



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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Harold Lloyd, aptly described as one of the great figures in the golden age of film comedy, was Imperial Potentate for Shrinedom in North America when he visited New Bern a decade ago. He was here to attend Sudan Temple's Winter Ceremonial, and created quite a stir.

Although it wasn't publicized at the time, Lloyd was already personally preparing and editing an anthology of his best screen humor called "Harold Lloyd's World of Comedy." The job has kept him busy ever since, but his completed production is now ready for showing in art theatres throughout the country.

This film is destined to be followed before next year's frost by the release of his old-time classic, "The Freshman." Those of you who still recall this movie masterpiece are probably wondering how long it has been since you saw it on the screen of the local Masonic theatre. The answer is 36 years ago.

Incidentally, the bespectacled comedian is still a clown at heart, although his days of active slapstick are now only a madcap memory. John C. Waugh, who covers the Hollywood scene for the Christian Science Monitor, testifies that "Exuberance undimmed through half a century still lights those once-bespectacled eyes. Comedy still untarnished through three generations still rules his life. And a boisterous laugh is still his hallmark."

Present plans call for a reissue of "Grandma's Boy" and "Welcome Danger" if "The Freshman" makes a hit with today's audiences. And then, in short order, "Saftey Last" and "Kid Brother" are certain to make their appearance before millions of fun loving Americans who weren't even born when these films were first flashed on silver screens across the country and around the world.

Describing the alternately shy, daring, bold and eccentric character he portrayed so effectively, Lloyd says he had a knack for getting into trouble and emerging from it in miraculous fashion. "We drew him in such a way," Lloyd explains, "that we could do all kinds of comedy with him. He could do improbable things with plausibility."

Fortunately for the famed comedian, he hasn't had to go through red tape with various Hollywood bigwigs in order to revive his films, and compile the aforementioned anthology. Lloyd owns the pictures himself, and this is a situation so unique among the old-time film comics that only one other comedian, Charlie Chaplin, finds himself in a like position.

