Although none of these six cartoons is outstanding in terms of comedy content, they make an interesting comparison in terms of style, story content, animation techniques and color, in order of screening, the cartoons are: "Confederate Honey" (1940), a "Done With the Wind" takeoff by Fritz Freling with racial stereotyping intact; "Peanuts" (1941) in which the pop-art animation style of the dream sequence is an astonishing forerunner of the "Yellow Submarine" and Peter Max images of today; "Unruly Hare" (1944), a Frank Tashlin-directed Bugs Bunny, remarkable for the speed of its gags and its lighting transitions, a style that didn't really become standard until at least ten years later in "The Fighting 69th" (1941), one of several wartime anti-war cartoons. Somehow such cartoons were always more effective (irresofar as any anti-war film can ever really be effective) than the more ambitious parodies in feature films, perhaps because the cartoon format enabled the absurdity of wartime proportions in a matter of seconds; "The Great Piggy Bank Robbery" (1946), a Bob Clampett cartoon satirising the private eye cycle of the period via a Dick Tracy comic-strip format, with some quite nightmare animation; and "What's Cooking Doc?" (1943), another Clampett, and an amusing and off-beat Bugs Bunny killing the Academy Awards. Incidentally, the stock footage of an Academy banquet is actually taken from Fox's "Hollywood Carrousel", but with new dialogue dubbed in. A post-script thought in regard to "The Fighting 69th!": Disney obviously saw this and drew much of the inspiration for his admittedly much superior "F patterns Two Hundred" from it.

"LAZY BONES" (Fox, 1925) Produced and directed by Frank Borzage Scenario by Frances Marion from the play by Owen Davis; Camera, George Schneiderman and Glenn MacWilliams; 8 reels


Frank Borzage is a major but curious director who often seemed to do much better with minor material - bringing importance and beauty to the trivial of life by his own unique and often unfathomable methods - than with the big specials designed to cash in on his reputation for emotional material. Without minimising its emotional power and honest sentiment or discounting the fact that nobody could have done it better, "Seventh Heaven" is rather a silly film, overpopulated with unlikely characters. (One respects Borzage's genius with it all the more when one sees Henry King's sound remake however!) Similarly, Borzage's huge early talkie success "Dish" is a rather fatuous picture a trenchant to the rest of it, and may well have been a non-scripted interpolation by Borzage himself. Some of his lest promising material has some of his best work in it; the poignant final scene of "Flirtation Walk" (I still don't quite understand how he got such simplicity and pathos into such a commonplace scene), and even one of his lost films, the much under-rated "China Doll". "Lazy Bones" has no reputation to speak of, and is a relaxed, simple film, honest old-fashioned and sentimental if you will, that shows Borzage at his very best. It's a misleading film in that the audience fondly assumes it can anticipate the next scene out of all the story threads, and because of this, the deliberately paced development - with the methodological dating of story periods - tends to get a little irksome, seeming to get in the way of the "obvious" climax. But the obvious never comes; all the cliches are sidestepped. It's important to stress this first, as through no fault of this particular film, we have been brain-washed and pre-conditioned, and may well tend to judge this film by a pattern of others that followed. It's a charming and moving piece of Americana, surprisingly played by Buck Jones, who even in his later westerns incorportated a lot of the physical mannerisms and bits of comedy business that flow naturally here. There's another fine performance from Zasu Pitts (odd how films like "The Little Princess", "The Wedding March" and this one keep coming along to remind us that her dramatic performance in "Greed" was not just that of a memorised Troylli and lovely ones from Jane Novak and Madge Bellamy. Those of you who saw the toned 35mm original at the HNA a few months ago will know how Borzage shot much of the film (near the House though, at a girl's wedding) using constant reverse angles - shooting into and away from the sun constantly, within speed frames. This made it tough for the laboratory to time properly even back in 1925; today, from a later negative, and with current shaky lab standards, it is even tougher. The print is therefore variable but as good as can be obtained in 1970! —— Wm. K. Everson

Tonight's show runs approx. 2 hours, giving everyone ample time to catch the Merry Griffin show - with Lilian Gish, Betty Bronson, Ken Maynard, Richard Arlen and others. Our first plug for a tv show in 20 years! The new Hufi schedule for Jan-April will be mailed out later this week, and will include the long-promised Hufi Society fact-history sheet.