

# "ROSE MARIE" AT CHELMSFORD

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## BRILLIANT PRODUCTION BY LOCAL SOCIETY

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The already praiseworthy record of the Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society is this week being greatly enhanced by the presentation at the Regent Theatre of "Rose Marie," a romance of the Canadian Rockies, and one of the most popular of post-war musical plays.

In putting on this delightful show, with its tuneful music and charming spectacle, the Society is definitely achieving its greatest success since its formation in 1920, and it may truly be said that this is the best amateur production the town has witnessed.

"Rose Marie," which represents the Society's most ambitious effort, is pro-

H. H. Evans and Mr. M. Taunton; perruquiers, Miss Gladys Butcher and Mr. Percy Russell.

The orchestra, with Charles Hambourg as musical director, comprises the following: Violins, Mr. W. H. Bateman (leader), Miss B. Clarke, Mr. G. Hodges, Mr. W. V. McDonald, Mrs. M. Cole, Miss J. Ruddy, and Mr. V. Waldau; viola, Mrs. W. Adkins; 'cello, Mr. F. Hart; bass, Mr. W. L. Barclay; clarinet, Mr. W. Dann; flute, Mr. H. J. Dove; oboe, Mr. W. McMullen; trumpets, Mr. G. Dann and Mr. J. Thomas; trombone, Mr. G. Turner; horns, Mr. V. F. Waller and Mr. G. Clarke; bassoon Mr. J. Biddulph; percussion, Mr. W. Wareham; pianoforte, Mr. A. Heather.

Each performance this week has attracted a full and enthusiastic house and "Rose Marie" is proving itself a

viding large audiences with splendid entertainment. It contains lilting music and good singing, plenty of gaiety and colour and many attractive ensembles, a cast of about 60 combining in some beautiful scenes. Not only is "Rose Marie" a colourful and spectacular production, but musically it also stands high.

The bookings have been unusually heavy, an indication of the fact that the public have been anticipating something better than usual this year—and those who have already seen the show have not been disappointed. The attendance on Monday was a record for a first-night, and from the first moment the performance went swinging merrily and tunefully on its way, and it was soon evident that this was entertainment well above the average. Principal members of the cast did well in both singing and acting and the chorus put in extremely good work in song and dance.

Much of the success which is marking the performances is due to the stamp of professional production which they unmistakably bear, and in this respect the Society has been wise in employing the services of Madge Macklin, the results of whose efforts as producer leave little to be desired. Once again the musical side is well looked after by a nicely-balanced orchestra ably conducted by Charles Hambourg.

The book and lyrics of "Rose Marie" are by Otto Harbach and Oscar Hammerstein, and the music by Rudolf Friml and Herbert Stothart. The main scenes are laid in "Lady Jane's" hotel, Saskatchewan; Totem Pole Lodge in the Canadian Rockies; a novelty shop in Quebec; and the grand ballroom at the Chateau Frontenac, Quebec.

The cast is as follows:—Sergt. Malone, Leonard Pease; Lady Jane, Eileen Hobart; Black Eagle, Cecil Bocking; Edward Hawley, Alex Ogston; Emile la Flamme, Eric Strutt; Wanda, Audrey Parrett; Hard-Boiled Herman, Fred. Munnion; Jim Kenyon, Gilbert Torry; Rose Marie la Flamme, Rose Rowbotham; Ethel Brander, Dorothy Bocking; a caretaker, Cecil Bocking.

Ladies of the Chorus: Rene Babbs, Mary Barneveld, Olive Burton, Marjorie Byford, Ida Clarke, Audrey Cutts, Emily Everett, Gwen Farrow, Hilda Fewell, Lilian Finning, Peggy Guest, Joan Howard, Marjorie Hunt, Doris Johnson, Margaret Martin, Joyce Mayhew, Muriel Millington, Barbara Parsons, Betty Pearce, Mary Phillips, Deenie Radford, Pat Rollason, Phyllis Rowe, Molly Seal, Lilian Smyth-Tyrrell, Winnie Torry, Josephine Wells, Pauline Williams.

