

Vaudeville

- Percy was known as “the Joplin Kid” – from his birthplace, not from any relationship with Scott Joplin
- Started playing in public when he was 12
- When he was 21 (1901) was playing in Chicago clubs – started at the wine room at Joe Suits for a dollar a night but “I was too good for the place – I could read music”
- Then to Utopia Café and Bar for two and half dollars a night, and finally to Freddie Train’s for \$15 a night
- In 1906, Percy married the vaudeville performer Dolly Connolly (1888-1965)
- Throughout the 1910s until the eventual demise of vaudeville in the late 1920s, Wenrich both wrote for and toured with Dolly
- Types of acts included popular and classical musicians, singers, dancers, comedians, trained animals, magicians, strongmen, and female impersonators
- Wrote “*Put on your old grey bonnet*”



Percy Wenrich (1880-1952)

- ❖ born in Joplin, Missouri, studied music in Chicago
- ❖ first published work was written at age 17 (1897)
- ❖ moved to New York City around 1907 to work as a Tin Pan Alley composer
- ❖ married a vaudeville performer and they toured together for many years
- ❖ composed at least 18 rags
- ❖ best known for his popular music and worked with a number of talented lyricists
- ❖ *Sweetmeats* (1907) *Crab Apples* (1908)

