



Operetta

LEO, THE ROYAL CADET

(BIOGRAPHY) The “entirely new and original Canadian military opera” was written in 1889 in Kingston, Ontario by the Nova Scotia poet GEORGE F. CAMERON (1854-85) and OSCAR F. TELGMANN (1855-1946), the German-born conductor, educator, composer and violinist. For over 50 years, Telgmann was a leading musical figure

in Kingston, Ontario. **(BACKGROUND)** *Leo, The Royal Cadet* was unique as an [operetta](#), for it drew its situations and characters from a Canadian institution — the [Royal Military College](#) of Canada in Kingston. The work traces the hero’s career at the college and includes an affectionate spoof of local characters such as the college’s professors of German and French as well as the Commandant and the cadets. Leo’s battle experiences during the [Zulu War of 1879](#) and his eventual reunion with his true love Nellie provide additional points of interest in the pageant-like plot. The work was first staged at Martin’s Opera House in Kingston in July 1889 and featured an all-Kingston cast. A specially organized Leo Opera Company took the work on tour in 1890 to several Ontario towns. A number of revivals are known to have occurred up to 1925, and it is estimated that, by that point, the popular operetta had received about 150 performances.

(MUSIC) The three interconnected numbers are taken from Act II. These feature the wily Commandant and Nellie in a short [recitative](#), “Ho! Ho! My Pretty Maid,” followed by the two airs “I Met him in the far away” and “Ho, Ho! My airy fairy maid” — each distinguished by bugle-like imitations. The tunes are

catchy, bright and musically indebted to [Arthur Sullivan](#) (1842-1900)

(PUBLICATIONS)

Libretto: Kingston: Henderson & Co., 1889; [CMH 10](#), 96-100.

(RECORDINGS) Russell Braun, Sally Dibblee and Carolyn Maule, *Le Souvenir* [Centrediscs, Série Lavallée Series, CMC-CD 5696].



Battle Scene, Act III of *Leo, the Royal Cadet*
Poster Courier Co. LITH. DPT.

