

WHITEFRIARS  
FAVERSHAM  
KENT

# The Carmelite News

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## THE "SILENT" FILM

**When I was a lad** of fifteen I lived in Dublin. I had no money beyond a few pennies but I used to walk down a way called Harcourt Road and there was a backyard cinema there. The entrance to it was up a narrow alley and the only indication that it was a cinema was a sort of half circle over the entrance to the alley—I forget the name. Outside, standing flush with the path, was a uniformed commissionaire whose duty it was to advertise the two shows of the evening. I well remember the card he held in his hand—a printed programme—advertising to passers by the attractions. It was always the same call.

"EARLY DOORS, TWO, FOUR, SIX, EIGHT AND A SHILLING!" "Early doors" was seven o'clock, repeat of programme at nine.

**I had no money**, but an intense curiosity. One evening I sported sixpence to see what it was like. I found the flat floor of a hall alive with youngsters. The bedlam was dreadful. I decided to remove myself up into the shilling department. It became clear to me that the shilling department was anything over sixpence and consisted of two rows of seats on a raised platform against the back wall, well out of range of aerial missiles.

**These kids** just would not wait. They whistled, they booed, they shouted. They threw things at the projection slit and their language was Christian but not pious. They used words I hardly knew existed. Let us say that it was factual. They were referring to the management of course. They had everything, bananas, peanuts, fire crackers—in fact they

were providing their own entertainment until the screen became alive.

**I did not realise it** at the time but now I know that they were the **liveliest audience in Europe**. They knew what they wanted; they insisted on getting it and they were quite prepared to tear the place down if it didn't arrive. Their first love was of course, Westerns. Hard riding, fast shooting, the sort of film where the six gun roared, and men died swiftly and sure, and went down and stayed down whether they liked it or not.

**It was in the days** of the silent films with the citations underneath, but these youngsters gave advice which I think any film director would have paid high salaries for. They called the villain all the names they knew, and the very worst they knew. They called out to the heroine to be most careful of herself, went into a frenzy because someone was creeping up on her, and when finally the villain got to grips with the heroine their anger was beyond expression. They just simply wanted to tear the place apart. They shouted advice to the hero, they shouted advice to the heroine. In fact I think the place was a nursery of film directors. As long as there was action, plenty of blood, and as long as the bad men went down and stayed down, there was agreement and full satisfaction. But if ever the bad men seemed to be getting away with it they just simply raised hell against such injustice.

**Of course**, at "two, four, six, eight and a shilling" the management could not provide a varied programme. There had to be some way of clearing the house so they put on a nature film, birds, porpoises or fish—the



breeding ground of seals or the life span of salmon. But these boys were not conditioned for that sort of observation, they threw everything at the screen. They finally found that the screen was not the real object and they then threw whatever they had at the projector, but in the end they were ushered out after a jolly evening.

I went once, astonished that such ill manners should be tolerated even at "two, four, six, eight and a shilling," but now I am not so sure. I have been to the cinema so many times, and so often wanted to fling something at the screen. I have wanted to make some sort of protest at the muck, dirt, superficiality and untruthfulness of the picture. I have

now concluded that we need the juvenile audience of Harcourt Road, Dublin, to show film directors what they should produce. How I wish that I were fifteen years of age again! How I wish that I had a few rotten eggs, a few banana skins. How I wish I had the fundamental courage to express my open displeasure of present day cinema performances.

"Two, four, six, eight and a shilling" was really good. It meant that a mother could get rid of her brood for at least two hours in the evening. Fourpence for the big lad and twopence for the young lad and they all went into the same place—sixpence for two. Now, I will say this. They got good value for their money.

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

**T**HERE was a time when people in Europe ate with their fingers. It is still good table manners amongst the natives of Africa. Any assistance to the carving of the joint in the Middle Ages was supplied by the dagger which was a normal item of personal equipment. Not only were there no knives or forks or spoons, but table dishes were very scarce and each diner helped himself from a central dish or bowl and took his drink out of metal goblets. Plates for each person were not seen until the days of Henry VIII. Meat was served direct from the fire on thick slices of bread.

In the 13th Century it was only the nobility, the rich and the higher clergy who carried knives made specially for table use. The blades were made of very finely tempered steel and were fitted into costly and elaborate hafts. Like all other helps towards eating and drinking these knives were personal to the owner and greatly prized. The Lord of the Manor kept in a casket his salt cellar, his box of spices and his table knife. It was placed on the table before him as he sat down. Sometimes these caskets were beautifully made in silver or inlaid wood, or took the fanciful form of a ship in full sail.

Guests were expected to bring their own knives. Usually a pair, one for cutting meat, the other for bread. They were carried in a decorated

sheath hung from the girdle. The carver had a special knife, longer and thinner. He carved in chunks. The blades of English table knives were made of fine steel stamped with the blade-maker's mark, made in London or Sheffield, but by now, we are talking of a few centuries onwards.

In the 17th Century the blades were ornamented, sometimes chased with the coat of arms of the owner, while handles were beautiful examples of the carver's art in silver, ivory, or enamel work. For centuries the knife, with some assistance from the spoon met all the diners' needs. The fork was regarded as an eccentric extra. The spoon was a most useful weapon for the table. The earliest examples were made of wood. Edward I. had 69 knives and only three forks and he used *them* for eating pears—sticky things anyhow.

Forks first came into general use in Italy during the 16th Century and the most elegant examples of early forks are Italian. Sometimes they had two prongs, sometimes three and sometimes four. The forks in our kitchen at the moment have five prongs. They are good for eating peas.

