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Hidden Identities, Forgotten Histories: Female Provincial Touring Artists in Britain, 1887–1900

Provincial touring companies of the late Victorian period, comprising mostly unknown actors and actresses, have received minimal scholarly attention until recently. The sheer number of 'on-the-road' artists who were employed in such enterprises from the late nineteenth century onwards increased to such an extent that to establish a framework for their individual and collective study presents significant challenges. This article addresses this problem by proposing a method, grounded in genealogy, that records the male and/or female artists of a given touring company over its full term without selective bias in order to establish a cohort of subjects for further examination. It tracks the touring companies of actor-manager Lawrence Daly, an individual unheard of today, between 1887 and 1900, the year of his death. One hundred and twenty-five female artists employed by Daly during this period are recovered, and their careers, family histories, and personal identities are subjected to statistical analysis. The conclusions drawn here not only contribute to the better understanding of the social history of non-elite female provincial artists of the late nineteenth century, but also afford the opportunity to shine a light on figures whose names, lives, and achievements are long forgotten. Further, a case is made for the method as the basis for a wide-ranging database of provincial touring companies and artists. Bernard Ince is an independent theatre historian who has contributed several articles on Victorian and Edwardian theatre to *New Theatre Quarterly*.

Key terms: nineteenth-century British theatre, cohort study, non-elite performers, identity resolution, stage name, genealogy.

There are many actors who have lived and died unnoticed and unknown who might have been as highly distinguished as those illustrious actors whose names have become household words, if, with the same propensities, they had had the same opportunities and the same advantages.¹

THE MAJORITY of provincial touring artists who filled the advertising columns of the *Era* and *Stage* theatre newspapers in increasing numbers from the late nineteenth century onwards remain a largely anonymous body. In a broad sense, they constitute the 'non-elite' of the British theatre profession, whose working lives were spent mostly in the provinces rather than in London's West End. This allusion to ordinariness is not intended to be derogatory but merely symbolizes a historically visible yet 'silent majority', who were never recognized in their time, not even as merely competent jobbing actors.² They often lacked formal training, had few, if any,

theatrical forebears, and left no account of their professional experiences for posterity. Further, despite constituting the lifeblood of the British provisional touring landscape, they have tended to be disregarded in the historiography of the period, with the exception of a small body of scholarship from the likes of Jan McDonald, Tracy C. Davis, Christine Woodworth, and Janice Norwood.³ Their collective history lies hidden behind a mask of anonymity that is often made even more inaccessible by the mask of the stage name or *nom de théâtre*.

The question remains, however, as to how sufficient data may be recovered from a large pool of non-elite male and/or female stage artists of differing life and career spans without introducing bias in their individual selection. This article outlines one potential method, namely a cohort study grounded in genealogy, and focuses on a single touring

enterprise in order to examine the efficacy of it. While a genealogical approach to the study of lesser-known theatre artists is now common practice, having been used by Norwood and Jacky Bratton among others, the approach proposed here is new.⁴ This article is thus an exploratory study, the aim of which is to assess the feasibility of the cohort approach through the use of genealogical resources and, beyond this, to make a case for its contribution to larger-scale projects.

Central to this deployment of standard genealogical resources and stage material in order to recover biographical and other data from a specific cohort of stage artists is the concept of 'identity resolution'. The term 'identity' here refers specifically to biological or personal identity, while 'resolution' refers to the process of establishing the true birth and family origins of a subject, which is a prerequisite for subsequent studies of, for example, socio-economics and social demography. Touring companies offer ideal case studies to put this method to the test and to maximize the number of subjects recovered. Drawing on Jonathan Bollen's argument for the use of 'data models' in theatre research and applying them to touring companies more specifically, it is clear that, by their very nature, such enterprises bring together the required 'people, places, and performances' in a 'network of artistic collaboration unfolding in time and distributed in space'.⁵ Furthermore, and crucially in the present context, touring enterprises comprised an ever-changing pool of artists upon which their longevity depended. The artists associated with a given company at different points in its lifespan contribute, in an additive sense, to a resultant cohort that is ideal for analysis.

The proposed approach confers several advantages. First, the artists effectively choose themselves and thus comprise a randomized assortment of subjects. Second, the frequency or longevity of their respective time with a company becomes irrelevant. Instead, focus is placed on the point of their career that intersects with the touring company's work. While this does not offer a full profile of all the roles performed by a specific actor, the raw data recovered here lays the foundation for such

investigations in the future. Third, the chances of capturing a wide variety in different 'lines of business' and from different walks of life are maximized by virtue of the turnover of artists within the life of a company.⁶

Finally, this method offers the opportunity to study the progression of different generations of performers. The longer the lifespan of a company being analyzed through this method, the greater the progression of different generations recovered. Having said this, the selection of the touring company (or companies) for study is dependent on the parameters of the investigation, including appropriate criteria for periodization.⁷ It should be noted that while the employment of this cohort method in this article focuses on actresses, the method is gender non-specific and so is equally applicable to the study of male performers.

