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DALLAS

From

Harlingen (Tex.) Star

Date OCT 12 1940

10/12/40

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Hollywood
Gossip
By ROBIN COONS

FORT WORTH, Tex.—This is the town "where the West begins," and it's all Western for the day's big movie shindig. If any of the city's 192,786 people (1940 census), or 200,000 with the "metropolitan area" thrown in, aren't yippeeing, they're casting absentee yips, and we're getting the echoes in the mass sound effects on the streets.

They've pulled out ancient carriages, primitive autos, all their wild-west wardrobe for the occasion. The day's a success: There's even a "Westerner" sandwich at the corner drugstore.

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TAKES no straw vote to decide that these people have fallen for Gary Cooper, the hero of the movie and of the day. Gary's being Gary, who has a lot of "Mr. Deeds" in his real-life make-up, and when it comes to making friends and influencing people there's nobody like a Deeds or a Cooper. Good thing this Hollywood delegation includes no phonies—these people "where the West begins" could spot one a mile away.

They say there are more people in town today than they've had in years. The merchants are smiling. Biggest smile is vigorous Amon Carter's. Mr. Carter is publisher of the Star-Telegram and Fort Worth's leading booster. Sam Goldwyn tells why the movie premiere is here: "I was at a publishers' luncheon in New York, and Amon Carter was there. I happened to mention I might hold the premiere in Dallas, and Mr. Carter said 'Why . . .'"

Fort Worth and Dallas are chums and buddies—like Los Angeles and San Francisco. Only Fort Worth and Dallas are closer together and get in more digs at each other. They say Mr. Carter, when he goes to Dallas, always packs a lunch.

The "feud" is a running gag in local humor, but Dallas friends are always at Shady Oak, the Carter farm showplace, for those big hearty Sunday breakfasts.

The Shady Oak dinner for the movie crowd is a feast—southern fried chicken right next to western "rancho beans," the like of which I've never tasted before.

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AND THE visiting stars need nourishment after a day's hearty work—a big luncheon, happily informal, followed by the parade, a riotous, yipping, color-splashed hit leading through cheer-packed streets to the big Will Rogers memorial coliseum. There they give a free show—and with bands playing and cowboys riding, the cowboy who takes the most cheers is that boy Cooper again, showing (if there are any skeptics) he can really ride a horse.

The picture (shown at three theaters with "personals" by the stars at each) is a good western, and Walter Brennan turns in another character portrait as Judge Roy Bean, the "Law West of the Pecos." The new girl, Doris Davenport, is interesting in her debut, and Cooper—well, you know Coop.

If "The Westerner" doesn't live up to the celebration that introduced it here, it's because very few pictures could.