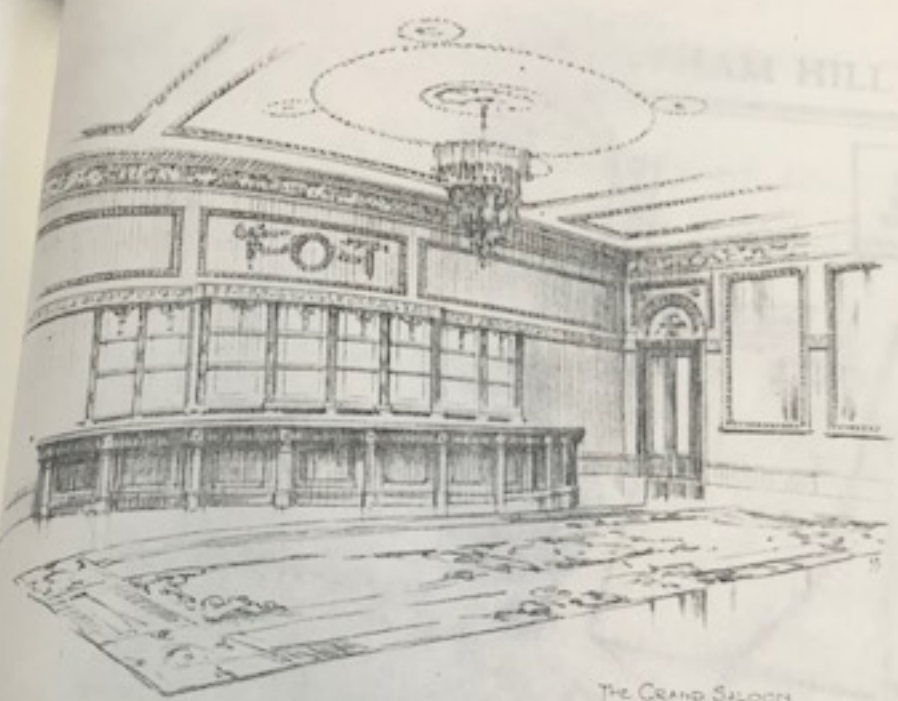


THE  
STREATHAM HILL  
THEATRE

# STREATHAM HILL THEATRE

ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

London Borough of Lambeth



THE GRAND SALOON.

**S**PACIOUS and well-appointed Saloons and Lounges are provided for every section of the Auditorium.

There are four Soda-fountains. Dainty afternoon Teas will be served at Matinée Performances.

The supply of refreshments is under the direct control of the Management, and all articles sold are of the best quality at lowest prices. The Ices and Soda-fountain specialities are made exclusively of real cream ice.



MR. W. G. R. SPRAGUE



MR. W. H. BARTON

## THE ARCHITECTS

MESSRS. SPRAGUE and BARTON are the architects that have been responsible for the designing of THE STREATHAM HILL THEATRE.

MR. SPRAGUE has designed a large number of the West End Theatres, including The Globe, Queen's, Aldwych, Strand, Wyndham's, New Theatre, St. Martin's Lane, Ambassadors, St. Martin's Theatre, etc., in addition to some forty theatres in the suburbs, provinces, and in Paris.

MR. BARTON has been associated with MR. SPRAGUE for many years.



Mr. F. B. PITCHER,  
*Chairman of The Pitcher Construction Co., Ltd.*

The constructional work of the STREATHAM HILL THEATRE has been carried out under the personal supervision of MR. F. B. PITCHER. The Pitcher Construction Company has recently completed the reconstruction of the Savoy Theatre in record time, and also carried out the construction of the New Locarno Dance Hall.

During the war, Messrs. Pitcher executed a large number of Government contracts in which speedy work was necessarily one of the most important factors. Among these may be mentioned the new town at Gretna Green, for the building of which the Company were one of the principal contractors; H.M. Stationery Office Store at Loman Street, and many Grain Stores, Ammunition Stores, Aeroplane Hangars and Housing Schemes in various parts of the country.

