START SIX NEW FILMS

With six new pictures starting before the cameras, production schedules at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer this week neared peak activity. William Powell and Myrna Loy were reunited in a gay romantic comedy, "I Love You Again," under direction of W. S. Van Dyke II. Lawrence Weingarten produces with the cast including Frank McHugh, Edmund Lowe and Donald Douglas.


Shearer-Taylor Co-Starrer Set
For Early Start

The Ethel Vance best-seller, "Escape," will be brought to the screen intact without any changes in the original narrative. Director Mervyn LeRoy announced this week, as plans were completed for an early production start with Norma Shearer as the Countess von Treck and Robert Taylor as Mark Preyssing. Tests are now in progress for the much-coveted role of the mother, Emmy Ritter; for the General, and for Dr. Ditter, who aids in Emmy's escape. As much care will be exercised in selecting the right players for these characters as was used in casting "Came With The Wind." LeRoy declared. Lawrence Weingarten will produce the picture.

Douglas to Write 'Kildare' Story

Lloyd C. Douglas, famous author of "The Magnificent Obsession," "White Banners" and "Disputed Passage," was signed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer this week to write an original story for the "Dr. Kildare" series. One of the foremost among American novelists, he not only has seen each book become a best-seller, but has had the added fame of their box office success as screen hits.

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER
STUDIO NEWS
APRIL 23, 1940
Press Acclaim for Turner, Blondell, Murphy, in '2Girls'  

Enthusiastic acclaim greeted Lana Turner, Joan Blondell and George Murphy at the preview of "Two Girls On Broadway" at Los Angeles’ Westwood Village Theatre. Newspaper reviewers unani-
mously agreed on Miss Turner’s box-office appeal, one writer declaring that "not since Clara Bow took the world by storm has there been anyone so young and fresh and good to look at and to dance! All in all 'Two Girls On Broadway' is a clever picture with good entertainment and several catchy song numbers. S. Sylvan Simon on the screen play for the directing, and Jack Cummings deserves a word of praise for the production."

DAILY VARIETY—"Two Girls On Broadway" is the smartest of the current opening releases. It is a well-balanced story of the smart showcasing it provides Lana Turner. Breezy, lifting, it is well-balanced with heart interest, comedy, song and dance. The picture will hold its own on any well-regarded bill."

DAILY REPORTER—"Made to order for audiences of all types. It packs a wallop in both the musical and dramatic departments and boasts grand performances by every member of the cast. Producer Jack Cummings has blended all his ingredients in excellent fashion and the result is a musical production that will leave audiences asking for more of its kind. Lana Turner will continue to gain popularity with her splendid trouping and fine exhibition of dancing. Stun-
ningly gowned for her big dance number she unusually ovalizes with that call "Oomph."

EDWIN SCHALLERT, LOS ANGELES TIMES—"Better bet your life."

Interesting to find Nacio Herb Brown supplying the leading melodious number . . . Harry Revel and Ted Fetter provide another tune . . . George Murphy is turn-
ing his screen dancing into a fine art and he has a deft partner. Miss Turner plays her role capably and Miss Blondell is effec-
tive."

Ruskin Awarded Writer Contract

Harry Ruskin, who is at present work-
ing with Willis Goldbeck and Carey Wil-
son on the next "Dr. Kildeare," has been signed to a new long-
term contract by M-G-M.

Singer Signs Film And Stage Tickets

Virginia O’Brien, whose distinctive style of "blues" singing won her local stage prominence overnight, has been placed under long-term contract by M-G-M, and will start there following an engagement in New York in "Keep Off the Grass."
Old West's Final Caravan Blazes Own Last Trail

Historic relics of pioneer Western days, when fortunes were made and lives sacrificed under the blazing sun of Nevada's Death Valley, two of the original twenty-mule borax wagons which hauled their loads from Furnace Creek to Mojave in the 1890's and early 1900's are making history as they roll eastward on their final cross-country tour enroute to the New York World's Fair.

This is the first time that the wagons have made such a trek since 1917, when they left Oakland, California, on a similar mission, driven by "Borax Bill," famous muleskinner of Old Death Valley Days.

