IAN CARMICHAEL
TOMMY STEELE
BENNY HILL

Light up the sky

The heart-warming, heart-breaking story of the little men in the big war.
SYNOPSIS

NONE of them was a hero. They manned a searchlight battery during the blitz, but the greatest enemy was boredom.

FOREMOST among Lt. Ogleby's (IAN CARMICHAEL) "legionaires" are Syd McCaffey (BENNY HILL) and his brother Eric (TOMMY STEELE). They regard the war as an annoying interruption in their career as a variety act, aimed at the Palladium. Eric's light heart keeps getting him in trouble but Syd's light touch usually gets him out again.

TOMMO (VICTOR MADDERN), the non-com in charge of the battery, considers his primary problem to be Roland (HARRY LOCKE), the unit's consumptive cook, who thinks he's "Oscar of the Waldorf" and shoots a week's rations on one night's menu. Tommo's superficial surliness doesn't fool anyone, but he is hard put to keep up with the responsibilities of his authority.

ROUNDING out the group are Ted (SYDNEY TAFLER) and Smithy (JOHNNY BRIGGS). Ted's son, about Smithy's age, is fighting in Africa. A bond grows between the men, When shy Smithy goes AWOL to untangle a love affair, Lt. Ogleby prevails upon Ted to help bring him back. Smithy gets off with a light sentence and when Ted gets word that his son has been lost in combat, Smithy is his main comforter.

THEN, in the battery's one moment of glory, it brings down an enemy plane during a raid, suffers the demolition of the unit's mess, and begins to feel a part of the war. Smithy is fatally wounded during the action. This nearly crushes Ted, but once again he picks himself up and continues to do his little part in this little war. No one was a hero — just human.

THE CAST

Lt. Ogleby ....................... IAN CARMICHAEL
Eric McCaffey .................... TOMMY STEELE
Syd McCaffey .................... BENNY HILL
Ted Green ....................... SYDNEY TAFLER
Lance Bombardier Tomlinson .... VICTOR MADDERN
Roland Kenyon .................. HARRY LOCKE
Leslie Smith ..................... JOHNNY BRIGGS
"Spinner" Rice .................. CYRIL SMITH
Harry (Driver) .................. DICK EMERY
Comperes ....................... CARDEW ROBINSON
Jean .......................... SUSAN BURNET
Theatre Act ...................... SHEILA HANCOCK
Mr. Jennings .................... FRED GRIFFITHS

TECHNICAL CREDITS

Produced and Directed by .......... LEWIS GILBERT
Associate Producer ................ JOHN DARK
Screenplay by ..................... VERNON HARRIS
Based on the play "Touch It Light" by ROBERT STOREY
Director of Photography .......... JOHN WILCOX
Art Director ...................... JOHN STOLL
Editor .......................... PETER TANNER
Production Manager ............... MORRIS AZA
Music Composed by ............... DOUGLAS GAMLEY
Conducted by ..................... MUIR MATHIESON
"Touch It Light" by ............... LIONEL BART and MICHAEL PRATT
Camera Operator .................. DUDLEY LOVELL
Assistant Director ................ JACK CAUSEY
Sound Supervisor ................. STEPHEN DALBY
Sound Mixer ...................... CECIL MASON
Sound Editor ..................... ALBAN STREETER
Continuity ....................... SHIRLEY BARNES

R.C.A. Recording
MADE AT TWICKENHAM FILM STUDIOS LONDON, ENGLAND

RUNNING TIME
85 Min. - 7650 Feet
WAR is hell — but it's not always loud, explosive, burning hell. As the moving, "LIGHT UP THE SKY", now at the ________ Theatre proves, it can be just quiet, slow-burning, maddening hell, too.

THIS is a touchingly real picture about a unit that mans a searchlight battery outside of London during the blitz. Ian Carmichael is the officer in charge of these strange bed-fellows.

THERE are two brothers, Benny Hill and Tommy Steele, who are impatient to finish the war and get back to their variety act. In the meantime, they keep busy scavenging the best of the local farmers' crops — including one's pert blonde daughter.

