



Hilda Boot aka Butsova 1896-1976

Prima Ballerina

Hilda was born in Nottingham living at 62 Upper Parliament St in 1901 with her grandmother and parents who were confectioners. Her first performance was in Alice in Wonderland at the Savoy Theatre in 1910 at which time she was also lodging in London in order to study at Stedman's Dance academy.

By 1912 she had joined Diaghilev's Ballet Russe in Covent Garden was spotted by Pavlova and invited to join her company where she took the name Butsova at Pavlova's suggestion. She travelled with them to Germany, Russia, Cuba, Mexico, central and south America, then London and then Japan, Hong Kong, India, Egypt. etc touring extensively from 1912 – 19. She was understudy to Pavlova. Nottingham Journal 1923 called her 'one of the acknowledged leading classical dancers of the world.' In 1925 she married the impresario Harry Mills and left Pavlova's company being given a Faberge diamond watch. She then danced with various companies and in 1929 performed in London Blackpool and Newcastle.

She returned to USA in 1930 dancing again with Pavlova and was part of a robbery of her husband's theatre in which a gangster was killed as she described in a letter home. In the mid 1930's she opened her own dance school in Brooklyn and then did lengthy teaching roles with 2 other dance schools living at 340 West 72nd Street where she died after a heart attack in 1976