# THE EXECUTIVE STAFF



ERNEST LEGGETT  
*Medical Director*



KENNETH BRODIE  
*Assistant Manager*



A. BARRETT-  
BRANDRETH  
*General Manager*



WILLIAM HARVIE, F.I.S.A., *Secretary*



J. DIXON, *Stage Manager*

## The Reservation of Seats.

SEATS may be booked at no extra charge at the Theatre Box Office, which is open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. In the event of application by letter, cheques in payment should be posted so as to arrive three clear days before the date of the performance. Cheques or Postal Orders should be made payable to the STREATHAM HILL PLAYHOUSE, LTD., and crossed.

SEATS reserved by telephone must be claimed half-an-hour before the advertised time of performance. Tickets for Saturday night, however, must be taken up by 12 mid-day.



The Entrance Hall.

## PRICES OF ADMISSION

(INCLUDING ENTERTAINMENT TAX) -

BOXES (*Seating four persons*) - £1 11s. 6d. and £1 1s. 0d.

STALLS - 7/6 and 5/9

GRAND CIRCLE - 5/9 and 4/9

### SPECIAL MATINEE PRICES

(WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS AT 2.30 P.M.)

BOXES - £1 1s. 0d. and 14/- STALLS - 5/9 and 4/9 GRAND CIRCLE - 3/6

Box Office open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

No extra charge for Booking.

Telephones : STREATHAM 9470-1-2-3

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

regarding the presentations at THE STREATHAM HILL THEATRE appear

DAILY IN—

*The Daily Telegraph* §  
*The Daily Express*  
*The Daily Mail*  
*The Daily Mirror*  
*The Daily Sketch* §

EVERY EVENING IN—

*The Star* §  
*The Evening News*  
*The Evening Standard*  
ON SUNDAYS IN—  
*The Weekly Dispatch* §  
*The Sunday Express* §

AND EACH WEEK IN—

*The Streatham News*  
*The Wandsworth Borough News*  
*The South London Press*  
*The Brixton Free Press*  
*The Clapham Observer*  
*The Croydon Times*

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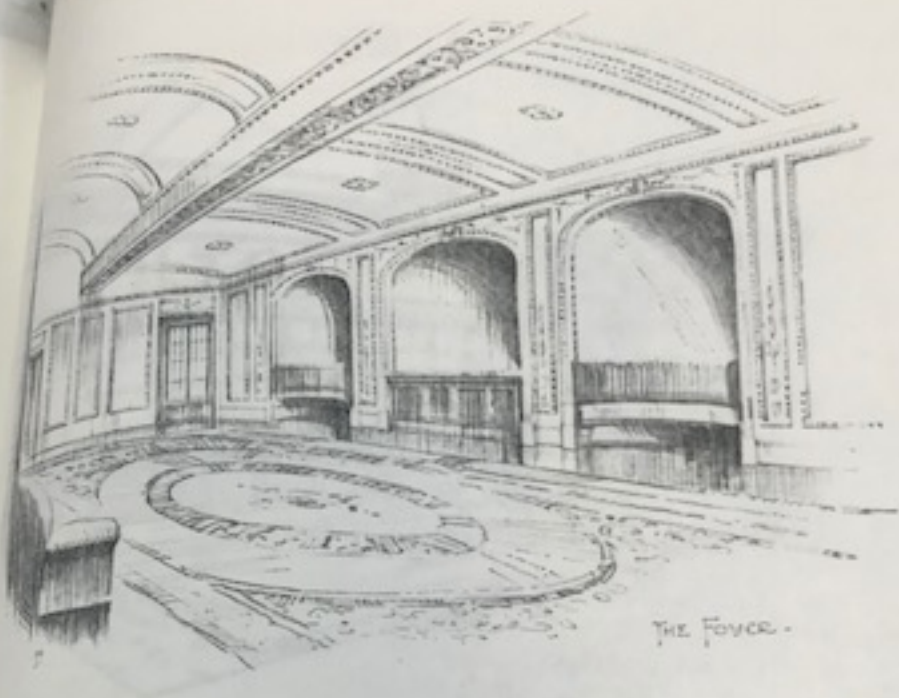
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THE ENTRANCE HALL.