Gentlemen of the Chorus: William Babbs, John Barnard, Harold Berry, Guy Bevington, Eric Bruce, Ernest Bryan, Douglas Catt, Sidney Finning, Stan Hunt, Geoffrey King, Cyril Palmer, Peter Sherman, Jack Stanley, Alec Torry, John Verney, Ralph Williams.

Rose Rowbotham

Rose Rowbotham, who plays the title role of Rose Marie, has, with two exceptions, assisted the Society in all its productions. This year she again gives a winsome portrayal, is outstanding in singing and acting, and easily maintains her reputation for histrionic talent. Hers is a very likeable characterisation, and is noteworthy for the way she sustains the French-Canadian accent. Her acting is finely expressed, and her singing a real delight, especially in the numbers, "Indian Love Call" and "If a man should ask."

A new-comer to the Society who is making a name for herself is Eileen Hobart, who adapts herself admirably to her part as the keeper of a Saskatchewan saloon. She gives an almost flawless caricature of an emotional and typical saloon-keeper, her lines are well spoken, and her presence is pleasing. Playing a difficult part, Audrey Parrett, a clever actress, gives an impressive portrayal of the vamping, ardent, and alluring half-caste, Wanda. Her dances are a speciality, and she scores her greatest triumph when dancing and singing with the chorus in the number, "Totem Tom-Tom." Dorothy Bocking plays a dignified, haughty, and scheming part with commendable ability, and speaks her lines well.

Leonard Pease makes a striking figure as Sergeant Malone, of the Mounties. A singer and actor of more than usual talent, he is well qualified to turn to account the opportunities which his part affords. His acting is excellent, and, possessing a ringing voice, he is clearly heard even in the most distant corners of the theatre. The only matter for regret is that "Rose Marie" offers him insufficient scope for his vocal qualities.

Another of the Society's firm favourites, Fred Munnion, once again is in capital form as the principal laughter-maker. The virility of this born comedian adds considerably to the success of the production, and his antics convulse the audiences with laughter. He creates any amount of fun, in which he is aided and abetted by Lady Jane and Sergeant Malone. These three are responsible for one of the jolliest numbers, "Only a kiss." Jim Kenyon, the passionate lover of Rose Marie, is admirably played by Gilbert Torry, who expresses himself particularly well in a number of emotional scenes. His singing is effective and he is at ease in his part.

A noteworthy characterisation of a demonstrative and gesticulating Frenchman is given by Eric Strutt in the role of the French-Canadian fur-trader brother of Rose Marie. Alex. Ogston acts realistically, sings well, and speaks his lines with excellent enunciation and expression. He makes the most of his part, as also does Cecil Bocking playing the role of the degenerate Indian, Black Eagle, and later as a caretaker.

Special mention must be made of the chorus, particularly the lady members, whose dancing in typical chorus-girl style is a feature of the performance. Some of the ensembles are especially pretty, and the dancing is marked by rhythm and grace. Generally, the singing is harmonious and well balanced, and provides adequate support for the principals.

Others who assist are: Hon. prompter, Major F. W. M. Powley; hon. call boy, Mr. W. J. Turner; hon. accompanist, Mr. Alfred Heather; hon. property masters, Mr.

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Each performance this week has attracted a full and enthusiastic house and "Rose Marie" is proving itself a

record-making success. In fact the Society has already established several records. Expenses are greater than ever before, but the takings and the attendances have never been equalled. Takings alone are already well above those for the whole of the week last year. The number of performers creates yet another record, and—most important of all—there is good reason for saying that the quality of the entertainment itself excels that of any previous production.

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"ROSE MARIE."—Some of the principals in the Chelmsford Operatic and Dramatic Society's production at the Regent Theatre, Chelmsford. Left  
 Rose Marie (Rose Rowbotham), Jim Kenyon (Gilbert Torry), Hard-Boiled Herman (Fred Munnion), Ethel Brander (Dorothy Bocking), Lady Jane (Edith  
 Wanda (Audrey Bennett), Black Eagle (Geoff Bocking), Edward Hawley (Alex Ogston). Photo