



# Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

JOHNNY DOWNS was about the most personable young screen player ever to depict the All-American boy. He's around 60 now and going strong but that's not the entire reason for this item. In the last 10 years an impostor has deceived writers into thinking he is the real Johnny Downs. Once it was in Brooklyn and more recently in Matamoras, Pa.

The authentic Johnny Downs, whose career goes back to 'Our Gang' silent comedies, lives in Southern California. The phone book lists a Johnny Downs, 1114 Orange St., Corona, California.

When Johnny is not busy with TV commercials, play groups, local television or public appearances he's busy selling San Diego area real estate. He has a lovely wife, four daughters and one son all alive and well.

A Hollywood Cavalcade reader visited Johnny this summer and said he's more gracious today than when he was playing the charming college student in the throbbing thirties.

*YOUR QUESTIONS . . . Bette Davis and Katharine Hepburn competed for Oscars in 1935, 1940, 1942 and 1962. Davis won in 1935 while Katy never beat Davis in an Oscar race. Katy is the only feminine star to own three Oscars . . . Better historians agree that Joan Crawford was the first star developed by MGM from 1925 on. Crawford had made six films before Garbo came along . . . Natasha Rambova died in Pasadena in 1969 almost unknown.*

*WHO IS WHERE . . . Arlene Harris used to live at 569 N. Rossmore Ave., Los Angeles, 9004 . . . Jimmy Durante lives at 511 N. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills . . . Some fans contact George Raft at 9571 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills . . . Lillian Gish used to get mail at 430 E. 57th St., NYCity, 10022 . . . Early sound era matinee idol Stanley Smith died in Pasadena this spring . . . David C. Imboden, 87, also passed on earlier . . . He appeared in 100 films including the 1927 version of King of Kings.*

*VIEWING the 1930-40 films on TV proves the enduring popularity of the cliché. It seems as if half of the films made in that era always had the line: "Are you all right?" A mystery was certain to contain the taught dialogue phrase: "Have you told anyone about this?" The innocent suspect always protested his innocence thusly: "I can explain the whole thing." The romantic stuff usually contained a sad plea: "How can you do this to me?" "Hold me close, never let me go," was a line in the heavy breathing love scene supported by dozens of violins. The cliché was a vague, time killing device for the screen writer while allowing his characters time to get in camera position or whatever. The*

*bromides never advanced the plot but they did consume 90 feet of film and that was another minute gone by.*

*REMEMBER Elmo Tanner the singer-whistler with Ted Weems for so many years? Well, Elmo is well and living in Florida. Recently we called him: "Oh, I'm fine. Getting along. Have lived here about 16 years. Love the country. I have a lovely wife, four children and six grandchildren. I sing a little here. I enjoy today's popular music. I'm more of a middle of the road music man. I love to hear from fans. I live at 7418 Second Ave., S. Ave. North St. Petersburg, Florida, 33710. It is nice to be remembered."*

*NEWS REEL . . . Singer Wee Bonnie Baker is reported living in Florida . . . Eleanor Holm looked very chic this summer at California society affairs . . . Society band leader Henry King died in Texas a few weeks ago . . . The tourist turnout for the 48th anniversary of the death of Valentino was the largest of the last 10 years. His 1921 film The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse drew big crowds at a Los Angeles theatre.*

*IT SAYS HERE . . . Carmel Myers, 74, says she's returning to films . . . Her son, Herbert, thinks UFO's are the real thing . . . Jennifer Jones hopes to work in more films . . . Cesar Romero has not been off the movie or TV screen in 40 years, hence his 1974 powerful draw . . . MGM moguls were absolutely determined to have Shirley Temple for Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz . . . It would fail without her, they said . . . Mary Astor has a granddaughter who is the exact image of grandmother and that's some beauty . . . Fred Astaire at 75 says he'll never do another dancing thing, movie or TV, too much strain . . . Victor Heerman, in his 80s, is very proud to have a film playing that is 40 years old. The Marx Bros. Cocomanuts is packing them in these days.*

*PAULINE STARKE lives in quiet retirement at 1122 9th St., Santa Monica, Calif., but enjoys hearing from old friends. Recently we chatted about films of long ago. "I don't see many movies now other than on TV. Some of them are not too enjoyable. I like Joan Woodward. "Miss Starke (now Mrs. George Sherwood) was one of some 20 players who got a big start in films in the 1916 Intolerance. She remembered playing in the 1921 version of A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court and the Eyes of Youth in 1919. The sound era wrapped up her career after a few films.*

*COMMENTS, contributions and questions are welcomed at Hollywood Cavalcade, P.O. Box 113, Pasadena, California 91102.* □