The property of the Pacific Coast Borax Company, the wagons in recent years have been on exhibit at the railroad depot in Barstow, California, but were recently reconditioned for M-G-M's "20 Mule Team," in which Wallace Beery plays the role of the muleskinner, and Leo Carrillo plays his Indian "swamper," Piute Pete.

The wagon "train" consists of two wagons, each weighing 8000 pounds and capable of hauling 30,000 pounds of borax, and a steel water tank of 1220 gallons capacity. The water was needed for man and beast on the 182-mile haul.

After their showing at the New York Fair, it is expected that the wagons, which are unchanged from their original state except for a set of new steel tires on the eighty-four wheels, will be turned over to the Henry Ford exhibit at Dearborn, Michigan.

Wagons Last Load
As Railroad Ends
Its Famed Career

After more than forty years of service, the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad recently went out of commission, carrying, as its last freight load, the selfsame twenty-mule team wagons which it originally replaced.

Metro - Goldwyn - Mayer. Filming "20 Mule Team," set at the old borax mining days, with Wallace Beery, Marjorie Rambeau and Leo Carrillo, took two of the original wagons and their accompanying water tank to Death Valley for location work on the picture in the original locale. And needing railroad sequences for the final episodes, the company filmed them near Death Valley junction. Then, because it was necessary to ship the wagons back to the Culver City studio, they were placed on the last freight train ever to leave the junction.

Beery Visits Grave

Wallace Beery, playing the role of muleskinner Bill Bragg in M-G-M's "20 Mule Team," while on location at Death Valley, drove the grave of Jim Dayton, borax wagon driver who died of thirst in the Valley while trying to free his mules from their harness so that they could save themselves.

Camel Hoof Print Found

One of Director Richard Thorpe's memorials of this historic trip to Death Valley for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "20 Mule Team" is an imprint of a camel's hoof, reported by geologists to be approximately 15,000,000 years old.

Kansas City Proves Exploitation Trek Top Sensation

The Mules Are On Their Way!

That the appearance of the original Death Valley borax fields equipment with the twenty mules from the motion picture, "20 Mule Team," can be promoted into a civic event is proved by the splendid campaign staged by Harry Loud, from the studio exploitation department, Captain Volney Phifer, Bill Ferguson's right hand man from the New York office, and Irving Waterstreet, exploitation director in the Kansas City territory. Here is what Kansas City DID and you can duplicate and, very likely, improve upon:

Newspapers

Week prior the Kansas City Journal broke with announcement and followed up with ad day of arrival of the equipment and mules from the Coast. Advance stories were carried covering announcement of the parade.

Through the Journal promotion department (Midland Cook) tied into the solid page of art which broke day before the parade. Page carried routine of parade and colorful Death Valley copy.

Advertising Newspapers

Pacific Coast Borax Company tied in with all stores. Advertisers breaking with ad day of appearance. All chain stores covered through newspaper advertising copy in ads.

Displays

Katz and Crown chain stores all featured windows in their down-town drug stores. Independents also tied in with windows. 200 grocery stores including AP, Milburns used 17½x22 cards with parade announcement imprinted.

Schools

With announcements on bulletin boards at high schools.

Radio

Radio station WHB (Mutual) covered the parade from the start via traveling short wave unit truck with dispatch and interviews with Curley Eagles and Capt. Phifer. Advance announcements 2 days prior also carried in spot form on regular happenings of the day program.

Trailers

Loew's Midland used (2) weeks in advance spotted in program.

Parade

Approximately 2 mile route starting at 10 a.m. With approximately 70 boys and girls on horseback in Western cowboy attire, lent colorful atmosphere to the spectacle. One unit the Roy Knapp Rough Riders consisted of 30 directly in front of the mule team. Police motorcycle escort (24) in all led the procession. Directly following the wagons 40 riders of the Wyandotte group all boys and girls on ponies and in western cowboy outfits completed the parade.