Introducing Lawrence Daly

Lawrence Daly is an exemplar of the archetypal entrepreneur specializing in the consistent and uninterrupted running of touring companies during the last decades of the nineteenth century, and so is an apt choice for study here.⁸ Apart from satisfying the requirements stated above, the period in which Daly's company was active coincides with both a period of significant change for women in regards to marriage and property, and the rapid expansions of the theatre-building landscape across the British Isles, facilitated by the expansion of the railway network.⁹ Further, Davis has shown that there was a surge in male and female artists taking to the stage during the 1890s in roughly equal measure.¹⁰ Although the cohort of 125 female artists recovered in this present study represents a mere fraction of those working at the time, it nevertheless presents a useful cross-section of the female provincial touring masses from which to gain some awareness of their life experiences over a period of significant social, economic, and industrial change.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, is the fact that Daly – like many of the performers who worked for him – was unremarkable for his time, despite being undoubtedly



Figure 1. Lawrence Daly, Eva Lawrence, and their daughter Elsie (n.d.). Photo courtesy of the Billy Rose Digital Collection, New York Public Library.

talented (Figure 1). He is a virtually unknown theatrical personage and so contrasts with famous contemporaries who also ran touring companies such as Sarah Thorne, Ben Greet, F. R. Benson, and Augustus Harris, although such elite figures are no less applicable to a cohort study as outlined here. The changes in the composition and development of Daly's company during the 1880s and 1890s, coupled with the fact that his plays have left little or no enduring legacy, thus offers a useful framework for exploring the social and gender dynamics of his 'family' through genealogical and other data.

In order to set the context for the study, it is useful to first consider Daly himself, the plays he toured, and some of his principal performers who took title roles in two of his most successful and long-running productions, *The Prime Minister* and *Cissy; Or Love's Devotion*. This is then followed by a discussion of

the approach, challenges, and outcomes of the research, including a statistical summary of the results, and the conclusions to be drawn.¹¹

Plays and Players

Lawrence Daly first appears in the theatre press in 1884, advertising for artists to join his amateur dramatic company, which commonly gave performances at the Hackney Institute or the United Dramatic Hall in Islington.¹² Within three years, he and his wife had built up an impressive repertoire of stage roles as amateurs.¹³ The reason why Daly then chose to transition from an amateur to a professional enterprise is unknown, but he appears to have been part of an amateur dramatic milieu in the East End of London that may have informed his decision. In March 1886, he appeared in a company at Ladbroke Hall alongside actor Percy Lawrence, who became a member of a large company of amateur performers specializing in drama, comedy, and Shakespeare that Daly managed the following year.¹⁴ It is possible that this venture was the precursor to his professional touring enterprise proper, although neither Lawrence nor any of the artists listed are found in the later touring companies.

Although Daly's first professional tour commenced in December 1887, the venture began in earnest in 1889, following the couple's sojourn on the touring circuit in 1888 as a 'Mr and Mrs' marital partnership. His first production, *The Prime Minister*, was a four-act musical play by Clarence Burnette that had nothing to do with politics.¹⁵ It was originally performed (as was typical) by three separate companies (A, B, and C), but these were eventually amalgamated into a single company.¹⁶ The actresses in Daly's original company (in addition to Eva Lawrence) were Amy Woodleigh, Dot Conway, and Ellen Cranston, the latter two revealed in this study as being married to fellow company members Alec Forbes and Clarence Burnette, respectively. The other actors were George F. Sinclair and Percy Milton.

Eva Lawrence played the role of Rose Wildbriar, a blind heiress, over a thousand times, which is a part that was also played by Madge Clouston Foster (in 1890), Stephanie Baring

(also in 1890),¹⁷ Lizzie Watkins (1892), and Pauline Bernhardt (1894).¹⁸ Similarly, the part of Mrs Jubb (played against Daly's Jonathan Jubb) was performed by a number of actresses over the years, including Bessie Heath (in 1889), Helen Brinckman (1889–91),¹⁹ and Kate Rignold (1892).²⁰ Heath and Rignold specialized in 'First Old Woman' roles and were the oldest of Daly's actresses by some margin.²¹ Other performers of note included Clara Weston, who appeared as Constance Chandloss in 1889,²² Edith Housley in the soubrette role of Hetty Ferns in 1889–90, who was joined by her mother, Jenny Holloway, as Constance Chandloss in 1890,²³ and Lucy Wilson in 1893–4 (Figure 2).²⁴

A summary of the principal plays toured by Daly, as shown in Figure 3, suggests that he operated with plays of some quality. Of the four musical plays included in the tour, *Cissy* is the best remembered, and is thus worthy of brief consideration here.²⁵ Kurt Ganzl refers to it as

a seemingly haphazard little omnibus piece [which] paired a romantic-dramatic-comic tale of the most obvious kind . . . with an eclectic and movable selection of musical numbers ranging from a touch of coloratura and mandoline and piano solos to a lady whistler, in an evening of wholly unsophisticated entertainment which proved extremely popular in



Figure 2. Edith Housley (born Edith Ellen Housley) as the Prince in *Cinderella* (n.d.). Photograph courtesy of Gordon Housley.

Play	Genre	Number of Acts	Author	Years performed
<i>The Prime Minister</i>	Musical Play	4	Clarence Burnette	1887, 1889–1900
<i>Our Boys</i>	Comedy	3	H. J. Byron	1890–1894
<i>The Bells of Fate</i>	Drama	5	Edward Darbey	1891–1895
<i>Cissy</i>	Musical Comedy	3	W. H. Dearlove	1891–1900
<i>The Danites</i>	Drama	5	Bret Harte	1894
<i>A Woman's Honour</i>	Musical Drama	4	W. H. Dearlove	1895–1900
<i>A Queen of Hearts</i>	Musical Comedy	4	Clarence Burnette	1900

Figure 3. Table showing the principal plays toured by Lawrence Daly between 1887 and 1900.

