

Yvonne Arnaud – Effingham's Star of Stage and Screen, Pianist and Comedienne

JEREMY PALMER

Yvonne Arnaud, after an initial career as an internationally admired concert pianist and singer, changed direction and became one of Britain's most accomplished and much loved actors. She was cast very often in comedic and light-hearted plays, allowing full scope to combine her delightful vivaciousness with her impeccable command of timing and highly perfected stagecraft. She acted often with other well-known actors living in Effingham.

Early career

Of all the stage entertainers who made Effingham their home, none worked harder than the French pianist, singer and actress Yvonne Arnaud. From 1905 through to her death in 1958, she was consistently one of the most popular stars of the era, whether on stage, in films or through television and radio broadcasts. That she lives on via the Guildford theatre named in her honour is a testament to the level of stardom she achieved in her lifetime.

She was born Jeanne Germaine Arnaud on 20 December 1890, to Colonel Charles Leon Arnaud and his wife Antoinette. The family lived in the Bordeaux region of France. Once Germaine's early musical talent was recognised, her mother made every effort to develop her daughter's skills, controlling and directing her life in this direction. Germaine was educated in Paris and studied music at the Paris Conservatoire where in 1905 she won the Premier Prix for her piano playing.

By 1906 her mother had taken her on tour throughout Europe. The earliest review we have found is dated 29 November 1906 and appeared in the *Morning Post* newspaper. Arnaud was appearing at the Aeolian Hall; the reviewer commented on her 'exceptional command of the keyboard' and finished by saying:

'Mademoiselle Arnaud displayed much taste and feeling, but if she had revealed all the poetry of the music doubt would have been thrown on the statement as to her age. She was received with great and well-deserved cordiality.'



Figure 1 Arnaud photographed by Dorothy Wilding; Picturegoer Series, No 378a.

By 1908 her reputation as a pianist of great promise had taken her to the United States. She was one of the guest soloists for the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1909, arriving in January and promptly garlanded with rave reviews. Tours in Germany and Scandinavia followed, then in Russia and as far as Siberia on the Trans-Continental Railway.

The last we hear of her in the role of performing pianist was in February 1910, when she appeared in Nice's *King Carnival* celebrations where her interpretation of Saint-Saëns' Toccata was highly praised. However, after this appearance she seems to have dropped out of the public eye for a while, for reasons we have not been able to ascertain.

From piano to stage

It was not until the summer of 1911 that Germaine reappeared. Oriel Malet, in her 1961 biography (p63 onwards) of her godmother Arnaud entitled *Marraine* (this being the name Malet gave to Arnaud) recounted Arnaud's brother Edmond saying that she accepted a challenge to appear on stage for one night only. This was to be in a theatrical role and not as a pianist. She approached the impresario Georges Edwardes to fulfil this wish. After conquering both Edwardes' and her mother's opposition, Germaine was cast in a soubrette role as Princess Mathilde in the musical *The Quaker Girl*. The one night became several weeks of touring. Arnaud appears in the cast lists as 'Germaine France', the earliest mention being an advertisement from the *Leeds Mercury* on 22 August 1911. *The Quaker Girl* had been a massive success. Starring Gertie Millar, it had opened at the Adelphi Theatre on 5 November 1910, running to 536 performances. It was therefore a risky decision to cast Germaine Arnaud in a supporting role, even in the touring version, and one that was not well received backstage, as Arnaud described:



Figure 2 From *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 14 September, 1912.

'Gertie Millar, Elsie Spain, James Blakeley and Hayden Coffin were in the cast. Joe Coyne was the only one who was kind and who would rehearse with me. There was a terrible uproar in the theatre, you see, because of the understudy who was ready to play ... everybody was against me, even the chorus girls who were all very fashionable ladies, very well kept, and I was just like a flea amongst all those beautiful girls.' [*Marraine*, p65-66]

The tour lasted until May 1912. Arnaud commented in *Marraine* (p67) that she was due to go back to France but contracted typhoid and so had to remain in England. This is perhaps doubtful because Arnaud also states that she again demanded a theatrical role from an impresario when she approached Michael Faraday, manager of the Lyric Theatre. Since 'Yvonne Arnaud' was announced in *The Stage* on 1 August 1912 as being in the cast of Faraday's *The Girl in the Taxi*, this implies a period of only three months between her first and second plays on the stage. Given casting and rehearsals, it would be reasonable to assume the break between the two was even shorter.

The Girl in the Taxi opened on 7 September 1912. Based on a French farce, it seems that Faraday showed great patience and faith in the untrained Arnaud as well as having to negotiate with her mother to allow her underage daughter to perform. Faraday also rechristened Germaine as Yvonne, after deciding that 'Germaine' sounded too much like 'German'.

The Girl in the Taxi ran for 385 performances. Arnaud's performance was singled out for praise. *The Westminster Gazette* issue of 6 September 1912 described her as:

'... a very attractive young artist who in the part of Suzanne achieved instantaneous success on the score alike of her personal charms, her sprightly action and her tasteful singing.'

Other publications accorded her similar accolades, *The Observer* calling her 'an attractively arch and demure little rake', for example.

From Oriel Malet's account it also seems that 'Yvonne Arnaud' was Germaine's means to escape her mother's tight control; the character Yvonne, vivacious, charming and bubbly, was everything the pianist Germaine had been denied.

'It is plain that something was released in her from the moment that she stepped onto a stage. Her own comments make this plain: "I thought it was the easiest thing in the world and such fun ... how I enjoyed it ... By then, I had taken a liking to play." Inside the solemn, round-faced little girl there was someone else, spontaneous and gay ... Inside that warm circle of light, she found herself taking part in a delicious game; and it had nothing at all to do with Maman.' [*Marraine*, p70]

WHO LEAPT

From Obscurity to Fame in a Single Night.



MLLE. YVONNE ARNAUD

Bassano

The clever young French actress who made an instantaneous success in that entertaining musical play, "The Girl in the Taxi." Miss Arnaud's Suzanne is a sheer delight from start to finish, and her voice is used to good purpose in some pretty songs. Miss Arnaud speaks with a slight French accent which enhances her charm. She had previously appeared in the provinces, but her chance came in the Lyric piece and she seized it with both hands.

Figure 3 From *The Tatler*, 11 December 1912.

Arnaud used her considerable musical skills in comedies, farces and operettas through the 1910s. Here are some examples from this period, including a widely covered story about an anonymous admirer gifting her a lemur. She tried to keep it but after an appeal for help on what to feed it, and the lemur then eating one of her hats, it was passed on to London Zoo.



Figure 4 From *The Sketch*, 13 May 1914.



Figure 5 From *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 18 March 1916.



Figure 6 From *The Tatler*, 2 July 1919.

Her run of farces and light comedies culminated in *Kissing Time*, with Arnaud now billed alongside stars such as Stanley Holloway, Leslie Henson and Phyllis Dare. This ran for 13 months at the Winter Garden Theatre, closing on 3 July 1920.

Silent films

Arnaud had by this time taken some first steps into silent films. She was reported in October 1919 as taking a role in *The Temptress*, adapted from a story by Balzac and produced for the British and Colonial Film Company. She followed this with a second production for B&C entitled *Desire*, also from a novel by Balzac. She complained at the heavy workload this caused, appearing in film during the day and on stage at night. This may have been the reason why Arnaud would not work in films again for another ten years and made no further silent movies.



Figure 7 From *The Bioscope*, 20 November 1919.



Figure 8 Promotional card for Arnaud, 1920s.

A change now became inevitable; an operation to repair her vocal chords damaged them further, resulting in Arnaud no longer being able to sing professionally (as mentioned without citation on the *stagebeauty.net* website's page on Arnaud – via the Biography link there).

Marriage

A report published in *The Pall Mall Gazette* on 28 October 1920 does mention that Arnaud had only recently recovered from an operation, although this was a passing reference; the main subject of the report was her surprise marriage that same day to Hugh McLellan at Kensington Register Office. It emphasised how much of a shock this was to the theatrical world and how few were in the know.

The Times seems to have been the only newspaper given notice of the wedding, announcing on the 28th:

'The marriage arranged between Hugh McLellan, only son of the late C M S McLellan and of Mrs McLellan, and Germaine Yvonne, only daughter of the late Colonel Arnaud, of the French Army, and of Mrs Arnaud, will take place very quietly today in London.'

Hugh McLellan was the son of Charles Morton Stewart McLellan, a highly successful and prolific American writer of musical comedies for the stage. He had enjoyed major success in the West End in 1898-99 with *The Belle of New York*. This had toured overseas and been frequently revived. He resided at Earnshaw Cottage in Esher, a property previously owned by Charlotte Despard of the Women's Freedom League. Hugh, born in New Jersey in 1895, had become a naturalised British citizen in December 1914 while studying at Trinity College, Oxford. His father had died in 1916, although the family was still involved in theatre via Hugh's uncle, George Brinton McLellan, who would rise to be the managing director of the Wernher Group of West End playhouses. Hugh had tried his hand at writing for the theatre, had acted and would later become his wife's manager. Otherwise he seems to have had a peripatetic career; in various places he is described as an amateur golfer, an actor, an academic and an accountant. When the couple moved to Effingham he would then become a pig farmer.

