



In This Chapter:

Sammy Baugh

"Crimson Ghost"

"Holt of the Secret Service"

"Junior G-Men of the Air"

House Peters Jr.

Turhan Bey

Louise Currie

Serial Features...and much more!

SLINGIN' SAMMY BAUGH

by Boyd Magers

Sammy Baugh, as you know if you're a football fan, was perhaps the world's greatest quarterback. He threw footballs for more than 23,000 yards in gains while he was field general for the Washington Redskins of the NFL. Before that, he was an All-America quarterback for the Texas Christian University Horned Frogs, played in the inaugural Cotton Bowl game (a 16-6 win over Marquette) and is a charter member of both the College Football Hall of Fame ('51) and the Pro Football Hall of Fame ('63). The only other quarterbacks who have claimed both college and pro titles are Joe Namath and Joe Montana. Sam was also named to the modern all-time team, encompassing a 50 year period from 1919-1969. Samuel Adrian Baugh, 86 last March 17, played high school ball in Sweetwater, TX. These days he never leaves his ranch outside Rotan in West Texas. "I've got a rule that includes not going anywhere. I go to the golf course (usually three rounds a week) and back home. That's my travel. As long as I do that, I feel good, eat good and sleep good at night. I sure as hell don't go to any big city. I don't fly. I don't drive at night. And I sure don't miss it a lot," Baugh expresses himself with much profanity in a high nasal drawl as he bites off



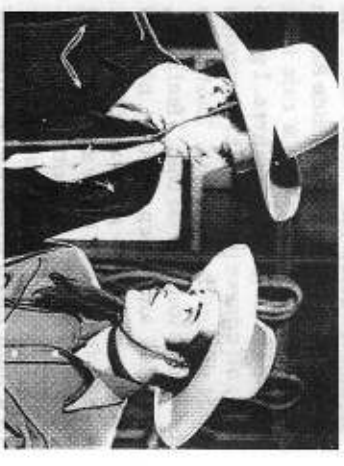
another chaw of Red Man. The 6'2" rancher prefers Sam to Sammy and when he starts talking about football, it's like he knew the game at the dawn of time. In a way he did. "Everything I learned about the game came from TCU and coach Dutch Meyer. I still think he was way ahead of his time. When I got to the pros, they had these little rules that were supposed to protect the passer, just like today. But the real rule don't ever change: Quarterback tries to pass, you put his ass on the ground! All you hear from coaches now is 'Stay in the pocket.' Sonofabitch can get killed staying in the pocket." Baugh had a campus job sweeping out the music room when he led the Horned Frogs to a national championship in 1935. He played 16 seasons with the Redskins and led them to NFL titles in '37 and '42. "Pro quarterbacks make more money today in one game than I did playing 16 Godamn years. I couldn't believe it. But, good for them. I was born too soon." Baugh started out making \$8,000 a year with the Redskins



Baugh in his coaching days.

but by the end of his pro career he was drawing about \$25,000 with thousands more in endorsements. After retiring in 1952, he "coached Houston Oilers and the Detroit Lions." Talk about making money—ranching sure ain't the way to do it. I bought my place in 1941." He owns 6,200 acres of grasslands and cultivated fields. Baugh's wife died several years ago. A daughter and grandchild live with him on the ranch while one of his sons—a high school football coach at nearby Snyder—helps keep the place going. Sam has a satellite dish and during the Fall he starts watching football on Saturday morning and keeps on till Monday night. "It's a better game now." His brief fling as an actor in Republic's "King of the Texas Rangers" serial helped pay for the ranch and stock it with Hereford cattle. "Somebody from Republic called me and asked if I wanted to do a movie. I thought at first he was kidding. When I realized he was serious, I pointed out to him I didn't know the first thing about that sort of thing. Hell, I was a football player. He told me players like Red Grange had done okay in movies ("Galloping Ghost" serial—Mascot '31) and Tom Harmon of Michigan, who had just won the Heisman Trophy, had signed to do a picture." ("Harmon of Michigan" '41—among others.) Fellow Texan and longtime friend John Kimbrough, the Texas A&M star from nearby Haskell, TX, was also about to sign a contract to star in Zane Grey westerns for 20th Century Fox ("Lone Star Ranger", "Sandown Jim"—both '42). Baugh laughingly chides his friend, "I guess I was the world's worst actor, unless it was John Kimbrough." (Kimbrough still maintains a ranch in nearby Haskell.) "The Republic guy told me it wouldn't take long," Baugh continues, "said it

would be fun and would pay pretty good. So I figured I'd give it a try." The 12 chapter 1941 serial was tailor made for Baugh as famous football player Slinging Tom King returns to Bordertown and joins the Texas Rangers to track down 'His Excellency', the mysterious agent of an unnamed 5th column foreign power engaged in destroying Bordertown oil fields and who is responsible for King's father's death. His ranger father is killed at the very moment Tom is winning the game for the Texas All Stars. Baugh's contract, consummated 2/27/41, paid him \$1,000 a week on a five week minimum guarantee, tying him with Ray Mala ("Robinson Crusoe of Clippert Island") and Ralph Byrd ("Dick Tracy Vs. Crime, Inc."—his fourth DT serial) and Hoot Gibson ("Painted Stallion") as the highest total-grossing actors in Republic serial annals. The serial was filmed during Baugh's off-season in June and July '41. The first chapter intercut some actual game footage of Slingin' Sammy at work on the gridiron, but nothing thereafter. The main-title music was a spicetangling Mort Glickman arrangement of the TCU Horned Frogs fight song, "Come To the Bower". Sammy admits, "I was just a football player on a two month fling in sunny California. Shoot, when we were filming it I could never figure out what the story was about. They'd give us the part of the script we'd be doing the next day



and tell us to study the lines that night. I did that for a while but they kept changing the scenes the next day; so I finally quit memorizing the lines until the next day when we got to where we were going to be shooting. It was a lot of fun, but not something I ever thought of doing as a career." Baugh has often credited Duncan Renaldo, who played Mexican Rurales Capt. Pedro Garcia, with showing him the "acting ropes". Renaldo once told interviewer Greg Jackson, "I liked Sammy very much. He was so green. I tried to get him to be natural and not to act. Neither (directors) Jack English or Billy Witney could do that with him; they didn't have the time nor the capacity to do that. I'm a very patient man and I directed him really. Billy used to let me. Then said, 'Duncan, here we go' and I'd stop right into the scene and play the rest of it." (Comments from DALLAS MORNING NEWS 5/10/99; 3/13/56; 11/6/77 and TEXAS MONTHLY 11/97. Thank to Barry Martin, Pat Shields and Jack Mathis' VALLEY OF THE CLIPFANGERS.)

