

All the links in 'The Paper Chain'

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"The Paper Chain" an excursion into the intrigues of murder and spying by Falkland, L. Cary and Ivan Butler, and presented last week by the Farrar-street Church Players, retains much of the innocuous quality of Mr. Cary's more popular comedies. The story concerns the murder by his attractive cousin of the inoffensive, middle-aged civil servant, who had some rather obscure atomic secrets.

The Farrar-street Players would have been well advised to have chosen a piece with a little more zip and action for their first attempt at heavy drama.

The setting of the lounge of a small country hotel was really excellent, bright and authentic, and the production, in general, was quite good, though at times, the pace tended to slow down to tedium.

As the femme fatale, Jean Cassel, Margaret Hill had the requisite intelligence and smart appearance to give credulity to the part, and her acting, especially in the more dramatic moments, had an appealing quality. Her victim, Maurice Spencer, met his demise early on in the play, but was portrayed with harassed conviction by Frank Blades.

Jean Hammond made a charming Anne Roberts, secretary to the rather forbidding Mrs. Hackett, a part in which Edith Challenger excelled with some clear, incisive diction, and the poise of experience.

Ruth Rapson was very amusing, in natural manner, as the maid, Ruby, and Muriel Holgate cleverly caricatured the murderer's accomplice, Doris Lamont.

A most natural, unassuming performance was given by Mary Johnson as the hotel manageress, Mrs. Dennison.

The Law was well represented by 15-years-old John Horncastle, who had a very promising debut as Inspector Jack Harvey. However, it is asking a lot of a youngster of such tender years to play an adult character in a company of older players and despite the stage moustache, the youthful appearance was not entirely disguised, but it is good experience, and the Players have another good prospect in young John.

Arthur Bowker, as Superintendent Robert Needham, was shrewd and businesslike in his questioning of the various suspects, and he skillfully avoided the monotony which can so easily creep into these detective roles.

On the whole, Mr. Tom Horncastle had quite a good production, but a little more meat the contents of the play would have added to the evening.



BARNESLEY Farrar Street Church Players are presenting "The Paper Chain" this week. All the "links"—the full cast—are seen in this picture.