

### In The Greatest Story Ever Brought To The Screen



Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh in "Gone with the Wind"

### Keeping Faith With Those Who Read The Famous Book

So far as I know, no one has come forward to claim the championship for rapid reading of Margaret Mitchell's truly dramatic novel, "Gone With the Wind." It is difficult for me to imagine anyone completing a careful digest of the book in less than twenty-four hours of actual reading time. Mr. David Selznick and I sought to get all of the memorable events of that book into an evening of screen entertainment. As it turned out, the story is told in three hours and forty-five minutes of film.

Novels have been converted into screen fare before. A screen director knows that film pace and rhythm can cover much ground which took dozens of pages in a book. That pace I knew would play a major role in our story and I was prepared for it. But I didn't realize that into my hands had been thrust a virtual Bible of Southern life with a string of "Don't's" a mile long.

Whatever problems we had on "Gone With the Wind" were inconsequential alongside of that matter of creating a story to satisfy the world's greatest pre-sold critical audience any film has ever had. Miss Mitchell had told us what would be authentic and we had to duplicate it. We had no authority to heighten any situation or minimize any other. We couldn't change simply for effect. We were not making a picture to please an author or a cast of characters. Our thought had to be on a public which was rabid on the subject.

So out the window went a major part of the experience-proved dramatic inventions we know. Imagination is a fine thing in entertainment, but accurate transfer of life is another thing. We all know that if we make a picture showing a miner at work, we must be sure to employ a real miner who will have our miner character acting and talking like a miner. We do that to satisfy a really small part of our audience which will know whether we are

right or wrong. Yet here we had not a minority but a vast majority of our audience in the position of critical experts.

#### Down to Reality

I went to work on "Gone With the Wind" with the headaches of pure imagination from "Wizard of Oz" still ringing in my ears. I had felt that picture was quite a problem, but now I began to see something Utopian in an audience which didn't know what a Munchkin was, nor how an Emerald City might look. I was down to the bed rock of reality, with millions of voices shouting, "Hew to the line, mister."

Any important period picture has its headaches. You can't use sixty principals and nine thousand supporting players without realizing you've been through the mill. Nor can you fail to appreciate the responsibility of a motion picture which has accumulated a million working hours from those who helped make it real. They tell me we shot 1,350,000 feet of negative. Now that it's all done, the figure doesn't surprise me.

### Had To Look Alike To Win Roles

After scores of interviews, and the comparison of hundreds of photographs, two actors were picked who looked enough alike to play Stuart and Brent Tarleton, in "Gone with the Wind," opening Monday on the screen. They are Fred Crane and George Reeves. Crane plays Brent and Reeves Stuart. Aside from the color of their hair—Crane's is brown and Reeves' black—the two men's features are remarkably similar, and they are nearly of a size. Crane is six feet one inch and Reeves a half inch taller, but Reeves is five pounds lighter than Crane's 155. Crane is from New Orleans, La., and is playing his first role in pictures. He is 20 years old and has green eyes. Reeves, 23, has been in California ten years and is a native of Ashland, Kentucky.

### BIGGEST SCENE EVER SHOT IN FILM HISTORY

The filming of the biggest scene ever photographed was made possible by construction of the largest motion picture camera crane. A giant boom with an extension of 85 feet in any direction, including a direct vertical one, was designed to photograph 1500 extras on the forty-acre Atlanta, Georgia, set in "Gone With the Wind," the Technicolor production starring Clark Gable, Leslie Howard and Olivia de Havilland and presenting Vivien Leigh as Scarlett O'Hara. The picture opens Monday on the Liberty screen.

So enormous was the crane's weight—140 tons—that a concrete runway two hundred feet long and twelve feet wide was built along the track where the crane moved. The largest camera crane previously in existence had a boom reach of only 33 feet, entirely inadequate for the scenes proposed by Director Victor Fleming. It was desired to shoot a close-up of Miss Leigh as Scarlett O'Hara, and swing from that directly to a long shot of Union and Confederate wounded just brought to the Atlanta railway station from the battlefield, in July, 1864.

The giant camera boom was built with a contractor's rigging crane, mounted with its caterpillar tractor on two trailers, and supported by forty-six truck-sized pneumatic tired wheels. The crane was designed to handle such heavy loads as structural steel members, tanks and electric signs, so it was rigid enough to support the big Technicolor cameras without vibration.

