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## Anna Held: A Biography

Michael Owen Hoffman  
*Portland State University*

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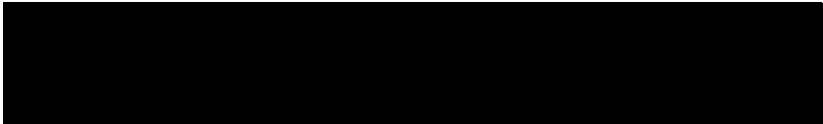
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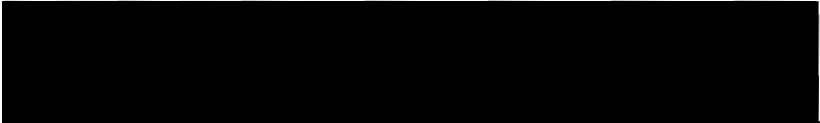
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Michael Owen Hoffman for the  
Master of Arts in History presented September 15, 1981.

Title: Anna Held: A Biography

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

  
Victor C. Dahl, Chairman

  
Gordon B. Dodds

  
David A. Horowitz

This thesis, a biography of the French actress, Anna Held (1873-1918), is an attempt to place her in proper perspective in American history. Essentially a record of Miss Held from birth to death, it highlights many events that made her famous. Included are examples of publicity generated by her manager-husband, Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr.

Much credit can be awarded Ziegfeld for his expertise in publicity stunts and promotion. Undue praise, however, has been attributed to him for the origin of the Ziegfeld Follies and the success of Anna Held.

Anna was a Continental success long before she met him. His promotion introduced her to the American public, but her prodding and financing made Ziegfeld and the Follies a success.

Through the years the name "Anna Held" has almost been forgotten. The research was contingent upon examination of primary source material in Los Angeles, New York and Cambridge, Massachusetts. The eighty-five year old surviving daughter of the famous actress graciously consented to interviews that proved indispensable to the research. The research methodology involved assemblage of material, including news clippings, articles and books. The fortunate personal contact provided a clearing house for verifying or disaffirming information. As a famous personality, the truth about Anna Held is hidden in the legend. Her daughter, Liane Carrera, has suggested that this treatise be titled: "What They Said About Anna Held."

ANNA HELD: A BIOGRAPHY

by

MICHAEL OWEN HOFFMAN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS  
in  
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1982



TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH:

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of  
Michael Owen Hoffman presented September 15, 1981.

[Redacted Signature]

Victor C. Dahl, Chairman

[Redacted Signature]

Gordon B. Dodds

[Redacted Signature]

David A. Horowitz

APPROVED:

[Redacted Signature]

Frederick M. Nunn, Head, Department of History

[Redacted Signature]

Stanley E. Rauch, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

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Finally, thanks should go to the following parties for their professional assistance on my valuable research trips: Mary Ann Smith of the Museum of the City of New York, and the staffs of the YIVO Institute of Jewish Research in New York and the Harvard University Theatre Collection in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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## CHAPTER I

### ANNA HELD'S YOUTH

Anna Held symbolized glamour, Continental naughtiness, all the compelling magic of the paste and tinsel world beyond the footlights.<sup>1</sup>

There is a place in American history for a biography of Anna Held. In the realm of social history her theatre and personal instigation resulted in the formation of the Ziegfeld Follies, a part of the emerging urban and cosmopolitan culture of the United States. Although the general public credited Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., known as the glorifier of the American girl,"<sup>2</sup> for the conception of the Follies, Anna Held was probably responsible for its birth. Her active campaigning for peace during the Great War (World War I) is another contributing factor that should assure Miss Held of a place in history. At the urgings of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she was instrumental in persuading the United States to enter the war.

American theatre-goers, in the early part of this century, knew Anna Held as a petite, five-foot tall girl, with an eighteen inch waist, weighing about 115 pounds with the classic "hour-glass" figure,

<sup>1</sup>Carol Hughes, "The Tragedy of Anna Held," Coronet, August, 1952, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Van Doren, ed., Webster's American Biographies (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Co., 1975), p. 1174.

who became a great Broadway star. The blue-eyed actress spoke with a French accent and idolized Sarah Bernhardt. Anna lived in the Post-Impressionist era, the days of Degas, Gauguin and Van Gogh when Paris was the art center of the world. They were relatively peaceful years (1870's-1890's), for no wars were fought during the generation previous to Anna's departure for America. She came at the urging of Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., whose name is still remembered for the Follies and for the stars whose careers started in his productions.

The significance of the events which eventually brought Anna Held to the United States is best explored through a revealing biography because the theatre became her life as a child. The coincidental factors leading her to fame are much like jigsaw pieces falling into place.

Hannale Held<sup>3</sup> (later called "Anna") was born in Warsaw, Poland, on March 18, 1873, the last and only surviving of eleven children born to Shimmle<sup>4</sup> or Maurice Held and his wife, Yvonne or Helene Pierre. James Nardin in Notable American Women notes that Anna listed Helene in Who's Who in America as her mother's name.<sup>5</sup> Other than her parents,

<sup>3</sup>According to records in the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, Anna was called "Hannale" at birth, retaining that name until about 1885 when she took "Anna Held" as a "nom de guerre" (stage name). Data at the YIVO Institute implied that she "carefully concealed her past," even to the point of refusing to see Jacob Adler in New York years after achieving her success. Adler was instrumental in helping the poverty-stricken Anna when she was orphaned at the age of twelve. Lulla Rosenfeld, Bright Star of Exile: Jacob Adler and the Yiddish Theatre (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1977), pp. 185-186.

<sup>4</sup>"More About Held," New York Times, April 22, 1956, sec. 6, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup>James T. Nardin, Notable American Women 1607-1950, ed. Edward T. James (Cambridge: Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 177-178.

very little is known about Anna Held's antecedents.

An area of disagreement centers on the locale of her birth. Documentation names many sites, including Indiana and Paris, as her birthplace.<sup>6</sup> Some authorities have suggested that Anna concealed her true birthplace, and that she assumed that being born in the entertainment capital of Paris, as she had exclaimed so vibrantly many times, would have been beneficial to her professional career.<sup>7</sup> Until only three years before she died, Anna had even been convinced herself that she had been born in Paris.<sup>8</sup> It remained a controversial subject throughout her life and after her demise.

According to her daughter, the most unlikely fabrication of Held's origin comes from a news item which explored her assertion of Paris birth, including an erroneous statement:

Miss Held was born March 18, 1875. Her school days were passed in a convent at Neuilly and she stepped from the care of the Sisters to the stage of the Folies-Bergere giving imitations of prominent Parisian actresses.<sup>9</sup>

The author of the article used both correct data and manufactured material in his work. The year of birth could have been a printing error but the assumption of a direct route from the convent to the

<sup>6</sup> A letter to the New York Times from Jacob Shatzky of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (New York Times, April 22, 1956, sec. 6, p. 25) indicates a birthdate of 1865 in Warsaw and an article in the same paper (New York Times, March 18, 1956, sec. 6, p. 28), "Through Lautrec's Eyes," which includes Lautrec's drawing of Anna, implies that she went to the Montmartre district of Paris from Indiana.

<sup>7</sup> Marjorie Farnsworth, The Ziegfeld Follies (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1956), p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> "Anna Held Still American," New York Times, November 7, 1915, sec. 2, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> "Miss Anna Held," unidentified news clipping, Collection of the Museum of the City of New York.

Folies-Bergere was false. Quoted correctly, however, was a reply to newsmen in America that was rewritten and printed throughout the country:

Of course I was not born in A-mer-i-ca. Let me see, where is zis Saint Louie? Oh, yes in Missouri. Well, wherever it is, I was not born there. My birthplace was Paree, dear old Paree! If you ever go to Paris (remembering her English) just call at the Rue des Hospitalières, St. Gervais 4, and ask the old lady next door whether she knows Anna Held. She will tell you that she used to toddle me on her knee, and, well I don't know how much she will tell you. I am sure she will convince you that I am a Parisian. But, there, I don't see why I should be so anxious to deny that I was born in America. America is a nice country, isn't it? I love it, but, to be truthful, I cannot claim it as my native country.<sup>10</sup>

One would believe that with all the conflicting reports, including that of the celebrity herself, there would be no resolution of the controversy. However, her true nationality had been settled, although not widely publicized in November, 1915. According to a special cable to the New York Times from Paris on November 6:

...the British Consulate definitely established the fact that Anna Held was an American citizen. ....Wishing to return to America from Rome...she got a French passport from the Embassy there, on the assertion that she believed she was born in Paris. ...in Paris, she learned from friends of her family that she was really born in Warsaw....she obtained what is called a "homeless stranger's" passport. She next went to the American Consulate, whose vise was necessary in order to leave France for America. [They told her] "you became an American by marrying Ziegfeld. Unless your divorce contains an express clause about citizenship, you are still an American, under the law of 1907." Miss Held had her divorce papers... and they contained no clause revoking her citizenship...the American Embassy, refused her vise. [Eventually] her Russian passport was vised by the American Consulate under protest.

<sup>10</sup> Burns Mantle, "Anna Held, a Kindly Friend, Loyal Comrade's Tribute," unidentified news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Thinking the matter settled, Miss Held took her Russian passport to have it viséd for the journey...but the officials declined to visé any but an American passport.

At this point Miss Held declared she almost decided to settle in Paris for life, but finally returned to the American Embassy and managed to obtain a passport.<sup>11</sup>

Her father, Shimmle or Maurice Held, had plied the glovemakers' trade for an aristocratic clientele in Warsaw when fear of a revolution upset his life, he uprooted his family and relocated in France, in 1876, after an arduous journey by stagecoach and foot.<sup>12</sup> With five or six employees Mr. Held next operated a small glove manufacturing business in Paris from 1876 until about 1884.<sup>13</sup>

Years later, Anna said her "father was a Parisian, although his name was Held. Some forgotten ancestor may have been a German."<sup>14</sup> Indeed, all relatives except her parents, have been forgotten. However, many later claimed to be related, especially after Miss Held's death. Anna had warned her daughter that people would attempt to become related, so as to share in the inheritance.<sup>15</sup> For whatever motive, a Paul D. Held, born in Warsaw in 1886 and later a New York resident, claimed to be a cousin. As the winner of a prize from the

<sup>11</sup>"Anna Held Still American," New York Times, November 7, 1915, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup>Liane Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld (Hicksville, New York: Exposition Press, 1979), pp. 15-16. Anna Held's Memories was originally published in French in Paris (1954). This treatise was translated and reprinted in 1979 under the auspices of her daughter, Liane Carrera.

<sup>13</sup>Anna Held, "My Beginnings," Theatre Magazine, July, 1907, p. 180.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, February 14, 1981.

Royal Society of Music for a symphonic poem, Death and the Maiden in 1912,<sup>16</sup> he was an unlikely publicity seeker. Later, his surviving relatives declared that his father was Anna Held's brother.<sup>17</sup> Her daughter has fervently denied this. Ms. Carrera did not believe he was a relative, that he claimed to be one so as to have a connection with a celebrity.<sup>18</sup>

Anna's mother Yvonne (or Helène) Pierre was certainly religious, although it is not certain whether she was a Catholic or a Jew. Some evidence indicates her mother was a Polish Jew, whose family moved to a Polish settlement on the heights of Montmartre.<sup>19</sup> After her husband's death in 1884, she took her daughter, Hannale, to London where they resided near her relative's former home in a predominantly Jewish area called Whitechapel, near Rosemary Lane, the major avenue of Jewish trade.<sup>20</sup>

Anna Held later described how, as a child, she spent "long periods kneeling on the cold stone floor of this or that church, saying my prayers. And I retained an unpleasant memory of it - in my knees."<sup>21</sup> She also wrote of early contact with priests and nuns

<sup>16</sup>397th Public Organ Recital Program, College of the City of New York Department of Music, December 2, 1914. Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

<sup>17</sup>Lynne Kessler Held to Liane Carrera, August 26, 1980.

<sup>18</sup>Interview, Carrera, February 16, 1981.

<sup>19</sup>Carrera, p. 16.

<sup>20</sup>Lulla Rosenfeld, Bright Star of Exile: Jacob Adler and the Yiddish Theatre (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1977), p. 182.

<sup>21</sup>Carrera, p. 16.

and later stated that "among the Ashkenazy Jews [who took her in after her mother's death] no one asked me to give up my Catholic faith."<sup>22</sup> Her daughter very emphatically believes that Anna Held was a Catholic.<sup>23</sup>

Miss Held spent her early childhood in Paris where the family lived near a schoolhouse in Montmartre Heights.<sup>24</sup> Little Hannale's father was successful in his glovemaking business in Paris. She enjoyed working with him, watching his artistry closely and after learning to sew was able to help with the buttons. Watching the well-to-do Parisians as they drove up to her father's shop probably developed a desire for the finer things in life.<sup>25</sup>

Things went well for the Held family during their first five years in Paris, but little is known for certain about that period of Anna's life. She attended school in convents in Neuilly and Rouen, France.<sup>26</sup> Anna wrote later of a school-girl experience of the interim period between the family's arrival in Paris and her father's death. She described an unusual Christmas experience after leaving the convent for the holidays to visit her parents in Paris and friends in Germany. Near Nuremburg, the train was delayed when vandals ripped up track. The stranded school-girls were forced to stay at a farmhouse with many children. Anna described the farmer in his St. Nicholas garb "consisting

<sup>22</sup>Carrera, pp. 16, 31.

<sup>23</sup>Interview, Carrera, February 15, 1981.

<sup>24</sup>Who's Who on the Stage, 1908 ed., s.v. "Held, Miss Anna (Mrs. Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr.)."

<sup>25</sup>Carrera, pp. 17-18.

<sup>26</sup>Who's Who in America, 1915 ed., s.v. "Held, Anna."

of a regulation jacket and a Persian lamb cape." After giving the poor family some of their own possessions, the group was reluctant to leave the next day after staying for a real German Christmas dinner.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps such experiences gave Anna Held the desire to help in the charitable work that she became noted for in the pre-war years in America.

During this seemingly happy period, Anna first appeared on stage, a remembrance so profound that she told her daughter about it and repeated it in her Memories:

My first appearance before the public ended in a disaster for us actors and a laugh riot for the audience. The occasion was a benefit show, and I was to play Cupid. With my quiver, bow, and arrows, I was supposed to stand on a pedestal in a classic pose. For the sake of decency, I wore a pair of horrible, cheap cotton tights....in the scene with me were a pair of lovers, one on each side of me, crooning a love song. Throughout their duet, I was supposed to remain perfectly still. I scarcely had the right to breathe.

At rehearsals, I played my role as a statue to perfection. Then came the great day. Under my coronet of artificial flowers, I felt I was looking my best, and was sure of myself. But when the curtain went up, I was seized with such terrible stage fright that I loosed my arrow into the audience. At this, the lovers panicked. And by this time I myself was so scared that I peed in my tights and it showed.

The curtain was lowered, and I was given a fine thank you.<sup>28</sup>

Things began to deteriorate when Hannale turned nine. Her father became ill, was unable to use his skill as an artisan, and gradually the shop became defunct.<sup>29</sup> Mr. Held's illness worsened after the loss. Becoming despondent, he possibly turned to alcohol for solace and soon contracted a form of lung disease which caused him to cough almost incessantly. He died on a winter evening in

<sup>27</sup>"While a School Girl," New York Telegraph, December 5, 1897.

<sup>28</sup>Carrera, pp. 18-19.

<sup>29</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 180.

1884, in a hospital for alcoholism<sup>30</sup> and was buried in a "potters field."<sup>31</sup> Just prior to his death, the eleven-year old Hannale had been forced to sing in the streets of Paris to supplement the meager family income.<sup>32</sup>

Hannale's mother, in an attempt to support the unfortunate survivors, opened a small restaurant on the Rue des Martyrs, which eventually failed.<sup>33</sup> After her father's death, other attempts for support were left up to Anna, who turned to modeling. Striving Bohemian artists often went to the Montmartre area in search of models, and two artists for whom she sat later became famous. With "Maman" (affection for "mother") present, Hannale posed for Carolous Duran and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. Many of the latter's paintings contain figures of Anna's "type." Her recompense was only ten sous per hour, and her increasingly despondent mother spent most of the family funds on lighting candles at church.<sup>34</sup>

Hannale still managed to go to school, even though she took a job cleaning and curling plumes. Picking them up in the Latin Quarter after school and curling them at night, she returned them the following morning on her way to school.<sup>35</sup> Later she worked in a hat manufacturing shop where, according to Anna, she sang as they worked. Hannale became

25. <sup>30</sup>Charles Higham, Ziegfeld (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1972), p.

<sup>31</sup>Carrera, p. 21.

<sup>32</sup>Mantle, "Anna Held, a Kindly Friend."

<sup>33</sup>Carrera, p. 20.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 180.

concerned if the other shop girls stopped to listen, fearing they would lose their jobs. She probably realized the golden qualities of her singing voice while employed there.<sup>36</sup>

These efforts, however, proved inadequate support for a widow and orphan. In desperation, Anna's mother decided to go to London where she had relatives. She wrote to them, then left for London with Anna, before enough time had elapsed to receive an answer. The hope of finding a refuge was smashed upon arriving at their relative's supposed address. Their kinsmen had moved and no one knew where.<sup>37</sup>

It seemed the end of the road for them. They had no friends or relatives and were in a strange country where they could not speak the language. With virtually no remaining funds, they rented a run-down little room next door to the Princess Theatre. This decision, prompted out of basic need for shelter, turned into a god-send. This little theatre would launch Hannale on her way to becoming the famous Anna Held.

Success did not come easily. Another serious blow struck when her ailing mother died four months after their arrival, leaving little Hannale an orphan at twelve years of age. She had lost both parents within ten months.<sup>38</sup> Only through the help of recently made friends at the theatre would she be able to handle the tragic situation.

<sup>36</sup>"Anna Held Dies," Dramatic Mirror, August 24, 1918, news clipping, Collection of the Museum of the City of New York.

<sup>37</sup>Carrera, pp. 22-26.

<sup>38</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," pp. 180-182.

## CHAPTER II

### THEATRE LIFE: SURVIVAL AND FAME

The Old Princess, as the Jews of East-End London called it, was a Yiddish theatre.<sup>1</sup> Its history stemmed from Russia when "new" laws of May 1882, under repressive policies which expelled the Jews from the farms and limited their activities in the cities. This included a ban on their style of theatre. Seemingly the Russian government feared the influence of poets and playwrights who brought sunshine into the wretched lives of their people. In 1883, the small theatre group joined the westward stream of emigration.

Settling in the Whitechapel area of London, the Yiddish players found themselves still regarded as outcasts. The closest thing to a permanent settlement there was Smith's Theatre on Prince's Street.<sup>2</sup> In the period of the Yiddish settlement, a butcher, A. Smith of Dorset Street in Spitalfields, the manager of the Hebrew Dramatic Club,<sup>3</sup> built Jacob Adler a theatre. "Smith's playhouse was built like the ordinary London music hall, with an orchestra pit and a gallery."<sup>4</sup> Supported by the membership of the club, the admission fees were only ten and fifteen

<sup>1</sup>"How Anna Held Started," unidentified news clipping June 18, 1905, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>2</sup>M. J. Lands, The Jew in Drama (Port Washington, N. Y.: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1926), pp. 284-285.

<sup>3</sup>"The Spitalfields Disaster," Times (London), January 20, 1887, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Rosenfeld, P. 182.

cents.<sup>5</sup> It was basically a "dramatic club," that being the only way to support a Yiddish theatre at the time. The by-laws of the club stated that its purpose was to provide its members with social intercourse, mutual entertainment, dancing, recitations and social and intellectual improvement in general. The rules did not allow political or religious discussion. Membership in the club cost two guineas per year, payable weekly.<sup>6</sup>

In January, 1887, a tragedy occurred when the dramatic club was staging an amateur performance entitled The Spanish Gypsy. When the production was in full swing, some youths in the galleries, in order to see the stage better, climbed up a gas pipe which was affixed to the wall. In doing so, they broke the pipe in half. A patron sitting near the pipe tried to stop the gas from escaping with his handkerchief. Some people blurted out "turn off the meter." Undoubtedly the orders were misunderstood and panic ensued as cries of "fire" went through the audience of 400 to 500. Many of the patrons, attempting to rush down stairs and through doors too small for such large numbers, were unable to escape. Seventeen died, sixteen by suffocation. All but two were young people.<sup>7</sup> As a result of the disaster, Smith was arrested for holding theatrical performances in a place not licensed as a theatre. The shadow of the event caused a severe loss of business.<sup>8</sup> The false

<sup>5</sup>Landa, p. 281.

