RENOWN PICTURES CORPORATION LTD

presents

WILL HAY

in

MY LEARNED FRIEND

With

Mervyn Johns • Claude Hulbert

Ernest Thesiger • Lloyd Pearson • Charles Victor

Produced by Michael Balcon Directed by Basil Dearden and Will Hay

A Comedy-Thriller De-Luxe, With Big Box Office Stars!

This Film Counts as

BRITISH FEATURE QUOTA
THE STORY

SOMewhat apprehensively, Claude Babbington starts his case against the defendant, William Fitch. It is his last chance of holding down his already precarious job as a solicitor's office. Alas, William Fitch—who is charged with obtaining money by fake begging letters—refuses to co-operate. He wriggles out of the charges with adroitness that poor Claude is left gasping, the butt of the court's ridicule.

After the trial, Will and Claude meet in a pub. Will reveals that he is a disbarred barrister—self-disbarred is how he describes it—and the two strike up a friendship. They are drinking on it when Will is greeted by an old client, Grimshaw, whom he once failed to get acquitted on a charge of forgery. Before leaving, Grimshaw confides that he has a plan—he means to "get" everyone responsible for putting him behind bars. That includes Will, who is to be saved till last as a kind of tit-bit!

Headlines in the evening newspaper announce that Lord Chelsfield, the judge who sentenced Grimshaw, has been found drowned. Horrified, Will and Claude hasten to the Chelsfield inquest and try to convince the coroner that it was murder, but they are thrown out for creating a disturbance in court. Scotland Yard seems the next step. On the way Grimshaw pops up in the car. He warns them that if they go to Scotland Yard he will add Claude to his list and bring Will down to an earlier place. Obligingly, he also gives a clue to the identity of his next victim: Safety second. Will remembers that a gangster called Safety Wilson turned King's evidence on Grimshaw. The two seek out Safety in his East End dive and warn him of his impending fate.

Safety laughs at the idea and invites Will to a game of poker. Will agrees and, up to all the tricks, milks Safety of so much money that the gangster threatens to slice him up with his razor and feed him to the river. Claude, meanwhile, has become the centre of a terrific rough and tumble. The lights go out—Will and Claude escape, but Safety has had his throat slit from ear to ear.

Next day Grimshaw rings up to say, "A lad in Bootle," which helps Will to identify an actress appearing as Aladdin in a Bootle pantomime. They push off to warn her, get mixed up with the performers, wreck the pantomime, only to learn from Grimshaw, who is waiting for them, that they have been trying to warn the wrong woman—he has just disposed of her sister. Grimshaw then suggests a visit to a medical specialist, and Will remembers a Dr. Scudamore who refused to certify Grimshaw as insane. He and Claude rush to the doctor's clinic to warn him of Grimshaw's plan, but are mistaken for lunatics. Before they can prove their sanity Grimshaw has executed his plan—and the doctor.

One more murder to go, and it is Will's turn! From a clue left by Grimshaw in Claude's flat, they deduce that he means to blow up the House of Lords, which rejected his appeal.

Disguised as Beefeaters, the two discover crates of gunpowder in the vaults. Grimshaw appears with a gun. He tells them that when Big Ben strikes twelve the House will go sky-high. They escape from him only to find themselves on the clock-face of Big Ben. Then begins an exciting chase up and down the numerals, with Will and Claude struggling to hold back the hands and Grimshaw out for their blood. Fortunately, their plight is noticed by the police who come to the rescue—just in time to save the House of Lords and the national heroes, Will Fitch and Claude Babbington.