THE FOYER.

RETIRING rooms are available on every floor, including a ladies' boudoir.

There is a public telephone for the use of patrons in the Stalls Lounge. Medical men who expect messages whilst at the Theatre, are invited to leave the number of their seat with the Attendant in charge.

The Staff is trained to render cheerfully every possible service for the comfort and convenience of the patrons.





FAMOUS FIRMS THAT HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF THE STREATHAM HILL THEATRE:

### GENERAL CONTRACTORS

MESSRS. THE PITCHER CONSTRUCTION CO., LIMITED,  
57, ASHBURTON GROVE, N. 7.

*Fibrous Plaster and Decorations*

MESSRS. GOODALL & CO., Limited,  
Manchester.

*Furnishing*

MESSRS. JAS. SHOOLBRED & CO.  
Limited,  
Tottenham Court Road, W. 1.

*Plated Goods*

MESSRS. HARRIS PLATING  
WORKS, Ltd.  
10-13, Glasshouse Yard, Aldersgate Street,  
E.C. 1.

*Art Metal Work*

MESSRS. ALFRED BROWN & CO.,  
Birmingham.

*Rubber Flooring*

MESSRS. THE NORTH BRITISH RUBBER  
Co., Ltd.  
Tottenham Court Road, W. 1.

*Electrical*

MESSRS. THE BERKELEY  
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING CO.  
Ltd.  
28, Buckingham Gate, S.W. 1.

*Carraraware*

MESSRS. DOULTON & CO., Ltd.  
Lambeth, S.E. 1.

*China and Glass*

MESSRS. THE HOPE POTTERY CO.,  
20, Newington Butts, London, S.E. 1.

*Orchestra Lift*

MESSRS. KNIGHT & CO.,  
Springfield Road, New Southgate, N. 11.

*Sanitary Fittings*

MESSRS. SHANKS & CO., Ltd.  
81, New Bond Street, W. 1.

Cruikshank and a memorable performance by Robeson, the first black actor to play Othello on the London stage. On the last night of the Ivor Novello musical, *I Lived with You*, the Streatham Hill Theatre was graced with the presence of Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and his wife Joan Crawford. Olivier made his only appearance at the theatre as one of Fairbanks' guests. The crowds mobbed the Hollywood stars and thirty police were forced to hold back the screaming fans clutching their autograph books. It took the actors five minutes to reach their car. In May that year, the theatre saw another example of mobbing. Not only did fans waylay Jack Buchanan, but a crowd of screaming girls desperate to touch their idol, actually tore his coat in the scuffle.

The theatre was open for a total of 1,293 weeks, during which it performed 659 plays, 220 musicals, 50 operas, 31 ballets, 118 pantomimes, 213 variety shows or revues, and 1 concert. Some of the other stars who appeared at the theatre were Dame Edith Evans, Sir John Mills, Fay Compton, Sir John Gielgud, Celia Johnson, Margaret Rutherford, Vivien Leigh, Jessica Tandy, Flora Robson and Vanessa Redgrave, from the world of acting; Alicia Markova from ballet; George Robey, Max Miller (the 'cheeky chappie'), Stanley Holloway and Tommy Handley (of *ITMA* fame) from variety; Sir John Barbirolli, Sir Henry Wood, Richard Tauber, and Gracie Fields, from the world of music. George Formby was due to appear at the theatre but cried off at the last minute owing to illness.

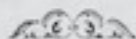
Even Clark Gable performed at the theatre during the Second World War. In fact until a V-1 bomb hit it, the theatre managed to stay open for much of the war.

