

ELSIE JANIS IS KEEPING UP WITH GEORGE WASHINGTON



Miss Elsie Janis lays out her own tennis court.



Philipse Manor, once Washington's headquarters, now home of Elsie Janis.



Keeping up with George Washington and his hatchet.

Having Purchased Philipse Manor Actress Feels That She Must Live the Washingtonian Life

THIS keeping up with George Washington," said the pretty actress, "is 'too copious for my dimensions.'"

"Elsie," chided her mother gently, "you do express yourself so—er—so—cloudily."

"Cloudily?" echoed the pretty actress. "Look up George Washington's letter about Lee. You'll find it in the first volume of the *Custis Memoirs*, page 86. George Washington said that something or somebody was 'too copious for his dimensions.' And then she threw down the axe with which she was emulating a certain performance of the Father of his Country and murmured something to the effect that the performance would be continued in the small tent at the rear of the main auditorium."

The pretty actress was Elsie Janis of course and I violate no confidence when I say that Miss Janis is wearing herself to a frazzle in a noble attempt to keep up with George Washington and the traditions of Castle Philipse, the old Philipse Manor in Tarrytown where George Washington loved and lost the beautiful Miss Philipse and where his headquarters were established during some stirring times.

Some months ago Miss Janis purchased Philipse Manor with a lofty idea of occupying the old house as a permanent home and presenting it to the Colonial Dames or the Daughters of the American Revolution or some similar organization at such far distant and melancholy time as she should move into a chilly abode in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, which is just across the road.

"It will be so inspiring, so wonderful to live in a house thrilling with memories of Washington and the Revolution," she said when friends tried to dissuade her from the purchase.

The "tent at the rear of the main auditorium" proved to be a delightful built on veranda dining room, and there attended by a polyglot assortment of servants Miss Janis continued her Washingtonian saga over a luncheon that was served by a Japanese butler, assisted by a French maid and supervised by a colored housekeeper.

"It was originally mother who thought of the Washington house," said Miss Janis, darting a reproachful glance at her parent as she helped herself to hors d'oeuvre a la Philipse. "You know Miss Philipse gave George his congé here, and mother, who doesn't believe that an actress should marry, thought that the tradition of that disastrous love affair might give an atmosphere of austere spinsterhood to the place."

"And does it?" I asked, for there has been gossip which seemed to contradict the efficacy of the atmosphere.

"Do have a toasted mushroom; they're lovely, Blanche Bates's recipe," cryptically replied Miss Janis, waving the hors d'oeuvre in my direction.

Meekly I speared one of the things and tore it asunder upon my plate. I loathe mushrooms, but when investigating a bit of sentimental gossip one must be diplomatic.

"Does it?" I repeated.

Miss Janis looked pained.

"It is really dreadful to acquire a vicious habit," she murmured vaguely.



At the trout pool.

"I was a nice normal girl before I was attacked by the George Washington microbe. Liked dancing, you know, and motor trips, and even regarded a tamed aeroplane without a shudder. But now—"

"If you look at page—I forget the page—but if you read the Van Rensselaer story of George Washington at Tarrytown and White Plains you will find that the young Father of his Country was addicted to endless horse-back trips to and fro on the face of Westchester county. He stopped and admired the herbage beside the roads and presented various gifts of copper currency to the children of the sturdy settler who played beside the bride way. And that's little Elsie."

"Every morning I en-saddle myself (the phrase is George W.'s), and trot across the historic roads over which the 'en-saddled' Father of his Country also, I have no doubt, rode and quoted Gray's 'Elegy' to companion his soul on the way."

The luncheon had progressed to the chicken a la Maryland stage by this time, and Miss Janis found a certain solace for her equestrian woes in that comfortable invention.

"I thought it was Gen. Wolfe who stormed the Heights of Abraham to the metre of Gray's 'Elegy.'" I suggested by way of airing the sole fragment of literary knowledge in my possession.

"He did," admitted Miss Janis, "but Martha Lamb's history says that Washington also had the habit. And so I murmur things about the twittering call of inebriate breathing morn' when I start out on my early ride, and of course it would be a blasphemy against a sacred memory to pass the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery without some allusion to the fact that here, 'each in his narrow cell forever laid, the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,' or the paths of glory lead but to the grave."

"It is very hard, and life is quite bitter," she concluded with pathos. "And then when I get home, after brushing with hasty steps the dew away to meet the sun upon the upland lawn, I have to show George Washington's bedroom to awed and reverent tourists who find themselves unable to pass without a visit to the sacred shrine."

Ensued a pause, during which I searched my mind for some soothing phrase, for truly Miss Janis looked

so sorry for herself that one's heart was pierced.

