



A Wish for Jamie, Howard & Wyndham's hit pantomime that ran for two consecutive three-month Christmas seasons at Glasgow Alhambra then toured and spawned a whole decade of *Jamie* pantomimes. The author was stage manager of the first (1961) of these productions and one night accidentally fired a bomb in the wrong scene. This drawing, made by a member of the Alhambra's electrics crew, somewhat exaggerates the consequences although the dancers (Western Theatre Ballet) certainly corpsed more than somewhat.

Bad Robber at Weston-super-Mare where the waves break over the stage door but you learn how to fall off the schoolroom trick bench, and work the ghost (it's behind you) gag. And a three month run in Edinburgh feeding Stanley Baxter in crossovers teaches you a thing or two about timing.

Then it was stage managing the biggies for Howard & Wyndham and becoming assistant to their great Producer and

Director, Freddie Carpenter. Then lighting the Sam Newsome Coventry Epics. Then . . . but, oh let's draw a veil over panto in the seventies. Yes, panto lives on and it's great fun but a lot of it is enough to make an old theatre technician shed more than a crocodile tear. Far too often nowadays it is treated as an easy way to make a bit of bread to prop up the less popular parts of the theatre season.



ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH THEATRE TECHNICIANS

is moving into its own premises
at

**4-7 Great Pulteney Street,
London, W1R 3DF**

on Monday, 12th November 1979

There will be a house-warming party for members
and their guests on Friday, 30th November at 5 p.m.

Membership enquiries to A.B.T.T. on 01-434 3901

So, let's get back to memory lane . . .
do you remember . . .

. . . the matinee showman who, told to *strike the fire in the change*, asked *What?* It was explained that he should pick up the fire, coil the cable carefully, and put the fire on the prop table. So he walked on in the middle of the big gypsy encampment scene and, oblivious to actors and audience alike, carried out his instructions in an efficient if somewhat slow and deliberate manner.

. . . then there was this fellow Francis Reid who, during performance 99, grabbed the switch for the Act Two bomb tank instead of the Act One flash box. Pity about the electrician who had sat on the bomb tank to read his evening paper during the previous 98 performances.

. . . the pensioner's matinee when the tuttu ladies were doing their Tschaikovsky dance amid delicate gauze cuts and a haze of blue light. Slowly the back blacks parted to reveal the great Jimmy Cullen (resident SM of Glasgow Alhambra) requesting guidance from his maker. After which they slowly



One of the many attractive pantomime posters from Howard & Wyndham's chronicle of 60 years of Pantomime production '1888-1948'.

closed. The fairies did not seem to be unduly perturbed . . . and neither, frankly, did the pensioners.

. . . the night when a famous director forgot to switch off his rehearsal microphone and the entire sound system, including the dressing rooms, relayed his whispered aside to his assistant *Well, this fairy would have no place at the top of my Christmas tree.*

. . . the *Genie of the lamp* whose G-string got caught in the star mechanism of the star-trap.

Oh, panto, I love you. Where else could the Demon King sing Don Giovanni's *La chi darem* as *Give me thy hand, oh fairy.*

And a Merry Christmas to one and all.