D'ja Notice:

Sammy Baugh is a two gun man in Ch. 1 of "King of the Texas Rangers", then reverts to one gun for the rest of the serial. Former serial and western players Kermit Maynard, Buddy Roosevelt and Eddie Dew all have roles in "King..." as well as Richard Simmons who, 13 years later, starred in Republic's "Man With the Steel Whip" serial.

CHEAT ENDINGS

"King of the Texas Rangers"—At the end of Ch. 3, before the speedboat hits the rocks, King tells Prof. Nelson to get down and they duck in the boat. Instead of that, at the start of Ch. 4, King tells Prof. Nelson to "jump," as they do!

VCI SERIALS

"Mandrake the Magician", "The Phantom", "Lost City" and "Return of Chandu" serials are now available in lavishly illustrated boxes from VCI for \$29.99@ (plus shipping). Certainly all four have been "around" for some time, but VCI does the best job of distributing serials these days at a reasonable cost. Quality is always fine also. These four bring VCI's current output to over 85 serials in release. Interestingly, their "Terry and the Pirates" has been withdrawn. (800) 331-4077; <www.vcihomevideo.com> or write 11333 E 60th Pl., Tulsa, OK 74146 for their catalog.



PERILS OF COLUMBIA

Lost for years were the original negatives for which lobby cards were struck from Columbia's sound serials of the '30s and '40s. Now, the first generation material used to make lobby card sets for 15 Columbia serials from '37-'43 has been located by Anthony J. DeSantis who plans to publish them through his Magic Dr. Z imprint (114 London St. #2, E. Boston, MA 02128) *Will it escape!*

SERIAL CLIPPINGS

Five pages on serials—in particular "The Phantom Empire"—in CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN #28. The mag now regularly

devotes a section to serials. ✂ The Walter Reade Theatre of Lincoln Center in New York City showed "Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe" March 25-26 and April 22-23 as part of their movies for kids program. "See if our 21st Century bears any resemblance to the movies' version of the future." (Well, it certainly doesn't resemble "Flash Gordon" or "Buck Rogers"...at least not yet!)

(Thank to Frank Gutierrez.) ✂ The Silent Movie Theatre presented "Wild Western Week" May 23-29...which included some early talkies, as well as Ch. 1 and 2 of Gene Autry's "Phantom Empire". 611 N. Fairfax Ave., Hollywood, CA. (323) 655-2510 ✂

Serials break the "sound barrier"—Mario DeMarco 2 page article in MOVIE COLLECTOR'S WORLD #602. #603 covers Republic—King of serial productions. ✂ Six page article on J. Carroll Naish in NOSTALGIA DIGEST (June/July '00) w/photo from "Batman". Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053. ✂ FAMOUS MONSTERS #231 contains pt. 2 of their chapter by chapter synopsis of "Crimson Ghost". ✂ Good article (with then and now photos) on Carole ("Monster and the Ape") Mathews in THE CALL-FORNIAN, 2/13 (Murrieta/Temecula, CA, area). ✂ Buck Jones' career and Masonic record in KNIGHT TEMPLAR (3/00). ✂ "Phantom Empire" now showing weekly on The Western Channel"; available via DSS dishes. ✂ "The McKim Clan" is well covered (6 pgs.) in CLASSIC IMAGES #300. Much more on Sammy McKim's serials in SR #35.

SERIAL BITS

by Mario DeMarco

Back in 1912 a young actress named Mary Fuller starred in what can be called the first serial, "What Happened To Mary?", from



the Edison Film Co. Readers first followed Mary's monthly adventures serialized in McClure's Ladies World, then viewed the 12 episodes on the screen. It was a unique idea and became the "grandmother" to modern day "soap operas". Mary Fuller didn't perform any exciting, extraordinary stunts such as soon to come daredevil actresses like Pearl White, Ruth Roland, Kathryn Williams, Louise Lorraine, Arline Pretty, Allene Ray and Neva Gerber did. These members of the so-called "weaker sex" certainly managed to liven up the various chapterplays in which they starred. Each reel of "What Happened To Mary?" was a complete entity in itself, with its melodramatic entanglements resolved within each episode. "Install-

ment connections were loose and its episodic endings lacked the localized holdover suspense later identified with serials," writes Buck Rainey in SERIALS AND SERIES. True serials came into their own during the late teens and '20s. Chapterplays of all types were being produced. The more fantastic and action-crammed, the more appealing to audiences they were. Serials were stepping stones for many new performers—they learned to act in these thrill-a-minute weekly dramas before hitting the "big time". The reverse also occurred—big stars acted in serials when they couldn't obtain starring roles. A few saw these productions as their "bread and butter", and remained with them throughout their careers. It's these individuals that are still remembered reverently by the fans as *serial stars*.



CLIFFHANGER COMMENTARY

by Bruce DeHman

To this day I'm still not certain why "The Crimson Ghost" so unnerved me. Growing up, I was practically weaned on Chaney's Wolfman, Karloff's Frankenstein Monster and Lugosi's marble-mouthed Count, but in truth considered them more old pals than legitimate threats to my well being. I loved horror films, the scarier the better, and never once recall experiencing nightmares over them like a lot of other kids I knew. So, why did "The Crimson Ghost" who, let's face it, is pretty hokey looking (the late Clayton Moore once



stated the most difficult thing about making the serial was keeping a straight face when he was in the same scene with the title character) with his dime store skeleton mask, cowl and bony gloves, make me, a guy who laughed at Godzilla and snickered at the Mummy, so uncomfortable? Like I said, after all these years I've never made sense of it anymore than why the lead witch in TUBBY comics also gave me the creeps. Go figure. Republic's 1946 "Crimson Ghost" deals with a suit of armor remark-

able counter-atomic device called the Cyclotrode, designed to short-circuit all electrical rays it's brought into contact with. Naturally, for a lot of nefarious reasons, the Ghost wants to get his gloved mitts on it, but the ethical inventor, Professor Chambers, refuses to cooperate until, employing a deadly mind-controlling collar, the Ghost makes the powerless scientist his slave. Opposing his mad scheme are ace criminologist Duncan Richards and Diana, a member of the scientific university staff which includes, unknown to all, the Crimson Ghost himself. "The Crimson Ghost", even more than a lot of other serials, is low on logic but very high on thrills and excitement.

