

**SIXTY YEARS' STAGE SERVICE,  
BEING A RECORD OF THE  
LIFE OF CHARLES MORTON,  
"THE FATHER OF THE HALLS"**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649705801

Sixty Years' Stage Service, Being a Record of the Life of Charles Morton, "The Father of the Halls" by W. H. Morton & H. Chance Newton

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**W. H. MORTON & H. CHANCE NEWTON**

**SIXTY YEARS' STAGE SERVICE,  
BEING A RECORD OF THE  
LIFE OF CHARLES MORTON,  
"THE FATHER OF THE HALLS"**



SIXTY YEARS' STAGE  
SERVICE, BEING A RECORD OF THE  
LIFE OF CHARLES MORTON, • •  
• • "THE FATHER OF THE HALLS."



Library of  
A. B. C.

COMPILED BY

W. H. MORTON AND H. CHANCE NEWTON.



LONDON:

GALE & POLDEN, LTD.,  
2, AMEN CORNER, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1905.

NO. 1181  
ALLEGONIA  
GALE & POLDEN, LTD., 2, AMEN CORNER, E.C.

1905

Copy of  
Copy of



Photo Engraver

CHARLES MORTON.

See, Vol. 1, p. 100.



## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—Early Years ... ..	1
II.—His First Business Venture ... ..	4
III.—The Old Canterbury Tavern ... ..	7
IV.—The First Real Canterbury Music Hall ... ..	11
V.—A Digression on Ditties ... ..	15
VI.—The Second Canterbury ... ..	25
VII.—Some Early Canterbury Stars ... ..	30
VIII.—Some more Surrey Side Magnets ... ..	34
IX.—Some of the Lady Stars at the Canterbury ... ..	41
X.—More Improvements at the Canterbury ... ..	44
XI.—Charles Morton as Law Breaker ... ..	48
XII.—Morton as a Sunday Entertainment Pioneer ... ..	52
XIII.—Morton Builds another Hall ... ..	54
XIV.—In Spite of a Fight, the Oxford Opens ... ..	57
XV.—Some Early Oxford Comics ... ..	60
XVI.—Some Strange Oxford Turns ... ..	65
XVII.—Some Daring Experiments ... ..	68
XVIII.—The First Oxford's Sad End ... ..	71
XIX.—An <i>Al Fresco</i> Venture ... ..	74
XX.—A Music Hall transformed into a Temple of the Drama ... ..	79
XXI.—Morton again as a Law Breaker ... ..	81
XXII.—The "Phil." as Theatre ... ..	83
XXIII.—A Great Operatic Success ... ..	88
XXIV.—The Philharmonic Concerts ... ..	95
XXV.—The "Phil." again as Theatre ... ..	101
XXVI.—On Dissension and Detectives ... ..	103
XXVII.—Some Surrey Gardens Shows—and a bit about the "Brit." ... ..	106
XXVIII.—Morton at the Gaiety ... ..	110
XXIX.—Morton as Emigrant ... ..	112
XXX.—The late Mr. Morton's Tale of a "Trust" ... ..	116
XXXI.—Mr. Morton's Story of his Return Voyage ... ..	119
XXXII.—At the Opera Comique again ... ..	122
XXXIII.—A Spell at the Royalty ... ..	125
XXXIV.—At the Opera Comique—Last Time ... ..	129
XXXV.—More about "Orders," Please ... ..	132
XXXVI.—Migration to the Alhambra ... ..	136
XXXVII.—A Busy Time at the Alhambra ... ..	140

M70066

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXXVIII.—More Alhambraism ... ..	145
XXXIX.—More Mortonian Moving about. ....	148
XL.—Another Theatrical Venture ... ..	150
XLI.—Avenue Attractions ... ..	154
XLII.—Other Avenue Attractions—More or Less ... ..	156
XLIII.—Morton again as Minstrel Manager—and as "Empire" Ruler ... ..	159
XLIV.—The Alhambra's Reversion to Type—Morton again as Manager ... ..	163
XLV.—Morton's Next Move ... ..	166
XLVI.—Morton again in the Strand—Some Stories of his Stars	169
XLVII.—More about Early Tivoli Stars ... ..	172
XLVIII.—Morton's Last Managerial "Pitch" ... ..	180
XLIX.— ... ..	185
L.—More Tributes ... ..	189
LII.— ... ..	196
EPILOGUE—A Peep at Past and Present ... ..	202



## TO THE READER.

---

[*As Mr. Charles Morton prepared this preface not long before his death we have thought it best to let it stand exactly as he wrote it.*]

THERE are few things more difficult to write and make interesting than prefaces. Most people skip them altogether ; few are noteworthy ; none are remembered ; and, indeed, the once hallowed custom of writing them at all is dying out. I, however, as part and parcel of a past age, although still very much alive to-day, feel that I ought to keep the good old tradition green, and so I venture on asking you to read this story of my life, culled from personal data, and jotted down at short intervals during the few periods of leisure I have enjoyed.

My career, if it cannot claim more than the ordinary amount of excitement inseparable from its type, has at least been full of episode, and if it has been a longer one than most of my contemporaries, I attribute that mainly to a strenuous love of work and a temperance of habit, both birth-inherited gifts.

It goes without saying that during my long life I have come in contact with many illustrious and distinguished people, both in and out of the entertainment profession ; and, if I have not dealt at length in some reminiscences which might interest the snapper-up of anecdotes, it has been principally because, to my mind, digressions on matters which have not seriously influenced a life, should have little or no prominence in a simple biography.

To my dear brother William, who has always been an ardent collector of facts concerning my various business ventures, I tender my thanks for his help in this narration of my public services, and to Mr. H. Chance Newton I am also greatly indebted for the trouble he has taken in the preparation of this volume for the press.