



THE OTHER MAN: Leslie Howard (seen here with Vivien Leigh) was an obvious choice for the part of the intellectual Ashley Wilkes

with waste, soaked with kerosene and set alight, while technicolour cameras ground away.

Scarlett is Found

In the light of the dying flames Myron Selznick, Hollywood's biggest agent, stepped up to his brother and introduced a young British actress by the name of Vivien Leigh. "Dave," said Myron, "I want you to meet Scarlett O'Hara."

Vivien Leigh was born in Darjeeling, India in 1913, and spent the first five years of her life in Calcutta. She was educated in London, studied dramatics, married a barrister by the name of Leigh Holman and had a child. After an early picture, "The Mask of Virtue," she had small parts in "Storm in a Tea Cup," "Fire Over England," "Dark Journey," "St. Martin's Lane," and "A Yank at Oxford." While playing in a later picture ("21 Days Together") she met Laurence Olivier, to whom, after both had been granted divorces, she was recently married.

Though many people were alarmed at the idea of an English girl playing Scarlett, most Southerners, according to the American news-magazine "Time," were relieved. Their real fear was that a damyankee girl would be given the part.

More and More Trouble

George Cukor began directing "Gone with the Wind" in January, 1939, and encountered trouble almost at once. Selznick was not satisfied that Cukor had the big "feel" of the picture and thought he worked too slowly.

Cukor having resigned, Selznick called in Gable, and offered him a choice of directors from a list of four. Gable chose his old friend Victor Fleming, who had done good directorial jobs with such "problem" pictures as "The Crowd Roars," "The Great Waltz" and "The Wizard of Oz," and had also directed such money-makers as "Captains Courageous" and "Test Pilot." Fleming started work immediately, and drove his team hard.

Various interesting tales circulated during the next few months concerning quarrels, differences of opinion and outbursts of temperament in the company. Fleming and Vivien Leigh quarrelled frequently, it was said, their main point of difference being the interpretation of the character of Scarlett. Fleming thought Cukor had taken the "guts" out of the part. Vivien Leigh wanted it left as Cukor had visualised it.

In addition, there was continued dissatisfaction with the script, and valuable time was wasted while it was written and rewritten on the set. Fleming was at one point reduced to such a condition that he confessed afterwards he had thought seriously of driving his car over a cliff. Instead, he went to bed for a week, and left Sam Wood (who directed "Goodbye, Mr. Chips") to carry on.

Finished at Last

The actual shooting of "Gone with the Wind" was finished early in July, 1939. Now came the job of cutting the 225,000 feet of film (altogether 475,000 feet has been exposed) to a picture short enough to be exhibited. Fleming and Selznick worked day and night taking out, putting in, taking out, putting in, until they had a version of "Gone with the Wind" that would run for just under four hours. Said Selznick the night before the Hollywood preview: "At noon I think it's divine, at midnight I think it's lousy."

But the real test by then lay with the public and the result has made cinema history.

High Jinks at Atlanta

With customary Hollywood strategy, the world premiere of "Gone with the



OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND, as the gentle Melanie. Another popular choice from the start

governors of five States. Belle of the ball, of course, was Vivien Leigh, who everybody agreed looked just like Scarlett O'Hara. Clark Gable was surrounded by hundreds of giggling young women, one of whom looked at him too long, gasped, "Lord, I can't stand this any longer" and fainted. Given an alternative of a fat Christmas present or meeting Gable, an 11-year-old girl chose Gable.



AT THE SIEGE OF ATLANTA: Scarlett O'Hara searches among the dead and wounded Southerners for the body of her lover

Wind" was held at Atlanta, where State-wide holidays and city festivals were proclaimed in honour of the occasion. Public feeling was at such a pitch that the mayor of Atlanta had to warn citizens not to tear off the clothes of visiting movie stars, as had happened in Kansas at the premiere of "Dodge City."

Highlight of the celebrations prior to the screening was a "Gone with the Wind" costume ball, attended by 6,000 merry-makers, including movie stars and executives by the hundred and the

When he kissed her she asked, "Now am I a woman?"

Absent from the ball was Margaret Mitchell, the novelist, who is shy of publicity and has declared that she will never write again.

Applause and Awards

As well as endorsing the choice of Vivien Leigh as Scarlett O'Hara, American picturegoers subsequently also endorsed their own choice of Gable as

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TWO ACADEMY AWARD WINNERS: Vivien Leigh's performance was voted the best by a woman star last year, Hattie McDaniel's as "Mammy" the best by a supporting actress