"I suppose it is because you have such a talent for imitations?" I suggested, "that you can't help—"

"That's it, exactly," interrupted the owner of Philipse Manor. "From the moment I wake up in the morning, until I kneel down beside the Washington bed to say my prayers at night, I find myself always in the attitude of saying, 'My next imitation, ladies and gentlemen, will be George Washington at Castle Philipse.'"

And after luncheon was finished—was I mistaken, or did Miss Janis prolong the meal even to coffee a la Farewell Address, as one who dreads the coming ordeal?—the reluctant actress, the eager reporter and the willing camera followed the father of his country through a repertoire of historic stunts.

"I shudder at the realism of this wood pile," said Miss Janis. "It is a regular Heloise effect, for a venerable cherry tree blew down the night we had that dreadful wind storm last May, and George—all the hands on the place are called George, whether

that's their name or not, poor things—George dissected it—do they dissect trees when they tear them limb from limb?—and piled it up with next winter's wood, as you see."

"Unfortunately 'George' was unable to identify the cherry wood, and an enthusiastic audience was unable to see Miss Janis face the camera in an imitation of Washington and the cherry tree."

A fine brook flows through the historic domain. It is a decadent descendant of the once bustling mill stream which ground Colonial grist only a few yards from the manor house. The sturdy foundations of the old mill have been carefully collected by Mrs. Janis and used partly in the reconstruction of an ancient stone wall that again griddles the estate, and partly in the building of a dam, which restores to the place its historic mill pond. Here Miss Janis has a fine swimming pool and here she follows the example of George Washington as 'forth by a wood historian, and angles for the elusive, and indeed permanently absent, trout.'

Tradition speaks of the lovely but ebullient Miss Philipse as possessing a "smallish Chinese dog." Miss Janis preserves the Heloise effect by taking a very up to date Pekinese, of a lineage that reaches far beyond the Washington dynasty, when she strolls hopefully goes forth a-fishing.

"Patriotism is one thing and pleasure

is another," said Miss Janis reflectively, looking up from the more or less uneven surface of a carefully marked out patch of ground which she was attacking with a rake. "On page—"

"Oh, Elsie, do leave out the pages and paragraphs," interrupted the weary maternal voice.

"In one of the Washington looks in the living room," resumed the lady of the rake, "I learn that the serious minded father of his country was not averse in his earlier youth to several out of door games then in vogue. Badminton was one of them. And it seems that G. W. was great on Badminton."

"Do you know what merry little frolic? It is a sort of silly tennis, played—"

Miss Janis's voice took on a tone of horrified contempt to amuse and soul drawn to be an imitation of George Washington or anybody else—it is played with shuttlecocks—foolish little feathered shuttlecocks. And you beat them about like tennis balls. I am perfectly happy to follow the Father of my country about on foot and on horseback, but when it comes to Badminton—the rake dug viciously into the stony soil—"I am going to give a very lifelike imitation of G. W. playing tennis. That's why 'George' and I are laying out this tennis ground and I am having a continental tennis uniform, blue with buff facings, you know, to preserve the atmosphere."

"But I am afraid tennis would be an anachronism," interposed Mrs. Janis, "not that I object to anachronisms, but when you are trying to live up to a person and a period—the rest was drowned in an indignant clatter of the rake as Miss Janis tossed it aside and bade 'George' finish the preliminary leveling of George Washington's tennis court."

Near the tennis ground is Miss Janis's own garden, an old-fashioned plot fragrant with the flowers that the cruel Miss Philipse might have loved. There are iris—sweet flag Miss Philipse probably called it—lavender and old fashioned box borders, beside which

clumps of sweet william and bleeding hearts bloom as blithely as if they were not descended from an original stock that might have blossomed at that time when Washington vainly courted the fair mistress of the manor, or on that sterner summer when war trampled red footed over the garden border.

Inside the house the authentic George Washington bedroom is of course a centre of interest, but before the manor house fell into Miss Janis's hands the room had been decorated out of all semblance to its original austere simplicity and even the ruthless incursion of electric light has marked the foot of progress up the winding, narrow Colonial stairs that lead to the historic chamber.

The huge living rooms below breathe more of the spirit of the elder day, and out of doors, just across the road, a pine and dark antique tree, maled shadowy patterns on the smooth clipped lawn when the same old sun shines on the same old valley, where Washington had his dream and where Washington Irving, whose ashes rest in Sleepy Hollow, just across the road, wrote for New York its so-called local history literature. A tablet placed beside the door of Philipse Manor by the Colonial Dames of the State of New York describes the old house as having been built in 1683, or thereabouts, but the first Dutch bricks, of which the chimneys are built, were pressed in Holland in 1619 and 1621—before New York was settled by the earliest Knickerbocker.

