

JOE E. BROWN TO HELP LYRIC CELEBRATE VAUDEVILLE FEAT

Famous Actor's Newest Film, 'Earthworm Tractors,' Scheduled to Open Friday

Max Weber Is Booked to Head Theater's Anniversary Stage Show; Four Other Acts Are to Share Olsen-Nicholas Spotlight.

BY JOHN W. THOMPSON

Starting Friday, the Lyric is to celebrate an important occasion with Joe E. Brown as cinema host in his latest comedy, "Earthworm Tractors."

The Lyric's party is to be in celebration of the theater's having completed 100 consecutive weeks of vaudeville, a good record for any theater.

Charles M. Olsen, Lyric owner, challenged Indianapolis theatergoers to support vaudeville shows through the depression and they did.

So Mr. Olsen and his right-hand man, Ted Nicholas, decided to do a little deserved bragging. On the Lyric's stage during the anniversary week a five-act vaudeville is to hold sway.

Heading the performers is to be Rex Weber, comedian and ventriloquist. Supplementing Mr. Weber's act is to be the Variety Female Chorus, singers; Ross and Bennett, in an act entitled "No Sense and Nonsense"; Bell Brothers and Carmen, variety act, and the Five Cordovas, acrobats.

Post Stories Used

"Earthworm Tractors" is a movie adaptation of William Hazlett Upson's stories which appeared in the Saturday Evening Post. They concern the galvanizing of Alexander Botta, who claimed he could sell anything and got the job of distributing tractors.

To film the picture, a huge synthetic swamp was designed and several miles of mountain trails manufactured. A half dozen 17-ton tractors were used as motorized actors, and also as post-shooting set-making equipment. Tractors' total weight was 100,000 pounds.

Mr. Brown, who at his own instance, does his own stunt work, drove the tractors through some pretty tough country. Mountain grades of 70 per cent, arroyos such as war-time tanks had to cross, and terrifically large loads hauled across brush-strewn country tested both Mr. Brown and the tractors.

Brown Moves House

One of the funniest sequences in the film is said to be a house-moving stunt. It features Mr. Brown driving a tractor and dragging behind him a house in which Guy Kibbee reads serenely. The climax comes when a chain breaks, leaving the house perched on railroad tracks.

As Mr. Brown's new leading lady, "Earthworm Tractors" will present June Travis.

Miss Travis never had appeared on the professional stage and had had absolutely no screen experience when she got her first film contract and role in "Stranded," starring Kay Francis. In her second picture, she took the feminine lead. She was born in Chicago, the daughter of Harry Grabner, vice president and general manager of the Chicago White Sox. With music and painting for hobbies, she still is considered one of the best woman hockey players in the country, and she organized a softball league in Hollywood.

Others in the cast of "Earthworm Tractors" include Carol Hughes, Gene Lockhart and Dick Foran.

Il Duce to Boss Movie Making When Director Moves to Rome

Dick Powell's Popularity Hinders Relaxation When He and Joan Blondell Visit Park.

BY RUTH McTAMMANY

HOLLYWOOD, July 20.—Walter Wanger's production plans for picture making in Rome is unique. Having returned from that city, where he made final arrangements with Mussolini for construction of a film city, he now faces problems of casting, making and releasing the American-Italian product.

He plans to make, during the coming year, seven Hollywood features, then he is to go to Rome, where he will make five pictures.

He is to be starred in the first Rome production. American stars, Italian small part players and "extras," together with Italian backgrounds, necessitates use of stories which adapt themselves to this unusual setup. The larger market for the films will be in English-speaking countries.

At the same time, it will be natural to presume that Il Duce will want pictures in which he is background and story theme; in fact, with Italian money backing the project, he will have much to say.

Walter Wanger is the big boss on his Hollywood lot, but how will he make out under the dictatorship of Mussolini?

The Hollywood bowl, one of the largest open air theaters in the world, recently was the scene of the opening concert, "Under the Stars," of this season. The Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra gave the program before an audience of 15,000.

The film colony, including many stars, help support these community, non-profit performances. May Robson and her party occupied one of the larger boxes. John Boles, Bert Lytell, Edward Arnold also were in nearby boxes. Daniel Frohman, escorted by a group of veteran theater people, were hailed by cheers and admiring friends on their way to a box.

Janet MacDonald and Gene Raymond, affected by a California moon and Debussy suite of plain music, held hands in collegiate fashion. Between numbers, a press photographer spied Jack Barrymore, Ariel and her mother. The spotlight warmed them; that their photographs had been taken. Barrymore flew into a rage, jumped from his seat and yelled, "Come back here and I'll punch you in the nose." It was a discordant note in the harmony of good music and moon setting for a first night at Hollywood Bowl.