If you are on the line of march of the 20 Mule Team Caravan, if your city is listed in the itinerary—start laying your plans now ... today. This is M-G-M's biggest national exploitation stunt. Remember ... there will be not another appearance of these famous wagons in your city. That era of transportation is gone from the colorful West ... the borax wagons are on their way to the World's Fair and then they are to be placed in the Museum of Transportation at Henry Ford's Greenfield Village. This is your last chance.
Here's the West...the Real West — Amazing Death Valley—the Roaring Story of the Men Who Hauled the Precious White Crystals...Borax...Across 165 Miles of Heat and Rock and Sand...of Bleaching Bones and Sudden Death...of Drama and Excitement—for At the End Lay...Mojave—Wide Open and Wild!

THE MULES ARE COMING...YES...20 OF 'EM...RIGHT FROM DEATH VALLEY THEY CAME WAY ACROSS COUNTRY IN THE BIGGEST EXPLOITATION CARAVAN IN YEARS — 20

(See story and route of the caravan in this issue of the Studio News...get busy now—contact your de...
STAR VALUE...IN CAST...IN STORY IDEA--IN THE VARIOUS...COLORFUL COUNTRY IN WHICH IT WAS MADE...BIG IN EXPLOITATION POSSIBILITIES!

GIT 'LONG YOU LOD EARED CACTUS BURNERS!
RENT...stakin' 20 miles across the desert...
RENT...stakin' 10,000 pounds of borax...and creatin' every part of the Wild West way...in Roaring Death Valley Days when fabulous fortunes were made overnight...and Missing sons decided who got it!

20 MULE TEAM
FILMED WHERE THE SUN MEETS THE DESERT IN COLORFUL SCENIC DEATH VALLEY
Starring
Wallace BEERY
Leo CARRILLO
Marjorie RAMBEAU
Ann BAXTER
Douglas FOWLEY
Screen Play by Cyril Hume, E. E. Paramore and Richard Maibaum
A MÉTRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PICTURE
Directed by Richard Thorpe
Produced by J. Walter Ruben

THEATRE

...LAND OF FABULOUS FORTUNE...IN THE LUSTY DAYS OF EARLY CALIFORNIA!
WHEN BORAX WAS WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD!
WHEN MEN DIED IN THEIR BOOTS TO HOLD A CLAIM!

THEATRE

AME TO PLAY IMPORTANT PARTS IN THE PICTURE...AND NOW THEY ARE ON THEIR LOP-EARED JACK RABBITS, HAULING THE ORIGINAL AND PRECIOUS DESERT WAGONS,
rung in grocery stores...tie-in with Pacific Coast Borax Products...it's there...and waiting for you.)
**STUDIO NEWS**

**Beery Rides Again In Thrilling Screen Saga of Old West**

The pioneer days of Death Valley are relived in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "20 Mule Team," with Wallace Beery starred as Muleskinner Bill Bragg, the best driver on a route which has become a landmark in the annals of the West.

Teamed with Beery are Ella Culligan, who scored for him in the sensational "Viva Villa!" and Marjorie Rambeau as Piute Pete, Beery's Indian 'swammer,' and Miss Rambeau as Josie Johnson.

Filmed in the original locale, among the sand dunes, sun-baked canyons and salt pools of Death Valley, the picture tells of the fight to find a new "mother lode" of borax. Josie, to earn enough to give her daughter, Jean, an education. Jean is played by Anne Baxter, of New York stage, who joins the young company paymaster and tries to elope with a gambler, "Stag" Roper. Noah Beery, Jr., joins his uncle for the first time, playing the paymaster Mitch, while Douglas Fowley is seen as Stag.

Richard Thorpe, of "Tarzan" series fame as well as director of other screen successes, directed. J. Walter Ruben, responsible for the success of the previous Beery Western, "The Bad Man of Brimstone" and numerous other hits, produced.

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**Beery Does Roping In Epsom Salts to Undehydrate Self**

Thanks to film studio chemists, Wallace Beery was able to take a bath in Death Valley's "bad water" without suffering any physical harm.

The script of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "20 Mule Team" required Beery to "dunk" himself in the pool, some thirty feet in diameter, which lies at the lowest point of Death Valley, 280 feet below sea level. As muleskinner Bill Bragg, driving one of the old borax wagons, he is in the habit of sometimes rolling in this pool to "undehydrate" himself.