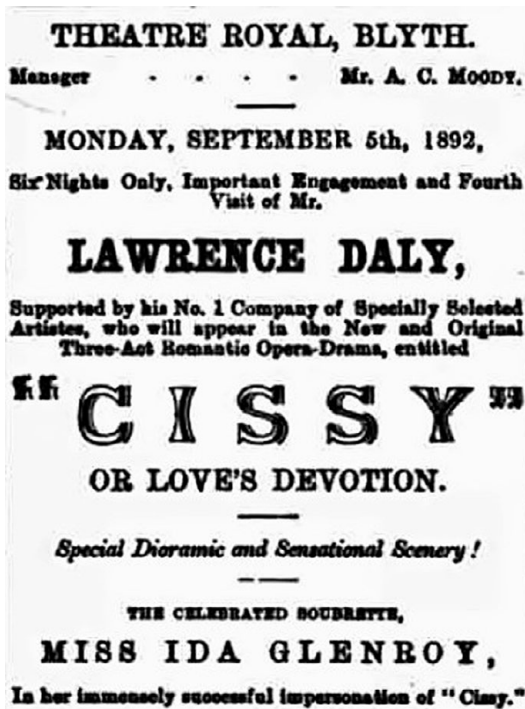


Figure 4. An advertisement for *Cissy* promoting Ida Glenroy in the title role of *Cissy Vere*. *Blyth News*, 3 September 1892.



Figure 5. Katie Peerless (born Kate Alexandra Boardman), n.d. Photograph courtesy of the Billy Rose Digital Collection at the New York Public Library.

the smaller (and sometimes not quite so small) provincial theatres and halls through which it toured year after year, becoming something of a phenomenon with its little but insistent success over more than a decade.²⁶

The noted eclecticism was a result of the wide range of novelty acts that Daly introduced. Such variety gave *Cissy* a fresh look that helped to maintain its popularity with audiences across the British isles for an extended period of time much to the apparent chagrin of Ganzl, who declared the musical-comedy-drama to be the 'most unsophisticated of all types . . . annually redecorated and trotted out in the Mechanics' Halls and Institutes and small town theatres'.²⁷

The principal soubrette role of *Cissy Vere* involved not only a triple impersonation (*Cissy*, a young heiress; *Florine*, a Neopolitan street singer; and *Mike*, a ragged young street urchin) but also multiple performance skills. Thus, in addition to being young, pretty, and petite – basic requirements for soubrette or ingénue roles – and being an experienced

actress, the ability to sing and dance were essential, while playing the piano was a useful adjunct. The part was so demanding that there would regularly be two actresses performing it on alternate nights.

The original *Cissy Vere* was Ida Glenroy, who took the role in 1891 and 1892 (Figure 4), reappearing in 1898, when she alternated with Viviane Douglas, and in 1899, alternating with Lily Brammer.²⁸ Viviane Douglas shared the role with Margaret Story-Gofton in 1895 and with Grace Wilson in 1896.²⁹ Other performers in the role included Lucy Manders and Agnes Lyon (both in 1893), Clara Powell (1893–94), Alice Metcalf and Rose Stanley (both in 1894), Georgie Corlass (1896–7 and 1899), Ruby Hallett and Katie Peerless (both in 1896), and Ella Swarbreck in 1898 (Figure 5).³⁰ The last performers under Daly, who appeared in the role in 1900, were Dulcie Murielle and Adeline Yohle.³¹ Other noteworthy performers included Marie Ault (Figure 6), who played the role of *Mary Mopps* in 1895–6,³² and Susie Fradelle as *Olive Temple* in 1896.³³



Figure 6. Marie Ault (born Emily Cragg), n.d. Photograph courtesy of Philip Holliday.

Daly's style of advertising was persistently aggressive throughout his career. The level of detail, self-promotion, and careful forward planning evident in the advertisements proved to be the lynchpin to his continuing success, where plays like *Cissy* were toured year after year to the entire spectrum of venues from Theatres Royal to those in smaller towns, market towns, and suburbs. Although beyond the scope of the present article, it would be interesting to compute the mileage covered on a typical tour based on the information given in Daly's advertisements.³⁴ An advertisement for the 1899 tour of *Cissy* and *A Woman's Honour* offers a good example, listing in chronological order all of the thirty-one venues that made up the tour.³⁵ It shows that the company was engaged every week of the seven-month tour and, with each booking being a five-night run and the weekend being dedicated to travelling to the next venue, it suggests the level of energy and commitment required of all artists in the company.

Analyzing the Cohort

In order to resolve the identities of the female performers in this cohort study, a wide spectrum of methods has been used. These methods combine conventional theatre research with those regularly employed by the experienced family historian and genealogist. While the family historian typically works with the common or family names of ancestors, this research naturally began with the names of performers as they chose to be known by on the stage, the aim being to resolve the former by decoding the latter. The exercise has proved to be far from straightforward for many of the actresses in the cohort. Research of this nature, especially when it involves virtually unknown subjects, is not an exact science and rarely results in clear outcomes. Consequently, this study does not claim to have resolved all the issues, nor to have answered all of the questions. Instead, it offers one approach to further the study of theatre lives on and off the stage.

