E AL I N G  S T U D I O S

present

FRANCOISE ROSAY
TOM WALLS
PATRICIA ROC

in

JOHNNY FRENCHMAN

with

RALPH MICHAEL
PAUL DUPUIS

(By arrangement with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation)

FREDERIC PIPER
PAUL BONIFAS

ORIGINAL SCREEN PLAY
BY
T. E. B. CLARKE
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER:
S. C. BALCON

Director of Photography:
ROY KELLINO
Editor:
MICHAEL TRUMAN
Production Supervisor:
HAL MASON

Sound Supervisor:
ERIC WILLIAMS
Art Director:
DUNCAN SUTHERLAND

Recordist:
L. PAGE
Sound Cutter:
MARY HABBERFIELD
Assistant Editor:
BARBARA BENNETT

Camera Operator:
JACK PARKER
Wardrobe Supervision:
MARION HORNE
Make-up:
TOM SHENTON

Unit Managers:
MICHAEL McCARTHY
RONALD BRANTFORD
Music composed by
CLIFTON PARKER
Played by
LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Conducted by
ERNEST IRVING

Produced by:
MICHAEL BALCON
Directed by
CHARLES FREND

E A G L E - L I O N  D I S T R I B U T I O N

Length: 9,406 feet.
Certificate: "U"
Registered No.: Br./Tr. 8,437
The Story

"Johnny Frenchman" is the story of the age-old rivalry between the Cornish and the Breton fisherfolk. The tiny port of Mevagissey in Cornwall was chosen as the background for the film, and it served in turn for the Cornish fishing village of Trevannick, and the Breton harbour of Lanec, both names of locations used in the story. The Ealing Studios unit spent twelve weeks at Mevagissey during the shooting of the exteriors of the film. The local fisherfolk were used in many sequences of the film and for the French scenes French refugees from Newlyn and Penzance were brought over. In addition, the Admiralty gave permission for the French fishermen (most of them Bretons) to bring their boats over from Newlyn to take part in the film. Many of these men had played gallant parts during the German occupation of France. They were members of the Resistance movement, and helped to smuggle dozens of British and American soldiers and airmen over to the English coast.

Francoise Bosay as Lanec Florrie is the leader of the Breton fisherfolk, and she and her crews poach repeatedly on the Trevannick fishing grounds and evade harbour dues on every possible occasion. Florrie has a son Yan (Paul Dupuis) who runs his own boat and is always in the forefront of the poaching expeditions.

The leader of the Cornish colony is Nat Pomeroy (Tom Walls) who is harbourmaster of Trevannick. Nat has a particular grudge against the Bretons; first for the dues he loses, and secondly because he is also a fisherman.

Nat has a daughter, Sue (Patricia Roc), the belle of the village, who is courted by handsome young Bob Tremayne (Ralph Michael) and the match is favoured by Nat.

The feud which has been going on for years is partially healed on one occasion when the Frenchmen, who happen to be caught in the act of poaching and brought into Trevannick harbour, suddenly turn to and help the Cornishmen land a gigantic catch of mullet. This good deed leads to an exchange of good wishes culminating in the French inviting the Cornishmen over to Lanec for a grand wrestling tournament. (Cornish and Breton wrestling is a grand sport and both styles are similar).

Yan meets Sue at the fete preceding the match between Yan and Bob. During one of the tussles Yan falls and breaks a leg. The Frenchmen claim that Bob fouled Yan. Florrie is furious at the accident to her son, and the Cornishmen are seen off by a hooting crowd of Bretons. Once more, the feud is on.

War breaks out, and in 1940 France is overrun by the Germans.

Florrie and Yan escape to England bringing with them a large proportion of the population of Lanec, and a number of English soldiers. They come to Trevannick, and Sue and Yan’s love-making is the scandal of the village and disgusts Nat, whose antipathy to the French is as strong as ever.

Bob, who has been called up, comes home on leave, and Sue tells him that she loves Yan. Yan and Bob have a terrific fight, and Yan, who has promised to marry Sue at Falmouth the next day, disappears. Bob goes back to his unit, and Sue is heartbroken.

Florrie eventually explains that Yan has gone on secret Navy work and was unable to give his whereabouts. On his return to Falmouth, Florrie enters into a conspiracy with him and smuggles Sue out of the village and she and Yan are married. When Florrie breaks the news to Nat he is furious and swears that he will not have his daughter in the house again.

One stormy day a floating mine is seen approaching the harbour of Trevannick. If it hits the breakwater the whole village will be destroyed. In face of strong opposition Florrie puts out in her boat with her crew, gets a seine net around the mine and tows it out to sea, thus saving Trevannick.

This courageous feat is watched from the shore by the whole village, and on her return Florrie is carried shoulder high up the village street by a cheering crowd. Nat relents and gives Yan and Sue his blessing, and the picture ends with the refugees sailing back to a liberated France, Sue with them, eager to get back to her new home.