

Motion Pictures Celebrating 50th Anniversary of Founding

Edison Cinema History Noted

First Patent for Movie Machine Is Applied for in 1891

If you had dropped in on Thomas A. Edison 50 years ago at his laboratory in West Orange, N. J., you probably would have found him dividing his time between experiments on the phonograph, his pet project at the time, and a photographic device with which he hoped to show objects in motion. His chief interest in motion photography was to provide a visual accompaniment for his phonograph. He wanted people to see as well as hear the artists who performed, but hearing them was more important to him.

With his assistant, William Kennedy Laurie Dickson, Edison had been at work on motion photography since 1887. However as Terry Ramsaye points out in his authoritative history of the motion picture, "A Million and One Nights," progress was blocked by the lack of a flexible substance in strips long enough for his purposes.

Failure Threatened
Obviously glass plates were too brittle to show successive images with sufficient rapidity to give a spectator the illusion of motion. So Edison tried some heavy celluloid sheets that he obtained from John Carbutt. They were clumsy and could be obtained only in very short pieces. For lack of a more flexible substance, Edison told Ramsaye, his experiments were threatened with failure.

The Rev. Hannibal Goodman, of Newark, N. J., had applied for a patent on a film base of nitrocellulose compound on May 2, 1887. Early in 1889 George Eastman also hit upon a suitably flexible film base for photographic emulsions. It was the Eastman film that Edison used in his experiments.

Motion Picture Born
Dickson went to work so effectively that when Edison returned to West Orange from a trip to Paris on October 6, 1889, he saw pictures in motion through his Kinetoscope No. 1. His experiments were successful; the motion picture was born.

On August 24, 1891, Mr. Edison made application for a United States patent on his invention. It was suggested to him that he ap-

ply for foreign patents, including England and France, as well. "How much will it cost?" Edison asked.

"Oh, about \$150." "It isn't worth it," Edison said, and thereby left his invention unprotected in Europe. Ramsaye's comment is: "One hundred and fifty dollars saved; an empire lost."

Shack First Studio
The first motion picture studio in the world was a tar-paper shack erected on the Edison lot in West Orange, N. J., at a cost of \$637.87. His assistants dubbed it the Black Maria. Fred Ott, an Edison employe whose sneeze was recorded by the movie camera, had the honor of being the first film actor.

The priority of Edison's Kinetoscope, first demonstrated on October 6, 1889, in the laboratory in West Orange, N. J., is beyond dispute. That demonstration is generally accepted as the birthday of the motion picture and the fiftieth anniversary is being celebrated this year.

It was not until some years later that the story picture was born. "The Life of an American Fireman" was among the first. Better known to present day audiences because of its revival by the film library of the Museum of Modern Art is "The Great Train Robbery," made by Edwin S. Porter in the fall of 1903 near Paterson, N. J. The train robber himself, impersonated by George Barnes, appeared in a full screen closeup at the end of the one-reel, 800-foot thriller.

Movie Theatres Spread
The motion picture was on its way. Hale's Tours and nickelodeons spread through the larger cities of the United States. In 1905 John P. Harris opened a continuous show motion picture theatre in Pittsburgh.

In 1906 Carl Laemmle started two theatres in Chicago. Because he found that many existing services were "slack in organization and uncertain in delivery," he opened the Laemmly Film service in October of the same year. Later he went into production to insure that he would have films to deliver.

In 1907 Broncho Billy Anderson appeared in one of the first westerns and D. W. Griffith became a director in the Biograph studio in East 14th street in New York City. Two years later, when Mary Pickford became a player, there were 9,000 motion picture theatres in the United States. The following year the first American newsreel, Pathe Weekly, was started.

Adolph Zukor had gone into

business with Marcus Loew in 1903 as part owner of a penny arcade in 14th street. By 1906 Zukor was a full-fledged theatre owner. Soon he became fired with the idea of showing longer pictures than the one-reelers then in vogue. He bought the American rights to the four-reel "Queen Elizabeth" with Sarah Bernhardt, for \$35,000 and opened it at the Lyceum theatre in New York City on July 12, 1912.

Nineteen twelve was a year of important beginnings for the screen. Up to then pictures had been only one or two reels long and the distribution machinery of the industry was not geared to handle longer pictures. But the motion picture was reaching beyond the nickelodeons.

"The Prisoner of Zenda" with James K. Hackett and "The Count of Monte Cristo" with James O'Neill were among the earliest American features. Samuel Goldwyn, Cecil B. deMille and Jesse L. Lasky collaborated on "The Squaw Man" in 1913. Mary Pickford appeared in "A Good Little Devil." The following year Mack Sennett went into production of a six reel comedy, "Tillie's Punctured Romance," with Charlie Chaplin and Marie Dressler, and the feature picture had come to stay.

