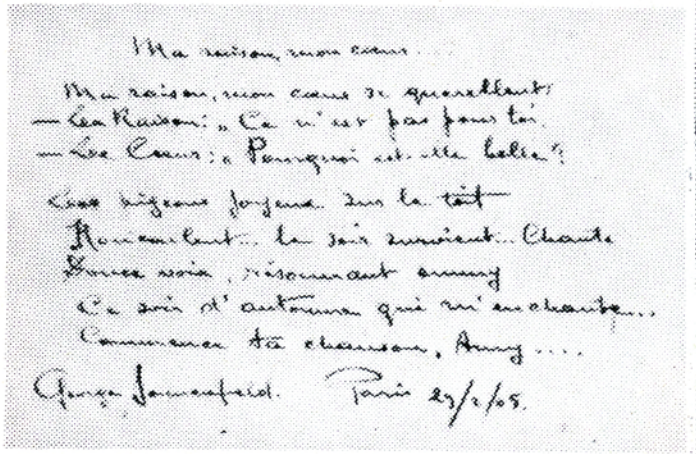
AMY CASTLES
COURT SINGER


Ma raison, mon cœur...
Ma raison, mon cœur se querellant
— La Raison: „ Ce n'est pas pour toi
— Le Cœur: „ Pourquoi est-elle belle?
Chez légères forgeus sur la toit
Rossignol... le soir survient... Chante
Encore voix, résonnant amour
Ce soir d'automne qui m'enchante...
Commence ta chanson, Amy....
George Sonnenfeld. Paris 23/1/08.

"Le Courrier de Scheveningue" July 1908 says "Miss Castles of Melbourne held us under the charm of her exquisite voice - a voice of infinite purity and of marvellous flexibility. The English have styled Miss Castles the "Australian Nightingale". It will never again be said that the English are not gallant, as they were never more complimentary - to the nightingale! There is no greater flattery for a singer than to be compared to the King of singing birds, and yet the nightingale finds in his throat, no lighter trills, no sweeter sounds, than those which Miss Castles gave forth in profusion, and which in brilliance resembled glittering fireworks."



AMY CASTLES

	Matrix		G&T Pre-dogs, H.M.V. London	
1.	3174	Bel Raggio "Semiramide" (Rossini) 3'35"	June/July, 1909	2-053006
2.	3176	Bolero - "I Vespri Siciliana" (Verdi) 3'13"	June/July, 1909	2-053007
3.	3173	Qui la Voce, "I Puritani" (Bellini) 4'05"	June/July, 1909	2-053008
4.	9011	Caro Nome "Rigoletto" (Verdi) 2'55"	Sept, 1906	3674
5.	10019	Angels Guard Thee "Jocelyn" (Godard) 2'45"	1907	3740
6.	9009	Winds in the Trees (Goring Thomas) 2'31"	Sept, 1906	3667
7.	702	To the Angels (Zardo) 3'28"	Sept, 1906	03068
8.	9007	The Angels Serenade (Braga) 2'53"	Sept, 1906	3670
9.	3177	The Perfect Way (Willeby) 2'41"	June/July, 1909	03158
10.	3186	My Little Violet (Willeby) 2'16"	June/July, 1909	03160
11.		Four Leaf Clover (Willeby) 2'08"	June/July, 1909	
			Columbia Australia	
12.	WR 142	By the Waters of Minnetonka, (Lieurance) 2'03"	Nov, 1926	0575
13.	WR 182	The Rosary (Nevin) 2'16"	Dec, 1926	0575
14.	8579	Serenade (Gounod) 2'53"	July, 1906	3654

EILEEN CASTLES

	Matrix		Columbia Australia	
15.	WTX 27	Ave Maria (Bach/Gounod) 2'56"	27/7/1927	02516
16.	WR 273	Danny Boy (Weatherly) 3'19"	25/7/1927	0740
17.	WR 274	Songs My Mother Taught Me "Gypsy Songs", (Dvorak) 2'12"	25/7/1927	0740
18.	WTX 28	Ave Maria-Intermezzo "Cavalleria Rusticana", (Mascagni) 3'17"	27/7/1927	02516

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Patricia Finn, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia



The first 1899 Exhibition Concert

The concert halls proving inadequate the Trustees leased the Melbourne Exhibition building, where on May 31st Amy Castles drew the largest concert audience up to then ever brought together in Australia, if not the world. The "Argus", the daily journal of her native city said: "Melbourne has never witnessed such a demonstration as that seen at the Exhibition last evening." "A record for a Melbourne indoors gathering", 'The Argus' June 5th, 1899.

COURT SINGER

"I belong to Australia and to the Australians, not only by right of birth, but also by a hundred other ties. Australians gave me the first helping hand. Australians first whispered to me of success. Australians were the first to assist me in the hard times at the beginning of my career. To Australia I belong, therefore, as long as the Australians care to claim me. And I hope that will be for always." So said Amy Castles.

"My Musical Career".
Cassell's Magazine, September 1907

Australia has produced no more distinguished singer than Amy Castles as the records of various countries can testify. E.A. Baughan, the editor of the London "Musical Standard", described her voice as "The Voice of the Century".

Amy was born in Melbourne 1880, and educated with her sisters at the Convent of Mercy Bendigo, Paris and Berlin. Her father and mother were both good amateur singers. It has often been told that before Amy's birth Amy's mother in her dreams was frequently enthralled by the sound of exquisite singing. Amy was one of a family of seven, all of whom showed unusual musical talent.

Dolly and Eileen having won distinction in England, America and Australia. Eileen and Dolly Castles' fine voices method, and dramatic art constituted an extraordinary record for three sisters.

Amy's voice was described as of "almost incomparable beauty", by Thorold Waters, the editor of "The Australian Musical News". He said in "The Sun", 2nd March 1923. "Certainly, the greatest dramatic singer Australia has yet sent forth."

On the 24th February 1895, Amy Castles began her singing tuition under the gifted Mr. Alan Bindley in Bendigo who said of Amy, "Even in the first days of her training she showed special musical gifts. She has a remarkable ear, she can practise unaccompanied scales for six or seven minutes without losing a vibration in pitch, capable of giving both vocal and facial expression to songs, had a range of voice capable of covering any Italian music. The blending of her registers was marvellous, and in rich sustained music of the Wagnerian school, she excelled as well as being able to overcome the gymnastics of the more ornate Italian music."

Amy with her brother and sisters won gold medals. Amy won the under 15 pianoforte solo competitions. In 1898 she entered the Ballarat South Street Eisteddfod where she won all soprano solos, and the trio with Dolly Castles and Beatrice English. October 1898 Amy played "Patience" with the Royal Bendigo Operatic Society. March 1899 she was introduced to the Austral Salon where she stunned the audience with the beauty of her voice. The Governor-General, Lord and Lady Brassey, heard her and immediately set plans in motion for a series of concerts to be arranged to enable Amy to further her studies abroad.

