee.

Shortly afterward, Lucilla, still weeping, went back to New York.

Lu Gives In.

Now, fancy a scene (one continuous scene) in the home of Lee: his pretty daughter mad to go on the stage, with a career prophesied for her by no less than Fannie Brice! Lee wanted her to stay in Kansas—out her mother and the girl herself, knew neither sleep nor calm thereafter in their excited eagerness for Lucilla's big chance.

Lee didn't get much sleep thereafter, either.

Just who started the correspondence, or exactly how it progressed, is "strictly private."

One night, recently, a sweet-faced little girl with clothes that spelled somewhere west of Chicago, was admitted "in front" at the "Music Box," passed by the management. For several performances she studied and observed.

Then came a morning rehearsal and the stage manager was notified that Miss So-and-So had been transferred to the road company of the Music Box, and Miss Lee would replace her. Which Miss Lee? Why, Miss Lucilla Lee! The stage manager thought he knew all the choristers on Broadway worth a chance at a place in this crack chorus, but he didn't know Miss Lucilla Lee. No, she was from "out of town."

New Girl Tyro.

The new girl obviously was a tyro, although a charming little trick and not at all without talent. She seemed to cling to Miss Brice, who seemed to be her patroness, guardian and mentor. Miss Brice maneuvered her had remained around at chorus rehearsals—but now she never missed one, and always stayed through, and always waited until the new girl from out-of-town changed her practice clothes, and always took her away with her—out of the theater, into her own waiting limousine.

One of the girls asked the novitiate where she was living, and she naively said at Miss Brice's home—but she expected to move shortly, as soon as a relative should arrive.

That's about all there is to the story, except—

Scan the following from the correspondent in Fort Leavenworth: "In answer to your query in re Arnstein:

"Story sent you several weeks ago about Nicky being on coal pile was entirely correct. But a few days ago for good behavior, he was assigned to messenger work.

"Answering your inquiry regard Sidney Lee he is married, one daughter, Lucilla, now in New York, preparing for stage.

Lucilla is a charming girl. Her mother was formerly a seamstress before she married Lee, who is a veteran prison officer. Mrs. Lee is said to be in full accord with her daughter's theatrical plans, but Lee is not so enthusiastic, though he gave full consent. Mrs. Arnstein is said to have encouraged the girl considerably while out here visiting Arnstein in an effort to get him off the heavy and dirty work at which time she also met Mrs. Lee, having already

Girl, 7, Poisons Three; Seeks to Slay 8 Others

Confesses Twin Sisters Died of Ant Paste Spread on Food: Tried to Kill Child With Razor.

Los Angeles, Feb. 3.—Police detectives today were investigating one of the strangest cases ever brought before the police of California—that of Ailsa Thompson, 7, who has confessed, the officers say, that she caused the death of her twin sisters and a woman by poison and attempted to poison eight other persons.

The girl was taken into custody upon request of Mr. and Mrs. Jess Platts, with whom the child boarded, after a strange substance of solution from a radio battery and ant paste was found spread over food of the Platts, just as their infant daughter,



Jules "Nicky" Arnstein.

as well as Maxine Thompson, the girl's 2-year-old sister, were about to eat.

According to police, the girl frankly admitted the poison attempt and that she had caused the death of her twin sisters by ground glass two years ago while her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Thompson, were residing in Dauphin, Manitoba. She further asserted, the police claim, that she caused the death of a Mrs. Price, with whom she once lived, by administering rat poison to her.

"I guess I was just mean and liked to see them suffer," the girl is said to have declared in admitting the poisonings.

Ailsa is said to be one of the smartest pupils in the second grade she attends and is said to have shown great interest in recent crimes, recently having asked Mrs. Platts to read her the daily stories of the case of Dorothy Ellingson, San Francisco murderer.