Because in his previous picture, "The Man from Dakota," Beery had to fall into a river-bottom hole, and suffered an earache from the dirty water, Director Richard Thorpe decided to take no chances on the Death Valley water. On a preliminary trip to the "bad water" with the chemist Clyde De Vinna, he brought back a bottle of the fluid. The water was found to be 85 per cent Epsom Salts solution.

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**Beery's Role As a Muleskinner Requires Thorough Training In Handling of Team**

During his thirty years in show business, Wallace Beery has learned a smattering of scores of trades for the roles he has played: sea captain, police sergeant, fireman, explorer, Pony Express rider, prizefighter, wrestler, air pilot, industrialist, circus trainer, saloon keeper and horse doctor, to list just a few. But never has he had to learn a trade as thoroughly as that of the muleskinner in that saga of the borax pioneers, "20 Mule Team."

"You can't kid a mule about whether you know how to handle him," remarked Beery. "And when you have twenty of them, you need to convince each one of them separately that you know your job. Other than borax wagons are liable to end up in the cameraman's lap." Which explains why the star spent a week driving the animals assembled for the picture, before a camera turned.

"A successful muleskinner in the old days had to be a practical veterinary, a blacksmith and a pretty good wheelwright," observed Beery. "Thank goodness we had men in the film crew who could take care of those chores for me. If I'd been actually stuck there alone in Death Valley, head of the pack, I don't know how my reputation as a frontiersman would have held out."

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**Tops As Versatile Actor, Is Rambeau Tribute to Beery**

When Marjorie Rambeau appeared in an important supporting role with Wallace Beery in the memorable "Min and Bill," she had no idea that ten years later she would team with him in "20 Mule Team."

"But it seemed very natural to be back with him," she said. "As a matter of fact, I feel much akin to Wally Beery, strange though that may sound. We both teamed in stock. Personally, I'd like to see him play some more straight dramatic parts instead of his typical comedy, for he's a far more versatile actor than many give him credit for. In my opinion, Wally is tops in versatility, plus being a good old trouper, besides."

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**Beery Shoes Shod Like Mules' Hoofs**

Wallace Beery's "character" shoes, which have carried him through many a role, were shod for the "20 Mule Team." Preparations for his role as muleskinner Bill Bragg in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "20 Mule Team." Metal plates were fastened to the soles of each shoe, to protect Beery's feet from the glass-like borax crystals which adhere to the hard borax wagons' bottoms.

The cutting edges on the borax have been known to slice leather to shreds in no time.

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**Carrillo 'Swammer' As Pioneer's Wagon Wheels Roll Again**

The original high-wheeled wagons which hauled thousands of tons of borax out of Death Valley in the 1890's, and which had been on exhibit outside the railroad depot at Barstow since track was laid to the present borax plant at Trona, went back into service for "20 Mule Team."

Originally driven by "Borax Bill" Parkinson, most celebrated muleskinner of his time, they were driven in the film by Wallace Beery, who practiced for weeks, cracking the blacksnake whip which he uses as he rides the high-wheel horse, had Leo Carrillo as his helper, or "swammer," on the ride, Carrillo portraying the Indian, Piute Pete.

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**Veteran Trouper Director's Biggest Asset, Thorpe Says**

When a director finds himself handed a cast handpicked by three of the best established veterans in the business, he can be excused for feeling particularly happy.

That was the situation which Richard Thorpe faced when he was assigned to direct "20 Mule Team." He expected that the actors would be telling him what to do, instead of vice versa. Yet, Thorpe now says he'd gladly go back and direct another picture with the three of them tomorrow, if he had the chance.

"After a week or two with that trio, I felt ashamed of myself for having anticipated any difficulties at all," he confessed. "They took a load off my shoulders. No one here has all had about thirty years' experience each on stage and screen, so there really isn't much you can teach them about characterization or technique."

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**Famed Architect's Kin Making Debut**

Anne Baxter, younger niece to Hollywood's famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright, plays her first film role as the romantic feminine "Beth" in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "20 Mule Team," with Wallace Beery, Marjorie Rambeau, Leo Carrillo and Noah Beery, Jr.

Miss Beery, who plays the daughter, Blossom, in the road company of "Susan and God," and who has appeared recently with Eva Le Gallienne and with Gladys Cooper and Philip Merivale, was signed to a contract by Twentieth Century-Fox but was loaned to M-G-M for her first picture. She is a former student of Maria Ouspenskaya.