Amy broke the world record with 20,000 people at the Exhibition Building in May 1899. The Sydney concert attendances were the largest in Sydney. She made £6,000 odd in three months. Lord Tennyson presented Amy with a leather volume of his father's poetry, and letters to Sir Hubert Parry, Edward Elgar and Charles Villiers Standford. Amy left for Paris September 1899 where Madame Marchesi pronounced Amy's voice to be "a true dramatic soprano, magnificent and perfect, without a flaw".

Sir Hubert Parry offered Amy three years tuition in languages at the Royal College of Music. He declared she had no need for singing tuition, as her voice was perfect. Amy declined and went to Paris. December 12, 1899 at Madame Marchesi's Jubilee, Amy starred "as her latest, youngest and most promising pupil". In July 1900 Amy was troubled about Marchesi's tuition. Marchesi was trying to turn her into a contralto! Amy went to M. Jacques Bouhy where she progressed. Marchesi always regarded Amy Castles as one of her most famous pupils as is witnessed by the letter from her daughter.

(To the Editor, "The Musical World", May 16 1907)
Sir - I read in your paper of 16th April that Mr. Andrew Black seems to have made the following remarks:- "The few Australian singers who have obtained definite success in Europe have done so without Continental or English training." I need reply nothing else than by giving a few names of my mother's greatest Australian pupils - omitting many excellent but less celebrated ones - who all hail from Australia and have been trained by her, namely: - Nelly Melba, Frances Saville, Ada Crossley, Miss Alda (now at the Royal Opera, Brussels), Amy Castles, Irene Ainsley, and many many others - Yours etc.

Blanche Marchesi.
16 Greville Place, London N.W., April 16.

Amy made her debut on November 19, 1901 at St. James Hall, London. King Edward wrote to Victoria's Sir Andrew Clarke, Agent-General that he would follow her future with intense interest, the Prince and Princess of Wales announced their patronage. The voice and style of the young student carried the audience by storm. The "Pall Mall Gazette" said "the records of half a century showed no instance of similar public excitement", this opinion was universally endorsed.

"It is quite without precedent for a member of the musical or dramatic profession to start her public career under the immediate auspices of the Royal Family, and in being honoured by the patronage of the Prince and Princess of Wales for her debut concert, Miss Amy Castles is to be congratulated on her extraordinary good fortune."

The British "Australasian"
November 14, 1901

The London Press went into raptures over her voice and found in the organ "qualities for which the voices of Jenny Lind, Tietjens, Patti, and Calve were most distinguished", "London Times".

The London Musical Courier (December 14, 1901.)

Mr. Vert's Horoscope and a New Star.

On a beautiful December night in the sixties, three seers from the sunny land of Sound walked into Paris, into the foyer of the Royal Palace of mighty Cavalho, King of the Empire of Music, and spake: "Where is the new Queen of Song? We saw her star in the land beyond the footlights, and have come to worship her. What is her name?" And the King answered: "Her name is Patti". Then the Scribes went in, but instead of worshipping her they wrote her up, and her fame travelled to the ends of the earth. And this star rose in the heavens and stood at its zenith for forty years, almost like a fixed star, shining with wondrous brilliancy. But now, that it is declining, scarcely less splendid than in its ascendency, the seers are again scanning the heavens, and a great cry is going through Israel that N. Vert, the Astronomer and Astrologer, has discovered another wonderful star, whose name is Amy Castles. So, therefore, on Dec. 11th, the people went in streams to St. James's Hall to see this star, asking afterwards: "What size will it be? Will it be of the magnitude of the Patti star?" But nobody answered, for nobody knew, in that the star is only in its ascendency, just above the horizon, among the red moving clouds, in the constellation of Hope and Youth. Miss Castles' voice is most beautiful, and in timbre it excels Melba's organ; yet it is no Patti voice. Still Miss Castles has a phenomenal voice, like that of Patti, only of a different timbre. Miss Castles should remember that the secret of Mme. Patti's vocal endurance consisted in the fact that she would never sing aught to jeopardize her voice. Patti would never have dared, would never have dreamed at Miss Castles' age, to attempt "Hear ye, Israel", although it lies perfectly within her range."

"Miss Castles is the possessor of a singularly beautiful voice, quite one of the voices of the century ... most beautiful in quality reminding one of Melba's but with an added warmth."

The "Musical Standard", London
November 23, 1901.

Such was the beginning of the career of Amy Castles. There was nothing more romantic and surprising in the whole history of music. Her sudden rise and enthusiastic recognition were without parallel.

Amy received greetings from poets and statesmen, splendid contracts and offers by Sir William Parratt, Music Master to the King who invited Amy to sing before His Majesty.

J.C. Williamson made Amy an offer. In 1902 she returned home to an unparalled welcome and toured Australia and New Zealand in a series of concerts. There was a frenzy of public favour. The greatest concert audience on record in the world with 25,000 at the Melbourne Exhibition June 7, 1902. Many seats had to be auctioned as thousands were turned away.

"The greatest audiences ever".

The Daily Telegraph, July 7 1902

"She has made a triumphal march throughout the length and breadth of the land singing to the largest audiences ever gathered together under the Southern Cross."

"The Daily Telegraph", Launceston
July 7, 1902

"It was a vast crowd that rolled up to the farewell Castles concert." Peter Quince said: "Although the public had been warned that the doors might be closed we said "All humbug, Melbourne cannot flood out the Exhibition - So it happened!" He went on to say: "A kind of permanent hot wind, the breath of a sirocco or simoon had settled in the building, which never before held such a crowd as to be able to effect the atmosphere."

"Punch" June 12, 1902

Mr. Williamson paid Amy Castles the largest salary he ever paid to a star (Punch April 24, 1902). Amy Castles "whose phenomenal success on her now completed tour of Australasia has been one of the most striking events in our musical history."

The AGE, June 9th 1902

June 7th, 1902. Although the concert did not commence till 8p.m., the audience began to pour in at 2.30 ... A cartoon in Melbourne "Punch" at this time showed an orchestra composed of the Prime Minister, the State Premier, and other public men complaining at having to play second fiddle to a little girl student. On entering Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, one night early in this tour, the audience rose "en masse and cheered her wildly, while the orchestra played "Home, Sweet Home." They refused to be seated until she rose in her box and acknowledged the welcome.

At the close of this Australian tour, Miss Castles entered on two years' further study in Paris, and late in 1905 she reappeared in London at the Queen's Hall, where her singing created a furore. The great critics of the day once more went into ecstasies over her beautiful voice. Mr. E.A. Baughan, in the "Daily News", hailing her as "One of the few great voices of the day".

"That Miss Castles has a wonderful voice - I am inclined to think one of the few great voices of the day - must be ungrudgingly admitted at once.

It reminds one in timbre of Melba's but it has more power of expression, and its quality is more varied. The young singer has temperament, too, and did many things in the mad scene from Ambroise Thomas's "Hamlet", which could not have been taught, and in the trying "Ritorna Vincitor" from "Aida" displayed real dramatic feelings. "The Daily News", 22nd November, 1905.

