

Oklahoma!

THE STORY OF THE PLAY

THIS is a simple story of farmers and cowboys, living, loving and quarrelling in the early days of a new State, "Oklahoma". Curly, a cowboy, is in love with Laurey, the niece of Aunt Ella, who is a farmer, but Laurey cannot decide between Curly and Jud, a farm hand. Jud is an uncouth fellow with an unpleasant nature and a shady past. In a fit of pique, Laurey agrees to go with Jud to the box social, although she is rather afraid of him. This causes a quarrel between Curly and Jud which, while increasing her fear of Jud, shows Laurey where her heart really lies. In a dream Laurey sees herself at the altar with Curly, only to be snatched away by Jud, who in a fight gets Curly at his mercy. In order to save Curly's life, Laurey promises to marry Jud, and on waking from her dream and still under its influence, she goes off with him.

The "Box" is a supper hamper which each girl provides. An auction is held and the man takes the girl to the supper whose hamper he has been successful in acquiring. In order to beat Jud in the bidding for Laurey's hamper, Curly sells all his possessions and this so impresses Laurey that she agrees to marry him, and losing her fear of Jud, orders him off the farm.

Meanwhile, Ado Annie, who "Cain't say No", has become involved with a philandering pedlar, Ali Hakim, but is more or less promised to Will Parker, who returns from Kansas City to claim her. To escape her clutches, Ali Hakim helps Will to win back Annie, only to get caught in the rebound by Gertie Cummings, the girl with the laugh.

When the wedding party for Laurey and Curly is in full swing, Jud appears and attacks Curly with a knife. In the ensuing fight, Jud falls on his knife and is killed. The Federal Marshal calls on Curly to give himself up, but on the suggestion of Aunt Eller, old man Carnes, a local Judge, holds an improvised court and a verdict of "Accidental Death" is recorded. The play ends with the departure of the happy pair in the Surrey for their honeymoon amid the good wishes of both farmers and cowboys.