<sup>6</sup>Times (London), January 20, 1887, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup>"Terrible Accident," Times (London), January 19, 1887, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>Nahma Sandrow, Vagabond Stars: A World History of the Yiddish Theatre (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 71.



fire alarm incident later prompted Jacob Adler ("Papa" Adler as Miss Held then called him) to relocate in New York.<sup>9</sup> "Anna" was one of the players on stage that fatal night.<sup>10</sup>

When stranded in London, an elderly gentleman, "Elie Brandt," assisted the displaced Helds. He fed them their first meal in London and located the humble room to live in.<sup>11</sup> Hannale and her mother acquired a room next door to the Princess Theatre. Elie, an actor there, introduced little Hannale to Jacob Adler, who offered her a job in the chorus,<sup>12</sup> which she enthusiastically accepted. "Maman" Held was so sick and financially desperate that she allowed her twelve year old daughter to accept the job.

The heightened desire for the stage, an ardent effort to learn English, and five shillings a night for her labor spurred her efforts.<sup>13</sup> She was large for her age, looking at least sixteen,<sup>14</sup> and she worked very hard in the "choristka." Another future star, Dinah Shtettin, adored the

<sup>9</sup>Hershel Zohn, "The Yiddish Theatre" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Denver, 1949), p. 114.

<sup>10</sup>Landa, p. 285.

<sup>11</sup>Used by Liane Carrera in her book, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, the name "Elie Brandt" is a pseudonym, Ms. Carrera had the data relating to this period of her mother's life but lacked many personal names. She added pseudonyms to provide readability to the English edition of the memoirs. Interview with Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, February 18, 1981.

<sup>12</sup>Carrera, pp. 26-31.

<sup>13</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 182.

<sup>14</sup>"Began as a Chorus Girl," 1912, unidentified news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

girl and occasionally loaned her a dress or a pair of shoes.<sup>15</sup> The enchanting voice and graceful, slender form soon drew the audience's attention. Adler, who felt she had the potential to be a star, had her coached to sing Shulamith. Making her debut in this operetta at Smith's Theatre she was billed for the first time as Anna Held.<sup>16</sup> Henceforth she was known by that name.

Anna's success in the chorus and her maturity on the stage generated envy, and coupled with vivaciousness and a certain haughty air, soon sparked trouble. Clara Blum, another young actress with the troupe, decided that Anna was trying to take her place. In the physical encounter that ensued, four men were needed to restrain Anna's attacker.<sup>17</sup> According to Miss Held's account:

I had been in the chorus for three weeks, when one day I was coming down a dark, narrow flight of stairs from the stage and I met one of the girls, Miss Blum who was coming up.

Catching my head with one hand, she buried her long fingers in my hair. With the other hand she struck me again and again in the face, giving me two black eyes. I had to be taken home and I was there a week before I could go back to my place in the chorus.

But the attack only served to make sympathy for me. The manager began giving me parts to play and songs to sing, and my salary increased.<sup>18</sup>

Things brightened somewhat when one of the prima donnas eloped. Having no readily available replacement, the managers were forced to make a quick selection from the chorus girls.<sup>19</sup> Thus little blue-eyed

<sup>15</sup>Rosenfeld, p. 186.

<sup>16</sup>Rosenfeld, p. 186.

<sup>17</sup>Carrera, pp. 35-36.

<sup>18</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 182.

<sup>19</sup>"How Anna Held Started," unidentified news clipping, June 18, 1905, Harvard Theatre Collection.

Anna became a star in Abraham Golfaden's Shulamith. Soon after, she played Dina in Bar Chovcha and the title role in The Spanish Queen.<sup>20</sup>

Anna was alone in the world at twelve years of age, but she managed very well with the help of "Elie Brandt," Polly (the landlady) and "Papa" Adler. About four years later, she asked Elie to be her manager and he spoke to her as a father would:

My dear child, you have the beauty of a she-devil...you look hot enough to set fire to the curtain...take it easy, young lady! A lover will come soon enough. I'll tell you quite confidentially that your incandescent personality kindles all kinds of unholy desires. You're a born flirt...men in the audience respond to your performance. You rejuvenate them... they go home and do their marital duty by the missus...while thinking of you. Up until now, Adler has protected you like a woman of his own. He saw to it that your power over men was not revealed until you were armed for the struggle...Now it's up to you to use that power wisely.<sup>21</sup>

Anna took this advice to heart and developed values that she was known for all her life, especially with employees of her own troupe in the United States. During an interview in 1917, some of the girls told reporters:

"She [Anna] doesn't know how to be peevish..." "She is never temperamental at the theatre and will not stand for anyone else to be cross at the locations they play," "...She wants all members of her company treated like human beings, and that's more than I can say for some of the stars."<sup>22</sup>

Following an annual pattern, in the spring of 1886, Jacob Adler's theatre group took to the road. Performing in barns and traveling

<sup>20</sup>Higham, pp. 25-26.

<sup>21</sup>Carrera, pp. 38-39.

<sup>22</sup>"Zip! There Goes Another Tradition, Killed by a Broadway Showgirl," New York Evening Mail, 1917, news clipping, Anna Held scrapbooks, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

constantly was not an easy living, but it enabled the troupe to survive. In Amsterdam during Anna's first appearance on the road she was mistaken for a young woman who had just been released from prison for killing a police officer. The likeness packed the house and made her the talk of the town.<sup>23</sup>

Adler persuaded Anna to leave his poor company. He felt that she had the potential for a better future than the company could provide. Anna took his advice and while living at the Adler family home sang "chansonettes" in music halls in Holland. After successful performances there she moved on to Rotterdam and Christiana for several months and finally went to the Hague and German cities. At the age of fifteen she had a growing bank account. Anna had found her life style and advanced rapidly toward fame.<sup>24</sup> By the time she was sixteen, Anna had gained the experience and confidence needed to return to Paris in a professional capacity. ✓ She had been without parents for almost four years and was managing well by herself. Living an adult life prepared her for relocation in Paris about 1890 where she played in the theatrical company of Abraham Goldfaden until it folded. She then entered French vaudeville.<sup>25</sup> Through the help of her old friend "Elie Brandt," Anna secured a manager, M. Talonet, an impresario who also ran a theatrical agency.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup>"Miss Anna Held Dies Bravely," New York Herald, August 12, 1918, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 182.

<sup>25</sup>Rosenfeld, p. 186.

<sup>26</sup>Carrera, pp. 40-41

In 1893 she moved up to the famous Paris music halls, El Dorado and La Scala, which were under the same management.<sup>27</sup> Anna developed some quaint acts for her appearances at the music houses. A favorite was a performance in which she wore her "postage-stamp" dress. In her "cafe-concert" act entitled Le Colignon, she wore a little coat, a man's hat, carried a whip,<sup>28</sup> and sang an accompanying song entitled: Mlle. Colignon, which she also used on her opening night in Boston (November, 1896).<sup>29</sup> A silly song, it burbled nonsensically:

One knows me in the round (music)  
Under the name of Mademoiselle Colignon;  
It is not necessary for me to mingle  
With the grumbling coachman (driver);  
My clients are made up of  
Mistresses and Lovers.

REFRAIN:

I am Mademoiselle Colignon!  
Climb into my delicate carriage, Darling  
I live in the country of love,  
I run day and night.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 182.

<sup>28</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 182.

<sup>29</sup>M. Felix Chaudoir, "Le Colignon," Boston (Mass.) Beacon, November 11, 1896, p. 13.

<sup>30</sup>Translated from French by Laurie Harris, Sept., 1980.

On me cannalt a la ronde  
Sous I'non d'mam'zelle Colignon;  
Il ne faut pas qu'on m' confonde  
Avec Poell des galiants;  
Ma clientele se compose  
De mistresses et d'amante.

REFRAIN:

Je suis M'amzelle Colignon!  
Montez dans mon fiacre, mignon;  
J'remise au pays de l'amour,  
Je trotte nuit et jour.

After Talonet died, Anna handled engagement contracts herself and discussed offers from Paris, Berlin and Vienna. Employing Teddy Marks as a manager in 1895 at the regular 10% fee<sup>31</sup> relieved her of this job so she could pursue her artistic career. To stay professionally active, she studied singing under a noted teacher and learned more diction.<sup>32</sup>

It had always been Anna's desire to emulate her idol, Sarah Bernhardt. That obsession prompted her to visit hospitals where she watched the sick and dying and studied the "tragedy" of their faces. In Philadelphia, she witnessed surgical operations to make herself "hard."<sup>33</sup> But the real Anna Held was not a "tragedienne," and she learned sophisticated "naughty songs" associated with cafe-concert shows featuring risqué verses.<sup>34</sup> The tragedy stage was not the place for effective use of her seductive eyes and voice.

When she returned to London, she headlined at the Palace Theatre, a new theatre with a capacity of 1400. It opened January 31, 1891, with Alfred Plumptre as the sole music director.<sup>35</sup> He felt that inasmuch as all Anna's songs were in French, she should sing at least one number in English. Anna thought about the request, remembering a similar experience at the Wintergarten in Berlin. The song used then had been such a success that she suggested that Plumptre make it over for her in

<sup>31</sup>Carrera, p. 47.

<sup>32</sup>"Where Was Anna Born?," New York Sun, undated news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>33</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 183.

<sup>34</sup>"Cafe-Concert" shows were forerunners of the exotic music halls.

<sup>35</sup>Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchelson, The Theatres of London (London: Rupert-Hart-Davis, 1961), pp. 122, 124.

English. It was a translation of a German ditty called The Little Devil (or The Little Teaser, Die Kleine Schrecke). In English, it became Won't You Come And Play With Me?, a song that soon became her trademark.<sup>36</sup> Like Mlle. Colignon, it was just a silly song with simple lines:

I have not been here very long,  
 As yet I'm quite a stranger,  
 And so to try an English song  
 May seem perhaps a danger.  
 One thing I ask - a favor slight -  
 I hope you'll not refuse me -  
 That if I don't pronounce it right  
 You kindly will excuse me.

Followed by the refrain:

I'm fond of games and romps, you see,  
 I wish you'd come and play with me,  
 For I have such a nice little way with me,  
 I wish you'd come and play with me.<sup>37</sup>

It is plain to see why the petite girl with her personalized eye movements and French accent became a sensation in London and later in New York.

After becoming a star in England and the continent, the increasing great demand led her to turn down many chances to go to America. She felt no desire to go there now that she was successful and lived in her fine apartment at 86 rue du faubourg Saint-Honore, across from the Presidential Palace in Paris, the residence she retained for the rest of her life.

In the spring of 1894, she secretly married a rich South American tobacco planter, Maximo Carrera, a model of kindness, whom

<sup>36</sup>Liane Carrera (Anna Held, Jr.), "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance With My Mother," True Story, March, 1934, p. 117.

<sup>37</sup>"Anna Held," unidentified news clipping, 1896, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

she did not love.<sup>38</sup> Heretofore, Anna had avoided "affaires de coeur" and "affaires de corps" (affairs of the heart and body) and, according to her Mémoires, she was, at twenty one, as pure as "the young beginner" who played with Adler's troupe. She also related many of the proposals, flowers and gifts she received from men admirers who came to the theatres.<sup>39</sup>

Carrera, a recent arrival from Argentina, had served as a colonel in the Uruguayan army. For some reason, Carrera had moved to Buenos Aires.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps it was his dashing Spanish manner that fascinated Anna. Leading a life of regularly scheduled excesses, the colonel could always be found at l'Epatant, a huge gambling club, where as one of the largest bettors, he won or lost enormous sums of money in one evening. Carrera met Anna when in his mid-fifties and was excessively attentive toward her, patronizing Miss Held's performances nightly at La Scala or El Dorado.

During an engagement at Trouville, Anna occasionally went to the casinos. Not familiar with gaming club rules, she felt insulted when the proprietors refused to admit her. Her indignant reply was heard by none other than Maximo Carrera, who calmed her resentment and explained that casinos customarily did not admit unescorted women. He then escorted her and later bought her "souper" (dinner).<sup>41</sup> This began a

<sup>38</sup>Hughes, "The Tragedy of Anna Held," p. 48-49.

<sup>39</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 46-47.

<sup>40</sup>Higham, p. 26.

<sup>41</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 49-56.



one-sided romance that affected Anna's future. Carrera's wealth pushed her to new heights. Perhaps his wealth and elegance of manner prompted her to marry a man to whom servants bowed as they would royalty. Anna now tasted the fine living she had so desired when the aristocratic glove buyers visited her father's shop many years before. She was very fond of Carrera, but has said that she "certainly didn't love him."<sup>42</sup>

He owned a home on the Champs-Elysees and Anna retained her apartment across the street from the Palace. At times, both lived together in Trouville. Much of the secrecy was largely due to fear of losing a huge inheritance that Maximo stood to receive from his aristocratic Argentine family. Also, a married female actress would not be as attractive to the predominantly male audience. Later, after going to New York, Anna even kept the public ignorant of her daughter's existence for the same professional reason. Liane thoroughly surprised the American public when she suddenly appeared in public, a twelve year old girl.

During her pregnancy Maximo had cared for Anna excessively, going so far as to cover the street near their homes with straw to deaden the sounds of the horse-drawn vehicles, so as not to disturb her.<sup>43</sup> She didn't want to be pregnant and raved at Maximo for "his carelessness;" after all, didn't he think of her career? A few years later in a second pregnancy she was anxious for the child, but in 1896; at twenty-three years of age with a promising future, Anna had no desire to have a baby. She later said: "But if I made my first

<sup>42</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 49-56.

<sup>43</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 118.

husband suffer, my second made me suffer more."<sup>44</sup> Obviously she did not want the child, but the pregnancy was there and Maximo begged. Anna said later, "I already decided to have the child, because it had already got its ticket at the box-office."<sup>45</sup>

With the assistance of supporters like Jacob Adler and Maximo Carrera, she had come a long way from the Princess Theatre. Early in 1896, Anna, accompanied by her Italian maid, Beatrice Brioschi, left for London for an eventful week's engagement at the Empire Theatre.<sup>46</sup> The performances themselves were uneventful, but something happened that would take her in new directions and onto a new continent. The twenty three year old Anna Held met a twenty seven year old American, Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr.

<sup>44</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 62.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid

<sup>46</sup>There is a disagreement here between writers. Some feel that the theatre was the Palace. Anna states in her Memoires (p. 64), that it was "the Empire."

### CHAPTER III

#### ANNA HELD AND FLORENZ ZIEGFELD, JR.

Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., born in Chicago on March 21, 1869, was the son of Dr. Florenz Ziegfeld, the founder of the Chicago Musical College, and Rosalie De Hez, a grand-niece of Étienne Gérard, Marshal of France under Napoleon.<sup>1</sup> After attending public schools, young Ziegfeld served as treasurer for his father's college.<sup>2</sup> That work bored "Flo"<sup>3</sup> and he became interested in show business early in life, probably influenced by recitals at the music college. Running away from home at fifteen (1883), he joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, then playing in Chicago. His father caught up with him at the show's next stop but the damage had been done. Young Ziegfeld had tasted the sweet forbidden fruit of show-business and waited for another opportunity.<sup>4</sup>

Ironically, Flo's next chance came through his father. Chicago officials selected the elder Ziegfeld to provide part of the entertainment for the 1893 Chicago World Exposition. The German band Dr. Ziegfeld ✓

<sup>1</sup>Dictionary of American Biography, 1946 ed., s.v. "Ziegfeld, Florenz," by Walter Prichard Eaton.

<sup>2</sup>Webster's American Biographies, 1975 ed., s.v. "Ziegfeld, Florenz (1869-1932)," ed. Charles Van Doren.

<sup>3</sup>Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr. was affectionately called "Flo" by Anna and friends. He called her "Annie," Interview, Liane Carrera, February 18, 1981.

<sup>4</sup>Patricia Ziegfeld Stephenson, The Ziegfeld's Girl, Confessions of an abnormally happy childhood (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1964) p. 33.

had imported was a disaster, so he gave the entertainment project to young Flo who was to travel to Europe and solicit some top quality productions.<sup>5</sup> Before leaving, Flo took the opportunity to watch Little Egypt do her scandalous belly dance. While jugglers, acrobats and comedians failed to draw any crowd, Little Egypt played to standing-room crowds.<sup>6</sup> Ziegfeld reasoned, therefore, that a sensual female performer could be the key to show-business success.

By the age of twenty-two Ziegfeld already exhibited the manipulative, deceptive and cruel modus operandi that he would use throughout his life as a showman. Once he set up a tent in a Chicago park and staged his "Dancing Ducks of Denmark." The ducks actually came from a local Illinois farmer and teaching them to dance and sing came equally easy. They performed on an iron stage with gas jets underneath. An assistant turned up the heat and the ducks never failed to dance or perform. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals put an end to his three D's of music! To avoid a repetition of SPCA interference, his next show was the "Invisible Brazilian Fish." He was able to inveigle patrons into paying to look into an aquarium filled with nothing but water.<sup>7</sup> As Anna Held observed, this was part of the apprenticeship for the "King of Hullabaloo," and he could always find gullible persons to be duped.<sup>8</sup>

Ziegfeld's only success before he met Anna Held was as a result of

<sup>5</sup>Stephenson, pp. 34-36.

<sup>6</sup>Robert C. Toll, On With The Show: The First Century of Show Business in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 297.

<sup>7</sup>Toll, p. 297.

<sup>8</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 85-86.

stumbling on a German vaudeville strongman, Eugene Sandow, who claimed to be the strongest man in the world. Sandow played at the Casino Roof Garden in New York, but he was a failure there. Ziegfeld picked up his contract cheaply and took him back to Chicago to begin his first attempt at glorification. He played up the contrast between Sandow's strength and his shy, gentle personality. Recruiting a Chicago entertainment critic, Amy Leslie, he had her walk through flowery gardens with Sandow who was dressed in a leopard skin.<sup>9</sup> Profit started from publicity stunts when Flo presented Sandow at the Trocadero, Dr. Ziegfeld's music hall, where Chicago socialites saw his exhibition of strength. Flo personally ushered Mrs. George Pullman, the Pullman Car manufacturer's wife and Mrs. Potter Palmer of canned food fame, to Sandow's dressing room where he stood openly revealed. The ladies, encouraged to feel his biceps, were photographed in the process.<sup>10</sup> This stunt started a fad for ladies willing to part with a contribution of \$300; they could go backstage and feel the strongman's muscles.<sup>11</sup>

For three years Ziegfeld promoted a touring vaudeville team, featuring Eugene Sandow. They finally fell out and Flo disbanded the group. With the money he accumulated on the Sandow venture, Ziegfeld went to Monte Carlo where he lost most of it. Ironically, he lost much of it to Maximo Carrera! Flo, a poor gambler, never stopped losing.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Toll, p. 207.

<sup>10</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 118.

<sup>11</sup>Toll, p. 207.

<sup>12</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 118.

In New York, Ziegfeld, distinguished by his pink shirts, wing collars and cane,"<sup>13</sup> cultivated acquaintanceships with wealthy people, whom he could later call on for money. His backers included "Diamond Jim" Brady and Lew Weber, of the Weber and Fields theatrical partnership. Later he joined Weber when Fields dropped out, and with his new cohort attempted to put on a show at Weber's Music Hall. Friction developed between the new partners,<sup>14</sup> and the partnership lasted less than one season. Weber re-entered the picture with Anna Held in 1904.

Returning to Europe early in 1896, he traveled much of the time with Charles Evans, a retired stage comedian with whom he speculated about reviving the old Evans and Hoey team. In London, Teddy D. Marks, Held's theatrical manager, suggested a visit to the Palace (Empire?) to see the star performer, a petite French beauty with an eighteen inch waist, part of a perfect hour-glass figure.<sup>15</sup> The young lady that Ziegfeld and Hoey watched, excitedly, was none other than Anna Held.

Billed as "L'Etoile de Paris," she sang her theme song:

Won't you come play wiz me?  
As I have such a nice way wiz me?

Her charms astonished Ziegfeld and Evans! Although they had been considering some sort of show, they had not developed any firm plans; now they immediately started planning to use the star. It was to be a revival of a play that had opened first at Tony Pastor's Opera House

<sup>13</sup>Edward B. Marks, They All Sang" From Tony Pastor to Rudy Vallee (New York: Viking Press, 1934), p. 139.

