

Movie Fan Morals First Guarded With State Censor Board in 1911

By Robbin Coons
 HOLLYWOOD (AP)—Out of the general "viewing with alarm" that began with the early career of the movies sprang the first of the seven state censorship laws now in effect in this country.

This was the Pennsylvania law passed in 1911 creating a board of "three residents and citizens of Pennsylvania, two males and one female," to pass on pictures.

There followed Ohio, Kansas, New York, Maryland, Virginia and, in a sense, Florida, which accepts only such films as are passed by the National Board of Review and the New York Commission of Films.

All these boards have the power to delete scenes or parts of scenes, or

der changes and to ban films in toto. They usually are authorized to accept assistance from additional reviewers, in some cases voluntary, in others paid.

They look at pictures, and their rulings are final. Annual reports show their scissors have been active. In addition, there are some 267 cities and towns, some in the state censorship boundaries, that maintain local censorship authorities.

Censors Don't Agree

From censorship centers the "Hays office"—the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.—receives regularly lists of deletions and changes made in Hollywood films, and copies of these go to all producing companies.

The fact, demonstrated by years of experience, that the various censor boards do not always agree on what should be eliminated, or on what films are "bad" and what films "good," complicates the problem in Hollywood.

"Sex," "crime" and "political corruption" are three subjects responsible for the majority of deletions and changes. Scenes that will be passed in one of the censor states will meet disaster in another.

Hollywood's plea, from the very beginning, has been for internal censorship before production. On the other hand, agitation for complete federal censorship has been heard in congress for years. A bill to create a federal motion picture commission was introduced in congress in 1928, and other attempts to obtain such control have been made from time to time.

Battles Began Early

The films have challenged the constitutionality of state censorships, in the cases of Kansas and Ohio, and the United States supreme court has held them constitutional.

The battles over movie censorship began early, and with them came the first of the torrents of literature and declaration that have continued ever since. In Chicago's 1907 experiment a judge in a letter to the papers ascribed much juvenile crime coming to his court to nickelodeon influence. The same charge, in varying forms, has been made against films ever since, while other judges have denied movies a contribution to juvenile delinquency.

Attempts to inaugurate censorship have been made at one time or another in most of the states, without success. These attempts and the running fire of controversy during lulls in the battles have created an extensive literature pro and con. The arguments on both sides are many and varied.

Old Charges Familiar

The pros recurrently cite the need they see for protection of children and adolescents from sex and crime scenes and themes, from "vulgarity" and from "corruptive influences." The cons call state censorship "un-American," "undemocratic" and "dangerous," charge that it opens doors to political influence and "graft," that the application of formal standards results in "ridiculous" and "unjust" eliminations and restrictions, and they point out its "evils" with as much enthusiasm as the pros point out its "benefits."

There is striking similarity, incidentally, between the charges of "low moral tone" and "indecentcy" made by the church and club reform movement today and the charges made against movies in the past.

Charlie Murray Half a Century In Actor's Role

By Robbin Coons
 HOLLYWOOD (AP)—Another screen veteran this week joined the exclusive ranks of players who have been before the public for 50 years.

Charlie Murray, the 62-year-old comedian, passed the milestone July 10.

When he was 12 years old, Charlie ran away from his Cincinnati home to join John Robinson's traveling circus. It was on July 10, 1884, that he gave his first public performance. Nobody who watched the cavorting of the four clowns at Zanesville, Ohio, that day, went around predicting that one of them some day would become a popular funny man.

Charlie stayed with the circus three years, working as a clown, trick rider and Roman charioteer. A fall from a horse brought an injury that sent him home to his parents. But it didn't stop his stage career. He became an "actor" in medicine shows and worked in cheap repertory companies. It was on another visit to his family, which had moved to Centerville, Ind., that he met Ollie Mack. The two of them decided they were what the stage needed—and so the team of Murray and Mack was born.

For 21 years their association lasted and in all that time they experienced but one financial failure. One of their biggest hits, "Finnegan's Ball," kept them busy three years running.

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You don't hear much about Mur-

ray as one of the leading stars of Hollywood. He doesn't have the "glamor" of a big name, he isn't a "romantic hero," and he isn't a "handsome Romeo." It takes a personal appearance to bring out the truth about how he stands with his fans. The boys and girls pick him out in a parade of screen stars and shout his name when they merely show polite interest in the "glamor girls and boys."

He has been associated with George Sidney in the "Cohens and Kellys" series since 1927. Never very pretentious offerings, the films made money and the team continues in a series of six short comedies made for Columbia.

His first director was a chap named David Ward Griffith. But he became known to the film world generally as a Sennett Keystoneer, remaining eight years in the company of "Klownish kops."

ENGINEERS TO MEET IN '35 IN ARIZONA

(Continued From Page One)

Alvanley Johnston, grand chief of the B. of L. E., and pledged continued support to him.