With her ability to sing on stage compromised, Arnaud re-established herself in farces and comedies, enjoying early success in *Tons of Money*, the first in the hugely successful series known as the Aldwych Farces. This was the first venture of a new theatrical partnership. As W MacQueen Pope wrote in *The Footlights Flickered* (p94-95), as the curtain rose on the opening night of 13 April 1922, following a desperate battle to find investors, it could easily have fallen again on two new bankrupts. Instead *Tons of Money* lived up to its name. It ran for 737 performances and ushered in 13 years of lucrative and similar hits for the Aldwych. Arnaud played Louise Allington, wife to Ralph Lynn's Aubrey and forever coming up with a new plan, each more preposterous than the preceding. It gave her a catchphrase – 'I've got an idea', a phrase to which Aubrey clings like a limpet in the hope that each new one will rescue them from their impecunious state. *Tons of Money* re-made Arnaud as a star of light comedy. She would return to the Aldwych Farces but such was her mastery of what was called the 'comedy of pure fun', she would have roles written specifically with her in mind. This was precision-tooled comedy, overlaid with Arnaud's infectious humour and unique delivery. Audiences knew what to expect and even if the material was thin, her commitment and expertise were never in doubt.

The McLellans now lived in the heart of Belgravia, giving their address variously as 44 Eaton Mews North or Lyall Cottage, perhaps both referring to the same property. It would remain their home until the move to Effingham in the mid-1930s.



Figure 9 *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 October 1920.

August 24, 1932

The Sketch

343



THE STAR'S HOUSE — MODERN TYPE; YVONNE ARNAUD'S MEWS HOME.

The stage star of the pre-war period expected a home with an impressive approach. We have changed all that nowadays, for many of the most important and celebrated people live in converted mews flats, or houses with very simple façades, though the interiors are beautifully decorated and full

of labour-saving devices and luxury gadgets. Miss Yvonne Arnaud, for instance, has a cottage in a Mayfair mews. She is, in private life, Mrs. Hugh McLellan, and will be seen at the Globe next month in a new play, "Will You Love Me Always?" It will have a preliminary run in Manchester.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAGHA.

Figure 10 The McLellan's London home, Lyall Cottage, pictured in *The Sketch*, 24 August 1932.



Figure 11 Hugh McLellan, his wife Yvonne Arnaud and Anita Elson pictured in *The Sketch*, 19 August 1931.

Broadway

Arnaud's next notable role was as Mrs Pepys in J B Fagan's *And So To Bed* which opened at the Queen's Theatre on 6 September 1926. With Arnaud starring alongside Edmund Gwenn, this was another substantial, critical and commercial hit, with a run of 8 months. She then continued in the cast when the play transferred to the Shubert Theatre on Broadway in November 1927. Arnaud received praise on both sides of the Atlantic. The review in *The Tatler* published on 29 September 1926 began:

'Not for a long time have I enjoyed a new play so much as I enjoyed Mr. Fagan's comedy on the Pepys menage, *And So To Bed*. It began rather slowly, and for a little while I thought it was going to be just a wee bit dull. But the moment Miss Yvonne Arnaud, as Mrs. Pepys, appeared on the scene she "lifted" the play to a wonderful extent. A great performance. Moreover, at her entrance the play itself seemed to get into its stride, so to speak, and for ever afterwards was enchanting.'



Figure 12 *And So To Bed* from *The Sketch*, 22 September 1926.

In New York the *Brooklyn Times Union* echoed this with:

'It was Yvonne Arnaud who ran away with the chief honours of the evening though. As Mrs. Pepys she is a joy.'



Figure 13 *And So To Bed* from *The Sketch*, 22 September 1926.

During the Broadway run, Sir John Gielgud was also appearing in New York for the first time. He mentions Arnaud in his autobiography *Backward Glances* (published by Hodder & Stoughton, 1972) saying she was 'enchantingly kind' to him whenever they met (p173). *And So To Bed* enjoyed a six month run in New York, Arnaud sailing back on 11 June 1928. This would be one of the highlights of Arnaud's stage career. Oriel Malet mentions that the only portrait of Arnaud which came close to capturing her personality was of Arnaud in costume as Mrs. Pepys (Figure 13), saying it captured her strength and determination as well as the solemnity of the child prodigy she had been. It hung on the staircase in her Effingham home.

Yvonne Arnaud would appear only twice on Broadway, the second time in *Canaries Sometimes Sing*, a comedy play by the British writer Frederick Lonsdale. She initially appeared in its 1929 staging at The Globe Theatre, then sailed to the US in October 1930 to recreate the role at the Fulton Theatre. However it received poor notices, the *Brooklyn Times Union* this time branding it a 'lean comedy'. Arnaud returned on 12 December 1930 and would not perform in America again. In the meantime a film version of the play had been released in the UK in September, as Arnaud relaunched her acting career on screen.

Effingham connections

She reunited with J B Fagan on stage in *The Improper Duchess*, another substantial critical and audience success at The Globe which ran from January to November 1931. This united her on stage for the first time with soon-to-be fellow Effingham residents and actors, Winifred Oughton and Andrea Malandrinos. All three would also be cast in a revival of *And So To Bed* that followed on in November at The Globe.

Oughton in particular was a long-term friend, and would be Arnaud's regular companion travelling back on the train from Waterloo to Effingham. *The Improper Duchess* was a satire on America, big oil and impoverished Ruritanian nobility.



Figure 14 In *The Improper Duchess* from *The Sketch*, 11 February 1931.

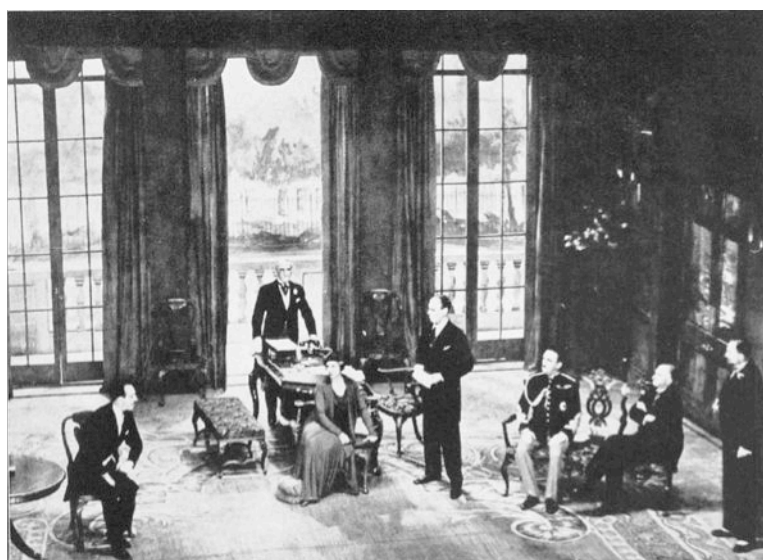


Figure 15 In *The Improper Duchess* from *The Sketch*, 21 February 1931.

Arnaud would again reprise her role of the Duchess in the movie version three years later. This seems to have been a mixed blessing; her movie roles would ensure she stayed in the public eye when unable to work on the stage, and perhaps compensate for her no longer travelling abroad for work. However, interviewed for the *Norwood News* on 1 April 1932 she stated:

‘There is nothing about making pictures at all, except that they make you get up early every morning for nothing at all. Often when you get there early you are not wanted until four o’clock in the afternoon, and if you do not do the thing right the first time it can be done again and again – a million times if necessary. Seldom is it a spontaneous performance.’

Arnaud’s grumpiness was understandable. It transpired at the end of the tour of *The Improper Duchess* that she had continued working while needing an operation for fibroids. *The Daily Mirror* reported on 12 April 1932 that she was in a Park Lane nursing home.



Figure 16 From *The Daily Mirror*, 12 April 1932.

She was discharged a month later in May; she and Hugh were captured by a photographer for *The Sphere*. She would not be seen on the stage again until the autumn.

Perhaps this brush with mortality encouraged Arnaud to expand her range into more serious roles. In February 1934 she appeared as Queen Katherine in Sir Oswald Stoll’s revival of Shakespeare’s *Henry V* at the Alhambra for which she received respectful reviews. However, although thereafter roles by the great comic writers of the age would be offered to her, Arnaud would mostly avoid serious dramas.

Home life

By 1935 the McLellans’ thoughts may have turned to escaping from London and putting distance between Arnaud’s professional and family lives. In a report in *The Daily Mirror* dated 26 November 1935



Figure 17 From *The Sphere*, 14 May 1932.

the McLellans were seen playing tennis at Norwood Farm by Effingham Common, guests of long-time friends Sir Nicholas and Lady Audrey Waterhouse:

‘A loud report coincided with every double fault served by Miss Yvonne Arnaud over the weekend – not as a reprimand, but as a signal that her husband, Mr Hugh McLellan had accounted for another rabbit somewhere nearby.

She was playing tennis with Sir Nicholas Waterhouse and Lady Waterhouse on their hard court at Effingham, and with relentless energy repaired to the barn to play badminton as soon as it became dark.

Sir Nicholas Waterhouse, distinguished accountant, went to his study to stick in stamps, of which he has such a fine collection that he told me he bought the house entirely from the proceeds of his “swaps”.