In addition to her London engagements during 1906, 1907, 1908 and 1909, the young prima donna, each of these years, sang with remarkable success throughout Germany, winning special favour in Munich, Cologne, Dortmund, Dresden, Frankfurt, Mainheim, Mainz, Leipzig etc. During these busy years she also had several star engagements at Ostend, and became a great favourite in Holland, her lovely voice exciting the special admiration of the Queen of the Netherlands. A regular part of each of these four years was reserved for the Harrison Tours of the United Kingdom, for which she was specially engaged by Mr. Perry Harrison, manager for Madame Patti, whom she replaced as star soprano at these concerts.

On one occasion after singing with the Dresden Philharmonic Society, she was presented with a gold laurel wreath tied with red ribbon and was asked to take up German citizenship.

A star performer at the Frankfurt Museum Concerts - one of the most sought after engagements by any musician - Amy would star with Steffi Geyer, for whom Bartok wrote his symphony - Fritz Kreisler, Mischa Elman and other distinguished musicians. Berlin's leading critic said: "She is one of only two or three really great "bel canto singers left in the world". (Refs. Dr. Walter Nieman. Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News. Library and Museum of Performing Arts, Lincoln Centre, New York. Detroit News Tribune, September 25 1909.)

Another German critic said in Dortmund on hearing Amy sing with the Berlin Philharmonic, "Like Beethoven, she is beyond criticism". (Refs. Goethe Institute, Dr. Manfred Triesch 1975. "Musikalisches Wochenblatt".)

In July 1908, Caruso heard Amy Castles sing "The Prayer" from "Tosca" in Belgium. He was enchanted, and asked Puccini the composer to come and hear her himself. Puccini did so, and at a dinner party especially arranged by Caruso for Amy, urged her to come and sing "Tosca" in Milan.

Amy had to decline as her contracts unabled her to take up this invitation. Puccini was to say later that Amy Castles was his ideal "Butterfly".

Rachmaninov in 1907 dedicated a picture of himself "To Amy Castles the Nightingale". Daniel Mayer who introduced all the greatest stars to London, in "The American Musical Courier" February 1917 said: "Amy Castles, you know, she was known as the 'Australian Nightingale'."

Ernest Newman said: "Miss Amy Castles was a delight to those whose inclinations are more in the direction of the florid style of singing. This is Miss Castles forte, for her high-pitched voice, with which is combined a lustrous quality of tone, is capable of coping with all the intricacies of bravura which would be forbidding to anyone whose vocal powers had limitations. Her delivery of the "Mad" song from Ambroise Thomas' "Hamlet" was a brilliant achievement in which every note in the difficult roulades came out with scintillating clearness, the secret of it all being the complete absence of effort."

"It was clever alike in the purely lyrical sections as in the wildly dramatic part reflecting Ophelia's mental state." Newman said "A lightly-scored and showy song by Chaminade gave Miss Castles a further opportunity for her astonishing vocal gymnastics in which she entered with perfect ease and skill". John McCormack was the other artist singing at this concert.

Liverpool Courier, 20th January 1906

Another critic stated that this dramatic ability of Amy's could not have been taught, but came from within.

An English critic said after one of her concerts, "Miss Amy Castles hails from Australia, and her country may be proud of her. She exercises a potent spell upon her audience, and her attractive platform presence adds to the charm of her artistic vocalisation. In either florid or legato singing she shows mastery over the greatest difficulties presented in the score."

"Her voice is bright, full and clear. Above all, it is flexible and indisputably musical. She trills artistically, and indeed, every form of singing she touches she adorns. Her readings are such as to thoroughly arouse interest in the scholarly musician; and they are full of enjoyment."

Evening Express, December 12, 1906

Her name always headed the list of artists with whom she appeared and she sang under every conductor of note.

Henry J. Wood said of her, "Truly one of the most exquisite voices I have ever heard."

Evening News, 21st November 1905

In one concert an English critic stated: "Sarasate, Busoni and Miss Amy Castles - so brilliant a constellation! There were no "stars" in fact but a trio of artistes who stood for the very highest and best in their respective branches of the art. The result was a performance that seemed well-nigh perfect, a performance of which one carried away no impression save that of the glorious music. Mr. Harrison always includes in his series a concert which he designates the "Musicians Concert" and we presume we listened to it last night. Certainly Mr. Harrison will have some difficulty in passing the standard which he has just created."

The Free Press, December 12, 1906.

The First Adelaide Festival

In 1909, Messrs. J. and N. Tait, concert managers of Australia, cabled Miss Castles offering her irresistible terms for another tour of her native land. Once again the same avalanche of public favour! She swept over the Commonwealth like a queen in fairyland.

John Tait in the "Sydney Morning Herald" September 29, 1909, said "In the end we anticipate that the tour will embrace upwards of 150 concerts instead of the 60 for which we originally contracted with Miss Castles when the party left England. It will be seen therefore that the success so far has been unusually pronounced".

6000 attended the Ballarat concert held in the Colosseum. "Freeman's Journal", September 16, 1909 in a long interview with Frank Talbot - the Tait's business manager, quoting him said: "He would have been a rash man who would have predicted that Miss Castles would have met with the phenomenal success which began with her opening show in Melbourne where the original season had to be extended by 5 concerts to cope with the demand."

In 1909 the first Adelaide Festival was inaugurated, "Gallila" (Gounod) was sung for the first time in Australia. (See "The Register" Adelaide, 22.12.1909.)

"Musical Notes" (by "Veloce")

"The biggest event in Adelaide's latterday musical history is to be chronicled from tonight, Monday night and Tuesday night. The interested public have been already made fully aware of the oratorio festival, in which Miss Amy Castles and Mr. Peter Dawson and Mr. Anderson Nicol are to take leading solo parts. The contralto soloist will be Miss Laura Humphreys. The Adelaide Choral Society, augmented to 250 voices, together with a chosen orchestra, numbering 50, have been putting in the most earnest and hearty rehearsals of their career, upon Rossini's "Stabat Mater", Gounod's "Gallia" and "The Messiah". Mr. Charles J. Stevens has thrown his every attribute into the task of preparation and the public simply cannot fail to fill that Jubilee Exhibition building three times. Having heard part of the rehearsals, one can but say that a treat is in store. An important fact, which needs to be stated for the sake of the future historian of South Australia's musical education is that this great triple occasion is our first festival. They are very fond of holding such extended doings in the great centres of England - where "The Messiah" is, of course, the pivot of them all. Here, however, the "festival" or "feast of music" is a rare thing. The appetite of this little community has been only too easily satisfied with the one course; but we are a growing child, and we need a lot of food. Steadily the menu has been extended, and we were reasonably proud when we swallowed too large productions of Elgar's oratorio masterpiece. Now, here comes our first big festival. May it be known to the future as the First Annual Adelaide Festival! Our musical organizations all get together in the bonds of real good-fellowship, when anybody's anniversary requires to be celebrated. Why cannot they combine every year and produce in united harmony some such noble programme as we hear of every month or so "at home?" It would hurt no one, for there is opportunity for all - every soloist and conductor. While it would help thousands, and look what it would mean for South Australia! An Annual Festival. There's a New Year resolution for your musical societies. See that you keep it."

