

# HE HADN'T FORGOTTEN

*Wellington Theatre Manager*

*Establishes Link With*

*Great Hollywood Director*

A "Record" Interview

by

ROGER HOLDEN

**A** SATURDAY night in Hammersmith, West London, twenty-six years ago . . . A typical Saturday night audience at the weekly concert of the Hampshire House Social Club . . .

On the stage two young men, one dressed in kilts and singing Scottish comic songs, not too brilliantly—the other in the wings waiting his turn to sing some of the light romantic ballads so popular twenty-six years or so ago . . .

One of those young men was Alec Regan, now manager of the Majestic Theatre, Wellington.

The other, the one in kilts, was Frank Lloyd, now one of Hollywood's most outstanding directors—the maker of "Mutiny on the Bounty," "Cavalcade," "Lloyds of London" and "Wells Fargo."

**A**LEC REGAN has never forgotten those far-off days in Hammersmith, when he and Frank Lloyd were starting their theatrical careers together, when they sang songs at Saturday night concerts in return for the princely sum of 5/- each. Sometimes—a special occasion—they received 7/6.

He thought, however, that Frank Lloyd might have forgotten. A man who has climbed as far and as high as Lloyd has climbed sometimes likes to forget the days before he was famous.

But Frank Lloyd is not that type. A few weeks ago in Hollywood he received a visit from Phil Maddock, general manager of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in New Zealand. Mr. Maddock, who was on a visit to his company's studios, brought him a letter which Alec Regan had written in Wellington.

Mr. Regan had been diffident about writing that letter. He need not have worried, because Frank Lloyd was delighted to receive it. Memory, once aroused, needed little coaxing, and he recalled with pleasure the time when he and Alec Regan had earned their five shillings a night. He was only sorry that Mr. Maddock had not brought a photograph of Alec as well as a letter, so that he could see what his former colleague looked like now, 26 years after.

So that Alec could not have the same complaint Lloyd gave Mr. Maddock his photograph to bring back to New Zealand. Autographed by the famous director, it now



*IN HOLLYWOOD.—Phil Maddock, M.-G.-M.'s N.Z. chief, brings the famous director, Frank Lloyd, a letter from Alec Regan.*

occupies pride of place on the manager's desk in the Majestic Theatre, Wellington. . . .

**F**RANK LLOYD not only talked over old times with Mr. Maddock. He also discussed the future. He is at present with Paramount, his latest film being "Wells Fargo," but he has the idea to come to Australia and make a picture about Captain Bligh when he was Governor of New South Wales. Indeed, it is rather more than an idea with Lloyd; it might almost be said to be an ambition. Apparently he is so certain that the subject is a good one for filming that he is even willing to put up some of the money for the project himself, if necessary. And he hopes that Charles Laughton may again be induced to play Captain Bligh, as he did in Lloyd's M.-G.-M. production, "Mutiny on the Bounty."

**I**NCIDENTALLY, what Phil Maddock told me the other day rather bears out what Doug. Snelling said last week about the difficulty of getting into Hollywood. Although Mr. Maddock was more or less on an official visit to the film capital, it wasn't easy to meet Frank Lloyd so that he could present Alec Regan's letter.

"Trying to contact a producer in Hollywood is probably harder than trying to get into Heaven," says Mr. Maddock.

Many things impressed Mr. Maddock on his visit, including the beauty and charm of California, but nothing seems to have fired his imagination more than the marvellous collection of "props" for films at the M.-G.-M. studios at Culver City. There you can find the fetsam and jetsam of a thousand past pictures, but among the relics is a very great deal of material that will come in useful again.

The property building occupies a large area, and is eight stories high. The contents of each floor is classified. For instance, on one you find period furniture, on another nothing but office furnishings. On a third floor there is nothing but pianos, and so on.

Adrian's department where they make the dresses for M.-G.-M. films—probably the best-dressed films of all—would send any normal woman in raptures. There are yards and yards of cloth and fabric of every description—the whole being worth a fabulous price. "One thing Hollywood cannot fake is dress materials," says (Continued on page 45).

Twenty-Six Years After