Perhaps, as some serial critics have suggested, by the post war period, cliffhangers were getting a bit past their prime; ideas were presented over and over again, they were overly predictable and lacking the imaginative robustness that characterized earlier productions. But I still think a handful, this one included, still delivered enough of the goods with which to have a great

time.

Cast-wise, Charles Quigley is okay as the heroic Richards, although there is something a tad reserved, although pompous about the actor that



Charles Quigley, Linda Stirling, Clayton Moore.

has always kept him from being among my favorite serial heroes. Linda Stirling, beautiful, elegant and as believable as anyone could be (given the material) is always a welcome addition to any chapterplay.

Also on hand are dependables I. Stanford Jolley (who supplies the voice of the Ghost but actually portrays an entirely different part—confusing? Perhaps it was meant to be so.), Kenne Duncan as Chambers, Forrest Taylor, Fred Graham and, both acting and doing their usual great stunt work, the unbeatable team of Tom Steele and Dale Van Sickel. However, my favorite character in the serial is the late Clayton Moore's Ashe, the Crimson Ghost's lead henchman. Despite his legendary association with the Lone Ranger and other heroic figures, I have to say I always found Moore to be most effective as a bad guy (he more or less repeated this role in Republic's "Radar Men From the Moon"). He's tough, vicious and a most worthy opponent for Richards. That famous raspy voice, while soothing and comforting when he was the Ranger, seems quite threatening and unpleasantly menacing here. What I also enjoy about the later Republic serials, which often employ science-fiction slants, is all the scientific gadgetry the studio craftsmen put together and "The Crimson Ghost" has more than its share. This, coupled with William Witney and Fred Brannon's spirited helmsmanship, the Lydecker miniaturs and a prevailing sense of... the ominous and the mysterious, which nicely compliments the Ghost's bizarre persona, makes this cliffhanger a lot of fun, even if I think a villain as intimidating and offbeat as this one deserved a more grandiose demise (if you haven't seen the serial, I won't give the ending away). "The Crimson Ghost"

might not get under my skin the way he once did when I was nine, but he still has the power to entertain and amuse me. Like they say, old friends are the best.



A REPUBLIC SERIAL IN 12 CHAPTERS

SHOENBERGER ON SERIALS

by Jim Shoemaker

In 1966 Republic released a TV package of features edited from complete serials known as the Century 66 package. At best, the situation was unusual in the sense the new feature titles were either so obvious that it was almost insulting ("Spy Smasher Returns", "Doctor Satan's Robot", "Nyoka and the Lost Secrets of Hippocrates", "Sakima and the Masked Marvel") or they were so oblique you could



only scratch your head in frustration. Some samples of that type: "U-238 and the Witch Doctor", "Missile Base At Taniaik", "Code 645", "Jungle Gold". The original serial titles those features were made from in order are: "Jungle Drums of Africa", "Canadian Mounties Vs. Atomic Invaders", "G-Men Never Forget" and "Tiger Woman". These serial features had a running time of 100 minutes each. When the film editors tired to condense 15 chapter serials like "G-Men Vs. the Black

Dragon" and "Secret Service in Darkest Africa" the result was, not surprisingly, disappointing. Imagine trying to squeeze over four hours of story into a scant 1 hr. 40 min. Anyone who had not viewed the original serial was hard pressed indeed to make a great deal of sense out of these quirky adaptations. One can only wonder what was going through the mind of the person or persons assigned the job of retitling these serials into feature form. For instance, "G-Men Vs. The Black Dragon" was renamed "Black Dragon of Manzanar". Since Manzanar was one of the internment camps in which Japanese citizens were held during WWII, the viewer is understandably puzzled as to any connection to the war time serial. The sequel to this serial, with action star Rod Cameron reprising his role as Rex Bennett, was "Secret Service in Darkest Africa". The new title was "The Baron's African War". Unless you happened to recall the lead villain's military title was "The Baron", you have another enigma on your hands. Another serial feature title considered misleading was "Torpedo of Doom" culled from "Fighting Devil Dogs". In this serial, the evil villain, the Lightning, usually referred to his weapon of destruction as "The Thunder Bolt." However, in fairness, the really astute serial fans might well recall the title of chapter six was indeed, "Torpedo of Doom". I can add a bit of



personal trivia about this serial. Many years ago I had the pleasure of dining with Barry Shipman, lead writer on "Fighting Devil Dogs". Shipman also worked on the screenplays of such serial classics as three Dick Tracys, the two Lone Rangers and "Daredevils of the Red Circle". In addition to many non-serial projects, he wrote for the Durango Kid series at Columbia. During our meal he related about working alone at his office at Republic. It was nighttime and he had a problem. He was having difficulty coming up with a new imaginative criminal for his latest assignment, "Fighting Devil Dogs". He was so lost in thought he didn't notice the approach of a major electrical storm. His concentration was interrupted by a spectacular flash of lightning followed by a clap of thunder so loud it shook his office window. It frightened him because he didn't realize the storm was coming. Then his writer's mind began working. A short time later one of Republic's greatest menaces was born—the Lightning. There were a total of 26 titles in the Century 66 package. It is interesting to note none of these serial features had a western plotline. It's believed the studio thought the public had been overexposed to western story themes due to TV series. Actually, feature versions of Republic serials were released for the first time many years earlier—30 to be exact.