A ten-ton truck supplied the motive power for moving the crane along the runway, and the boom itself was moved by a 150-horsepower motor mounted on the platform of the crane. Because of the noise of these powerful engines, a special arrangement was made for recording sound in the crane shots.

The bulletin warns, and it is best not to get more than one cutting a season.

Since kudzu can easily be eradicated, there is no danger of its ever becoming a pest. While the vines will over-grow trees in jungle fashion if left alone, the plant can easily be kept in bounds by making a trip around the forest border three or four times in

### Farm Fruit Budget Told By Niswonger

H. H. Niswonger, horticulturist of the State College Extension Service, says every member of a farm family should not only eat the proverbial "apple a day to keep the doctor away," but also should have a fruit budget for the year.

He recommends 12 pounds of dried fruit, 24 quarts of canned fruits, and five pints of jelly for each member of the family.

the summer with a drag harrow.

To help farm people fill their fruit budgets, the horticulturist makes the following suggestions about cultivation and fertilizing: Spray your apple and peach trees in order to have fruit comparatively free from worms and other insects.

Fertilize bearing grape vines with one to two pounds of a 6-7-5 commercial fertilizer per vine. Stable or chicken manure is also good. Do not apply fertilizer or manure close to the vine. Thin out the bearing raspberry rows so that the remaining canes will be three to every foot of row. Fertilize the raspberries which are bearing with manure or two

pounds of manure of manure per 100-foot row. Newly set grape vines, raspberries, and strawberry plants should be fertilized with manure or one tablespoonful of sulfate of soda per plant. Apply in a ring at a distance of one foot from the plant. Cut each grape vine and berry plant to a few inches above the ground, leaving several buds. Care should be exercised in hoeing young raspberry plants so as not to cut off the new shoots that develop from the roots at the base of the plants. A garden weeder is better than a hoe to pulverize the soil around the base of the plants.

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### Erosion Control By Kudzu Plants

The story of how an ornamental plant was transformed into a major field crop in the Southeast in less than a decade is told in Farmers' Bulletin No. 1840—"Kudzu for Erosion Control in the Southeast"—recently issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The bulletin, written by R. Y. Bailey, senior agronomist of the Soil Conservation Service, also tells how a stand of kudzu may be established for producing palatable hay and forage. Farmers in Wilkes County may obtain copies of the bulletin by writing to the Soil Conservation Service, Spartanburg, S. C.

Kudzu is described in the bulletin as a "heavy duty plant" especially adapted to soil and climatic conditions of the Southeast. It grows vigorously on eroded land, produces a dense ground cover to protect the surface of the soil against beating rains, restores fertility on eroded areas by adding organic matter and nitrogen, maintains a stand of plants over a long period of years without replanting, and produces palatable hay and forage.

Introduced from Japan some 50 years ago, kudzu was commonly known as "porch vine" and used largely as a shade, though there was limited use of the plant for hay, grazing, and roadside protection. Since the beginning of erosion control projects under the Soil Conservation Service, however, land devoted to kudzu has increased to more than 40,000 acres.

Kudzu is a deciduous, viney legume which grows from cross buds and buds at the nodes of the vines. The vines often reach a growth of 50 feet or more during a single growing season. The plant grows rapidly during spring and summer, its roots often penetrating to a depth of three feet or more. The large leaves drop with the first frost to form a spongy-like layer of absorptive material.

While the plant will grow anywhere south of Maryland, kudzu is not well adapted to low, marshy lands; poorly drained areas of the more acid soils; or to the Black Belt of Alabama and Mississippi.

Kudzu is ideally suited for the reclamation of critical slopes—badly eroded, "break-off" slopes, such as the lower sides of old bench terraces—occurring in cultivated fields.

"There is a need on most southeastern farms," the bulletin states, "for an abundance of cheap forage. Kudzu makes hay of excellent quality; its feeding value is as high as that of alfalfa. It produces larger yields than most annual plants commonly grown for hay and has the distinct advantage of not requiring soil preparation and planting every year and it is not seriously affected by seasonal droughts."

The Alabama Experiment Station has developed a single attachment for the end of the cutter bar of the mowing machine which greatly simplifies mowing kudzu, and the hay can easily be raked with an ordinary dump rake. The hay cures rapidly and can be stored like other hay. Kudzu should never be overgrazed.

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