

BUFFALO BILL IS DEAD, BUT BILL HART ISN'T

Not Even in Palmiest Days Did Plainsman Have More Followers Than
Noted Actor, Says Ray W. Frohman.



William S. Hart

BY RAY W. FROHMAN.
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BUFFALO BILL is dead. But Bill Hart still remains. And not even in his palmiest days—the days of his showmanship—did the famous former have an audience so great or a following so enthusiastic as the famous latter.

If I expected to get a bullet through both ears and be snaked off my feet by a well-thrown lasso, I was disappointed.

For William S. Hart did none of these things which he greeted me. He just looked kind of "sad but determined," as though he were accused of being a stage-robbler and didn't dare to defend himself.

Bill Hart's expression in real life is very much the same as it is when you see him on the screen.

He is just Bill Hart. What more is there to be said about it? Of course there is much more to be said about Bill, but about his appearance and his expression—just not another word.

And I'll say he's pleasant. Why, he didn't even know me, but put his foot on my chest before inquiring my business!

We have all seen in the films a rugged, gaunt individual with a face like a mule's, so "hard-boiled" and of men as to be almost beautiful; and we have seen this knight of the plains do goodly deeds until that face, reflecting his homely, heroic virtues, has registered kindness, even tenderness.

He isn't always a cowpuncher with a barking "kat" in each fist. Sometimes he's a lumberjack, sometimes he's a convict, sometimes he's a sea captain, or a frontier preacher; but usually he's an outdoor man, and always he's a HE-man, just as Galsworthy was a HE-man, virile and admirable.

Homely, Heroic Virtues.
I found out lately why those homely, heroic virtues overspread the face of the man who fittingly bears such sobriquets as "Blue Blazes Rawden," "The Tiger Man," "Two-Gun Hicks" and "Shark Monroe."

It's because his intimate personal history—and his biography as full of humble incidents and homely lessons as Benjamin Franklin's—was thrice as thrilling—shows that he himself has those simple virtues.

"When you hear 'Bill' Hart relate unassumingly his experiences and beliefs, it's easy to understand how he 'got started' and never stopped.

This rough-and-ready terror of "bad men" I discovered in regular civilized office at his studio in Hollywood, ready to pack up for going out "on location" in the Mojave desert for 10 days. He was wearing "store clothes"—a clean white shirt, neat gray pants, plain black shoes.

The son of a gun, to use the language of Pecos Bill, and "Two-Gun Hicks" was actually riding a swivel chair!

Not Wild or Woolly.
Unless you consider the lack of a coat and collar the mark of a plainsman, there was nothing of the wild and woolly about this quiet, polite gentleman with the light brown hair, determined frown, light blue eyes, high cheek bone, firm lips, with thoughtful lines about them, and strong jaw.

Except that he averaged one "damn" and one "hell" to the minute he might have been his own gentle pinto pony with the feed bag on.

You've got to go back into his history a bit to understand "how Bill Hart did it": how this raw youth of 18, who had lived in Dakota territory until he was 15, playing riding bareback and shooting with Sioux Indian kids, got his first stage job as a "super" at Drury Lane theater in London and a few weeks later tied his way to New York into his first part, in a road show; and how he first starred on the road in 1902 as John Storm in "The Christian."

And then you'll want to know how in 1912, with an established reputation in Shakespearean and classic dramas and later in western roles, he refused an offer to be featured in a Broadway production in 1914 to star, at less than one-fourth the salary, in the first picture with Triangle, "The Bargain"—until today, instead of being a star and leading man at three or four hundred a week, facing an average audience of 800, he stars before from eight to ten million people a day in about 40 pictures being shown all over the world, with—he won't tell how much salary, "because I don't wish to blink the public and what's the difference."

Says He "Inherited It."
"I inherited what little stage ability I have," said Mister Hart. And if you'd talked to him you'd call him "Mister," too.

"My grandfather on my father's side

send him abroad, being just about to take his family to plunge in a far northwestern venture. So "Bill" worked his way on a cattle boat, received \$14.85 at the end of the trip, walked 203 miles from Liverpool to London, and worked there till he saved up enough to take him to Paris.

Noting the "let on parole" sign in a store, Bill submitted a little idea of his own—delivering parcels to people who spoke English—and delivered for four or five firms. His room cost him five francs a week.

Mornings he washed windows and scrubbed floors at a fencing master's, to receive "wonderful" lessons after hours from an assistant whom Bill, who was always "handy with his hands," taught American boxing.

Every night he went to the theater. In 14 weeks Bill went back to London and, being 18, tall and well made, without trouble got his job carrying a spear. In four or five weeks he went back to Liverpool—paying his fare this time—and was given free passage home on a cattle boat.

He Hates White Lie.
"I knew I had to lie and I did," Mr. Hart explained regarding his landing his first part in New York. "It was a white lie. I told 'em I'd played in London. I knew only how to put paint on."

"I got a job at \$12 a week with Daniel E. Handmann, on the road in repertoire, including Shakespeare and such plays as 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' and in eight months I played 52 parts—juveniles, heavies, bits, old men, boys, everything."

"How did I work up from that to become a star? The same way as others. It takes many years' service, and I suppose there must have been some ability behind it. It's ten thousand times harder to succeed on the stage, in my opinion. A picture star can be made almost overnight."

After that first tour, Hart served his apprenticeship with Madame Mojaska, Julia Arthur and Madame Ithea, playing diversified roles, leads and heavies, in Shakespearean and classic dramas. Following his being starred in "The Christian," Hart was the original Messala in "Ben Hur."

After his hit as "The Virginian" in 1908-9 he played principally western roles.

