

# MEMORIES OF WEEK'S VISIT WITH PATTI OFF THE STAGE IN HER PALATIAL HOME AT CRAIG-Y-NOS

## Story of Rare Experience With Famous Diva And Her Husband Told by Victor Rosewater

Visit Was in 1891, When the Idol of the World Was 48 Years Old and In the Bloom of Mature Beauty—The Invitation to Accompany Her to Great Estate in Magnificent Private Car of Prince of Wales Was Like a Queen's Command—Patti Clung to Her Mexican Hairless Dog and Warbling Bullfinch—Sang "Little Annie Rooney."

In June, 1891, in company with my father with whom I was making a tour of Europe, I spent nearly a week as the guest of Madame Patti and her husband, Signor Nicolini, at Craig-y-nos, her beautiful castle in Wales. The story of this rare experience was embodied in this letter to The Bee, which is here reprinted as again of interest because of the death of Patti a week ago.

*Victor Rosewater*

Royal Albert hall presented a magnificent appearance Saturday. Its 8,000 seats rising tier upon tier, balcony over balcony, round and round its circular walls, were filled to overflowing with London's most fashionable people attracted to the place by the anticipation of hearing the world's greatest prima donna in a matinee concert. This is the empire of the Queen of Song. As soon as Patti presented herself upon the platform the fluttering fans ceased to move. A storm of tumultuous applause greeted her first number. As encore after encore was graciously responded to the audience went wild with enthusiasm. Other participants in the concert received due recognition, but no sooner was the encore to Patti's last rendition completed, than half this vast concourse of London's lovers of music, already satisfied, left their seats in their desire to retain the final impression of their favorite. Such an ovation on occasion of her second appearance in the metropolis and at the close of the season affords striking proof that the diva now, more than ever, retains the pre-eminence position which she has so long held in the operatic world. Patti is growing old, but she is the youngest singer on the stage, always vivacious, sprightly and supple. She talks with the confidence of years, but points triumphantly to the fact that she is the only woman in the world who commands £800 (\$4,000) for singing three or four operatic selections at a matinee concert in London.

### Patti's Palatial Car.

Patti off the stage is no less entertaining, attractive, fascinating. In England as in America, she is accustomed to travel in her own palatial style, and with the consent of the prince of Wales the railway management places the prince's special car at her disposal. An invitation to visit Craig-y-nos is not to be lightly rejected; add to that a request to accompany its fair owner on her journey to London, and comes simply a queen's command. When shortly after 10 o'clock Monday morning, Madame Patti reached the station, she was immediately surrounded by a host of friends who had assembled to bid her goodby. There was much embracing, re-embracing and hand-shaking. One farewell advice will never suffice. At last it is all over and the train starts. The party settles down for an all-day ride; it comprises besides Madame Patti and her three attendants, a Miss Woodford and her brother, my father and myself. I must not forget Patti's Mexican dog and her hairless dog, a bullfinch that pipes whose tunes and melodies to perfection. The car is elegant and comfortable, upholstered with morocco-cushioned seats in well arranged apartments. We should never call it luxurious nor venture to tender its use to the prince of Wales should he consent to travel in America.

Patti could scarcely have been in better humor. The delightful expectation of soon reaching home—that home of which she thinks whenever she sings her famous concert song—seemed to put her in the best of spirits. She chats, sings, pets her dog by turns. I remember the amusement I derived from hearing Patti Rosa sing the ditty, "Oh, Caroline! Oh, Caroline! Meet me round the Corner," etc. What then was my surprise to hear the same song hummed by the divine Patti, to see her look up and nod and perform the whole accompanying pantomime! How did Patti Rosa obtain the name? "Oh, she took it," says Madame Patti, "because the cost was cheap." But that marvelous voice must not be enclosed. First one window is closed, the opposite one opened and shut. The ventilators must be turned now this way, now that. No currents of air can possibly be tolerated in the car.

