

A FREE TEN-MINUTE THEATRE MYSTERY

The Misfiled Playbill

A dedication vanished before the house opened.

Bellwether Theatre, 14 May 1936. At 7:05 p.m., producer Edwin March ordered the lobby dedication to founding actress Ruth Vale removed from the revival display. At 7:18, the dedication card and its photograph were gone. Doors open at 7:30.

YOUR QUESTIONS

Who moved the dedication? Where is it now? What evidence proves the act was preservation rather than destruction?

READ PAGES 2-4 / KEEP THE HINT FILE CLOSED / NO OUTSIDE KNOWLEDGE

Claims Before Curtain

EDWIN MARCH / PRODUCER

Ordered the dedication removed. Says he remained in the lobby from 7:08 onward.

MAE ORTIZ / STAGE CARPENTER

Repaired the lobby display latch from 7:00 to 7:08, then returned her tools to the stage-left cage by 7:12.

CLARA FENN / PROMPTER

Called the dark orchestra-spacing rehearsal from 7:12 to 7:17. Says nobody crossed the lit stage.

TIMED RECORD

Time	Independent record
7:05	March’s removal order entered in the lobby log.
7:08	Display repair card signed: M. Ortiz / latch repaired / glass locked.
7:12	Stage-left tool cage signed: M. Ortiz / all tools returned.
7:12-7:17	House lamps out; ghost light on. The stage-left wing remains reachable without crossing the lit stage.
7:18	Empty mounting corners found; display glass unbroken and repaired latch still locked.

A Founder's First Entrances

THE BELLWETHER PLAYERS

OPENING NIGHT / 3 OCTOBER 1911

Beneath the silver arch, Ruth Vale enters.

THE WATCHER

Every lantern lowers as she crosses.

THE CALLER

New music begins below the boards.

THE MUSICIAN

Curtain waits for her final word.

THE COMPANY

Here the house first learned her name.

THE PROMPTER

ARCHIVIST'S PENCIL: FIRST ENTRANCES. NEVER THE EXITS.

STAGE NOTE / 1936 REVIVAL

The old stage-left rehearsal bench stands above a shallow, dry prompt shelf. The shelf cannot be seen from the lobby or stage, but it can be reached from the stage-left wing without crossing the lit playing space. Mae's returned-tool receipt bears a fresh rectangle of lobby-mounting paste.

Proof Before Answer

01 WHO moved the dedication?

02 WHERE did the card and photograph go?

03 WHEN was each step possible?

04 WHY is preservation better supported than destruction?

05 Cite two independent details.

WHEN YOUR THEORY HOLDS, OPEN HINTS & SOLUTION