Secure in the possession of a home so saturated with "atmosphere" of Washington, his first victories and his defeat, the young owner of the manor found that Miss Janis tries with commendable spirit to keep up with George Washington? Or that the interviewee, lingering among the thrilling memorials that enrich the spot, fled only when urged by the young owner to share a cup of tea with the Washington Post march, or try a fox trot to the music of "George Washington's Last Dream?"

She Quotes the Father of His Country as She Emulates Him With an Axe

PLAY THAT TAUGHT ENGLISH WORKINGMEN TO SAVE THEIR MONEY

IT is doubtful if England's workers have ever saved as much money as they are saving to-day. This is due in part to high war wages and in part to the fact that an impulse toward economy which began among the aristocracy, and from the aristocracy permeated the class of rich commoners, has at last been felt by the workers.

At first the British workers lost their heads in consequence of the great increase in wages resulting from the war and an era of extravagance began among them. He was a poor munitions worker who did not send his wife to get a sealskin coat on five shillings a week instalments, to buy a piano upon the same terms; that workman's cottage was rare from which a photograph did not send its songs into the evening air; grimy colliers dressed their daughters in fine silks; fuse-makers gave their sons as much for spending money as before the war days had been spent upon the family maintenance. The English workingman plunged into an era of insane spending accompanied, until new laws were passed, by extraordinary intemperance.

It was not until a few months ago that the arguments against all this

began really to take effect and the British worker came to his senses. A play called "War Mates" had a powerful influence in putting a stop to strikes in the munition works, which during the first year of the war promised seriously to hamper the Government in its equipment and support of the armies fighting in the field against Germany. The success of this play undoubtedly inspired the author of another drama, "Too Late," which was written by Walter W. Ellis for the purpose of influencing the British workmen away from extravagance. Admittedly the effect of this stage presentation has been remarkable. Some extracts from it will therefore be of interest.

The principal character, Jim Garston, who has been drawing abnormally high wages for war work, has been so wasteful that his wife, Peg, has become frightened and herself has gone to work in a factory so that she may earn wages with which to supply a fund for their son Harry, who is at the front, if when he returns at the end of the war he should find difficulty in getting work.

A mate of Jim, named Bill Holmes, is his companion in dissipation, and under the influence of drink endeavors to make love to Peg. She indignantly repulses him and in order to get even he lies to her husband about her getting work.

The opening of the first act includes the visit of Harold Clarke, son of the Garston family's landlord, with a request for the rent. Peg refuses to pay

him from her funds, wishing him to collect from Jim, who is wasting his money. Clarke knows that she herself is at work in a munitions factory and she begs him to keep the knowledge of it from her husband. He is in the act of shaking hands with her as a seal to the promise when Bill Holmes enters and mistakes the significance of the handclasp. Soon after Clarke's departure Jim enters, finding Bill with his wife.

Jim's statement that he, a workman, drove home in a taxi from the scene of his daily labors is not in the least an exaggeration of episodes constantly noted among the laboring classes in the munitions towns during the first year of the war. The play continues in part as follows:

(Enter Jim Garston with a flower in his coat and bottles in his pocket. He smokes a cigar.)

Jim—Hello, Peg! (Removes coat) How are you, Bill?

Bill Holmes—Pretty bobbish. Thought you'd be later.

Jim—Aha! I had a taxi up to the foot of the hill.

Peg—A taxi? What should I? I'm earning it!

Bill—Of course. We can't all be misers, Jim—We're gentlemen, aren't we? But I can't stick these rotten cigars. Where's my pipe?

Jim—Went you have some tea?

Jim (to Bill)—What say?

Bill—if you like—we can wash the tea down afterward.

Jim—Not that I'm fond of drink, mind you. But they shouldn't close the pub.

This is simply revenge. We'll get our own back somehow. Revenge, Bill.

Peg (looks at Bill handing tea)—Don't spill it.

Jim—What do you think of this tea set? Cost fifty bob (shillings)—and they won't balance.

Bill—You are a swank.

Jim—I'm just real at home with these fine things. I believe we're gents and don't know it. (Drinks.)

Bill—You said you wanted to buy a gramophone.

Jim—Hark at him, Peg! A gramophone. You mean a phonograph, dance!

Bill—Well, whatever you call it. Best Smith wants to sell his. He'll take four quid and it cost ten.

Jim—Right ye are. I'll have it.

Peg—But, Jim, isn't it better to save the money?

Jim—What's the good of saving it? Easy come, easy go.

