

MINOR COINCIDENCES

There are some minor synchronicities and coincidences I've noticed over the last 20 years and, on their own, they might be dismissed as pure randomness. But given all the more significant coincidences and commonalities I've already discussed on the other pages, I felt it was worth mentioning them. I have noticed quite a number of small clues in some of Harry's movies that hinted at his eventual reincarnation. The first thing I noticed was the number of drag sequences in Harry's films. Sure, EVERY major silent and sound comedian donned a dress for laughs at some point -- it's an age old tradition, right? The difference with Harry was the frequency and the sequences were LONG! In *THE CHASER*, the plot of the movie centers around role reversal...Harry is punished by being forced to wear a skirt throughout most of the movie and becoming the "wife", while his wife becomes the "husband". In *SEA SQUAWK* and *SKIRT SHY*, he's wearing a dress for almost the entire duration of both films. I made a collage of scenes from each of these films. Top row: *The Chaser*, *His First Flame*, *The Sea Squawk*. Bottom row: *Skirt Shy*, *Double Trouble* and a soundie called *Beautiful Clothes*. The soundie (a 1940's version of a music video) ends with Harry going through a revolving door, then using a split screen effect, he comes out the other side wearing a dress! What I'm unsure about is how much involvement Harry had in the decision to implement drag sequences in so many films. *THE CHASER* was all his idea since he directed it, but the other films were not officially written/directed by Harry.





Inter-title from HIS NEW MAMMA, 1924



I DON'T REMEMBER, 1935 ...Harry is an artist with a terrible memory. Doesn't even recognize his own mother!

I forgot about ALL AMERICAN CO-ED! It's a Hal Roach mini feature from 1941. Harry himself doesn't engage in any cross dressing, but the main character does in order to enter a beauty pageant at a girls' school. There's a funny scene where the principal of the school says she refuses to allow any men on the campus, to which Harry replies, "Well, I'm a man." She responds, "You're safe." I included a clip of this scene. You Tube link to this clip, click or copy and paste into your browser: <https://youtu.be/LbHdLm2PA0Y>

Here's a short list of a few other "clues" I noticed in Harry's films that hint at his reincarnation. They're subtle to most, but jumped out at me.

- SOLDIER MAN - a WWI soldier, who is the spitting image of the king, is forced to take his place, both roles played by Harry
- SOLDIER'S PLAYTHING - Harry says, "If you don't hear from me, you'll know that I'm dead."
- MISBEHAVING HUSBANDS - right after a brief scene of Harry walking into a bar, there's a cut to a scene of a party where someone says, "Are you sure that dog is dead?" Makes me laugh. I know it's simply the punchline of a joke but to me, sounds like they're referencing me/Harry.
- BLOCK BUSTERS - one of the East Side kids sees Harry coming and says, "Here comes the embalmer's nightmare."
- THE HITCHHIKER - Harry wants to hitchhike to Chicago, where I was born
- GOODNESS, A GHOST – Harry is guided by his grandpa's ghost, also played by Harry
- FLYING DEUCES - a Laurel & Hardy film Harry co-scripted. It has the blatantly obvious running gag where Stan & Ollie discuss reincarnation then the film ends with Ollie returning as a horse. I'd really LOVE to know who suggested this gag, if that's at all possible to find out. If it was Harry, then WOW.
- BLOCK-HEADS - another L&H film Harry worked on. Right at the beginning, just before heading into battle, Ollie says to Stan, "I'll be back. We'll ALL be back."
- A CHUMP AT OXFORD - yes, another one! When L&H arrive at Oxford, Stan is recognized as a brilliant student who got conked on his head years ago, lost his memory and wandered away. He gets hit on the head AGAIN and reverts to his old personality. Again, I'd like to know if Harry suggested this gag idea. By the way, CHUMP & BLOCK-HEADS are my favorite L&H feature films (I don't know why, maybe because I worked on them!)