I found Dick Powell out in his garden studying the script for his

Wig Producers Are Kept Busy

Historical and Biographical Movies Increase Business.

By United Press

HOLLYWOOD, July 20.—The movies are in the throes of another "wig cycle," which is hiking earnings on wigmakers who once depended almost solely on the vanity of bald-headed men.

Historical pictures, biographical dramatizations of the long-dead great and Shakespeare have created a new demand for wigs, as well as revealing interesting data on their manufacture.

Hundreds of wigs are made annually in Hollywood by skilled workmen. Hair is imported from European countries.

The laws of this country require that all hair sold in America be imported. It doesn't matter if an American sells hair, but he must send it to Europe before he can sell it to an American firm.

Movie wigmakers have made a thing of beauty of the artificial scalp. said Wally Westmore, one studio makeup man, who explained how they were manufactured.

After taking measurements of the wearer's head and constructing a base of net and gauze, the hair must be crocheted into the base by a process known as ventilating.

This is done by skilled ventilators who afterward make the front part of the wig out of hair lace, the making of which is the most difficult part of all.

Each individual hair is ventilated into the framework of hair lace and the finished product is so made that it scarcely can be told from natural hair.

Nearly all false moustaches are made of hair lace when worn by principal players. That is because they appear in closeups. Bit and extra players just stick on a bank of hair with spirit gum.

Played in Stock

"Freddie March, co-starring with Katharine Hepburn in 'Mary of Scotland' was well-known leading man for middle western stock companies before entering pictures.

Admired by Daughter

One of Bert Wheeler's most ardent fans is his seven-year-old daughter, Pat. She visits him every Saturday during the filming of "Mummy's Boys."

Others in the cast of "Earthworm Tractors" include Carol Hughes, Gene Lockhart and Dick Foran.

next picture, "Gold Diggers," in which he and Joan Blondell are to be co-starred. He has been on a four-day vacation, which he considers a rare treat.

"I wish I could have several weeks of rest," he said. "My mother and father are visiting me and mother has been waiting for weeks to tell me all the home news. But I can't spend much time with her on account of necessary preparations for my radio program and my next picture."

"The other night Joan and I thought we'd like to play a little away from Hollywood, so we went down to Ocean Park to ride the amusement thrills. We got out on the pier where the roller coaster is, and the news went around that we were there. In a few minutes 50 or 75 people began to crowd us down to the pier's edge, calling for autographs. I made a speech like this: 'Miss Blondell and I are tired. We just finished a picture, and would like to spend an evening just as you do. Now we will sign 10 books, and if the rest of you will send sheets or your books to the studio, we'll sign them and mail them back to you.'

"The crowd was about to agree, when up steps a six-foot giant who was a rough looking customer. He grabbed my coat lapels in a hard grip and said, 'Do you folks want this guy to sign?' They all said they did. 'Then bring up your books, he'll sign.'

"I was mad and began sizing up the man's face for a quick right when I saw three more just like him edging through the crowd. I thought of my coming picture and what they'd probably do to my face and said, 'Folks, I see I've got a new director. I guess I'll go to work and sign.'

"When we finished, Joan and I left the pier—much work and no play."

Erik Rhodes, now in "Second Wife," first came to the attention of Broadway critics when he played in "The First Little Show."

Woon Stage Attention

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HOLLYWOOD STARS SCINTILLATE BRIGHTLY ABOUT FESTIVE BOARD



FILMLAND'S FUNNIEST MEN!

LAUREL AND HARDY

(The seventh of a series)

BY PAUL HARRISON

HOLLYWOOD, July 20.—(NEA)—There have been 10 years of Laurel and Hardy. Ten years, and something like 80 pictures, and uncoupled millions of laughs for slapstick fans from here to Baluchistan and back.

The wild-haired little Britisher with the silly grin and the fat man with the bangs and Whitmanesque mustache comprise the best-known comedy team on earth. During a period of two years they made each picture five times—in English, Spanish, French, German and Italian.

Knowing no foreign languages at all, they read lines written phonetically on blackboards outside the range of the cameras.

"And our process," chortled Laurel, "Oliver was a Georgia Spaniard." "And Stan was a British Frenchman!" whooped Hardy. The boys are like that—exuberant.

These days the pair make pictures only in English, but their films remain tremendously popular in all foreign countries. The foreign dialog, recited by interpreters, is dubbed into the films exhibited abroad. Reason for the change was economics.

Laurel and Hardy now make features instead of shorts, and their latest effort, "Our Relations," cost a cool \$400,000. Slapstick comedy 1936 style, has got it into top hat and tails, a plush environment, and the middle brackets of Hollywood profanity.