"The Register" Adelaide December 18, 1909

Love of Home and Kin

A dominant characteristic of Amy Castles was a tender love of her own family, together with a deep affection for her friends and an abiding attachment to Australia. She often made heavy pecuniary sacrifices in order to visit her homeland. In 1915 she again made a tour of the Commonwealth, meeting on all sides the now familiar evidences of unusual public esteem.

Oratorio - A Riot of Enthusiasm

Throughout her English tours the Australian star always took a leading part in oratorio performances, for which class of music she was so admirably suited by the noble quality of her voice. At Bristol, in Gounod's "Redemption", the "Times and Mirror" records that "she thrilled the audience and won their hearts", while the "Daily Mercury" said: "Her charming voice rang out over the vast hall with matchless clearness." In Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Glasgow, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Aberdeen, Newcastle, and all the great provincial cities her success had been the same, while her appearances in Dublin always caused a riot of enthusiasm. With the Tietjens quality in her voice, Miss Castles was able to achieve equal success in opera, concert and oratorio. When Mr. N. Vert, the doyen of concert agents, first heard her, he affirmed that if she chose to devote herself to oratorio she must become the greatest oratorio singer in the world.

"The Bulletin", April 7th, 1910. "Amy Castles is the first Australian to make her debut here in grand opera".

Mr. J.C. Williamson was directing a grand opera season, and saw the advantage of capturing his lucky star. Before her concert season was completed he paid a large ransom to Messrs. Tait for the cancellation of her contract, and, to the plaudits of a delighted public, introduced the great soprano in a memorable season of grand opera. Her roles were "Mimi", "Nedda", "Santuzza", and "Madame Butterfly", in which latter impersonation many connoisseurs declared her to be supreme.

The score was lowered one semitone to suit Bel Sorel. "The Bulletin" declared it unfair to Amy (Bulletin April 7th, 1910).

April 1910 Puccini cabled Amy his congratulations on her record run.

Victorian admirers contributed money to buy a diamond butterfly which was presented to Amy Castles by the Prime Minister, Mr. Fisher on stage at Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, at the close of the Melbourne Season on the evening of September 8th, 1910. This season of opera was sung in English, the second time in the world after America.

Melbourne August 28th, 1910 saw Amy record another astonishing feat. Henry Bracy asked her if she could sing Boheme that night. The time was 2.30 p.m. Pampari, the soprano who was supposed to sing had walked out. Amy did not know the score but she went to the theatre, studied the score, went on stage and sang the opera without even a rehearsal! She received a standing ovation. (The Age, The Argus, etc. August 29th, 1910) The opera "Madame Butterfly" ran a record eight straight weeks in Sydney and Melbourne. Mr. Williamson in the "Daily Telegraph" April 23, 1910, commented: "The fact of one opera running four weeks, with seven performances a week, is quite unprecedented in Australia, and as far as I know in any other English speaking country. Naturally, we are gratified."

"Our Australian soprano Miss Amy Castles seems to be created for the part of "Butterfly" - she was assuredly the making of the opera."
"The Argus", 3rd August 1910

Regarding "Madame Butterfly", Gustave Slapoffski commented in the Sydney "Sunday News", May 25, 1924, "Amy Castles and Bel Sorel alternated in the title role with great success resulting in a run of eight of ten weeks - a period unparalleled in the annals of grand opera."

October 1910 saw Amy with another first: she sang the female lead in "Cavelleria Rusticana" and "I Pagliacci" on the one night.

At the height of her operatic success, Amy received a cable from Mr. Daniel Mayer, the distinguished entrepreneur asking her to return to London for a series of special engagements at the Chappell Concerts for 1911-12.

1911 she toured New Zealand in 20 concerts for the Taits before returning to London.

Prima Donna at Imperial Opera Vienna

In 1912, the favourite Australian singer concluded a lucrative contract for a tour of Russia, but she bought herself off later "in order to accept an offer from the Imperial Opera, Vienna, thus achieving the Blue Ribbon of the operatic world. The Austrian agreement was for 6 years, during which she alternated the prima donna roles with the famous Selma Kurz. Here Miss Castles established another record, being the first Australian-born girl to sing in the German tongue on the European operatic stage. All the promise of her childhood's appearance as "Patience" was richly fulfilled in the Austrian capital, her acting no less than her singing winning her the ardent applause of the most exacting audiences in Europe.

Amy Castles, Imperial Court Singer

The Emperor, Franz Josef expressed unbounded admiration for the young prima donna's voice, which he declared the richest in tone of all he had ever heard. So marked was her artistic progress and so extraordinary her advance in public favour, that before she was very long in Vienna the Emperor paid her the remarkable compliment of issuing a warrant appointing her Chamber Singer to the Imperial Court. Miss Castles was the youngest singer ever to receive this appointment, which Madame Patti considered the greatest honour of her career.

The "Times" in London, February 21, 1913 states: "Our Vienna Correspondent telegraphs that the young Australian soprano Miss Amy Castles made a successful debut at the Imperial Opera there in the title role of Puccini's opera, "Madame Butterfly." The purity and range of her voice made an excellent impression on the audience which called her repeatedly before the curtain at the end of each act."

She was the only Australian singer ever to have been invited to sing with the most highly esteemed opera ensemble in Europe, the Vienna Imperial Opera. She was the youngest Court Singer in the history of Vienna. Amy Castles was the first prima donna in the world who sang in four languages on the operatic stage.

Mrs. J. J. Brenan, the mother of the distinguished Jennie Brenan, a leading figure in Australian ballet, and the Australian representative of London's Royal Academy of Dancing saw Amy Castles receive the greatest ovation accorded to any star she saw on her travels, when she saw Amy Castles perform "La Boheme" in Vienna.

The Mercury, 30 January 1922

Amy's contract stipulated she sang the parts of Desdemona, Violetta, Gilda, in Italian and Mimi, Cho Cho San, Nedda, Tosca, Juliet and Sulamith, in German.

War occasioned her return to Australia. Amy returned to Australia in 1915 and under honorary management of J.&N. Tait gave a series of concerts at the Exhibition for the Sick and Wounded Soldiers Fund. Amy presented the Lord Mayor with her cheque on stage at the conclusion of the concerts in Melbourne.

Miss Castles made her first appearance in America at the Carnegie Hall, New York, in 1917, when the beauty of her voice won the warm eulogy of all the metropolitan connoisseurs of music. The entry of America into the war dislocated the plans of all great artists, and the Melbourne prima donna altered her tournée. During her sojourn in New York she enthusiastically associated herself with various movements for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers, one of her most notable appearances being with Paderewski at an entertainment for the Allied Red Cross Funds. Her home in Manhattan was an open house for Australian soldiers passing to and from the seat of war, in which her brother George, who also had a very fine voice, served as a private soldier. Her kindness to the soldiers of her own country has been very graphically described by the facile pen of Signaller Tom Skeyhill.

Amy Castles was named "The Human Flag of Australia" for her generosity.

It was in New York in 1919 that her sister Dolly - dainty as a little Dresden china figure - said goodbye to the stage and married Major Charles Finn, R.A.M.C., (4th F.A.), O.B.E.