We know that the Waterhouses and McLellans had been friends as far back as 1926, as shown by a photograph of them playing tennis together [*Studies in the History of Effingham*, Volume 8, Article 69, publ Effingham Local History Group (ELHG)]. Sir Nicholas in his privately-published *Reminiscences* described the tennis parties they enjoyed:

‘He (Godfrey Winn) was a very fine [tennis] player and when I partnered him in doubles at our parties here I usually lay down under the net all the time except when I had to serve. In mixed doubles he often partnered Yvonne Arnaud and they made a wonderful pair. If I were on the other side my only chance would be to try and put them off their strokes by improper remarks.’

Godfrey Winn as an actor appeared in many plays and films but went on to write novels and became a star columnist on *The Daily Mirror* and *The Sunday Express*.

Arnaud’s sporting skills were not limited to tennis and badminton, as the photograph in Figure 18 showing Arnaud playing table tennis demonstrates. She may have started with this sport in 1923, since an article in the *Birmingham Gazette* on 10 March 1923 described how she and Ralph Lynn had taken it up in order to keep in trim for their roles in *Tons of Money*.



Figure 18 From *The Daily Mirror* Archive.

The Waterhouse / Arnaud circle of friends illuminates how she had also continued her musical career even after the loss of her singing voice. Lady Waterhouse's friendship with the French violinist and impresario, André Mangeot, is discussed in ELHG's Waterhouse article [*op cit*]. We know that Arnaud occasionally accompanied Mangeot's International String Quartet as a pianist. For example, a flyer in the André Mangeot Archive held in the Royal College of Music (RCM) library shows them performing together in May 1922 at St. John's Institute in Tufton Street, the highlights being Bax's Second Violin Sonata and the first performance in England of Honegger's Violin Sonata. Another document held in the RCM library indicates that both Arnaud and Lady Waterhouse were members of Mangeot's Music Society in 1923. Indeed there is a letter in the RCM library, dated 6 September 1940, from the publishers Hutchinsons, in which they declined to publish Mangeot's biography of Yvonne Arnaud. She may also have first met Sir John Barbirolli through his role as cellist in one of Mangeot's string quartets, although Barbirolli's official biography states that he met Arnaud when she overheard him playing in a theatre orchestra in 1923. Their friendship would last throughout her life with Arnaud frequently appearing in concert with Barbirolli. She also included a recording of Barbirolli conducting the Hallé's performance of *The Marriage of Figaro Overture*, in her *Desert Island Discs* selection broadcast in January 1951.



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SOURCE: Historic England Archive

Figure 19 Arnaud at Norwood Farm, 16 June 1937; by courtesy of the Historic England Archive.



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SOURCE: Historic England Archive

Figure 20 Arnaud at Norwood Farm, 16 June 1937; by courtesy of the Historic England Archive.

We can be reasonably sure that by 1937 the McLellans had taken up residence at their new home, Banks Way Farm in the north of Effingham parish, situated down a lane leading away eastwards from Effingham Junction railway station. The above photographs from the Historic England Archive were taken on 16 June 1937, but although they purport to show Arnaud in her new home they were actually taken in Norwood Farm. This was probably because Banks Way had not yet been completed. Godfrey Winn wrote in July 1937 in *The Daily Mirror* that the McLellans would be moving into Banks Way that month.

The photograph in Figure 21 captures her in what appears to be a relaxed and happy moment. The house seen behind her is Grove Paddock (now The Paddock), built by Anthony Nicholas Diamantidi and leased as a country retreat during 1934-38 to the singer, instrumentalist and comedienne Gwen Farrar. As Arnaud moved to the village probably in late July 1937, and Gwen Farrar surrendered the lease of Grove Paddock on 9 May 1938, the picture may well have been taken in the summer of 1937.



Figure 21 Arnaud in cheerful mood; perhaps summer 1937.

Farming in wartime

One of the first things that the McLellans did was to establish a piggery holding 600 pigs. Godfrey Winn, writing in *The Daily Mirror* on 11 March 1937 indicated that this was part of their original plans:

‘Yvonne Arnaud and her husband (are) in the process of moving into a most attractive home near Effingham. Mr Hugh McLellan is taking up pig farming and is most enthusiastic about it. So is his wife. “You must come one day and see Hugh’s pigs,” Yvonne exclaimed. “The poor pig, he is a much maligned animal. He is not nearly so dirty as human beings pretend. Hugh’s piggery is spotless and to prove it I am going to give a house-warming party in it soon.”’

Monica (née Mooney) German-Ribon, who gave ELHG her oral reminiscences on 22 May 2013, was a young girl living in Effingham at this time and painted a different picture of Yvonne Arnaud and her pigs:

‘I went into the Land Army and I was sent to this pig farm run by Yvonne Arnaud’s husband, and I loved the pig farm and the pigs loved me! Yvonne Arnaud didn’t love the pigs and they didn’t love her very much. There was Basil the boar used to waddle towards me for back scratching every day ... He [McLellan] had about 12 pigs and lots and lots of piglets and Basil the boar who I was very fond of. Yvonne Arnaud used to come down and look rather disdainfully at the pigs and sniff at them, that sort of thing and Basil would turn his back on her. She only came down once a week to see what was going on. I was only there for a month so I saw her about four times.’

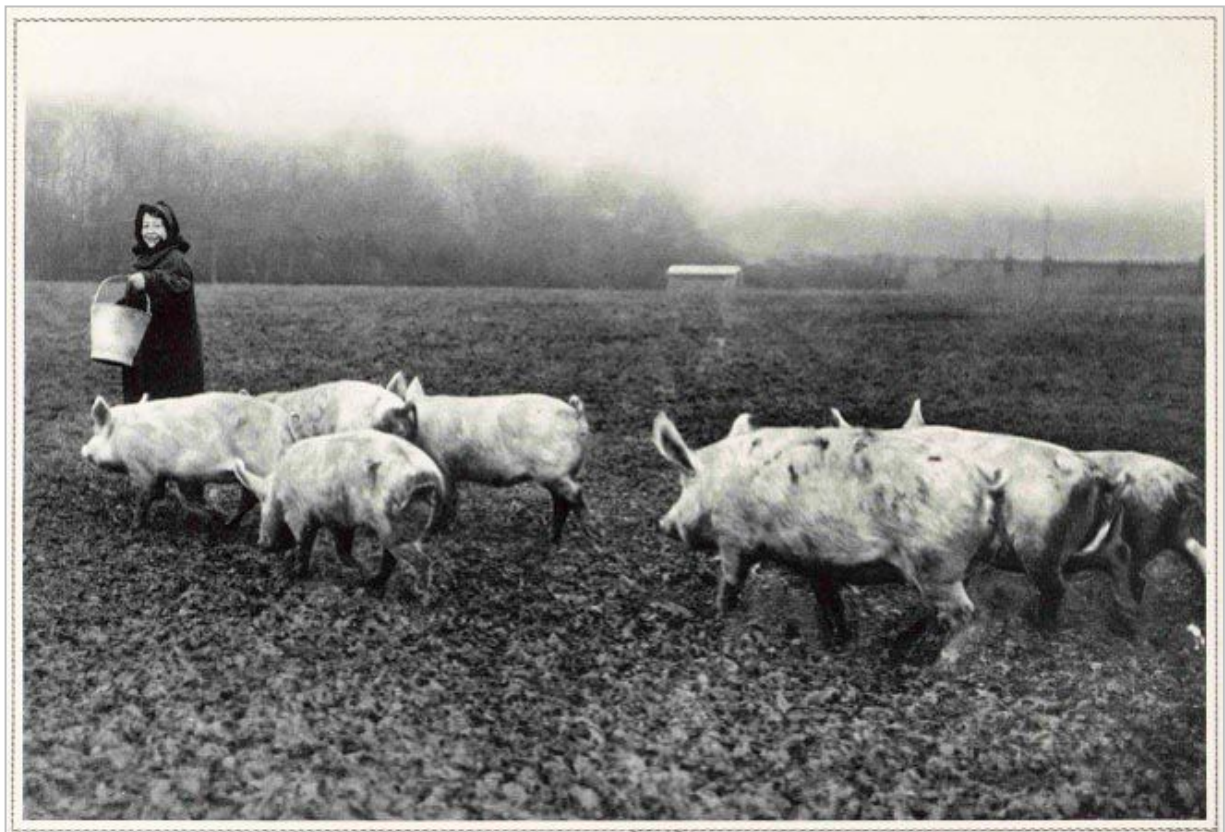


Figure 22 The McLellans at Banks Way Farm, pictured in *The Sketch*, 26 January 1938.

The move to Effingham was initially spoiled by a burglary in the following November in which thieves scaled a ladder to break into Arnaud’s bedroom while she was away broadcasting. Although her dogs were barking furiously, the staff were oblivious, allowing the burglars to steal jewellery worth £2500. Some items were later found discarded on the railway. We have not found a record of anyone being apprehended for the theft.

