

TRAVELING THE ROCKY ROAD TO FAME

Raymond Turner Conquers Tremendous Obstacles to Achieve Success in Movies



Sometimes "Ray" found it necessary to tramp the streets too weak to work, but too proud to beg. Finally, he got a "break," and then, even Al Jolson, who seldom shares the spotlight with anyone, recognized the young colored actor by giving him an important part in "Big Boy." "Ray" proved a "WOW." Success at last! Then the film magnates began bidding for his talent. Read this throbbing story below!

ing place dumped the contents of this improvised savings bank on the table. The little pile of nickles, dimes, quarters and few half dollars represented the savings of a long period of self denial. Pocketing the few dollars of change he faced the West and started his toil-worn young body toward the city where his heart already was—Hollywood.

Several weeks later a tired, dusty, hungry boy tramped from studio to studio in search of work. No one seemed to have even a day's work as an extra for him. The massive studio gates and the uniformed gatemen seemed always between him and his objective. He was nearly famished, but the indomitable spirit that carried him from New Mexico to Hollywood, under the most trying conditions, kept him plodding on.

Dame Fortune Smiles

Then Dame Fortune smiled on him. One day as he was waiting near a studio gate half supporting his tired, starved body by grasping the iron rail outside the watchman's little office, Opportunity knocked. Al Rockett, the producer of "Abraham Lincoln," came hastily out of the gate and asked the gateman to call an employment agency for him. As he waited he noticed Raymond sagging slightly against the rail. Young Turner became suddenly aware of his gaze and attempted to stand erect. Rockett smiled at him and Turner swayed a bit, then pulled himself together and smiled—the sort of smile a courageous man smiles when he is losing a hopeless fight.

Rockett, with the deep sense of understanding that had placed him high in the field of directors and producers, understood, partly at least. He asked the gateman to cancel the call; turned to Raymond and said, "Come inside, Son. I want to talk to you."

Lands Chauffeur Job

In Rockett's office on the big studio lot a young colored lad was telling an amazing story of hardships and perseverance. Under the skillful guidance of the producer, the conversation drifted into channels that led to this unburdening of confidences. At the end of the narrative the man whose fame was won by an understanding heart, softly said:

"I had it sized up about that way. That's why I asked you to come in. I've just lost my chauffeur. He had a chance to take a small part with another company on the lot and I let him take it. It seems to be just my luck to get good men who want to act and then lose them the first time a camera starts grinding. Can you drive?" Ray answered in the affirmative.

"Well," said Rockett, "you have a job. We'll find out about your acting ability later. What you need now is a 'flock of hot groceries.'"

His First Picture

The deal was made. Tho' he was not yet an actor, he at least had access to the studio. As he told me later:

"It seemed wonderful to see the gates that had so long been barred against me quickly open when I drove up in Mr. Rockett's big limousine."

Raymond Turner was not destined to be a chauffeur for long. When the picture, "Hills of Missing Men," was made, Al Rockett let Director J. P. McGowan have Ray for the comedy part of the cook.

His histrionic ability was definitely proved in this pic-

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ON THE LEFT, the big good-natured smile of Raymond (Ray) Turner, whose rise to success in Hollywood came only after long privation, anxiety, and hard work. His work has put him in contact with some of the greatest movie celebrities in Hollywood.

By BUDDY MASON

THIS is a tale of dreams that came true. Dreams of fortune and fame that a young colored boy visioned while toiling fourteen hours a day under a blazing sun on a New Mexico ranch. The New Mexico sun is more conducive to dreams than work, but young Raymond Turner had many tasks to perform. As he plodded his weary way about the sun-scorched ranch under the relentless rays of Old Sol he dreamed and planned.

At the little theatre in Roswell he had seen a few moving pictures. On the rare occasions when he was able to scrape together a few pennies to procure a ticket to this shabby little house of enchantment he would come early and stand outside waiting for the box office to open—and when the last show was over and the lights put out for the night, a bright-eyed lad would reluctantly leave the theatre.

Young Turner KNEW he could act! His friends were equally positive that he couldn't.

He made the mistake of telling his friends of his hopes and aspirations. Many men with the spark of genius that might have won them fame have been laughed into an embarrassed oblivion by "friends" who could not understand. Not so with Raymond. Their jibes and laughs only served to spur him on with the firm determination to prove to them that they were wrong.

Tramped the Streets Hungry

He gathered his few belongings, and taking an old tin can from its hid-

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"RAY" ACTING FOR THE CAMERAS. Already talented, it was an easy matter for Ray to develop into a versatile actor; consequently he has been cast in several different types of parts. His biggest difficulty was in landing an opportunity.