While Peg goes off to wash up the tea things Bill tells Jim he caught Peg and Clarke in a love scene. Jim pretends to go off with Bill to buy the gramophone. Clarke returns and Peg has laid the rent money on the table when Jim bursts in. There is a violent scene, in which Clarke is ordered out and goes.

Jim—Where did you get that money?

Peg—I'm minding it for some one else who as sure as I'm alive will want it some day, and that's the honest truth.

Then Jim accuses Peg of meeting Clarke secretly and despite her protestations of innocence orders her out of the house when she refuses to tell where she got the rent money.

Jim—Not that I'm fond of drink, mind you. But they shouldn't close the pub.

The second act shows us Jim seated at

table in his house, with Clarke standing in front of him.

Jim—(Haggard looking, Vehemently)—I'm willing to work, but I tell you there's no work to be had. It's barely had that dreadful wind storm last May, and George—all the hands on the place are called George, whether

table in his house, with Clarke standing in front of him.

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table in his house, with Clarke standing in front of him.

Jim—(Haggard looking, Vehemently)—I'm willing to work, but I tell you there's no work to be had. It's barely had that dreadful wind storm last May, and George—all the hands on the place are called George, whether

don't start on me again. I've cleared out of my shanty—you may as well have the keys. (Offers keys.)

Jim—Thank you. And where are you going to live now?

Bill—Me? Oh, I'm going to turn in here with Jim.

(Jim laughs satirically.)

Clarke—Garston is leaving here tomorrow at 12.

(Exit Clarke.)

Bill—You leaving here? What are you going to leave me in the lurch like that for?

Jim—Do you think this is a blooming hotel for everybody?

Bill (gazes around)—Hotel dee lo kee hart. Well, aren't you going to give us a drink?

Jim—The tap's outside in the yard.

Bill—I ain't here like the gentry do on the Continent—be the waters.

Jim—Have you got any baccy?

Bill—Don't talk so well off. I've been walking up the hill now behind a bloke smoking twist, just to get a sniff of it. I've walked miles to see if there was a job going.

Jim—Any luck?

Bill—Every blooming thing is lying idle. And four hundred of the recruits have just come home.

(Knock at door.)

Jim—See who that is.

(Bill opens door—Harry, in khaki, peeps in.)

Harry—(Playfully)—Is Mr. Garston indoors?

Jim (starts back)—Harry!

Harry—What cheer, father? I thought I'd surprise you. (Offers hand.) Well, we've done the job and whacked the old Germans. (Pause.) Ain't ye pleased to see me?

(Bill enters.)

Jim—Of course I'm pleased. I'm—er

I'm very glad you ain't wounded, Harry.

Harry—Oh, I've had some nasty scratches, but these? It's all over now, and it's a treat to get home. Father, I can do with a good lump of the old 'ceddar and a pint of bitter ale—eh?

(Jim is silent. Bill wipes his mouth reminiscently.)

Harry—What's wrong? What's up, father?

Bill—Shall I tell him? (Jim nods.)

Harry—Come on, hand times.

Harry—Strike me pink! And I heard you were all making pots of money and being like dukes.

Bill—Aye.

Harry—Ain't you had any work?

Bill—Yes—oh—o—a bit.

Harry—What do you call a bit?

Bill—Been out of work, father? Can't either of you talk? Gad, you're a rum lot to come home to.

Jim (starting up)—We've had work.

Harry—Good work, five, six, seven—and some of us ten pounds a week, and like blithering idiots we've blown the lot—and that's the truth—the damned truth.

Harry is told that his mother has gone and then discovers that he knows all about it. He produces a letter from his mother in which she describes the trick Bill Holmes played, and then goes. A struggle takes place between Jim and Bill, which ends with Jim collapsing and Bill crawling out of the door. Then later:

Peg and Harry appear in doorway. Peg gives money to Harry and tells him to go and buy some things.

Peg (comes to Jim and assets him to armchair)—Come here and keep quiet.

Jim—Peg! Peg! You've come at last. Peg—I'm not one to say much, you know that and if you're mused, Jim—well, there are hundreds of others who have done the same as you. I know it came. It was bound to come. Why didn't you listen to me and save yer money? You and the likes of us have been grabbing for years because we were born and fixed in a thirty bob rut with no hope of a future. Thirty bob on the dole—and not one prayer has been for a change in our lot. I know it came. It was bound to come. Why didn't you listen to me and save yer money? You and the likes of us have been grabbing for years because we were born and fixed in a thirty bob rut with no hope of a future. Thirty bob on the dole—and not one prayer has been for a change in our lot. I know it came. It was bound to come. Why didn't you listen to me and save yer money? You and the likes of us have been grabbing for years because we were born and fixed in a thirty bob rut with no hope of a future. 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