

Jerome H. Remick & Company

- He was a very successful businessman in the lumber and dairy industries
- By 1905, he started a publishing company with offices in Detroit, New York and Chicago
- A number of future composers started out as song pluggers for the company, often in department stores. This included Charlotte Blake, who first demonstrated and then wrote rags and songs for the company in Detroit, and Irene Giblin, hired at age 14 in St. Louis to demonstrate Remick tunes in a department store, but was soon composing hit rags
- Others included: composer George Botsford (huge hit with *Black and White Rag*); Charles L. Johnson's *Dill Pickles Rag*; Irene Giblin's *Chicken Chowder*; and Percy Wenrich working with various lyricists
- in 1914, a 15-year-old youth George Gershwin was hired as a song plugger and a piano roll arranger. Tried to submit a couple of pieces that he had composed, but it was made clear to him by management that he was hired to play songs, not to write them.
- This tune is called “*Ketchup Rag*,” written by Irene Giblin in 1910 when she was 22
- The sheet music artwork shows a dancing ketchup bottle, complete with legs and arms, and holding hands with two prancing figures dressed in clown outfits
- As you might expect, it is a lively tune



Irene Giblin (1888-1974)

- ❖ born in St. Louis, Missouri
- ❖ showed a natural talent as a pianist at an early age
- ❖ at 14, she was working as a music demonstrator at a local department store
- ❖ published her first ragtime composition at 16
- ❖ published more than ten ragtime songs over a period of eight years
- ❖ retired from composing in 1913 to raise a family

