

Cinema Comments

COURIER'S CURRENT CINEMA COMMENTS

By JOHN SPRINGER

Fights are the order of the day in the movies this week. To lead them off is a revival of that most famous of movie brawls in "The Spoilers." Less gory and extensive but lively displays anyway occur between Van Heflin and Tom Conway in "Grand Central Murder" and between four youngsters in "On the Sunny Side." The brief set-to between Richard Arlen and Philip Terry in "Torpedo Boat" is almost lost in the shuffle and Joan Crawford has only minor struggles with Melvyn Douglas in "They All Kissed the Bride." "This Above All" has only a skirmish between Tyrone Power and a farmer, but the background concerns the biggest fight of all.

"This Above All"—A-2

I'm sure I should have been a great deal more impressed with "This Above All." The novel, by Eric Knight was the first best-selling novel about the Second World War and 20th Century-Fox has not stinted on the pretentious production. Yet although it is a good love story very well acted, I can't look upon it as a particularly telling drama of the effect of the war on the people of England.

Perhaps my fault was reading the book. For, as the movie stands, it is a frequently moving love story but the real meat of the novel has been cut. The hell of Dunkirk and Clyde Brigg's bitterness over class consciousness are merely mentioned and other important elements of the novel are entirely eliminated. What is left is just the love story—but "This Above All" as a novel, was more than a love story.

The acting is high-grade, throughout, although it is a shame to see fine actors like Nigel Bruce, Sara Allgood, Gladys Cooper, Philip Morivale, Alexander Knox, Jill Esmond, and even Thomas Mitchell playing such very minor roles. It is to Tyrone Power and Joan Fontaine that the burden of the acting falls and they are both fully able to handle it.

Power has not been so well cast for many pictures and he gives one of his best screen performances, even though the role has been considerably simplified for the screen. Miss Fontaine again plays with the warmth and depth that have characterized her exceptional performances in the past. Anatole Litvak's direction is superior.

"They All Kissed the Bride"—B

It seems that into the life of every hard, efficient business woman will come a whimsical fellow to teach her the old proverb about "All work and no play." This time, she is Joan Crawford and Melvyn Douglas who has played so many of these things he could probably do them in his sleep—is the play-boy. The picture, "They All Kissed the Bride," is a trivial little comedy piece—another of those buff's that you forget a few minutes after you leave the theater, but which maintains a fair quota of laughs while it is going on. The picture is inclined to lean over backwards in an attempt to be as racy as the Hays office allows. Roland Young, Billie Burke and Allen Jenkins, have roles that are not worthy of their ability.

"The Spoilers"—A-2

"The Spoilers" is a pretty old baby now and it's lost a lot of its oomph. Oldsters, with excellent memories, may recall the first film version of the Rex Beach novel—a picture which starred William Farnum (who has a bit in this version), Tom Santschi and Kathryn Williams. Two other versions—a silent with Milton Sills, Noah Beery and Anna Q. Nilsson, and a talkie with Gary Cooper, William Boyd and Betty Compson—have been made since then.

New Marlene Dietrich plays Cherry Malotte, the dance hall hostess with the heart of gold, while John Wayne and Randolph Scott are the gentlemen who go into the famous fight. The Farnum-Santschi fight made movie history and each successive "Spoilers" tries to outdo the last in duration and goring of its particular fight scene. Wayne and Scott put up a bloody battle here as the highlight of a film that is otherwise pretty ordinary and even seems strangely lacking in action.

(Continued on Page 16)

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