THE CAST

William Fitch ........ WILL HAY
Claude Babbington .... CLAUDE HULBERT
Grimshaw ............... MERVYN JOHNS
Sir Norman ............. LAURENCE HANRAY
Ferris ................. ERNEST TESIGER
"Safety" Wilson ........ CHARLES VICTOR
Magistrate ............. AUBREY MALLALIEU
Gloria .................. DERRA HAZELL
Barman ................. LESLIE HARCOURT
"Basher" Blake ......... EDDIE PHILLIPS
Dr. Scudamore .......... G. H. MULCASTER
Col. Chudleigh .......... LLOYD PEARSON
Butler ................. MAUDIE MCLAUGHLIN
Aladdin ............... MAUDIE EDWARDS

CREDITS

Produced by MICHAEL BALCON
Directed by BASIL DEARDEN and WILL HAY

Associate Producer .......... S. C. BALCON
Original Screenplay by .......... ANGUS MCPHAIL, JOHN DIGHTON
Production Supervisor .......... JOHN CROXTON
Cameraman ................ W. COOPER
Art Director ................ MICHAEL RELPH
Wardrobe ................ MARIANNE
Sound Supervisor .......... ERIC WILLIAMS
Song, "You Do Things to Me" .......... PETER NOBLE
Music ........................ ERNEST IRVING
Supervising Editor .......... SIDNEY COLE
Editor ................. CHARLES HASS
Unit Manager ............. JACK RIX
Special Effects ............ ROY KELLINO
Recordist ................ LEN PAGE
Dances arranged by .......... PHILIP BUCHEL

PUBLICITY AVAILABLE

STILLS
Set of 8, 10x8 .... 6/6
POSTERS
Quad Crown, 30 x 40 ... 3/6
STEREOS
As illustrated
TRAILER
An excellent Trailer can be obtained from Messrs. NATIONAL SCREEN SERVICE LTD., Wallace House, Wardour Street, London, W.1 Telephone: Gerard 4851

REGISTRATION DETAILS

CERTIFICATE U
LENGTH .... 6832 feet
REG. No. BR/TR6586

RENOV PICTURES CORPORATION
ADVANCE STORY

AS BIG BEN SEES IT!

The climax of Will Hay's latest comedy for Michael Balcon, "MY LEARNED FRIEND," which comes to the screen, is a hair-raising chase round the clock-face of Big Ben. Will Hay and Claude Hulbert, disguised as Beefeaters, clamber madly up and down the famous numerals, while Mervyn Johns is a mad murderer, out for their blood, follows.

Realism's the thing, even in escapist comedy, believes producer Balcon, so a camera unit was sent to Westminster to get some real-life shots from the top of the famous clock.

"Biggest headache of the job," says Syd Howell, head man of the outfit, "was that the film is about pre-war life, so the shots had to show no signs of war!" Take a look at wartime Westminster as Big Ben sees it, and you'll agree that "headache" is the right word!

"Too," says Syd, "the weather proved itself no ally. Our equipment had to be carried by hand up Big Ben's stairway—it seemed more like Mount Everest!—often to find, when we got to the top, that bad weather conditions made filming impossible. We just had to wait around for the weather to change. It was then that our own sense of time went all haywire. Those celebrated chimes went off, it seemed, every two minutes! They sound pleasant enough over the radio, but when you're right on top of them, believe me the blitz has nothing on them as an ear-splitter!"

ADVANCE REVIEWS

ALL-STAR CAST IN WILL HAY'S LATEST COMEDY RIOT

In Michael Balcon's "MY LEARNED FRIEND," coming to the Cinema on , Will Hay and Claude Hulbert foil the most ambitious plot since Guy Fawkes, Mervyn Johns, as Grimshaw the schemer, plans to blow up the House of Lords because its members rejected his appeal against a gaol sentence. If the House of Lords goes up, then Will's number is up, too—a state of affairs that Will and his friend Claude go to hair-raising lengths to prevent. On the trail of Grimshaw they wreak a pantomime, are locked up in a mental clinic, and get mixed up in a merciless rough-and-tumble at an East End dive. Presenting the ultimate in beserk fisticuffs, it is probably the biggest fight ever to roar across the screen in British pictures, with boxing champions Eddie Phillips and Dave Crowley taking part in the melee to assure absolute authenticity. Finally, in order to save the House of Lords, they find themselves on the dizzy heights of Big Ben, trying to hold back the clock-hands—the explosion is timed for the last stroke of twelve—while Grimshaw, out for their blood, chases after them with a gun. This hilarious chase around Big Ben is one of the funniest sequences seen in any Will Hay comedy, and sends one's mind back to the classic scenes in Harold Lloyd's "Safety Last!"

