

Settles Texas Feudin'



Gary Cooper in "The Westerner," Samuel Goldwyn's picture that had its world premiere in Fort Worth Thursday night. He is shown in a scene in which he assumes the authority of the

"Law West of the Pecos" and settles the feud between farmers and cattlemen. The picture will continue its regular run at regular prices at the Worth Theater.

'The Westerner' Records Page in History of Texas

BY IDA BELLE HICKS.

Samuel Goldwyn's "The Westerner" that had its world premiere in Fort Worth Thursday night, records in picture, sound and story a page out of the colorful history of Texas. The beginning of the development of the vast riches of the Western sections of the State is the basis of this saga. It tells of the violent struggles of farmer and cattleman and gives us a characterization of the type of men and women who founded the present illustrious families of the Lone Star State.

MEET THE JUDGE.

Judge Roy Bean, generally regarded as a cantankerous old codger of the 1880's, lives on in song and story and sometimes intrudes his ornery personality into legal battles of today. Immortality has a strange and often unaccountable way of enfolding by-gone personalities into its eternal pre-eminence. Many have wondered how Judge Bean rated such distinction. Now we know. Walter Brennan was coming along some 70 years later to record the judge and his meanness on celluloid.

As "The Law West of the Pecos," the title by which the so-called legal authority has come to be known, Brennan goes merrily on with his scene-stealing technique that has won for him two Academy awards for character roles.

NOW THE COWBOY.

Cooper as "The Westerner" is the courageous, sharp-witted, easygoing

(until pushed too far) type of settler that today's Texan fondly pictures as his fearless ancestor.

Our hero was brave enough to face a wagon load of armed men ready to shoot, smart enough to outwit a wiley old rascal, lover enough to win a pretty girl and industrious enough to stake a homestead and lay the foundation for family tradition. He represents the settler who worked hard, prospered as a farmer or struck oil, and sent his youngsters to Eastern colleges, bought fine automobiles and carried on in solid comfort.

Montana cowboy, newspaper cartoonist and movie actor in real life, Cooper has brought to the screen the unforgettable "Plainsman" and "Virginian." There is something strong and solid about "The Westerner" that indicates it will hold its own with his former pictures.

THE LADIES.

Doris Davenport, the girl Goldwyn selected from the extra ranks and molded into a star, is Cooper's leading lady and one of the Hollywood actresses who got there the hard way. As Jane Ellen Matthews, Miss Davenport plays the role of the farmer daughter back in the days you heard grandma tell about—milking the cows, baking the bread and helping with the plowing, too, if they got short handed. A few more like Miss Davenport and the farm boys never would have started their exodus from the farm.

THE STORY.

It was her charm that stilled the restless feet of the wandering cowboy who was arrested and charged with horse stealing on arrival in Judge Bean's town. In Bean's "Jersey Lily" saloon that served as courtroom as well as bar, the stranger was put to trial immediately over a bottle of rye, a Bible and some vicious looking six shooters.

Turning the name Langtry over in his mind the cowboy (Cooper) senses the judge's long distance devotion to the British actress and tricks him into believing that he (Cooper) knows Mrs. Langtry personally. He goes so far as to say he has a lock of her hair in a trunk in El Paso. That saved his neck.

The judge started figuring out how he could get possession of the wisp of hair and the cowboy started trying to figure how he could get it in his own hands before the old man forced a showdown.

This lays the foundation of a friendship of a sort that ends in death for the admirer of the Jersey Lily, and the champion of the early Texas farmer who put up the first West Texas fence to protect his crops from herds of cattle. The feud between the farmers and cattlemen furnished the judge with most of his cases. He favored the rancher and his words, "That's my rulin'" laid may a man in his grave.

Principal figure in the feud is Jane Ellen's father (Fred Stone) who fights a valiant battle for the rights of the farmer. A spectacular fire, cattle drives and a band of furious farmers give the thrills to the story that keep it in tune with the true Western shoot-'em-up pictures that delights the movie public. One faint touch of glamour creeps in with Lilian Bond who, as Lily Langtry, comes to the turbulent country to put on a show. It is in the old opera house, only a few moments before curtain time, that the cowboy and the judge have their last argument, and the old man fires his last shot.

In the arms of "The Westerner" he dies courageously, gazing for the first time on the face of the woman he spent years admiring in a fantastic long distance devotion. Lily's fame lives on in Texas. So does the judge's, and now we have "The Westerner."

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