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**Camera Reloaded Once Every Mile**

A camera followed a team of twenty mules four miles, reloading with film every mile, for the longest continuous "perambulator" or moving scene, in the history of the motion picture industry.

This occurred at Death Valley, where Wallace Beery and Metro-Goldwyn-May- er's "20 Mule Team" company worked on location, in the lowest spot below sea level in North America.

The cameras were on cars with special wheels to negotiate the sands.

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**Noah In Father's Steps For Uncle Wally's Pic**

Noah Beery, Jr., while on location in Death Valley with his uncle, Wallace Beery, and M-G-M's "20 Mule Team" troupe, was following in the footsteps of his father, who appeared in the first film ever produced in that locale, "Wanderer of the Wasteland," in 1924. Kathryn Thornton, Billie Dove and Jack Holt were the stars of that picture, which Irving Willat directed. Some six months later, Erich von Stroheim directed "Greed" in the valley, with Jean Hersholt and Gibson Gowland.
**EXPLOITATION**

The Biggest Ballyhoo in Show History

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS**

Muleskinner Bill Bragg (Wallace Beery) arrives in the desert town of Furnace Flat with his Indian swapper, Pinto Pete (Leo Carrillo), and his band of mules. Jimmie Johnson, another of his mules, is awaiting him because the company is in financial trouble. Furthermore, his current muleman, Josie Johnson, has run out at Josie Johnson's saloon and hotel.

Josie is particularly sharp because he had considered himself virtually engaged to Josie Rambeau. Instead, Rambeau had any muleskin beer "on the coffee" from his wife, Marjorie. Meanwhile, Josie's daughter, Jean (Anne Baxter), is also having romantic troubles. Tired of waiting for him to make his mark, she is money to send her away to school and tired of waiting for Josie. She takes a job in the Furnace Flat mule company's paystall, to grow rich enough to support herself. Josie is fascinated by a woman who leaves town vowing to join forces with Chuckawalla (Clem Bevins), an old prospector, and make a fortune.

Bill finds Chuckawalla dead on the desert, clutching a bag of crystals which Bill believes worthless. But "Stag" Roper (Douglas Fair- lain), a new stockholder in the mule company, who has won his shares in a poker game, recognizes the crystals as rich borax from the long-sought mother lode and sets out to find Chuckawalla's claim before the company locates it.

Jesse wants Bill to drive Stage out of town, mistrusting the latter's attentions to Josie. But Bill knows too much about Bill's past and the latter ignores his promises to Josie, who discovers that her daughter plans to slip to San Francisco. She threatens Stag with a gun, which Stag shoots and drops his head for the claim, which Bill discovers. Stag, determined to avoid being found out, takes the girl, who saves Mutt and Jeannie. Bill, driven to madness, wounds Stag and his side, Salters (Arthur Niblo) and en- gages in a gun battle in which Pete, Stag and Salters are killed and Bill wounded. He manages to get Mutt onto a mule which he knows will carry him back to Furnace Flat, while he prepares to die on the desert. But a mule rescues him. Mutt and Jeannie are married and Bill becomes the manager of Josie's saloon.
**Press Acclaim for Turner, Blondell, Murphy, in '2 Girls'**

Enthusiastic acclaim greeted Lana Turner, Joan Blondell and George Murphy at the preview of "Two Girls On Broadway" at Los Angeles' Westwood Village Theatre. Newspaper reviewers unanimously agreed on Miss Turner's box-office appeal, one writer declaring that "not since Clara Bow took the country by storm has there been anyone so young and fresh and good to look at."

- Excerpts from reviews follow:

**LOUELLA O. PARSONS, LOS ANGELES EXAMINER**—"An eyeful and certainly the epitomes of Hollywood drama, Turner dazzles here in her beauty. It's a privilege just to look at her. Not since Clara Bow took the country by storm has there been so young and fresh and good to look at in the movies. George Murphy is extremely likeable, and how he can dance! All in all, "Two Girls on Broadway" is a clever picture with good entertainment and several catchy song numbers. S. Sylvan Simon does a lot of directing and Jack Cummings deserves a word of praise for the production."

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