Arnaud’s career was still in full flow and she used her stardom for good causes in her new home once the War had broken out. In March 1940 she appeared alongside Gerda Brown, the commandant of the local Red Cross detachment, to appeal for donations for the Finnish Comforts and Refugees Fund. After a performance she would always head home to Effingham, as Gielgud writes:

'She would not sleep in London during air raids but would send her dresser out to shop for her, rushing off to Waterloo as soon as the play was over laden with bags and parcels, and riding triumphantly in the guard's van of a train to reach her country house, coaxing smiles and friendly help from everyone on the way.' [*Backward Glances*, p174]

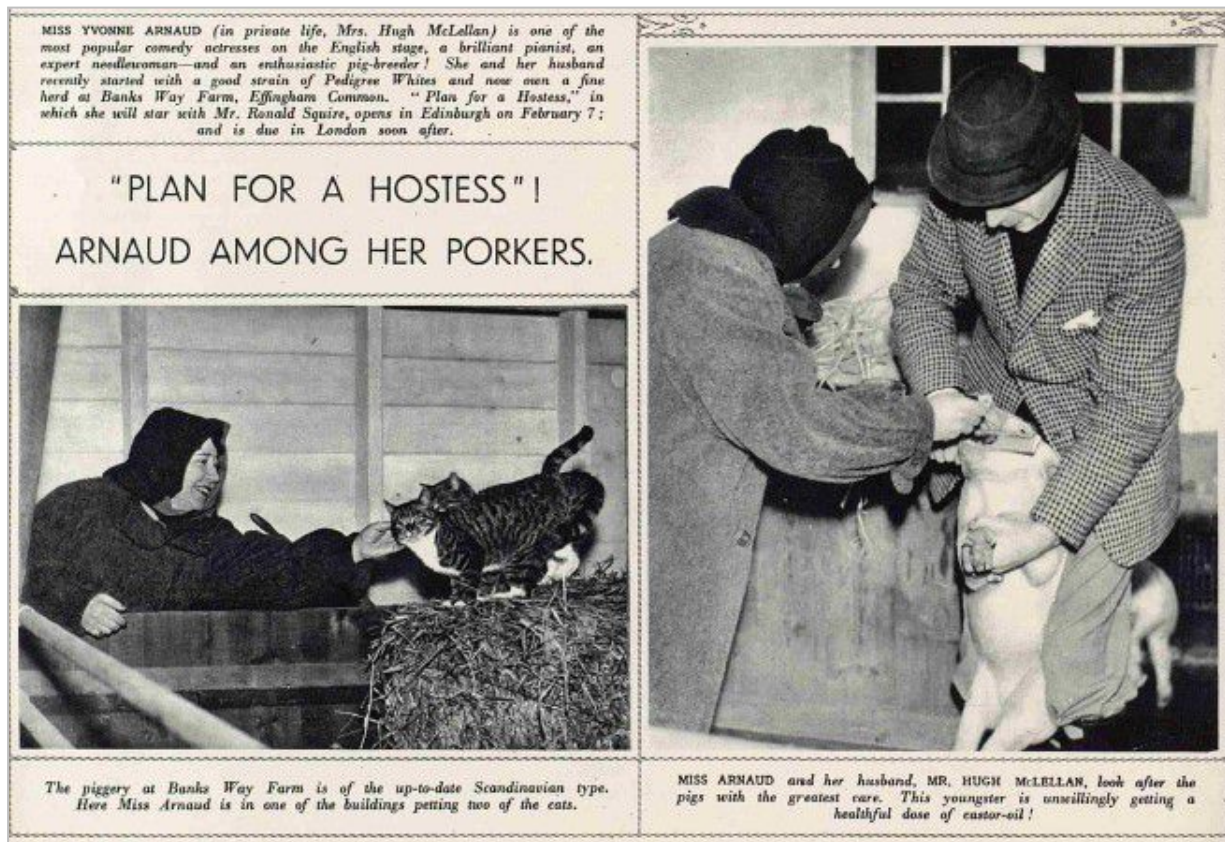


Figure 23 The McLellans at Banks Way Farm, pictured in *The Sketch*, 26 January 1938.

She travelled back with her friend and fellow-actor Winifred Oughton, their sumptuous supper being noted in the *Evening Telegraph and Post* (Dundee) of 25 May 1942 – a packet of sandwiches and a flask of coffee. Not that Effingham was always a safe destination. Writing to a Mrs Salmon on 30 September 1940 she complained: 'We are in the front line here and we have air raids, bombs etc. on our fields and unpleasantly near.'

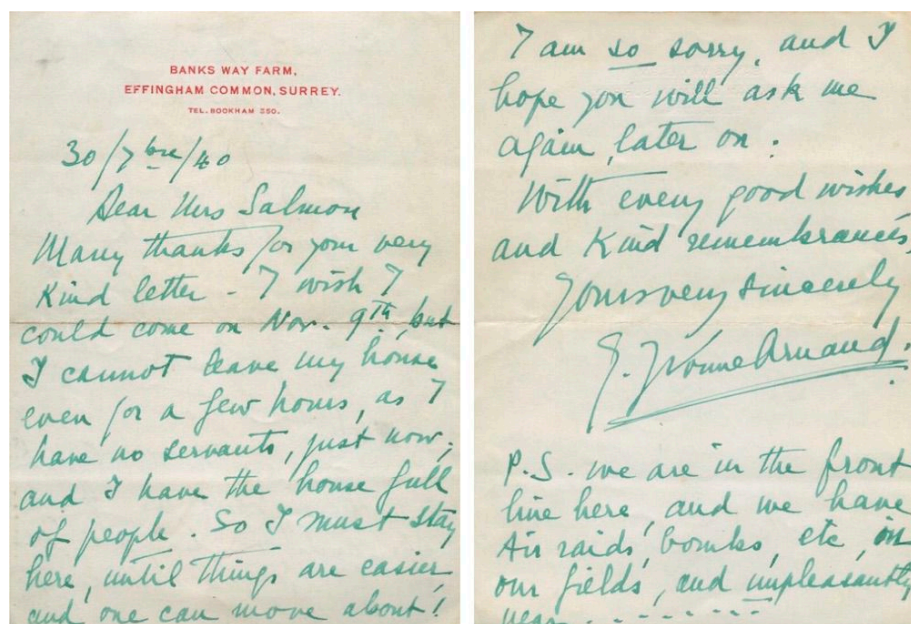


Figure 24 The letter from Arnaud to Mrs Salmon.

There is a partial corroboration of this because we know that the raids on Brooklands by German bombers had started on 24 July. We also know from the evacuee Ronald George Burton, who was staying with the Waterhouses at Norwood Farm, that German aircraft had dropped incendiaries on and around Effingham Common, and this may be what Arnaud is referring to in the period between July and September 1940.

Winifred Oughton served as the first President of the Effingham Junction Women's Institute which met at the Rowland Lubbock Hall at Effingham Junction after it formed in December 1940. Arnaud would often entertain the members on the piano. In April 1942 Oughton persuaded her co-stars from *The Nutmeg Tree*, Arnaud and Naomi Jacob, to entertain a packed-to-the-rafters WI meeting, and followed this with a Shakespeare Festival on Monday 16 November. Arnaud accompanied Leslie French, the great Shakespearean actor of his day, on the piano performing songs from the Shakespearean canon. A fortnight later on Monday 30 November she was opening a Chinese Exhibition at Bookham First Aid Post, this time to publicise an 'Aid to China' fund. Arnaud was eager to recommend Madame Chiang Kai-Shek's philosophies of courage and determination.

The articles from *The Surrey Advertiser* shown in Figure 25 report the above three occasions.

WOMEN AND SHAKESPEARE
Members of the Effingham Junction Women's Institute held their first Shakespearean festival at the Rowland Lubbock Memorial Hall on Monday. It was produced by Miss Oughton, assisted by Mrs. Boxall and Mrs. Lowry as stage managers. "Half an Hour in Shakespeare's England" was presented by Mesdames Church, Edwin, Ford, Goddard, Manning, Pimm, Williams, Wood, and Frances Edwin, and in the scene from "The Merry Wives of Windsor" Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Manning were particularly entertaining. Miss Oughton (the president) introduced the Shakespearean actor, Mr. Leslie French, who entertained with songs and episodes from the plays of Shakespeare. He was accompanied at the piano by Mrs. Hugh McLellan (Miss Yvonne Arnaud). Scenes from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" were played by Doreen Boxall, June Crane, Tony Freeman, Donald Gotta, Audrey Williams, Wendy Freeman, and Pat Merrell. During the interval Miss Oughton gave a resumé of the activities of the Institute, including adoption of the trawler Roletta and sending comforts and gifts for the crew for Christmas, the canning of 9cwt. of tomatoes, and aid to Russia. She also spoke of the two funds the Institute was particularly interested in—Cancer Relief and the Royal Surrey County Hospital, Guildford. The proceeds on this occasion were for the Cancer Relief Fund, and her appeal for it was endorsed by Mrs. McLellan. Later Miss Oughton mentioned extra entertainments that had been arranged by the Institute, including a play on Russia, special speakers on America and Russia, children's entertainments, and another Shakespearean programme on Shakespeare's birthday, April 23rd.—A total of £9 0s. 6d. was realised for the Cancer Relief Fund.

Figure 25a 18 April 1942.