Meanwhile, D. W. Griffith had been chafing at the restrictions imposed by one-reelers. After a venture into production of the four-reel "Judith of Bethulia," his technique came to maturity in 1914 in "The Birth of a Nation," one of the milestones of screen history. By skillful use of the camera, Griffith combined the great sweep of battle scenes with close-ups in producing his powerful drama.

The motion picture had progressed through the Hale's Tour and nickelodeon stages and by 1915 it already had a wide popular following.

A steady advance in the quality of film entertainment began, marked by such pictures as "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," made in 1921 by the production organization that Marcus Loew had acquired to assure his theatre patrons of an adequate supply of entertainment; "The Covered Wagon," presented by Adolph Zukor, and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," presented by Carl Laemmle in 1923; "The Gold Rush," Chaplin's contribution in 1925; "The Big Parade" and "What Price Glory" in 1926 and "Sunrise" in the fall of 1927.

Sound Trials Begin
While the art of the silent screen was approaching its zenith,

Darryl F. Zanuck's 'Hollywood Cavalcade' Tells the Screen's Greatest Story—Its Own

Alice Faye, Don Ameche Star in Romance of Movie Capital from Bathing Beauties To World Premieres; Filmed In Technicolor

The romance of Hollywood, from bathing beauties to world premieres, has been staged anew and photographed in Technicolor, and the highly entertaining result is Darryl F. Zanuck's production of "Hollywood Cavalcade," starring Alice Faye and Don Ameche.

Great stars of today and great personalities of yesterday tell this human drama of today—the story of the men and women who conquered the entertainment world—of Mike, who wanted to make movies, and Molly who wanted only to be loved by Mike, but who won greatness on the screen.

Those memorable Mack Sennett bathing beauties, the Keystone Cops, Buster

Keaton, Ben Turpin, Chester Conklin, custard-pie comedy, Al Jolson singing the climactic song of "The Jazz Singer"—they're all here again to warm your heart with the happiest memories of 1001 thrilling yesterdays.

This 20th Century-Fox film marks the Technicolor debut of Alice Faye, as well as her first straight dramatic role. As Molly, she secretly loves her "discoverer" and director, Mike (Don Ameche), through the early days when he introduces custard-pie comedy, bathing beauties and Keystone Cops. Then, in despair, she marries her handsome leading man (Alan Curtis), only to find that Mike loves her so much that the blow crushes him and, for a time, writes him his glorious career.

Mack Sennett Plays Himself
Zanuck signed the famous King of Comedy, Mack Sennett, as technical adviser and also to play himself in a scene of the picture. This marks Sennett's first appearance before a camera since 1917 and the ROMANCE of Hollywood from first time his voice has been heard on the screen.

The early scenes in which Alice Faye is hit smack in that lovely face with a succession of 19 custard pies, tossed by that veteran pie-linger, Buster Keaton (and intended for the ever-present top-batted villain, played by George Givot), are reminiscent of the days when Mabel Normand, Gloria



TWO stirring scenes from the film: above, Don and Alice with Alan Curtis; below, with J. Edward Bromberg.



FILMED anew, with Al-Mack Sennett mermaid ice Faye as one, the Mack Sennett mermaids are more appealing than ever. Here you see them decorating Santa Monica's Castle Rock, which they made famous. And this time they're photographed in sparkling technicolor.



COMEDY—The Keystone Cops (above) are photographed again and Buster Keaton and Ben Turpin (right) reenact their old brand of slapstick and custard-pie comedy.

bathing beauties stroll by famous Old Castle Rock on Santa Monica beach, as they did back in 1916. But this time, the scantily-garbed brigade boasts the presence of Alice Faye among their number.

Although these curvaceous beauties had the effect of liberating the women of the day from rigidly confining fashions, Sennett admits he had no such object in mind when he introduced them.

"It really was a publicity stunt at first," Sennett recalled. "I couldn't get pictures of my comedians published in newspapers and magazines. I thought if I had a good-looking girl don a bathing suit and stand close enough to one of my comedians so that he couldn't conveniently be cut out of the photograph, the picture would get printed. It worked. Then I reasoned that if the girls were so interesting to magazine and newspaper readers, there wasn't any

reason why they shouldn't draw on the screen. They drew millions of dollars into the box office.

The advent of those imitable Keystone Cops is also faithfully reproduced in the film. The hilarious and nostalgic scenes in which they disport feverishly about in the interests of law and disorder were directed by Mal St. Clair (who was a Keystone Cop himself once), with the advice and aid of Sennett.

Jed Prouty brings the excitable Keystone Chief to life again on the screen, while the antics of rubber-faced Eddie Collins, as a member of the force, add much to the general gaiety.

Colorful Era Is Rebuilt
Don Ameche, who plays the director-hero of "Hollywood Cavalcade," will recall to mind, with his riding togs and leather puttees, the great megaphone-wielders of the '20s and early '30s, while Stuart Erwin carries on the tradition of the demon cameraman who wore his cap backwards, and Donald Meek plays a pioneer producer.