THERE is a non-com, Victor Maddern, whose biggest problem is how to keep one stripe ahead of his fiance. There is the cook, Harry Locke, who has Duncan Hines dreams and blows a week's rations on one exotic meal. There's Sydney Tafer whose son is killed fighting in Africa, and Johnny Briggs who goes AWOL to see his girl but returns to make the largest contribution of all to the battery's one moment of glory.

THEY are an ill-assorted bunch, of the kind every army unit was made up. None of them wanted to win medals only to fight the loneliness and boredom that rankle more than the enemy.

THE barracks shake with laughter when the brothers "find a bathtub and set it up in the mess; there is conniving when the CO finds the brothers doing their bit in an amateur show in town; there is conflict when the cook refuses orders to "man the light"; and there is courage when men fire small arms into the teeth of dive-bombers.

IN short, there is everything that people are made of, and the result is one of the most human pictures ever to come out of the war.

IAN CARMICHAEL

"FOR the first time, I'm an underdog."
That was Ian Carmichael's succinct summing-up of his role in the affecting new comedy-drama, "LIGHT UP THE SKY" now at the ________ Theatre.

IAN, who has made his merry mark as the underdog in such comic hits as "Private's Progress," "School For Scoundrels" and "I'm All Right, Jack" welcomed his new role for another reason — it shows him off as a fine serious actor.

PLAYING the officer in charge of a searchlight unit during the blitz, Ian has to cope with as strange a bunch of bedfellows as war ever threw together.

HE felt familiar in the uniform, though, having been a major in the war himself. Although he had abandoned the family jewelry business at the age of sixteen to form a dance band, his real start in the show world came during his service when he staged camp entertainments.

AS a civilian again, Ian did about everything one can do on the stage, short of birdcalls. He sang, danced, acted and toured in anything that would take him. His break finally came in a London revue. The moviemakers saw him and snapped him up, and since then he has been Britishly hilarious in a string of successful comedies screened here.

BUT in the Showcorporation release, "LIGHT UP THE SKY," Ian proves he learned his trade well, for his adept handling of a key role helps make this one of the more memorable dramas of human conflict.
THE only address on the envelope was “T. Steele.” A few days and five hundred miles later, England’s bobby-sox boy wonder, Tommy Steele, got another fan letter.

NOW, Tommy stars in his first dramatic part, that of a muddle-headed soldier in the stirring story of a searchlight battery during the blitz. It is the Showcorporation release, “LIGHT UP THE SKY”, now at the ____________ Theatre.

ALTHOUGH rock’n roll brought his fame, Tommy has no qualms about moving into meatier assignments.

“BOBBY-SOXERS grow up,” he says, “and I’d better grow with them.” But that growing will only be figurative for this diminutive dynamo.

AT four feet eleven inches, it was almost predestined that Tommy’s first job would be as a bellboy. He hasn’t grown any in inches since then, but his growth in income has been so spectacular that one of his many movies was titled “The Tommy Steele Story.”

BRITISH FILM GIVES COMICS, CROONERS KEY ROLES IN MOVING NEW WAR DRAMA

Leave it to the British to make a stirring war movie with no heroes, and no he-men.

None of the stars in “LIGHT UP THE SKY”, now at the ____________ Theatre is known for his brawn and none has a strong, silent reputation.

The star, Ian Carmichael, for example, is familiar to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic as a capering cut-up, through such high farces as “Private’s Progress,” “School for Scoundrels” and “I’m All Right, Jack”. In “LIGHT UP THE SKY” he plays the CO of a searchlight battery outside London during the blitz. This Showcorporation release gives Carmichael his first real shot at a part where he isn’t the patsy, and his portrayal of an officer trying to keep an oddly assorted lot of dog-faces in fighting trim is a minor movie masterpiece.

His two biggest problems are Benny Hill and Tommy Steele, playing brothers whose variety act was interrupted by the war. Benny Hill’s fame in England is as a TV and nightclub personality. Tommy Steele is the wild-eyed, tousle-haired Baron of the British “Robert-Stocking” set.

The rest of the cast, Harry Locke, Sydney Tafler, Victor Maddern, and Johnny Briggs are also military misfits, but their combined cinematic dramatics are perfect for this picture.

