JOHN BARRYMORE —in— "BEAU BRUMMEL"

With "Beau Brummel" we present the third in our current series of films requested by our members. Quite incidentally, neither of the previous two screenings have managed to pay for themselves. We hope that the magic name of the "Great Lover" will, on this occasion, balance the scales more economically. We should stress, by the way, that our version of "Beau Brummel" is the complete and exact edition — very considerably longer than the drastically hacked five-reel copy that is in limited circulation. This particular Brummel vehicle is one that has had but a minor showing in New York in recent years; due to its length it is shown by the Museum of Modern Art on a one-a-day basis, and for various reasons their last screening of it was restricted to two days only.

"BEAU BRUMMEL" was a favorite subject for biographers and playwrights for many years. Reynaldo Hahn wrote an opera based around the man; in 1928 Sir Edward Elgar wrote the music for a production in England written by Barrie and Geraldine Lawrie in the title role; again in 1933 the English company mounted a production of Harold Simpson, music and lyrics by B.C.billier starring Harry Welchman and the more recent production in America occurred in 1934 at the St. Louis Municipal Opera where a book by Gladys Clutter was used and created by music of Barry Fierman (whose melodies ran through "Trend" and "We Rake") and the company included Leonard Cceley and Allan Jones. The Schuberts scheduled it for Broadway, but never made good their promise. The original play by Clyde Fitch (immortalized by Betty Davis in a remark brushed off in a tirade in "All About Eve") was revived several times by Arnold Daly, in the title role, at the Cort Theatre in 1915 and 1916.

Richard Mansfield (1857-1907) commissioned a young playwright, Clyde Fitch (1855-1909) to write his first play for him, inserting bits of dialogue from time to time. This play was BEAU BRUMMEL and was composed in 1900. Mr. Fitch was paid $250 a week in salary to write it for Mansfield, $7.50 for each performance until the total reached $1500, and then the rights to the play passed to Mansfield, who used it as a vehicle until his death. Ownership reverted to his wife (the screen credits list her permission to film the play) who controlled all performances (including a radio adaptation in 1937 starring Robert Montgomery and Judge Evans) until her death in 1940. The role was a great plum for all actors, and it was only natural that Brummel should wish to enact the great Fopp Brummel evident in Mansfield (Mansfield's Dr. Jekyll) was an assonance as was Brummell's screen performance, and Brummel enacted the same script of Shakespeare's "Richard III" utilizing portions of "King Henry VII", part 3.

The Fitch play was adapted for the screen in 1912 by James Young, who directed and played the title role, for Vitagraph. The remainder of the cast: Lord Ballarters (William Phillips); Helen Ballarters (Glara Hissell Young); The Duchess (Julia Sawyn Gordon); Lord Alvanley (James Mannion); Prince of Wales (Charles Chapman); Isadore, Brummel's valet (Steele Geddes).

The version that we are screening this evening opened at the Strand Theatre on March 30th, 1924. It was produced by the Warner Brothers Brothers by arrangement with Mr. Richard Mansfield, based on historical data and the play by Clyde Fitch. The adaptation was made by Dorothy Bernhard, it was photographed by David Abel, and it was directed by Harry Beaumont who went on to fame as the director of the first great all-talking musical "The Broadway Melody".

The Cast

George Bryan Brummell —— JOHN BARRINGTON
George, Prince of Wales —— Willard Louis
Maitlands —— Alex D. Francis
Lady Helen Stanhope —— Cammel Myers
Lord Stanhope —— Richard Tucker
Lady Nancy —— Claire de Lorez
Desmond Warham —— Topping Sams
Snodgrass (Tunkeeper) —— James A. Marcus
Mr. Abrahams —— Richard Rushton
Timothy —— C.H. Chadcock
Mrs. Bargrose —— Rose Deere
Lady Nina —— Etoe Lester
Lady Margery Alvanley —— MARY ASTOR
Frederick Charlotte —— Irene Rich
Mrs. Humberbry —— Mrs. Humberbry
Lord Alvanley —— Lord Byron
Mr. Nyron —— Lord Mayley
Mrs. Warham —— Clarissa Selby
Mrs. Snodgrass —— Betty Brace
"Pecile" Byng —— John J. Richardson
Parllyna, valet to Prince of Wales —— P.F. Quinnell

The latest story in that MGM is preparing a wide-screen production of "Beau Brummel" starring Stewart Granger.

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