A FEW PERSONAL COINCIDENCES

My mom was born in Partanna, Sicily (I uploaded her passport, you know how I like my proof) in 1950 and she was 2 when she immigrated to the States. Frank Capra, who was a prominent figure in Harry's life and career, was born in Bisacquino, Sicily. The two towns are very close each other. I circled them on the map. Isn't that a bizarre coincidence? Makes me wonder if Harry was thinking of or even dishing out ethnic slurs towards Frank, when he was feeling anger and resentment towards him. Not cool Harry, I wouldn't be surprised. And see what happened...that's karma for ya. That's why if people knew they could be reborn as those they hate, then the hatred, violence and prejudice would stop. That explains this coincidence that I'm now the same ethnicity that Frank Capra was. The prejudice Harry must've had, had

to have been severe enough to warrant experiencing a lifetime growing up in a Sicilian family. I have experienced some minor discrimination in my life due to my ancestry. My dad's dad immigrated from Palermo.



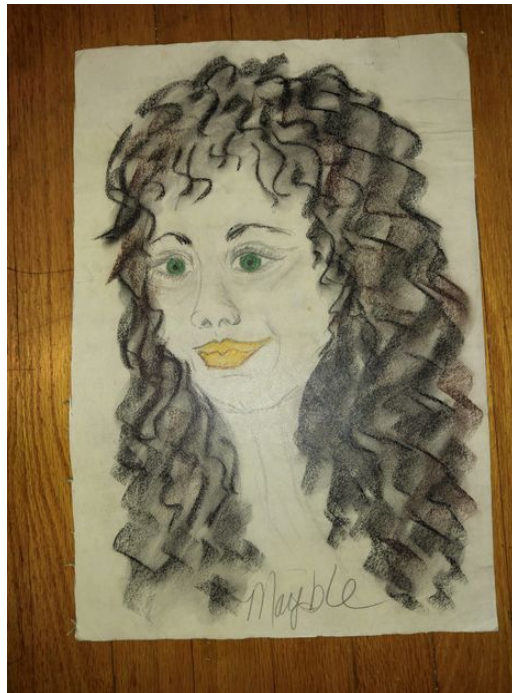
The [Locality Page](#) includes a map indicating places of historical interest.



Mom's 1952 passport, she was 2. In the border of the circular purple stamp is the town name of PARTANNA, where she lived and was born in.

- Another Frank Capra related item...in IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE, the scene at the train depot where George Bailey's brother, Harry, introduces his new wife as "Ruth Dakin". Then she corrects him by saying her full name, "Ruth Dakin Bailey". I might be grasping at straws with this one, but Dakin is the name of the street in Chicago my brother and I lived on for the first 25 years of our lives. That's an odd name and an odd coincidence. This has to be the most viewed Capra film. Keep in mind, this film came out in 1946. Harry died at the end of 1944 so I imagine his colleague's death was heavy on Frank's mind when this film was in its writing stage. I'm sure Frank was grieving somewhat. Perhaps that's why he chose Harry for the name of George Bailey's brother. And the character of Uncle Billy resembles the real life Harry to me in looks and personality. Clarence the angel, has a child-like nature that reminds me of Harry's screen persona.

•And here is one last personal coincidence. In January 2002, on a whim, I contacted a person on the internet who does "spirit guide drawings". Somehow they channel the energy of our guides and try to capture how they look in a drawing. It was cheap enough and I thought what the heck, just for shit n' giggles. So I emailed them and sent my 20 bucks via Paypal. I was skeptical and didn't even expect to get anything in the mail. I thought this has to be a scam. But no, I did get the drawing as promised. And I was speechless....this person knew NOTHING about me. All they asked for was name, location, date of birth, and I was not on social media at the time. The drawing I received was of a woman with dark hair and the channel artist person heard her name, but as you can see they spelled it wrong. I can understand that. Mabel is not a common name so she spelled it the way it sounded. The real Mabel Langdon, Harry's widow, had died March 17, 2001. So I received this drawing January 2002. It may not be an accurate resemblance and the name is misspelled, but the odds are staggering that the one and only time I send for a spirit guide drawing, it turns out to be a woman named "Mayble". Skeptics would say, well it's probably not Harry's Mabel. Or accuse me of forging this myself. Oh please, give me a break....I've never drawn this badly! This drawing on its own isn't that impressive, but in light of all the other evidence I've presented, it becomes much more convincing and significant.



MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

Got a few more things that didn't quite fit on other pages. I wanted to include a couple quotes from Columbia shorts director, Jules White, in which he describes how Harry was as a person. I really appreciate his honesty, empathy, and I can't help but feel enormous love and respect for the guy. I've read negative descriptions about how his directing style was violent, fast paced and cartoony. Well, so it was but he gave Harry a chance when he so desperately needed it and that says a lot about Jules' integrity. Quote is from a 1978 interview with Jules (year I was born). From LITTLE ELF pg. 253

Jules White recalled in 1978. White had started out as editor for his older brother, Jack White, about ten years earlier at Educational Studios, then progressed to director around the time sound had arrived. He moved to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1930, co-creating and directing the Dogville comedies, one-reelers in which a cast of live canines performed spoofs of various movie genres. White signed with Columbia in July 1932, but because of his M.G.M. contract, he couldn't start until the following year. Once he arrived, the first thing he did was hire as many comedy veterans as were available, whether or not he'd worked with them before.

"Arthur Ripley came to work for me as a writer in 1934. He hadn't worked for a while. I knew him by reputation rather than personally. He'd been in charge of Mack Sennett's editorial department; he supervised the writers and watched over production, direction and everything. We were kicking around ideas [and] he said, 'What would you think of Harry Langdon?' I said, 'None better. Where is he, what's he doing?' He said, 'Harry is flat broke. He's absolutely *destitute*. He needs work and he needs it badly.'

"I had heard about what transpired with him and Frank Capra. He was a great, great comedian...but like many actors, he wasn't satisfied with just acting. Many actors think they know better what kind of material they should have, what scripts should be written and who should write and direct them. They want to be the whole show. This was my fear, [but] Ripley said, 'He'll be a good boy. Would you like to meet him?'

"I said, 'I sure would. There's no question about the man's talent, and talent doesn't die. Will you bring him in?' He said, 'No. I want to make him think you're coming for him, because he's very demoralized. All it would take is just one little boost to make him feel great, you know what I mean?' I said, 'I sure do.'"

Ripley set up the meeting at Langdon's preferred golf course, the Lakeside Country Club. White remembered, "I saw this little guy sitting out there at this table, and I knew he was going to put on a front for me and I had to put on one for him. I [thought], 'Well, it can't do any harm, it can only do us both some good.' Ripley introduced us, and I said, 'I'm sure glad to meet you. I've always been one of your great fans.' Well, his face brightened [but] I had to lead him to

talk. He wouldn't say much. So finally I said, 'How would you like to make some pictures for me?' He said, very softly — almost surprised — 'I'd like it.' I said, 'Well, great, how about coming to the office tomorrow, and we'll sit down and talk turkey?' He said, 'Fine!'

"So he came in. He had no agent; I made the deal directly with him, and we drew up a contract for two pictures with options, at one thousand dollars per picture."

Harry Langdon was *not* the man of the reputation that I had heard. He was a very nice guy. He was a very subdued, quiet fellow and all he wanted to do was make a comeback. He worked like a Trojan. He did everything and anything—sat in with us on story conferences, helped work on the gags. Any time we wanted him he was Johnny-on-the-spot. . . . As with all people, time had taken a toll, his baby face had wrinkles. He now had to play a more mature type of Langdon, but Harry rose to the occasion. . . . Unfortunately, towards the end, the short subjects business went to hell.

Another nice quote from Jules White (Oldham, KING OF SILENT COMEDY pg. 221)



Publicity still from HIS FIRST FLAME...I just get a kick out of seeing multiple Harrys. Reminds me of that Michael Keaton movie, MULTIPLICITY. Imagine being able to have a conversation with your past life personalities. Trippy!



Wanted to use this image somewhere on the website, this might be a good place. I really like what Bill Schelly wrote in his book about the final scene of ZENOBIA.

Roach gave the final scene to Harry. McCrackle walks away from the crowds who see him off. He strides down a country lane, wearing his top hat and carnival coat. His beloved Zenobia is at his side. The group is joined by a third member: Zenobia's baby, for her problem all along had been an undetected pregnancy.

As the music swells on the soundtrack, Harry turns and waves to the wedding party (and the movie audience). He seemed to be saying: "Goodbye for now, but don't worry — I'll be back!" The sentimental ending was touching, especially for anyone who fondly remembered Harry, and all the wonderful moments he had contributed to screen comedy in the past.

An excerpt from page 162 of HARRY LANGDON: HIS LIFE AND FILMS. It always chokes me up when I read it. And now, whenever I watch the end of ZENOBIA, I recall what he wrote.

You Tube video clip of final scene of ZENOBIA, click on it or copy paste into your browser
<https://youtu.be/RCEo51KHQ04>