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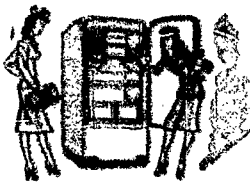
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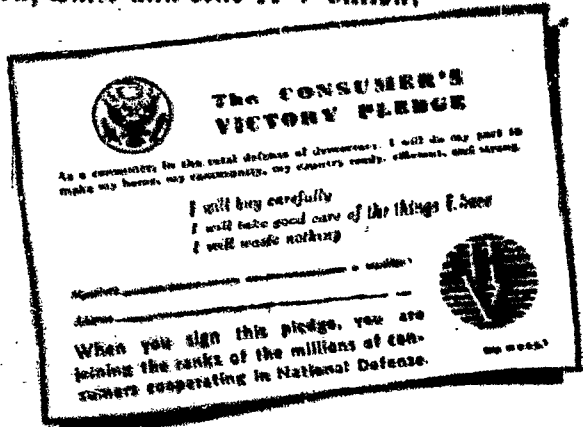


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Cinema Comments

(Continued from Page 5)

as Win. Dame May Whitty plays the doughty coverage with her veteran's artistry and there is notable work by Harry Travers, Bronia Parbes, Helmut Dantine, Henry Wilcoxon and every member of the supporting cast.

"Mrs. Miniver" is sentimental, but never sloppy, it is moving, but never tear-jerking, it has its gentle comedy, but none that does not belong. It is a picture that has dignity and courage and heroism. It is one of the few pictures that can truly be called "inspiring."

"The Magnificent Ambersons" —A-2

Between the extraordinary "Mrs. Miniver" and another important picture, "The Magnificent Ambersons," I was able to get back to normal with a something called "Private Buckaroo." By that time, I was back in the mood for another movie masterpiece. "Magnificent Ambersons," however, is something less than that.

Booth Tarkington's study of the decline of a first family of a small town won a Pulitzer Prize a few years ago. Orson Welles has given it the expected striking treatment but the picture is steeped in unrelieved gloom and the pettiness of one spoiled young man seems hardly adequate basis for a drama that would be meaningful today. Contrasting Welles' direction with the direction of William Wyler, for example, shows Wyler interested in firmly establishing his characters as real people, unconcerned with special effects or new techniques of production. Welles, on the other hand, concentrates on new ways of using the cinema medium, but forgets characterization and makes little attempt to establish sympathy for his characters.

The photography is striking and so is Welles' introduction of his story and of the characters; the painstaking development of the atmosphere, the lifelike handling of dialogue; the dramatic use of whispers and shadows. You will also get a chuckle out of a couple of minor Welles conceits. For example, when Joseph Cotten is reading a newspaper, next to the item he reads is a drama by Jed Leland. "Jed Leland" if you remember, was Cotten's role in "Citizen Kane." When Tim Holt walks by a nickelodeon, the movie advertised stars Jack Holt Jack Holt, in case you didn't know, is Tim Holt's father.

The picture has been well cast, save in the case of young Holt. The role of the self-centered son needed a really exceptional actor to make it real and Holt, though he does as possible within his limitations, is not up to the difficult role. Anne Baxter, however, again shows what a talented and charming young actress he is and Joseph Cotten is an excellent, untheatrical actor. Ray Collins, Dolores Costello, Richard Bennett and Erskine Sanford make the most of their few opportunities. Agnes Moorehead gives the outstanding performance as poor, foolish Fanny, although the role, as written, is inclined to make the character exasperating rather than pitiable.

It seems hardly necessary to say that "Magnificent Ambersons" is an unsatisfying film. But there is so much in it that is so very fine that it is definitely worth seeing, even though one regrets that Welles' second movie is not a more

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satisfactory successor to the brilliant "Citizen Kane."

(John Springer does a new type of Movie Memory this Monday at 10 A. M. over WSAW. For the first

time, he reminisces about a screen musical — the Irene Dunne-Rogers and Astaire operetta, "Roberta" — and features selections from the Jerome Kern score in addition to the usual commentary.)



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