THEODORE HUFF MEMORIAL FILM SOCIETY

Program for Tues., November 15th,
In the Marine Room, 5th floor,
Capitol Hotel, Eighth Avenue & 51st St., N.Y.C. at 7:30 p.m.

NEXT SHOW: December 20
ELAINE HAMMERSMITH in "PAINT AND POWDER" (1925)
Chaplin: "His New Profession"
Laurel & Hardy: "Sailor Beware"
Mr & Mrs Sidney Drew:
"Mamie's Picture"

COLEEN MOORE

in

Ella Cinders

(1926)

A FIRST NATIONAL release, presented by John McCormick

Directed by ALFRED E. GREEN
Scenario by Mervyn LeRoy and Frank Griffin, based on the comic strip "Cinderella in the Movies" by William Conselman and Charles Plum. Photographed by Arthur Martinelli.

The Cast

ELLA CINDERS ............... COLEEN MOORE

Waite Lifter ............... Lloyd Hughes
Prissy Pill ............... Vera Lewis
Lobbs Pill ............... Doris Baker
Indian on train .......... Chief Yowlachie
Harry Langdon ............ Harry Langdon

with Russell Hopton in an extra role

LORNA DOONE

WITH

MIDGE BELLAMY

and

JOHN BOWERS

(1922) A THOMAS H. INCE production, released by First National

Directed by MAURICE TOURNEUR
Photographed by Henry Sharp
Scenario: Katherine Speer Reed
Cecil G. Mumford
Wyndham Gittens

Based on the novel by R.D. Blackmore
Costumes & set design: Milton Menasco
Musical score arranged by Sol Cohen

The Cast

LORNA DOONE ............... Madge Bellamy
John Ridd ............... John Bowers
Sir Ennor Doone ............ Frank Keenan
The Counsellor ............... Jack MacDonald
Carver Doone ............... Donald MacDonald
Ruth ......................... Norris Johnson
Lorna as a child .......... May Giraco
John as a child ............ Charles Hatton

ELLA CINDERS .......... 7:30 p.m.
Intermission ............. 8:15 p.m.
LORNA DOONE .......... 8:55 p.m.
Finish ..................... 10:25 p.m.
"ELLA CINDERS"

More than any of her other films, "Ella Cinders" is strictly a Colleen Moore vehicle. It neither exploits a period, as did her "flaming youth" epics, nor does it contain much comedy material that is effective independent of her personality - as did "Orphans and Un避免es," shown by this society a year or two ago. Colleen is the whole show in this one, and lack in 1926 that was more than enough to have the crowds lining up around the block. Viewing the film at the time, the trade paper "Film Daily" devoted most of its space to Colleen, and commented: "Colleen scores another triumph... certain to delight her following... she is cute and varies her laughs with pathetically bit that make her work particularly enjoyable. She's going to please them thoroughly in this."

The film is something of a companion piece to Harold Lloyd's talkie "Movie Crazy," with Colleen as the small-town slavegirl who makes good in the movies via the usual route of accidentally ruining a costly scene! The Hollywood sequences are extremely enjoyable, with the good old Mitchell cameras prominently on view, and Harry Langdon contributing an amusing, and typical, guest appearance.

Colleen imitates Coogan, laughs, cries, plays, and in the final scene of ultimate marital bliss is left with her lovely self. No-one else seems to matter much, although Lloyd Hughes makes a pleasant hero, and Chief Yowlachie (unbilled originally), still one of Hollywood's leading Indian players, has an amusing sequence. The print, mounted on one large reel for continuous running, is in fine condition and is a toned original.

"Lorna Doone"

1922 was perhaps the beginning of the Golden Age of American Cinema, which reached its peak in 1925/26, and declined only very slightly until the coming of sound in 1928. Brought a wonderful era to an unwelcome close. There had of course been many great films before 1922, particularly those of Griffith, but never before had there been such a continuous parade of hits. Then "Lorna Doone" opened on Broadway in December of that year, other current attractions were "The Toun That Forgot God"; "with an audience in Flower," "Plead and Blood," "Robin Hood" and "The Beautiful and the Damned." Other notable (artistic, boxoffice, or both) successes earlier in the year had been "Arms of the Storm," "The Prisoner of Zenda," "Grandma's Day," "Smiling Thru," "Toilet Leaved," "River Twist," "The Three Musketeers," "Foolish Lives" and "Hancock of the North."

"Lorna Doone" may not have been the greatest film of 1922, but it was unquestionably the most beautiful from a visual standpoint. Without belittling the great camerawork of Henry Sharp, most of the credit is certainly due to Maurice Tourneur, oft referred to as "the post-producer," and one of the most sensitive creators of film that Hollywood has ever known. Born and educated in France, Tourneur started making films in Hollywood in 1914. He had no trouble at all in filming the literary classics of other nationalities, which is a fact worth noting. The somewhat Continental outlook on things American by "Lorna Doone" and "Innocent," with which he would have been a direct influence had American directors handled those chores. This is not to criticize them, but rather to emphasize how remarkable was Tourneur's adaptability. His version of "The Last of the Mohicans" is still a yardstick by which all such adventure stories should be measured. In 1917 he made of "The Blue Bird" an enchanting fairy story, delightful and magical throughout, using tints and tones as they had never been used before - or since, as we have not seen his version of "Treasure Island," but presumably it is of equal merit. (Later Tourneur was to reveal a marked talent for the macabre, as in such French talkies as "Les Lieux du Diable," released here as "Circus of Sinners." This talent was certainly inherited by his son, Jacques Tourneur, who made "Out People" among other fine thrillers."

