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STA-BLOND THE BLONDE'S OWN SHAMPOO



Film Reviews By G.M.

SPEAKING CANDIDLY

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(Universal)

ACCORDING to Nancy Evans (Irene Dunne), the life of every woman contains a piece of unfinished business, and until she can get it tidied up, she isn't likely to be happy. In her case, it was a blitzkrieg romance with a rich philanderer (Preston Foster), who kissed her passionately two or three times when, as an innocent country girl, she travelled by train to New

York. At the station he politely raised his hat and disappeared.

Without wishing to doubt the lady's account of the incident, one must comment that two or three kisses on a train are hardly enough to justify all the frustration and inhibition and heart-break that go to make up the rest of this story. Rather conveniently, Nancy manages to get herself married to the philanderer's nice brother (Robert Montgomery), but then she insists on making both their lives miserable by trying to tie up the loose ends of the railroad romance. Not until he has joined the army in disgust, and she has had a baby in secret, is she able to make her husband understand the peculiar significance of her mental attitude. She is more successful with him than she was with me: it was all a bit too psychological and subtle for this dimwitted critic.

However, *Unfinished Business* is by no means without merit, not in its theme so much as in its incidentals. Much of the by-play is really amusing, as when the heroine, with ambitions to be an opera singer, finds the only outlet for her talent in singing birthday greetings *ad nauseam* over the telephone. And the film does admirably illustrate the cinema's special happy knack of being able to introduce subsidiary characters who wander on to the screen and then wander off again, having contributed little to the actual development of the plot, but a great deal to the entertainment. For instance, I have just as clear impressions of three unimportant people—Walter Catlett, the nightclub impresario who hires the heroine as his lyrical 'phone girl, Eugene Pallette, the butler with squeaky boots and a perpetual grievance, and the unknown actress who plays Montgomery's aunt—as I have of the two principals. For this and one or two other examples of imaginative direction, I pay tribute to Gregory La Cava, but he is guilty of at least one howling cliché—the baby in the final scene. Why not a black cat instead? Now, that would really have meant something, as you'll doubtless realise if you've seen the picture.

But my main complaint is that the whole jolly business—and it often is jolly—is such an unconscionable time a' finishing.

IN THE NAVY

(Universal)

WHEN I reviewed *Buck Privates*, the first Abbott-Costello comedy to reach New Zealand, I remarked that it was good fun, but rather difficult to say why. And now that *In the Navy* has arrived (with all the inevitability of American comedy cycles), I again find it a little difficult to say, not why I laughed, but why I laughed so much. Most of the jokes are Mark 1, and the situations in general are as old as Charlie Chaplin, but they go over. I might add that I was one of a thin lunch-hour house, and even that had little dampening effect, so presumably Messrs. Abbott and Costello are good entertainers. The film may lack some of the pristine sparkle of its predecessor, but it is good workmanlike

Tours By Famous Artists

DETAILS of the first portion of the itineraries of both Harold Williams and Ignaz Friedman are now available. Mr. Williams' first broadcast will be from Station 1YA at 8.2 p.m. on Tuesday, November 18, this being followed by further broadcasts at 8.9 p.m. on the following Thursday at 9.25 p.m. on the Friday, and on November 24 and 26. He will give a patriotic concert in the Auckland Town Hall on Thursday, November 27, and will then leave for Wellington. Harold Williams was one of the artists who contributed to a recent "Victory Show" broadcast over 97 Commercial stations throughout Australia, which raised nearly £200,000 for patriotic purposes. He sang the prologue to "Pagliacci," "Ride, Cossack, Ride," and an aria from "Otello." Ignaz Friedman, the distinguished Polish pianist, will make his first broadcast from the 2YA studio on Sunday, November 23, this being followed by a patriotic concert, which will be broadcast, in the Wellington Town Hall on the following Tuesday. Further details of his itinerary will be published in next week's "Listener."

entertainment, and in one or two scenes, such as that in which Abbott relieves Costello of his payroll by an old confidence trick, it is pretty close to first-class farce.

The Andrews Sisters are in the cast again, and as if they weren't enough, Messrs. Dick Powell and Foran also relieve their feelings (but not mine), in song. I could have done with the humour without the harmony, but probably Universal didn't have me solely in view during production. Nevertheless, I was satisfied on the whole, and shall be pleased to meet A. and C. again when they join the Air Force.

NEW WINE

(United Artists)

SCHUBERT'S life story has, for Bohemian romance, seldom been equalled among composers. Penniless throughout his days, he lived on the charity of his friends—poets, artists, musicians—and spent his evenings with them at Bogner's coffee house or the Green Anchor. Sometimes he would hold a party—Schubertiaden they came to be called—or would play his works to an admiring circle at the home of one of his many well-known friends. Although he often used to sit alone, glum and brooding, his companions were many, and some of them, like Vogl, the baritone, famous in contemporary society.

Schubert lived in a circle of brilliant people, but he was poor enough to be content with the hum-drum happenings of the less gifted. There was so much reality in his life that it was as full of comedy and pathos as his music is full

(Continued on next page)

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