Hard Work Does It.
"You've got to keep attracting more attention," Hart continued in explaining his rise to stardom, "gradually getting better parts and better salary, always working hard and making good. Did I have to 'climb' into making me a star? If they want you, they want you, and you have mighty little to say about it; if they select you, you can go down on your knees and thank God they found you—that's been my experience."

Walking down Euclid avenue in Cleveland, where he was playing in "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," one cold winter night in 1912, Hart blew into a cinema house to keep warm. It was the first picture he ever saw. He was thrilled, and obsessed with the idea that his opportunity lay on the screen.

Here He Comes.
Rejecting the offer to be featured on Broadway, he paid his own fare to California, and in 1914 began as the "star"—at only \$75 a week—in his first Triangle picture, "The Bargain," with scenes in the Grand Canyon. He has been starring in movies ever since.

In 1917 began the William S. Hart Productions, Inc., for the Famous Players-Lasky corporation, including the latest release, "John Petticoats," in which, as a Washington lumberjack, Hart inherits a modeste's shop in New Orleans, where scenes were taken. He is now working on the first of nine special productions he is to produce himself, as his own boss and without limit on time or footage.

And that's "how" the pleasant gentleman in the swivel chair—who could have shot the whiskers off my eyeball without touching the lid—"did it."

Eight Miles to School.
"I'd ridden eight miles on a pony to a little Dakota school with five pupils, but I'd had little formal education when my parents took me to New York at 15. At public school they thought me stubborn—and I can hardly blame 'em—and had my father before the board of education to explain."

"I had Indian habits. I wouldn't say 'Good morning.' If they'd talk to me, I'd turn and walk away, as an Indian does. An Indian doesn't say 'Goodby' or 'Go to hell,' or anything. I was stoical."

"My father, who was a highly educated man, decided I'd better be tutored at home. I was a big strapping kid, anyhow, among a lot of children. For a year and a half he 'cramped' me, and I passed the scholastic examination for West Point. You needed 75 to pass and I got 70-20."

"He ground it in, but I was always great on application—anything I went after I stayed with till I got it. I was crazy to go to West Point. So I could get back west as an officer. I'd always lived near form and was familiar with soldier life. But my father couldn't get me an appointment, and I was brokenhearted."

"I'll tell you a dramatic incident that changed my whole life just then—I've never told this to anyone. I think," continued Mr. Hart, his voice sinking to a whisper, "that it was a wonderful bond of affection between me and my father. I made up my mind to run away from home. I went down to the east river and made arrangements with a captain to let me work my way to Australia. The boat was to sail at 5. I was to go on board at 4. I made it all right, crawling past my parents' door with my belongings in a bundle over my shoulder, but just as I closed the house door I felt a hand on the other side of the knob."

"It was my father, in his nightgown. He questioned me, and I told him the boat would reach Melbourne in six months 'All right, laddie—I'll meet you there,' he said—and he'd a been there, too. I went back to bed."

Then young Hart, who had been spending his spare quarters as a gallery god in New York, told his father of his ambition to become an actor. His dad explained that acting was an art which called for culture and refinement and for which a raw prairie boy wasn't fitted; but that if he was determined, he should at least "break in" in Europe, seeing the best development of centuries and getting the rough edges off him. He especially advised him to learn fencing.

But the elder Hart wasn't able to

send him abroad, being just about to take his family to plunge in a far northwestern venture. So "Bill" worked his way on a cattle boat, received \$14.85 at the end of the trip, walked 203 miles from Liverpool to London, and worked there till he saved up enough to take him to Paris.

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various forms is served and at which like cannot forget the main issue—advertising the article. There is many an argument between the old reproaches concerning the rules of etiquette and social manners, but it is difficult to figure which has the best of it, although it makes rare good laughing material for the audience.

Several late song and chorus hits will be introduced by Dot Raymond, Billie Bingham, Charlton Chase, Clarence, and the other clever principals, assisted by the Rosebud girls, such as "Cinda Lou," "All the Boys Love Mary," "Oh, Mother, I'm Wild," etc. Matinee every day. Country store Tuesday night and chorus girls' contest Friday.

PASTOR MAKES PROMISES
CANDIDATE FOR CONGRESS ADOPTS SLOGAN.

"Legislation in Interests of All the People and Development of Oregon" Pledge of O. F. Jones.

BAKER, Or., March 20.—(Special.)—Rev. Owen F. Jones, rector of the St. Stephens Episcopal church of Baker, has prepared his nomination petition on the republican ticket as candidate for the office of United States representative from the second congressional district of the state of Oregon. The general belief in eastern Oregon is that the reverend gentleman will give N. B. Sinnott, republican, present incumbent, a hot race to the Washington office. Jones' petition should reach the secretary of state today or tomorrow.

The campaign slogan adopted by Rev. Mr. Jones, embodied in his petition, is: "Legislation in the interests of all the people, and the development of Oregon's natural resources."

In his petition he makes the following statement of policy:

"If I am nominated and elected, I will during my term of office, advocate legislation in the interests of all the people, with due regard to the equal rights of capital, labor and the general public, and will give every encouragement for the development of the natural resources of the state of Oregon, to the end that they may be enjoyed by the greatest number. My earnest effort will be devoted to the end that Oregon may receive its just proportion for its own improvement of the funds derived by the government from Oregon's resources."

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Edison Diamond-Disc, Mahogany, standard make, 175.00
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Mozart Cabinet, Mahogany finish, 75.00
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Widdcomb, Fumed Oak finish, good condition, 150.00
Widdcomb, Table style, Art model, 250.00
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Columbia, Walnut finish, used two months, 135.00
Columbia, Fumed Oak finish, used three months, 125.00

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