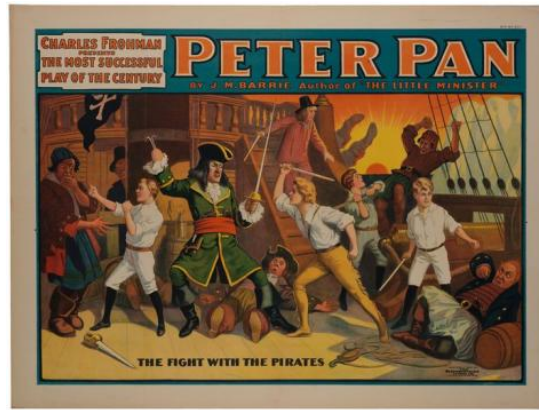


0. CHARLES FROHMAN - Story Preface
1. J.M. BARRIE - EARLY LIFE
2. MARY ANSELL BARRIE
3. SYLVIA LLEWELYN DAVIES
4. PETER PAN IS BORN
5. OPENING NIGHT
6. TRAGEDY STRIKES
7. BARRIE AND THE BOYS
- 8. CHARLES FROHMAN**
9. SCENES FROM LIFE
10. THE REST OF THE STORY



This poster, advertising “Peter Pan” and crediting Charles Frohman as the producer, is from the second production of the play and dates back to 1906-1907. Created by Peter O'Toole Lithograph Company; online via Pinterest.

Barrie became friends with the American who produced his plays: [Charles Frohman](#). Together with his two brothers (Daniel and Gustave), Frohman was part of the New York theatrical scene. Some folks called him the “Beaming Buddha of Broadway.”

Frohman [launched](#) his career (note his name in the lefthand corner of the poster) by producing Bronson Howard's *Shenandoah*. In 1893, he built the [Empire Theater](#) (scroll to the bottom) with Al Hayman and soon was working with the leading dramatists of the day: [Oscar Wilde](#), Somerset [Maugham](#) and [Arthur Wing Pinero](#). It was Frohman who first produced *Peter Pan* at the Duke of York's Theatre in London.

Although he was part of the reviled [Theatrical Syndicate](#), whose handful of members controlled the best stage productions and nationwide bookings (to the detriment of independent theater owners), Frohman made his deals with a handshake.

He launched the long and successful career of [Jerome Kern](#) who composed Broadway tunes for British productions before they opened in America. And, it is said, Frohman was fair to his stars - like [Maude Adams](#) who [played the role](#) of Peter Pan between 1905 and 1915 (and was the [inspiration](#) for Jane Seymour's character Elise McKenna in the movie [Somewhere in Time](#)).

Had it not been for Frohman, Maude may never have had the chance to play the famous character. In fact, had it not been for Frohman, *Peter Pan* may never have *become* a famous character.

It was Frohman who convinced J.M. Barrie to create a script based on the *Peter Pan* story from *The Little White Bird*. Frohman (who was known for exporting plays between the Old World and the New) had seen the promise of a most improbable [stage story](#). He took a chance on a play about a boy who never grew up.

By 1915, a decade after *Peter Pan* first opened, [Barrie](#) was struggling with a new production called “Rosy Rapture, the Pride of the Beauty Chorus.” Imploring Charles to come to London to help him work out issues with the faltering play, Barrie unwittingly played a role in his friend's death.

Germany, at war with Great Britain since the summer of 1914, had issued warnings that crossing the North Atlantic on a British ship would be unsafe. To assist his friend, however, Frohman ignored those warnings and sailed on the *Lusitania's* [ill-fated voyage](#).

After the ship was torpedoed (on 7 May 1915), and the water was quickly rising, Charles Frohman was standing next to [Rita Jolivet](#), an actress. The ship's rail got closer and closer to the water, but the producer calmly puffed on his cigar. Knowing the ship would soon be gone, Charles faced his likely demise with courage.

Just before a wave swept Jolivet into the ocean, Frohman observed: “Why fear death, it's the greatest adventure of all.” He was, undoubtedly, thinking about Barrie's famous line in *Peter Pan*:

*To die will be an awfully big adventure*

Jolivet lived to report Frohman's words. Charles was less fortunate. After his body was recovered, it was sent back to New York City where his funeral (at [Temple Emanu-el](#)) drew such a crowd that police had to close 5th Avenue.

Frohman wanted to be remembered as “The man who gave *Peter Pan* to the world and [Chantecler](#) to America.” With the release of *Finding Neverland*, it appears that at least part of his wish has come true.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/CHARLES-FROHMAN-Finding-Neverland>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/CHARLES-FROHMAN-Finding-Neverland>

## Media Stream



### Charles Frohman - Producer of "Peter Pan"

He first suggested that J.M. Barrie, the playwright, further develop a character who appeared in one of his books (The Little White Bird).