Director Lewis Gilbert wanted to make a film about simple soldiers, battling boredom and barracks fatigue. His offbeat casting helped give him one of the most human pictures ever made.
Benny Hill and Tommy Steele take a soft-shoe break from their posts on a searchlight battery in the heartwarming heart-breaking drama “LIGHT UP THE SKY” now at the ______ Theatre.

Harry Locke draws a bucketful of bath for his sergent, Victor Maddern, as the barracks fights boredom with bedlam in the unusual new drama of the littlest war, “LIGHT UP THE SKY” now at the ______ Theatre.

Chief cook, Harry Locke, is dressed down by Serargent Victor Maddern for shooting a whole week’s rations on one big meal in the stirring film “LIGHT UP THE SKY” now at the ______ Theatre.

Benny Hill keeps Harry Locke from hitting Victor Maddern as barracks fatigue sets in and tension and tempers mount in the compelling war film, “LIGHT UP THE SKY” now at the ______ Theatre.

Benny Hill and Tommy Steele man the searchlights in the teeth of the blitz as the battery suffers its moment of glory at the exciting climax of “LIGHT UP THE SKY” now at the ______ Theatre.

SUSAN BURNET
Susan Burnet is the comedy blond who provides the romantic interest along with Tommy Steele in “LIGHT UP THE SKY” the Show-corporation release starring Ian Carmichael.
At the rate Director Lewis Gilbert is going, they may give him a page in the war chronicles. His long list of films cover the war behind the headlines in such depth and detail you get the impression he was in every battle and barracks.

“The war is fifteen years behind us now,” this English director says. “It is part of history and stories about it are accepted as such. The Americans do the same thing with cowboys and Indians. The truth and brutality on both sides can be shown fairly now. The further we get from the war, the more good stories we can write about it. I think they’ll always make good cinema.”

Gilbert is interested not only in the famous episodes, such as he immortalized in “Sink the Bismarck,” but in the stuff the everyday soldier went through.

“There were many men who were never given permission to be brave. Ninety percent of the men in the army never saw front-line service.”

The culmination of his concern comes in “LIGHT UP THE SKY”, a Showcorporation release.

“I didn’t want to make a farce,” he says. “If there is too much comedy, it immediately becomes unreal. Life, especially army life, was essentially dramatic with amusing incidents and comic situations providing welcome relief from the hardships, boredom and discomforts.”

“LIGHT UP THE SKY” is an intensely human and vividly realistic picture of such life. And this is what Gilbert was aiming for.

“It had to be real enough for a man to nudge his wife and say, ‘I knew a bloke like that.’”

1. Hold a special Veterans Night, or give special showings for local veterans groups like the American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars. In the latter case, no one should be admitted without his vet’s cap. If there is a Nike battery near you or a similar small installation of soldiers such as that portrayed in the film, hold a special preview for them and arrange for suitable publicity.

2. If possible, hire a large searchlight to tow about town with suitable banners and posters. Then station it outside the theatre in the evening to literally light up the sky. To add to the atmosphere, have your doorman and ushers wear steel helmets.

3. One of the characters in the picture is a cook with ambitions of being a chef. He prepares fancy meals for the men. Using his picture for publicity, arrange recipe contests with the local newspaper, probably in cooperation with the women’s page editor. For added interest, have her pick a list of ingredients such as those an army cook is likely to be restricted to. Contestants must use only those limited ingredients to concoct their dishes.

4. On opening night, give away small pencil-sized flashlights; if feasible, these should carry the name of the picture.

5. Two of the picture’s stars play a brother variety act and during the picture take part in a local amateur show. Use this as a springboard for an amateur night of your own. Or if there are any military facilities nearby, have a purely soldier’s amateur night.
The heart-warming, heart-breaking story of the little men in the big war.

Ian Carmichael
Tommy Steele

Light up the sky

Bryant presents a Lewis Gilbert Production
Produced and Directed by Lewis Gilbert
Distributed by Showcorporation

Theatre

Pressbook cover is available as 2 color 1 sheet poster

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