"Darkest Africa" was released on May 21st, 1936. The last one was issued on June 30, 1959, "Ghost of Zorro". Please understand this particular selection was much shorter in screening time than the 100 minute features and done to cash in on the Zorro TV craze. The longest running time was 75 minutes for "Missile Monsters" ("Flying Disc Man From Mars"). The shortest time was 65 minutes for "Lost Planet Airmen" ("King of the Rocket Men").



As you see the title changers were up to their old tricks! Although some serial titles were left alone ("Dick Tracy", "Zorro Rides Again" and "Drums of Fu Manchu") can you figure out what serials these titles came from? "Yukon Patrol" and "Satan's Satellites". No need to keep you in suspense. The first retitling is from "King of the Royal Mounted". The serial was released on Sept. 20th, 1940; the feature came out April 30th, 1942. The second retitling was adapted from "Zombies of the Stratosphere". This serial was first released on July 16th, 1952. The feature was issued on March 28th, 1958. Serial fans had little difficulty identifying the new title "Hi-Yo Silver" as coming from "The Lone Ranger" which was released February 12th, 1938. The feature version came out a little over two years later on April 10, 1940, with a running time of 69 minutes. A few minutes of additional footage was added to the opening of this feature with veteran actor Raymond Hatton telling the story of the Lone Ranger and his horse, Silver, to child star Dickie

Jones who appeared in five serials: "Blake of Scotland Yard", "Adventures of Frank Merriwell", "Call of the Savage", "Great Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok" and "Queen of the Jungle". He also was the voice of "Pinocchio" in the '40 Disney animated movie. As a young adult he starred in two popular TV shows, "Buffalo Bill Jr." in '55 and "Range Rider" ('51-'53) with popular serial star Jock Mahoney. There were features made from other studio's serials as well: "Desert Command" from "Three Musketeers" (Mascot); "Radio Ranch" and "Men With Steel Faces" from "Phantom Empire" (Mascot); "Chandu On the Magic Island" and "Return of Chandu" from "Return of Chandu" (Principal); Tarzan and the Green Goddess" and "New Adventures of Tarzan" from "New Adventures of Tarzan" (Burroughs); "Black Ghost" from RKO's "Last Frontier" and "City of Lost Men" from the abominable



"Lost City"; as well as "Blake of Scotland Yard" (Victory), "Clutching Hand" (Stage & Screen), "Cluster's Last Stand" (Stage & Screen), "Shadow Of Chinatown" (Victory), "Tarzan the Fearless" (Principal), "Queen of the Jungle" (Screen Attractions), "Hurricane Express" (Mascot), all of which had feature versions by the same title. Surprisingly, Universal, with the largest output of serials (69 titles), only released a handful of features: "Rocketship" and "Spaceship to the Unknown" from "Flash Gordon"; "Mars Attacks the World" and "Deadly Ray From Mars" from

"Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars"; "Perils From the Planet Mongo" from "Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe"; "Squadron of Doom" from "Ace Drummond"; "Planet Outlaws" and "Destination Saturn" from "Buck Rogers"; "Phantom Creeps" from the serial of the same name; "Savage Fury" from "Call of the Savage" and "Jungle Safari" from "Jungle Queen".

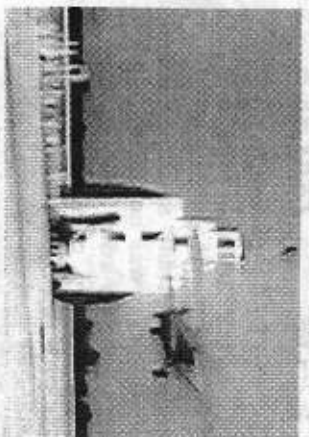
A real puzzle are Columbia's 57 serials. Although I've seen some feature versions made from odd chapters by fans, I have never seen or known of any official Columbia distributed releases, save the feature version of "Superman" of which your editor and I are unsure of the original distribution. If readers of this article have any information about features from serials, I am sure the publisher of SERIAL REPORT would like to hear from you.



by Tinsley E. Verbrugg

Chapterplays with an aviation plotline utilized a number of Los Angeles area airfields. One of the most popular was the L.A. Metropolitan Airport at Van Nuys in the San Fernando Valley. Opened in 1928, the Van Nuys facility originally consisted of 80 acres amid scattered trees and farmland. Soon, it included six hangars and an art-

deco control tower with such Tinseltown luminaries as Howard Hughes, Hoot Gibson, Wallace Beery and Gene Autry flying their own planes there. In 1939, Metropolitan Airport played host to a number of major films, including "Lost Horizon", "Men with Wings", "Storm Over the Andes" and Laurel and Hardy's "Flying Deuces." During WW II the Army purchased 163 acres adjacent to the airport for a military airfield and the airport made its most notable screen appearance in "Casablanca." A hangar seen in that fine Bogart film is no longer part of the now huge Van Nuys airport but can still be seen on Waterman Drive near Woodley Avenue on the edge of the airport property. L.A. Metropolitan also appeared in several serials. Its art-deco tower and two of its hangars were featured in Ch. 9 of "Junior G-Men", while its runway and a hangar, that in 1941 was situated on the north



Scene of L.A. Metropolitan Airport tower from "Junior G-Men" Ch. 9.

edge of the airport, made less distinctive appearances in "Tailspin Tommy", "Tailspin Tommy In the Great Air Mystery", "Flying G-Men", "Dick Tracy's G-Men", "Junior G-Men of the Air" and "Hop Harrigan", among others. The tower can be briefly seen in Terence Stamp's recent "The Limey". Another San Fernando Valley airport made an appearance in at least one serial. The Glendale Airport (not to

be confused with the still thriving Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport, into which movie fans often fly) was featured in "Sky Raiders," with signs for its Grand Central Air Terminal and the Trimm Aircraft Corp. (also located there in the filming days) clearly visible in various scenes. When friends and I visited it several years ago, the Glendale Airport terminal, which also appeared (complete with incongruous palm tree) as the London airport in "Sherlock Holmes in London" and in the opening scenes of "Hollywood Hotel", was still standing at 1310 Air Way, near the San Fernando Rd. exit to the Pasadena Freeway (Fwy 134). (Many thanks to Jerry Schneider, Leon Smith and the webmaster of the Van Nuys airport website.)