CHINESE EXHIBITION
OPENED BY MISS YVONNE ARNAUD AT GREAT BOOKHAM
Miss Yvonne Arnaud opened a week's Chinese exhibition on Monday in aid of Lady Cripps's "Aid to China" Fund at the First-Aid Post, Great Bookham.
Everybody should read Madame Chiang Kai-Shek's book, Miss Arnaud said, and they would learn a lot about China. This great lady had, with unflinching courage and determination, taught the Chinese much in hygiene and other forms of welfare. "We can all learn from the steadfastness and patience of the Chinese if our own country is to achieve its aims," she added.
It was their duty to thank China and to prove their gratitude by trying to help as much as they could. It was not only a most deserving, but an absolutely necessary cause to help. In the exhibition they would see the beauty and the culture of Chinese work.
The Rev. H. A. Floud, vicar of Effingham, acknowledged Miss Arnaud's kindness in coming to open the exhibition. She had given charm and delight to many in various ways, and they were all glad to have the privilege of seeing her there that day.

Figure 25b 21 November 1942.

TWO NOTABLE VISITORS
ENTERTAIN WOMEN'S INSTITUTE AT EFFINGHAM
Effingham Junction Women's Institute held their monthly meeting on Monday this week, and there was a large assembly.
Miss Oughton (president) was in the chair. Announcements included a proposal to hold a course of dress-making classes, commencing on April 23rd next at 2 p.m., and as one of the items will be renovations it should prove a useful help in war time.
Many people have responded to Mrs. Godfrey's appeal for toys, etc., to be sent to the Malden Children's Nurseries for war workers' children, but more are required and should be sent to Downe, Cobham Road, East Horsley. During the week commencing April 20th there is to be a house-to-house collection by the members of the Institute for the Blind. In previous years about this time an appeal has been made to members and friends for fresh eggs for the hospital at Guildford, and although this year eggs may be rather scarce the president asked members to bring what they could to the meeting on May 4th.
After the business the President welcomed Miss Naomi Jacobs, the well-known novelist, and also members from eleven other Institutes and their friends, about 100 being present altogether. Miss Jacobs gave a most delightful talk on her travels through France to Italy and her experiences there before the war.
The surprise item, promised to the members some time ago, turned out to be the welcome appearance of Miss Yvonne Arnaud (Mrs. Hugh McLellan), who played the piano in a manner which delighted all present. Another appreciated item was given by Miss Barbara Sharp, who played the violin. Tea was later served to the members and visitors (about 140).

Figure 25c 5 December 1942

This coincided with John Gielgud announcing at the start of November that he would be reviving Congreve's *Love for Love* at the Phoenix Theatre after a nationwide tour, and that Yvonne Arnaud had been cast as Mrs. Frail. He writes in *Backward Glances*:

'Her technique was as unfailing as her instinct. One might have supposed that the elaborate verbiage of Congreve would have proved something of a problem for her ... but she used her breathing and timing as cunningly as ever and rose to the challenge like a bird. She was the only leading actress I have ever known who looked forward to a first night with happy anticipation and really seemed to enjoy every single moment of it.' [*Backward Glances*, p174]

Love for Love transferred to the Theatre Royal, Haymarket and ran until May 1944.



Figure 26 A scene from *Love for Love*, pictured in *The Tatler*, 5 May 1943.

Arnaud continued as part of its repertory company in Somerset Maugham's *The Circle* and also toured Germany to entertain British Army troops on the Rhine as part of the ENSA organisation. This was followed by another Maugham adaptation, simply called *Jane*, in which Arnaud was partially cast against type as a dowdy but wealthy Liverpoolian widow who marries a much younger man. Figure 27 shows Arnaud and Leslie Banks, appearing in Somerset Maugham's *The Circle*, outside the entrance to the ENSA theatre in Iserlohn.

Post-war years

If neither play was exactly tailored for Arnaud at her best, 1948 redeemed this with *Traveller's Joy* at the Criterion Theatre, in which Arnaud played a scheming Englishwoman marooned abroad who has exhausted her traveller's allowance (there were



Figure 27 *The Sketch*, 19 September 1945.

extensive restrictions on how much foreign exchange British travellers could take outside the country). The plot follows her ingenious attempts to escape her impoverishment.



Figure 28 A scene from *Traveller's Joy*, pictured in *The Sketch*, 21 July 1948.

This was a perfect piece for Arnaud and helps us understand her comic persona from the critical adulation it received. This is from *The Sketch* published on 21 July 1948:

'It is strongly Yvonne Arnaud's evening; comedy rides sparkling in her eyes and bubbles from her lips. She has a taking trill and an equally infectious gurgle. She will toss up an idea like a gay balloon, keep it hovering for a moment, then release another and another ... Any Arnaud performance is effortlessly airborne though the apparent lack of effort needs an unremitting attention to technique ... her performance in *Traveller's Joy* must be a delight to a playgoer who has learned to admire those expressive hands, the twitch of the mouth, the flickering eyes, and the relish with which Miss Arnaud can decorate and colour the most innocent-seeming line.'



Figure 29 A scene from *Traveller's Joy*, pictured in *The Sphere*, 26 July 1948.

An interview with Arnaud was published in *Woman's Journal* in 1949. This was conducted at Banks Way Farm by Alan Ivimey, one of the people behind the inception of *Woman's Hour* on BBC Radio. The full interview can be read in the Appendix.

If Arnaud was feeling these roles were not stretching her, in her private life she was becoming more vocal for causes she believed in. Her presidency of the League Against Cruel Sports in 1948 began with a furious row covered in all the newspapers when the Duke of Beaufort weighed in against both Arnaud and an Anti-Blood Sports Bill then being debated in Parliament. The League condemned his remarks that labelled her a French actress who couldn't know anything about hunting and how it should be conducted. Arnaud replied with withering Gallic sarcasm saying:

'The Duke must be a very charming man to say such nice things about my acting. But the days are gone when an actress was expected to know about nothing outside the theatre. Because my husband farms I know quite a bit about animals and hunting. Many of my friends hunt but they do not mention the subject because they know my views.' [*Manchester Evening News*, 16 February 1949]

There was further upheaval later in 1949 when her brother Edmund died. He was buried at Our Lady of Sorrows, Effingham on 29 September.

Traveller's Joy would be the biggest hit of Arnaud's career and would not close until December 1950 when it had clocked up more than 900 performances.

This was followed by a rare misstep when she was cast as a bitter ageing actress in *Colombe*, a play by Jean Anouilh translated and produced by Peter Brook. The critics agreed that Arnaud failed to be so detestable that she would justify her son's hatred towards her, and that this unbalanced the rare moments of comedy in the play.

Much more successfully at the end of 1952 and into 1953 she played a witty and cultured mother in *Dear Charles* at the New Theatre, summoning her three children to inform them that the picture of the man they had assumed to be an absent father was in fact bought from a Brighton junk shop, and that each child had a different father. It was high comedy again and once more a substantial hit, running for a year. However, exhaustion and torn cartilage in her knee forced Arnaud to retire from the play which then closed in February 1954.



Figure 30 A scene from *Dear Charles* in *The Illustrated London News*, 3 January 1953.

Time was catching up with her, even if Arnaud's precise age remained in doubt. The *Liverpool Echo* called on her birthday on 20 December 1955 to wish her happy birthday, whether her 60th or 63rd. If her gravestone and obituary in *The Times* are to be believed, it was actually her 65th. There were more productions – Alan Melville's *Mrs Willie* was another vehicle designed just for Arnaud, and he was duly rewarded with a hit which ran for a year from July 1955. And when she was not on stage there was a constant series of TV and radio programmes for her fans to lap up. Over-exposure does not seem to have been a concern for Yvonne Arnaud.

By the end of the run of *Mrs Willie* the McLellans had decided to sell Banks Way Farm. It was advertised in the *West Sussex Gazette* on 12 July 1956. The sale particulars by Weller, Son and Grinsted included 274 pure- and cross-bred pigs together with many farm implements and machinery. The sale took place at the Effingham farm.

Oriel Malet wrote that the McLellans sold up because of the difficulty in acquiring live-in domestic help. Anyone who has tramped over Effingham Common on a bleak winter's day will recognise her description:

'No one will stay in such a lonely, out-of-the-way place, with a private drive, half a mile long as the only means of access. In winter when the rain lashes against the house and the fields are troughs of liquid clay, Bank's Way seems a bleak and lonely place, shut away at the end of its long lane.'

The McLellans bought a small house at 35 London Road, Guildford, living in a flat in Brighton while it was decorated. Arnaud returned to the stage in June 1957 in Robert Morley's *Six Months' Grace* at the Phoenix Theatre but the reviews were poor and after Arnaud contracted influenza its opening night had to be put back.

There was to be one more farce, *A Ticklish Business*, which premiered in Brighton on Easter Monday, 7 April 1958 before being retitled *The Big Tickle* when it reached London. Arnaud played a South American pianist roping in burglars to raise money for dubious reasons. Maybe the plot was just too far-fetched as it managed only 27 performances before closing on 14 June.