The data recovered from the present cohort study have been divided into three subsets depending on the degree to which the identities of individual actresses could be resolved. In the first group are those whose identities remain unresolved, that is, their historical record offers either no clues as to their origins and connections, or, at best, it offers several possibilities but nothing tangible. In the second group are a small number of borderline cases whose identities may be described as only partially resolved. The third and largest group contain those actresses whose identities have been resolved in terms of such life events as birth, marriage, and death, and, in many instances, with additional identification of their parentage and wider familial connections.

A numerical summary of the results of this study is shown in Figure 7, expressed as 'totals found' for the different categories of investigation, numbered 1–18. The totals for Categories 2, 3, and 4 are further expressed as a percentage of the total number of female performers in the cohort (125), rounded up to one decimal place, to provide a crude measure of success in identification. The totals for all

	Category	No.	%
1.	Actresses in cohort (1887–1900)	125	
2.	Identity unresolved	46	36.8
3.	Identity partially resolve	14	11.2
4.	Identity fully resolved	65	52.0
5.	Date (or year) of birth confirmed	74	93.7
6.	First marriage	67	84.8
7.	Published marriage notices	14	17.7
8.	Divorce	6	7.6
9.	Second marriage	12	15.2
10.	With children	37	46.8
11.	Date (or year) of death confirmed	57	72.2
12.	Published death notices/Obituaries/In Memoriam	26	32.9
13.	Probates/Administrations	13	16.5
14.	Newspaper biographies	6	7.6
15.	From theatrical families	15	19.0
16.	Photographs/images	13	16.5
17.	Actresses found on family trees	50	63.3
18.	Actresses found on UK census	63	79.7

Figure 7. Table showing the numerical summary of results for actresses employed by Lawrence Daly. Categories 5, 6, 9, and 11 refer to approximate or exact years; Category 10 refers to data mostly from family trees; Category 13 refers to (nine) Probates and (four) Administrations; Category 18 draws data from the 1939 Register for England and Wales, the 1841–1911 censuses for England and Wales, and, in a small number of cases, the Scottish census.

other categories are expressed as a percentage of Categories 3 and 4 combined (79). Additional notes for certain of the categories are provided in the legend to the table.

Given that there does not appear to have been similar data published elsewhere from which to draw direct comparisons (notwithstanding Davis's work on the social identity of actresses) and the statistically small sample of which this present study is based, it is difficult to be wholly objective in the interpretation of these results. Whether a result appears to be 'higher' or 'lower' that might be expected in a particular category depends very much on preconceptions. I have thus avoided using such terms and instead highlight observations I consider worthy of note and which a larger sample study would illuminate further. These are: the percentage of marriages and the

proportion married to spouses in the theatre; the number of marriages resulting in children, and, with this in mind, the number of divorces (or, at least, those that were publicized); the number of actresses who came from theatre families; and the number of performers identified on public family trees and in census records.³⁶ Overall, analysis of active career spans shows a range from 1861 to 1949, with nearly 50 per cent active on the stage for twenty years or more.

The interrelated factors that constitute and affect an individual's life progression is a complex multidisciplinary field far beyond the scope and intent of the present article. Nevertheless, below is a graph of births, marriages, and deaths within the cohort for the purpose of better understanding the demographic profile of those female performers whose

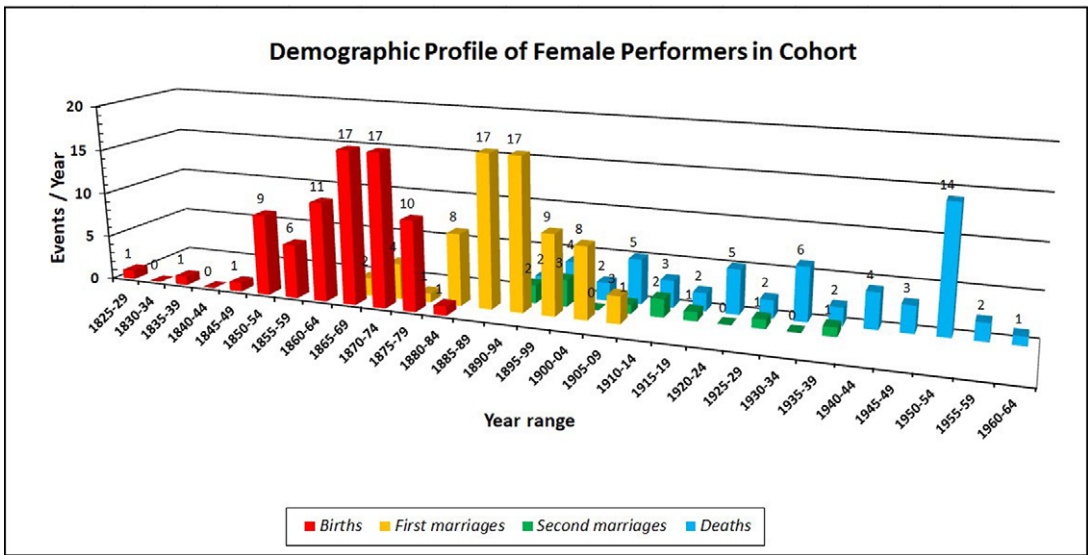


Figure 8. Graph of births, marriages, and deaths in the cohort of female performers who acted in Lawrence Daly's companies between 1887 and 1900. The data labels above the vertical bars show the number of events in each five-year range.