### "Home Sweet Home."

And now we are approaching Wales. The landscape becomes more variegated and hilly. At last we reach the Severn tunnel, from which we emerge after five minutes' rapid locomotion, and then we are in Wales itself. Madame Patti is all excitement and ecstasy; she is again upon familiar ground, again in the country of her choice. The horizon is hemmed in by mountains covered here and there with verdant woods. The arable land is bright green and divide into small patches by means of the darker lines of hedges. At Neath we are given a special locomotive and pass hurriedly up the steep grade. Now begins the craning of necks and straining of eyes. Everybody gazes eagerly out of the window to catch the first glimpse of Craig-y-nos. At last it comes to sight. There it is, nestling in a clump of foliage, halfway up the mountain slope; from the lofty flag-staff over the center tower flutters America's starry banner—most wel-

come sight in a foreign land—and at its side the British standard, Craig-y-nos, the rock of the night, seemingly stands out in some far hue from its green background to welcome us. It is not the only welcome. Mr. Nicolini is in waiting with the carriages. As we alight, Madame Patti utters a cry of surprise; this is not the Nicolini whom she left but a few days before with a fine full beard, it is a handsome, rosy-cheeked man with blue eyes, brown hair and mustache—the beard has vanished. Despite repeated exclamations, "Is this my husband?" Patti seems to have already accustomed herself to the change and rather seems to like it.

### From the station a serpentine paved roadway leads down and around the mountain to the gates of the walled enclosure.

### Million Dollar Castle.

Craig-y-nos has undergone many alterations and extensions since it came into the possession of Madame Patti 11 years ago. Vast sums had been spent annually in embellishing, modernizing and enlarging it until at present, it represents an investment of over \$1,000,000. The castle is an imposing, oblong structure with its main frontage towards the rising sun and overlooking terrace, lake, valley and mountain. The turcked south wing with its narrow windows and Norman crest was built some 80 years ago. The rest has since been added. Its massive walls of sandstone, now gray and antiquated in appearance, are surrounded by castellated crenels. At each end by bastion-like towers rising above the three-story castle. Recent extensions and additions have been in harmony with the original design. The new center tower is embellished by a clock which strikes the hours exactly like the famous Victoria clock in Westminster.

### The principal entrance opens in a large airy hall from which a convenient stairway leads to the stories above which are devoted to chambers and sleeping apartments. It goes without saying that these rooms are superbly furnished and equipped with all modern conveniences including electrical call bells.

Madame Patti's household is more elaborately yet unostentatiously arranged. The most noticeable piece of furniture is a large safe in which the diva's princely jewels and valuables are securely kept. The chambers are handsomely decorated, not overdone; the older ones are finished with painted woodwork, those just completed in the new addition with beautiful natural wood.

### Display of Trophies.

On the ground floor to the north of the entrance hall is a cosy little reception room, in which is displayed a number of the great singer's trophies. Letters from the crowned heads of Europe and eminent composers, pictures of dear friends bearing autograph inscriptions, among which that of Mrs. Cleveland attracts the eye, painted woodwork, set of chairs of gold and silver and precious stones, and other tokens of admiration and esteem present the story of the career of the most famous songstress of our age. The drawing room on the opposite side of the hall is larger and perhaps a little more elaborately furnished. An adjoining alcove contains a Parian marble bust of Patti. A smaller plaster model of the prima donna in her youth, placed in the hall above, gives material for an interesting comparison. Portraits and photographs of the same subject at different periods of her career are by no means lacking, but as they are well distributed throughout the various rooms, their profusion does not obtrude itself on the eye. The library is commodious and fitted with every convenience for writing. Along the walls is arranged a small collection of well selected literary works in English, French and German. Many treat of musical topics, but there are also many finely illustrated books, besides a number of standard novels. Among them I notice Longfellow's poems, "John Halifax, Gentleman," Daniel Deronda, "History of Music," by Clement, the National Encyclopedia, Ouida's works, "Songs of Wales," works of Byron, Burns and Shakespeare. On the tables are many finely illustrated books, besides numerous photographic albums, giving views of different places in the many lands which Patti has visited.