Thomas Coryate in 1611 wrote of his experience on the continent, when it was the custom in all Italian towns and cities "that they doe always eat their meals using a little forke when



they cut their meate". Anyone touching a dish of meat with his fingers would give offence to the company and transgress the law of good manners.

The new fashion met with considerable opposition in England and was the subject of much rude verse. Many thought it coarse and ungrateful to throw food into the mouth as you would toss hay into a barn, and of course a fork requires expert manipulation. It is a good thing we learn to do it young. I still know people that cannot use a fork without stretching out their necks. That is why we use napkins in case any of the human fodder becomes displaced.

In 1659, Richard Cromwell, the Lord Protector, paid £2/8/- for six meat forks, but Prince George of Denmark paid only 30/- for twelve silver forks in 1688. Today we regard knives and forks as natural companions of the table. Their proper use is perhaps one of the earliest lessons we teach to the children. The earlier forks were straight in the prong. It was a useful advance when the cutler

found that the slightly curved prong was better.

It is a pity that the appearance of knife and fork has become so commonplace. Mass production always has that effect. Nevertheless, some beautiful examples of table cutlery can still be seen in ancient houses. Knives and forks of beautifully tempered steel with handles of silver, ivory, ebony, enamel, amber, agate, mother of pearl and onyx, some elaborately inlaid with precious metals, as good and as lovely as ever came from an artist's hand. Not until the 18th Century did it become the accepted fashion for the hostess to supply complete matching sets of table cutlery, knives, forks and spoons. Until about 1750 the traveller rarely left home without his compact set of knife, fork and spoon. These sets were ingeniously contrived to occupy as little space as possible. The only relic of that custom surviving today may be recalled when you give a present of a set of carvers as a wedding present to a friend. These are still set out in an upholstered case.

## ORIGIN OF STORIES

They say that most good stories have their origin in the Stock Exchange. There are thousands of brokers and their assistants on the floor of the Stock Exchange dealing with the exchange of shares in the home and foreign markets and to have a good story to tell is a marvellous asset. Anyway, it is believed that most really good stories are born there. Some of them are not for all cars, but it is remarkable how wide an interest these stories have. Of course we all know the many sided stories about Catholic priests, there are thousands of stories about nuns and lately, there is a crop of stories about Lourdes.

Here is one of them. A man crossing the street was knocked down by a car. He was injured, but not badly, and he knew that he had been knocked down by a splendid looking Rolls Royce. He was quite a while in hospital and he made up his mind that he was permanently and gravely injured—in fact that he was paralysed

from the waist down. This story he maintained against the doctors and all their advice. Of course it was a question of insurance and the Company went to court. It took its usual course, one panel of doctors maintained that there was nothing really wrong with the man, that in fact, he was a phoney. While another panel of doctors maintained that he was helpless. The judge put the case to the jury. He said, "You have heard arguments on both sides. It is your privilege to believe either one story or the other, but be careful you don't make a mistake." The jury decided in favour of the injured man and the judge awarded him £35,000 in damages. The insurance man was there in court and wrote out the cheque. He brought it to the man in his wheelchair and handed it over. "You have won your case," he said, "and here is the money. £35,000; and we also pay the costs, but," he continued, "remember that you are condemned to that wheelchair for life. You can never



move out of it. You will be watched, and if ever you are seen out of it we will bring an action against you for our money and next time you will pay the costs as well." The man looked at him and said, "Your trouble is that you have got no Faith. To-morrow I am flying away to Lourdes and I am convinced that

when they wheel me down into the waters you will witness the miracle of the century." "You can stop watching me because either I am going to be cured completely and at once, or at least I am going to get gradually better and better." I'll see you in a year's time.

### T H A N K S



Thanks to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Mother Mary Aikenhead for cure of my brother of Arthritis.  
E.C.

Thanks to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Mother Mary Aikenhead for favour received.  
K.C.

Grateful thanks to St. Anthony for favour received. A. S. Malvern.

Grateful thanks to the Sacred Heart for favour received.  
Vera M. Daly, Birmingham.

Two drunks were going home late at night through a winding lane and came to a level crossing. One said to the other, 'Let us go by the railway line because it is shorter.' They trudged along and one said to the other, 'The steps on these stairs are rather wide apart.' The other said, 'I don't mind that, but the hand rail is too low.'



### OUR COMING NOVENAS

ST. JUDE - - - - -	June 13th — June 20th
SACRED HEART OF JESUS - - -	June 21st — June 29th
OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL - -	July 8th — July 16th
ST. ANNE and OUR LADY - - -	July 18th — July 26th
ASSUMPTION - - - - -	Aug. 6th — Aug. 15th

### OUR BURSES

	<i>Already acknowledged</i>			<i>Increase</i>		
The St. Jude Burse No. 2 ...	£1,556	18	6	now £1,899	1	0
Holy Child of Prague Burse ...	489	16	6	497	16	6
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Burse ...	42	0	6	48	0	6
Our Lady of Lourdes Burse ...	32	10	0	93	0	6
Immaculate Conception B.V.M. Burse	91	0	6	92	1	6
Little Flower Burse ...	560	5	0	570	5	0
Sacred Heart Burse ...	30	10	6	32	10	6
St. Anthony Burse ...	33	12	6	37	12	6
St. Joseph Burse ...	1,044	2	6	1,045	2	6
Holy Souls Burse ...	1	12	6	2	12	6

Our Lady keep you !

Yours in Carmel

*M. E. Lynch O.C.*