identities were partially or fully resolved (Figure 8). A peak of cohort births is seen between 1860 and 1879, of first marriages between 1885 and 1894, and of deaths between 1950 and 1954. Given the unpredictability of life events, especially with regard to mortality, the degree of variability around these peaks is unsurprising. More important is how such data may be correctly interpreted in the context of the population as a whole, including other professions. This is a question the present study alone cannot answer. Having said this, it worth noting that for those actresses in the cohort for whom both a birth and first marriage year could be established, their average age at first marriage was twenty-six. This figure accords with data regarding women born in England and Wales between 1850 and 1890.³⁷ Regarding mortality, the average age at death of those for whom a birth and a death year are known was sixty-six. This is somewhat higher than that found for the general population among women born between 1850 (fifty-five) and 1890 (sixty-one), as reported in Harrison. Although these sample sizes are too small to draw meaningful conclusions, they offer a glimpse of the potential value of

applying the cohort method to other touring companies.

Some Conclusions

The cohort study described here is an exploration of how genealogy may be employed in the study of non-elite artists, using a touring enterprise as the vehicle or framework for capturing sufficient individuals for subsequent analysis. It does not claim to prescribe a new methodology *per se*, but offers a new approach whereby the 'invisible' touring members of the theatre profession may be recovered for further study without recourse to selective bias. Their neglect in theatre historiography, as noted by Davis and others, lends further support for studies of the kind outlined here.

The method has also served the additional purpose of exposing the life history of a touring enterprise through its interactions with the artists it employed at different points in time. This further deliverable lends additional justification for the use of the cohort method, but its full potential may only be realized by the construction of a much wider-ranging database

that incorporates multiple touring enterprises and their respective artists. It might be added that although the focus of this study has been on female performers, the method is equally applicable to male artists, and so a follow-up study that recovers all the actors in Daly's companies using an identical approach would be a highly desirable comparative exercise. It is interesting, moreover, that while female performers were the main focus, the various sources of information means that more has been revealed about their wider social connections.

While the social history of non-elite touring stage performers has remained peripheral to the mainstream of theatre research, there are some notable exceptions that help to contextualize my findings. Davis, for example, stresses the importance of the 'social context of performers and performance' and the 'personal dimension of social activity', while investigating their 'consequences for performance'.³⁸ Elsewhere she asks: 'Traditionally, woman's choice to go on the stage was at least as much a financial imperative as an artistic inclination [so] what were the motivations of middle-class woman from non-theatrical backgrounds?'³⁹ Such remarks have particular resonance in the context of the present study, where eight out of ten actresses were married and, of these, half bore children, while only one-fifth were part of an active theatre family unit or had theatrical forebears.

Norwood's dissection of the careers and personal lives of nine Victorian touring actresses is similarly informative.⁴⁰ She uses the term 'mid-tier' for actresses who were forgotten or marginalized but who were, nevertheless, 'professionally active in the mid-nineteenth century . . . outside of the West End . . . skilled in their chosen line of theatrical activity and [had] achieved a reasonable level of fame in their own right'.⁴¹ While a number of the actresses included here certainly satisfy Norwood's 'mid-tier' criteria, the profile of others suggest a level that is considerably lower, although such variation might be expected in a random assortment of one hundred and twenty-five individuals. Further, while seven of Norwood's subjects had significant careers overseas, the vast

majority of actresses recovered by the cohort method worked almost entirely in Britain.

As for the concept of 'identity resolution', this is only tangentially relevant to the 'post-structuralist discourse on identity', which 'dislodg[es] the too-rigid dichotomy between "real life" and theatrical representation'.⁴² By contrast, Mary Jean Corbett draws on Elizabeth Robins's view that to be your 'real self' offstage differs from the self portrayed in performative acts on the stage.⁴³ Norwood, on the other hand, 'addresses issues of identity by considering how it is framed by the repertoire [an actress] adopts and how she chooses to present her own history'.⁴⁴ Further, she observes astutely: 'Writing a history of subjects for whom there are no autobiographies, limited or no biographies, and little extant private writing or letters, presents particular challenges'.⁴⁵ Since, the actresses considered in the cohort study left no written accounts of their experiences or philosophy of life, it is impossible to know how deeply they felt about their 'real self'.

This study has also demonstrated that many factors determine the likelihood of a full resolution of a single individual's identity and that success in this regard is not always dependent on a healthy historical footprint in the theatre or provincial press. This is well evidenced by Stephanie Baring's case history. If the former were true, then her performance profile might have been expected to yield more clues as to her true identity than it did. The absence of such clues proves that other factors are at play, and that these are often in the hands of the performers themselves, who chose how much or how little of their private lives was made public.