The conductorship of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in May 1918 was one of the most desirable in the world. Rumours that Sir Henry Wood would take up that post were later denied.

Amy Castles Praised

While in America Amy Castles received a unique compliment from the President of the Boston Symphony Orchestra: "All Miss Castles' notes are of equal beauty", he said at a farewell to the prima donna. "The greatest compliment that could be paid to Tetrazzini at the height of her boom was that three of her high notes - the particular three which she roused her audience to rapture - were almost as lovely as the corresponding notes of Miss Castles. The Australian's voice is unique, for it is beautiful all through."

The Green Room, August 1919

President of the Boston Symphony Orchestra was Judge Frederick P. Cabot. The conductor was Pierre Monteux, who conducted Amy in Vienna when he conducted the Vienna Philharmonic.

The Advocate, May 3 1919. "The President of the Boston Symphony Orchestra described Amy Castles voice as the most beautiful to be heard on the American Continent! Judge Frederick P. Cabot was authorised to speak on behalf of the Trustees." (Musical America)

In 1919 the American community in Australia arranged a big reception to welcome Amy back to Australia in thanksgiving for her war effort.

Australia Once More: 1919-20

August, 1919, Australia's best-loved singer made a fifth tour of her own country. She opened at Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney, as prima donna of the J.C. Williamson grand opera, and astonished all by the splendid advance she had made in dramatic art during her term at the Imperial Opera, Vienna. The voice seemed to have taken on, even an added richness, and its beautiful smoothness and unlimited reserve of power entranced the public. Once more there were overflowing audiences. Once more she was the heroine of continuous ovations.

"The Register", October 11 1919. Amy Castles in "Madame Butterfly".

"Miss Amy Castles in the role of Cho Cho San was the central figure, literally a charming Butterfly, which spread its beautiful wings and flew too trustfully into the flame of love.

Miss Castles is a feminine Puccini, for she, too, combines vocal and powerfully dramatic gifts. She was hardly off the stage, and won a tremendous ovation. Her local popularity is not based merely upon sentiment, as this fine performance illustrated. Cho Cho San was the central character, and so the whole evening's work was dominated by a perfect singer whose stagecraft rivalled her vocal gift."

Miss Amy Castles - "The Voice of a Century"

For the reserved seats there is always an overflowing demand, and at the cheaper doors hundreds are turned away every night she sings. The beauty of the voice which the London critics on the occasion of her memorable debut described as "The Voice of a Century" is enhanced by an admirable dramatic art and nothing finer than her performance of "Madame Butterfly" has ever been seen on the Australian stage.

Reading the notices of the Sydney critics - who are not a very emotional set - the consensus of opinion amongst them is that Miss Amy Castles' voice is "the voice of a century". "Could scarcely be more fascinating vocally, and there was much charm in her impersonation of the character". "MissAmy Castles, the most velvety-voiced soprano Australia has produced, will undertake the role of the ill-fated Butterfly in the initial gala performance. She is an ideal Butterfly."

Punch 30th October, 1919

Barrages of Applause from the Critics

Triumph as Juliet

Australia's Pride
Prices of Admission Raised

Amy Castles' operatic work in Adelaide aroused such enthusiasm that her reappearance in her native city of Melbourne was awaited with remarkable interest. The most striking testimony of her popularity was given by the management, who decided to increase substantially the charges of admission for the occasion of her *rentrēe*. In spite of this risky experiment, the vast seating capacity of Her Majesty's Theatre was too small, and hundreds were unable to secure admission.

TRIBUTES FROM ROYALTY

Appearances before Crowned Heads of Europe and members of Royal Families became almost commonplace.

In 1906, Amy was star of a command performance in London for Edward VII. Later in that year, she had a lucky escape from death. She was booked to go to Holland for concerts at the request of Wilhelmina, Queen of the Netherlands, but owing to an accident to her companion, was obliged to postpone her journey.

The accidental delay was providential: the small ship on which they had been booked grounded off the Dutch coast, with the loss of all lives.

Queen Wilhelmina was exceedingly kind to her, presenting her after one of her appearances at The Hague Court with a handsome diamond ring. This was practically the only jewellery Amy wore while travelling. H.M. expressed the hope that it would bring her luck on her tours.

Both Dolly and Amy became great friends with the young Danish Princes, Erik and Axel, who were delighted to meet famous artists, indeed prima donnas, who were only two or three years younger than themselves.

Another interesting gift remaining amongst Dolly's cherished possessions is a small platinum box, with engravings of hunting scenes, from Erik.

In Vienna, Emperor Franz Joseph presented Amy with a diamond and emerald bracelet.

As a souvenir of a small intimate party to which Amy had a Royal summons to sing before Their Majesties, Queen Alexandra gave her a square brooch of diamonds bordered with blue tourmalines.

As a tribute from a country without Royalty, America's famous Ex-President, Theodore Roosevelt, at a private engagement at his Oyster Bay residence, asked Amy to sing especially for him "The Last Rose of Summer". Amy, accompanied by the famous violinist Mischa Elman, had already sung for Ex-President Roosevelt Gounod's "Ave Maria" with Mischa Elman playing the violin obligato. Ex-President Roosevelt gave Amy a Mandarin's coat of navy blue satin embroidered with pure gold thread. This formerly had belonged to a Chinese Emperor. This coat is today almost as good as new.



GALA PERFORMANCE FOR H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES
His Majesty's Theatre, June 5, 1920.

By special request of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, Amy on leave from the opera in Sydney sang "Ah Fors e Lui" from "La Traviata" in Act II, Scene 2.

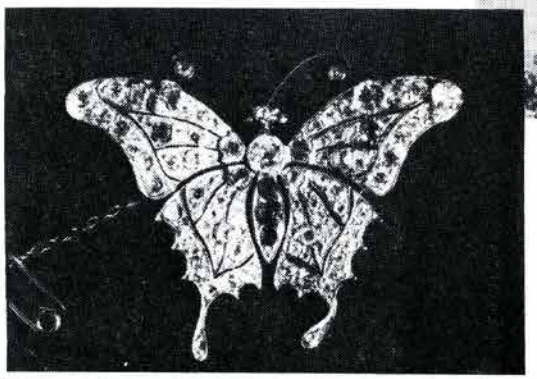
Prime Minister Fisher went to Her Majesty's to present a diamond butterfly to Amy Castles, a memento from the State of her birth on the occasion of an unparalleled success in grand opera as "Madame Butterfly". The same gifted one also received a silver mounted dressing bag. The house was packed, the enthusiasm great.

(Illus. Sp. & Dr. News)

"The first Australian to make her debut here in grand opera."

(The Bulletin) April 7, 1910.

The people of Victoria subscribed to the Diamond Butterfly.





HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE
The
PRESENTATION
of the
DIAMOND BUTTERFLY
To
Miss AMY CASTLES
The HON., the PRIME MINISTER
On behalf of Victorian friends and admirers
At the conclusion of the performance
TO-NIGHT - (THURSDAY) - TO-NIGHT



Amy after she won the Ballarat South Street Competition.



