Tonight's program is a pot-pourri of shorts — material that has been piling up on us and that there hasn't been room to place in other programs. And there are as many again, waiting a similar outlet in a month or two. The program, in order of screening, is:

"THE ROCKY ROAD" (Biograph, 1911, one reel) Dir: D.W. Griffith; camera: G.W. Gitt; with Stephanie Longfellow, Frank Powell, Manchee Sweet, Kate Bruce, Gracie Henderson, Gladys Egan, Charles Kailes, Christy Killen, Charles West.

"The Rocky Road" is a routine Griffith Biograph, with surprisingly little advantage taken of the cross-cutting possibilities of the climax, but it's a well done little film, and features some nicely photographed New Jersey exteriors. The film is sparse on titles, but we don't think you'll have too much trouble following the plot, which is that old standby about the long-last father falling in love with and almost marrying his own daughter. A couple of years ago this little film became a minor cause célèbre on TV; the program was running late, and an announcer, who obviously hadn't been watching it, shut it off during the wedding ceremony, and assured his viewers that the wedding came off beautifully and the couple lived happily ever after!

"THE FITFALL" (Ince-Kay-Bee, 1913; two reels) Written by William Clifford. We rather slipped up on this: not having screened it for some years we had forgotten that the print identified neither star nor director — and this dire realization came to us only as we were going to press with these notes. Possibly some Ince aficionado tonight can identify the extremely homely leading lady for us; there are familiar Ince faces in bits, but her name is a mystery. It's an old-fashioned melodrama of the perils awaiting a young lady in the big city, and takes a pretty dim view of the theatrical profession; it's more interesting as a commentary on the morals and morals of the times than as a film, though it's competent enough done.

"EVE'S LOVE LETTERS" (Hal Roach-Pathes, 1927) 2 reels; dir: Fred Guiol; starring Acnes Ayres with Forrest Stanley and Stan Laurel.

One of that curious series that Roach turned out with fading dramatic stars given top billing (and players like Stan Laurel carrying the comedy load), "Eve's Love Letters" is a bizarre combination of labored slapstick and often brilliant invention. Some of Laurel's pantomime is quite exceptional, and there are some hilarious titles. It seems to be a re-working of Charlie Chase's "Lightly Like a Rose", and a lot of the spirit of that one has rubbed off on to this. "Sir Oliver Hardy" is referred to throughout — but alas, he is not played by Ollie in person. The print is a fine toned original.

(Intermission)

INTOLERANCE FOOTAGE

Here we have about a reel of scenes from the Babylonian sequence of "Intolerance" deleted from the final 13-reel version of that masterpiece. There are some fine scenes at the camp of Cyrus the Persian, and an interesting episode in the Temple of the Moon God — a set that isn't included in "Intolerance" as released at all. The final sequence — a love scene between Constance Talmadge and Elmer Clifton — seems to have been shot much later as "padding" footage for "The Fall of Babylon". (That feature release of the Babylonian story contained out-takes from the original, plus newly filmed scenes — including a happy ending). Constance seems much more the polished comedienne in this sequence, and incidentally is put through one of Griffith's favorite gimmicks — the "new walk" to impress the boy friend (viz Rae Marsh in both "Intolerance" and "The White Rose"!). As this material is processed from 35mm footage, we hope later to show more such deleted material not only
From this film, but also from "America" and some Doug Fairbanks items too.

"THE MAD DANCER" (Janes, 1925) Dir: Burton King; with Ann Pennington, Johnny Walker, Richard Tucker.

This one-reel condensation of a quite ambitious independent feature of the mid 20's contains most of the highlights, and provides a welcome glimpse of vivacious Ann Pennington. It's good, rather outlandish fun as long as one doesn't try to figure out the title -- for the dancer is singularly sane throughout. The narration, though serious, is a little obtrusive at times; however, we're leaving the sound track on since it wouldn't make too much sense otherwise.


This little segment was actually first compiled as a unit in a News Magazine for schools, then later incorporated into a theatrical short, "Looking at Life". It's of interest to us since much of the footage comes from Warner's 1927 "The First Auto", written by Darryl F. Zanuck and directed by Ray del Ruth. Its stars were Russell Simpson and Charles Ernest Lock (who, ironically, was decapitated in an auto accident not long afterwards).

"CONDUCTOR 1492" (Warner, 1923) Prod: Johnny Hines; directed by Frank Griffen and Charles Hines.

The Johnny Hines films were enormously popular in their day, and though Hines' croaky style seems common-place today, with generations of William Haineses and Pat O'Brien's havin' followed him, his films -- with their combinations of comedy, stunts and thrill -- have held up very well. This two-reel condensation gets in most of the highlights, including some wonderful racial gag that would hardly pass muster today, and a nip of a (flaming red toned!) fire sequence. This is really well and convincingly staged.

"ALLEZ-COP" (Educational, 1934) Dir: Charles Lamont; written by Ernest Pagano & Dwart Adamson; with Buster Keaton, Dorothy Sebastian, George Lewis, Harry Lyons.

This is a slightly condensed version of one of the best of Buster's two-reelers for Educational; Buster's youthful innocence has gone, and the pacing is off, but there are still some good gags there.

"IT HAPPENED TO YOU" (Warner, 1954) 2 reels; written and directed by Robert C. Youngson.

Although over-sentimentally written, this is a beautifully edited documentary coverage of America's participation in World War One. Reflecting the propaganda newsreels of the time, the stress is on jubilation, horse-play in the training camp, and the glory, excitement and patriotism of it all. Combat footage was relayed to the home front only in very small doses. (Incidentally, this indisputable record of the nation's attitude at the time proves how well and accurately King Vidor re-created that attitude almost a decade later in "The Big Parade"). Some of the footage is extremely rare, and all of it is well put together. Incidentally, you'll notice a slight roar in the track between the shots of Harry Richford and Dougelling bonds; initially Chaplin was there too, but the FDA "requested" that it be removed before release, it not being polite at that time to remind audiences that maybe Chaplin wasn't such a bad fellow after all.


A good Herric melodie to wind up with -- less savage (and less funny) than most, but with more story and some charming animation. Seen with other, faster, zanier, cartoons, it would suffer -- on its own, it should stand up very nicely.

---

Next Tuesday: REEL IN THE DEVIL HORSE; RIN TIN TIN IN WHERE THE NORTH BEGINS