A great majority of the delegates, pleased with the hospitality of La Grande and impressed with the opening numbers of the Semi-Centennial U. P. celebration here yesterday, were remaining in the city today and tomorrow before returning to their homes in the eleven western states and three Canadian provinces from which they came.

The delegates to the W. U. M. A. convention were special guests last night at the Old Timers Hall which was held in the Sackajewa Ballroom immediately following the coronation ceremony. An excellent crowd was

present for this final event of the convention and dancing was enjoyed until midnight.

During the evening Queen Pays Walker and her attendants were escorted to the ball room and introduced to the gathering.

LOCAL BAKERS TO HOLD MEET HERE SUNDAY

Bakers all over the state are now getting organized and holding elections to create a bakers board of control to administer the state marketing agreement recently approved, and also to act as a code authority under the national code.

The local section will hold its election July 22 to elect a member on this board, and transact such other business preparatory to compliance with the code becoming effective July 23.

Murder at MOCKING HOUSE BY WALTER C. BROWN

SYNOPSIS: A policeman and a stranger, the latter apparently a man who has tried to kill Pierre Dufresne, have been found murdered in Dufresne's house. Sergeant Harper, on foot, has found a threat to go on—and it leads to Pierre Dufresne. Dufresne's butler has admitted that he master owned a revolver of the size used to kill the stranger. Now, in the presence of Harper's superior officers, the butler denies the statement.

Chapter 27 THE SEARCH

"THEN what kind of a game—explains yourself, Andrews?"

"It was you, Mr. Harper, who told me that Mr. Dufresne had given you that information about the revolver. I did not feel that it was my business to contradict his statements. I see now that it was just a little trick on your part and I will draw what I said previously."

Harper was boiling, not only over the exposure of his ruse, so neatly and effectively checked, but over the collapse of his promising secret.

Pierre Dufresne clapped his old retainer on the shoulder. "A good and faithful servant"—he intoned, laughing merrily at the detective's discomfiture.

Harper glared angrily at the impassive Andrews. "This is a serious matter, I warn you. For the time being the police are in charge of this house. Your duty as a citizen to uphold the law is greater than your duty to an employer."

"But you lied to me, sir," protested the gaunt old man, with a devastating simplicity that sent his master into a fresh paroxysm of laughter.

Harper turned to Dufresne. "All right, sir, but that is not the whole story. Detective Lafferty saw this gun himself. We know it was there."

"I repeat then, that I do not own such a weapon and I have never seen it nor handled it."

Harper bowed. "We will accept that statement, Mr. Dufresne. But we know the gun exists, that it is in this house, and with your permission we will search until we find it."

"You may search as thoroughly as you please, Sergeant."

"Lafferty bring all the others here. I want everybody to stay in one room while the search is going on."

Dufresne carelessly selected a cigarette. "And what do you expect to prove?" he drawled.

"These cold-blooded murders were committed by some one in this house," Sergeant Harper snapped, "and I intend to get at the truth, no matter whom it involves!"

The household assembled in the small drawing-room, a pleasant and many-windowed room on the main floor, adjoining the breakfast-room.

THIS enforced gathering was quiet enough on the surface but underneath it was seething and boiling with curiosity and excitement. The Sergeant's brief and uncompromising assertion that the case had changed from an unexplained double homicide to an equally unexplained double murder had set the household by the ears.

One by one they denied any knowledge even of the existence of the revolver Harper sought in the first flush of surprise they did not gather the implication that the murderer was not only alive but one of their number. That realization dawned on them a little later and placed an awkward restraint on the conversation.

Harper, Lafferty, and the two policemen conducted the search, having commanded the company of Mrs. Whitmore, not only because she had the keys to all the locked places in the house, but also to witness that all household and individual property rights were respected. Silent and sullen, her dark brows frowning, Mrs. Whitmore accompanied the officers.

Four men, trained and experienced in such matters, can make short work of any room when the sole object in question is as heavy and bulky as a revolver, but there were many rooms and closets in the house and Harper's methods were painstaking and thorough. He had set out with full confidence in the success of the search.

As their absence lengthened, the waiting group began to split up along lines of natural gravitation. Captain Macklin and Pierre Dufresne sat on a window-seat.

Director Connors had been obliged to leave, owing to the press of other affairs, and he had left without giving any definite answer to Dufresne's request.

The faithful Andrews and the stolid, good-natured John Whitmore stood in a corner and talked together in low tones. There was a sardonic glimmer in the old butler's eyes and a determined jut of the jaws, for he was still feeling elated over the

neat way he had tripped up the detective's attempt to trap his master. The placid Whitmore, however, was lost and bewildered at the turn affairs had taken.

Young Donaghy, spick and span in his tallored uniform, stood at one of the windows, apart from the others. Busy with his thoughts, he looked out steadily and unseeingly, as if absorbed by a mental puzzle.