EILEEN as "Marguerite" (FAUST)



DOLLY played Princess Zara in "Utopia Ltd", Gilbert & Sullivan opera. The first and only time this opera was performed professionally in Australia. It opened Jan 29, 1906 at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne with Charles Kenningham.



Amy as "Mimi" in La Boheme.

Amy Castles played the role of Mimi in "La Boheme" for the first time on August 28, 1910. The soprano had left. She was asked by the management at 2.30 p.m. if she could help. Amy studied the part hitherto unknown to her from the time she arrived at Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, approx. 3.30 p.m. until she had to dress. She went on stage and played the part without even a rehearsal. She received a standing ovation.



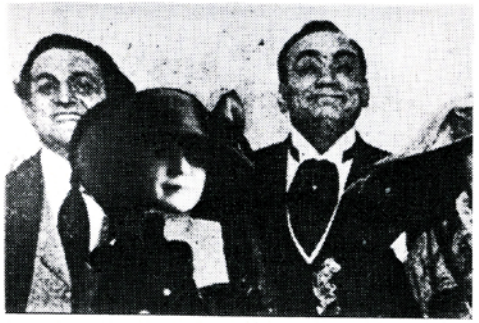
Eileen as "Musetta" (La Boheme)



Amy as Juliet.



Amy as Tosca.



Amy and Caruso

Amy rehearsing at the Metropolitan in New York for America's First War Benefit Concert. This was held on April 29, 1917. Amy sang "Land of Hope and Glory" and "God Save the King". When America entered the war Amy joined with Paderewski and John McCormack to give her services for war causes. These efforts included singing at a series of concerts held at the 677 5th Ave. home of Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt in May 1917 for the American Red Cross.



George made his stage debut in London March 1906.



Eileen with Caruso, 1913.

EILEEN CASTLES, 1886-1970

Eileen like her sisters won gold medals. She won the soprano section of the Bendigo Conservatorium, 1906. On the 4th October, 1905 she sang Rossini's "Inflammatus" from "The Stabat Mater" with the Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra at the Melbourne Town Hall.

1906 studied with Mons. Bouhy. 1908 engaged by George Edwards for "Waltz Dream". Eileen recalled from Paris for the Coronation Concert, Albert Hall, June 17, 1911. J.C. Williamson engaged her personally in Paris for the 1911 Australian opera season. She played Micaela and Sibel.

1914 Eileen Castles made her debut in New York at the Century Opera House in "La Boheme", remaining in America playing grand and light opera with Aborn Opera Co., American Society of Singers and Manhatten English Grand Opera Company and others.

1919, the Directors of the J. C. Williamson Opera Company cabled Eileen to join the company. Eileen returned and played the role of "The Doll" in 'Tales of Hoffman'. She joined Amy in 'La Boheme' and sang "Musetta" to Amy's "Mimi". The two sisters created a furore with the brilliancy of their singing and acting.

She played Nedda in "I Pagliacci" and Micaela in "Carmen" etc. Eileen opened in Gilbert and Sullivan in 1920 in Australia.

From 1924 to 1928 Eileen engaged in opera and light opera in Australia and toured with Amy in concerts. She taught singing and did broadcasting.



Eileen in "The Fortune Teller", Victor Herbert composed this operetta. Eileen was his favourite "Naughty Marietta".

EILEEN CASTLES' SENSATIONAL SUCCESS

For the Adelaide season the company was strengthened by the inclusion of Eileen Castles, who came from America in response to a cable from the directors. She made her operatic debut in the South Australian capital as Olympia in "The Tales of Hoffman", winning the most astonishing success known in that city since the debut of her elder sister. The Adelaide "Register" thus: - "Eileen Castles' portrayal was a masterpiece in every sense. The audience accorded her an ovation. She was applauded tumultuously, and had to return many times."



Eileen as the Doll "Olympia".

George - the tenor brother - educated Marist Brothers, Bendigo and Xavier College Melbourne and Paris. He enlisted early in World War I in the Cavalry, being mentioned more than once in despatches and was badly gassed. He then veered to the entertainment side of the Army and formed the "Smart Set Concert Party" from the Australian 4th Division A.S.C.

1918, he was chosen out of the combined Allied Armies at the personal request of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales to sing the "Te Deum", in Rheims Cathedral at the "Thanksgiving Mass" in the presence of all the Heads of State.

Prior to enlisting, George had a position in the Agent-General's Office London. Seymour Hicks engaged him. He made his London debut in March 1906 with Marie Studholme in the musical "My Darling". "The Beauty of Bath" and "The Gay Gordons" followed.

In 1910 he played 'de Jolidon' in the "Merry Widow". He bought the rights of the "Merry Widow" and "A Waltz Dream" from Williamson touring the country. After the war he toured Australia with the "Smart Set Concert Party". He went into business and died in 1970.

DOLLY CASTLES, 1884-1971

Dolly won medals as a child. J.C. Williamson arranged concerts for Dolly and Amy in Sydney and Melbourne in 1903. Dolly studied with M. Bouhy making her first public appearance in Paris in "L'Anglais tel qu'on le Parle". J.C. Williamson was present at this performance and engaged Dolly for 1904-1906 Gilbert and Sullivan season in Australia.

In 1904 Dolly at 19 years of age played the prima donna roles in all the Gilbert and Sullivan operas with the exception of "Ruddigore". She created the part of Princess Zara in "Utopia Ltd". 1907-1908 appeared at the Gaiety Theatre London and Daly's Theatre under contract to George Edwards. Seymour Hicks engaged her to replace Ellaline Terris in "The Dashing Little Duke" and "The Gay Gordons".

1910 Arthur Collins engaged her for principal boy at Drury Lane Theatre in "Jack and the Beanstalk".

She entertained Royalty and 200 boy scouts at Drury Lane Theatre.

October 7, 1912 she made her debut in New York at the Astor Theatre in "The Woman Haters Club". A series of engagements in America with Shubert Brothers, Alexander Woods, Oliver Morosco, F.C. Whitney etc. creating "Polychrome" in the "Tic Toc Man of Oz". The first musical extravaganza of Los Angeles.

1915 Dolly returned touring Australia and New Zealand in "Cinderella". 1916 returned to Broadway. 1919 married Major Charles Finn R.A.M.C. (4th F.A.) O.B.E., veteran of the Gallipoli Campaign.





HER MAJESTY'S

SOLE LESSEE AND MANAGER MR. J. C. WILLIAMSON

Wednesday, December 7th, 1904

SPECIAL MATINEE PERFORMANCE

Of Gilbert & Sullivan's Famous Work, the Æsthetic Opera

PATIENCE

Arranged by Mr. J. C. Williamson to commemorate the debut to the Comic Opera Stage, of the talented young Australian

.....Vocalist.....