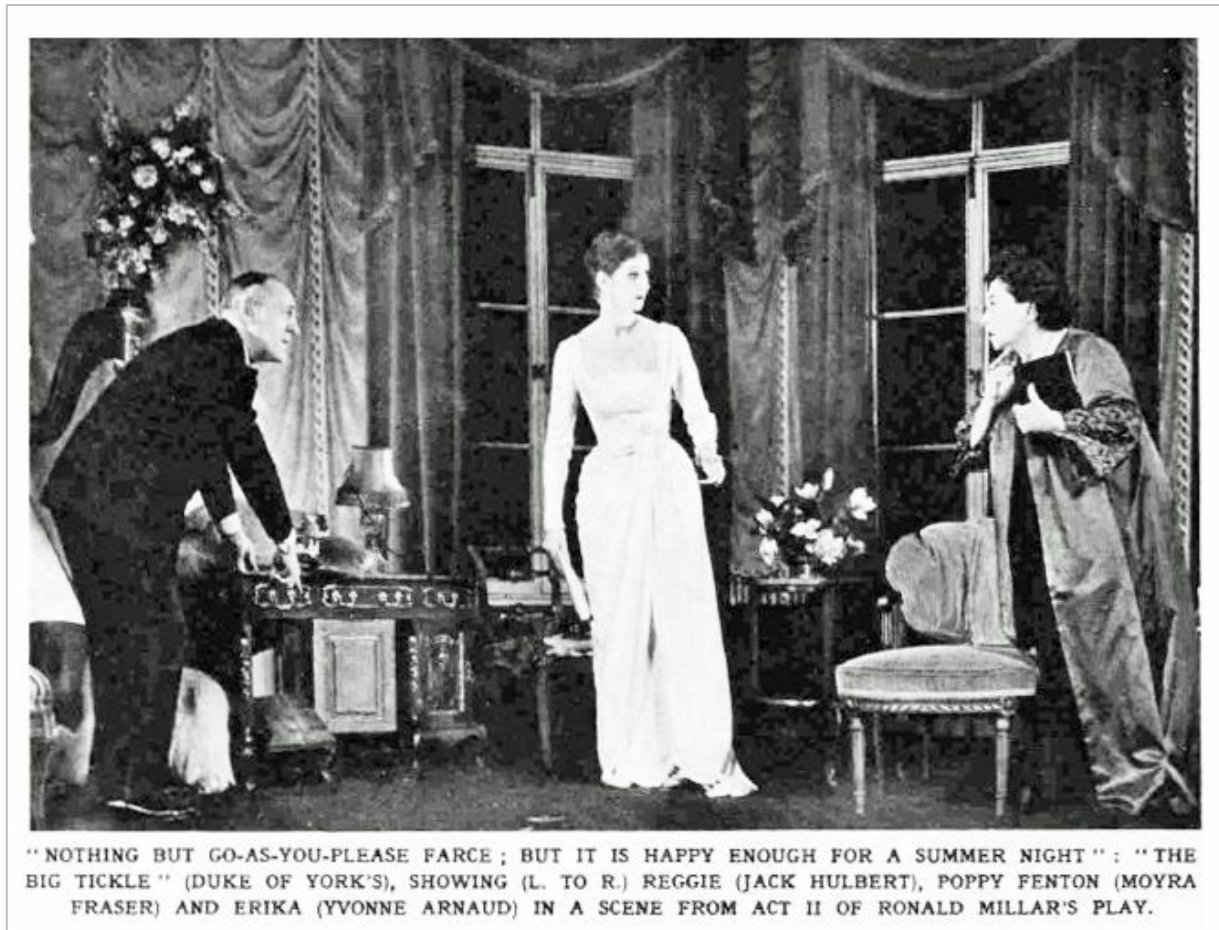


Figure 31 A scene in *The Big Tickle* in *The Illustrated London News*, 7 June 1958.

Her final appearance may have been at the London Palladium for a midnight revue on 24 July called *Night of 100 Stars* in aid of the Actors' Orphanage – Arnaud is listed amongst the crowd of celebrities who had promised to attend but we have not been able to find confirmation that she appeared on the night.

Illness and death

A week later, on 31 July, Yvonne Arnaud suffered a stroke and collapsed in her garden while picking flowers. Oriel Malet stated that she was tired from the strain of moving house and the failure of her latest farce. She was alone, Hugh walking their dog and the visiting Malet was elsewhere. She was admitted to St Luke's Hospital, Guildford and then transferred to the National Hospital in London, where a team of specialists operated and tried to save her life. She recovered consciousness in August but by 6 September was again giving great cause for concern. She died on 20 September 1958.

Her obituary in *The Times* was published two days later:

'Her death removes from the stage an actress of abundant charm: it was impossible to resist her. Yet she was much more than a delightful creature with whom every playgoer instantly fell in love; she was the wittiest of actresses too, witty in the essentially theatrical way in which a gesture has all the effect of an epigram.'

The Stage's obituary, published on 25 September, expanded upon Arnaud's unique genius:

'Her individual talent, refined to brilliance by an art which, in turn, was the outcome of unremitting concentration and work, remained fresh because she herself remained so. It appealed to younger generations as it continued to appeal to those who had seen Yvonne Arnaud long ago, because in its composition there was an eternal quality.'

We have always had, and always will have, silly women who are gifted with wise inspirations; who chatter and get involved in ridiculous situations, yet who know exactly how to behave when real danger is near; who are at heart daring and original, and not merely stupidly reckless or wantonly affected. Yvonne Arnaud typified this type upon the stage, and generation after generation understood what it was all about.'

Her ashes were scattered at St Martha's churchyard on St Martha's Hill south-east of Guildford, a beautiful spot overlooking the Surrey Hills. Her gravestone was erected against the boundary wall.

Figure 33 shows a brief article published in *The Daily Mirror* on 31 December 1958, about her Will and charitable activities.

A memorial service was held in St Martin in the Fields church in London at noon, Thursday 16 October. There was considerable surprise that in her Will she had left only £1,593, a tiny amount after a lifetime of work and fame. A possible reason was that she had effectively worked for the love of it, without the commensurate salary expected for a top-line performer.

An alternative explanation was that although she had earned up to £10,000 per annum, she gave most of her wealth to animal charities, a view backed up by the then secretary of the League against Cruel Sports. This begs the question – did Arnaud deliberately choose to focus on material that she knew her audience wanted, so that these plays would have long runs and thus maximise the amount she could give away to charity? Could this explain why she rarely deviated into serious or challenging work?

Acclaim and lagacy

By May 1961 it had been decided that the new theatre in Guildford would bear her name. This opened four years later and continues to this day. However, despite being one of the very few women to star on the West End stage from the pre-First World War era right up to the late 1950s, and acknowledged by her contemporaries as one of the finest comic performers of her time, the memory of Yvonne Arnaud has since faded. This is probably because the films and plays she appeared in have largely not lasted. However, right at the end of her career, Arnaud was cast in

Jacques Tati's film comedy *Mon Oncle*, as a maid named Georgette. It was Tati's first film in colour, with a minimum of dialogue but using sound effects for humorous purposes. Production began in 1956, with the film released in 1958, becoming both a critical and box office success. *Mon Oncle* won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, a Special Prize at the 1958 Cannes Film Festival, and the New York Film Critics Circle Award for Best Foreign Language Film, receiving more honours than any of Tati's other cinematic works. Although she was close to the end of her life, Arnaud would have known of its success at Cannes, which we might speculate brought some relief from the succession of poorly received comedy plays at the end of her stage career. Few of her farces have been revived in London, *Tons of Money* being a rare exception. Hardly any recordings of Arnaud the pianist are available. There is no single archive of Arnaud's copious correspondence, even though Hugh had apparently despaired at how many hours she spent at her desk writing to people all over the world. This mirrors an apparent lack of academic interest in re-evaluating her life and career. Perhaps this would have suited Germaine Arnaud, who kept her private life so exclusively out of reach that Eric Johns, trying to interview her during the run of *Traveller's Joy*, came away empty-handed and despaired at Arnaud's refusal to meet him even half-way.

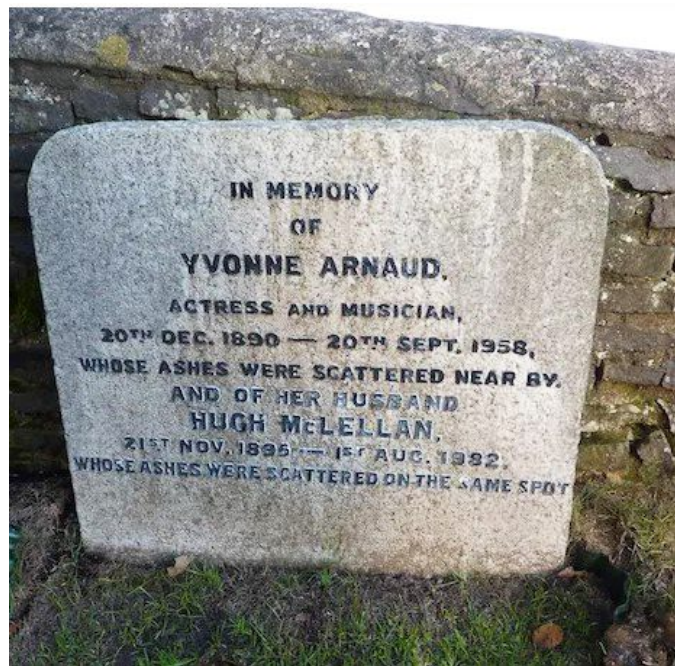


Figure 32 The McLellans' gravestone.



Figure 33 From *The Daily Mirror*, 31 December 1958.