<sup>14</sup>Farnsworth, p. 16.

<sup>15</sup>Higham, pp. 23-24.

in New York on September 22, 1884.<sup>16</sup> The play, A Parlor Match, would be the vehicle for launching Anna Held in New York.

Being the flamboyant promoter that he was, Ziegfeld immediately went out and bought a diamond bracelet and sent it to Anna with a bouquet of rare orchids. Her maid, Beatrice, read the card to her. Saying she knew no Monsieur Ziegfeld, Anna ordered the maid to return the gifts.<sup>17</sup> It was not unusual for a celebrity to receive such gifts, but it was rare to have them returned. Of course, Anna Held was not the "run of the mill" celebrity. She possessed a fine set of values about which all of her associates would attest.

The next night more flowers and a larger diamond bracelet came and Ziegfeld appeared at her dressing room just minutes after their delivery. Anna threw the card on the floor refusing to see the American upstart. Then, apparently remembering the night before, she decided to see what kind of man would do this two nights consecutively. The actress should have known better! After all, she had married the last fan who had been so presumptuous. Thus, she allowed Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., to see her, without an invitation or even a compliment on her act or the show he immediately sat and asked her to work for him. Flo revealed plans for A Parlor Match, even setting the approximate date that she would leave for New York. Anna disliked the brazen American manner but she listened. This goodlooking man's assurance and polished style intrigued her.<sup>18</sup> Ironically, Ziegfeld then was "in the middle of one of his flat-broke

<sup>16</sup>John Chapman and Garrison P. Sherwood, The Best Plays of 1894-1899 (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1955), p. 178.

<sup>17</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 64-65.

<sup>18</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 118.

periods,"<sup>19</sup> and yet he was playing the big-time producer, offering anything to influence Anna to accept his proposition. To purchase the gifts of diamond bracelets, he had cabled "Diamond Jim" Brady in New York for one of his famous "life or death" loans.<sup>20</sup>

Persistent as he was, Anna retorted that she had played in New York's East Side music halls in 1895 with disastrous results.<sup>21</sup> To discourage him further, Anna told Ziegfeld of her upcoming autumn (1896) commitment to Edouard Marchand for appearances at the Folies-Bergere in Paris.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, she informed him, about recently turning down a \$1,000 a week offer from Koster and Bail of New York. The stage beauty thereupon insisted upon even more from Ziegfeld, \$1,500 a week for the ten week engagement. In a characteristic response, the impecunious impresario obtained Miss Held's signature even though the idea for the revival of A Parlor Match upon which the negotiation depended had barely started to germinate in the minds of Evans and Ziegfeld. Anna would encounter similar situations in the years to come.<sup>23</sup>

So the stage was set. Anna Held would achieve a new popularity and fame in the United States and Ziegfeld was on his way to becoming a celebrated producer. As an added factor a personal relationship

<sup>19</sup>Stephenson, p. 40.

<sup>20</sup>Eddie Cantor and David Freedman, "Ziegfeld and his Follies," Colliers, January 20, 1934, p. 22.

<sup>21</sup>Paul Hume, "Oscar and the Opera," American Heritage, February, 1973, p. 62.

<sup>22</sup>Higham, pp. 28-29.

<sup>23</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 118.



would develop between them. Anna for the first, and the last, time fell in love.

The contract secured, Florenz Ziegfeld now faced the problem of returning home and financing Anna's September departure to New York. Needing money to return to America, Ziegfeld cabled Lee Shubert of the successful theatrical producing family, requesting \$1,000 to book passage to New York. Shubert agreed to lend him the money in return for the rights to tour Ziegfeld's proposed star. With money forthcoming, arrangements were made for Ziegfeld to sign contracts on his return. Indeed Flo signed contracts for a Held tour, but with Shubert's competitor, Abe Erlanger. Shubert had to sue to recover his money. That and other under-handed dealings installed permanent hatred between them.<sup>24</sup>

While returning to the United States on the S. S. Havel,<sup>25</sup> Ziegfeld contemplated the process by which he could obtain funds to break Miss Held's contract with Marchand of the Folies-Bergere; cable Anna the first \$1,500 she demanded; and finance her voyage to New York. Ziegfeld later told Edward B. Marks how he accomplished the financing of her journey to America: "he stripped himself of his jewels, (in those days, diamonds were a manager's badge of office), placing the stones in his handkerchief, he sent one of his staff out to raise money...sending it all to Mlle. Held."<sup>26</sup>

Ziegfeld ignored Marchand's Folies-Bergere contract with Anna until near the time of her departure, when she discovered that the

<sup>24</sup>Jerry Stagg, The Brothers Shubert (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 87.

<sup>25</sup>Higham, p. 30.

<sup>26</sup>Marks, p. 140.

agreement was still in effect. Ironically, it was Maximo Carrera who alerted her to the problem. Flo had not paid the cancellation penalty as promised. Miss Held cabled Ziegfeld: "Send Money or Contract Cancelled."<sup>27</sup> To handle this ultimatum, Ziegfeld purchased jewelry on credit that he immediately resold for the needed \$10,000, an act for which he could have been imprisoned in France.<sup>28</sup> Within hours of the receipt of Anna's cable, Flo replied with the money and message: "\$10,000 sent by Garfield Bank. Experts advise Marchand cannot prevent your departure. A Musical Delegation awaits you at Quarantine [sic]."<sup>29</sup>

A busy schedule filled the ensuing months between their meeting and Anna's departure to America. Miss Held had to complete engagements in London, Brussels, Monte Carlo and Lucerne before leaving for New York.<sup>30</sup> And private responsibilities also took time. On May 23 she gave birth to a baby girl. It was a difficult delivery for the new mother, who for two days fought for her life. Maximo Carrera had hoped for a son, but instead was blessed with the daughter they named Liane. The infant was immediately hustled off to a wet-nurse outside of Paris at Rueil, so as not to interfere with Mlle. Held's professional life. The baby rejected the first nurse so another, a Mme. Malsang (Badblood), had to be engaged.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 82.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>29</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 82-83.

<sup>30</sup>"Mlle. Held Arrives," New York Times, September 16, 1896, p. 5.

<sup>31</sup>Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, February 17, 1981.

Maximo had been gambling, losing everything and owed two million francs. Selling all he could and borrowing funds from his Argentine family did not cover his huge losses. By French law, a wife's property could be seized for her husband's debts, so Anna had to pay the balance of Maximo's losses to keep her apartment and its furnishings.<sup>32</sup> The summer of 1896 certainly had been active for Anna Held. A different life style would soon evolve; her new career in America was already being planned in New York by Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr.

<sup>32</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 80-82.

## CHAPTER IV

### NEW YORK

The present New York City "midtown" was a growing district in the 1890's. Here Long-Acre Square was rapidly becoming today's theatre district. After the Times Building was built in 1904, the area became known as Times Square. Streets from Herald Square to Central Park bustled with activity and growth, with buildings springing up continually. A few blocks south, the Flatiron Building, twenty stories high (307 feet), pointed toward the new part of New York; it was the tallest building in New York when it was finished in 1902.<sup>1</sup>

Except for Indian fighting there had been no conflicts during the three decades between the Civil and Spanish-American wars. Entering a period of dramatic economic growth after the 1890-97 depression, success stories of inventors were commonplace occurrences. Large expositions like the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and the World's Exposition in Chicago proclaimed the rise of the United States as the world's industrial leader.

In booming American cities of the "Gay Nineties," skyscrapers rose to twenty stories with electric elevators that miraculously ran up and down. Horseless trolleys ran at the incredible speed of twenty miles per hour and streets were lighted electrically. New York was the ultimate in population, growth and wealth, boasting of giant bridges

<sup>1</sup>Edgar Saltus, "New York From the Flatiron," Munsey's Magazine, July, 1905, pp. 267-269.

that spanned rivers over a thousand feet wide. The city, fast becoming the theatre capital of the world, was then exceeded only by London and Paris. Horses, buggies, cable cars and people crowded the streets. An increasing number of motor vehicles caused more congestion, as the thriving city's population reached 3.4 million by 1900.<sup>2</sup> The Sixth Avenue "el" provided much of the mass transportation for the midtown commuters. The New York World ran a series of articles debating the pros and cons of the increasingly popular bicycles, but much concern was voiced about their safety.

The Presidential election was the talk of 1896. William Jennings Bryan advocated inflationary silverite policies, whereas his opponent, William McKinley, defended the gold standard. It was a fierce campaign following a depression and by mid-September New York City was deeply engrossed in the political contest. Their daily news exploits filled the many competing New York newspapers: Hearst's Morning and Evening Journal, the Herald, Times, Post, Sun, Review, Commercial Advertiser, Evening Mail, and Pulitzer's World.

Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst actively competed with and attacked each other through the 1890's with the former publishing such sensationalism as:

She had laid down in the cellar to sleep, and the sewer that runs under the house overflowed and suffocated her where she lay. No one will ever know who killed Kate Sweeny. No one will ever summon the sanitary inspectors. Nobody seems to have thought it worth an investigation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Jerry Korn, ed., This Fabulous Century, 1870-1900 (New York: Time, Inc., 1970), p. 220.

<sup>3</sup>Kern, p. 168.

Publishers generated "Yellow Journalism," an opprobrious term for reckless journalistic excesses. It stemmed from Pulitzer's innovation, an illustrated Sunday comic section featuring a pajama clad nameless urchin called the "Yellow Kid." In 1898, papers told ghastly tales of Spanish atrocities in Cuba and of the treacherous sinking of the United States battleship Maine, and contributed to the war tenor all across the nation.

In the theatrical world, dancer Isadora Duncan made her debut in The Geisha. A mediocre production, The Great Northwest, employed an unknown actor, William S. Hart, who later made motion picture history.<sup>4</sup> Such was the New York of 1896 and the theatrical season that Anna Held encountered in America.

Mixed feelings accompanied departure from her adopted France. She had gained fame in Europe, acquired a husband she didn't love and left behind a three-month old baby daughter. Edouard Marchand of Folies-Bergere had been paid to cancel her contract, but he obtained a court order to try to stop her departure by seizing her luggage and theatrical trunks, alleging that Ziegfeld had not paid the penalty in time. Carrera, however, managed to take Anna's goods to England before the bailiffs arrived.

Her last cafe-concert engagement finished, Miss Held left Lucerne, Switzerland, on September 4 to begin her new life as an "artist lyrique," i.e., with musical comedy in legitimate theatre.<sup>5</sup> Maximo Carrera had tried hard to keep her with him, but it was a losing effort! He was on

<sup>4</sup>Chapman, pp. 32-33.

<sup>5</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 83-85.

the dock at Southampton when she left on September 8. Custody of Liane, was his only remaining hold over Miss Held.<sup>6</sup>

The voyage was a weary one and the actress stayed in her cabin for the first three days, composing herself after the recent happenings. Other passengers included Teddy D. Marks, her manager; Beatrice Brioschi, her maid, and her little pug dog, "Dizi."<sup>7</sup>

On September 11, the fourth day out, a deck steward committed suicide by jumping overboard. That evening Anna sang her songs at a benefit concert for his widow and children. Senators J. B. Foraker of Ohio and James Smith of New Jersey presided. Anna reported that:

We got \$517, and I sold programmes for \$300 of that. "I sang my little English song 'Come and Play with me.'" Senator Foraker was on board. He said that he and all his friends would come and play with me at the Herald Square Theatre, and that he would bring an umbrella to pound the floor in applause."<sup>8</sup>

Anna Held's arrival shared headlines with an incident involving two employees, fireman Patrick Moran and bedroom steward William Hyde, who had broken into staterooms and the hold of the ship.<sup>9</sup> The door to the hold had been found open by passengers, who on investigation, surprised Moran among disarranged and opened baggage. Loot in his hands and in his pockets included surgical instruments, rings, broaches and other valuables. Among the recovered articles were some of Miss Held's jewels. When apprehended, he claimed Hyde as an accomplice.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, February 18, 1981.

<sup>7</sup>"A Beauty From Paris," New York Daily Tribune, September 16, 1896, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup>"Mlle. Held Arrives," New York Times, September 16, 1896, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup>"Baggage Looted at Sea," New York Times, September 16, 1896, p. 5. ✓

<sup>10</sup>New York News, September 16, 1896, p. 4.

They were turned over to the police on arrival in New York.

Although ill on the last night of the journey, Anna was overjoyed early in the morning of September 15th to see New York Harbor, now graced by the Statue of Liberty, a gift from "her" France, dedicated only ten years before. As the ship docked at Ellis Island, Anna was greeted by a rented yacht carrying Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., newsmen, celebrities such as Lillian Russell and Diamond Jim Brady, and a thirty-piece band.<sup>11</sup> Flo had planned this event many weeks in advance.

Newspapers had been debating whether or not Anna would really come to America. Reporters cited her commitment to the Folies-Bergere in headlines reading: "Will Mlle. Held Come?"<sup>12</sup> "She is Coming,"<sup>13</sup> and "Who will get her?"<sup>14</sup> The Herald was most explicit telling the public that the "Manager of Folies-Bergere says Anna can not leave,"<sup>15</sup> but finally came the headline: "Anna Held Here at Last."<sup>16</sup> The press probably enjoyed speculating as much as Ziegfeld, who probably fed them many conflicting reports to "keep the ball rolling."

Anna was escorted royally to the New Netherlands Hotel at the southeast corner of Central Park. She took a suite that was an exact replica of Marie Antoinette's boudoir, reproduced for the 1893 visit of

<sup>11</sup>Toll, p. 299.

<sup>12</sup>"Will Mlle. Held Come?" Philadelphia Telegraph, September 4, 1896.

<sup>13</sup>"She is Coming," New York Herald, September 7, 1896.

<sup>14</sup>"Who will get her?" New York World, September 8, 1896.

<sup>15</sup>"Manager of Folies-Bergere says Anna can not leave," New York Herald, September 4, 1896.

<sup>16</sup>"Anna Held Here at Last," Chicago Journal, September 17, 1896.



the Infanta Eulalia of Spain.<sup>17</sup>

Under Ziegfeld's supposed orders, Anna Held granted her first interview in New York while attired in a semi-transparent negligee. She spoke of the 1893 Chicago Exposition and of the incidents that happened on the ship.<sup>18</sup> Asked about bicycles, she reported great interest in them. The Paris Bicycle Club had chosen Anna as a mascot and the Trafalgar Square Cycling Club of London had given her a solid gold bicycle, which was stolen from her Paris apartment during the First World War.<sup>19</sup> The first interview proved to be entertaining for the newsmen and a pleasant welcome for the new arrival. The New York papers primed the general public for A Parlor Match, premiering Miss Held's career in America.

<sup>17</sup>Toll, p. 299.

<sup>18</sup>"A Beauty From Paris," New York Daily Tribune, September 16, 1896, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 18, 1981.

## CHAPTER V

### PRESS AGENTS AND PUBLICITY STUNTS

A Parlor Match was due to open the following week (September 21) at the Herald Square Theatre, so rehearsing began immediately after Anna's arrival. Ziegfeld purposely did not star Anna on her first performance, and, after stirring up publicity about the petite Parisian star, gave the top billing to Charles Evans and William Hoey, a comedy team with a reputation for coarseness. Eddie Cantor later said that:

This humble introduction made her triumph twice as sensational. It gave the critics and the audience a feeling that they had discovered this obscure little performer and lifted her out of the crowd onto their shoulders. Once she had scored her sweeping success, he set the machinery of ballyhoo in motion.<sup>1</sup>

Anna worried about her A Parlor Match appearance which consisted only of stepping out of a huge candy box to sing. She described it as "the worst stage fright of my life."<sup>2</sup> Reception to the three songs in French ranged from mediocre to indifferent, but Ziegfeld had anticipated this and arranged for a "claque." As the curtain came down the claque clamored for an encore. Returning, Anna sang her old theme song in English to "Old Horse" Hoey:

<sup>1</sup>Cantor, "Ziegfeld and his Follies," p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 86.

I have not been here very long;  
 As yet I'm quite a stranger,  
 And so to try an English song  
 May seem perhaps a danger!

followed with the refrain:

I wish you'd come and play wiz me!

Hoey reacted to each word and gesture in some fashion. The result was the birth of a new American musical comedienne.<sup>3</sup> Still, Ziegfeld knew that success could only be achieved by keeping Anna Held in the eyes of the public.

In 1896 newspapers comprised the major mass communication medium. The only other form of major public advertising for theaters was through giant posters on buildings and billboards. Every theatre had its advertising man, known as a "bill poster;" newspaper advertising was not his concern, rather he dealt with paste and billboards. In New York City, there were about 300 bill-posters employed during the theatrical season, beginning annually about late August. An organized body controlled the locations, many of which, were under contract. "Bills" of various sizes, usually came in "stands" of 24 or 28 sheets. Costs for printing was from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per stand and the bill poster got 84¢ for each posting.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless Ziegfeld had already proved newspapers were best for publicity, although billboards were used for Miss Held as well.

During the first week's run of A Parlor Match, the Herald Square Theatre was the site of the climax of a New York Journal sponsored "Bicycle Fairyland," which started with a parade on September 12th,

<sup>3</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 86-88.

<sup>4</sup>Grace M. Mayer, Once upon a City (New York: Macmillan Co., 1958), pp. 237-239.

three days before Anna's arrival. Ziegfeld had promoted her earlier association with bicycles and gave her a nickel-plated vehicle when she got to New York. The theatre exhibited the prize-winning bicycles and Flo arranged for Miss Held to present the prizes after the performance the evening of the 24th.<sup>5</sup> Details were fed to the press regarding her riding attire, a short skirt with leggings. Anna said she tried "knickerbockers" but they were "oh, so shocking!"<sup>6</sup>

On leaving the theatre after the presentations, Anna encountered a vociferous demonstration by an enthusiastic mob of over 600, mostly men. They cut the horses loose from her carriage and pulled it to the Hotel Marlborough and on to the Waldorf where she was stopping that evening.<sup>7</sup>

Florenz Ziegfeld's general contribution to American entertainment history consisted primarily of publicity stunts and exotic sets. He roused national publicity through fantastic stories fed to the newspapers. Anna Held displayed her much talked about "hour-glass" figure (36"-19½"-35") but "Ziggy" publicized an eighteen inch waist and insinuated that she had a rib removed to achieve it. Stories attributing rib removal as a partial cause of her death circulated after her demise.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Mayer, p. 154.

<sup>6</sup>"Mlle. Held Arrives," New York Times, September 16, 1896, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>"Mob Captures Anna," New York Journal, September 25, 1896, news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>8</sup>"200 Years of American Theatre," Life, November 19, 1951, p. 117.

An example of Ziegfeld's nationwide publicity emerged in the "pants for Anna's horses" gimmick. A Minnesota headline read "Cobs will wear Trousers...Anna Held protects her ponies from cold Gotham winds."<sup>9</sup> Farther west, the following day, another paper in St. Louis told its readers that "Anna Held dresses her horses."<sup>10</sup> Of the incident, Anna says that while she was driving her bay cobs<sup>11</sup> in Central Park, Ziegfeld told her to go down Fifth Avenue to Martin and Martin's (makers of horse blankets). There Flo ordered pants for the horses. Over half of the company's employees engaged in making the fancy outfits of dark brown Kersey cloth.<sup>12</sup> Within a few days, the nation's newspapers carried articles with ridiculous illustrations of Anna's horses ready for the expected cold winter. Examples of presumed quotes from her in the New York Journal were:

'I do not go about bare-naked in the freeze' says the little Anna with archness....'and my darling cobs shall not go bare-naken either.'

The idea came to her from an experience in London with her favorite horse "Snapper," she caught pneumonia, but lived, her horse didn't. She made up her mind then that in another winter her horses would be dressed and I don't care how much people laugh about it, or say it is for show, I am going to do it, for I did love Snapper so, and he cost nearly 15,000 francs, and I can never find another with so smart a tail and step.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup>"Cobs will wear Trousers," St. Paul-Minneapolis Globe, September 29, 1896, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>"Anna's Tailor Made Cobs," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, September 30, 1896, news clipping, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>11</sup>A "cob" was a "short-legged, thick-set horse, often having a high-gait and frequently used for driving." Random House College Dictionary, 1968 ed., s.v. "Cob."

<sup>12</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 68.