Richard Croymen, pensive and subdued, idly ran his sensitive fingers up and down the keyboard of the piano, turned sideways across a corner of the room. He fingered melancholy little snatches of melody, softly, dreamily, his thoughts busy elsewhere. The first muted chords had drawn glances of wonder and disapproval at the intruding of the sound of music at such a time. By the side of the piano, seated in an easy chair, was Aline Croymen, smoking a cigarette and frowning at the swaying toe of her slipper.

THE minutes dragged by interminably to make a quarter-hour, the quarter became a half, the half lengthened to a full hour, and the relentless cycle started on its second lap.

Conversation succumbed to the strain and became forced and desultory as impatience gnawed at every one. Even Dufresne's indignation was reduced to intermittent flashes.

One hour and a half Harper and his men expended on the search and when he returned to the drawing-room no one could tell from his expression whether or not they had been successful. But one glance at Mrs. Whitmore's disdainful air of triumph told them that the much-sought weapon had not yielded the secret of its hiding-place.

Harper's bitter disappointment was betrayed only by his grim tone as he stood before Pierre Dufresne. "I have not found the gun but I am still convinced that it is concealed here in the house. Since no one has left, it can hardly be otherwise."

Dufresne made a gesture of dismissal to the servants, who promptly fled out, that they might talk over this astounding affair more unreservedly in their own quarters. Aline Croymen and her husband left quietly, tactfully leaving the field clear for the discussion that must follow.

"I hope you did not overlook Mrs. Dufresne's room, Harper?" Dufresne asked insolently.

"No, indeed. I looked there very thoroughly," the detective answered.

"And what absurdity do you purpose next? Please don't worry about any inconvenience to my family or myself. I am merely the owner of this property." Dufresne was being purposely insulting.

"I have given orders that no one is to leave this house without being searched. We do not intend to have this revolver carried away. Later we may search for it again, but for the present I shall work along other lines that may bring the same result."

"Going out to study the snow again, I suppose? Or possibly to look for more places where fingerprints should be, but are not. Bah, you have no case, Harper, and you know it."

Dufresne's tones were obviously intended to be baiting, and this thought acted as a counter-irritant to the detective's natural irritability. "Do you think so?" was his cool reply. "We've just about finished with our study of the material facts. Now we take up the characters and personalities involved. I'll endeavor to follow the good advice you gave me at our first meeting, Mr. Dufresne, and take nothing for granted."

Eyes flashing, lips curling angrily, Pierre Dufresne turned his back on the detective and walked out of the room. Captain Macklin took up his hat and overcoat. "Stay on the job, Harper, but you'd better work fast. Dufresne is a bad man to cross and he carries plenty of weight in certain quarters. He'll have your scalp if he can."

"I'll risk that, Captain. I think he's so damned sure that I can't make a case out of it that he'll let me carry on, just to show me up."

After Captain Macklin had gone, Harper called to Lafferty, and they proceeded to search the room in which the Dufresne household had waited. Lafferty asked, "Do you think any of that crowd would have nerve enough to keep that gun hidden on themselves? Perhaps we should have made a personal search."

Harper shook his head. "The gun would be too bulky and the risk foolish. No, the thing was hidden, and hidden well. We'll have to keep thinking about it."

Tomorrow, the detectives find a mysterious piece of string.

GAS SUPPLY HERE AMPLE FOR JUBILEE

There is plenty of gasoline in La Grande now for all local uses, for the farmers, and for the visitors to the Semi-Centennial U. P. celebration, it was announced today, by Charles Flytle, head of the local committee of distributors.

He reported a shortage of third structure gas but said there was plenty of first structure for all.

R. E. BEAN HERE TO SEE SHOW

R. E. Bean, Republican candidate for the state senate from Union, Umatilla and Morrow counties, is here from his home at Freewater to attend the U. P. jubilee today and tomorrow. Mr. Bean is editor of the Freewater Times.

BILL ELLIS IN CITY TODAY

Bill Ellis, of Baker, with his famous Oregon Trail costume, is here today attending the celebration.

DR. ZIMMERMAN SEES JUBILEE

Dr. George Zimmerman, for many years a practicing osteopath in La Grande and voluntary coach at La Grande High, is here to attend the home-coming and celebration. His present home is in Los Angeles.

ERIN PUTS SILENCER ON JAZZ

LIMERICK, Ireland (AP)—The Thimmond festival committee here was told by Patrick O'Flannagan that the death knell of jazz had been struck in the Irish Free State. The Athlone radio station has cut anticipated music from its programs and O'Flannagan said efforts would be made to wipe out all foreign dance music.

Thirty pure-bred Jersey calves recently were distributed to 4-H club members in North Carolina to stimulate farm boys' interest in good livestock.

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