The last word here belongs to Naomi Jacob, with whom Yvonne Arnaud acted in *The Nutmeg Tree* and *Love for Love*. These are extracts from an appreciation she wrote for *The Times* on Friday 26 September 1958:

‘As an actress she was superb and how she hated a bad play! How she would work at it, suggest alterations, improvements for her knowledge of stage craft was very great. Her real love was comedy not farcical comedy. In one of her last letters to me Yvonne Arnaud wrote “I hate farce. They want me to be a clown, and I loathe being a clown,” How admirable she was in *Love for Love*: that scene played with Marion Spencer seated on a sofa was surely one of the most masterly exhibitions of polished comedy. It all looked so easy, no matter how often you listened to the scene; you felt that every line was being said for the first time.

Another great comedienne, Marie Lloyd, once told me that “You must make your audience love you – really love you.” That was what Yvonne Arnaud did.’



Figure 34 Yvonne Arnaud by Bassano Ltd; whole-plate glass negative, 17 October 1912; NPG x33369 © National Portrait Gallery, London.

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APPENDIX

Article about Yvonne Arnaud by Alan Ivimey, Woman's Journal 1949



Welcome to Banks Way Farm! High up on the North Downs overlooking broad acres of farmland stands the country home of actress Yvonne Arnaud



The Forest of Fontainebleau comes to life by a Surrey fireside, in a tapestry woven by skilled French fingers



And So To Bed—and Miss Arnaud passes a favourite portrait of herself as Mrs. Pepys

Yvonne Arnaud

By
Alan Ivimey

She laughs—and the world laughs with her!

IF my heart had ever been tempted to bleed for Yvonne Arnaud—instead of as usual just beating a little faster—it would have been upon watching from the orchestra stalls of London's Criterion Theatre her sufferings in that hotel in Stockholm. For I, too, have felt the pangs of that particular phase of "Traveller's Joy"—yes, in that very hotel, with the view over the water to the Royal Palace and the sound of the orchestra coming up the well outside one's room. And that hollow feeling as the supply of *kronor* gets shorter and shorter.

But even being short of money in Stockholm would be worth it, I felt, in her company; just to find all one's

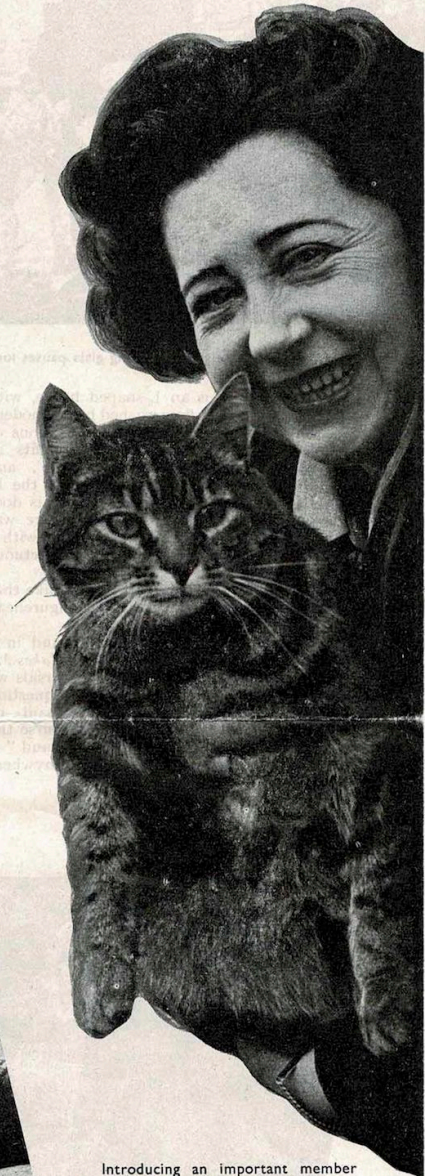
troubles dissipated so delicately in a silver, small fountain of laughter. And it is to the accompaniment of that laughter that I shall remember my visit to her home on that high hinterland of the North Downs.

A private road from the little station turns sharply upon itself in a thicket and then runs straight beside a line of young poplars to the white house at the end. And, that day, a feudal retinue of flowers was drawn up on either side, in welcome.

The house is called Banks Way Farm—it is close to Banks Common—and looks across pleasant farmland to the green, tree fringed crest of open downland; an easy slope from this side, but a sudden drop when you reach that near the



Photos specially taken for Woman's Journal by Tom Blau



Introducing an important member of the Arnaud ménage, Billie—or would it be Grannie?—who has a weakness for fish teas

Boy, the Golden Labrador, proffers an elegant paw from a settee printed with Latin words set to medieval music in scarlet and black



An actress through the looking glass pauses for reflection

horizon. It is an L-shaped house, with wings of white, lime washed brick, modern but built with the bland proportions of the Georgian farmhouse which fits so easily into a Surrey landscape; and the front door is in the angle of the L. Upon arrival, a window above this door opened swiftly outwards and there was the lady of the house, leaning out with a hand and arm flung forwards in impetuous welcome.

If I had a sailing ship I would like that attitude immortalized as the figurehead for it.

I had first met Yvonne Arnaud in a B.B.C. programme called *What Makes Me Laugh in the Theatre?* At rehearsals we had to argue about this deep question while a girl took down what we said—or some of it—in shorthand. Of course the short answer was "Yvonne Arnaud"—and not only in the theatre but anywhere

else one might meet her, because she laughs and makes laughter so much. And now, here she was, opening the door.

The hall, following the angle of the house, revealed a staircase full of afternoon light, and four doors, each with its own separate mystery to be explored—the momentary excitement which good houses offer when you enter them for the first time. But contemplations on this theme were complicated at once by a large and slowly

pace Golden Labrador Retriever who was doing his best to take my hat. "This is Boy," said Yvonne "and always he must carry something. Wait, I have something for him," and during a few moments of good natured struggle with a large amount of cold, wet nose thrust up my sleeve, she had found a green and red woolly mitten which Boy at once accepted in lieu of my hat. To this fastness with a little country station, Yvonne Arnaud hurries gladly every night. During the run of *Traveller's Joy* she has twelve minutes after the curtain has come down, in which to catch her train, and she travels down with her stage make-up still on. She reaches home at midnight and then starts on her correspondence. And it is a big correspondence because she is on the committees of various organizations for helping hospitals, for invalid children, for certain French

charities and, of course, for animals. Letters read and answered, she plans the next day's meals for her husband and household, reads for an hour—and so to bed.

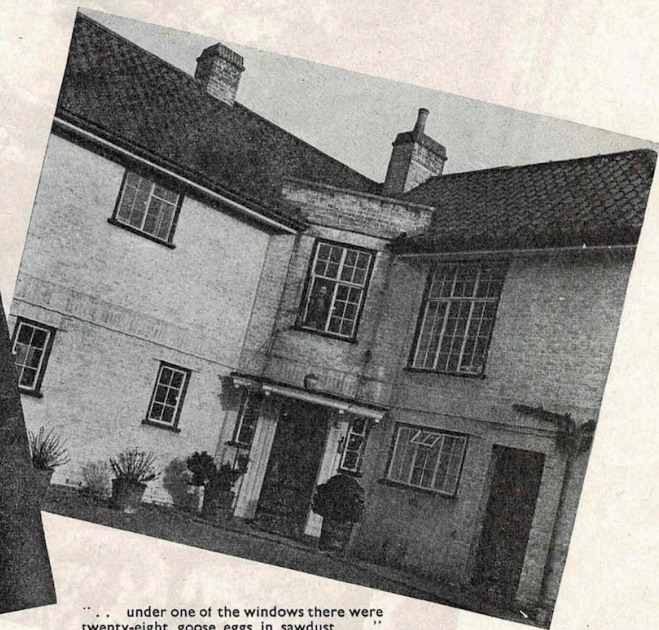
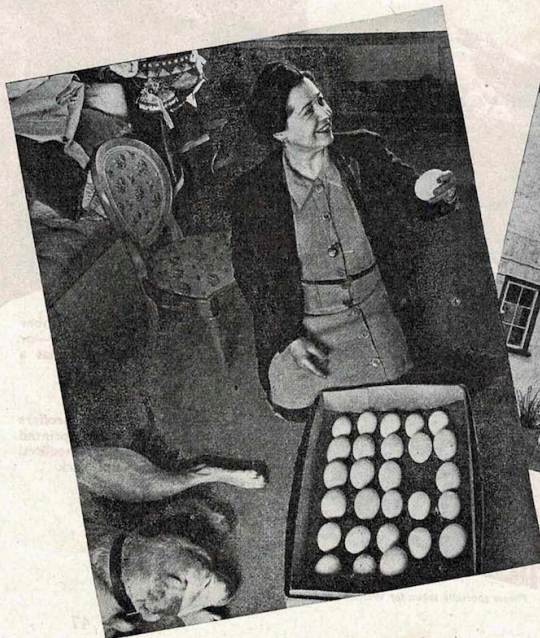
"My pet aversion," she said, "after those who are cruel to children and animals, are the people who ring me up and say 'But what do you do with yourself in the country?'"

In the drawing room the first thing which caught my eye was a Grotrian Steinweg grand and, on top of it, a signed photograph of John Barbirolli. There is a story behind that photograph and I found the beginning of it in another photograph taken outside the Paris Conservatoire before the First World War. It showed a group of people, including a famous professor of the piano and, beside him, a very serious little girl of thirteen with short black hair in a fringe, white frock and black cotton stockings. Little Yvonne won the first prize at the Conservatoire for piano playing that year, and not long afterwards she was touring Europe and America as a child prodigy. And though this very gifted person eventually adopted the stage, she has never ceased to love her piano and has played with some of our finest symphony orchestras, including the Hallé. And so its conductor watches her from the piano top every time she sits down to play.

