

# Richard Harris 'a hit' in London



RICHARD HARRIS in "Diary Of A Madman."

ORD SNOWDEN took some photographs at the rehearsals, and with Princess Margaret, came back stage to congratulate a young actor on his amazing performance in "The Diary of a Madman," at the Royal Court Theatre, London. All this happened in Limerick-born Richard Harris, who is also starring in six films now running in London's West End—"Mutiny on the Bounty" and "This Sporting Life."

A HIGHLIGHT of my recent visit to London was seeing myself the brilliant performance of Richard Harris in "The Diary of a Madman," staged at the Royal Court Theatre in the Square.

THE SIGHT of RICHARD HARRIS on the stage was exciting enough but, entering the theatre, I found myself surprised that I was expected, that two guest seats had been thoughtfully left for me at the office.

As the over-thoughful Dickie Harris had gone away he had arranged for my private seat in the front row of the Royal Court Theatre and a splendid tradition and of today's most famous theatres have graduated from its boards.

It was therefore with a sense of expectancy that I awaited the rise of the curtain. The next two hours were sheer theatre. Harris proved that he is an actor of stature and

I asked "Dickie" would it be possible for him to include Limerick. He felt elated at the idea of playing in his native city and said that if he decides to go to Dublin, Limerick will in all probability follow.

Harris is now a world-famous personality. He has played in films with James Cagney, Robert Mitchum, Charlton Heston, Gary Cooper, Marlon Brando and Trevor Howard to name but a few.

It is no secret in show business that they all found themselves hard pressed to keep up with the magnetic star quality which he has now acquired.

## Backstage Lindsay Anderson

I hurried back stage after the performance to find several Limerick people in the number one dressing room, including Mr. Dick Nanton of the Customs and Excise and Mr. Kennedy of Thomondgate.

Richard was very pleased to find that we liked the show, which had run the gauntlet of the critics. A number of them felt that he was attempting something beyond his scope at this stage of his career.

However, I learned that London, New York, Paris, Munich, Dublin, and other world capitals are waiting eagerly to see his marathon one-man performance.

Finally, Harris is well versed in everything that is happening in Limerick and he had all the latest sports results at his fingertips. Fame has not changed him or dimmed his ever bubbling exuberance, which is probably the best tribute that I can pay him at this stage of his career.

## "This Sporting Life"

Lewisham Odeon Manager, Mr. Thompson greeted me on my arrival at this huge cinema which has been practically rebuilt following a disastrous fire over a year ago.

It is now equipped for bingo, stage shows, one-night stands, children's matinees and, of course, the cream of the celluloid entertainment.

I should mention that Lindsay Anderson is also the director of "This Sporting Life," an explosively tense drama of human relationships.

It gives Harris his most challenging role to date and one which has established him, as one critic put it, as "a new screen giant."

He co-stars with Rachel Roberts and her brilliant performance does much to make this such an absorbing and dramatic screen play.

"Dickie" was loud in his praise of the performance of this actress and I made it my business to find out more about her.

# 'I was scared stiff ...'

## Says Rachel Roberts

IN striking contrast to the proud and reserved Mrs. Hammond, whom she portrays in "This Sporting Life," the on-screen Rachel Roberts is witty, outgoing, and as Welsh as Wales.

She is also an uncommonly gifted actress who has brought to Mrs. Hammond a complex and realistic character who will stay in the mind of Angora's long after they have seen the film.

## Adore My Life

IN private life Rachel Roberts is Mrs. Rex Harrison. Having had more than her fair share of ups and downs as an actress she speaks with refreshing candour of her present success as an actress and as the wife of one of the world's most popular film stars.

"I adore my life with Rex," she says. "The one thing I like about my life is that we relax thoroughly. I read, swim and go for long walks."

"We go to bed early and rise late. Since I have been married to Rex I have had time to think about life and sort out my values. Professionally it means that I will accept only parts in which I really believe."

## Met at the Court

Such a part is that of Mrs. Hammond, but even the challenge of this outstanding role would not have lured her away from her happy home in Italy where it was for the fact that she successfully on to the screen was shared by Karel Reisz and Lindsay Anderson.

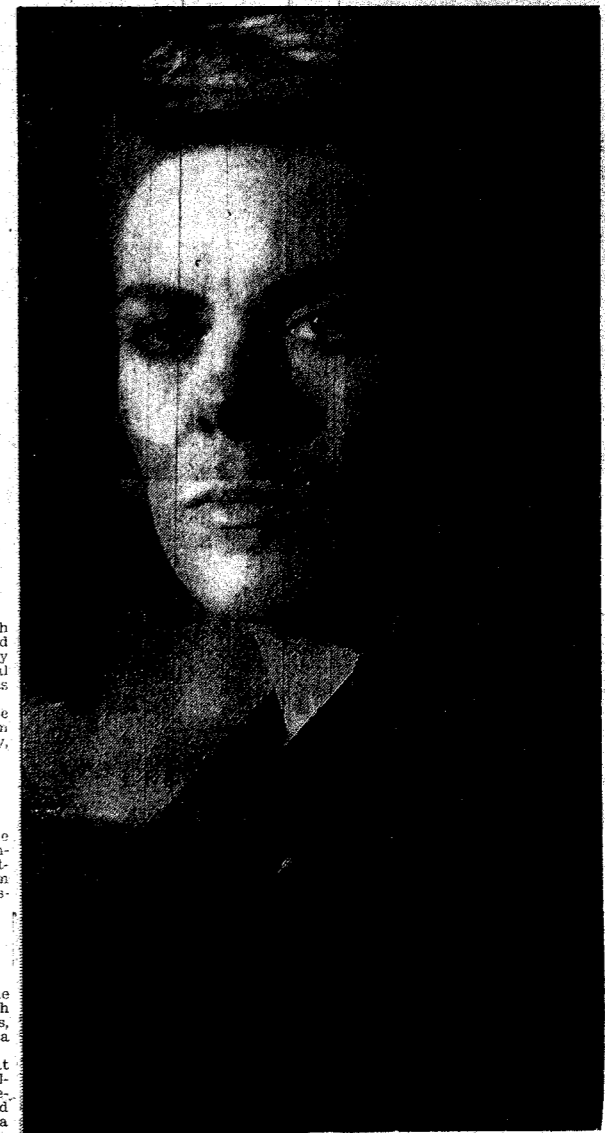
## The Exact Opposite

"I was frightened of her," she says, "frightened of Mrs. Hammond, she is such a strange knot of nervous character. And I'm Welsh, ebullient—the exact opposite."

"I was scared stiff of Mrs. Hammond, but Karel and Lindsay resolved all my doubts."

Miss Roberts, daughter of the Rev. Richard Roberts, a Welsh minister, studied teaching in Wales, then went to London as a drama student.

To pay her way she sold meat pies at Olympia. Did figure modelling at the Slade School of Art. Became a waitress at a cafe called The Welsh Kitchen. Taught drama to the children in London's Camberwell. And worked as a nurse and then as a cook in a mental home.



RACHEL ROBERTS in "This Sporting Life."

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