Not least of the film's assets is its unusually strong cast of stellar favourites. Apart from Hay, Hulbert and Mervyn Johns, all to be seen at their best, the cast includes such popular players as Ernest Thesiger, Laurence Hanray, Charles Victor, Maudie Edwards and Lloyd Pearson, who rated raves for his portrayal of "Teddy" in the London version of "Arsenic and Old Lace."

With its fast-moving comedy scenes and exciting thrills, "MY LEARNED FRIEND" should be voted perfect light entertainment by all who like a good laugh at the cinema.

LAUGHS AND THRILLS IN "MY LEARNED FRIEND"

Will Hay's efforts to hold up a mast-murderer's schedule—on which he is chief victim—make "MY LEARNED FRIEND," which comes to the Theatre next through Renown release, one of the most hilarious comedies in which this popular star has ever appeared.

The film begins with Will—a disbarred barrister—up before the court on twenty-three charges of obtaining money by false begging letters. Claude Babington (Claude Hulbert) is the prosecuting solicitor. Will pleads not guilty—twenty-three times—and proceeds to wriggle out of the charges so adroitly that poor Claude is soon the butt of the court's ridicule.

Will is acquitted, the case dismissed, and—his troubles begin. Over a friendly drink with the forgiving Claude, Will is greeted by an old client, Grimshaw (Mervyn Johns) whom he once failed to get acquitted on a charge of forgery. Grimshaw confides that he has a plan—he means to "get" everyone responsible for putting him behind bars. That includes Will, who is to be saved till last, as a kind of tit-bit!

The fun (for the audience!) begins with the murder of the judge who sentenced Grimshaw. Then one by one his other victims meet an untimely end. Will and Claude, forewarned by Grimshaw on each occasion, do their best to prevent the crime from happening, but always just too late. Their adventures take them to an inquest where they are thrown out for causing a disturbance. They visit an East End dive in which Will just manages to escape being sliced up by a razor slashing. They get taken for lunatics at a mental clinic and, in an uproarious sequence at a pantomime where they have gone to warn the principal boy (Maudie Edwards) that she is next on Grimshaw's list, they get all mixed up behind the scenes and appear on the stage with Will as the Emperor of China and Claude as that faithful stooge, the Slave of the Lamp!

Laughter and thrills reach a terrific climax when the two discover Grimshaw's plot to blow up the House of Lords (which had rejected his appeal) there is an exciting chase round the clock-face of Big Ben, with Will and Claude struggling to hold back the hands—the explosives are timed to go off on the last stroke of twelve—and Grimshaw clambering after them with a loaded gun!

Will Hay and Claude Hulbert are both on top form as the two amateur detectives, and surely their fans need know no more than that. Mervyn Johns, fast becoming one of England's top character actors (he will be remembered especially for his fine work in "Dead of Night" and "Pink String and Sealing Wax") contributes a first-class performance as the mad killer, and the supporting cast is full of top-notch screen personalities.

CATCHLINES

UNRATIONAL HILARITY IN WILL HAY'S LATEST COMEDY SENSATION!

LAUGHS AND THRILLS ON THE RUN AS WILL HAY AND CLAUDE HULBERT CHASE A MURDERER THROUGH LONDON'S NIGHT-CLUBS, THEATRES, AND ON TO BIG BEN!

BRITAIN'S COMEDY KINGS TEAMED AGAIN IN THE CRAZIEST LAUGH HIT SINCE "HELLZAPOPPIN!"

A NARROW-ESCAPIST COMEDY HIT OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT.