**DOCKS OF NEW YORK** (1928, Josef von Sternberg) with George Bancroft, Betty Compson; "Men of Many Skins" with Erich von Stroheim and Denise Vernan, and Charley Chase's "The Wrong Trak".

**HICQUADE OF THE TRAFFIC SQUAD** (Edison, 1915) Directed by Eugene Nowland; 1 reel With Pat O'Malley, Benkie Lear, Yale Banner, Dennis Ward, William Hage, Jessie Stevens.

Although this has some of the typical Edison faults - subtitles inserted too early so they tip off action, rather clumsy editing at times - it is nevertheless quite one of the best Edison melodramas that we've seen. Really well photographed in pleasing New Jersey exteriors, it also has a rousing chase climax making first-rate use of the moving camera, and with some of the most convincing flight and stunt work that the usually rather ineptnerprising Edison studios ever came up with. Editing apart, this measures up to Biograph standards of 1912.

**LUCKY DOG** (O.M. Anderson production, 1917; released by Metro, 1919) 2 reels Directed by Jesse Robbins With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Florence Gitlet.

The first (entirely accidental) encounter between Laurel & Hardy, with Hardy as a burlesque villain getting quite a lot of footage, "Lucky Dog" also served, equally accidently, as a kind of "pilot" for a series that Laurel & Anderson were to make for Metro. Its historic importance somewhat outweighs its comedy content. There are some very amusing bits, but much of it is frenetic and uninspired knockabout, although the street exteriors and the vigor of both Laurel & Hardy help a great deal. The print is in very rough condition, with odd scenes missing in the middle; hopefully it can be put in better shape by padding it with material from another print that we hope to get shortly. In the meantime, since we announced it before, had to disappoint you when the print was lost for several months, and now have found it again, we thought it best to show it right away rather than await the outcome of this celluloid surgery.

**HOMECOMING** (UFA, 1928; US release by Paramount) Director: Joe May Produced by Erich Pommer; screenplay by Fred Nace and Dr. Fritz Wendhausen from Leonhard Frank's "Kurt and Anna"; Camera: Gunther Rittau; Titles by Julian Josephs; 8 reels With Lars Hanson, Gustav Freidel, Dita Parlo, Theodor Loos.

After having been tantalised for years by the 2-reel British 9.5mm cutoff, it's good to have a complete print of this lost work again. It's every bit as good as one expected from that cutoff -- though, it must be admitted, no better, indicating once more how careful and fully representative of the originals those British condemnations were. "Homingcoming" is a "serious film" indeed to come from Joe May, whose German career ("Kurt and Anna" in 1911 stressed serials, fantasies and melodramas, and whose best Hollywood film (his American career ranged from 1934 through the early 40's) was probably "The Invisible Man Returns". It's a strange, stylised work, possibly more Pommer than May; it's not slow in the sense that a Dreyer film is slow, for individual sequences are well-paced, yet at the end of eight reels surprisingly little has actually happened. Sometimes it is perhaps a little too simple in its construction and motivation, and the Lars Hanson character, with his totally uncalled-for self-sacrifice and nobility, becomes irritating rather than gallant. Nevertheless, it's a fascinating work both dramatically and cinematically, with its always interesting pictorial design and editing, and often lovely camerawork. (This is marred to a degree by decomposition at the beginning, but it clears up quickly). Made in 1928, when "All Quiet on the Western Front" was first published, and when anti-war and pacifist themes were suddenly fashionable in both film and literature, it inevitably seems a little trivial today and doesn't, for example, have the impact of "La Grande Illusion". (It's an odd coincidence that that lovely and much-under-rated actress Dita Parlo, should have such similar roles in both films. These two performances, plus "I'Abalone", should have established her as a major star - but she had to content herself with being merely a major actress!) "Homecoming" was remade by MGM in the post-WW 2 period as "Desire Me", with Greer Garson and Robert Mitchum. At the time it was considered a disaster, and although several directors worked on it, none took screen credit, I must admit that it didn't seem that bad to me - but of course, at the time I hadn't seen the original "Homecoming" either. Kramerov doesn't think highly of the film, considering it a rather crude translation of a sensitive novel; be that as it may, purely as a film it holds up rather better than many of the films that he was enthusiastic about, and we are lucky to be able to see it finally in its full form. Like so many late silents, it is far more concerned with style than content, and thus makes an interesting companion-piece to next week's Sternberg film from the same year.