Also worthy of additional consideration is the issue of the stage name, including the reason for its use and by whom. The use of a stage name has been accepted as the norm without critical analysis, but is more complex than meets the eye. Of those whose identities have been fully resolved here, 30 per cent used a stage name that bore no resemblance to their family names whatsoever. Examples of this include Adeleine Montagu, whose birth name was Abigail Alexander, and Lina Nazeby, who was born Esther Selina Cropper. Others used a stage family name that was quite different from their 'real' one (for example, Lilian

Rosebery, born Lilian Routledge), while some truncated their name to their first and middle name and omitted their family name (for example, Annie Kelso, born Annie Kelso Reid). In a few cases, stage names were changed mid-career, an example being Eva Allen (born Evaline Quemy), who changed her stage name to Belle Tilbury in order to match the stage name of her husband Harry Tilbury, whose birth name was Thomas Saunders. With the exception of Mrs Lawrence Daly (later Eva Lawrence), the only actress in the cohort who retained the name of her husband as her professional name was Mrs John Watkins (born Charlotte Watson or Adams). Given this variability, and accepting that it may have little significance as regards performance *per se*, the subject of stage names warrants more serious study than has hitherto been the case.

In conclusion, it is pertinent to consider briefly how the cohort method might contribute data to a more conceptual mode of thinking around the study of the non-elite acting profession in Britain in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Worthy of particular note in this respect is both Bollen's 'data models' approach, as referred to earlier, and the work of Christopher Balme on the Bandmann Circuit.⁴⁶ In the former, information about performances is recorded in data structures that are combined in a relational database of live events built using data models designed for recording performance-based information.⁴⁷ Balme, on the other hand, employs ANT ('actor network theory') to examine Maurice Bandmann's touring circuits, conceptualized as an 'interconnected network of nodes'.⁴⁸ Both offer interesting possibilities, thus making the design and construction of a unified model, suitably configured for historical touring data derived from studies such as the present one, a possible way forward.

Notes and References

The author would like to express his thanks to Professor Emerita Vivien Gardner in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at the University of Manchester for her valuable comments on earlier drafts of this article.

1. 'Opportunity', *Stage*, 31 May 1906, p. 13.
2. Tracy C. Davis, 'Questions for a Feminist Methodology in Theatre History' in *Interpreting the Theatrical Past*,

ed. Thomas Postlewait and Bruce A. McConachie (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), p. 63.

3. Jan McDonald, 'Lesser Ladies of the Victorian Stage', *Theatre Research International*, XIII, No. 3 (1988), p. 234–49; Tracy C. Davis, *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture* (Routledge: London and New York, 1991); Christine Woodworth, 'Luggage, Lodgings, and Landladies: The Practicalities for Actresses on the British Provincial Circuits on the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Theatre Symposium*, XXII (2014), p. 22–32; Janice Norwood, *Victorian Touring Actresses: Crossing Boundaries and Negotiating the Cultural Landscape* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).

4. See, for example, Norwood, *Victorian Touring Actresses*, p. 196–220; and Jacky Bratton, *New Readings in Theatre History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 171–99.

5. Jonathan Bollen, 'Data Models for Theatre Research: People, Places, and Performance', *Theatre Journal*, LXVIII, No. 4 (December 2016), p. 615–32 (p. 615).

6. See Norwood, *Victorian Touring Actresses*, p. 47–67.

7. See Thomas Postlewait, *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 157–95.

8. Lawrence Daly has himself proved to be elusive as regards family history and biography. With the exception of a brief biographical sketch in *Era* (19 November 1898, p. 11) and several obituaries (*Era*, 17 November 1900, p. 11; *Stage*, 15 November 1900, p. 17), there is no evidence to ascertain his social origin or identity, nor is there any record of his birth, marriage, or death in the official indexes. Daly and his wife are enumerated together in the 1891 England census – their sole appearance in these records – as Lawrence Daly (theatrical manager and actor, aged twenty-eight) and Annie E. Daly (actress, aged thirty-seven), both born in London. Annie E. Daly is presumably the actress Eva Lawrence (see n. 13 below), and her abbreviated middle name in the census therefore Eva. Other contemporaneous touring companies who could have been chosen for analysis include those of Auguste Creamer, F. A. Scudamore, J. B. Mullholland, J. W. Turner, Fred Cooke, Wynn Miller and J. F. Elliston, G. Knobel-Rousby, Charles Harrington, Henry Dundas, and Charles Melville, among many others.

9. For details of the changes to marriage and property laws for women, see Mary Lyndon Shanley, *Feminism, Marriage, and the Law in Victorian England, 1850–1895* (London: I. B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 1989), and Philippa Levine, "'So Few Prizes and So Many Blanks': Marriage and Feminism in Later Nineteenth Century England", *Journal of British Studies*, XXVIII, No. 2 (April 1989), p. 150–74. For more information on the growth of theatre buildings, see Claire Cochrane, *Twentieth-Century British Theatre: Industry, Art, and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 19–25, 29–32.

10. Davis, *Actresses as Working Women*, p. 10–12, 64. For example, Davis notes that the 1891 England and Wales census records 3,696 individuals enumerated as actresses and 3,625 as actors.

11. The entire raw dataset of 125 actresses from which the analyses are derived is available from the author on request.

12. *Stage*, 15 August 1884, p. 24. Daly's earliest advertisements give his address as 3 Duke Street, Adelphi, although there are no records of any performances of his at this venue.

13. See, for example, *Stage*, 28 January 1887, p. 18. Eva originally performed as 'Mrs Lawrence Daly', but later adopted the stage name 'Miss Eva Lawrence' (*Stage*, 8 July 1887, p. 20).

14. *Era*, 13 March 1886, p. 16; *Stage*, 1 April 1887, p. 21.

