 Apart from being a nostalgic reminder of the days when Riverside Drive was a symbol of elegance and raciness, and when automobiles were so new in New York that only three streets were watched for careless driving, "NY. Bicycle Police" is certainly notable for refuting the many "first" claims for travel shots photo-rushed from moving vehicles. Whether or not this is the first such shot is a mute point -- any such claims are always dangerous and suspect -- but quite certainly it comes well before the "official" firsts, which are generally dated around late 1912. Practically the whole of the film is one long travel shot, and a very smooth one it is too. Nor can one minimise its importance by saying "But that's the obvious way to shoot a chase". It still wasn't obvious to Porter several years later when he shot a runaway horse sequence in Central Park for "Life of an American Policeman" -- and broke the whole thin' up into static long shots.

ROSES OF MEMORY (Edison, 1915) One reel; directed by Edward C. Taylor; story by Edward S. Kern; with Edward Earle, Fessie Lear, Augustus Phillips.

Every time one comes across a good Edison short (and most of them were rather mediocre) one is almost instantly discouraged by a look at the production date. Invariably the film turns out to have been made long after one expected, and almost identical films of equal merit had been produced by Biograph some five years earlier. To some extent, this is true of "Roses of Memory", but somehow its story is less obvious than usual and more carefully thought out; its sets are sturdier, and the acting better. It still impresses as rather a neat little job of movienaking -- and for nostalgic interest, there's a gem of an old car.

BETWEEN ORTON JUNCTION AND FALLONVILLE (Edison, 1913) One reel; director not credited; story by Charles Seay; with Edna Flugrath, Higelow Cooper, Augustus Phillips, Barry O'Moore.

This charmingly titled little melodrama is quite one of the best Edisons we've ever come across. The influence of Griffith is apparent throughout, and it's all to the good; a pity that more of the usually dull Edisons didn't have that same influence. And a pity too, that there's no record of the director. It's an exciting little tale, with some really fine lighting, excellent camerawork, and tight editing.

GOOD NIGHT NURSE (Educational, 1929) Two reels. Directed by Henry W. George; with Lupino Lane, Wallace Lupino, Fay Holderness, Eleanor Fredrick, Nurell Evans.

Print loaned through the courtesy of Cinema 16.

This represents something of a "first" in that never before has a Cinema 16 release found its way to our die-hard projectors. However, this does not mean that we are lowering our standards; rather that Cinema 16 are raising theirs with a return to the "old values". Quite seriously though, we are most grateful to Amos Vogel for making this film available to our own little Lupino Lane fan club ahead of his own re-premiere. We've run a number of Lanes over the past five or six years. Few of them have matched his wonderful "Monte of the Mounted" or "MovieLand", but no two have been quite alike, and all of them have had their moments. "Good Night Nurse" is not top-bracket, but is decidedly above middle-bracket Lune, and (thank heavens) is not nearly as akin to "Carry On Nurse" as its title suggests. The whole thing is really just a showcase for Lane's acrobatic antics; one of his routines goes on for too long, but there are some great gag props, and the sheer savagery and frenzied lunacy of much of the action is made more effective by Lane's own...
The Wreck of the Hesperus (1927) 

The Wreck of the Hesperus is a silent film directed by Elmer Clifton and produced by Cecil B. DeMille Productions for Pathe in 1927. It stars Frank Marion, Virginia Bradham, Sam De Grasse, Alan Hale, Francis Ford, Slim Summerville, and Ethel Taylor.

Prints of The Wreck of the Hesperus seem to have vanished in recent years, and we're most grateful to Joe Franklin for loaning us this recently-located one. It's somewhat out from the original release prints, but apart from assuming that the complete prints had far better 'posing', this does seem to be a reasonably representative version.

The reasons for its production seem to have been two-fold. First of all, it seemed a good commercial bet as a follow-up to Elmer Clifton's classic of 1923, Down to the Sea in Ships. Secondly, its production enabled it to take advantage of the facilities of another current DeMille picture, The Yankee Clipper. The ship here is one of the two utilised in Yankee Clipper, and the same typhoon sequence, mainly a matter of really expert miniatures, is used in both films.

Despite the excellent climactic wreck sequence, the film certainly is no match for its famous predecessor. The story never really gets anywhere, the borrowings from Lone-Fellow are laborious, and everything seems like what it really is — just a build-up to a spectacular climax. However, Clifton makes it seem like far less of a programmer than Rupert Julian was able to do with Yankee Clipper. There is some effective use of the 'right' locations, and some shots of tremendous power and beauty — among them the brief but breath-taking shot of the hero galloping to the scene of the wreck. Clifton was really a most curious director; Down to the Sea in Ships was a classic; his earlier comedies under Griffith were delightful; yet he made only that one truly great film, and in the sound era turned out scores of westerns, actioners and serials which were all competent enough, but lacked that vigorous spark that marked the 'B' pictures of Lesley Selander or Lambert Hillyer.

The Wreck of the Hesperus is a disappointment if judged by the standards of Down to the Sea in Ships. But it's still a robust, highly enjoyable and extremely well photographed film. It was very well received by the critics in '27, and was certainly several notches above the usual DeMille-Pathe output.

Next program: Tuesday next July 25th., 7:30 p.m.

I'M NO ANGEL (1933, Weslye Ruggles) with Mae West, Gary Grant, Edward Arnold
ROXIE HART (1942, William Wellman) with Ginger Rogers, Adolphe Menjou

NOTE. Due to the very brittle condition of THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS, it hasn't been possible to put it through a viewer, or re-screen it, for scoring purposes. Thus tonight's musical accompaniment will have to be done rather off-the-cuff, based on the memory of just one screening, and we ask your indulgence for any inadequacies that may result. Thankyou.