

ERMINIE

Comic opera in 2 acts. Music by Edward Jakobowski; Libretto by Claxson Bellamy & Harry Paulton (based on Charles Selby's Robert Macaire)

Grand Theatre, Birmingham, England - 26 October, 1885; transferred to the Comedy Theatre, London 9 November 1885; transferred to the Gaiety Theatre, London . Closed 3 April, 1886 (154 perfs)

Casino Theatre, Broadway: Opened 10 May 1886; closed 26 June, 1888 (571 perfs).[3]

SYNOPSIS

Erminie is the daughter of the Marquis de Pontvert. She has been promised, in an arranged marriage, to Ernest, Vicomte de Brissac. He is a young nobleman and the son of an old war comrade of Erminie's father. Erminie and Ernest have never met each other. Erminie, however, is secretly in love with her father's secretary, Eugène, and Ernest is secretly in love with Cerise Marcel, who is Eugene's sister and Erminie's friend. Eugène and Cerise are orphans who were taken in to his household by Erminie's father. Eugene feels that his subservient position makes it impossible for him to ask the Marquis for Erminie's hand in marriage.

On his way to the betrothal ceremony, Ernest runs into a pair of crafty "philanthropists" (thieves), Ravennes and Cadeau, who steal his money and wardrobe and tie him to a tree. They disguise Ravennes as Ernest and Cadeau as a Baron and blunder into the Lion d'Or for the betrothal, saying that they were waylaid by thieves. Seeing the wealthy wedding guests, they scheme to make off with a lot of money. Cadeaux gets drunk, however, and his bad manners nearly spoil the scheme. Ernest eventually escapes his bonds and arrives late and in disordered attire at the Lion d'Or. Seeing Ernest, Ravennes cries "Seize the villain," claiming that Ernest is the thief who attacked them earlier in the day. Ernest is arrested and tossed in jail.

At the Chateau Pontvert that evening, Ravennes, still disguised as Ernest, pretends sympathy for Erminie's love for Eugene. He promises to help her to elope. At the same time, she unwittingly helps him to rob the house and the wedding guests. Eventually, however, in a farcical comedy of errors and mistaken identities, the plan fails, and the robbers are arrested. Nevertheless, their scheming inadvertently rescues Erminie from the arranged marriage, as both pairs – Eugene and Erminie, and Ernest and Cerise – are happily united.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. Overture
2. Introduction, Chorus & Ensemble - "Around in a whirl we skip, dance and twirl; let each boy and girl make merry..."
3. Exit (Reprise) - "Around in a whirl we skip..."
4. Chorus & Ensemble - "Vive le Marquis! vive le Marquis! Welcome, welcome to the fête..."
5. Exit (Reprise) - "At village feast here meeting you..."
6. Song - Erminie & Chorus - "Ah, when love is young, all the world seems gay! Tra la la la la la la la la..."



7. Duet - Erminie & Eugène - "There is a sweet remembrance of the past, a treasur'd dream, a dream I fondly store..."
8. Entrance of Soldiers & Chorus - "All for glory the soldier's life; from the conflict scorning e'er to flee..."
9. Song - Marquis & Chorus - "Dull is the life of the soldier in peace, with hateful routine until war brings release..."
10. Exit (Reprise) - "All for glory the soldier's life..."
11. & 11a - Entrance & Duett - Ravannes & Cadeaux - "We're a philanthropic couple, be it known..."
12. Dream Song - Erminie - "At midnight on my pillow lying, by daily toil oppress'd..."
13. Concerted Piece - "The blissful pleasure I profess of such a meeting overjoys me..."
14. Finale Act I - "Away to the chateau, away from the throng, where bridegroom and bride will be plight-ed ere long..."
15. Entr'acte
16. Introduction, Chorus, Ensemble & Song - Marie - "Here on lord and lady waiting, court gallants and nobles all..."
17. Exit (Reprise) - "Here on lord and lady waiting..."
18. Song - Eugène - "Darkest the hour ere light of dawn beameth; deepest the gloom ere the storm clouds divide..."
19. Chorus & Song - Erminie - "Joy attend our Erminie, hers be ev'ry earthly bliss..."
20. Song - Erminie - "A lover in his mirror gaz'd, with visage wan, and glare half-craz'd, to see if thinner he had grown..."
21. Song - Cadeaux & Whistling Chorus - "I'm not a free agent, like any of you, there's them as looks arter my fate..."
22. Vocal Gavotte - "Join in pleasure, dance a measure, fondly treasure hours so bright..."
23. Lullaby - Erminie & Chorus - "Dear mother, in dreams I see her, with lov'd face sweet and calm..."
24. Supper Chorus - "Come to supper, let's repair..."
25. Scene Change
26. Concerted Piece (unaccompanied) - "'Tis growing late, yes, 'tis growing late, and time to end the fête..."
27. Finale Act II - "Should we gain your favours, ev'ry heart is gay..."

CAST

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marquis de Pontvert • Eugène Marcel (the Marquis' secretary) • Vicomte Ernest de Brissac • Captain Delaunay (a young officer) • Sergeant • Dufois (the Landlord of the Lion d'Or) • Simon (a Waiter) • Henri • Pierre • Chevalier de Brabazon (the Marquis' guest) • Ravennes (a thief) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cadeau (a thief) • Cerise Marcel (Erminie's companion) • Javotte (Erminie's maid) • Marie • Clementine • Princesse de Grampeneur • Erminie de Pontvert • M. St. Brice • M. D'Auvigne • M. De Nailles • M. de Sangres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mme. St. Brice • Mme. de Lage • Mme. de Brefchamp • Mme. de Chateauln • Antoinette • Charlotte • Jeanette • Mignon • Rosalie • Niniche • Nanine • Fanchette
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SYNOPSIS of Scenery

ACT I - The Village Fête in Pontvert, France.

ACT II - The Ballroom in the Marquis de Pontvert's Chateau.