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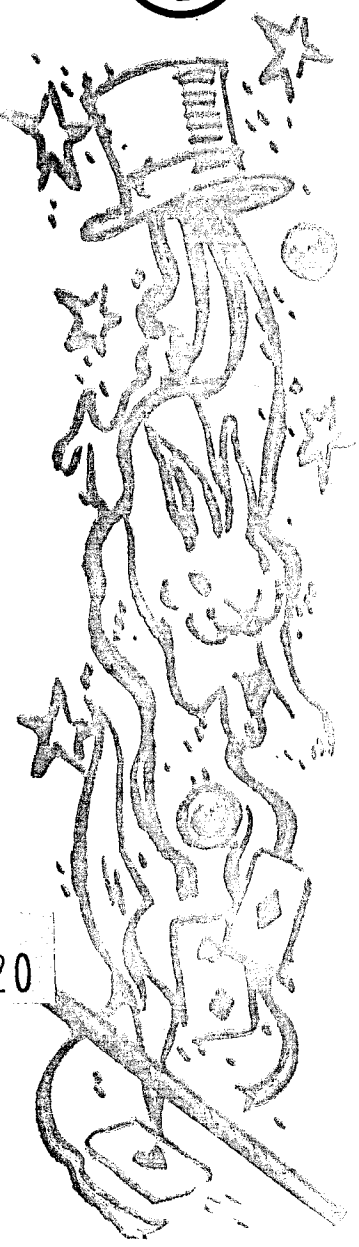
TOPPS



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CELESTE EVANS

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CELESTE EVANS



"The Beauty of Magic"

by Neil Foster

Few people can say that they are gainfully employed doing something that they desired as children. Usually the circumstances are such that they are thrown into situations that have complete and different results as to what they may have dreamed of doing in later life.

Celeste was born in a small town of White Rock, B.C., Canada just north of the U.S. border on the west coast. At the age of 9 she had the good fortune of meeting Mr. Alan Lambe and thoroughly enjoying a performance given by that well known magician, Celeste's eye to the future was already in focus.

With what magic tricks and bits of ribbon and scarfs that a child of nine can gather, Celeste started on the long and involved study of magic. Fearing that her mother would object because of the weird objects and pamphlets being trucked into home, Celeste hid her new found hobby in the attic for two years. Formal schooling and learning magic became the format for Celeste.

As she lived so far away from the big city and any chance of obtaining real professional tricks from magic stores, Celeste had to make do with what she could make herself. Her first set of "Billiard Balls" were ping-pong balls so heavily coated with tacky rubber cement she could do a flat palm levitation. As the fear of dropping the balls was no longer an obstacle, mastering the trick and all its various movements that her little magic books described became very easy. As her patience had not been exhausted as is the case with most nine year olds first attempt at the "multiplying balls", Celeste then decided to take a whack at card manipulations. Again the books were scanned and through sheer stubbornness and four hours a day practicing, she discovered how easy it was to pick the cards up standing over a bed, instead of spending hours on her knees picking them off the floor. Celeste finally mastered a large portion of the basis to card manipulations. Although, as she found out in later years there

were much easier methods to this complicated card magic, her flourishes and dexterity with cards showed beauty and gracefulness. The deck of cards became her very best friend, she carried them everywhere and in every waking hour possible, she would take them out and practice. When her faithful deck got dirty, she would wash them gently with "Lux Flakes", and dry them and then polish them up with the dry "Lux Flakes". As I mentioned she later discovered easier methods, but Celeste had only her small magic books and had only met one "real live magician" in her life.

Fortunately, Celeste had most of the basic magic and finger training behind her when she entered into "Teen-age Life", with all the distractions, sports, movies, school work, and Teen Dances that tend to lure a young girl's interests away from her childhood ambitions. She now could have fun with her hobby and as most of her practicing was done in secret, her first debut to the "living room" audience was met with astonishment and endless questions from the rest of her family. They always thought she shut herself away with her dolls, little did they know that the dolls had been shut away years before.

As Celeste and her magic grew, she felt she had a workable knowledge of the art to enable her to seek out a "professional teacher". After graduating from high school, she moved to the big city nearest her, that being Vancouver, B.C. Celeste found her teacher and after watching his perfection and dexterity in any object he picked up, there could be no better magician to train her. She had found John Kirby, who incidently was a cousin of Alan Lambe and who had trained under Mr. Lambe in his youth. John Kirby put Celeste through five years of hard and involved schooling, correcting bad habits already formed, improving self-taught sleights, teaching her the hard way and then the short cuts so that Celeste should be capable of getting out of any situation. John Kirby took

Celeste through every type of magic, explaining them fully, pointing out the good and bad points, but he frowned on Celeste ever using props. Loving sleight-of-hand as she did, Celeste happily agreed. John Kirby has passed away since then but to Celeste he will always be the greatest.

Her desire for a professional career on stage finally became a reality when she joined a traveling tent show troupe traveling on the west coast. From the "ten in one day" and the rude awakening that tent show audiences can be sometimes nasty, Celeste graduated to the club dates and a series of Canadian Army shows taking her into Korea.

Canada's TV show "Pick the Stars" became the vehicle which brought Celeste to the Eastern provinces. Sandwiched in between the singers and musical acts in the competition simply because her "act wouldn't take long" she easily became the winner in the audition and was flown into Toronto for the show. Night clubs kept her booked solidly until she made New York her headquarters.

Celeste maintained an apartment in New York and conducted her business from that city but lived there seldom. By now, Celeste's eyes were turned across the seas and to what ever adventure and romance awaited her. After touring Europe six times, she teamed up with the United Nations who were sending select entertainment to the various trouble spots where the U.N. troops were posted. Celeste first went to the Gaza Strip in 1959 and then in 1961 they sent her into the Congo . . . just two days after Patrice Lumumba had been killed. Keeping just hours away from the enemy, this brave troupe of four sped into the trouble areas and entertained on whatever make-shift stage or what have you available and sped out again, hearing from reports later that the last place of entertainment had been attacked.

Again in 1961 this adventurous traveler was chosen to represent the United States on a goodwill tour, The John F. Kennedy exchange program. These "ambassadors of goodwill in grease paint" toured for five months to such countries as Afghanistan, Nepal, India, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Iran bringing cheer and laughter to millions of people. The troupe also had the fortune of appearing in palaces and being "presented" to kings and queens, presidents of countries, heads of state and Shahs. The troupe then had to learn how to curtsy.

After satisfying her adventure lust by traveling around the world with her deck of cards, marriage was to be the next big event in her life. Celeste married her agent and manager in 1962. Her husband, Harry Breyn, loves magic and handles not only Celeste but several top name magicians. Harry tags himself as a "Male Magical" because everytime Celeste attends a magic club meeting that has a ladies night affair, Harry finds himself outside in the hall with the ladies while his lovely magic nut of a wife is deeply engrossed inside the meeting with all the men. As he has been

called Mr. Evans so many times, he now answers to the name as if it really belonged to him.

This tall statuesque and beautiful girl makes a stage appearance at the outset which is quite electrifying. As Celeste appears in an evening gown, minus the "sleeves, pockets and concealed hiding places" worn by the men of her profession, the sudden production of eight doves and a real live Toy Poodle adds still more bewilderment to an already baffling act.