Close beside the Barbirolli photograph is another of her favourite possessions, a little sketch by her friend, James Bridie, showing himself interviewing a patient on a hospital ship with which he served during the last war, a ship to which Yvonne Arnaud was godmother—a fairy godmother, supplying comforts.

The drawing room is full of pleasing things. It is lighted by four French windows curtained and pelmeted in yellow French linen and has a settee

Please turn to page 113



... under one of the windows there were twenty-eight goose eggs in sawdust ...

Farewell to the farm—our hostess waves goodbye from the window above the porch

cottages whose secret cupboards had not got their hidden store of French brandy and tobacco.

Dr. Crane lived alone in his creeper covered dark little house, waited on by his old sailor servant Tom Pearse and by no one else. He had been a naval surgeon for most of his life and had a hearty distaste for all female society. He did not dislike women when they were ill, provided they were genuinely ill, for then in his view they were no longer women but suffering bodies, and for suffering bodies he had a compassionate sympathy that made them almost sacred in his eyes. And at Stella's age they were hardly women yet but merely children; though he would never himself have put the word "merely" before the word children, for he worshipped childhood even as he worshipped the starry Heavens, the windswept corn, untrodden snow and all things healthy and fresh.

Highly paradoxical was the love of this strange old man, for he gave with equal passion to the ideal and to its opposite, to the whole thing and to the broken thing that had fallen by the way. But for careful people, those who could not leap for fear of falling, who kept their windows shut against fresh air and guarded minds, hearts or purses against the possibly painful inroads of truth and compassion, for the evasive, the plausible, dawdlers and the self absorbed, he had nothing but a contempt so biting that few patients subjected to it called him in again. But there were plenty of the other sort about. For one malingering, he'd say, you'd meet fifty who carried pain like a banner, and for one skinflint there were a dozen who'd give you their last penny and never let you know there wasn't a pocketful where that came from. But he liked to catch 'em young, and batter their minds and hearts wide open with whatever tool came readiest to his hand. He had caught Stella very young, and was mercilessly beating her mind into shape with all possible speed, before domesticity submerged her altogether. But her heart he tried not to touch at all, because for some reason or other she had been born with a wounded heart. In his opinion it was salves that she needed for it, not a hammer.

Stella parted with Sol at the doctor's gate and with Daniel leaping around her ran up the paved path between the bushes of rosemary and lavender to the open front door. Here she paused, gripping Daniel's collar.

"Come in, can't you," shouted the doctor impatiently from the shadows within. "Don't dawdle. If you think that mind of yours is

already sufficiently well informed to permit of dawdling upon the threshold of education, then say so, and I'll waste no further time upon you, but if—"

"I've got Daniel," interrupted Stella, who was no more afraid of the doctor than she was of Father Sprigg. "I don't know what to do with him."

"What in the name of thunder made you bring that great gangling ninny of a beast to a lesson on the death of Socrates?"

"I had to. I promised."

"Then bring him in and tie him to the table leg."

Stella towed Daniel over the scrupulously scrubbed flags of the dark bare little hall to the open door of Dr. Crane's study. Only in the worst weather were any of the doors shut; his passion for hospitality was only equalled by his passion for fresh air. The study was as clean as the hall, but mercifully not quite so dark and bare. It was stone flagged, the walls completely lined with books. An old table of Spanish chestnut stood in the centre of it, with two beautifully carved chairs pulled up on either side. The one with its back to the window, the doctor's, had no cushion, but the one facing the light was comfortably supplied with a couple of them.

Patients and pupils, and many who came to consult the doctor about problems other than physical or intellectual, sat in this chair, and while they poured their troubles into the comforting depth of his comprehending silence he watched their faces in the soft light that shone through the spotless muslin curtains draped in the window, and learned more from the shadows round the eyes and the play of expression about the mouth than he did from the flow of confused words tumbling about his ears. He knew how a flow of words, like a flow of blood, can wash away poison.

The room had an Adams mantelpiece and a basket grate filled with firebricks. Pipes and tobacco jars and medicine bottles were piled on the mantelpiece, and over it hung an engraving of one of the doctor's three heroes, Lord Nelson, with whom he had once been shipmates. His writing desk was in one corner of the room and in another corner was a big locked cupboard containing his drugs, bandages and splints. An engraving of Shakespeare and another of the bust of Socrates, his other two heroes, hung over these.

He glanced up from the great tome he was reading when Stella entered, pointed to the chair opposite and was at once engrossed again. She tied Daniel to the table leg and

sat down to wait patiently till he got to the end of the paragraph and was free to attend to her. "Never stop in the middle of a paragraph," he had said to her once, "for any reason whatever except the dire need of another or your own death. Finish one thing as completely as possible before turning your attention to the next, even though the next be invasion by the enemy, and allow other people to do the same. A divided allegiance leads to woolly mindedness, and that to senility of the intellect at an unnecessarily early age. You have been warned, Stella. I shall not speak again."

And he had not needed to speak again, for Stella sat still and upright in her chair and studied him lovingly. Though he was nearly seventy his rough iron grey hair was still thick and plentiful, receding only on the temples, and he wore it neatly brushed back and tied in a queue in the nape of his neck.

The hot suns of his seafaring life had burned his skin mahogany colour and the endurance of many things had seamed it as though it had been gouged with a bradawl. He had a huge domed forehead, a large ugly broken nose twisted slightly to the right and dark, penetrating eyes beneath bushy white eyebrows. His jaw was aggressive but his mouth was mobile and sensitive. He was always scrupulously clean shaven and his large yet delicate hands well tended. His well cut shabby clothes were well brushed and the voluminous stock that he wore twisted round his throat, snowily white. He had a few little vanities: an eyeglass on a watered silk ribbon, a bunch of fine old seals attached to his watch chain, and always a fresh flower in his buttonhole.

He reached the end of the paragraph, shut the book and looking up met the direct and loving glance of the child opposite. The light seemed to reflect back from the still, lovely little face as from the surface of some pool pellucid to its depths. The old man's face twisted suddenly. God, how he loved the child! To keep her just as she was, unsullied and happy, he would have given his surgeon's skilled right hand. Happy? But she was not happy. Though she was smiling now, both her dimples showing, she was not the same Stella that she had been when she came to him last. There were no candles burning in her eyes. There was a new maturity in the thin brown face, a wistfulness about the mouth that had not been there before.

To be continued in Woman's Journal next month.

Yvonne Arnaud *Continued from page 48*

covered with a printed material showing medieval music in a four line stave—black square notes on scarlet lines—and the Latin words are there as well. Yvonne sang the melody, too, which seemed a nice thing to be able to do with one's loose covers.

The huge open chimney piece has a noble fire back with the royal arms of England stamped upon its black iron.

Then Boy having been held back, we went to see the cats, Arthur (black), Billie and Grannie (tabs), awaiting their fish tea, each on a stool of its own. Then we went upstairs, past a huge mother pig of white and black china with a rose pink tail, and so to see the family of cactus plants which are just so many more shades of green in a green bedroom. But there were coloured prints on the walls—one of the old Vauxhall Gardens—a Russian ikon bought in Aberdeen, and the curtains and the covering of the dressing table were of the tint of ripe loganberries. The dressing table itself was loaded with bowls of flowers and leaves and a potted cyclamen, and some money in a little china tray.

"The change from the fishmonger," nodded Yvonne, and it somehow became a comedy line as she said it.

Then we went along a corridor to the far end of one wing of the house to her own special room which she calls Capharnaüm, the French equivalent to our "glory hole." But though it was as full of things as a princess's playroom, it was all very tidy, and lit, too, by a window at either end.

Two corners were filled with bookshelves each with an arched space holding tiny glass toys. Then there was a frame with a piece of tapestry in the making which showed part of the Forest of Fontainebleau. She does three needlefuls (if that is what you call them) every day, and there is *petit point* in it, too.

Under one of the windows there were twenty eight goose eggs in sawdust in a cardboard box. Turning them periodically is just another little task that goes on up here. When the geese go "broody" the eggs are put under them for hatching. Yvonne tells me that those not wanted for hatching make the very best omelets.

Next I examined a small reversible table of walnut with an embroidered centre, the authentic work—checked at South Kensington by the needlework experts—of Queen Anne's own embroiderer.

So much of what was in this house seemed

to have the gaiety of the most exciting kind of toys.

Through the window I could see a weeping willow in all its glory and an almond waiting to welcome all comers on either side of the drive. And then we found a very large straw hat with a wide and floppy brim. So we went out to see the garden. Of course, before long, Boy was carrying the hat. He has to carry something. I had hidden mine.

The flowers were guarding a long fringe of boscage behind the poplar row, filled with primroses and wood anemones. Arthur trotted by; white pigeons clustered on the roof, and this part of the afternoon in Surrey seemed at peace with the world.

As she waved goodbye from an upstairs window, I thought I knew the secret of how Yvonne Arnaud can throw such enchanting little handfuls of laughter—as blossoms tossed in a carnival—night after night to the world in front of the footlights. And the secret is three-fold.

You need a house filled with treasures whose value is renewed each time you show them to your friends; a Capharnaüm, and a Golden Labrador Retriever to carry your hat.

THE END