

# The Lively Arts

Notes on the Passing Show:

## Motion Picture Folk Are Credit to Selves

### Pleasant Memories of a Premiere With Goldwyn, Cooper and Others

By John Rosenfield.

**M**AY ONE be permitted a passing glance at The Westerner parties of last week and the momentous Hollywood visitation?

The Fort Worth end of the party constituted the most eventful movie world premier known to the industry, excepting Atlanta's party for *Gone With the Wind*. Arrangements on the whole were superb and were the more remarkable for the fact that so many diverse interests were involved. The Goldwyn producing organization, the United Artists distributing group, the Fort Worth civic groups and the Interstate Circuit had to be co-ordinated for the creation of the colorful show.

#### Fort Worth Goes Playing.

As helpful as anything else was the spirit of the Fort Worth people. That town, despite what Amon Carter says, is not an agglomeration of cowpunchers but a white collar city with a fancy and somewhat fanciful Western tradition. When it puts on boots and bright shirts, phony pistols and ten-gallon hats, it is indulging in a masquerade as festive as the harlequinade of a New Orleans Mardi Gras.

It is, therefore, to the everlasting credit of Fort Worth that it pitched in and made a festival out of its Westerner premiere. It took its ranch costumes out of moth balls, split the air with blank pistol shots and yipped the gang into a state of ecstasy. Three theaters, the Worth, Hollywood and Palace, were packed for simultaneous showing of the picture.

The reception, parade, ceremonies at the Will Rogers Coliseum,

and the extraordinary afternoon on Amon Carter's Shady Oaks Farm will be remembered by everybody who took part.

There was no desire in Dallas to dull the edge of the Fort Worth premiere. Public appearances here were limited to the first showing of *The Westerner* at the Majestic. Other plans had to do with the entertainment and not the exploitation of the stars. In other words Dallas bounced a good opening for *The Westerner* off Fort Worth's head. We learned this trick in 1936 from Fort Worth, of all places. Remember the big Centennial and the little one?

#### Actors' Big Chief.

Edward Arnold, the burly actor, came along not as a member of *The Westerner* cast but as president of the Screen Actors Guild, otherwise the union of movie players. He was struck by the active part taken by the press. The habitual newspaper attitude toward the screen is comic cavil, bright cynicism and an eagerness to convert a peccadillo into a scandalous headline. But here was Amon Carter, the Fort Worth publisher, serving as front man for the arrangements in his beloved town. In Dallas *The News* gave a luncheon to Samuel Goldwyn, the producer, to the fan and trade writers who are read in Dallas, to an assortment of stars and to local theater and film distribution figures.

Such newspaper cordiality, said Mr. Arnold at the Amon Carter party, will do much to conserve the finer values of Hollywood and the highly important film industry.

## Mr. Goldwyn Speaks Almost Perfect English

We have been so busy reporting the main events of the premieres that there has been neither time nor place until now for vignettes of the visiting personalities. Here goes:

Samuel Goldwyn.—The veteran producer was intense and self-conscious but amiable and appreciative of attentions. He didn't slaughter the English language while here, which was more the pity. A Goldwynesque mot would have added to the joy of the occasion. He merely mangled his syntaxes while giving off the general impression of a well-informed, deep-thinking and forceful captain of industry. We saw him lose his temper once—when Bob Hope was late in arriving for the *Majestic* performance Friday night. Mr. Goldwyn muttered dire threats about firing somebody, but the real culprit was beyond the reach of his pink slip. He was Bob O'Donnell of the local Interstate Theaters, whom only Karl Hoblitzelle can fire. O'Donnell, who had Hope in custody, said that the comedian was starving for supper and what could he, O'Donnell, do about it?

Gary Cooper.—This was the lank

actor's first world premiere junket. He surprised himself with a facility at charming impromptu speeches. Gary, on the stage or at the microphone, was as artless as in pictures and just as effective. He always said the right and the tasteful thing. He made countless friends by his behavior.

Bob Hope.—Brought along as master of ceremonies, this young man caused gaping amazement. His quick tongue, his improvisation of stage microphone gags, his sense of theatrical line amounted to sheer genius. This, of course, is what Bob Hope has. He is a master of both the spoken gag and the pantomimic gag. We imagine that he might have been a big talent in silent pictures as in talkies. His work at the *Majestic* here was the finest of his four Texas performances. This was his last one and he had eliminated all the bugs. His "Yes, Mr. Goldwyn" stunt upon introducing the producer was a prodigious satire of the satire on the movies. Goldwyn played stooge with good spirit. Hope's long, wide walk while Bruce Cabot was at the microphone remains one of the funniest stunts we have ever seen on the stage. He held up the *Majestic* performance here, but we understand he was talking to O'Donnell about bringing a stage show here this winter. So we'll forgive everybody, including O'Donnell.

Walter Brennan.—The actor who played Judge Roy Bean is a student of his craft. Brennan told us the books he had read about Roy Bean. He had sought out persons who had known the old saloonkeeper personally. The result was a characterization that was not only creative acting but also creative biography. We have never met an actor with less ham in him than Brennan. He is an artist—although he wouldn't call himself such—and strangely without self-consciousness in ordinary contacts.

#### Horning In.

The Westerner premieres were good excitement and good fun. Everything about them was to the credit of show business and this made us happy. We don't know how much Fort Worth cared about Dallas' horning in. But horning-in is a cowman's phrase. We learned about that during the year of the Texas Centennial Exposition.

### AIRWAY

8006 Denton Drive, Love Field

LAST DAY

"LILLIAN RUSSELL"

Alice Faye-Don Ameche

Wednesday-Thursday

"DR. ERLICH'S MAGIC BULLET"

with Edw. G. Robinson

### EAST GRAND

East Grand at Graham

LAST DAY

"WATERLOO BRIDGE"

Vivien Leigh-Robert Taylor

Wednesday-Thursday

"NEW MOON"

Jeanette MacDonald-Nelson Eddy

### GROVE

Buckner Blvd. and Kaufman Road

TODAY ONLY

"FORTY LITTLE MOTHERS"

with Eddie Cantor

Also: "LITTLE PAL"

with Mickey Rooney

Wednesday-Thursday

"LILLIAN RUSSELL"

Alice Faye-Don Ameche

### HASKELL

Elm and Haskell

LAST DAY

"20 MULE TEAM"