So far as we are aware, Maurice still lives; but a little over a year ago he was very seriously injured in an automobile accident and all but paralyzed. "His handicap, plus the fact that he is now 82, means that he will never direct again."

Although Tourneur had made a few films in France in 1910, the bulk of the silent period was spent in the American studios.

Pictorial beauty has always been the strongest point of any Tourneur production - beauty combined with romanticism, or a suggestion of the macabre. In "Lorna Doone" the shots of the sinister scenes, sitting on horseback on the crest of misty hills; the wrecked coach in the sea; the dramatic silhouettes against stark rock cliffs; the lovely pastoral scenes and the magnificently composed interiors, all compare more than favorably with the best that Norma, Von Stirling, Von Steenberg, Pudovkin and the other great (but more celebrated) visual directors have ever given us.
Of this pictorial magnificence, "Film Daily" reported, "... an unusually beautiful production that stands as high in pictorial appeal ... very good direction and a worthy presentation of a famous novel. Blackmore's popular romantic melodrama is splendidly visualized. Many exquisite and beautiful shots ... Tourneur presents a picture that is unusually good to look at ... many of the scenes suggest gorgeous pastels ... the settings are unique and always excellently photographed. The soft tones and suggestions of soft focus often enhance the natural beauty ... the battle scenes have been lavishly staged and offers genuine thrills ... You can go the limit of praises of pictorial appeal they (the customars) rarely see such beauty in scenic investiture, and "Lorna Doone" certainly has it".

Not that the film is all beauty and nothing else; the action scenes are slammed over with tremendous gusto, and the chases and battles remain as exciting as ever. Certain minor liberties have been taken with Blackmore's original story of course. One important character - the highwayman who loves loath - has been eliminated completely. John is swept over a waterfall into the Doone country instead of climbing up as in the book. The dramatic chase along the frozen river has been eliminated, and the battle at the Doone village has been transferred from its original position (two-thirds through the novel) and added to the climax. This latter seems to stem from Ince's "script supervision" the ending as it stands is constructed very much in the mould of Ince's beloved westerns.

However, despite these changes, and they are minor ones, the film is easily the best version of the novel to date. A recent Columbia opus with Richard Greene was just transposed horse opera with no pretentions to anything else, but a 1934 British version, directed by Basil Dean, and starring Victoria Opper, John Loder, Margaret Lockwood and Roger Livesey, had a great deal of merit.

There had been some vague thought about filming "Lorna Doone" on location in England, but nothing ever came of it. The story was that Tourneur didn't think it necessary, although it's more likely that this was Ince's attitude! However, the California and Nevada landscape substitutes surprisingly well for Devon, and the cottages, inns, and other buildings are remarkably authentic in appearance. Tourneur and his set designer, Nansco, worked from photographs in reconstructing these landscapes, and Tourneur himself had been to the ruins of the Doone village. (In Devon, the Doones were the local Daltons and James Boys rolled into one, and many relics of their period - the 17th century - still remain.) For the impressive gateway to the Doone stronghold, Tourneur found a gap that had been dynamited in the Southern Sierras by a railroad company - and subsequently not used. This gap has since formed the gateway to many an outlaw stronghold - primarily of the Texan variety. One or two camera notes: Tourneur used four cameras on this production instead of the customary two, spending so much time on intricate set-ups and lighting that he wanted to take no chances at all of scenes being ruined? The film contains two particularly good glass-shots; one of them, in a spectacular white-chapel sequence (the christening of the son of King James 1, with some 110 extras in attendance) is particularly stunning and puts today's glass-shots to shame. Those of you really familiar with Ince (i.e. the background data on Ince, deliberately omitted from these notes) will know of his program notes on "Barbara Frietchie", and the "History of the American Screen" publication by the group for film study -- will note the frequent use of one of his favorite coastline locations -- and one stock shot, probably from a Hill Hart western, of a horse and rider toppling off a cliff.

The Cast: Hodge Dallamy ("The Iron Horse", "White Zombie") makes a lovely and appealing Lorna. John Lober, the hero, is the star on whom the Norman Maine character in "A Star Is Born" is based. He committed suicide by walking into the sea, although his wife, Marguerite de La Motte, was not quite the up-and-coming young star as portrayed by Gwynne and Garland. Frank Keenan, an actor of the old school, is the grandfather of herman von.

First National really wants to town on publicity for "Lorna Doone". In the "Davy Crockett" tradition, they promoted all sorts of merchandising - Lorna Doone dolls, candles, biscuits, umbrellas, hats, A Lorna Doone song plugged the picture, and Lorna Doone Days were arranged for schools! One big contest had Hodge posing for stills of the great heroines of art and history - Juliet, Carmen, Joan of Arc, Betsy Ross, Madame Butterfly, Cleopatra and Pocahontas (shades of "Nothing Sacred"?) - with contestants having to identify all the young ladies. For the most part, the film was sold as a love story. THE JOLIEST LOVE STORY EVER TOLD was one catchline. THE JOLIEST MUGGIE IN FICITION IS ABOUT TO LIVE another, but there was a whole of six-sheet stressing action and gore! Probably the best advertising slogan of the lot was a six-sheet stressing action and gore! "HE HAD ALL THE BILLS ON THE FIGHTING DOCKS - THE BILL WITH HIM. IN THE END OR A MURDERING LOVE - TRUTH IN HU€ ESCAPE - A FILM AS SWEET AS A SPLENDID MAHOGANY CURE TASTE!"

Our print by the way is literally luminous, and just about the finest 16mm print we've ever seen. It's toned, mounted on one large reel, and does full justice to the magnificent shots created by Tourneur and Sharp.

-3-

Art-work — Dorothy Lovell; program notes and enquiries — Bill Everson, Manager's Office, 2136 Broadway, NYC 21.