As we explained in our News Bulletin, you’re taking "pot luck" with tonight’s show inasmuch as there was no way of examining the material ahead of time, but for the sake of looking at fresh Harlow-Langdon material, it seemed worth the gamble. A few words of explanation are perhaps in order, as these notes will necessarily be somewhat cursory.

Dangereously late on the evening prior to tonight’s show we were handed all the material—some 26 reels of film, all unmarked, and all off-reels. This all had to be mounted very hurriedly and checked on a viewer, identified, and in some cases re-cut when key sequences were out of order. There turned out to be six Langdon—three of which, however, we had already played—DOES IN THE WOOD SATURDAY, AFTERNOON, HIS HABITATION WAO. The other three, however, were less familiar, and you’ll find them on this show. A word about them in a minute. The other material was frankly disappointing. The HOLLYWOOD KID is a great little two-reeler, and so we’ve added it to the show. But the rest … I’M RIGHT NOW, a Billy Bevan, started with a wonderful gag—and then for 2 solid reels NOTHING happened! Others were so out of sequence as to make them unviewable without hours of re-editing, but take our word for it, they were routine Sennett’s at best.

However, we have emerged with six reels of new Langdon material, and another two-reeler that’s quite delightful. One of the Langdons is a hodge-podge (see below) and HOLLYWOOD KID is minus titles. These are minor drawbacks however, with allowances for silent speed where needed, this gives us about 90 minutes of good Sennett, and predominantly Langdon, material. To this we’ve added another hour of miscellaneous (sound) material—program balance may not be of the best, but I think you’ll appreciate that when a show has to be assembled, viewed, edited, selected and then annotated all in one evening, last-minute additions become a matter of grabbing what’s handiest. Similarly, there has been no time to do any kind of musical scoring, so we’ll have to hope for the best with "natural" comedy music.

One final word—these are all reduction prints from the original negatives, and in some cases represent all that is left. They are also "green"—meaning that they have been through a projector only once (when I screened them last night). Unused prints like that have a habit of behaving unpredictably, so if there’s a little hopping or jiggling once in a while, you’ll understand why, basically it can be overcome by creating a larger loop holding the film in the projector with one’s fingers, and other little dodges which however, of themselves may make everything even less professional than usual. After all these words of warning (designed mainly for guests who never saw the news bulletin, and who thus may get a bad impression of us) we’ll get on to a brief coverage of the films—and keep our fingers crossed that all goes well.


Nothing could be more of a contrast to the Langdons than this fast and insane aleged look "behind the scenes" at Sennett’s studio. The pace seldom lets up, the gags are wonderful, and the glimpses of the Sennett factory fascinating. If it seems familiar in spots, it’ll be because some of it turned up in "The Golden Age of Comedy". There are only one-frame flash titles, but it’s all easy enough to follow.

"MARY LANGDON #1" This is frankly a puzzle. The first reel appears to be the last reel of a 2-reeler, identified on one-frame as "keep filling". (Yes there is no film of that title copyrighted under Sennett, and since there was a Monty Banks 2-reeler of ’25 with that title, it seems likely that Monty Banks had used it anyway.) The final reel is actually the last reel of 1924’s "Smile Please". Since Harry plays a photographer in both, it seems that somewhere along the line the two segments got erroneously joined. There is no splice in the print, so it is obvious that the negatives were spliced. Neither one of them particularly good—one is too slanting, the other too laborated. But, thanks to Harry, there are moments. Louise Carver, Andy Clyde and Madeleine Hurlock are on hand too.

"ALL NIGHT LONG" (Paths, 1924; no director credited; 2 reels) With Natalie Kingston, Vernon Dent, Panny Kelly.

A one-reel back-up of this, fuzzily duped, has been in spasmotic circulation for some years, but this is the first time we’ve seen a complete print. It’s a curious Langdon (an unnecessary comment perhaps—they were all curious), done surprisingly elaborately, with big war scenes, and a completely superfluous

Although not quite as good as one has a right to expect from a collaboration of Langdon, Bruckman, Edwards and Ripley, "Remember When?" is thoroughly charming and one of the most enjoyable of all the Bennett Langdonas. The tramp costume suggests a Chaplinesque role even more than usual, but it's a superficial similarity only, and all of the comic bits are done with a completely different spirit than Charlie's. That wonderful (if under-developed) scene, for example, where hungry Harry is confronted with a picnic table — putting down one goodie before he eats it because another and more delectable item catches his eye — only to lose out on everything when the picnickers return; Charlie, somehow, by aggression, stealth or cunning, would have come out on top. Put humble little Harry justambiases off pleasantly, sure that things will turn out all right without his having to fight or cheat. It's a quiet, wholly Langdonian piece, with less signs of Bennett overseeing than almost any of the others.

INTERMISSION

FUMUS FOR FOURTH

"Tanjousha, Tjanka and Njuasha" is a two-reel Russian color fantasy, of approx. 1955. Perhaps its chief claim to distinction is that this is the only print in this country! There are some in-jenious effects, welding live action, puppetry and cartooning, but it is all rather long-winded and obvious. However, as a child's film it has a certain charm and since it is never likely to get a release in this country, this is probably your only chance to see it.


We're running this little item not because of its interest as a serial (which is negligible) but because it is so diverting in another way. Fully 75% of the footage is lifted from "SOS Iceberg", that wonderful Rinck-Garnett film of the early 30's. Quite apart from the great footage itself, it's amusing to see how blandly the old shots are used, how Gibson Gowland and the others are so recognizable in long shots, and how cheap and shoddy the catch-up shots are against phony studio ice and even phony ice back projection. Best of all is the delightful dialogue, as odd lines are thrown in to prepare the way for all the stock. "Better take along some of this equipment — lucky I had it!" (or words to that effect) mutters Edgar Kennedy, as he uploads from the sinking ship enough crates to correspond to the tents, sledges and other accessories toted along by Leni Monefstein and Rod La Rocque two decades earlier.

"Fire, Wind and Blood" is another of Bob Youngson's beautifully edited excursions into disaster, with a wonderful parade of storms, hurricanes, floods and out-sized fires. The narration is as lively as the footage and somehow neither writer Youngson nor narrator Weis can quite keep their fascination in check as they comment on all the destruction and carnage. As a whole community goes up in flames, and hundreds are made homeless, one senses that their one real regret is that they didn't tough the blaze off themselves!

Program Notes & Enquiries: W. R. Everson, Hotel Bradford, 210 W. 70th St., NYC

Next Program: Thursday April 23th., room 21-0

RICHARD DIX: ESTHER RALSTON: lDIA HAY OLIVER in LUCKY DEVIL (Dir: Frank Tuttle, 1925); plus "SENIOR AMERICANO" (1929, dir: Harry Joe Brown) with Ken Haynard.