



67th SEASON — 1951 - 52

## Oldham Musical Society

President: Miss Marjory Lees. Chairman: Frank Whittaker, Esq.  
Vice-Presidents: Ernest Lord, Esq., Fred Thompson, Esq.  
Ernest Craig, Esq.

*presents*

Concert Version of the Opera

# “The Bartered Bride”

(SMETANA—arr. Julius Harrison)

In the GREENACRES HALL, on  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30th, 1951, at 7-15 p.m.

Under the gracious patronage of the Mayor and Mayoress  
Alderman and Mrs. Lord and the Chief  
Constable, W. E. Schofield, O.B.E.

### *Characters:*

KRUSINA, a peasant (Baritone) ..... Sung by the Chorus  
LUDMILA, his wife (Soprano) ..... Sung by the Chorus  
MARENKA, their daughter (Soprano) ..... MINNIA BOWER  
MICHA, a peasant (Bass) ..... Sung by the Chorus  
HATA, his second wife (Mezzo-Soprano)—  
Sung by the Chorus  
VASEK, her son (Tenor) ..... JAMES JOHNSTON  
JENIK, son of Micha's first wife (Tenor)—  
JAMES JOHNSTON  
KECAL, the village marriage broker (Bass)—  
OWEN BRANNIGAN

Leader of Orchestra: FRED BROUGH

Conductor: ERNEST CRAIG, A.R.C.M.

Accompanist: FRANK BERRY, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M.

PROGRAMME - THREEPENCE

Hon. Secretary: S. MILLS, 134 Birch Avenue, Chadderton.



*Oldham Musical Society*

## Smetana's 'The Bartered Bride'

FROM time to time an operatic composer emerges who allows a breath of clear cool air to blow through the opera houses of the world. In this century and in this country there has been Benjamin Britten with his "Peter Grimes"; but there is a better and perhaps greater example in the nineteenth century Czechoslovak composer Bedrich Smetana, a concert version of whose opera "The Bartered Bride" was presented at Hill Stores by the Oldham Musical Society on Tuesday night. The music of this most famous of all Slavonic folk-operas is lilting and captivating, as clear and rippling as the rivers and streams of the Bohemia which it has depicted for generation after generation of opera-goers. It is an example of a work of art conceived in joy—joy "impatient as the wind" as the poet has it.

For a successful presentation it depends on perfect accord between soloists, chorus and orchestra—for the music is no mere accompaniment to the words as in so many early Italian operas. This was achieved under the skilful conductorship of Mr. Ernest Craig, and the only word of criticism is that on occasions the orchestra—which played superbly throughout—tended to swamp the soloists.

The soloists Minnia Bower (soprano), Llewellyn John (tenor), who deputised at short notice for Mr. James Johnston who was ill, and Owen Brannigan (bass) radiated the infectious gaiety of the opera: in solo, duet or ensemble their singing was graceful and easy. By eschewing operatic rhetoric they produced performances that were models of musicianship and taste.

However good the playing of the orchestra and the singing of the soloists the whole could have been marred by poor chorus-work. But there were no weak chains in the performance, and the Oldham Musical Society chorus sang beautifully. A delightful balance between voices, roundness of tone, and precision of phrasing betokened careful and patient rehearsal.

Mr. Fred Brough was the leader of the orchestra and Mr. Frank Berry the accompanist.—J.B.

L.F. Wednesday, October 31, 1951.

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F. SCHOFIELD  
ALSO PRESIDENT