<sup>13</sup>"Trousers for Her Horses," New York Journal, undated news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

Anna discovered in a newspaper that she had invaded feminine fashions in America, claiming that big hats worn by women blocked the view of patrons sitting behind them in theatres.<sup>14</sup> During her performance a few nights later, the stage lights went out, and when they came back on, Anna was still on stage but all that could be seen of her was her feet. A huge hat covered everything else as Anna finished her interrupted number. The audience loved it, and the ladies taking the hint, removed their hats. In her Memoires, she claims that:

ever since, in New York and throughout the United States, good taste demands that a lady either wear no hat to the theatre or if she does...leaves it in the check room.<sup>15</sup>

Ziegfeld conceived many spontaneous ideas while others were well planned in advance. One can sense their enjoyment in looking for publicity items in the many newspapers of New York. Anna especially enjoyed studying the papers to improve her "English."<sup>16</sup> Although her broken, French-accented English delighted her audiences, Anna wanted to speak fluently. She managed so well that one critic even claimed that she was from England and faked the French accent.<sup>17</sup>

Ziegfeld and Anna hired a press agent, Leon Berg, who helped promote many outlandish tales. The piece de resistance of publicity stunts was the "milk bath." Echoes of the "girl who bathed in milk" still sound, but regretfully, almost forgotten is that the girl was

<sup>14</sup>"Mlle. Held and the Big Hat," New York Herald, October 6, 1896, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 88.

<sup>16</sup>Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, February 18, 1981.

<sup>17</sup>Held, "My Beginnings," p. 184.

Anna Held. Ziegfeld conceived the idea but press agent Berg exploited it to the utmost.<sup>18</sup> This was probably the single most significant item that propelled Anna Held toward national recognition.

The farcical milk bath venture began with the announcement in the New York papers that she was being sued for \$64 by a dairyman:

When Anna Held arrived in New York she requested her manager to provide her every other day with forty gallons of milk for bathing purposes. Mr. Ziegfeld made a contract...for the quantity at the rate of 20 cents a gallon. Miss Held had used 320 gallons, when she discovered that it was not fresh, and lacking the creamy quality essential....ordered the dairyman to cease delivery...and refused to pay for the 320 gallons she had used.

Miss Held was surprised when served with the process, and laid the matter before Mr. Ziegfeld, who engaged Col. Taliaferro to represent Miss Held in defense. Mr. Marks, Miss Held's personal representative said yesterday that the matter would be settled out of court, as milk baths were too peculiar to be discussed in public.<sup>19</sup>

The publicity having been set off, interviews further exploited the idea. According to a newspaper account, Ziegfeld "managed" to have a quarrel with the manager of the New Nederlands Hotel, who objected to the labor entailed in the daily delivery of the "bathing milk" to Miss Held's apartment.<sup>20</sup> The papers "quoted" Anna as explaining that bathing in milk was:

refreshing, nourishing and strengthening. Forty gallons in the tub is the amount required, and I remain in the bath for half an hour; often I have my coffee served there. Then I go back to bed and remain there for an hour.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup>Marks, p. 140.

<sup>19</sup>"Uses Milk In Baths," New York Times, October 10, 1896, p.3.

<sup>20</sup>Mantle, "Anna Held, a Kindly Friend...."

<sup>21</sup>"Miss Anna Held Dies Bravely," New York Herald, August 12, 1918, p. 3.

The press agent and Ziegfeld even arranged for reporters to "see Miss Held in the tub taking her bath....All they saw was Miss Held's head sticking out of a bathtub of milk."<sup>22</sup> Milk sales apparently zoomed throughout the country,<sup>23</sup> but as a result of the publicity of "poor-quality" milk the dairyman involved lost customers, and a week later he revealed the truth: that he was paid to file suit for non-payment. The dairyman said he didn't even know about Anna Held.<sup>24</sup>

Did a New York cow commit suicide as a result of Miss Held's milk baths? This question was asked a day after the milk baths were reported. Apparently, a cow was found hanging nine feet above the ground from the fork of a tree near Port Chester, New York.<sup>25</sup>

The "milk-bath" scheme continued to pay off after McKinley had defeated Bryan for the presidency the following month. Newspapers were ready for some fresh news and papers across the country carried front page announcements of "Milk Baths for Everyone." Brian G. Hughes, a millionaire boxmaker, had leased a large restaurant and remodeled it as a milk-bath establishment with two floors reserved for ladies. Milk baths would cost \$5.00, a reasonable price inasmuch as the milk alone cost \$3.50 per bath.<sup>26</sup> Ziegfeld might have had a hand in this but after about a week no more was heard of the commercial milk-baths.

<sup>22</sup>Mantle, "Anna Held, a Kindly Friend...."

<sup>23</sup>Farnsworth, p. 21.

<sup>24</sup>"Milkman Reveals the Truth," New York News, October 18, 1896, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup>"A Cow's Strange Death," New York Daily Tribune, October 11, 1896, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup>"Milk Baths for Everyone Now," New York Morning Journal, November 8, 1896, p. 1.



Press agents made use of the milk bath theme even after Ziegfeld and Anna were divorced. On her All Star Variete<sup>1</sup> Jubilee tour in 1913, the Savannah, Georgia, Press headlined "Anna Held comes to town as dairymen discuss the increased cost of milk."<sup>27</sup> Milk bath remembrances persisted forty years later, when in 1936 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios produced the Academy Award winning movie, The Great Ziegfeld, starring William Powell and Luise Rainer. During the filming, the director, Robert Z. Leonard, received a letter from Grace Ann Pollard stating:

It was more than thirty years ago that Miss Held saw me as a model in Plummer's coat and dress shop in Boston. She gave me a place in her company as a dancer.

The milk bath that wasn't really a milk bath originated with me. It was not milk, but a lotion resembling milk that had come down from the House of Stuart, of which my grandmother was a descendant. Miss Held actually bathed in water, applying this lotion only to her face, arms and shoulders.<sup>28</sup>

There is, however, some truth behind the milk bath story. Anna Held was accustomed to bathing in a starch solution which she considered good for the skin. Shortly after her arrival in New York, Flo saw the opaque fluid in the tub, and her explanation to Flo's questioning looks quickly set off his imagination that evolved a publicity stunt.<sup>29</sup> Her daughter, Liane, used to prepare her mother's milk baths and attests to their reality, although milk is not used in its preparation.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup>"Anna Held Comes to Town," Savannah Press, September 26, 1913, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup>"Milk Bath Yarn in a New Light," 1936, unidentified news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>29</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 18, 1981.

<sup>30</sup>During personal interviews in February, 1981, Mrs. Carrera gave me some samples of the milk-bath mixture that was used to prepare the "milk-baths." She keeps the exact formula of the mixture secret.

Flo Ziegfeld easily found publicity ideas in everyday happenings. On the day after the milkman exposed the lawsuit hoax, it was reported that Anna had fallen from her bicycle while riding to Coney Island. The collision was caused by a retired judge's horse after one of the reins broke.<sup>31</sup> The New York Times, which had always been dubious of Ziegfeld's news releases, on the following day, October 20, 1896, printed an editorial expose:

[Ziegfeld showed] great promptitude and vigor after the slight accident occurred, for he procured the invention of a thrilling tale of how his star had, at the imminent risk of her life, stopped a runaway horse and received her injuries as a consequence.

The Times quoted the headlines used by their competitors: "Held up a Runaway," "Anna Held Catches a Frightened Horse," and "Anna Held a Heroine," going on to say it would be a "sheer impossibility for the rider of a bicycle to catch and stop a runaway horse." The Times also stated that Ziegfeld's promulgation of "fake" stories about Anna Held were as mischievous as William Jennings Bryan running for President, but then, complimented Ziegfeld on his ability to circulate "so tremendous a whopper" to their [New York Times] competitors.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the story went nationwide; the Detroit Tribune headlined the item: "Actress Saves Life."<sup>33</sup>

When she opened at the Boston Theatre November 9th in A Parlor Match, a Boston reporter asked Anna about the bicycle incident.

<sup>31</sup>"Miss Held Hurt," New York Times, October 19, 1896, p. 8.

<sup>32</sup>"Heroines and Press Agents," New York Times, October 20, 1896, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup>"Actress Saves Life," Detroit Tribune, October 26, 1896, p. 1.

Whether or not the reporter was truthful or if she was well-versed on publicity stunts cannot be known, but "her side" of the story told to the reporter bears repeating here:

I do not know if it was heroic but I stopped the runaway horse. It was not just as it was printed in the paper. It was not so difficult. I was riding along. A gentleman was driving beside me. He broke one rein. The horse started to run, and the long piece of broken rein was flying out. I just rode up like this, reached out one hand, like that, and I was able to catch it, and I passed it, like this to the man, that was all, and the actress as she sat at the table, gave an imitation of herself reaching out with one hand and guiding her wheel with the other. It looked perfectly simple.<sup>34</sup>

A long tour of A Parlor Match had been planned to begin in December. It was imperative to circulate pre-performance publicity in areas where they would play. The annual process was to try out a play in Boston and New York at the beginning of the season (August-September) and take it on the road until about April. Anna Held and Ziegfeld followed this pattern and went to Europe every summer, returning around August with plans for the following season.<sup>35</sup>

The importance of the publicity for her first United States season (1896-97) may have been behind the rumor that the real European star had never come to America. It had been suggested that Ziegfeld had promoted an imposter, Edna Dougherty, a musical prodigy from St. Louis.<sup>36</sup> A few months later on April 11, 1897, a full page headline in the New York Mercury exploited the question: "Is She the Real Anna Held?" The rumor had been traced to a San Francisco news-

<sup>34</sup>"Anna Held Is Not Wicked a Little Bit," Boston Beacon, November 11, 1896, p. 13.

<sup>35</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 18, 1981.

<sup>36</sup>Syracuse Times, October 4, 1896, news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

paper and it was said that Ziegfeld intended on suing Singery Meyer, the writer of the original allegation. Meyer had stated "that the dollars and plaudits had been bestowed on a counterfeit of the famous French music hall singer."<sup>37</sup> Like many stunts, publicity dwindled and the story died out.

All publicity was not complimentary; there were rare derogatory remarks:

...her art - well, it is hardly worthwhile talking about such a little thing. She sings a couple of French songs very well and a couple of English songs very badly.

Those anticipating something real naughty were disappointed; those looking for the very highest expression of the latest things in the art of the Parisian cafe chantant were not satisfied.<sup>38</sup>

...Mlle. Held created no furor in Paris. Her abilities are of the most ordinary kind. Her voice is not sweet or very strong, and she uses it with no remarkable skill....she is by no means a beautiful woman...her thin legs well in evidence.... She would not be a "sensation" at all if the idea had not been forced upon the public mind that she is inherently and delightfully naughty. Perhaps she is, but few of us would ever have thought of it if we had not been told so.<sup>39</sup>

Anna did not let such articles bother her; they just added to her publicity. She employed a press clipping agency and the few bad reviews were placed in her scrapbooks along with the good. That A Parlor Match was successful was important; its promotion, like present-day television commercials, good or bad, was remembered and so it became effective advertising.

<sup>37</sup>"Is She the Real Anna Held?" New York Mercury, April 11, 1897, sec. 2, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>"Anna Held Is Not Wicked a Little Bit," Boston Beacon, November 11, 1896, p. 13.

<sup>39</sup>"The Theatres," New York Times, September 27, 1896, supp., p. 12. ✓

## CHAPTER VI

### NEW SEASONS AND NEW SHOWS

Florenz Ziegfeld's advertising campaign succeeded as Anna Held became a famous personage in the United States. The planned tour of thirty-seven cities went on schedule. A Parlor Match opened for a week at Boston commencing November 9, 1896. From there it went to Flo's hometown, Chicago, for a visit with a two-fold purpose. Ziegfeld's parents welcomed Anna, who found something in common with Flo's French mother. During the engagement there, they arranged receptions and parties for her introduction to the "industrial aristocracy."

Anna and Flo's relationship then assumed more of a personal nature. For Anna, it had always been somewhat of an infatuation that prompted her to go to New York in the first place. But as her daughter reported years later, "With all her Frenchness, my mother had not learned, until much later in life, to differentiate between the lover and the cavalier."<sup>1</sup> During their first year together, Flo courted her aggressively with typical overly generous gifts of flowers, candy and perfume. Ziegfeld always did everything in excess, with no thought to expense, usually spending others' money. Flo's inventive gimmicks even invaded their romance, as Anna's daughter explained:

<sup>1</sup>Interview with Liane Carrera, February 16, 1981, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

Once he took my mother fishing. They were in a yacht, and my mother was amazed and delighted by the number of fish she caught. Everytime she dropped her line there was a tug, and she would proceed to reel in another large fish. She did not know that Ziegfeld had hired a man to swim under water around the boat, and fasten a fish on her hook each time it went in the water.<sup>2</sup>

After a week in St. Louis in mid-December with A Parlor Match,<sup>3</sup> Anna went to Pittsburgh for her first Christmas in America. There she exhibited the first of her many charitable efforts in this country by giving up her time unselfishly to orphanages, humane societies and the Red Cross. In Pittsburgh, Miss Held followed a tradition of holiday street singing for charity:

...starting from the New Grand Opera House in Pittsburgh, headed by a brass band, the procession of carriages, which contained members of the company, including "Old Hoss" Hoey and Charley Evans, moved down Fifth Avenue...the procession halted and Miss Held sang I Want Yer, Ma Honey.

Leaving the street, Miss Held went into a large drygoods store...Passing through shopper's lines she jingled the money in her basket and in the name of charity asked for more. Then she went to the Pittsburgh Club, where the young men offered to buy her photographs and autographs. Some of them sold for \$10 each. To the sons of Pittsburgh's wealthy manufacturers, she sang Come and Play With Me.<sup>4</sup>

The major emphasis was for the benefit of orphan children. Other Christmas street ballads netted \$264.31 for the Western Pennsylvania Humane Society.<sup>5</sup> Anna's greatest efforts in volunteer work were to come later in World War I in France and the United States.

<sup>2</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 120.

<sup>3</sup>"A Parlor Match," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, December 14, 1896, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>"Singing for Charity," New York Morning Journal, December 26, 1896, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup>"Street Ballads," Pittsburgh Dispatch, December 31, 1896.

Life on the road for three to four months was not easy. Except for large cities, the performances were "one night stands." The amount of scenery taken from New York sets depended on tour budgets. It was difficult to set up in a new town every night and adjust stagecraft to local conditions; so toward the end of the century, most of the scenery built for New York theatres was constructed with the idea of taking plays on the road and special efforts made for portability. Basic parlor furniture was expected to be available at most local theatres. Painted drops used extensively for background scenes and wings of the set were fastened to frames that were assembled at each theatre.<sup>6</sup> An advance man traveled a few days ahead of the company to handle advertising and final arrangements. The travel time and constant assembly and disassembly of sets resulted in a demanding schedule.

A Parlor Match was a great road success. As the first Held tour it lasted until early April, 1897. March 8th of that year at Gilmore's Auditorium in Philadelphia marked the 3,000th performance of the show.<sup>7</sup> Publicity, a prime element of the tour, not only praised the play it also circulated rumors of a pending marriage between Anna and Flo. The news, supposedly released by members of the cast was denied by Anna, Flo and his father. Newspapers used the rumor as an excuse to review Anna's career and arrival in America.<sup>8</sup> A more exploitive newspaper

<sup>6</sup>"Plays on the Road," New York Tribune, October 25, 1896, sec., p. 9.

<sup>7</sup>New York Morning Journal, March 9, 1897, news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>8</sup>"Anna Held to be Married," New York Times, January 7, 1896, p. 1.

in Baltimore reported that the "manager of La Petite Anna" disturbed the public by shooting a vicious looking dog, followed by news of a denial of any wedding plans.<sup>9</sup>

The theatrical season over, on April 17th Miss Held left for France for the summer, a pattern she would follow each year. Her daughter and Maximo Carrera looked forward to their summers together, even when Ziegfeld came along. Maximo and Anna's "divorce" and the court's decision that Liane would remain in his custody highlighted that summer (1897). Anna described the custody as "a last way of influencing the woman he [Carrera] still loved."<sup>10</sup>

The true details of her marriage to Ziegfeld were as controversial as the facts of her birth. Evidently Anna and Flo lived together as husband and wife from the time of her arrival in the United States. The writer, Charles Higham, author of Ziegfeld writes that in the spring of 1897, on return from the A Parlor Match tour, the couple:

...gave a joint champagne supper party...and announced to their friends that they would simply sign papers...that they were married, since Held's Roman Catholic husband could not secure a resolution ....Apparently this curious arrangement satisfied their friends, and everyone agreed to say that a real marriage had been performed (it was not recognized as common law until 1904)....Ziegfeld told inquiring reporters that the marriage had taken place in Chicago in March....the most famous "marriage" of show business, was in fact, not a marriage at all.<sup>11</sup>

Anna tells us in her Memoires:

In 1898, Flo and I had regularized our relationship by getting married in Chicago, with Dr. Ziegfeld and his charming French wife as a witness.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Baltimore (Md.) Herald, January 23, 1897, news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>10</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 90.

<sup>11</sup>Higham, pp. 43-44.

<sup>12</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 91.



It is certain it was a common-law marriage, an advantage to Anna in 1904 when she faced loss of all her possessions for Flo's gambling losses. Her French lawyer, Maitre Alain, upon hearing of the marriage arrangement, was able to secure a court ruling removing the financial liens. A common-law arrangement was not legal in France so Ziegfeld's excesses could not jeopardize Anna's bank account or holdings in that country.<sup>13</sup>

A somewhat ludicrous event resulted from the court decision which provided Carrera with grounds for challenging Ziegfeld to a duel. He confronted Flo with the accusation:

You have insulted me in the person of Mme. Anna Held. When a man of honor makes off with a woman and provokes her divorce after promising to marry her, he keeps his promise, monsieur, or else he is no better than a scoundrel....Your sham marriage is not recognized under French law. You have committed an act of fraud, and misused a defenseless creature! My seconds will call on you in the morning.<sup>14</sup>

Hurrying to Anna's side, Ziegfeld learned that Colonel Carrera played for keeps when he dueled. To her amusement, Flo fled to Geneva.<sup>15</sup>

Of the many theatrical offers she received in the summer of 1897, Anna contracted with Oscar Hammerstein to star in an operetta, La Poupee, at his New York Lyric Theatre for \$2,500 per week. The papers were signed in Europe so plans were firm before returning to America that fall.<sup>16</sup> Ziegfeld had teamed up with William A. Brady to produce the successful Way Down East at the Manhattan Theatre (the present

<sup>13</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 102-104.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 104-106.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 106

<sup>16</sup>Higham, p. 44.

location of Gimbel's department store)<sup>17</sup> on Herald Square.

La Poupee ("the doll") opened October 21, 1897, and had played only a week when Anna was replaced by another performer. Supposedly, Hammerstein was either under pressure from other major stars or Ziegfeld's protective watch over her served to widen the gulf between the two producers.<sup>18</sup> Whatever the reason, the tenseness of the production caused Miss Held to lose her usual sparkle. Perhaps she simply had been miscast for the part as reviews indicated. Ziegfeld immediately placed her at Koster and Bail's Music Hall for a two week engagement commencing November 8th.<sup>19</sup> As a result, Hammerstein sued Ziegfeld for breach of contract. Flo counter-sued him for Anna's wages and damages, claiming that she was "subjected to uncalled for humiliation by Hammerstein."<sup>20</sup> As neither producer had money to fight in court, the case simply faded away.

Ziegfeld could not let a season go by without a spectacular publicity stunt. In November, 1897, he arranged for a seemingly impromptu kissing contest for Anna. At a party in New York's Hotel Martin, Julius Stegar, star of His Excellency, wagered that "if the lady will consent I can press a thousand consecutive kisses on the lips of Anna Held." Zeigfeld retorted, "I'll bet you can't give her two hundred." Flo bet his horse against a steamship trip for Stegar.

<sup>17</sup>Chapman, pp. 50, 52.

<sup>18</sup>Higham, pp. 44-45.

<sup>19</sup>"The Theatre," New York Times, November 14, 1897, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup>"Hammerstein Brings Suit," New York Times, November 2, 1897, p. 9.

