

LEEDS CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Horsforth Players in Mark Twain Story

Taking part in this week's production by the Leeds Children's Theatre of "Tom Sawyer's Treasure Hunt," a dramatised passage from Mark Twain's immortal story, are five Horsforth children. They are George Fawcett, of Broadway (The New Boy); Cedric Roberts, Outwood Lane (Billy Fisher); Marjorie Banks, Stanhope Drive (Amy Lawrence); Joyce Mann, Broadgate (Sally); and Marjorie Bagshaw, Sunnydale. All are 13 years of age, with the exception of George Fawcett, who is 15.

The play, produced by Arthur Cox, was originally thought to be too short for presentation on its own, and a prologue, depicting the white-washing scene, and an inset, a dialogue with Tom and Becky Thatcher lost in the depths of Injun Joe's cave, were written into it by Arthur Riley, a retired Leeds headmaster, who also took the part of Muff Potter.

Jeremy Smart, aged 12, of Roundhay School, gave an outstanding performance as Tom, well supported by Ann Miles, 13-years-old daughter of Mr. Maurice Miles, conductor of the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra, as Becky Thatcher.

During the week, parties from Featherbank School, South View School and Aireborough Grammar School have seen the play. Most of the cast of 31 are children; the grown-ups being school teachers or members of the Leeds Arts Centre.

The production and performance are of considerable merit. Lines are remembered faultlessly and meaning is skillfully matched by action: both essential qualities achieved only by hard work.

The next production by the Leeds Children's Theatre will be "The Snow Queen," a fairy tale by Hans Anderson, to be given in the Civic Theatre in December.