A SERIAL REPORT FROM FAR OFF NEW ZEALAND

by Barrie Hawking

During the '30s and '40s, and into the '50s, when the sound serial held sway at Saturday matinees around the world, it was no different growing up in far-away New Zealand, a small country, minute by comparison with the U.S., but with our fair quota of serials showing over that delightful period: more than many might presume possible. When it came to feature films, series westerns and other B-movies, we did miss out a lot. There were so many produced and not that many theatres in New Zealand to house them all. Serials though, because there weren't so many, usually got a run at the matinee theatres scattered throughout the country, in large and small towns. I lived in Auckland, New Zealand's largest centre, and during the late '40s and early '50s I had four

theatres

within walking distance of my home to choose from for my Saturday matinee entertainment. The first factor involving choice was the feature film being shown. If it was a Roy Rogers or Gene Autry, there was no argument—we went there. But if a Charles Starrett, Tim Holt or some non-western saga of the foreign legion or such was on, our decision usually veered toward what-

ever serial was showing at each theatre. That way we got to see chunks of most serials shown, but very seldom all! I remember one of the few we made a concerted effort to get to was Columbia's 1948 "Superman". Many American comic book characters portrayed in serials meant little to us in NZ, because we received only British comics at that stage, but "Superman" (and "The Lone Ranger") were universal, and we had them on radio as well. So, "Superman" was a *must see* for my crowd of youngsters. Because New Zealand at that time got most of its films through British distributors, rather than directly from the States, we were always a few years behind, which was good in a way because we got to see stars and films from before our time, so to speak. The chance of seeing two of



the Bill Elliott Columbia serials ("Overland With Kit Carson" and "Valley of Vanishing Men") about 1950 (many years after they were first made and distributed) helped me form what would be an everlasting admiration for Wild Bill. Many older serials seemed to have a second time around some years later, thus there were still Universal works like "Raiders of Ghost City" and "Mystery of the Riverboat" being screened. Most serials I saw in the late '40s and early '50s were from Columbia and Republic and, oddly enough, I always found the Columbia offerings more attractive: difficult now to say why. I can well remember the thrill after sitting through the first episode of Columbia's 1951 "Mysterious Island", with its mixture of Civil War and science-fiction! Regrettable is the fact I missed the last few episodes! I preferred "Cody of the Pony Express", maybe because of the flamboyant Jock Mahoney, more than what seemed insipid Republic affairs like "Adventures of Frank and Jesse James" or "Desperadoes of the West"...after all, who were Clayton Moore or Richard Powers? Mahoney we knew from Durango Kid films, of course he wasn't the Durango Kid...or was he? Little did we kids know that more often than not, he was the man behind the black mask. Late '40s and early '50s western serials did not appeal as much because our cowboy heroes did not play in them, as did those of the '30s like Jones, Maynard, Brown, Elliott, Foran. Years would pass before, through the magic of video, I could catch up on all those great serials of the past. Today, I can watch practi-

cally any serial I want. It was different in those halcyon days of youth. Remember, television did not invade New Zealand until the '60s so the picture theatre still held sway much longer than in most countries. We eventually ran out of serials and B-westerns. Then there was a huge gap until video, but strangely enough, my chance to see a classic serial of the golden age came along in the early '60s when television was introduced. One of the first children's programmes ran the first "Flash Gordon" serial and I could see for myself the "Captain Video" I had enthralled over at the matinee in '51 was pretty cheap stuff comparatively. At the time, "Captain Video", and even John Hart's "Adventures of Captain Africa", seemed exciting in the darkened cinema; we couldn't tell the sets were made of paper mache and stock shots made up much of the rest! Even though now I have seen Buck Jones, Mascot's early sound serials, Ken Maynard, "Flash Gordon", "Crimson Ghost", "Lone Ranger", "The Phantom" et al in action on video, nothing can quite capture the thrill of a Saturday matinee of yore, encased in the darkened cinema watching Dennis Moore tackle the mysterious riders from Ghost City, listening to the stirring introduction of Wild Bill's "Valley of Vanishing Men", seeing "Superman" stand dauntless in front of a roaring train bearing down on him or the balloonists arriving on mystery island encountering *very* strange goings on! To quote a well-worn but very apt phrase used by cowboy star Bill Hart and writer Alan Barbour—"the thrill of it all!"





THE OLD ONES AND... THE NEW ONES

by Jim Stringham

"Holt of the Secret Service" (Columbia '41) is one of those serials where everybody looks familiar. Columbia apparently did not release a complete cast list, but here is an approximation of what one would have contained. Many of the bit players are identified by the sharp eye and encyclopedic serial knowledge of SR reader Edward Billings.



Character	Played by
Jack Holt	Jack Holt
Nick Farrell	Jack Holt
Kay Drew	Evelyn Brent
Malloy	C. Montague
	Shaw
Valden	Tristram Coffin
Lucky Arnold	John Ward
Quist	Ted Adams
Crimp Evans	Joe McGuinn
Jim Latham	Edward Hearn
Severn	Ray Parsons
Frank	Jack Chestham
Geraghty	Stanley Blystone
Rankin	George Chesebro
Henchman	Buddy Roosevelt
Shorty	Harry Harvey
Ship Captain	Walker McGrail
Island Henchman	Stanley Price
Ship Radio Oper.	Charles Morton
Native Chief	Nick Thompson
Jail Guard	Franklyn Fanum
Tom (Henchman)	Jack Roper
Chris (Henchman)	Pierce Lyden
Henchman	George Magrill
Gov. Radio Man	Linton Brent
Ship Bartender	Jack Richardson

"The Shadow" (Columbia '40). If you're looking for a screen version

of radio's extremely popular CBS series, you won't find it here. No clouding of men's minds for Columbia—nevertheless a highly enjoyable romp. Here's the cast list, with help from Ed Billings.



