



Charles Dickens' immortal story comes to the Screen!

The Cast

Robert Newton, Bill Sikes
Alec Guinness, Fagin
Kay Walsh, Nancy
Francis L. Sullivan, Mr. Bumble
Henry Stephenson, Mr. Brownlow
Mary Clare, Mrs. Corney
John Howard Davies, Oliver Twist
Josephine Stuart, Oliver's Mother
Henry Edwards, Police Official
Ralph Truman, Monks
Anthony Newley, The Artful Dodger
Hattie Jacques and Betty Paul, Singers
of "Three Cripples"
Kenneth Downy, Workhouse Master
Gibb McLaughlin, Mr. Sowerberry
Kathleen Harrison, Mrs. Sowerberry
Amy Veness, Mrs. Bedwin
W. G. Fay, Banker
Maurice Dehnam, Chief of Police
Frederick Lloyd, Mr. Grimshaw
Ivor Barnard, Chairman of the Board
Deldre Doyle, Mrs. Thengumny
Eddie Martin, Annie
Fay Middleton, Martha
Diana Dors, Charlotte
Michael Dean, Noah Claypole
Gravelley Edwards, Mr. Fong
Peter Bull, Landlord of "Three Cripples"
John Patter, Charlie Bates
Maurice Jones, Workhouse Doctor

J. Arthur Rank Presents

OLIVER TWIST

By Charles Dickens

Starring

ROBERT NEWTON

ALEC GUINNESS KAY WALSH
FRANCIS L. SULLIVAN

with

Henry Stephenson

and introducing

JOHN HOWARD DAVIES as OLIVER TWIST



BILL SIKES

OLIVER TWIST

FAGIN

New Zealand premiere—

REGENT - CHRISTCHURCH - SOON

to be followed by "exclusive extended Seasons" at

REGENT - WELLINGTON

CENTURY - AUCKLAND

Film Reviews, by Jno.

CHEZ BLANDINGS

MR. BLANDINGS BUILDS HIS DREAM HOUSE

(RKO-Radio)

MR. BLANDINGS, Etc., is the film version of a novel I have not read, by an author whose name at the moment escapes me, but anyone who has dipped occasionally in the main currents of contemporary humour (both British and American) will find in it much that is familiar. When Anthony Armstrong bought a country place on the profits of *Ten-Minute Alibi*, and recouped his incidental losses by writing *Cottage Into House*, he anticipated a good many of the exasperating but comic situations in which Mr. Blandings finds himself. Parts of the story, too, reminded me of a hilarious sketch by Cornelia Otis Skinner, which appeared a year or two ago in the *New Yorker*; there is a scene featuring a bathroom medicine-cabinet which might have been the second instalment of a well-known Benchley piece; and the dialogue is occasionally reminiscent of S. J. Perelman. If all that suggests that Mr. Blandings is fairly good fun the suggestion is not far from the truth.

Like a good deal of what passes for fun to-day, of course, it is not 24-carat humour. It is somewhat wry satire, the frustrated comedy of man at odds with his environment which, in this technological age, seems to have usurped the place of the simpler humour of earlier and less complicated times. Humour in this particular defensive sense is, of course, not purely 20th Century—Beaumarchais's Figaro hastened to laugh at everything for fear of being obliged to weep at it—but so far as the creator of Mr. Blandings is concerned the wheels of his invention (to borrow Thurber's phrase) are set in motion by the damp hand of melancholy. And very topical melancholy at that.

Naturally our enjoyment of Mr. Blandings's frustrations will depend largely upon the extent to which we can relate them to our own misfortunes, and since housing is his prime preoccupation the film starts off with an initial advantage. I thought it started off very well.

First of all there are a few lines of caustic commentary on the joys of life in New York: the smooth efficiency of its transportation system (shot of the subway at the rush-hour), the "leisurely gracious living encountered in its sidewalk cafes" (swift cut to a crowded hamburger joint), the delightful variety of its climate (a newsclip from last winter's blizzard). Then we are introduced to the Blandings apartment—the first New York apartment I can recall seeing on the screen where the rooms didn't run to about a quarter of an acre apiece. Quite the contrary, in fact, for space chez Blandings is at a premium. The premium isn't so high as in most New Zealand homes, I should say—Mr. B's two small daughters appear to have an adequate room to themselves, and there is a large cook accommodated elsewhere, but the parallel is close enough to be enjoyable. The family spend a good deal of time edging round furniture which is just a shade too big for the rooms, the wardrobes and closets are so full of odds and ends that it's a

BAROMETER

FAIR: "Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House."

MAINLY FAIR: "White Cradle Inn."

OVERCAST: "So Evil My Love."

hazardous business trying to get anything out of them, and the bathroom medicine cabinet is so full of junk that it can't be closed and daren't be opened.

Life in the Blandings apartment, in fact, is a good illustration of the ancient truth that it's not the Slings and Arrows of Outrageous Fortune that really get us down, it's the trifling pea-shooting trivialities—the toothpaste tube squeezed at the wrong end, the lost socks, the mussed-up morning paper.

So far so good. We can laugh wryly with Mr. B., and sympathise comfortably. But when he suddenly decides that he has had enough, takes the plunge into the Connecticut countryside and buys an ancient farmhouse and 35 acres (more or less) the story moves a bit outside our experience and thenceforward we laugh at Mr. Blandings—but with a mixture of envy, for it has become more or less a fairy story. However, it isn't a bad one, there are plenty more embarrassments (though at several thousand dollars a time that is perhaps hardly the word for them) and Cary Grant and Myrna Loy are just the people to make the most of them.

And, of course, in spite of all the embarrassments the dream house finally does get built, and they move in, and live happily ever after with umpteen bedrooms and three bathrooms and 35 acres (more or less). As the curtain fell on all the smiling Blandings faces I felt that only Mr. Chad could supply the final comment—"Wot, no mortgage?"

WHITE CRADLE INN

(London Films-British Lion)

WHITE Cradle Inn is a pleasant enough little picture to look at, but not such a successful one from the dramatic point of view. The setting of the story is Switzerland, and the exterior scenes were all faithfully shot in one of the high alpine valleys or on the flanks of adjoining peaks, but the mountains are not really an essential element in the story—except towards the end when they are more or less dragged in to provide a cheap, easy solution for the emotional problem which the scriptwriters have got themselves involved in.

This is rather a pity, for the emotional problem is sufficiently removed from the commonplace to be worthy of better treatment than it gets. There is a conventional enough framework to the plot in the triangular relationship between Madeleine Carroll, the proprietress of the White Cradle Inn, her shiftless ne'er-do-well of a husband (Michael Rennie) and the village doctor (Ian Hunter), but there is a complicating factor in the person of a small boy, a French war orphan who has come to the inn as an evacuee and made a place for himself in the woman's affections which her husband cannot or will not

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