Ameche directs sumptuous period pictures in the grand manner and and the 20th Century-Fox makeup experts kept stills of many of the great film heroes before them while working on him.

J. Edward Bromberg, on the other hand, plays a composite of all Hollywood producers. Extravagant in the grand manner and the next, he is addicted to huge automobiles and highly quotable remarks. The historic answer to the imaginative director who wanted to take a troupe on an expensive location trip into the open country, often credited to A. E. Stearns, is revived in the film. "A tree's a tree, a rock's a rock! Shoot it in the park!"

Another concomitant of the silent picture era which is recalled in "Hollywood Cavalcade" is the musical accompaniment which was used to stir the emotions of the stars and to evoke their best dramatic efforts.

Musicians Emote Once More
In those days no star ever went before the camera for a big emotional scene without having his or her favorite music played for the occasion. In this matter, Director Cummings consulted Ray Martinez, now a member of the studio symphony orchestra, but once head of a leading string quartet which coaxed the famous stars of yore into the proper mood for emoting. Not only the same musicians, but the same music will be heard in "Hollywood Cavalcade."

What was perhaps the most significant scene in talking picture history was re-made for the film when Al Jolson sang again the famed "Kol Nidre" with which he electrified the world in the first talkie ever made, "The Jazz Singer."

The triumph of the beloved dog star, Rin Tin Tin, is also commemorated in "Hollywood Cavalcade," the canine star being impersonated by his own great-grandson, who bears the distinguished name of his forebear.

The screen play was prepared by Ernest Pascal. The story by Hilary Lynn and Brown Holmes is based upon an original idea by Lou Breslow. Harry Joe Brown served as associate producer.

THE ROMANCE OF HOLLYWOOD FROM BATHING BEAUTIES TO WORLD PREMIERES!

Just as "Alexander's Ragtime Band" brought back your happiest memories with its tunes...so will this heart-warming drama of today with its 1001 thrilling yesterdays!

DARRYL F. ZANUCK'S Production of **HOLLYWOOD CAVALCADE** IN TECHNICOLOR!

Starring **ALICE FAYE • DON AMECHE**

J. Edward Bromberg
Alan Curtis • Stuart Erwin
Jed Prouty • Buster Keaton
Donald Meek • George Givot • Eddie Collins

Directed by Irving Cummings
Associate Producer Harry Joe Brown
Play by Ernest Pascal • Story by Hilary Lynn and Brown Holmes
Based upon an original idea by Lou Breslow

Starts TODAY

Grand

experiments were being made with sound motion pictures. Some of Edison's first efforts had combined the phonograph with motion pictures. In 1920 Theodore Case patented his photo-electric cell and was working with the aid of Earl I. Sponable, co-inventor of Movietone, on experiments that led to the development of a successful method of sound recording. In 1923 Lee de Forest publicly demonstrated sound motion pictures on film at the Rivoli theatre in New York. In 1926 the Western Electric Vitaphone had developed to the stage of commercial exploitation. The first sound picture, Warner Brothers' "Don Juan," synchronized with a musical score on discs, was presented to the public at the Warner theatre in New York on August 6, 1926.

In 1928 the industry began to equip itself to produce and exhibit sound pictures and the first all-talking picture, "The Lights of New York," produced by Warner Brothers, was publicly exhibited.

The first outdoor feature picture to combine sound and movement effectively was "In Old Arizona." Then followed "All Quiet on the Western Front" and "Cimarron."

The American art-industry has been in existence only 50 years—a period considerably less than the Biblical span of man's life. It is observing its 50th anniversary by marshaling the creative genius of its 276 arts, crafts and professions to produce entertainment for the 85,000,000 Americans and 150,000,000 moviegoers in the remainder of the world who attend motion pictures every week.

COMING!

... AND A CAVALCADE OF HITS!

Richard Greene - Brenda Joyce - Richard Dix "HERE I AM STRANGER"

"DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK" with Claudette Colbert - Henry Fonda (Technicolor)

Frank Capra's "MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON" with Jean Arthur - Jas. Stewart

Joe E. Brown - Mary Carlisle in "BEWARE SPOOKS"

"PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES" with Jane Withers - The Ritz Bros. - Lynn Bari

Tyrone Power - Linda Darnell - Joan Davis - Binnie Barnes in "DAY-TIME WIFE"

Shirley Temple - Sybil Jason - Spring Byington - Eddie Collins in "THE BLUE BIRD" (Technicolor)

"HIS GIRL FRIDAY" with Cary Grant - Rosalind Russell - Ralph Bellamy

Joel McCrea - Nancy Kelly - Mary Boland in "HE MARRIED HIS WIFE"

"SWANEE RIVER" (Technicolor) with Don Ameche - Andrea Leeds - Al Jolson

PICTURES THAT ARE A GREAT TRIBUTE TO 50 YEARS OF PROGRESS

GRAND THEATRE