### Meals in Conservatory.

The dining room is a large square hall, the walls and paneled ceiling most handsomely decorated. The sideboard is loaded down with rare porcelain and silver. During the winter it is in constant use, but in the summer time the meals are served in a dining room especially constructed for convenience during the warmer months. The latter is a long conservatory built entirely of

glass, resting upon an iron frame. Exquisite flowers, tropical plants, rippling fountains, parrots, cockatoos, doves, canaries—are the background in front lies a panorama, a landscape painted by nature of which the eye never wearies. A long terrace dotted with flowering shrubs, graveled walks and clumps of trees, leads, step by step, to the foot of the valley beneath, where a splashing mountain-stream flows merrily onward over catarract and boulders. Beyond rise the mountains on either side, here covered with wood or grassy pastures marked by dark green fedges, there exposing rocky strata, behind which every now and then puffs of smoke from passing locomotives can be seen and the rabbits show themselves unabashed.

### Takes Daily Walk.

Nature and art have united to glorify themselves. It is here that Madame Patti is to be seen about 11 o'clock every fair morning taking her daily walk, in which she is often joined by her guests. That is the hour when she descends from her apartment; everyone has his morning to himself, breakfast being served in his room. Lunch on foot gives the first opportunity for using the lovely dining room. But it is at dinner, usually served at 7:30 p. m., that this crystal palace, illuminated by electric lights, shines in all its glory. Madame Patti presides at the head of the table, while Mr. Nicolini occupies the seat at the opposite end. The hostess appears in evening dress, and each evening in a different gown. And such gowns! Such jewels! My lady friends may perhaps be interested in knowing exactly what costumes Patti wore at dinner during the five days of our visit. On Monday she appeared in a white satin decollete gown trimmed with pearls; a pearl necklace, pearl earrings, diamond bracelets and a diamond brooch on her breast. On Tuesday, a pink gown covered with India gold and silver, precious stones and pearls; a reversed collar with 16 diamonds, as large as hazel nuts, costing \$45,000, with diamond earrings, bracelets and rings to match. Wednesday evening, a dress of blue damask, high in the back, but with heart-shaped cut in front, the skirt and bodice embroidered with rosebuds on pink crepe de chine; the necklace and earrings were of pearls, the diamond bracelets had cost 30,000 francs. On Thursday Madame Patti was clad in a peach-colored velvet gown with brocade of precious stones and spangles, garnishment of flowers of Oster; this was set off by a magnificent set of jewelry consisting of necklace, earrings and bracelets of large turquoise set in diamonds and worth \$50,000. Friday evening, a striking ball dress in train, of orange-colored satin, the front apron embroidered with pearls, diamonds and spangles, while the bottom was garnished with roses; around the neck a necklace of rectangular-cut emeralds framed in diamonds, with earrings, bracelets and brooch to match. This emerald set represents an outfit worth \$30,000. If so disposed, Madame Patti could dine herself daily in a different dress for a period of two months. Every costume has its own fan and is perfection itself. Almost the same can be said of her sets of jewelry. These ornaments represent hundreds of thousands of dollars.

### "Too much jewelry makes me look over-weighted," says Patti. "But I have so many sets that I must wear them if I do look like the jeweled virgins in some Catholic shrines. It is on account of these jeweled images that the churches are often robbed."

### Jewels and Prima Donnas.

"Robbers have no respect for madonnas," remarked one of the company.

### "No more have they for prima donnas," came the sharp retort from Patti.

It is not only on the operatic stage that Madame Patti has achieved celebrity. She has become famous in other fields and that of salad-dressing is one in which she takes especial pride. At each dinner she personally must dress the salad. It is needless to say that she has good grounds for pride and is not to be blamed for the satisfaction she takes in a handsome gold decoration presented to her by some of her intimate friends as a substantial testimonial for artistic salad-dressing.

### On the south, the summer dining room opens on a passage which leads to the winter garden, a large, high conservatory entirely of glass and iron. Its erection alone cost over \$20,000. The lofty dome makes a room for huge palms; flowering vines, hanging baskets, bright blossoms, fragrant perfumes replace in winter or in bad weather the beau-



*Adeline Patti Nicolini*  
To Mr. E. Rosewater as a friendly remembrance of her visit to his magnificent Bee Building—  
Omaha March 1899

### Beautiful walks along the terrace. All is lighted by electricity, heated by steam. Grapes, peaches and other fruits are raised in separate hot-houses.

