

## Silent Movie Accompaniment - I

# Hurry! 'Dirty Work' at The Crossroads!

## A New BOMBARDE Feature



COLONEL HARRY JENKINS: A lot of "hurries" have passed through his fingers!

On numerous occasions interest in old movie music of the "agitato" type has been expressed to the editor of the BOMBARDE. This is the almost forgotten music with which organists made action seem wilder, villains more dastardly, stealth more sneaky and impending chaos more heart-thumping. A lot of it was written in folio form and could be purchased by organists who lacked the ability to improvise sufficiently threatening themes and their variations. But a lot more of it was improvised and, therefore, now exists only in the memories of surviving silent movie cuers.

The BOMBARDE has arranged with former theatre organist Harry J. Jenkins to search out a series of these "hurries" (as they were called in the trade), and arrange them in simplified versions which still have all the "old moxie" required for picture work.

These "agitatos" are fascinating music. They help conjure pictures in the mind as they unfold — impending disaster, stealth, a trap about to be sprung. They are also a comment on their times; honest "danger music" which speaks musically and openly of the mood it conveys, in contrast with what modern film scorers do to obtain similar emotional reactions; bongo drum rolls, electronic bleeps, shingle-down-a-clapboard-house and similar distractions. On the contrary, despite its "corniness" by present standards, the old "hurry" built emotional wallop by blending with the scene on the screen rather than by calling attention to itself.

Our initial offering is a tune known and used by a whole generation of theatre organists to accompany such scenes as: Sgt. Quirt walking along the trench lined with waiting "doughboys", encouraging his troops just before the whistle blows to send them "over the top" ("... and don't stop unless you meet a bullet!"); John Wilkes Booth "casing" empty Ford's theatre on the afternoon of April 14, 1865; Ranjit Singh and his bearded Sikhs looking down their rifles at the thin column of

British troops (yes, including Gunga Din!) filtering through the Khyber Pass; Tim McCoy, evading the searching "redcoats," to get that vital message to General Washington; Simon Legree fetching his bloodhounds to take off after Eliza who is headed for the river; the villain's henchmen throwing the switch which will send the Westbound Limited (with Ralph Lewis at the throttle) hurtling over a precipice. The possibilities are endless.

Performing this type of music re-

## 'Dirty Work' at the Crossroads

Traditional, Arranged by  
Harry J. Jenkins

quires an ability to "do things backwards." In reverse of the usual order, much "agitato" music is written for a lefthand melody and righthand accompaniment. On organs with 61-note manuals the only basic change is to reverse the hands on the manuals—lower manual, right hand; upper manual (with a presumably heavier combination), left hand. However, the shortened upper manual of spinet plug-ins limits this procedure. In the case of the 44-note (or less) manual, better leave the hands on their accustomed manuals and juggle the stop keys to obtain a good, solid "horn" voice on the lower (lefthand melody) manual and a somewhat lighter (perhaps reed-string) combination for the righthand accompaniment. The pedal should be light. It's used mainly as an accent in this case.

Of course, we have indicated only the basic theme. The idea is to improvise on it. After mastering it as written, play it with the "f" omitted from the accompaniment (first 6 measures), then an octave higher. Then transpose it to G minor, A minor and C minor, or any favorite key, for variety.

No one seems to know the origin of this theme, although it was widely used. It probably appeared on movie cue sheets, and it most likely once had a name. But the only name recalled is "Dirty Work at the Crossroads" and for want of an originator's name we have credited it to that fine composer, "Traditional."

That is certain to raise some hackles among silent movie vets and we welcome all the names and information about it they can provide, not to mention notation of their favorite "hurries." Contributions are solicited and welcome.

We've told you about it. Now, play it!



## GET THE GUYS TO VOCALIZE

WITH NATIONAL'S DANDY  
"SING-ALONG SONG SLIDES"!!

Send for free catalog of all-time hit songs available in slide form for as low as 50¢ a tune! Need a projector? Let us know... we'll save you real dough!

NATIONAL SONG SLIDE SERVICE INC.  
42 W. 48th St. New York, N.Y. 10036



What do film stars of yesteryear talk about at Hollywood parties? Mostly their health, where they live and what they are doing. We attended the Robert Aldrich studio party (he bought a 1913 studio for his producing) and spent a few happy hours with the magic names of the Golden Twenties. Gertrude Astor, the woman who was two inches too tall to be a great star, looked as slim and charming (all in a white outfit) as she did in 1926... Claire Windsor, now in good health after a hospital siesta this summer, looked elegant and had a happy time talking about pictures with Neil Hamilton, Jack Mulhall and Conrad Nagel.

*"Any time... I'm always happy to say 'hello' to visitors." That's your invitation from Raymond Hatton. He lives in Palmdale (70 miles northeast of Los Angeles, Calif.). Hatton looked the picture of health and was busy reliving the days when he and Wallace Beery were a top Paramount comedy team.*

Betty Blythe, Jackie Coogan, Betty Bronson, Lita Grey Chaplin, and Minta Durfee Arbuckle were among other magic names who delighted the hordes of radio, TV and press people at the party.

ATOE organ clubs across the nation have good news coming their way. Harold Lloyd's classics such as "Safety Last," "Grandma's Boy," and "The Kid Brother," rarely viewed under ideal conditions, may be available in 1969. Lloyd was so moved by the huge, warm ovation the 1968 conventioners gave him that he has consented to having his films shown to ATOE groups. One of the conditions is that ATOE star Gaylord Carter must play the pipe organ music for them. Another is

that the films not be shown with idiotic film trash of today. Lloyd has admired Carter's keyboard artistry for 45 years.

It is likely that other responsible groups can arrange such showings through the "Flickerfingers" promoters, Box 405, Arcadia, Calif. It means great organ music and great films—a winning combination any time.

REEL STUFF... *Bessie Love appears in Isidora, the Duncan sisters' life-story. . . . A national columnist says Charlie Chaplin did not attend his son's funeral because the State Department denied him a visa. . . . Kalton C. Labue and Sam Gill will co-author a 1969 book on silent film comedians. . . . Hollywood is silent about the Fatty Arbuckle Story being filmed, although the film rights were sold in 1963. . . . Eighty-two new names are ready to be added to the Hollywood "Walk of Fame." Not one was ever a silent personality. One name has yet to be seen on the screen, although her first film is due by the time you read this.*

Noel Coward will be in the new list of "Walk" names, as will Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt.

SILENT films, the basic reason for the mighty theatre pipe organs, are nearing a 40-year high in new popularity. The renaissance for the non-talkers is now 25 years old. The Society of Cinephiles is a group of film collectors (250) who hold annual conventions and publish their tabloid newspaper four times a year.

They met in Hollywood last month and awarded their 1968 Cinephile award to John and Dorothy Hampton for "preserving and showing" silent films. The Los Angeles couple has operated the Silent Movie Theatre for the last 26 years. The 1969 Cinecon V convention will be held over Labor Day in Rochester, N. Y. Many ATOE members are avid film collectors.

UCLA's great school of cinematography (one of the best in the world) has sought out an ATOE member to lecture to the students who aspire to be the directors and producers of tomorrow. Gaylord Carter will lecture and demonstrate to the future movie makers the art of organ music. For Carter it will be a great honor as he was a member of the UCLA class of 1928.

Mary MacLaren lives at 126 North Manhattan Place, Los Angeles, and told us she would be most happy to hear from any of her old fans.