Coming immediately after the Hammerstein La Poupée flop, this incident supplied needed publicity through a full three-color page in the New York Journal. The article furnished a kiss-by-kiss report, Anna's statement and doctor's report. She said that "up to the fifteenth kiss I felt calm,...after the hundred mark, I experienced a most unpleasant tingling...at the hundred and fiftieth kiss, I was muscularly exhausted." By chance (?) a doctor was present checking the couple's pulse readings of which Miss Held's was as high as 152. Shortly after the 150th kiss, she passed out and the contest was over.<sup>21</sup>

Ziegfeld showed his inventive genius for another of Anna's musical engagements at Koster and Bail's when in December he had the drop curtain painted white with a large musical score in black. At first glance, the curtain looked like a mammoth piece of sheet music. Three large bars of music had some notes that were painted black, but most were holes through which black-face actors put their heads. Thirty-two grinning faces of various shades of duskiness stuck out through holes in the curtain.<sup>22</sup> The group of "living-notes" furnished background voices in the minstrel number I Want Dem Presents Back. Reports confirmed "they felt it a high honor to be permitted to support Miss Held." The idea was a great success with large articles and photographs in the New York papers.<sup>23</sup> This was really an innovation, because

<sup>21</sup>"Anna Held Kissed," New York Journal, October 31, 1897.

<sup>22</sup>"Negro Heads as Living Notes in Anna Held's Ballads," unidentified news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>23</sup>"I Want Dem Presents Back," New York Telegraph, December 5, 1897, p. 7.

up to this time there were not any half-tone reproductions in the news-media, only line drawing illustrations.

Ziegfeld was paranoid about his discovery. The music hall programs bore the words "All rights for America and Europe in the animated score are protected," the curtain drop had a large copyright imprint and he placed ads in the dramatic weeklies warning other theatrical producers to "keep hands off or be overwhelmed with litigation."<sup>24</sup>

By the turn of the century extraordinary expansion of the theatre initiated new forms of entertainment in New York. Typical male-oriented variety shows of the mid-nineteenth century experienced competition from the cleaner family variety. Escorted women could attend the theatre without fear of blemishing their reputations.

The era saw the rise of great promoters like Oscar Hammerstein, Charles Frohman, Lee Shubert and Florenz Ziegfeld. Changed styles of promotion and the increase of sensuality on stage marked elements of transition in the theatrical world. A forerunner of the protective or monopolistic associations of show business began in 1897 with a theatrical syndicate. A "syndicate" of six men including Charles Frohman, Marc Klaw and Abraham Erlanger used deplorable business methods to gain control over most of the theatres in America and usually forced actors to accept their booking arrangements. Other producers, like David Belasco and the Shubert brothers (Sam, Lee and Jacob), and stars like Sarah Bernhardt, challenged the syndicate. Bernhardt, excluded from theatres, played in tents and roller-rinks. It took the Shuberts to crack the syndicate's power by creating a

<sup>24</sup>"Negro Heads as Living Notes," New York Telegraph.

nationwide network of theatres. Although not exercising a monopoly, the Shubert family still controlled a majority of commercial legitimate theatres in the early 1950's.<sup>25</sup>

Anna Held ended the 1897-98 season with a musical farce, A Gay Deceiver, that played eight performances at the Harlem Opera House. Co-star John Bunny became one of the first motion picture stars.<sup>26</sup> When it went on the road, the show had a spectacular success in San Francisco.

Anna and Flo began their Western and Southern tour on February 28th, traveling and living in the private rail coach originally built for Lily Langtry at the height of her success. Langtry had a flamboyant romance with a wealthy playboy, Freddie Gebhart, who paid a quarter of a million dollars for the specially-built, seventy-five foot long, light blue coach containing a stateroom, dining room, observation room, servant's quarters and a kitchen. Using it for her 1887 trans-continental tour, Lily made the well-publicized stop at the late Judge Roy Bean's town named for her, Langtry, Texas.<sup>27</sup> Later a magician, Alexander Herrman, bought the car after Langtry abandoned it. After his death, the coach went on the market and Ziegfeld bought it for \$22,000 to provide comfort for his United States tours. Flo had the rear platform fitted as a piazza and took along a piano and phonograph as part of the furnishings to help pass

<sup>25</sup>Glenn Hughes, A History of the American Theatre, 1700-1950 (New York: Samuel French, 1951), pp. 317-318.

<sup>26</sup>Chapman, p. 209.

<sup>27</sup>Pamela Herr, "Lillie on the Frontier," American West Magazine, March-April, 1981, p. 42.

the travel time.<sup>28</sup>

On June 7, 1898, Anna and Flo embarked from New York harbor on the world's largest ship, Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse, bound for Europe.<sup>29</sup> During their annual summers in Europe, they usually searched for play material to use the coming season. But, this year, Flo already held an option on the Parisian comedy, The French Maid. He planned to complete the purchase and inaugurate Brady and Ziegfeld's season at the Manhattan Theatre on September 3rd.

Scarcely a month after arriving in Europe, Anna won first prize at the Flower Festival in the Bois de Boulogne. The festival helped soothe her feelings after losing another court battle to gain custody of Liane. When the judge asked the four-year-old girl: "Who do you want to go with, your papa or your mama?" she replied, after staring at both, "I want to stay with Agie." The latter was the boarding school teacher with whom she lived.<sup>30</sup>

The French Maid, a mediocre production, fared well enough for a tour in early 1899. Along with her French singing specialty, Anna starred in the title role, her first English-speaking part. Up until this time, Miss Held's fame resulted from vocalizing sensual songs with accompanying eye movements for which she became well-known.<sup>31</sup> Still,

<sup>28</sup> Arthur Brooks, "A Palace on Wheels," Metropolitan Magazine, June, 1898, pp. 20-21.

<sup>29</sup> "Anna Held's Departure," New York Telegraph, June 8, 1898, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, February 17, 1981.

<sup>31</sup> The French Maid Playbill, Chestnut Street Theatre, New York, January 9, 1899, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

Anna desired more of a dramatic role than that provided by The French Maid, which featured a vaudevillian theme. Changing her image would necessitate finding a more refined comedy to explore her acting abilities. Papa's Wife was the chosen vehicle. The planned transition from singer to actress required more Ziegfeld publicity.

Anna and Flo brought a nickel-plated automobile with them when they returned from France on the S. S. Touraine in early September of 1899.<sup>32</sup> Newspapers issued her challenge to any woman-driver to a car race from New York to Philadelphia and back.<sup>33</sup> The challenge allowed the opponent to drive on any road. Glory would be the only prize. No lady accepted the challenge after hearing that Anna set speed records in France by traveling ninety miles from Paris to Bordeaux in 192 minutes.<sup>34</sup>

With the publicity thus arranged, Papa's Wife opened November 13, 1899,<sup>35</sup> starring Miss Held as "Anna," a convent pupil. Indeed she had already played the part in real life but without such comical embellishments as an innocent girl becoming hilariously intoxicated. Lewis G. Stang stated in the Boston Journal:

Miss Held's improvement kills whatever doubt there may have been regarding Miss Held's future; it gives one faith in her permanency; it proves that Papa's Wife was not an accident...

<sup>32</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 95.

<sup>33</sup>"Anna's Latest Fad," unidentified news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>34</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 95.

<sup>35</sup>Hamilton Mason, French Theatre in New York, A List of Plays, 1899-1939 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), p. 53.

The step from milk baths to refined art was a long one to take under any circumstances, but in Miss Held's case it was more remarkable because of the ease and quickness with which it was accomplished.<sup>36</sup>

The production set off, perhaps, once again with Flo's help, a rumor that she wasn't really French. "She spoke and sang in the most intelligent English a foreigner has ever acquired."<sup>37</sup> Reviews in the New York Evening Sun and New York World referred to her perfect speech that "displayed a mastery of English that was unlooked for." Munsey's Magazine stated bluntly "Miss Held is an Englishwoman, not French in any way."<sup>38</sup>

Papa's Wife clearly changed the direction of the actress's professional style. Running for two years, the show was the only attraction that played New York 200 times to full capacity audiences. The show was sold out until Spring, 1900. Admiral George Dewey and Governor Theodore Roosevelt attended private dress rehearsals. Anna earned \$1,000 a week plus twenty percent of the gate.<sup>39</sup> The Ziegfelds moved into a twelve room suite at the Hotel Ansonia, more spacious quarters that better suited Miss Held's position than the Netherlands Hotel. Flo spent his lucrative income faster than he could make it. Being nearly bankrupt in 1900 did not deter his offer of a \$20,000 salary to William Jennings Bryan to help in Anna's publicity campaign.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup>Papa's Wife Playbill for 200th Night Celebration, Manhattan Theatre, New York, March 19, 1900, pp. 2-3. Townsend Walsh File, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>"The Mystery of Anna Held," Munsey's Magazine, October, 1907, pp. 97-99.

<sup>39</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 96.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.



The Ziegfelds took their well-deserved European journey earlier than usual to attend the Paris Exposition of 1900, characterized as the "Great World's Fair." Except for overall cost and area, it was the grandest and most ambitious exhibition in history, with attendance exceeding both the Brussels (1958) and New York (1964-65) expositions. The latter drew an attendance of 51,607,307 in two years, but it was surpassed by one year's attendance in Paris of 50,860,801.<sup>41</sup>

Hard feelings impeded Franco-American relations during that era. France's sympathy with Spain in the recent Spanish-American War still annoyed many Americans,<sup>42</sup> especially those who had been offended when their exhibits had not been considered for placement "among the first rank on the Quai des Nations," and they had resented being refused separate pavilions for California and New York.<sup>43</sup> Americans won out, however, on the question regarding the proposed opening date of the Exposition, Easter Sunday, April 15, 1900. It seemed that the French, more interested in artistic than theological matters, gave in and held opening ceremonies a day earlier.<sup>44</sup>

Ziegfeld had planned an exhibit for the American Pavilion and generated innovative publicity through a noted sculptor, W. H. Mullins, who crafted the golden Diana that topped the Madison Square Garden. Mullins went to New York ostensibly to measure Anna in preparation to sculpt an almost life-size statue of her in solid gold for the Paris

<sup>41</sup>Richard D. Mandell, Paris 1900, The Great World's Fair (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. xi.

<sup>42</sup>Mandell, p. 90.

<sup>43</sup>Mandell, pp. 55-56.

<sup>44</sup>Mandell, p. 58.

Exposition. Cost was estimated at \$31,500 for the gold and \$3,500 for the sculptor.<sup>45</sup> The project, however, went uncompleted.

The news-media readily admitted that Anna was "vastly more interesting in musical farce than she ever was in the brief divertissements of song and dance with which she hitherto had confined herself."<sup>46</sup> The great success of Papa's Wife was followed by another, The Little Duchess, in the 1901-02 season.

Anna worked hard at lessons in diction, literature and acting during off-days and summer vacation. By subjecting herself to strict discipline, she strove to achieve her lifetime goal of becoming another Sarah Bernhardt. A stage rival, Lillian Russell, became Miss Held's best friend and before The Little Duchess opened, Flo and Anna attended one of her performances. Overwhelmed with Miss Russell's attire, Ziegfeld commissioned a woman to sneak into her dressing room, copy gown details and obtain the dressmaker's name. He then ordered exact duplicates of twelve gowns at \$750.00 each for The Little Duchess production. Fortunately, for personal and business reasons, Miss Russell did not attend Anna's dress rehearsals.<sup>47</sup>

Anna continued searching for more dramatic parts. In the summer of 1903 she bought the rights to Mademoiselle Mars, an operetta by Gustave Luders and Joseph Herbert. Retitling it Mademoiselle Napoleon, the Ziegfelds invested enormous sums of money producing Anna's dream, a

<sup>45</sup>"Anna Held in Solid Gold, Life Size Statue for the Paris Exposition," news clipping, January 20, 1900, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>46</sup>"At the Play and the Players," New York Times, November 19, 1899, p. 18.

<sup>47</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 99-100.

serious drama. A search was made in Paris for "the Little Corporal's" hat worn at Waterloo, and it was supposedly found and used in the play.<sup>48</sup> Even though Ziegfeld presented a silver-topped glass powder jar to every lady patron, the Knickerbocker Theatre performance of Mademoiselle Napoleon failed ignominiously,<sup>49</sup> closing January 4, 1904, after only forty-three performances.<sup>50</sup> A lawsuit against Ziegfeld followed in 1905, when Dan McAvoy, an Irish comedian who had been hired at \$350 a week, found himself replaced without notice because his dancing allegedly interfered with Anna's performance.<sup>51</sup>

Along with the poor showing of Mademoiselle Napoleon, Ziegfeld lost more money on The Red Feather, his first attempt at producing without Anna as a star. These failures psychologically and financially damaged the Ziegfelds. Arriving in New York on August 24, 1904, they began to work to recoup the former season's losses. Anna openly conceded that she was finished with heavy dramatics; her profession was musical comedy. Collaborating with Lew Weber, Flo and Anna put together a cast for Higgledy-Piggledy, a two-act musical revue which also starred Marie Dressler, just starting on her climb to stardom.

Ziegfeld immediately set about circulating the rumor that henceforth Anna was to be known as Helen Held, pronounced distinctly "Hell-in-Held."<sup>52</sup> According to her daughter, Ziegfeld was very much

<sup>48</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 101-102.

<sup>49</sup>Farnsworth, p. 24.

<sup>50</sup>Burns Mantle and Garrison P. Sherwood, The Best Plays of 1899-1909 (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1947), p. 447.

<sup>51</sup>"McAvoy and Anna Held," New York Times, March 1, 1905, p. 9.

<sup>52</sup>Interview, Carrera, February 18, 1981.

concerned with the usage of names in his publicity, mainly anything connected with "Held." According to Liane Carrera, she heard her mother and Flo discussing the idea that the public should be told that Anna's name was Helen until she came to the United States but changed it, due to the implication of "hell" in the name.<sup>53</sup> Ziegfeld made a "play" with semantics:

"Go to Held" is an announcement made in glaring red letters on a half sheet poster on fences and ash barrels in and about New York City. In between the red letters are smaller black ones, which announces the celebrated European Vaudeville star, Anna Held.<sup>54</sup>

The next Held production, Harry B. Smith's The Parisian Model broke ground for new stagecraft innovations. The entire cast of more than fifty people performed on roller-skates during the last scene. Undoubtedly, the electrically-lighted costumes worn during the lavish production constituted another "first."<sup>55</sup> Beyond technical innovations, the viewing public's moral values were tested, resulting from the production's sensual nature, impelling men to return night after night:

...six statuesque women wearing floor-length cloaks entered an artist's studio, positioned themselves behind six easels that hid them from thigh to shoulders, threw off their cloaks, leaving their bare shoulders and legs exposed to the audience, suggesting that they were completely nude, when they were not.<sup>56</sup>

Anna, too, offered erotic glimpses of her self in her corset and flesh-colored stockings with six costume changes on the stage. The Parisian Model also preceded the FoLies' sumptuous style in its

<sup>53</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 13, 1981.

<sup>54</sup>Oakland (Calif.) Tribune, September 18, 1896.

<sup>55</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 18, 1981.

<sup>56</sup>Toll, p. 301.

finale of 150 performers, with chorus girls arranged in the shape of a fan. As the golden-colored curtains parted, Miss Held was revealed in a picture frame from which she emerged singing I Can't Make My Eyes Behave,<sup>57</sup> a tune written especially for the show. Gus Edwards, an unknown songwriter and friend of Flo's had become discouraged about finding a song topic, so Anna had suggested that he write about her eyes.<sup>58</sup>

Her "misbehaving" eyes, always favorite publicity subjects, presented perfect promotion material: eyes that evoked erotic promises. Further verification of Miss Held's eyes impact appeared in an illustrated article of the San Francisco Bulletin that reported:

Anna Held has refused an offer of \$5000 to pose before a moving picture machine for the operator to obtain a series of motion views of these [sic] optic orbs.

Despite the fact that Miss Held is the most photographed woman in the world, nobody can tell the color of her eyes. Miss Held has demonstrated that it really doesn't matter what their color may be. It all depends on how she uses them.<sup>59</sup>

Later in the 1930's her daughter, Liane, would operate two restaurants called "Anna Held's," one in midtown New York and the other in fashionable Westchester County. The memus illustrated the song I Can't Make My Eyes Behave with a photo-series of her mother's eye movements.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup>Toll, p. 301.

<sup>58</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 113-114.

<sup>59</sup>"Who Can Tell the Color of Her Eyes?" San Francisco Bulletin, December 9, 1911.

<sup>60</sup>Anna Held's Memu, Harry B. Smith Collection, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

Ziegfeld encouraged and even financed the protests on immorality concerning The Parisian Model and thereby increased its paid attendance. Even so, the Reverend Madison Peter, president of a league for reforming morals, said: "The Parisian Model is the most immoral spectacle of the century."<sup>61</sup>

On a lighter note, Held probably contributed to the promotion of the "teddybear." In that year of Theodore Roosevelt's grand African safari, she went on stage with a huge, shaggy stuffed bear. Photographs of the scene were widely publicized.<sup>62</sup> Closing in the spring (1907) after 179 performances, the exotic production paved the way for the Ziegfeld Follies.<sup>63</sup>

The American counterpart of Paris' Folies-Bergere was the Ziegfeld Follies. Most people either have heard or seen a show that evolved from the latter. Today's productions at Atlantic City and Las Vegas are based on the same stagecraft, lavish backgrounds and beautiful girls wearing exotic costumes and headgear.

A popular misconception credits Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr. as the overruling father of the Follies. Actually, he considered Parisian revues too daring for American taste; Anna Held inspired and financed Flo in the undertaking of the first Follies.<sup>64</sup> But for her, there probably would not have been a "Glorifier of the American Girl" or the Follies. In fact, Ziegfeld's chorus beauties originally were

<sup>61</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 115.

<sup>62</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 115.

<sup>63</sup>David Ewen, Complete Book of the American Musical Theatre (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1958), p. 355.

<sup>64</sup>Interview, Carrera, September 10, 1980.

known as the "Anna Held Girls." Until 1907 Ziegfeld was imply referred to as "Anna Held's manager" or "Anna Held's husband."<sup>65</sup> She told him: "your American girls are the most beautiful in the world, if you could only dress them up chic and 'charmant.' You could do a much better revue than the Folies-Bergere in this country."<sup>66</sup>

Spurred by her urgings, Flo selected dancing girls for the proposed "Follies of 1907." At the beginning, the Follies did not bear his name because, at the time, he was only engaged to stage the piece for Frank McKee, A. L. Erlanger and Anna for which he was paid two hundred dollars a week.<sup>67</sup>

The show finally became the Ziegfeld Follies in 1911.<sup>68</sup> It was Flo's idea, however, to present the Follies on the roof garden of the New York Theatre on Times Square, a popular burlesque place. The gardens, refurbished in a French restaurant motif was named the Jardin de Paris. Cooling systems were unknown at the time so roof gardens became popular in that era. Every hotel and theatre boasted of their roof gardens; by then tall buildings provided an appreciable change in temperature.<sup>69</sup> Anna was still playing at the Broadway Theatre, so Flo auditioned girls there between performances.

Possibly the Follies derived some of its style and content from the Folies-Bergere and part from a mid-nineteenth century

<sup>65</sup>Marks, p. 141.

<sup>66</sup>Cantor, "Ziegfeld and his Follies," p. 26.

<sup>67</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 120.

<sup>68</sup>Toll, p. 302.

<sup>69</sup>Marks, pp. 141-142.

American play, The Black Crook; the former influenced the sensuality and the latter presented the stage-setting extravaganza. The production, a landmark in what was considered "the wicked stage," first opened in September, 1860, and closed in January 1868, after 474 performances that grossed over a million dollars. Although newspapers and churches attempted closure, The Black Crook was revived six times before the turn of the century. Audiences were:

impressed by the sheer beauty of the production, such as the magnificent set that included a grotto with a large lake, or the lavish finale that had curtains of mist, gilded chariots, silver clouds and white angels. The ballet corps of one-hundred young, beautiful girls, headed by a fifteen-year old ballerina, wore striking costumes even though they were considered daring for the period.<sup>70</sup>

In much of the play's lures of color, sound and motion; Ziegfeld

like the Greeks of old...makes no attempt to deny the fascination of the human form. His exhibition of feminine beauty and the lines of his comedians have always been frank and unashamed but usually devoid of innuendo.<sup>71</sup>

Ziegfeld conceived a winning formula for good revues; they contained "three vital ingredients: (1) beautiful girls; (2) dazzling backgrounds; and, (3) first-rate comedians."<sup>72</sup> Eddie Cantor reported that:

the beginning of every Ziegfeld production was a roll of cloth and a strip of canvas. Even before the girls were selected or the comedians or performers engaged, Ziggy would be fingering samples of silk and looking at sketches.... He examined material like a virtuoso handling an instrument.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Abe Lafe, The Wicked Stage: A History of Theatre Censorship and Harrassment in the United States (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1978), p. 20.

<sup>71</sup> Oliver M. Saylor, Our American Theatre (New York: Brentano's, 1978), pp. 252-254.

<sup>72</sup> Ward Morehouse, "The Ziegfeld Follies, a formula with class," Theatre Arts, May, 1956, pp. 66-67.

<sup>73</sup> "Yesterday," Theatre Arts, August, 1945, p. 476.



On July 8, 1907, a hot New York night, the first Follies opened. Harry B. Smith handled much of the planning of the two-act revue, building on his experience with The Parisian Model.<sup>74</sup> Ziegfeld presented acts in a staccato and colorful manner. The show was only a moderate success until harsh-voiced and big-bosomed Nora Bayes was introduced. Somewhat of a revolutionary production, it presented popular personages on stage in caricature including such figures as John Phillip Sousa (who attended opening night and applauded his own image), Theodore Roosevelt and former rival Oscar Hammerstein.<sup>75</sup>

The first Follies closed its performances with sixty-four "Anna Held Girls" dressed as drummer boys. For the first time in theatre history, the actresses went off stage and through the audience. The production cost \$13,000 with a weekly expense of \$3,800 in salaries and overhead.<sup>76</sup> It was a great amount in 1907, but only a tenth of what the Follies would cost in future years.

The 1908 production of the Follies really determined its future when it featured Nora Bayes and her husband, Jack Norworth, singing Shine on Harvest Moon, for which she wrote the lyrics.<sup>77</sup> Improvement in casting had made the difference.

Of the twenty-one editions of the Ziegfeld Follies,<sup>78</sup> Anna Held appeared in just one, in 1910, and then only to present a small

<sup>74</sup>Mantle, Best Plays of 1899-1909, pp. 540-541.

<sup>75</sup>Higham, pp. 64-65.

<sup>76</sup>Ewen, p. 356.

<sup>77</sup>Farnsworth, p. 35.

<sup>78</sup>"Without the Master," Newsweek, March 11, 1957, p. 66.

motion picture of herself and Harry Watson.<sup>79</sup>

Stars that began their careers with the Ziegfeld Follies included Nora Bayes, Will Rogers, Marilyn Miller, Ed Wynn, Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, Leon Errol, Bert Williams, W. C. Fields and Fannie Brice. The Follies have been copied, improved upon and used for the subject of movies and television shows.<sup>80</sup>

The Ziegfeld Follies thus contributed much to the theatrical world and social history of the United States particularly from World War One through the 1920's, when morale needed an uplifting. As a training ground for future entertainment celebrities, the value is obvious. A Ziegfeld Club meets regularly, recalling the good old days of the Follies, with formal dinners and dance.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, Anna's urgings, Ziegfeld's promotional techniques and a few seasons of successful shows like The Little Duchess and The Parisian Model incorporating increasingly exotic settings were the seeds of conception for the Ziegfeld Follies.

<sup>79</sup>Burns Mantle and Garrison P. Sherwood, The Best Plays of 1909-1919 (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1945), p. 420.

<sup>80</sup>"'The Great Ziegfeld' as He Might Have Done It Himself," Newsweek, April 18, 1936, p. 29.

<sup>81</sup>"Ziegfeld Club," pamphlet (New York: Ziegfeld Club, 1980).

## CHAPTER VII

### YEARS OF CRISIS AND CHANGE

Success of the Ziegfeld Follies owed much to Flo's adept manipulations of people with whom he cultivated friendships. His biographer, Charles Higham, described this trait in an anecdote:

One day Ziegfeld received news that his great friend and backer, wealthy Jim Donohue, had been ruined by the stock market crash and thrown himself out of a window. Immediately after he heard the news he wrote the following words to Donohue's widow: "Your late husband promised me \$20,000 just before he fell." The money arrived two days later.<sup>1</sup>

Anna Held realistically characterized him as the "King of the Moochers, always finding new suckers waiting to be duped. The bigger his debts, the more money he was able to borrow."<sup>2</sup> Money was something he used, like scenery or music, to produce shows or to gamble, and Ziegfeld squandered earnings on whims and affectations, such as importing lavender shirts and baby elephants.<sup>3</sup> He was famous throughout the theatrical world for 500 word telegrams requesting money for another "life and death" situation and usually received it. No wonder, then, that he died owing almost \$1,000,000.

Ziegfeld was not adverse to using deception and manipulation in his feminine relationships. Although Anna employed business sense

<sup>1</sup>Higham, p. iii.

<sup>2</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>Morehouse, p. 87.

about the value of money, she often watched him gamble away her hard-earned money. Still Flo's devious practices alerted her to the danger of his greedy mind and a series of major incidents, each of increasing intensity, eventually led to a breakup. One of the first was a theft of \$300,000 of jewelry — including a dog collar with four broaches of diamonds and eight strings of pearls valued at \$25,000 — from her train stateroom on October 22, 1906.<sup>4</sup> The habit of traveling with all her jewels probably had been taken from the example of her idol, Sarah Bernhardt. While enroute to Cleveland on the Parisian Model tour, the petite actress missed her satchel of jewels sometime after passing Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.<sup>5</sup> When she reported the loss to the Cleveland police chief, Anna was aghast at his assumption that it was a publicity stunt. Had they heard, even in Ohio, of Ziegfeld? She was truly grief-stricken and that evening for the first time in her career, refused to appear on stage. Flo indicated serious intentions to help, leaving on a personal trip with Nat Pinkerton to recover the jewels for an alleged \$11,800 ransom. On his return, he brought some of the jewels, no money and a "story that was rather suspect."<sup>6</sup> Anna never believed his account, being convinced he somehow set up the theft to cover losses in his other endeavors.

On the other side of the Atlantic, weakened by diabetes Maximo Carrera died April 23, 1908.<sup>7</sup> The death of her ex-husband gave Miss Held

<sup>4</sup>"Anna Held's Lost Fortune," New York Times, October 24, 1906, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Higham, p. 58.

<sup>6</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 115-116.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 120.

the custody of twelve year old Liane, who exhibited the proper manners of a child who had spent most of her life in a convent. Miss Carrera felt no deep affection for her mother, although Anna had spent every summer with her. Leading a sheltered life in convents, her mother's occupation was concealed from her and most of those around her. After the child went to the United States with her mother, the public learned of Liane's existence and she of her mother's stage life. Being the mother of an adolescent girl could be damaging to the career of a titillating comedienne and Miss Held attempted to conceal her daughter's existence even after Carrera's death. Anna's profession also imposed difficulties. Few private schools would accept Liane. Rumors of a daughter became prevalent, so to end the talk that she was the mother of either an adopted child or an idiot, Flo and Anna informed the public of the truth.<sup>9</sup> After exposure to stage talk, Liane began to develop an interest in the theatre, particularly in Miss Held's upcoming 1908 production.

Harry B. Smith wrote a musical play, Miss Innocence, especially for Anna's 1908-09 season. A spectacular production which attempted to excel previous extravaganzas, this play marked the beginning of the "show-girl." Previously, chorus girls, called "ponies," were used as "clothes horses" and to exhibit their faces and figures<sup>10</sup> - singing and acting talent was not required.

Although the Follies in 1908 proved a success, Ziegfeld's chief

<sup>8</sup> Carrera, Interview, February 16, 1981.

<sup>9</sup> Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 120-121.

<sup>10</sup> Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 120.

interest was in the lavish Miss Innocence. To advertise the play, he ordered the largest electric lighted sign ever built. It contained 32,000 square feet of glass, measured 45 feet high by 80 feet long and weighed eight tons. Eleven miles of electric wire on the sign used more current than was required to illuminate the Brooklyn Bridge.<sup>11</sup> Nationwide publicity set up by Flo helped make it the most successful tour of Anna's career.

During mid-September (1908) rehearsals, an unfortunate incident threatened the success of the show. Anna became pregnant and this time she liked the idea! Miss Held was thirty-five at the time and, having made over a half-million dollars, she thought of retiring while still young. Liane, when asked if she would like a little brother, abruptly smashed her doll against the wall saying "That's what I'll do with little brother. I haven't had so much love that I can share it."<sup>12</sup>

Ziegfeld was not going to let a pregnancy stand in the way of Miss Innocence. An attractive girl, Lillian Lorraine had been hired as Anna's understudy, but was too inexperienced to handle the starring role. Flo was very concerned, not as a prospective father, but as a greedy businessman, and told his wife she would have to "get rid of the little bundle." An abortion, he said, was the only way.<sup>13</sup> Soon after, on a quiet Sunday evening (the servants were gone and Liane was at boarding school), Flo brought home a new friend, an inebriated doctor. Anna was thoroughly disgusted, especially when the men insisted on a medical examination. During the ensuing argument, she found herself

<sup>11</sup>Higham, pp. 66-67.

<sup>12</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 125.

<sup>13</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 17, 1981.

being restrained by Flo while the quack doctor administered chloroform.

Of the incident, Anna wrote:

In the world of fun house mirrors where I was fighting for my life, I could hear Flo's voice like a death sentence, "Doctor, give her a good dose of chloroform to calm her down. Then we'll take her to the table in the dining room."

The etherlike smell of an anesthetic burned my mouth with its sugary sweetness. With diabolical skill, the abortionist had given me just enough of the drug to paralyze me without putting me completely to sleep. Unable to defend myself, yet with my flesh capable of sensation, I was aware that a crime was about to be committed. I was stretched out on the table in the dining room. The doctor had unfastened my corset and was groping around in my underwear. My wrists and ankles were being bruised by straps fastened to the legs of the table. A metallic sound. The glacial feeling of being raped. The hesitant sting of a pain that is at first dull but then becomes sharper and grows. Its tentacles reach in organic tissue. It expands with calculated cruelty.<sup>14</sup>

After almost dying from a hemorrhage, Miss Held awakened the next morning when Ziegfeld told her they had lost a son. He said that she must have bumped into a piece of furniture, fainted and miscarried. Ziegfeld was thus able to surmount the obstacle, but it later resulted in a more serious loss than a play. Two weeks later, Miss Innocence opened on schedule.<sup>15</sup>

Anna played her role successfully while Flo hotly pursued the new girl, Lillian Lorraine. Miss Innocence was an appropriate role for Anna, for all during the production in 1908, she was ignorant of the real reason Miss Lorraine was in the cast. According to Higham, Lillian, a beauty and seducer of men, derived what favors she could from them. She had been forced into that style of life through no fault of her own. At thirteen, she had her first affair with a man,

<sup>14</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 134.

<sup>15</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 17, 1981.

who paid her father for the privilege of sleeping with her.<sup>16</sup> Ziegfeld installed her in an apartment two floors above Anna's eighth floor Ansonia suite, even decorating it identically. That, with the knowledge of his part in the abortion, killed any love or respect that she held for Ziegfeld, so she felt no remorse when she left New York May 18, 1909, on the Kronprinzessin Cecille, with other celebrities including Jay Gould. With her she took Liane, Beatrice and her little dog. She told reporters that she intended to retire after the next season, that her New York real estate investments brought good returns, and that she looked upon America as her future home.<sup>17</sup>

As summer ended, Anna enrolled Liane at a Versailles boarding school, the Lycee de Jeunes Filles. Returning from France on the same ship, she arrived in New York September 7th<sup>18</sup> at the Ansonia for the month before the nationwide Miss Innocence tour began on October 4th in Boston. Although Ziegfeld had become more impersonal toward Anna, he worried that she might return permanently to Paris, so he attempted another crafty trick to keep his successful star. The Miss Innocence tour was to end the week of April 10, 1910, in Boston, where it had begun, when Liane arrived in New York (April 9th) on the steamship Mauretania, she came, supposedly, as a surprise for her mother.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup>Higham, p. 73.

<sup>17</sup>"Mrs. George Gould Sails, Anna Held Also," New York Times, May 19, 1909, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup>"Anna Held Back from Europe," New York Times, September 8, 1909, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup>"Anna Held's Daughter Arrives," New York Times, April 9, 1910, p. 11.



Ziegfeld used the ruse that Anna was near death to get the fourteen year old back across the Atlantic, hoping it would secure the actress's permanence in America. Liane joined her mother in Boston.

Within a week after returning to New York, Flo imposed the final indignity upon their relationship. On the pretense of walking Anna's dog, Flo left the apartment with Liane tagging along. A few blocks out, his mood changed and he told the girl to go back home. Returning slowly, Liane noticed him enter the elevator, which had stopped on the tenth floor. Asked why she returned home alone, Liane blurted out: "I bet he went to see that nasty woman."<sup>20</sup> She related the happenings to her mother; even the daughter knew Lillian lived there but her mother did not. Questioned further, Liane explained about "that woman [an understudy] who wore the same kind of dress as you on the stage."<sup>21</sup> Going up the stairs, Miss Held heard laughter in the apartment. Waiting for a few minutes, Anna saw Flo emerge with her dog and Lillian "en deshabilité." Kissing Miss Lorraine farewell, he turned to be faced by Anna, who proceeded to use language which she rarely used; Flo slunk away. Returning to her suite, Miss Held found Liane and Beatrice already packing suitcases for a move to the Savoy Hotel.<sup>22</sup> They sailed for France on May 12th.<sup>23</sup> Anna had told her public on April 23rd at the new City Theatre, which she dedicated the week before,<sup>24</sup> that she did

<sup>20</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 122.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 140.

<sup>23</sup>"Anna Held Bids Goodbye," New York Times, April 24, 1910, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup>"Welcome New City Theatre," New York Times, April 19, 1910, p. 9.

not intend to go back on the stage for at least two years.<sup>25</sup>

Miss Held did not return to America for sixteen months. Persistent as ever, Ziegfeld greeted her upon arrival in New York and booked more tours of Miss Innocence throughout the country in a private Pullman car, The Republic. In San Francisco during the tour she met Charles F. Hanlon, a multi-millionaire lawyer, who had previous business dealings with Ziegfeld. Hanlon pursued Anna ardently and offered his legal services to free her from Ziegfeld's clutches.<sup>26</sup> Understandably, Anna's suit became a front page story.<sup>27</sup> Miss Lorraine's name was kept confidential, and she had not been Flo's only digression from the marriage bed. Anna named several in the legal documentation.<sup>28</sup> Years later, Anna and her daughter Liane were both discrete in writing of the incident and the divorce. Miss Held didn't use a name, only the term "understudy."<sup>29</sup> Later, in her article, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance with my Mother," Liane calls the woman, Melba Mitchell, not Lillian Lorraine, her true name.<sup>30</sup>

The divorce was granted August 1, 1912, and became final January 6, 1913.<sup>31</sup> Even though they had not lived together since 1909 and Ziegfeld

<sup>25</sup>"Anna Held Bids Goodbye," New York Times, April 24, 1910, p. 13.

<sup>26</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 142-143.

<sup>27</sup>"Anna Held Sues For Divorce," New York Times, April 14, 1912, p.

1.

<sup>28</sup>"To Hear Anna Held's Suit," New York Times, April 23, 1912, p.

10.

<sup>29</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 138-140.

<sup>30</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," pp. 121-122.

<sup>31</sup>"Miss Held To Be Free On Monday," New York Telegraph, January 1, 1913, news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

arrogantly told the press: "I have no desire to discuss my private affairs in the papers"... "My personal relations with Miss Held doesn't [sic] concern the public,"<sup>32</sup> he did not hesitate a week before the divorce was final to state that "his overtures for a reconciliation, conducted by trans-Atlantic cable, had been finally heard and granted by Miss Held from her Winter [sic] quarters in Biarritz, France, and they would be remarried again very soon."<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, Ziegfeld kept after Anna to come back to him. In fact, in April, 1914, Flo went to one of her performances at Baltimore's Maryland Theatre, to beg her to remarry him. One week later, he married Billie Burke, a budding and, to Flo's delight, wealthy actress. Charles Frohman, Miss Burke's manager, warned her about Ziegfeld and was very disturbed on learning of their marriage. Frohman, unfortunately, went down with the Lusitania on May 7, 1916.<sup>34</sup> Flo then became Miss Burke's manager, gaining more control over her finances. Ziegfeld had secured a meal-ticket for the rest of his life. His marriage did not visibly affect Anna Held until Billie Burke had his baby.

The success of the Follies in 1908 ironically led to years of crisis and change for Anna. The husband she had led to success had treated her with unbelievable cruelty, forcing the abortion of their own child; he had been unfaithful, blatantly cavorting with her under-study. At long last, this was too much. She returned to France to reconsider her goals.

<sup>32</sup>"Anna Held Would Divorce Ziegfeld," news clipping, April 15, 1912, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>33</sup>"Miss Held To Be Free," New York Telegraph, January 1, 1913.

<sup>34</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 123.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ANNA HELD AND THE WAR YEARS

Having divorced Ziegfeld, Anna Held was on her own for the first time since 1896. After returning to Europe, she lived in Paris, London, Naples or wherever it was the vogue to be. Liane was eighteen and out of school, so mother and daughter traveled together with her divorce lawyer, Charles S. Hanlon, who continued the pattern of Carrera and Ziegfeld by constantly following her, catering to every whim of the ladies, and in general, seeking the now eligible Anna's hand. She was fortunate to have Liane close at hand to ward off any "dangerous tete-a-tete" with the amorous westerner, whose cowboy garb caused a sensation in Europe.<sup>1</sup> Rumors circulated in the United States about an impending marriage.<sup>2</sup> Anna had no such ideas, though. She still loved Flo but would not ever consider returning to him.

Miss Held with Liane arrived back in New York September 8, 1913 on the steamship France, with plans for her own company, appropriately named "Anna Held, Incorporated," to be managed from offices in the Shubert Theatre Building on 44th Street. Miss Held already had formulated a lavish stage production, the Anna Held All Star Variete

<sup>1</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 144-145.

<sup>2</sup>"Cupid and Anna," unidentified Oakland, California news clipping, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

Jubilee,<sup>3</sup> in which she featured her famous "diamond stockings."

With John Cort as her manager, she toured in a luxurious private rail car. She was still a top attraction in America, earning \$3,500 a week<sup>4</sup> and was quite wealthy, although her recent divorce from Ziegfeld had cost her over \$50,000<sup>5</sup> and she still carried the largest insurance policy ever issued a woman in this country. Plans were made to build a needed new theatre:

Owing to the scarcity of theatres in New York, the Messrs. Shubert have arranged to erect a small theatre on West 44th Street for the use of Anna Held, to be called "The Anna Held Theatre." There the celebrated French comedienne will open next season in a series of one act French revues...the house will seat less than 300 people. Prices of seats will be 5 dollars per performance....the new Anna Held Theatre will have a small courtyard, allowing automobiles to drive up to the front entrance, set ten feet back from the sidewalk.<sup>7</sup>

Ziegfeld's absence from her life did not close off publicity.

The press expanded on real events, because Flo was no longer there to manufacture situations. In Los Angeles, Anna successfully sought to change a theatre's policy against scheduling Sunday performances.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup>"Mme. Anna Held Glad To Come Back," unidentified news clipping, September 9, 1913, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

<sup>4</sup>"Attractions in the Local Theatres," Portland Oregonian, December 7, 1913, sec. 4, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 144.

<sup>6</sup>"Anna Held's Life Insured," New York Sun-Telegraph, December 22, 1902, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup>"Anna Held Theatre," New York Review, no date, news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>8</sup>"Anna Held Changes A Policy," New York Telegraph, January 2, 1912.

Another incident built up by the press was one reporting the censoring of parts of Miss Innocence at the same theatre:

CITY PROSECUTOR EXPURGATES ANNA HELD SHOW AFTER WITNESSING A PERFORMANCE

"Miss Innocence" as depicted by Miss Anna Held at the Mason, [theatre] isn't innocent enough according to City Prosecutor Guy Eddie...Curtailment of certain scenes which Mr. Eddie says are "suggestive" and the expurgation of several lines...have been demanded by the city's official censor who attended a performance last night and who is of the opinion that the nature of plays which may be presented here, are being violated by Miss Held and her company...he arranged a conference and Miss Held's company promised to comply with the official's wish.<sup>9</sup>

More in a Ziegfeldian vein was a New York Times review in September, 1913, which read in part:

Anna Held arrived last night from Paris...accompanied by her daughter Liane and the Count Ste. Crois de la Roncière, who travels around with the actress and takes her up in his airship whenever she feels so disposed....