It was also learned from Mrs. Platts

that on last Sunday Ailsa tried to take the lives of her baby sister, Maxine, and Lorraine Platts, 9, by slashing their wrists with a razor blade, and that two weeks ago she put a strange combination of substance in the food of the Platts that made the entire family ill.

Still on another occasion Ailsa is said to have told her questioners that she poisoned the coffee at the Platts home.

Cy Scofield, a roomer at the Platts home, was another victim of the child poisoner, and on several occasions has suffered from strange illnesses, he said.

AT THE THEATERS

The Diehl Sisters, who have a great sense of comedy values, are one of the several popular features in the current six-act vaudeville bill at the World theater. The girls are expert dancers, but they chose to "down" their numbers and the result is that they score an unusual laughing success. Artie Mehlinger is a lively singing comedian. "The Christmas Letter" is regarded as the best playlet the World has ever presented.

John Holder, whose violin playing and imitations captured the first prize among 50 contestants at a contest held recently at station KFNF, Shenandoah, is the special added feature at the Empress Friday evening. Eight other acts will be offered in addition to the current musical farce, "Fooling Father," which is scoring a laughing success.

There are few dancers who possess the grace, animation and vitality of little Emilie Lea, appearing at the Orpheum theater this week in a dancing and singing concoction called "Rehearsing for Vaudeville." Miss Lea's offering is one of the high spots on the bill. The act is beautifully staged and the little dancer flashes several gorgeous costumes. Miss Lea's kicking solo and acrobatic waltz are distinctly different. Added to her dancing ability she possesses a pleasing soprano voice. Miss Lea's company includes Sam Kaufman, pianist, and Clarence Rock, who introduces some eccentric dance steps.

With a company of 50 people, including the 18 Jazz-Ganza girls, Jean Bodini's "Peek-a-Boo" is playing the Gayety twice daily. The show is clean and wholesome throughout, which should be the signal for the ladies to attend in large numbers. A bright bit in the show is the singing

and dancing of Nellie Nelson. Louise Fontain has arranged several art pictures, which are really worth seeing, and in "explaining" the pictures Harry Lander injects a lot of wholesome comedy. A distinct novelty is scheduled for Friday evening. It is called "Garter Nite," during which the pretty choristers will distribute \$15 cash to lucky patrons.

Consumption of Meat in United States Increases

Washington, Feb. 3.—Increased meat consumption in the United States last year was indicated in statistics compiled by the Department of Agriculture today, showing that about 1,000,000 more meat animals were slaughtered than in 1923.

Slaughter of 59,432,640 cattle, sheep, goats and swine were reported. While a half million fewer swine were killed, slaughter of cattle, calves and sheep increased half a million each.

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The International Revue JEAN BEDINI'S "PEEK-A-BOO" Columbia Burlesk With Harry and Willie Lander Tues. Nite—A BIG LAUGHING SURPRISE Fri.—"Garter Nite"—\$15 Cash Distributed Hundreds of 25c and 50c Seats Nightly

NEIGHBORHOOD THEATERS

BOULEVARD - 33d and Leavenworth Rudolph Vanentine in "A Sainted Devil" HAMILTON - 40th and Hamilton Irene Rich in "Behold the Woman" GRAND - 16th and Binney Katherine McDonald in "Chastity" Ten Scars Make a Man IDEAL - 18th and Durvas Sylvia Breamer and Lew Cody in "Woman on the Jury" Comedy, "Done In Oil" LOTHROP - 24th and Lothrop Sylvia Breamer and Lew Cody in "Woman on the Jury" Also Comedy

Today Cecile B. DeMille's Gorgeous Production With "The Golden Bed" Red LaRocque and Lillian Rich On the Stage—The Keno Four

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Farm Home Burned.

Pawnee City, Feb. 3.—Catching fire the second time after a small roof blaze in the afternoon had been put out, the farm home of Daniel R. Parks, six miles northwest of here, was destroyed by fire Monday night. One child, asleep in an upstairs room, narrowly escaped the flames.

When You Feel a Cold Coming On

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