This poster, advertising "Peter Pan," is from the second production of the play and dates back to 1906-1907.

Click on the image for a better view.

Peter O'Toole Lithograph Company; online via Pinterest.

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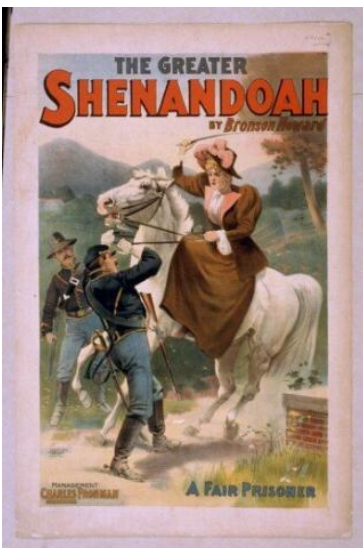
### Charles Frohman - Producer of Peter Pan

Image online, courtesy [University of Virginia](#) website.

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### The Greater Shenandoah Poster

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

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### Oscar Wilde

Image online, courtesy [oscarwildeinamerica.org](http://oscarwildeinamerica.org) website.

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### Somerset Maugham

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

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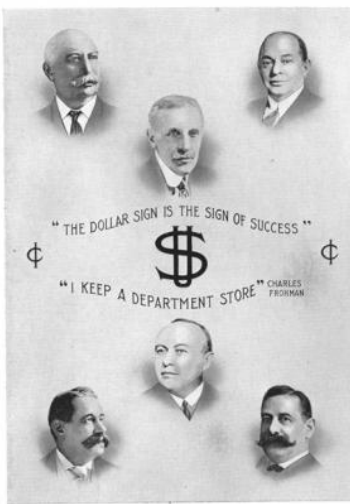


### Arthur Wing Pinero

Image online, courtesy the George Grantham Bain Collection, U.S. Library of Congress.

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### The Theatrical Syndicate

Image online, courtesy wayneturney.20m.com website.

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### Maude Adams - Highest-Paid Actress of Her Day

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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MISS MAUDE ADAMS

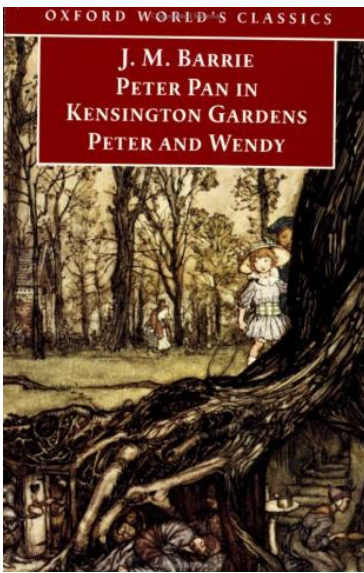
### Maude Adams - First Peter Pan in the U.S.

Lithograph by The Strobridge Lithographing Co., Cincinnati & New York, 1899. Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Maude-Adams-First-Peter-Pan-in-the-U.S.>



### Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens - by J.M. Barrie

Image online, courtesy [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com) website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Peter-Pan-in-Kensington-Gardens-by-J.M.-Barrie>



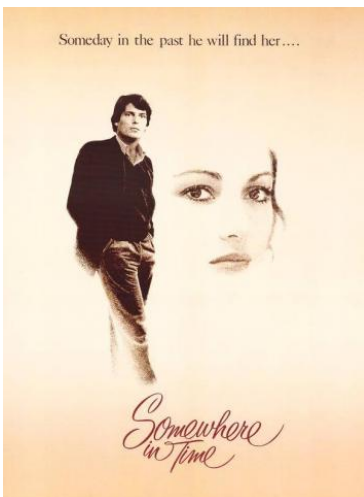
### Maude Adams - Inspiration for Elise McKenna

Image of Maude Adams, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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### Somewhere in Time - VHS Movie

Image online, courtesy [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) website.

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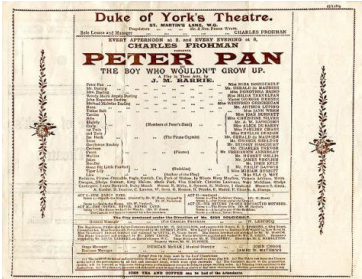
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Somewhere-in-Time-VHS-Movie>



### J.M. Barrie Photo

Image online, courtesy the quotidian website.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/J.M.-Barrie-Photo>



### Play Bill: Peter Pan

Image online, courtesy sirjbarrie.com website.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Play-Bill-Peter-Pan>



### Rita Jolivet - Survived the Lusitania Sinking

Image online, courtesy the filmstarpostcards blog website.

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