A week before leaving Paris she went to Fontaine-bleau to witness a rehearsal of "An African Lion Hunt" for the moving pictures...Just as she drove up in her automobile with the Count and her daughter, a tiger got loose and came bounding toward them. "I seized my rifle," said the actress yesterday, "and shot him right in the eye at 100 yards, and he dropped dead." Here she exhibited a claw said to have been removed from the tiger after death and mounted in gold for her saving the lives of the count, actors and actresses.<sup>10</sup>

Liane says that she does not recall her mother ever holding a gun, shooting any animal or the incident cited. She was nineteen at the time and probably would have remembered if it really happened. The Count was real, however, traveling with them from 1913 to 1915.<sup>11</sup> An automobile accident in London on July 20, 1913 could have been attrib-

<sup>9</sup>"City Prosecutor Expurgates Anna Held Show after Witnessing a Performance," Los Angeles Evening Herald, January 3, 1912.

<sup>10</sup>"Anna Held No [sic] Rehearsed," New York Times, September 6, 1913, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup>Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, September 10, 1980.

uted to the Count's lack of familiarity with English rules of the road.<sup>12</sup> Rumors flourished that she planned to wed the Count.<sup>13</sup> Adept at the new pastime of flying machines and having his own plane, he took Anna to the air: A Savannah reporter related that:

Anna Held says she loves to fly. Count la Roncière, who is with me now taught me how. The rascal nearly killed me twice, once at Hendon in England, and the second time in Paris, but I have had my revenge, he was nearly arrested as a spy in New York.<sup>14</sup>

A change of life style resulted from a mother-daughter quarrel. A bold theatre manager, took advantage of the family dispute by offering Liane a start in show business. Anna had no desire whatsoever of seeing her offspring on stage. Many times she issued warnings via the press to young girls:

The first piece of advice I would give to the average young girl who wants to become a music-hall singer is not to attempt it.

The vaudeville stage, as I first knew it in Europe, is a splendid school for a comedienne of the Judic type. You learn self-confidence, assurance, and...how to amuse an audience...

If my parents had been alive they would never have permitted me to become a vaudeville star.<sup>15</sup>

She outlined the dangers of the stage for young girls again in 1909:

Conditions behind the footlights, especially for chorus and show girls, are something horrible to think of. In most musical plays, the girls are absolutely at the mercy of the owner of the show,

There are a dozen theatres, I could name offhand, controlled, indeed owned, by millionaires, and these men, and their friends

<sup>12</sup>"Anna Held Hurt In Auto," New York Times, July 21, 1913, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>"Oo La! La! Anna Held, Ze Count She'll Wed - Secret," Los Angeles Examiner, November 9, 1915, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup>"Anna Held Comes To Town," Savannah Press, September 26, 1913, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>Anna Held, "How To Act In Vaudeville," New York Evening World, March 1, 1900, p. 2.

have all the privileges of the stage during rehearsals and performances. Their object is obvious. A girl with a pretty face is soon at their mercy.<sup>16</sup>

When asked if she would allow her daughter to follow in her footsteps as an actress, Miss Held retorted "Never! Never!...she will lead a quiet life and marry and settle down and - viola tout."<sup>17</sup> Thus, when on tour with her Varietes she exploded when she read how Liane was exploiting the name of "Anna Held, Jr.," for \$500 a week at Oscar Hammerstein's theatres.<sup>18</sup> The ensuing family quarrel separated mother and daughter until Miss Held was near death.

In May, 1914, she returned alone to her Paris home at Faubourg Saint-Helene which seemed quiet as a tomb. Her family had dissolved: Carrera had died, Ziegfeld had remarried and Liane had gone on the stage. This left her with a maid and little dog, Ting-Ting. It would not be a dull summer, however, for an event occurring in nearby Bosnia the following month altered any plans Miss Held may have had at the time. Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophia, were assassinated on their wedding anniversary, June 28th.<sup>19</sup> Having accepted an engagement at the Bucharest (Romania) Royal Theatre, she began preparations for the show, only to be halted by mobilization on August 3rd.<sup>20</sup>

Anna's alternative involved organizing the theatre group to entertain wounded soldiers. Indeed, she thrust herself into work for the war

<sup>16</sup>"Shun Stage as You Would the Plague, Dangers Lurk There for Every Girl," New York American, 1909, news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 151-152.

<sup>19</sup>A. J. P. Taylor, The First World War, an illustrated history (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1972), p. 13.



effort, entertaining troops, nursing soldiers and campaigning for peace until she died three months before the war's end. In a touching letter to her daughter in late 1914 from Biarritz in the Pyrenees, she wrote:

Here there is not much pleasure. The people here (Hotel Palais) are the most elegant...most of the hotels have been taken over. We find ourselves with many wounded, and many are in pain. There is a soldier who wishes to sell a coat from a man he killed. I won't buy it because it is so full of holes.<sup>21</sup>

To a Pittsburgh audience, she recounted experiences of singing in the trenches and that she:

...saw sights that even now make her shudder and cry to tell about. Miss Held said she sang to men with "no eyes" - just holes in their heads - who kept pulling at their lashes in the hope they might see.<sup>22</sup>

In a French limousine equipped with a fold-down table and ice box she traveled from one base hospital to another to cheer the wounded.<sup>23</sup> Later she gave the car to the French army, to be used by General Joseph Joffre. The fold-down table served the officers to spread their maps while on the battlefield. The automobile met a soldier's death on an important mission for the General when shots from a German reconnoitering party tore away parts of the car until it had to be abandoned by its chauffeur. He later wrote Miss Held about the car's fate.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Anna Held to Liane Carrera, August 26, 1914. The letter in French was translated into English by Caroline Meyer, Portland, Oregon, April, 1981.

<sup>22</sup>"Sang in Trenches," Pittsburgh Dispatch, April 5, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>"Anna Held's Work Among Wounded," August 15, 1918, unidentified news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>24</sup>"Anna Held's Auto Is Smashed After Use By Gen. Joffre," unidentified news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

Anna also sent the soldiers cigarettes and chewing gum regularly. The American Chicle Company ran full-page advertisements with her picture and the quotation: "The boys in the trenches expressed such a preference for Adams Black Jack Chewing Gum that I forward some every month."<sup>25</sup> Anna's daughter, Liane, said reports were received that much of the cigarettes, candy and gum had been sold to the soldiers, even though Anna had given it for free distribution.<sup>26</sup> Parisians called the actress a modern Jeanne d'Arc because of the things she had done for French war relief.<sup>27</sup>

Anna Held was instrumental in French propaganda to persuade the United States to intercede in the Great War. This she did with the urging of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who asked that she go back across the Atlantic and make speeches for the good of "her" France.<sup>28</sup> Her on-the-spot experiences at battlefield hospitals qualified her as a speechmaker in the war effort. Heywood Brown of the New York Tribune wrote that: "Anna Held has been through fire, her experiences have left their mark on her."<sup>29</sup> She did not return to the stage, to continue her career, but only in efforts to recruit help for France. Her words to the American press in 1916 were:

I wish that I could let the public here know that I am not the Anna Held of old. I am another woman - a woman with a

<sup>25</sup>Theatre Magazine, February, 1917 (No. 192), p. 119.

<sup>26</sup>Carrera, Interview, February 13, 1981.

<sup>27</sup>"Anna Held, Modern Jeanne d'Arc," Baltimore Sun, February 25, 1916, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 155-156.

<sup>29</sup>Heywood Brown, "Anna Held Here with War Song," New York Tribune, October 26, 1915, p. 2.

mission and serious motives, And that is not easy to show in a musical comedy, is it?<sup>30</sup>

Anna coined the phrase "Follow Me" in her desire to convince America to join the war. With this on her lips, she signed a contract with Oliver Morosco's Photoplay Studios to make her first Hollywood motion picture, Madama La Presidente, a French comedy farce of compromising situations.<sup>31</sup> The Morosco-Paramount movie had been filmed in all of three weeks during November, 1915. Publicity was kind to Anna, but the film did not help the war effort, and so she came out of the movie business discouraged. Her heart was in the war trenches when Louella Parsons interviewed her. Expressing her disappointment in the motion picture, she averred:

The camera is not truthful, my eyes looked so old and tired.... Ze stage make-up is zo very different, I had to unlearn all I knew when I faced the camera. When I stopped to think that every move I made was being photographed I got so [self-] conscious.

She continued, referring to her major interest:

Our boys are being killed and our babies are left fatherless. France and England in our time will never be the same. I always reach the audience with my voice...I want to do everything to stop that wicked war.<sup>32</sup>

For the war effort, she participated in many benefits and even sold newspapers with her autograph. The benefits were almost always for such as the Red Cross and Belgian relief. Instead of touring the country with a play, many of her journeys were charitable ones. Five

<sup>30</sup>Colgate Baker, "Super Anna Held & Follow Me," New York Review December 2, 1916, sec. 2, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>"Anna Held's Debut in a Screen Play," New York Times, February 7, 1916, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup>Louella O. Parsons, "Seen on the Screen," Chicago Herald, February 18, 1916, p. 16.

cent Omaha newspapers with her autograph sold for fifty cents and a dollar. So many people gathered to buy the papers that local police had to order the crowd to disperse.<sup>33</sup> Motion pictures were made of Miss Held selling St. Louis Times "Newsies" for relief of destitute war victims,<sup>34</sup> and New Orleans illustrated military-uniformed Anna promoting sale of the New Orleans Item for the sick Allied Soldier's fund.<sup>35</sup>

The Pacific Northwest was not left out of her campaign itinerary, and a gigantic sale of Red Cross Seals was held December 8, 1913, in the lobby of Portland's Hotel Oregon. Anna showed her appreciation by singing Won't You Come and Play With Me.<sup>36</sup> On this journey to Oregon, in the growing Western city, she was on tour with her All Star Variete Jubilee at the Helig Theatre on 11th and Morrison.<sup>37</sup>

Anna admitted to herself that the stage and the war had taken much of her freshness and strength. She was forty-three years old in 1916 when she wrote that she felt her "star was shining its last light."<sup>38</sup> The plan to organize her last war relief effort came from Ziegfeld's old competitors, the Shuberts, who planned a musical comedy with the intent

<sup>33</sup>"Crowds Flock to Buy the Daily News From Anna Held; Autographed copies bring extra price for Red Cross," Omaha News, May 12, 1916, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup>"Anna Held Sells the St. Louis Times for Belgian Fund," St. Louis Times, February 26, 1916, p. 3.

<sup>35</sup>"Watch for Anna Held Item Newsies," New Orleans Item, 1916, news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>36</sup>"Anna Sells Seals," Portland Oregonian, December 9, 1913, p. 13.

<sup>37</sup>"The Stage," Portland Oregonian, January 14, 1912, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 158.

of persuading America to enter the war on the side of the Allies. Miss Held welcomed the production, named it Follow Me and opened in October, 1916, at the Casino Theatre in New York. During this time, America was divided into three factions: whether to stay out of the war, furnish aid, or to enter the conflict in an all out effort for victory and peace.

Anna, firmly believing that the United States could stop the war, told her Follow Me audiences:

Fifteen days after the war began I sent a 150-word message to President Wilson, I told him "only God and you can stop this war." I never received a reply. Perhaps the President did not receive the message. I do not know.<sup>39</sup>

And, she said that over her Paris apartment door, across from the palace of President Raymond Poincaré, flew the French and American flags; so every morning as the President left his house, he was compelled to salute the American as well as the French flag.<sup>40</sup>

For Follow Me, Miss Held created special gowns, all costing over a thousand dollars each.<sup>41</sup> Most beautiful was the famous "peacock dress," a white costume with embroidery on the feathers of the spread-out tail, a long train and wired headdress requiring a special trunk. It proved to be the last costume Anna Held was to wear on the stage.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup>"Held's Peace Speech Unique in Musical Comedy," New York Review, undated news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>40</sup>"Women Here Are Superior," Brooklyn Citizen, May 2, 1917, p. 11.

<sup>41</sup>"Anna Held's Gowns in 'Follow Me,' are Wondrous Ones," Boston Record, November 16, 1916.

<sup>42</sup>The "peacock dress" was given to the Metropolitan Museum of Art after Anna Held's death. In 1949, it was passed on to the Museum of the City of New York. Some repairs of the train will be done by Mary Ann Smith, who is responsible for the dress.

After the second of three acts of Follow Me, she read what became known as her "peace poem," which has become lost. One could assume that its contents were similar to the following quotations from a press release:

War being uppermost in her mind, she talks mostly of war. You Americans...do not realize how terrible war is. I cannot get it off my mind, even as I laugh and sing, those poor soldiers are in the hospitals; those handsome stalwart young men with arms and legs shot off....<sup>43</sup>

She spoke at length giving further detailed descriptions of the wounded and recited the French determination to win she ended with a timeless statement regarding war:

...what makes me angry is that poor fellows who never thought of harming anyone are being sent out to kill by greedy, heartless rulers. Let those rulers get out there themselves and fight and the war would soon be over. Most of the men don't know why they are fighting. They have just been ordered to fight.<sup>44</sup>

During a Follow Me performance in Pittsburgh on April 4, 1917, the show was halted in order to announce the United States entry into the war.<sup>45</sup> Anna Held wept for joy, perhaps her work had not been in vain and had contributed in some small way to the attainment of her long desired goal.

Since her return to France in 1914, Anna had discovered and pursued a new direction in life. After she had achieved professional and financial success, the actress found her new goal in helping others. The United States intervention in the war did not end her tour of Follow Me. Although very fatigued, she continued the prosperous road show.

<sup>43</sup>Irvin Engler, "Crippled Soldiers on Anna Held's Mind as She Sings," Sacramento Star, January 17, 1917, p. 7.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 159.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FINAL CURTAIN

Follow Me continued successfully into the next season (1917-18). Perhaps it ran too long, with one performance a day each at a new town throughout the United States, because Miss Held's health soon failed. Correspondence with her daughter indicated increasing poor health, and a Christmas telegram on December 14, 1917, from North Yakima, Washington, noted: "feeling better but not strong."<sup>1</sup>

Two weeks later, snowbound again in Minneapolis, enroute to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for a performance the following night, all railroads stopped operating as the area experienced one of the worst snowstorms in history. An interruption at this point of the tour would have caused disruption of the company in mid-season and a personal disaster for most members of the company. Miss Held ordered her secretary to contact the manager of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, whereby she hired four engines to insure making the special 250 mile snowbound trip. It cost her \$10,000. The bitter weather aggravated the cold Anna had contracted in the Northwest. Notified of her mother's weakened condition, Liane arrived in Milwaukee from New York January 16, 1918. Two evenings later, Anna collapsed on the stage,<sup>2</sup> She entered St. Mary's Hospital in Milwaukee the following day, and she was said to be suffering

<sup>1</sup>Anna Held to Liane Carrera, December 24, 1917. Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

<sup>2</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 165.

from neuritis.<sup>3</sup> With determination like that of her famous mother, Liane, a novice actress, replaced Anna on the tour for its remaining thirteen and a half weeks. The Milwaukee audience witnessed a performance in which for "the first time in theatre history, a star was replaced by her own daughter."<sup>4</sup>

Liane Carrera says that years of overwork, plus the severe regimen she imposed on herself in order to keep her figure, had predisposed her mother to a case of anemia, which when aggravated became pernicious. The cold she contracted triggered the attack of acute myelitis.<sup>5</sup>

A telegram from Miss Held to her daughter at the Majestic Theatre in Flint, Michigan, gives an interesting view of her condition:

My Darling Daughter. Am just begging to pick up a little from my serious condition. Like a little chick wants to get out of it's [sic] shell. It is slow but am sure with time I will be alright. Proud of you. With lots of love and kisses. Remember me to Beatrice and Ting Ting.<sup>6</sup>

Doctors insisted on a warmer climate for her recovery, so Anna decided to go to Asheville, North Carolina, in March.<sup>7</sup> By late April, she was back in her apartment at the Savoy Hotel in New York.<sup>8</sup> She normally

<sup>3</sup>"Anna Held Taken to Hospital," New York Times, January 21, 1918, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 167.

<sup>5</sup>Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, February 17, 1981.

<sup>6</sup>Anna Held to Liane Carrera, January 26, 1918. Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

<sup>7</sup>Anna Held to Liane Carrera, March 25, 1918. Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

<sup>8</sup>"Anna Held Ill at Hotel Savoy," New York Times, April 25, 1918, p. 10.



weighed about 115 pounds, but by May she weighed only 84 pounds. X-rays indicated she had a rare disease, multiple myeloma, a spongy condition of bone marrow and tissue. Only fifty cases were known at the time. Her condition became worse due to the physical exhaustion brought about by tiring tours and constant exposure during war work.<sup>9</sup>

Two blood transfusions, a new innovation in 1918, were given Miss Held on May 5th, including blood from a "motor truck chauffeur."<sup>10</sup> Her condition improved, briefly contradicting the doctors' prognosis.

In her honor, a special performance of A Maid Of Honor was given in Hotel Savoy's ballroom for Anna who was rolled to the temporary theatre in a reclining chair.<sup>11</sup> Bravely, she heard the doctor's verdict that she could die at any time, a matter of hours or weeks. Calling in the New York papers, she instructed them to send her love to the soldiers.<sup>12</sup> Alexandro V. Georgewich, secretary of the Serbian legation in the United States, went to Anna's bedside and presented a bronze medal awarded to her by his government for her war efforts.<sup>13</sup>

On the 29th of June, she signed her recently drawn up will and testament wherein she directed Lillian Russell Moore to be her executor and made Charles F. Hanlon trustee for Liane.<sup>14</sup> In feverish periods,

<sup>9</sup>"Anna Held Has Myeloma," New York Times, May 3, 1918, p. 24.

<sup>10</sup>"Blood Transfusion for Anna Held," New York Times, May 4, 1918, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup>"Give Play for Anna Held," New York Times, May 20, 1918, p. 9.

<sup>12</sup>"Anna Held, Told Death Nears, Send Love to 'My Soldiers!'" New York Tribune, May 27, 1918, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup>"Medal for Anna Held," Pittsburgh Press, June 24, 1918, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

<sup>14</sup>"Last Will and Testament of Anna Held," June 29, 1918, Surrogate's Court, County of New York, New York City.

Anna would call out for "Flo." It was difficult, however, to persuade him to come to Anna's bedside; he divided his time between his wife Billie Burke and Lillian Lorraine. One of Anna's doctors laid in wait for several days for Ziegfeld and finally dragged him to her room, after which they had touching moments together. Flo promised to return, but he never did.<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that on the evening of Miss Held's death, while her body was being removed to the funeral home, the Ziegfeld Follies were being performed a few blocks away.<sup>16</sup>

She seemed to gain strength through July, then on July 31st Anna contracted bronchial pneumonia.<sup>17</sup> Hot temperatures began to plague New York, aggravating her already deteriorating condition. Early on August 12th, a doctor pronounced Miss Held dead. Liane would not believe it. In sympathy for the daughter, the doctor lifted the sheet which had been drawn over her face. Anna was still breathing. Liane sat with her mother during the last hours. At 1:00 P. M. she felt a slight tremor in Anna's arm. At 5:22 P. M. Anna Held died.<sup>18</sup>

She was taken to Campbell's Funeral Church at 67th and Broadway and interred in a vault at Woodlawn Cemetery on August 14, 1918.<sup>19</sup> Over 1500 mourners lined the streets. It was reported that Miss Held had requested that she be buried in France after the war.<sup>20</sup> Anna Held's

<sup>15</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 172-173.

<sup>16</sup>New York Times, August 12, 1918, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup>"Anna Held Has Relapse," New York Times, August 2, 1918, p. 9.

<sup>18</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 174-176.

<sup>19</sup>"Funeral of Anna Held To Be Held This Morning," New York Tribune, August 14, 1918, p. 7.

<sup>20</sup>"1500 Mourners at Anna Held's Bier," New York Times, August 15, 1918, p. 11.

body was exhumed for a second funeral service, a high requiem mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on September 13, 1918. Friends who had taken charge of her first funeral had not been informed that she died in the Catholic faith.<sup>21</sup> She was then buried in the Holy Angel's Cemetery at Mt. Pleasant in Westchester County, New York.<sup>22</sup> Anna left an estate of over \$300,000 of which Liane was to receive \$200,000, most of the value being in jewels.<sup>23</sup>

Anna Held's death notices appeared nationwide and in Europe with a huge splash of publicity, much like that which had introduced her to America. Many reporters diagnosed the cause of her death as myeloma, induced, they suggested ghoulishly, by too-tight lacing of Anna's corsets. Vivid diagrams illustrated what happens to female insides as a result of such lacing accompanied the stories. The final avalanche of obituaries concluded that such were the wages of life upon the wicked stage.