### Birds Are Everywhere.

There are birds everywhere. Patti called them her children. Having no little folks of her own, she lavishes all her maternal affection upon her birds and dogs and they are treated right royally. Ricci, the small Mexican dog with clipped ears and sleek yellow-brown hair, presented by Mrs. President Diaz, is her special favorite and is carried along on all her tours. The Welch ponies which Patti herself drives come in for their share of petting, but she feels for all animals. She will allow none to be killed upon the immediate premises. After dinner the evenings are devoted to various entertainments. The billiard rooms are located in the new wing on the north. There are two large halls, one containing an American table, the other a table with pockets for English players. In the first room is a grand orchestra made to order in Switzerland and imported at a cost of 100,000 francs. It is operated by means of an electric motor. All the favorite operas as well as classical symphonies and lighter dance music are rendered in an artistic manner by this wonderful piece of mechanism. Patti never tires of its music. It plays several selections, particularly a waltz of her own composition, which gives her an opportunity to accompany the orchestra with her cataracts. This she does with great skill and marvelous grace and is sometimes carried away by the rhythmic music to dance about while she plays.

### "Isn't this nice?" she exclaimed as she flitted along.

"Assuredly; but so lonely," I replied.

### Graceful as Waltzer.

"Come along!" and along I went without waiting for a second invitation. And no miss in her teens could possibly waltz more easily, gracefully, lightly than she. On the walls of the room, moreover, are hung several suits of stage armor in which Patti and Nicolini have appeared.

### The English billiard room contains an organ and a grand piano besides the tables. Billiards form one of the chief recreations for Mr. Nicolini who is quite an expert at the game. His wife, too, is said to be by no means an unskilled player. Nicolini has also had a new acquisition placed in this room—a game of Dutch top played on a handsome table with metallic ornaments in the three compartments in which the top, when spun, is to

## Singer Stunned On Returning Home to Find Husband Had Shaved Off Great Brown Beard

"Is This My Husband?" She Cried—Vast Sums Spent on Improving Million Dollar Estate Overlooking Lake and Valley—One Room Filled With Trophies and Letters—Patti Took Walk Every Morning, Presided at Dinner Table, and Always Appeared in Evening Dress With Blazing Jewels—Gave Concerts to Intimates in Her Own Beautiful Bijou Theater.

tion of the blue beard as a present and reciprocated the compliment by sending the donor one of the bloody keys used in the tableaux.

### Popular With Everybody.

It was on this same Christmas last year the first that Madame Patti had spent at her castle in the 11 years that she had owned it, that 4,000 children of the neighborhood were entertained at a Christmas dinner and in the evening all the tenants and servants of the estate assembled in this theater, where a tree laden with costly presents was tripped as the number of each present was drawn by some member of the audience. It closed with a ball opened by Patti and her butler. Right here it will not be out of place to say that the diva's great popularity among all classes of people in the Swansea valley is largely due to the hospitality which she has displayed in extending individual aid to the needy and in contributing to churches and charitable and benevolent enterprises.

The theater is not in constant use, but some entertainment is given every little while. A magic lantern shows dissolving views upon the canvas, a minstrel show, a farce or miscellaneous concert is carried out by amateurs or semi-professional players brought up from Swansea. To classics or comedies Madame Patti gives the same polite attention, applauds heartily and even leads the entire audience in joining in the chorus of "Annie Rooney," while Nicolini varies the text and gives piquancy to the song by chiming in "And Adeline is my sweetheart." The gallery is always set aside for the farmers and employes of the place who show by their countenances their intense enjoyment of the privilege. There is to be a regular season of theatricals this summer, beginning August 12, when Patti herself will take part together with a large number of celebrities, each of whom she has invited as guests at Craig-y-nos. On this occasion quite a number of Patti's admirers and friends, including many of the British nobility, will be entertained, among them Prince Pierre de Vallory, the son of Count de Chambrud, Count and Countess de Reuter, the Oppenheims, the

great bankers, and the Count and Countess Castrone. The castle is in fact a miniature hotel. About 40 servants are required all the time to keep up the household. Their quarters, the dining rooms, are always inviting in appearance. Two kitchens are maintained, one for English, the other for French cooking. The wine cellar, containing more than 10,000 bottles of the choicest vintage, is the pride of Mr. Nicolini and has been stocked under his personal care. The tables are commodious and well filled, but on account of their proximity to the castle are soon to be replaced by a set of handsome new buildings of brick and stone, more remote from the residence and now nearly completed.