15. *Stage*, 2 December 1887, p. 21. The play was performed under the alternative title *Our Fair Prime Minister* from October 1894 until March 1895. Burnette was also an actor in the company.

16. *Era*, 4 July 1891, p. 8.

17. Stephanie Baring shared 'Professional Card' advertisements and an address with a Grace Baring (see, for example, *Era*, 17 January 1891, p. 8), suggesting a familial relationship. Stephanie Baring wrote several one-act plays, including *Kuoni the Jester* (co-authored with Rafael Sabatini) that featured Grace Baring in the cast (Allardyce Nicoll, *English Drama 1900–1930: The Beginnings of the Modern Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 494). Stephen Baring co-authored the five-act drama *Life for a Life*, with Walter Beaumont, in which Stephanie Baring took the leading role (*Era*, 15 July 1889, p. 15). Stephanie Baring disappears from the theatrical record in 1911.

18. Bernhardt was of Danish ancestry on her father's (Schmidt) side and German on her mother's (Boysen). Married at seventeen in 1869, her husband was a bank clerk of German origin, but more extraordinary and unique in this cohort is the fact that she had a total of eight children, six of whom were born before she first appeared in the theatre records in 1884. Her patchy theatrical profile of occasional performances interspersed with recitations is thus understandable. She died a widow at Ventnor on the Isle of Wight in 1923.

19. Actress, 'dramatic reciter' in her later years, and member of the Variety Artists' Benevolent Fund (VABF), Helen Brinckman was born in India in 1865. Her father was a curate, and her grandfather was Sir Theodore Henry Lavington Brinckman, MP for Yarmouth from 1821 to 1826. She was a sister-in-law to Susie Fradelle, who was also a member of this cohort, and was survived by her husband Charles N. Fradelle. A cultured individual with no theatre heritage, she collected portraits of the great actors from the past and contributed an amusing letter to the *Era* on the subject in 1908 (25 April 1908, p. 13).

20. Kate Rignold was of the noted Rignold acting family whose family name was Rignall. See George B. Bryan, *Stage Deaths: A Biographical Guide to International Theatrical Obituaries, 1850 to 1990*, Volume 2 (New York; London: Greenwood Press, 1991), p. 1059–60.

21. Norwood, *Victorian Touring Actresses*, p. 221–35. Not all 'older woman' roles were taken by so-called 'ageing' women. In an advertisement for *Cissy* and *The Prime Minister*, for example, Daly requested a 'Smart, Petite Chambermaid, capable also of Good Walking Lady or Comedy Old Woman (must dance and turn a "cartwheel" really well, if can sing preferred)' (*Era*, 26 January 1895, p. 25).

22. Clara Weston had an exceptionally rich theatre heritage that included her mother Jane Corbert (real name Jane Howard Weston), as well as John Garside Neville, Jane Falconer, and Edmond Falconer, all of whom were actors. (She is not to be confused with an earlier actress of the same name who died in 1881.)

23. Edith Housley appeared to meet the requirements for the role of Hetty Ferns, which, according to an advertisement, included the need to be 'young, pretty, and sing and dance really well' (*Stage*, 19 February 1891, p. 17).

Other artists in this role included Ida Glenroy, Pollie Blake, Maud Elliston, Lucy Manders, Katie Peerless, Clara Powell, Annie M. Heathcote, Grace Wilson, Margaret Story-Gofton, Minnie Leslie, Nellie Gower, Amy Francis, Aggie Emmerson, and Eva Lawrence.

24. Lucy Wilson was the granddaughter of the famous equestrian and circus manager Andrew Ducrow. Her marriage to the actor Gordon Bailey was announced in the *Era* (4 August 1900, p. 11), while a photograph of her and her sister Alice de Winton was published in the same paper a year before (*Era*, 11 February 1899, p. 5). There is also a very brief entry related to her in John Parker's *Who's Who in the Theatre: A Biographical Record of the Contemporary Stage* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., 1933), p. 1435. It has not been possible to establish which role she played in *The Prime Minister*.

25. *Cissy* was mooted in advertisements as a 'worthy companion' of such celebrated musicals as *The Shop Girl*, *The Lady Slavey*, and *The Geisha*. See, for example, the *Barnsley Chronicle*, 20 June 1896 (p. 4), and the *Waterford Mirror*, 7 April 1898 (p. 2).

26. Kurt Ganzl, *The British Musical Theatre, Vol. 1: 1865–1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1986), p. 401.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 650. The original cast of *Cissy* in a copy-right performance at the Town Hall Theatre in Harrogate on 11 January 1890 is given in *ibid.*, p. 406.

28. There was an actress performing under the name Ida Glenroy in the 1860s, but whether or not she was related has not been determined. An Alexina Glenroy (of unresolved identity in this study) appears in the County and Parochial Register for 1900 in the Borough of Fulham alongside Ida Glenroy and at the same address, which suggests a family connection. They appeared together in Daly's *Bells of Fate* company in 1893 (*Stage*, 5 October 1893, p. 7).

29. An image of Margaret Story-Gofton and of her husband, the actor Basil Dyne (1868–1952), may be found in the *Era*'s 'Players of the Period' (9 April 1898, p. 11). A photo of Edward Story-Gofton (1846–1939), the noted actor and father of Margaret Story-Gofton, appeared in the *Sheffield Independent* (15 April 1914, p. 7). It was found in 2011 at the back of an archived copy of Ellen Terry's autobiography, *The Story of My Life*. An image of Edward Story-Gofton ('enter[ing] upon his 91st year on Friday') may be found in the 'Birthday Anniversaries' column of the *Stage*, 30 July 1936 (p. 8).