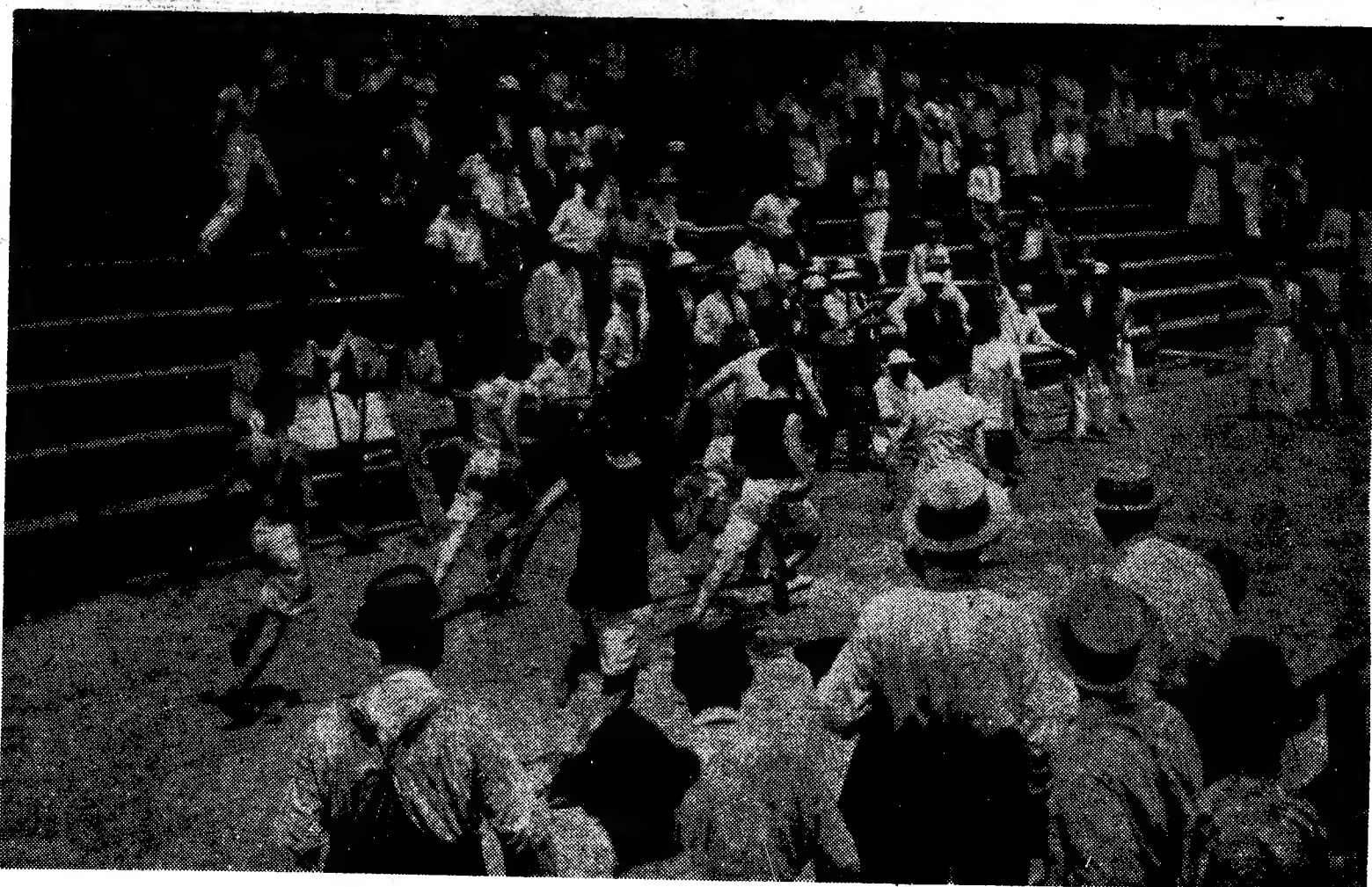
Harold Lloyd's humor depended almost entirely on physical antics, and many of the stunts were hazardous to say the least. Great performer that he was, he never used doubles, professional tumblers or nets.

When we were a kid, squealing as Lloyd hung from the side of a lofty skyscraper, it looked awfully real.



ON MEMORY LANE—This action photograph was snapped on a July day in 1910, when New Bern was playing host to the State Firemen's Tournament. Tense spectators

watch excitedly as hose is hauled from a speeding wagon, drawn by one of the town's famed fire horses. If you were in that crowd, you can easily qualify as an old-timer



SPRINTING FOR GLORY — Prizes were waiting for fleet-footed smoke eaters, when tournament time arrived here more than 50 years ago. Perhaps you recognize the location of this track, where local runners raced against

North Carolina's finest. Such was life in the good old days, when having fun was mostly a do-it-yourself proposition.

Today we know that it REALLY was real. "You may think I was only a few feet off the ground," says Harold, "but it isn't true. I was as high as you saw me. It sometimes took a couple of months to shoot a sequence like that."

Even as music, comedy has no lack of understanding in foreign

lands. A scene that is funny in the United States is equally funny in other countries. For example, Lloyd was Japan's favorite comedian as long as he was making pictures. terming his type of humor a "basic kind" of comedy, Harold shrewdly observes that it doesn't "age".

Come to think of it, the clowning

done by Lloyd and a few others like Chaplin, and Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, is as timeless as the ripple of a brook, robins in Spring, and holly at Christmas. The Three Stooges are in the same category, and those Our Gang comedies are too. That's why the kids of this generation find them so delightful.

Lloyd was a star in the era of

silent films, but it didn't end there. When the talkies pushed many a lispng luminary into oblivion, his popularity remained steadfast. We've already mentioned some of his successes, but others included "Girl Shy" and "Milky Way" as well as "Professor Beware" and "Feet First." We're glad the distinguished gentleman once visited our town.