### Machinery Building Interesting.

The machinery building is extremely interesting. A 50 horsepower steam engine furnishes the motive force by which the dynamo is operated. The incandescent lights are not worked by direct current, but receive their supply from a large storage battery. This gives a more steady illumination and obviates the necessity of running the engine at night. An adjoining room contains a machine for making ice by the other process, while near by are furnaces for manufacturing gas, the gas purifiers and gas holders. In another building is a fully equipped steam laundry, where the washing of the entire establishment can be quickly done. All the electric and gas machinery are duplicated to provide against possible accidents. The latter grounds are completely surrounded by high stone walls, the gates are solid oak, the bridge across the Tawe is closed by spiked grating. Nor is this all; a watchman makes his nightly rounds and notes his visits at various points by means of a time register. Electric burglar alarms are also provided as a protective against housebreakers.

The whole estate contains about 8,000 acres, of which some 700 are round the castle are within the walls. The greater portion of the land is let out to farmers and returns a small interest on the investment. The railway station at Pen-y-wyllt, a mile distant, is located on the estate. In this vast domain Nicolini retains the right to

hunt and fish, and the ruddy color of his face attests the healthfulness of his favorite sport. He is quite an angler and brings home whole loads of trout. Some are caught alive and placed in a pond where they are kept protected by a wire netting until wanted. Both the lake and stream abound in trout, which may be seen swimming about at all times, while another stream not far distant affords good salmon. Moreover, a field within the enclosure has been arranged to protect young pheasants (hatched by hens) until they are strong enough to take care of themselves. They then fly off to the woods, where they afford the huntsman as fine sport as the cold desire. Nicolini has figured that by this process every pheasant he shoots costs him \$5. Patti has not the heart to join him in hunting, but she has an exhibition some fine specimens of fish which she has taken.

### Reasons Were Many.

How did Patti come to select this spot in Wales as her home? This question has probably been asked by every visitor at Craig-y-nos, and Madame Patti is not reticent in replying:

"When I first saw the place, I was immediately struck by its beauty. I thought it the most charming spot I had ever seen. Then, too, I heard such clear, sweet voices among the Welsh peasantry, that I said: 'This is the country for me. I want to preserve my voice.' Beautiful as it must then have been, each year has added to its charm until now the term 'paradise' cannot be considered misplaced. No wonder that Patti adores the place and that strong inducements are necessary to draw her from it. Money, when earned by hard labor, is never unwelcome, and so Madame Patti continues to sing as long as her services are in demand at her own figures. She will make a concert tour in the United States this coming winter, and will probably reach Omaha in time to see the blue birds, of which she always speaks; but there is no attraction like Craig-y-nos! To Craig-y-nos she will return; for here alone can she find that serene and happy life which she desires."

## Failure to Give Pershing Sword a Mistake; British Heroes Richly Rewarded

Congressman Johnson Introduced Bill for \$10,000 Appropriation—Opposition Developed and Project Was Dropped—Other American Heroes Honored With Handsome Swords.

### By REPRESENTATIVE JULIUS KAHN OF CALIFORNIA.

Washington, Oct. 4.—Since the organization of the American army in September, 1789, 25 officers have been thanked by name by congress, 15 have been presented with gold medals, 14 have been presented with swords. This does not include officers of the navy who have been similarly rewarded. During the encounters with the Barbary pirates and the war of 1812 such officers as Truxton, Perry, Bainbridge, Decatur and Preble all received recognition at the hands of congress. In the Spanish-American war Dewey was made an admiral and was presented with a sword made by Tiffany & Co., for which the sum of \$10,000 had been appropriated. The legislation to present General Pershing with a sword was first suggested, so far as I know, by Hon. Royal C. Johnson, a member of the house from South Dakota.

### Opposition Caused Withdrawal.

When I found there was considerable opposition to the presentation of the sword I concluded to drop that provision from the legislation. I felt that if the presentation could not be made spontaneously and practically unanimously it would lose much of its value. When I found that the opposition would result in a fight on the floor a number of my colleagues and myself held a consultation at which it was decided that the resolution should be offered on the floor in the form in which it ultimately passed.