30. Lucy Manders's stage name came from the 'Manders Travelling Menagerie' for whom her father, William Henry Craney, was the bandleader. An image of Georgie Corlass was printed in the *Sketch*, 3 December 1903 (p. 399), and is also available in the Billy Rose Digital Collection, New York Public Library. Katie Peerless was married to the actor Wallace Arden, who had legally changed his name from William John Smith. Following his death in 1903, Peerless remained in the United States until her death in 1946. An archive named the 'Arden-Peerless Papers' is held within the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library, having been a gift from Lena K. Arden, one of their daughters.

31. Adeline Yohle had a double act with the eccentric comedian James Kurry [*sic*], who billed himself as 'A Komical Kustomer' [*sic*]. While there is no direct evidence of a personal relationship, the longevity of their association under titles such as 'Yohle, Curry & Co.' suggests they were married. Information connected to the name Yohle is incredibly sparse and is non-existent in any genealogical resource, with the exception of the

newspaper archive. She advertised herself as 'Principal Soubrette (Soprano) and Dancer' and continued in the role of Cissy for two years after Daly's death in 1900. In the twentieth century, she toured her own sketch show and performed regularly on the Variety and Music Hall circuit. Both Yohle and Kurry's names are most likely stage names, and so present an almost impenetrable barrier to further identification.

32. Marie Ault is arguably the most celebrated actress in the cohort. At seventy-nine years old, she was reported as being the oldest actress on the British stage (*Shields Daily News*, 8 September 1949, p. 3). A common mistake is to confuse her 'real' name (Emily Cragg) with that of her older sister Mary Jane Cragg (see, for example, Bryan, *Stage Deaths*, p. 50). Married in 1893, with one child, she divorced her husband in 1908 and died in 1951. See *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 26 May 1908 (p. 3) and *Stage*, 10 May 1951 (p. 13).

33. Susie Fradelle (Susannah Laura Maria Fradelle) was the daughter of a portrait painter and photographer. She is unique in this cohort in enjoying a marriage notice (*Era*, 18 April 1896, p. 12), a death notice (*Stage*, 16 June 1955, p. 8) – following her death in Detroit, Michigan, on 27 May 1955 – and an obituary (*Stage*, 9 June 1955, p. 13). Further, her mother (Amy Liddon, born Susannah Moody), brother (Charles N. Fradelle, husband of Helen Brinckman), and husband (Fred S. Majur) all worked in the theatre. She was reported to have a striking appearance, and was once described as an actress of 'marked dramatic gifts and culture' (*Stage*, 9 April 1903, p. 2).

34. Janice Norwood offers interesting comments on 'travel logistics' that include an analysis of the itinerary of actress Julia Seaman while on tour in 1873–4 (*Victorian Touring Actresses*, p. 105–11).

35. *Era*, 9 September 1899, p. 4.

36. In the absence of verifiable data, the year of birth or marriage is an approximation, but is exact in the case of deaths. The approximate birth date is drawn from census data, family trees, or known age at death; for marriages, this is estimated from 'Mr and Mrs'-style advertisements in the *Era* and/or *Stage* newspapers. The census data note five overseas births (Muriel Santley in America, Helen Brinckman and Annie M. Heathcote in India, and Madge

Clouston-Foster and Louie Esmond in Ireland), while other sources reveal four overseas deaths (Katie Peerless, Susie Fradelle, and Beatrice Vere in America, and Katie Parry in Canada).

37. J. F. C. Harrison, 'Average Age at Marriage, Child-bearing, and Death: England and Wales, 1850–1950', in Harrison, *Late Victorian Britain 1875–1901* (London: Fontana Press, 1990), p. 238.

38. Davis, 'Questions for a Feminist Methodology', p. 64–8.

39. Davis, *Actresses as Working Women*, p. 15. See also Jacky Bratton, 'Claiming Kin: An Experiment in Genealogical Research', in Bratton, *New Readings*, p. 174; and Norwood, *Victorian Touring Actresses*, p. 196.

40. Norwood, *Victorian Touring Actresses*, p. 196–220. When considering the relevance of Norwood's research in the context of the present study, it should be noted that her selected actresses were born in the 1830s and 1840s, with stage careers that peaked in the 1860s and 1870s. They are, therefore, of an earlier generation than the majority of actresses recovered here.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

42. Mary Jean Corbett, 'Performing Identities: Actresses and Autobiography', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 110.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

44. Norwood, *Victorian Touring Actresses*, p. 13 (referring to p. 46–84).

45. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

46. Christopher B. Balme, 'The Bandmann Circuit: Theatrical Networks in the First Age of Globalization', *Theatre Research International*, XL, No. 1 (March 2015), p. 19–36. See also Balme, *The Globalization of Theatre 1870–1930: The Theatrical Networks of Maurice E. Bandmann* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

47. See, for example, The Australian Live Performance Database, available at <<https://www.ausstage.edu.au/pages/learn/about/data-models.html>>, accessed 1 January 2022. The website is far-reaching, and includes details on database design, technologies, mapping, and much more.

48. Balme, 'The Bandmann Circuit', p. 25.