Character	Played by
Lamont Cranston	Victor Jory
Lin Chang	Victor Jory
The Shadow	Victor Jory
Margot Lane	Veda Ann Borg
Stanley Vincent	Roger Moore
Stanford Marshall	Robert Fiske
Turner	J. Paul Jones
Pilant	Jack Ingram
Roberts	Charles Hamilton
Inspector Cardona	Edward Peil, Sr.
Comm. Weston	Frank LaRue
Williams	Eddie Fetherston
	(often misspelled various ways)
Russell	Charles King
Wu	Phillip Ahn
Peil	Gordon Hart
Rand	Charles K. French
Rand's Butler	Murdock
	McQuarrie
Wilson	Lee Shumway
Clark	Kit Guard
Green	Richard Botiller
Harvey	Constance Romanoff
Jennings	Law Sargent
Steve	Charles Sullivan
Prescott	Giff Barrette
Nurse Crawford	Marin Sals
Alplane Mechanic	Jack Perrin
One-eyed Man	Joe Cais
Adams	Harry Tenbrook
Bart	Franklyn Fanum
Policeman	Kernan Cripps
Henchman	Frank Hagney
Judge	Lloyd Ingraham
Henchman	Jack Rice
Street Person	Budd Buster
Street Beggar	George Morrell

Here is Ed Billings' cast list for "Junior G-Men of the Air" (Universal '42).

Character	Played by
Ace Holden	Billy Halop
Eddie Holden	Gene Reynolds
The Baron	Lionel Atwill
Jerry Markham	Frank Albertson
Don Ames	Richard Lane
Bols Larson	Huntz Hall
Stick Munsey	Gabriel Dell
Greaseball Plunket	Bernard Punsley
Jack	Frankie Darro
Double-Face Barker	David Boyce
Araka	Turban Bey
Beal	John Bleifer
Comora	Victor Zimmerman
Augar	John Bagui
Monk	Noel Cravat
Dick Parsons	Paul Phillips
G-Man	Frank Kelly
Holden	Eddy Waller
Gail	Kathryn Adams
Whitey	Billy Benedict
Junkyard Customer	William Desmond
Secretary	Beatrice Roberts
Barry Evans	Vinton Haworth
Train Conductor	Pat O'Malley
Japanese Farmer	Jay Novello
Army Captain	Hugh Prosser
Senator	Guy Usher



A VIEW FROM THE CLIFF

by Michael Fitzgerald

Turban Bey. The name conjures up memories of 1940s Technicolor Arabian Nights adventures, usually with Maria Montez and Jon Hall. Born March 30, 1920, in Vienna, Austria, he is the son of an Austrian mother and a Turkish diplomat father. "In the late '30s, my mother and I fled the Nazis and came to the United States." It wasn't long before he made his feature film de-

but, and after a two year apprentice "playing despicable Arabs and oriental villains" he became a leading man, and many a young woman's ideal fantasy. Bey returned to Austria in the early '50s, but began commuting back and forth to America in the early '80s. Although very wealthy, with much property in Austria ("I needed more credits to get my Screen Actors' Guild Pension."), he's appeared in a few TV shows and made-for-video flicks to earn that pension. While in the U.S., he escorts Audrey Totter to various functions. "Audrey and I go back over 50 years. My mother wanted us to marry, but I had to explain we were not in love, just good friends." As for serials, "I did two—the first was 'Junior G-Men of the Air' with the Dead End Kids... (pause)... no comment... and the great, great Lionel Atwill. I remember the second one, 'Adventures of Smilin' Jack' much better. Tom Brown was Smilin' Jack. He was marvelous. Marjorie Lord was the leading lady—a very pretty, dark-haired girl. Working with Rose Hobart in that one was a pleasure. We were the villains. I loved playing villains. That was when I was at my best! We shot the serials very fast—one chapter after another. There were never any accidents—even when the Japanese bombed us! (Laughs)."



SERIAL BOO BOOS

In "Ace Drummond", John King's plane smashes into a wall in Ch. 2. You can see the propeller and right wing are still intact—but in the next scene the plane is in total ruin.

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ASK THE SERIAL CELBS

You submit questions for the serial stars to SR and we'll get the answers. (List of celebrities available for questions at end of column.)

Q: For Louise Currie in "The Masked Marvel" What was Tom Steele like to work with? I became interested in this great stuntman when I learned he was the Masked Marvel (behind the mask) but received no credit for the role.

—Jerry Zavadi, Grosse Ile, MI
 Louise Currie: "Tom Steele was a very handsome, energetic person—so charming, so pleasant and interesting to talk with. I enjoyed his company on the set! A really nice, nice man. I played a secretary who tells people what to do—I enjoyed that part of the serial! In 'Adventures of Captain Marvel', Tom Tyler was always rescuing me and carrying me off. (Laughs) Tom Steele, however, never did that. I didn't have those cliffhanger hazards on 'The Masked Marvel'. Tom Steele and I just had dialogue together, and, as a result, I didn't get to see his stuntman prowess at work! I frankly thought all the young men favored each other (David Bacon, Rod Bacon, Richard Clarke, Bill Healy); all of them were



very attractive—and they were hired because of their resemblance to one another. Therefore, you were supposed to have trouble figuring out which one was the real 'Masked Marvel'. They were trying to mix you up. But, Tom Steele was much slimmer than David Bacon, who was supposed to be the Masked Marvel. Their physiques didn't match at all. (Laughs) On a sad note, David Bacon was murdered just after we completed the serial. He had picked up a hitchhiker who stabbed him in the back and robbed him. The first few chapters were playing in the theaters, but he never got to see the ending. He was gone before the final chapters were sent to theaters!"

Q: For John Hart—Any special memories or stories about making the "Hawkeye: Last of the Mohicans" TV series with Lon Chaney.

—John McClintock, Placentia, CA
 Not really a serial question, but you'll enjoy a lengthy interview answer to that question in WESTERN CLIPPINGS #35.