STANLEY LAUREL JEFFERSON, born in England of theatrical parents in 1895, never had the slightest doubt that he'd be an actor. But he had a slight lisp. None of the great tragedians, he knew, ever lipped. So he turned to comedy.

His professional debut was made in his father's best suit after it had been trimmed with shears, to give it just the right touch of comic nonchalance. The hand he got from the customers was nothing to the one that awaited him at home that night.

A similar triumph was scored soon afterward, when he was given the task of igniting some gunpowder under the stage for a scene in which a safe was supposed to be blasted open. He put in plenty of powder and delighted the audience by blowing the safe and villain into the orchestra pit.

He was trouper at 12, billed thus: "Stanley Jefferson—Quaint Comedian—He of the Funny Ways." At 15 he had a minor place in a stock company in which Charles and Sidney Chaplin were principals. They came to America on tour, and Stanley was Charlie's understudy.

But the star's health remained discouragingly good. While they were playing in Los Angeles the boy succumbed to twinges of homesickness, deserted the troupe and made his way back to England.

A few years later, with Chaplin in a hoary-jested time called "Munching Birds," they again reached the United States. The company hired Chaplin. So Laurel went into vaudeville and soon had a fling or two at the flickers.

MEANWHILE Hardy, of the Harlem (Ga.) Harbys, had been having a lean time of it. A lean time, though he was one of five fat sons of fat parents whose Oliver weighed 173 when he was 13, at which age he had become a boy soprano.

His voice changed while he was warbling in Florida one winter, so he went to work for a fly-by-night movie company. He played comedy-heavy, carpentered sets, told cameras, made up the principals and helped with the scenarios. They counted that day lost when a picture wasn't started and finished in 10 or 12 hours.

Warlike, and Hardy sang patriotic songs in accompaniment of newscasts. Then to New York with the Edison Film Co., and finally to California with Larry Semon. There were pastures along Hollywood Boulevard in those days.

Laurel and Hardy appeared together in a picture in 1919—a Broncho Billy quickie. But their first team billing was in "Hats Off" in 1926. Each recognized in the

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Some of the publicity stuff that comes out of Hollywood is, to say the least, a little hard to take. But it's not hard to believe pictures showing stars at lunch. Here's a trio of hearty eaters, who were caught by a studio "Snoop-shooter" in action.

1. Ted Healy, who is seen on an average of once every two weeks in a film at Loew's, shown sipping his soup without the aid of his stooges. You may not recognize him because he has a tie on, and yes, that's a dress handkerchief in his pocket.

2. Milk is good for growing boys and so Frank Lawton, seen this week at Loew's in "The Devil Doll," is hoping that a daily glass will boost his screen work.

3. Leo Carillo was so hungry that he couldn't take time to remove his costume before his noon-day soup course. Leo is another of the film colony's standbys who rarely gets a day off.

Radio Programs

and News

Are on Page 15

Picture Producing Requires Much Capital, Even to Start

Many Studios List 2000 or More Employees, Including Many in High Salary Classifications.

By United Press

HOLLYWOOD, July 20.—Much has been said as to "what it takes" to break into moving pictures. Most of the discussion, however, centers upon the attempts of individuals to become screen stars. Little has been said concerning the requirements of entering movies as a full-fledged business venture.

In the light of recent surveys at major Hollywood studios, it seems a bankrupt on the loose would suffer a sudden and complete extinction if its owner decided to enter the motion picture industry.

Pyrolis in the business are of nightmare proportions. A Wall Street colossus, for instance, would find he needed a nucleus of approximately 215 high-salaried persons even to make his first sortie toward picture production. Then, after signing this group, he would find that some 2000 additional persons were needed before he could get a picture under way and production on a paying basis.

Work Is Complicated

The necessity for so many employees, amazing though it is even to old-timers, arises from the fact that at least 68 different departments must combine efforts to turn out a picture.

At one major studio the official personnel list contains only the names of 19 departmental heads. Of the other 198 persons on this studio's "No. 1 list," eight are major executives, seven associate producers, 15 are contract directors, while 75 are players under long-term contract.

Then there are some 15 employees who constitute the studio's stock group, 45 writers under contract, 18 cameramen, 10 assistant directors, nine composers and lyricists and 10 musicians.

For each man on this list there are at least 10 not even mentioned.

Employees Borrowed

Most of the studio telephone directories of permanently employed persons contain more than 2000 names and this list does not include many of the laborers and craftsmen at work on the lot.

But employment in pictures does not stop at this point. Nearly half of the casts used in many current pictures either are borrowed from other studios (and at excellent salaries) or they are composed of free lance workers.