After the war, the theatre, like many places of entertainment in the area, was denied permission to rebuild. Eventually it got the go ahead and the theatre reopened. Tommy Trinder made one of his last live appearances on stage in the pantomime *Jack and Jill* at the Streatham Hill theatre from 26 December 1961 to January 1962.

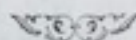
The competition from television, bingo and other attractions that had not been there before the war made it harder to pull in the crowds. The last performance was on 4 June 1962, showing Jean Anouilh's play *The Rehearsal*.

It went through various changes of ownership and use, primarily as a bingo hall. For all its successive transformations, the building was of such outstanding architectural quality that in 1994 the Department of National Heritage (now the Department of Culture) declared the theatre site to be a Grade II listed building.

THE  
STREATHAM HILL  
THEATRE



NOVEMBER 18th, 1929



CHAIRMAN:

JOSEPH C. CLAVERING

55804  
LAMBETH

## THE STORY of the STREATHAM HILL THEATRE

By MAJOR C. H. BELL, O.B.E., *Consulting Engineer.*



MAJOR C. H. BELL, O.B.E.

FEW people outside those actually connected with the stage have any idea of the human energy, plus mechanical equipment, required for the presentation of musical and stage plays in an up-to-date theatre, of the modern methods employed in stagecraft behind the Curtain to produce the effect required, or of the enormous effort necessary to ensure the comfort of the public in front.

THE STAGE of the STREATHAM HILL THEATRE, which is the all-important factor in the production of musical and dramatic plays, is of very large dimensions, and is designed to allow for easy change of scenery with the minimum of effort, so as to enable large changes to take place without noise and without delay in the performance. The very latest method of Stage Control

is installed, involving the use of about eight miles of steel wire rope, as against the old method of using ordinary hemp rope, which was subject to variation in length due to atmospheric conditions, and which at times produced weird effects by one line suddenly getting longer and another shorter. The special Counterweight Gear installed enables the heaviest scenery used to be pulled out of the way by one man at the controls. The Grid, above the stage, is 70 ft. from the stage floor, and this height allows scenery of any kind to be flown out of sight of the audience, without having to resort to any means of masking, as was required in the old theatres, when buildings did not allow of heights such as this.

To deal with the Stage Lighting, every type of Portable Stage Apparatus known at this date can be used without alteration of the Main Control. Every light on the stage can be operated simultaneously from the Stage switchboard situated on the stage level. The pressing of one small button is all that is necessary to reduce the stage to pitch darkness, if this effect is required, and the restoring of that button to its normal position is, again, all that is required to produce full lighting. By means of a system of specially controlled Dimmers almost any colour effect desired can be produced. Furthermore, the operation of the most complicated stage lighting effects can be carried out by one man. While one of the chief aims of

**STREATHAM HILL  
THEATRE**

*Furnishings  
and  
Equipments  
by*

**SHOOLBREDS**

JAS. SHOOLBRED & CO. LTD., TOTTENHAM COURT RD., LONDON, W.1

stage lighting is to produce a brilliant daylight effect when the scene calls for this, it is, at the same time, equally essential to be able to produce a night effect so realistic and so natural that the audience feel as though they were actually viewing the scene in real life. The production of these effects, however, cannot be allowed to pre-dominate over the importance of the correct value of light to present the artistes at their best, and in connection with this I would say that considerable experimental work has been carried out in order that modern make-up can be blended with light to present feminine artistes in their most charming guise.

THE DRESSING-ROOMS, which are known in the theatrical world as the Hotels of the stage artistes, are conveniently situated at the back of the stage. These rooms are of ample size and are fitted in the best possible manner for the comfort of the artiste, with self-contained suites for the leading players. It is not generally realised by the public that on a matinée day an artiste may spend many hours in a Dressing-Room, and for this reason this side of the theatre has been given considerable thought and attention.