Submit your questions to these serial celebs for answers in SR.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Walter Reed | Marion Shilling |
| John Hart | Gregg Barton |
| House Peters Jr. | Tommy Farrell |
| Adrian Booth | John Mitchum |
| Frank Coghlan Jr. | Lois Hall |
| Eleanor Stewart | Sammy McKim |
| Helen Talbot | Pamela Blake |
| Lucille Lund | Dick Jones |
| Mary Ellen Kay | Jane Randolph |
| Richard Simmons | Myron Healey |
| Pauline Moore | Sam Edwards |
| Frankie Thomas | Jane Adams |
| Vivian Austin Coe | Danny Morton |
| Steve Mitchell | Ann Rutherford |
| Anne Gwynne | Peggy Stewart |
| Carole Mathews | Louise Currie |
| Duane Thorson | Robert Clarke |
| Earl Bellamy (asst. "Desert Hawk" dir.) | Ray Boyle (aka Dirk London) |



DOROTHY HERBERT

Ken Maynard was with Cole Bros. in '37, '38 and '40. Their circus not only headlined serial stars Maynard and Clyde Beatty, but spectacular horsewoman Dorothy Herbert as well. As Albee Brent in "Mysterious Dr. Satan" ('40), the equestrienne was logically able to display her horsebacking skills at the stables on the spacious estate of C. 1. Dorothy, having been trusted up by agents of Dr. Satan, still manages to mount her horse and jump him through a window with her hands still tied behind her back. According to Jack Mathis' Republic records she was paid \$100 for one week's work in the serial, the only screen appearance for the New York born circus star, except for a short subject (released to home collectors by Castle), "Here Comes the Circus", in which Herbert jumped her horse while riding blind-folded. Dorothy was born 11/19/10 and died in May '94 (married name Kennard) in Ventura, CA.



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EPISODES

by Tom and Jim

Goldrup

House Peters Jr.

worked in such serials as "Flash Gordon", "Ace Drummond", "Sea Raiders", "Adventures of Frank and Jesse James", "Dangers of the Canadian Mounted", "Batman and Robin" and "King of the Rocketmen", but it all began with his role in "Adventures of Frank Merriwell" (36). "The interesting thing about 'Frank Merriwell' was that Tyrone Power Jr. was originally asked to do the part I finally got," House smiled. "Tyrone Power said no, and he's lucky he did because he went on a lot better than I did. I don't know if it was (Universal head) Carl Laemmle's idea or not, but the idea was to put all of the juniors in the picture: Jean Hersholt (actually Allan Hersholt—ed.), Bryant Washburn, Wallace Reid, Edward Arnold and myself. Then, of course, there was John King and Jean Rogers. Don Briggs was brought out from back east where he had done the radio show of Frank Merriwell (in '34 on NBC), and he played the part in the serial. They used my actual name in the story as House Peters; in every episode I was always a g a i n s t Merriwell. I would never help him or cooperate with him, but at the end of the show he and I became good friends. There were 12 episodes, and each week we would go on location. Sometimes on the back lot, other times somewhere else. One location was on John



House, Don Haggerty—"King of the Rocketmen".

Barrymore's yacht in Newport. We'd stay for five days and shoot the episode, so every episode had a week of shooting...more than the two or three days we got later in shooting a half-hour western. In those days you worked the clock around. You'd start at seven or eight in the morning and maybe quit at six in the evening...then to have them decide to shoot until eleven! So you'd go have dinner then work till eleven. In those days we had our own dressing rooms, so we would sleep in them overnight. I'd just call and say I wasn't coming home because the next morning's work call would be at 8 o'clock. One of the nice things about 'Adventures of Frank Merriwell' was Jim Thorpe. He played in the football sequences, set them up and arranged the teams. He was part of the production team but he was also in it. I really enjoyed meeting him. One thing I noticed was, whenever we needed a chase we used Mulholland Drive. In those days it was nothing but a dirt road, and we tore around there in the outdoor scenes. All of the chases were done in that area. Chase scenes were used there for 'Frank Merriwell', 'Rocketman' and basically all of the serials. They always used Mulholland because they didn't build up there until the '40s or '50s." We asked House if he enjoyed working in serials, and he laughed, "Yeah, when you're young and inexperienced. It wasn't the very best dialogue in the world, but it served its purpose. Let's face it, when the kids went to the Saturday matinee at the theater and the first thing

that came on was the serial...oh boy, they remembered exactly how it ended the week before. Then when the current episode would end, they just had to come back. That was the whole basis to the serial...to bring them back into the theater again. I can't even begin to count how many were made in Hollywood, but Republic and Universal were the forerunners of serials, and they filled theaters around the world."



ON THE SERIAL BOOK SHELF

THE VANISHING LEGION by Jon Tuska, first published in 1982, offers a critical treatment of every serial and feature produced by Mascot from 1927-1935. It's just been reissued in paperback by McFarland Classics (reprinting many of their best selling books). I agree with Barrie Hanfling of NOSTALGIA WESTERNS #62 when he writes, "(Tuska's) views often being soundly based and well written, (but) punctuated by bursts of fancy wherein he quotes large hunks of Jung on dreams and related topics, political analysis and displays a zest for the newly found (in '82) political correctness on the plight of native Americans. (These things) spoil an otherwise excellent account of the rise and fall of Nat Levine's studio." All of Mascot's 16 features and 30 serials are analyzed and commented on, with special emphasis going to "Mystery Mountain", "Miracle Rider" and "Phantom Empire". Tuska is brutally honest about Autry and Maynard—to the point if you are a fan of either, you may want to accept your screen version of them and leave off reading Tuska's commentary. Personally, we believe varying opinions and ideas make for good reading. You needn't (and shouldn't) always agree with a writer or historian to study his ideas and convictions. Varying

points of view and beliefs are what stir brain cells to activity. The shutting out of new concepts and notions only serve to reassert complacent thoughts. So, agree or disagree, at least give Tuska a read; he's a compelling and thorough writer. The McFarland Classic reprint is a bargain at \$24 ppd. 217 pages, 16 page photo section, complete Mascot filmography.