The practice of employing outside talent applies not only to the players but to every department of the studio, too, so it is a fat bank account, indeed, that can survive the rigors of an assault upon picture production.

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DAILY SHORT STORY

Willie the Gent

By RUTH LOUISE AYRES

THE weapon was leveled at the old man's heart.

"Stick 'em up!" Willie the Gent snarled.

Willie was under a strain. He had to be on his way out of town as soon as possible, because he had been tipped off that the police were looking for him. But he had to have money to make his getaway. The police would choose to get after him when he was broke—down to his last cent!

"Come on—make it snappy" and hang over the wallet," he ordered. The old man's parchment cheeks showed white even in the dim, before dawn light of the alley. As he reached in his pocket and pulled out a black purse, a spasm caught at his mouth and twitched it.

Willie the Gent grabbed the purse "Lemme see what you got," he muttered hoarsely. Still holding the gun in one hand, he opened the wallet with the other and saw a folded square of bills and a few loose coins.

HE took out the bills. Slowly, he unfolded them. There were only three—each of \$1 denomination. Dismay crossed his features.

"This all you got?" he barked. The old man nodded.

"Nerts!" said Willie, fairly spitting the word out.

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Chorus Girls Have Little Time for Fun

Movie Dancers Work Too Hard to Enjoy Hollywood's Social Life.

By United Press

HOLLYWOOD, July 20.—Many things have been relegated into the past during the driving rush of picture production in the last several years.

Among old-fashioned figures now reported extinct is Johnny of the stage door—he of the top hat, stick and flowers. The passing of Johnny is reported by those who should know, the young girls of the picture choruses.

Even worse, according to the report, than the absence of Johnny is the rumor that no nice men are taking his place at Hollywood's figurative stage doors.

It seems, according to girls who dance through the complicated routines of motion picture musicals, that working to screen fame by way of the chorus is not conducive to love and marriage.

The explanation is easy and understandable, chorus members say. "We have only one night a week that we aren't required to work at the studios," declares Esther Brodette, petite dancer.

"Men aren't interested in a girl who can't go out more than once a week. And there doesn't seem much we can do about it, as we must be up at 6:30 o'clock every morning, which means we have to go to bed early."

"With no time to go out, most of us must say farewell to thoughts of romance," declares Miss Brodette.

Forgotten by Boys

Another dancer, Lynn Bari, echoes the plaint of Miss Brodette. "When we are fortunate enough to meet a nice boy one week, which usually is what happens, some of the girls, of course, are too intent on their careers to give thought to romance and marriage," explains Miss Bari.

"People really would be surprised to know how many of us spend this precious free night of ours each week," the dancer said.

"I've seen a lot of nice boys, but there isn't anything else to do." "Pretty Dorothy Deering, however, softens the tale of the chorus girls' plight somewhat.

"None of the girls wishes to remain in the chorus, and getting out means long hours of dramatic study and constant attention to work. Thus, we have a substitute of sorts for the missing part of our social life."

Robert Doherty Gets New Assignment

LONDON, July 20.—Robert Doherty, rapidly rising movie star, is to be cast with Marlene Dietrich in the Alexander Korda production of "Knight Without Armor." It was announced today.

This will be Mr. Doherty's first screen appearance since "The Ghost Goes West," also under the Korda banner. Miss Dietrich left for the Denham studios after completing work in Hollywood in "The Garden of Allah."

"Knight Without Armor" is from the story by Robert Hilton, author of "Goodbye, Mr. Chips."

Discovered Valentino

Robert Z. Leonard, directing Robert Montgomery in "Piccadilly Jim," was the discoverer of Rudolph Valentino when he engaged him in 1916 as Mae Murray's dancing partner in "Princess Virtue."

Outing Scheduled by Variety Group

The third annual Variety Club picnic is to be held at Northern Beach Monday, Aug. 3. The committee in charge includes Marc Wolf, Kenneth Collins, Carl Niesse, Claude Penrod and Al Blocher.

The big event of the day is to be a baseball game between motion picture distributors and exhibitors. The program also is to include races for stenographers, shippers and bookers. Dancing is on the evening bill.

Tall Timbers Now Open for Business

Tall Timbers, cafe and night club, resumed operation with opening of State Road 67. Dancing is a nightly feature, with extra entertainment. Buddy Adams and his band, Louisville, are dance rhythm specialists at Tall Timbers.

PRESENTATIONS

WEST SIDE

STATE

BELMONT

DAISY

RITZ

ZARING

UPTOWN

GARRICK

ST. CLAIR

UDELL

TALBOT

REX

Stratford

EAST SIDE

TACOMA

TUXEDO

IRVING

EMERSON