### Recognition Stimulates Courage.

Personally I feel that it is a good thing for congress to show in a tangible manner its appreciation of the efforts of our officers and men, both in the army and the navy. Such a course naturally would stimulate the courage of all those in the service of their country.

### Rewards to British Heroes.

The other day I saw a list of those who had been honored by Great Britain. Let me give you the list of officers of the British army and navy who received rewards at the hands of their countrymen.

### Haig, earldom, 100,000 pounds.

### 3. Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Jellicoe, 50,000 pounds.

### 4. General Sir H. Horne (First army), peerage, 40,000 pounds.

### 5. Admiral Sir Charles Madden (second in command under Beatty), baronetcy, 10,000 pounds.

### 6. General Sir William Robertson (formerly Chief of Staff), peerage, 10,000 pounds.

### 7. Admiral Sir Doveton Strudde ( Falkland Islands), 10,000 pounds.

### 8. Rear Admiral Sir Reginald Tyrwhitte ("Arthusa" and North Sea actions), baronetcy, 10,000 pounds.

### 9. Field Marshal Viscount French, 50,000 pounds.

### 10. Field Marshal Sir E. Allenby (Palestine), viscountcy, 50,000 pounds.

### 11. General Sir W. Birdwood (Anzac and Fifth army), baronetcy, 10,000 pounds.

### 12. Vice-Admiral Sir Roger Keyes (Ostend and Zeebrugge), baronetcy, 10,000 pounds.

### 13. Field Marshal Sir H. Plumer (Second army), peerage, 30,000 pounds.

### 14. Field Marshal Sir H. Wilson (Chief of Staff), baronetcy, 10,000 pounds.

### 15. Sir Maurice Hankey (secretary war cabinet), G. C. B. 25,000 pounds.

### 16. Vice-Admiral Sir John D. Robeck (Dardanelles), baronetcy, 10,000 pounds.

### 17. General Sir H. Rawlinson (Fourth army), peerage, 30,000 pounds.

### 18. General Sir J. Byng (Third army), peerage, 30,000 pounds.

### 19. Air Vice-Marshal Sir H. Trenchard (Independent Air Force), baronetcy, 10,000 pounds.

## Burglary Increases 80 Per Cent In London, Says Insurance Co.

London, Oct. 4.—Burglary has increased 80 per cent in London during the past year, and burglarly insurance companies are urging policy holders to help them defeat the gentlemen who covet other people's property—and take it.

"We tell the householder if he will remove the ordinary rim lock and replace it with a mortice lock, the sunk in the edge of the door, he would make his premises safer, said an official. The first can be readily jimmied; the second is almost burg-proof."

## Dutch Dam Dream to Be True After 70 Years

Amsterdam, Oct. 4.—Holland at last has begun work on its long projected plan for reclaiming the land covered by the Zuider Zee. This will mark the fulfillment of a Dutch dream of 70 years. The schemes aims at recovering for tillage and pasture about 800 square miles flooded by the sea 700 years ago with a loss, it is said, of 80,000 lives. The remaining 500 square miles of channel between the reclaimed portions of land will be turned into a fresh water lake fed by the river IJssel, a branch of the Rhine and protected against the sea by a dyke 183 miles long between the Island of Wieringen and Piann, on the coast of Friesland.

## Cheap German Pottery Alarms English Dealers

London, Oct. 4.—The British pottery trade has taken alarm at the appearance of German china in the stores of the pottery district at prices which, manufacturing potters declare they cannot approach. Even in this city, with its important pottery industry, German ware is being offered below cost of local manufacture. These German goods, it is stated, are being represented as of Dutch manufacture but a member of the English China Manufacturers' association said that no such china was manufactured in Holland.

## England Bothered Over Caring for Army Generals

London, Oct. 4.—What Britain shall do with its general army officers is one of the questions of the day. To the present no one has been able to answer it although many of them are idle and costing the country a pretty penny. On the list are eight full generals, 27 lieutenant-generals, 122 major-generals, 488 brigadier-generals, all on full pay. On half pay there are eight generals, 25 lieutenant-generals and 49 major-generals.

For painting or oiling floors a New York inventor has patented a fountain brush mounted on small wheels.