

SUNDERLAND EMPIRE FOR SALE

THE 52-year-old Sunderland Empire, which closed on Saturday last, is for sale. Notices to this effect were displayed outside the theatre on Monday. Until the fate of the 2,700 seater building is decided a caretaker staff of four men employees has been retained. Several of the staff have spent a lifetime at the theatre. Stage manager **Johnny Grieveson**, who started as a callboy, has worked there for nearly 50 years with the exception of a short spell at the nearby Royal, now a cinema. Stage doorkeeper **Jack Knudsen**, one of four brothers who have at one time worked at the theatre, joined the staff a few weeks after Mr. Grieveson. The booking office staff also had a long serving worker in **Mrs. Ann Knowe** with an association of 38 years service to her credit.

Meanwhile some of the staff have already moved on. Chief electrician **Len Fisher**, who came from Edinburgh Empire in October, has taken up the duties of relieving electrician at Nottingham Royal. At one time he worked at the Melbourne Tivoli before coming to this country with an Australian ice speed skating team.

Assistant manager **Philip Rothwell**, member of a well-known Stockport family which has had a life-long connection with show business both on the stage and on the managerial side, is going to take up a similar appointment at Liverpool Empire next week.