<sup>21</sup>"High Mass for Anna Held," New York Times, August 15, 1918, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid

<sup>23</sup>Through alleged manipulations of Charles F. Hanlon, trustee until Liane "attained the age of twenty-five years" (Anna Held Will and Testament, page 3, article 19), she lost most of her inheritance. During interviews, she demonstrated much hostility toward Hanlon, so the writer felt it inappropriate to pursue the matter in the interviews. Carrera, Interview, September 10, 1980.

## CHAPTER X

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The many obituaries of Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., who died, in Hollywood on July 22, 1932, were understandably eulogistic but there was a notable disheartening absence of Anna Held's name in most of them. Until he had met her, he had been merely one of the thousand or more impresarios swarming over the face of the theatrical world. Ziegfeld did not become a producer until he "produced" Anna Held.<sup>1</sup> In fact, he was generally referred to as simply "Anna Held's husband" or "Anna Held's manager" until about 1908.<sup>2</sup> The title, Follies of 1907, was not even Ziegfeld's idea and at the time he was simply an employee hired to "install and manage a girlie revue."<sup>3</sup> The title had been conceived by Harry B. Smith, who ran a column in a Chicago newspaper called Follies of the Day.<sup>4</sup> As Ziegfeld gained more control in 1911, he added his name.<sup>5</sup> Since then, the public has been conditioned to think and speak of the productions as "Ziegfeld's" Follies or "his" Follies. Full credit for the Follies conception has been erroneously accorded to him, whereas in reality, Ziegfeld's practices were that of

<sup>1</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 8-9.

<sup>2</sup>Marks, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 120.

<sup>4</sup>Higham, p. 63.

<sup>5</sup>Toll, p. 302.

deception and financial manipulation of his friends, associates and wives.

In her Memoires Held admitted: "Florenz Ziegfeld helped me a lot. But didn't I help him even more? Up to the time we met he had produced only sideshows."<sup>6</sup> Many people remember or know of the Ziegfeld Follies: movies, plays and television shows have featured them. But a very few have ever heard the name of Anna Held, who conceived the idea and financed their decisive first productions!

Substantiating testimonials to Miss Held's vital role in the origin of the Ziegfeld Follies, have been forthcoming from notables of the entertainment world and his immediate family members. Even Ziegfeld's second wife, Billie Burke, admits in her foreword to Marjorie Farnsworth's Ziegfeld Follies that it was "Anna Held, who gave Mr. Ziegfeld the idea of the Follies."<sup>7</sup> Their daughter, Patricia Ziegfeld Stephenson gave a more detailed account of Miss Held's instigation of the Follies when she wrote of her father:

On one of their trips to Paris, Anna suggested to Daddy that he introduce an American version of the famous Folies-Bergere. American girls, Anna pointed out to him, were just as beautiful as French girls, and certainly Daddy could create as glamorous a background for the high-kicking beauties as any French impresario.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, the most knowledgeable of the start of the Follies was Anna Held, herself, who tells us in her Memoires that she "tried to persuade him to produce revues like the Folies-Bergere." She tells us that

<sup>6</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, pp. 100-101.

<sup>7</sup>Farnsworth, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup>Stephenson, p. 42.

Ziegfeld "had no faith in that type of a show." The only way she changed his mind was by offering to finance his production; that argument convinced him.<sup>9</sup>

Years later in her article, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance with my Mother," Liane Carrera told her readers that:

It was my mother (Anna Held) who prompted him to produce the 'Follies,' which had a definite place in the American theatre. My mother thought that the type of entertainment created by the Parisian Folies-Bergere would be successful in this country, but Ziegfeld was doubtful, and preferred to stick to Anna Held shows.<sup>10</sup>

The reports don't conflict, they only confirm what comedian Eddie Cantor, who owed his start in show business to his appearances in the Ziegfeld Follies, said, that "It was Anna Held who inspired Flo to undertake his first Follies."<sup>11</sup>

All of this is not to deny, however, that Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., contributed much to Anna's promotion in the United States. She was an established and the highest paid stage star across the Atlantic but unknown in America until 1896. Lavish stage productions brought out by Ziegfeld are innovations that are still visible today. "In Ziegfeld's time the girls were rounder. The men liked a little more hip and a little more breast - thin at the waist though."<sup>12</sup> The Ziegfeld Follies, as the years rolled on, were probably in part responsible, through the popularity of the chorus girls, for the desire for slenderness that exists today.

<sup>9</sup>Carrera, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld, p. 113.

<sup>10</sup>Carrera, "Flo Ziegfeld's Romance," p. 120.

<sup>11</sup>Cantor, p.26.

<sup>12</sup>"The Once and Future Follies," Time, May 3, 1971, p. 73.

Ziegfeld was rich in promotional expertise, a pioneer in the use of the popular "publicity stunts." If wealth is any sign of success, however, Ziegfeld was a failure, dying penniless. Anna Held bequeathed to her daughter and friends almost a half million dollars in money, jewels and property.

The many "firsts" in the Ziegfeld-Held combination were valuable parts of American theatre history, introducing such innovations as electrically lighted costumes and the intermingling of performers with the audience. Advertising firms probably derived much from their publicity ideas, not only in stunts like the milk-bath, but in stage stars endorsing products, such as the Anna Held corsets, Anna Held pomade, Anna Held dolls and even Anna Held cigars. The Portland Oregonian in 1912 said: "There is no more discussed comedienne in the world."<sup>13</sup>

Toward the end of her short life of forty-five years, Anna's time, wealth and thoughts were primarily devoted to her "adopted" homeland, France. It could not be stated that her efforts persuaded the United States to enter the World War I, but perhaps many American's emotions were moved in that direction through Anna Held's three years of hard campaigning, talking to thousands of people each week throughout the country. France recognized her potential, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs advising her return to America.

The name "Anna Held" would probably be in oblivion today, were it not for the 1936 movie, The Great Ziegfeld, and her daughter. Liane continued her theatrical efforts after her mother's death, acting in

<sup>13</sup>"The Stage," Portland Oregonian, sec. 4, p. 2.

Gentle Grafters (1926) and A Lady in Love (1927)<sup>14</sup> and going on to produce a play, Restless Women at the Morosco Theatre in the 1927 New York Theatre season,<sup>15</sup> reviving the name, Anna Held, Jr. in the latter. When she married bond broker Joseph Dodd Martenson on June 5, 1928, headlines read: "Anna Held, Jr. Weds Today,"<sup>16</sup> Mrs. Martenson (Liane) then went on to open two restaurants, both named appropriately "Anna Held's." At the time she still used the name, Anna Held, Jr.

In 1935, she began compiling her mother's Mémoires into a manuscript entitled "My Mother was an Actress." Originally published in French, it was translated faithfully into English by Guy Daniels of New York City, retitled and published as Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld in 1979.

In 1929, Anna Held III, Antoinette ("Toni") Martenson was born. Her mother, Liane, reports that Anna Held's grand-daughter has heard so much about the famous actress all through girlhood and that she therefore has no interest in her now.<sup>17</sup> Tony, as she grew older, moved to southern California; her mother followed soon after and settled in the small desert town of San Jacinto. While standing in line, waiting for the town's library to open, Liane discovered that Anna Held was completely unknown to the people of the area. Ms. Carrera writes: "I decided if the house next door to the library was for sale, I'd make

<sup>14</sup>Burns Mantle, The Best Plays of 1926-1927 (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1927), pp. 414-415.

<sup>15</sup>Burns Mantle, The Best Plays of 1927-1928 (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1928) pp. 481-482.

<sup>16</sup>"Anna Held, Jr. Weds Today," New York Daily Mirror, June 5, 1926, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Interview, Liane Carrera, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, September 10, 1980.



make an 'Anna Held Museum' and put her name on it so it could be seen again."<sup>18</sup>

The property was secured and the house refurbished at a cost of almost a half-million dollars, so the Anna Held Museum opened in April, 1977. The museum contains over 200 photographs and other Anna Held memorabilia, including replicas of the milk-bath and her bedroom with a \$1,500 full-size wax figure of the actress, sculpted by Lia DiLea, who makes wax figures for the Movieland Wax Museum near Hollywood. The purpose of the museum is "to show what Anna Held meant to the people of her time."<sup>19</sup>

The museum and an unsuccessful reprint of Miss Held's Memoires<sup>20</sup> are the only major remembrances of the famous French actress who was so popular in this country at the turn of the century. Periodically, one may hear the name, but as one of "Ziegfeld's" girls. On a New York stage in the spring of 1981, there appeared Tintypes, a musical in which a role was cast for Anna Held singing her famous 1907 hit: It's Delightful To Be Married.<sup>21</sup>

She remains one of America's largely forgotten celebrities, overshadowed by the man she financed and productions which she stimulated and inspired. This treatise has sought to resolve the myth and to

<sup>18</sup>Liane Carrera to Michael Hoffman, Letter, July 12, 1980.

<sup>19</sup>"Museum honoring Anna Held now open," The Enterprise (Riverside, California), April 27, 1977, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup>Ms. Carrera states that the translation of her mother's memoirs, Anna Held and Flo Ziegfeld (1979) was a failure and a financial loss. Letter, Liane Carrera to Michael Hoffman, July 12, 1980.

<sup>21</sup>"The Way We Were," Newsweek, November 3, 1980, p. 77.

establish the reality of Anna Held, Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr. and The Ziegfeld Follies, and thereby explain her prominent role in American social and theatrical history.

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## III. NEWSPAPERS

The significant newspaper articles listed here are alphabetized by title or author's name. The list is selective and a full listing would be much larger. At times as will be noted, some citations will lack pagination or date because the cited article came from a scrapbook, box or a file of news clippings such as those from the Billy Rose Theatre Collection

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- "A Cow's Strange Death." New York Daily Tribune, October 11, 1896, p. 5.
- "Actress Saves Life." Detroit Tribune, October 26, 1896, p. 1.
- "Anna Had a Prince." Boston Traveler, November 7, 1896, p. 8.
- "Anna Held Amused with a Movie." New York Times, May 30, 1918, p. 9.
- "Anna Held Back from Europe." New York Times, September 8, 1909, p. 9.
- "Anna Held Better." New York Tribune, August 12, 1918, p. 7.
- "Anna Held Bids Goodbye." New York Times, April 24, 1910, p. 13.
- "Anna Held Changes A Policy." New York Telegraph, January 2, 1912.
- "Anna Held Comes to Town." Savannah Press, September 26, 1913, p. 2.
- "Anna Held Contracts Bronchial Pneumonia." New York Tribune, August 2, 1918, p. 4.
- "Anna Held Dies After A Brave Fight." New York Times, August 13, 1918, p. 9.
- "Anna Held Dies in Hospital Here after Illness of Six Months." New York Tribune, August 13, 1918, p. 7.
- "Anna Held Doesn't Smoke." Denver Post, November 25, 1911, p. 18.
- "Anna Held Has Myeloma." New York Times, May 3, 1918, p. 24.
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- "Anna Held Hears Last Curtain Rung." New York Times, May 27, 1918, p. 11.
- "Anna Held Here At Last." Chicago Journal, September 17, 1896.
- "Anna Held Here with War Song." New York Tribune, October 26, 1915, p. 1.
- "Anna Held Hurt in Auto." New York Times, July 21, 1913, p. 1.
- "Anna Held in Farce." New York Times, November 19, 1899, p. 18.

- "Anna Held in Fashion and Beauty Show." Boston Record, November 9, 1916, p. 6.
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- "Anna Held is Delirious." New York Times, August 7, 1918, p. 9.
- "Anna Held Is Not Wicked a Little Bit." Boston Beacon, November 11, 1896, p. 13.
- "Anna Held Jewels to be Sold." New York Times, August 30, 1919, p. 7.
- "Anna Held, Jr. To Be A Play Producer." New York Times, November 8, 1927, p. 32.
- "Anna Held, Jr. to Wed Broker." New York American, June 5, 1928, p. 4.
- "Anna Held, Jr. Weds Today." New York Daily Mirror, June 5, 1928, p. 1.
- "Anna Held Kissed." New York Journal, October 31, 1897.
- "Anna Held Left \$220,757." New York Times, January 13, 1932, p. 14.
- "Anna Held Left \$278,260." New York Times, September 25, 1919, p. 13.
- "Anna Held Left \$300,000." New York Times, September 1, 1918, sec. 2, p. 1.
- "Anna Held, Modern Jeanne d'Arc." Baltimore Sun, February 25, 1917, p. 6.
- "Anna Held No [sic] Rehearsed." New York Times, September 6, 1913, p. 7.
- "Anna Held Seriously Ill." New York Times, May 1, 1918, p. 13.
- "Anna Held Still American." New York Times, November 7, 1915, sec. 2, p. 4.
- "Anna Held Sues For Divorce." New York Times, April 14, 1912, p. 1.
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- "Anna Held to Poincare." New York Times, April 20, 1913, sec. 3, p. 2.
- "Anna Held, Told Death Nears, Send Love to 'My' Soldiers!" New York Tribune, May 27, 1918, Anna Held "Follow-Me" Tour scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.
- "Anna Held Under X-Ray." New York Times, May 29, 1918, p. 18.
- "Anna Held Visits Invalid Soldiers." Toronto World, April 27, 1917.
- "Anna Held Wears Gowns Worth \$9000 in Follow Me." New York Review, 1916, news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- "Anna Held Won't Disclose Income." New York Times, December 27, 1916, p. 18.
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- "Anna Held's Auto Is Smashed After Use By Gen. Joffre." news clipping, Anna Held scrapbook, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.
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- "Anna Held's Daughter." New York Times, January 1, 1928, sec. 8, p. 4.
- "Anna Held's Daughter Arrives." New York Times, April 9, 1910, p. 11.
- "Anna Held's Daughter to be in Xmas Fund Concert." Atlanta Georgian, December 12, 1914, p. 1.
- "Anna Held's Daughter Wed." New York Times, June 6, 1928, p. 23.
- "Anna Held's Daughter Wins in Vaudeville." New York Herald, October 2, 1913, p. 3.
- "Anna Held's Debut in a Screen Play." New York Times, February 7, 1916, p. 9.
- "Anna Held's Departure." New York Telegraph, June 8, 1898, p. 21.

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- "Anna Held's Lost Fortune." New York Times, October 24, 1906, p. 9.
- "Anna Held's Tailor Made Cobs." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, September 30, 1896, p. 8.
- "Anna Held's Ways and Gems Dazzle." Portland Oregonian, December 8, 1913, p. 16.
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- "Anna's Latest Fad." news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- "A Parlor Match." St. Louis Globe-Democrat, December 14, 1896, p. 12.
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- "At the Play and the Players." New York Times, November 19, 1899, p. 18.
- "Attractions in the Local Theatres." Portland Oregonian, December 7, 1913, sec. 4, p. 4.
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- "Clicking the Castanets for Anna Held." Atlantic Journal, October 31, 1937, p. 4.
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- "Coney After the Storm." New York Daily Tribune, October 14, 1896, p. 10.
- Cooper, D. C. "Hoosier Held." New York Times Magazine, April 8, 1956, p. 6.
- "Crowds Flock to Buy the Daily News from Anna Held: Autographed Copies bring extra price for the Red Cross." Omaha News, May 12, 1916, p. 1.
- "Cupid and Anna," unidentified Oakland, California news clipping, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.
- "Cuts Anna Held Doctor Bill." New York Times, May 28, 1920, p. 8.
- "Cycling in Winter Months." New York Tribune, September 27, 1896, p. 10.
- "Denies The Engagement." New York Times, January 8, 1897, p. 7.
- Engler, Irvin. "Crippled Soldiers on Anna Held's Mind as she Sings." Sacramento Star, January 17, 1917.
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- "Miss Anna Held Hurt." New York Times, October 19, 1896, p. 8.
- "Miss Anna Held - Obituary." The Times (London), August 14, 1918, p. 9.
- "Miss Carrea [sic] Heads Good Bill at Forsyth Theater." Atlanta Georgian, December 15, 1914, p. 3.
- "Miss Held To Be Free On Monday." New York Telegraph, January 1, 1913, news clipping, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
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- "Milkman Reveals Truth." New York News, October 18, 1896, p. 7.
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- "Anna Held Dead." Theatre Magazine, September 1918 (No. 211), p. 176.
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- "Anna Held's 'Made in America' Creations." Theatre Magazine, February, 1917 (No. 192), p. 110.
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- Brooks, Arthur. "A Palace on Wheels." Metropolitan Magazine, June, 1898, pp. 20-21.

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Cantor's article described the Ziegfeld Follies as only a former participant could. Not withholding any pertinent details he relates Ziegfeld's business practices and personality traits. Cantor tells his readers about Miss Held's vital role in the formation of the Follies.

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Cowl, Jane. "Sex on the Stage." Theatre Magazine, April, 1919 (No. 218), p. 210.

Hackett, Francis. "After the Play." New Republic, July 7, 1917, p. 278.

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- "'The Great Ziegfeld' as He Might Have Done It Himself." Newsweek, April 18, 1936, p. 29.
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- "200 Years of American Theatre." Life, November 19, 1951, pp. 110-120.
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- "Without the Master." Newsweek, March 11, 1957, p. 66.
- "Yesterday." Theatre Arts Magazine, August, 1945, pp. 475-479.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. "How I Pick Beauties." Theatre Magazine, July, 1918 (No. 209), pp. 158-160.
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## V. PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

### Interviews:

- Carrera, Liane. Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.  
 Interviews, September 10, 1980, February 13, 14, 15, 16, 17  
 and 18, 1981.

Personal interviews were valuable for verifying research materials gathered and compiled. Also the addition of un-

published data was a great assistance. Ms. Carrera, Anna Held's daughter, is a reliable source, although some bias may be detected.

Letters:

Carrera, Liane, to Michael Hoffman. Letter, July 12, 1980.

Druesedow, Jean L. Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art (N. Y.) to Michael Hoffman. Letter, September 25, 1980.

Held, Anna to Liane Carrera. Letters, August 26, 1914;

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Held, Lynne Kessler to Liane Carrera. Letter, August 26, 1980.

Kernan, Beatrice, Curatorial Assistant, Museum of Modern Art (N. Y.) to Michael Hoffman. Letter, April 10, 1981.

Leslie, Amy, to Liane Carrera. Letter, August 12, 1918, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

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"Last Will and Testament of Anna Held." June 29, 1918, Surrogate's court, County of New York.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS PRINTED MATTER

Cemetery Records: Calvary and Allied Cemeteries Burial Lot certificate. Trustees of St. Patrick's Cathedral of the City of New York. Plot 146, Section 42, September 12, 1918.

Menu: Anna Held's [Restaurant] Menu. Harry B. Smith Collection, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

News clipping files: Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library; Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. and The Museum of the City of New York.

Pamphlet: Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California, 1977.

Written like a letter, the pamphlet contains a description of the Anna Held Museum, serving as a guide for the visitor.

Pamphlet: 44th Anniversary Charity Ball, Atlantic City, N. J., September, 1980, Ziegfeld Club, Inc., New York City.

Passport: Anna Held's French Passport, July 14, 1914, 16 pages, Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

Mis Held's French passport provides vital statistics such as birthdate, occupation and personal characteristics. The passport contains visé notations of many countries.

Playbill: The French Maid. Chestnut Street Theatre, New York, January 9, 1899. Anna Held Museum, San Jacinto, California.

Playbill: Papa's Wife. 200th Night Celebration Program, Manhattan Theatre, New York, March 19, 1900. Townsend Walsh File, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

Recital Program: 397th Public Organ Recital Program, College of the City of New York Department of Music, December 2, 1914.

Scrapbooks: Anna Held Scrapbooks, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library.

The Anna Held scrapbooks, compiled by professional clipping services, contain thousands of news and periodical clippings along with photographs, theatre programs and itineraries of various tours. The collection of scrapbooks was left to her daughter when Miss Held died in 1918. Years later, Ms. Carrera gave them in her daughter's name "Toni Martenson" to the New York Public Library who now has them in their Billy Rose Theatre Collection in Lincoln Center. Their priceless value to the researcher of Anna Held is obvious.

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s.v. "Ziegfeld, Florenz (1869-1932)."

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(Mrs. Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr.)"

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