"Very few books about the movies are either readable or reliable and hardly any are both. Most of them have been inequately researched and are the result of second and third hand reporting," wrote Ezra Goodman in THE 50 YEAR DECLINE AND FALL OF HOLLYWOOD (61). Well, here's one that meets Goodman's test! Grange McKinney's ART ACORD AND THE MOVIES is a meticulously researched biography and filmography, refuting and correcting many errors previously published about one of the greatest silent western and serial stars. Acord starred in five Universal serials from '20-'23 with "Moon Riders" being one of the most popular cliffhangers of the silent era. The others were "White Horseman", "Winners of the West", "In the Days of Buffalo Bill" and "Oregon Trail". This is a highly enjoyable straightforward read, never burdened with fanciful intellectualizing. Complete with 300 rare photos (including a 12 page color center section of lobby card and poster reproductions). Extensive bibliography. 170 pages. SR's highest recommendation! \$39.95 ppd. in U.S. (CA resi-

dents add 7.75% sales tax) Western Classics, PO Box 2091, Capistrano Beach, CA 92624.

CHAPTER 13

Spanish actress MARIA ALBA, 89, died in San Diego, CA, Oct. 26, 1999, of Alzheimer's. Born in Barcelona, Spain, Alba came to the U.S. after winning a beauty contest there. She appeared in "Hell's Heroes" w/Charles Bickford and "West of the Pecos" w/Richard Dix but she's best known as Princess Nadji in Bela Lugosi's "Return of Chandu" serial.



Stuntman WALLY ROSE, 90, died March 16 of cancer in N. Hollywood. Worked extensively at Columbia as he and studio head Harry Cohn were childhood friends. His first work was in 1938's Republic serial "Hawk of the Wilderness". Also in "Dick Tracy Vs. Crime Inc." Stuntman John Hagner (Stuntman's Hall of Fame in Moab, UT) tells SR, "He didn't do horsework, mostly boxing films and gangster stuff...worked some Columbia serials. One of the original Stuntmen's Assoc. members in '60. Before movie work he was a boxing promoter and referee."

SERIAL MAILBAG



The SERIAL REPORT format is excellent with all the pictures and graphics. The articles were varied and very interesting. I sat down with SR and didn't stop reading until I had finished the entire report. In Chapter 33 I especially liked Bruce Dettman's article on Republic's "Purple Monster Strikes". Other articles I really liked were "Walter

Miller Speaks...", the D'ja Notice pieces, "Episodes" by Tom and Jim Goldrup and "Ask the Serial Celebs". Please keep up the great work!

—Tom Adamstick, Peotone, IL

I enjoy Jim Stringham's column, "The Old Ones...And the New Ones" and hope he will continue to give us complete cast lists from the serials, especially the independents, Universal and Columbia. At this time I'm trying to track down the name of a Columbia player who appeared in many of their serials. In "The Shadow" he played Harvey (one of the bad guys). He also was in "Green Archer" and "Deadwood Dick". He has hair over both ears and a wide bald streak in the middle. Can Mr. Stringham, or anyone, help me out?

—Raymond Melzer, Flushing, NY
Jim Stringham identifies your Constantine Romanoff. He's also in "Valley of Vanishing Men", "Terry and the Pirates", "White Eagle", even "Flash Gordon" as an ape-man...besides those you mention. Romanoff's career began on the wrestling mat in Europe and the U.S. His first film was the silent "Forbidden Cargo" ('25) w/Evelyn Brent. Harold Lloyd used him to advantage in five films, especially "Kid Brother" ('27). Altogether, his brute countenance was seen in over 50 films (besides the seven serials) including "Wolf Song" ('29), "Island of Lost Souls" ('32), "Our Relations" ('36), "Long Voyage Home" ('40) and "Wild Harvest" ('47).



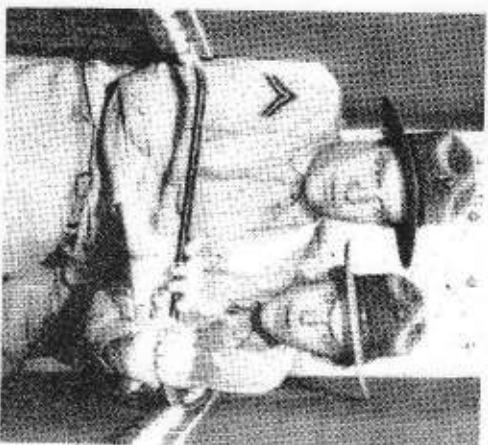
actor in several Columbia serials, notably "Terry and the Pirates", (starting in chapter 1), also "The Shadow". He also appeared in the beginning of each chapter with a whip in "Valley of Vanishing Men". I would like to know his name and any information about him.

—Walter Kowalski, Mesa, AZ
The only film my exhaustive reference sources list for Harold Brauer is a bit role in "Gentlemen Joe Palooka" ('46). There was a Bill Brauer who appeared in "Tex Granger" and "The Vigilante" for Columbia. Could it be the same person? Your query re Constantine Romanoff is answered above.

Could you ask your readers about "The Fighting Marines" ('35)? I saw it as a kid here in N.Y. City. In the chapter where the walls close in (Ch. 11), I remember Adrian Morris saying (earlier in that chapter), "This may come in handy" (referring to a crowbar he picked up.) Now, in every print I've seen, this line is excluded. I saw most of these chapters 2 or 3 times each as my father had the candy concession in the theatre. (Loew's Flushing, NY). Does anyone have an uncut print that contains that line?

—Will Jordan, N.Y., NY
In checking the two copies I have of "Fighting Marines" (the best being from VCI), Grant Withers and Adrian Morris have come up the first flight of stairs; Morris has no crowbar. There appears to be a cut in the film as they stand before a door. Then, Morris has the crowbar in his hand before they go up another stairway. Obviously, your

scene was once there...but not in existing prints. Here's a shot of Withers and Morris and that useful crowbar at the end of Ch. 11.



Regarding the article on Bobby Clark appearing in PotEAU, OK, with Bill Elliott (SR Ch. 33), my uncle mentioned Wild Bill doing the rodeo there. Seems Bill had a horse he thought could race, so he bet the locals. Lost a hundred or so. Same thing next year. Third year everybody wanted some of Wild Bill's money, so he said let's make it interesting! The horse finally decided to race! Bill collected and never came back! Hal

—Jack Bennett, Paul's Valley, OK

D'ja know:

J. Carroll Naish was nominated for an Academy Award in 1943 for his role as Giuseppe, the confused Italian prisoner of war in "Sahara". That same year he was the dastardly Dr. Daka in "Batman" opposite Lewis Wilson.

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