Miss Dolly Castles

With the following Great Cast :-

Colonel Calverley . . . Mr. FRANK WILSON
(His First Appearance in Australia)

Major Murgatroyd . . . Mr. ARTHUR HUNTER

Lieut. The Duke of Dunstable Mr. CHARLES KENNINGHAM
(For the First Time)

Archibald Grosvenor . . Mr. JOHN RALSTON

Mr. Bunthorne's Solicitor . . . Mr. J. FORD

Reginald Bunthorne . . . Mr. HOWARD VERNON
(In an original character)

Patience . . . Miss DOLLY CASTLES
(Her First Appearance on the Comic Opera Stage)

Lady Jane . . . Miss CELIA ORMONT

Lady Angela . . . Miss AGGIE THORN
(For the First Time)

Lady Ella . . . Miss SARA HYMAN

Lady Saphir . . . Miss EVELYN SCOTT

Rapturous Maidens, Officers of Dragoon Guards, &c.
by the Famous

Royal Comic Opera Chorus.

Programme Continued on Next Page.

SYD. DAY, Print, Melbourne.





Dolly in centre of photograph standing on box with Scouts in the Saloon of Drury Lane.
Lord Baden Powell is on the left of picture.

TREAT TO BOY SCOUTS
Miss Dolly Castles' Birthday Tea

"The selection of the guests has been in the hands of General Baden Powell, the secretary, and at 12.30 p.m. the lads are meeting on the Embankment to march in order to the theatre. All the principals have promised to assist at the tea, and the hostess receives her guests in the Boy Scouts dress in which she appears in the play.

A large and influential audience is expected at Drury Lane for the matinee, and amongst others, General Baden Powell has promised to attend."

"Pall Mall Gazette", February 1911.

"This was attended by Princess Mary and Helen of Teck and the children of Lord Crichton. Though Miss Castles was reticent on the subject, she had the honour of taking tea with the Princess. She also took up to their box some of her bonbons, and spent a merry time with them before rejoining her guests. At the tea the Chairman of the Theatre made the birthday speech and the boys loudly sang "For She's a Jolly Good Fellow". The Scout Master on behalf of the Company thanked her.

Miss Castles is one of a trio of talented Australian sisters all of whom have studied in Paris under M.Bouhy, and her sister Miss Amy Castles, is now playing in grand opera.

"The Picture Paper", February 1911.

Dolly played the female lead "Polychrome" in "The Tic Toc Man of Oz", the sequel to "The Wizard of Oz". It was Los Angeles' first musical extravaganza. An Oliver Morosco production.

Louis Gottschalk, the composer, conducted the San Francisco Orchestra when it was staged there.

Victor Schertzinger the composer was the concert master. He composed the song "Marquita" for Dolly Castles. This production of "The Tic Toc Man of Oz" saved F. Baum from bankruptcy as his biography mentioned.



CORT THEATRE

DIRECTION NORTHWESTERN THEATRICAL ASSOCIATION — HOMER F. CURRAN, MANAGER

LIMITED ENGAGEMENT, BEGINNING MONDAY NIGHT, APRIL 21, 1913
Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays

OLIVER MOROSCO Presents
A Quaint, Whimsical Diversion called

THE TIK-TOK MAN OF OZ

The play and lyrics written by L. Frank Baum
The musical score composed by Louis F. Gottschalk
The entire production staged by Frank Stammers

Amy Castles 1930 to 1940 devoted herself to singing publicly for mostly charitable causes. Toured Australia and New Zealand in 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925. Her conductors in Australia were Joseph Post, Gustave Slapoffski, Alberto Zelman, Fritz Hart, Roberto Hazon, George English, William James, Alfred Hill. She sang with distinguished artists Eileen Castles, Charles Tuckwell, Cecil Parkes, John Amadio, Harold Whittle, Waldemar Seidel, Ezio Kost, May Broderick, Victor McMahon, Adrian Amadio, Alberto Tortzillo, William Conway, Alice Madigan, Alfred Bartleman, Walter Kirby, Ambrose McMahon and others.

December 20th, 1924 Amy sang Handel's "Messiah" with the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Society, the 406th performance. The conductor Alberto Zelman and the other principles Victoria Anderson, Norman Bennett and Thexton Morphett. Sung at the Exhibition Building to a capacity audience the demand was so great two additional performances were given December 23rd and 25th. May Gaynor, violinist with the Victorian Symphony Orchestra remembers the beauty of Amy's voice.

Joseph Castles died February 1933 and Amy in memory of her father consented to sing for the first time in Melbourne the "Verdi Requiem", April 29th 1933. The only other time it had been performed in Melbourne had been in 1873 when the accompaniment was a piano. The orchestra is a necessary force in the performance of the "Requiem". The work was repeated on May 11 because of public demand, with Elizabeth Galbraith, Laurence Barker, A.C. Bartleman, Edouard Lambert and Connie Finlayson. Direction George English.

Amy died November 19, 1951, fifty years to the day she had made her London debut.

A voice once heard, never to be forgotten. Thirty years after, Pedro Tillett remembered. Agnes Murphy well-known writer, wrote in "The Bulletin", August 7th 1929. "On the Sunday before I left London recently I heard Pedro Tillett at Paul Robeson's Albert Hall concert say "The two most delightful thrills of my life were the first time I heard Amy Castles sing and the first time I visited San Francisco". "Pedro Tillett who used to run the leading London concert agency knows all the world stars, and is at present one of the high priests of the British Broadcasting Corporation." Thirty years before Pedro Tillett with his uncle Norman Vert who had managed Amy's debut in London, escorted Amy Castles to her carriage, and said that the success of the concert had succeeded all their expectations. That memorable night of November 19th, 1901.

The Bystander, October 3, 1906

An Ideal "Record"



Copyright G. and T., Ltd. *Photo N.N. Clarke*

Miss Amy Castles

The very gifted concert-singer, whose successes in London, and in Australia, have been so conspicuous, has the additional honour of being an ideal maker of gramophone records, her voice being one of exquisite purity and wide compass. Her first appearance at St. James's Hall, at the age of eighteen, was a remarkable triumph.

RECORDS WE HAVE TRIED

George Bernard Shaw present at the Gramophone Concert remarked after hearing Amy sing "To The Angels", "If Amy Castles never makes another record, her name and fame will be made with that one record."

"Music"

"Music", January 1907. "... Miss Amy Castles' thrilling voice was heard in "To the Angels" (Zardo), and the same artiste imparted a rare quality of expressiveness to Goring Thomas's "Winds in the Trees". Of these, too, excellent reproductions were played.

03.068 "To the Angels" (Zardo). Miss Amy Castles came to us from Australia with a reputation which her beautiful voice and artistic singing entitled her to, and which she has amply justified at her London appearances. Her voice is round, sweet and brilliant, without being too penetrating, while her breadth of style is plainly the result of sound training. The violoncello obligato, played by W.H. Squire, greatly adds to the general effect. This and the following record are bound to please.

2-053007, "Bolero - Merci Dilette Amiche" ("I Vespri Siciliana" - Verdi). This show piece is from an opera by Verdi, which did not attain any considerable success. This aria is, however, fairly well known, and it is one of such difficulty as only to suit sopranos of exceptional brilliancy of voice and impeccable method. Miss Amy Castles possesses a beautiful voice, as ripe as it is fresh and flexible. We do not remember to have heard the favourite soprano to such advantage before, and we are quite sure that our readers will accord unqualified appreciation to this striking record of bravura singing.