To pass to the other side of the Curtain, we come to the comfort of the patron, and in this respect we have two most important points to deal with. The first is the Heating and Ventilation of the Auditorium, as unless this is adequate in both respects the enjoyment of a play by the patron will be seriously jeopardised. In the STREATHAM HILL THEATRE no expense has been spared to provide everything possible for the physical comfort and mental satisfaction of the audience. The air is brought into the building by means of a special trunk placed on the top of the theatre roof. This prevents any polluted atmosphere from exhaust gas of motor cars, dust from streets, or anything of this nature from entering the auditorium. The air is drawn down to the Basement at the side of the theatre, where it enters into a specially designed chamber for the purpose of being washed. Every foot of air brought into the building is thoroughly saturated and washed to such an extent that it is impossible for any foreign matter whatever to reach the Auditorium. After passing through this cleansing process, it is tempered so that its entry to the theatre conforms with the requirements of the public. In the summer time the air is cooled, and in the winter time it is warmed. The chief factor in this system, however, is that the air in the Auditorium is entirely changed four times every hour, or at least ten times during a complete performance.

THE Boiler House outside the theatre is fitted with the latest type of oil-fed Boilers. This will eliminate smoke nuisance, and will ensure that the theatre does not, in this respect, give annoyance to its neighbours.

THE ENTRANCE VESTIBULES, CORRIDORS and FOYERS are also scientifically dealt with as regards Heating and Ventilation in order to produce the most comfortable conditions at all seasons of the year.

To refer again to the Electrical Installation, arrangements have been made to bring the equipment at this theatre into conformity with the latest requirements of the Electricity Commission, and in connection with this the current is received from The County of London Electric Supply Company, Ltd., at a pressure of 6,600 volts, 3-phase, 50 cycles. By means of the introduction of special Transformers this supply is reduced to a pressure of 400/230 volts, 3-phase, 50 cycles, and is distributed at the 400 volts pressure for Power and the 230 volts pressure for Lighting. This distribution is so arranged that all cables supplying the Front of the House, Stair-cases and Exits are entirely separate in every way from the main Stage Lighting. There is also a separate lighting supply from Storage Accumulators.

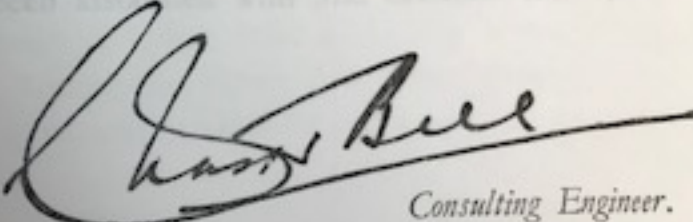
IN THE AUDITORIUM every effort has been made to reduce the number of fittings in use, and these have been so arranged as not to affect the view of the stage. Hand-some lustre fittings have been used for the lighting of the Vestibules and Foyers, and have been designed to conform with the general scheme of decoration.

THE South London public are fortunate in that the STREATHAM HILL THEATRE is the first theatre known to have three complete and distinct Orchestra Platforms. These Platforms are so arranged that any portion of the orchestra can be brought up to stage level, if so desired, for solo or other special effects, and, at the same time, the Musical Director can bring up the entire orchestra to stage level by the mere pressing of a single button.

CLEANLINESS is essential to comfort, and in accordance with modern practice a very efficient system of Vacuum Cleaning has been installed. A main central plant in the Basement removes all dirt and dust from carpets, curtains and draperies direct to a container on the plant, and thus avoids the distribution of dust and other foreign matter about the theatre.

ELECTRICAL PLANTS are introduced into all the Saloons for the provision of instantaneous boiling water for teas during matinées, and for the refrigeration of ice cream and soda-fountain specialities; and, in fact, the very latest electrical devices in all respects have been installed.

To summarise, I think I can say that the equipment of the STREATHAM HILL THEATRE comprises the most up-to-date and elaborate arrangements yet made for the proper presentation of musical and dramatic plays at any theatre at present in existence in London or the Provinces.

  
Consulting Engineer.