2-053006, "Bel Raggio" (Rossini's "Semiramide") - Miss Amy Castles is a gifted exponent of the school of coloratura, and she has in Rossini's music, opportunities rarely vouchsafed to the singer. Her voice is strangely elastic and pure, and she revels in the floridity and melodiousness of this striking air from "Semiramide"

G.C. 3.654 - "Serenade" (Gounod). The same singer displays great charm and flexibility of voice in this familiar berceuse, and the flute accompaniment is most tastefully played by Eli Hudson.

G.C. 3674, "Caro Nome" (Verdi's "Rigoletto"). The wonderful thing about this record is that the voice of Miss Amy Castles is returned to the delighted listener without one blemish on the bloom of a beautiful voice. The song, as everyone knows, requires judgement on the part of the singer, and a peculiar purity and flexibility of voice; the roulades and trills making no inconsiderable demand on the soprano's technical resources. Miss Castles comes through the ordeal with triumph, and so makes a record that will charm the most critical buyers of operatic records.

G.C. 3740, "Angels Guard Thee". If one were to ask the average music-lover who Benjamin Godard was, they would say, "Well, I know his second Mazurka and I know "Angels Guard Thee". O f course they would. We have the song sung by Miss Amy Castles with purity of voice and style. The record is a very charming one, the violoncello obligato contributing largely to the effectiveness of the rendering of this beautiful composition.

G.C. 3.670 - "La Serenata" (Braga). This delicious, appealing piece was written originally for the violin and has been fitted by transcription to the voice and various instruments, in much the same manner as Bach's first prelude was adapted for an "Ave Maria" by Gounod. The record is made by Miss Amy Castles singing to the subdued accompaniment on the violoncello by Mr W.H. Squire, and very beautiful and touching is the whole.

G.C. 3.667 - "Winds in the Trees" (Goring Thomas). No one who is familiar with the works of the late Goring Thomas is not cognisant that he was artistic in the highest degree in the realm of song. Innumerable compositions of his lie on the publisher's shelves - for what reason we do not know. This is an ordinary sample of the composer's work, and is sung by Miss Amy Castles with a purity of voice that is rare and a sense of light and shade which not every soprano evinces. As to the record, it is so true to every variation of the tone of the singer that it might be the singer in the flesh. This is record-making of the highest order, and this number must be a favourite with all connoisseurs of good songs and good singing.

"Music" 1906-1909

"Qui la Voce"

Appearances at Boosey Ballad Concerts - Queen's Hall, 1901

The same instantaneous recognition of the special gifts of Amy Castles came when she made her first appearance at the Boosey Ballad Concert at the Queen's Hall in London on November 30th, 1901. Amy was twenty-one years old and already a recognized star. "The Times" of December 2nd, 1901 wrote, "London Ballad Concert. The crowded concert of Saturday at the Queen's Hall, was chiefly remarkable for the first appearance of Miss Amy Castles at these entertainments. She had to give an encore after Bellini's "Qui la Voce" but was firm in refusing the same honour after a deliciously unaffected performance of Spohr's "Rose Softly Blooming". (She had already sung the ballad "When We Meet". In fact she had given two encores.)

This was the first appearance of Amy at these Ballad concerts at which the greatest singers of the day appeared. "The Sunday Times" (London), December 1st, 1901: "The last London Ballad Concert but one before Christmas drew an immense audience to Queen's Hall yesterday. The Australian soprano, Miss Amy Castles, made a successful first appearance at these concerts. Her neat and fluent rendering of "Qui la Voce" evoked rapturous demands for more, and in response the young artist sang with admirable suavity of style and unaffected sentiment Hope Temple's pretty ballad "When We Meet".

Mr Arthur Boosey telegraphed Amy his congratulations saying, "You made more of "When We Meet" than any other singer I have ever heard."

Amy Castles records are missing from "Voices of the Past" 1898-1925, Vol II, the Italian Catalogue by John R. Bennett, I.F.R.C. Vol. II. The numbers 2-053002 to 2-053008 are omitted, indicating that they have been removed from the index at some unknown time.

From Mr Peter Burgis of the National Film and Sound Archive, Canberra, we learn that in the period November 4 to December 14, 1926 and July 1927, on Columbia, the sisters Amy and Eileen Castles recorded 36 titles between them of which only two masters were issued.

To this day it is not known as to why only two masters were issued.



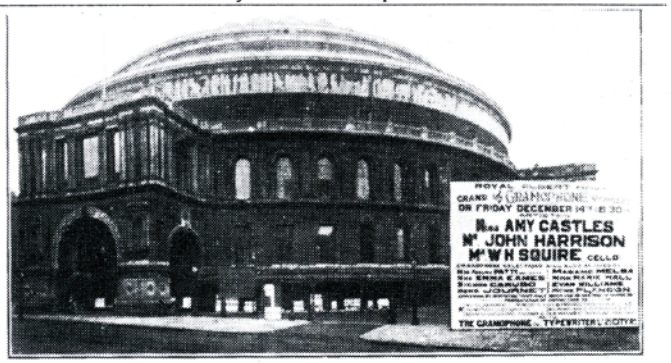
Amy Castles



Eileen Castles

GRAMOPHONE NEWS

1906 *The most extraordinary success the Gramophone has ever achieved.* 1906



THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON.

This is how the Royal Albert Hall looked in the afternoon on December 14th. By 5.30 crowds of people arrived and stood in long queues at the doors. The doors were opened at 7.30, when over 9,000 people gained admission. The occasion was the Grand Gramophone Concert. Gramophone enthusiasts came up to London from Dublin, Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Leicester, Birmingham. On the day of the concert the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. received over 500 applications for seats. Every seat was allotted within twenty-four hours of the first advertisement appearing in the London papers. The Royal Albert Hall is the largest hall in Great Britain. Among the audience were the Duke and Duchess of Wellington, Earl Howe, Sir Thomas Lipton, and a host of the leading lights in London Society.

The "Daily Mail", December 17, says:-

"An enormous gathering assembled at the Royal Albert Hall on Friday evening and enthusiastically applauded each item of a remarkable programme presented by the Gramophone and Typewriter Limited. The gramophone used was one that embodied an invention of the Hon. Charles Parsons, of turbine fame, and by means of an ingenious arrangement of air-pressures in the sound-box the volume of sound was greatly increased.

"Many ladies were visibly affected when Mme. Patti, or rather the gramophone, sang 'Home, Sweet Home'. The rendering recalled in a startling manner her singing at the same hall on the occasion of her farewell concert a few days ago. Signor Caruso's records were received with enthusiasm.

"The most effective example of what the gramophone can do was demonstrated immediately after Miss Amy Castles had sung in person, as her encore was a repetition of the song on the gramophone itself. Mr. John Harrison sang Leoncavallo's " 'Tis the Day", and his 'encore' by the gramophone created as much applause and appreciation as when he sang in person a few moments before."