

July 9, 2019

The Lucky Dog - filmed mid to late January to early February 1921. Released sometime between October and December 1921.

Stan Laurel's introduction to Oliver Hardy was arranged by producer Gilbert M. "Broncho Billy" Anderson and director Jess Robbins. According to Stan Laurel during the filming of *The Lucky Dog*, he and Babe were "friendly, but there was nothing about the picture or our own personal relationship to suggest that we might ever become partners".

Stan went on to say, "At the time we had no studio, so we rented space at the Selig Zoo Studio. We were making this picture so Mr. Anderson could take it back to New York to show them back there, to get a release for 26 comedies. So, Jess Robbins brought his cameraman over and also Babe, as we affectionately called him, to play the heavy. That's the first time I met Babe. So we made the comedy and I didn't see him again for probably two or three years".

Florence Gilbert - appeared in nearly 70 films between 1920 and 1927. She was married five times. One of her husbands was Tarzan author Edgar Rice Burroughs. She left the film industry at the age of 23 and lived to the age of 87.

Jack Lloyd - who plays the boyfriend, was born in Manchester, England and worked as an actor and director in the United States.

Edward "Ted" Jefferson - who played the butler, was Stan Laurel's brother. He appeared with Stan in two more of his comedies, *The Egg* and *Mixed Nuts* both in 1922. Sadly as Stan was filming *Oliver The Eighth* with Oliver Hardy, Ted died of a heart

attack after receiving laughing gas while visiting a dentist for a tooth extraction on December 17, 1933 at the age of 32.

Filming took place in Lincoln Heights, California on Mission Road and Lincoln Park Avenue in front of the Ostrich Farm, a popular attraction during this era.

Laurel & Hardy's first on screen encounter took place at the corner of Keith Street and Barbee Street nearby. The interior of this film were shot at the Selig Studios just up the street from the Ostrich Farm.

Saps At Sea - filmed early November through early December 1939. Released May 3, 1940.

Working Titles: *Jitterbugs, Crackpots and Two's Company.*

The title for this film was a pun for the 1937 Gary Cooper film, *Souls At Sea.*

As per Stan's instructions, this film was shot in sequence.

A visitor on the set one day was D. W. Griffith, who was working as a technical advisor on the lot for the film *One Million B. C.* which Hal Roach directed. Griffith said to Stan and Ollie, "You two fellows are greater pantomime artists than Charlie Chaplin".

Virginia Lucille Jones was the script girl on *The Flying Deuces.* Stan liked her work and asked to join the crew on *Saps At Sea.* One day, she tripped, fell down and hit her head on one of the cameras. Oliver sent her a box of roses and a note wishing her a speedy recovery. The friendship between the two became closer. One day,

Oliver proposed to her on the set. She accepted, although the two had never been on a date. They were married on March 7, 1940 and would remain together until Oliver's death in 1957.

Harry Hayden - Spectacled player often cast as officious or snooping types like hotel managers and bankers. With his wife, actress Lela Bliss, he ran the Bliss-Hayden miniature theatre in Beverly Hills from the mid-1930s until 1955. Notable alumni from there included Marilyn Monroe, Doris Day and Craig Stevens.

James Finlayson - making his 33rd and final appearance in a Laurel & Hardy comedy. The J. H. Finlayson on his plaque stand for James Henderson Finlayson. Note the **DVM** stands for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

According to director Gordon Douglas, "Yes, I directed the film, but Stan was very much in charge. He knew what he wanted and I had enough sense not to interfere with him. He was giving me an education in directing!"

Charlie Hall - making his 47th and final appearance in a Laurel & Hardy comedy. The Charles D. Hall listed on the credits as art director is not the same as Charlie Hall the actor.

Rycharl Cramer - acted on stage for 20 years before becoming a reliable villain in Hollywood films of the 1930s and 1940s. Most sources claim he played all of his bad characters as is because he had no sense of humor. This was his fifth and final role with Laurel & Hardy.

Gene Morgan - appeared in many Hal Roach comedies with Max Davidson, Our Gang, Charley Chase, The Boy Friends, Thelma Todd and ZaSu Pitts, The Taxi Boys, The Schmaltz Brothers and Laurel & Hardy.

Ben Turpin - This was his second appearance with Laurel & Hardy after *Our Wife* in 1931. *Saps At Sea* was his final film.

Harry Bernard - In addition to his 26 appearances with Laurel & Hardy, he also worked with Charley Chase, The Boy Friends and Our Gang. *Saps At Sea* was also his final film.

Eddie Borden - in addition to *Saps At Sea*, he appeared with Laurel & Hardy in *A Chump At Oxford*, *The Flying Deuces*, *Babes In Toyland* and most memorably in *The Bohemian Girl*.

Mary Gordon - specialized in housekeepers and mothers. She worked as a dressmaker before finding work on the stage. Mary arrived in Los Angeles in the mid-20's and began playing variations on the roles she would spend her career doing. She became friends with John Ford while making *Hangman's House* (1928) and made seven more films for him. In 1939, she took on her most famous role as Sherlock Holmes's housekeeper and played the role in ten films and numerous radio plays. She was also a charter member of the Hollywood Canteen, entertaining servicemen throughout the Second World War. On the radio show "Those We Love," she played the regular role of Mrs. Emmett.

Patsy Moran - made her film debut with Laurel & Hardy in *Block-Heads* (1938), following it up in *Saps at Sea*. At Monogram, she made her Western debut in support of Tex Ritter in *Cowboy From Sundown* (1940). On the radio, she appeared as Martha Hoople, the fool-suffering wife of "Major Hoople" on the short-lived (1942-43) radio series based on the comic strip "Our Boardinghouse." Patsy did not make the transition to television, though ironically, she did co-star in an episode of "I Love Lucy" in support of Lucille Ball, with

whom she had earlier appeared in an uncredited but role in 1944's *Meet the People* at RKO, the studio Lucy later bought.

Eddie Conrad - a former vaudeville performer, here he plays the Italian trombone teacher for Stan whose named Professor O'Brian.

Robert McKenzie - was the father-in-law of Billy Gilbert. While at the Hal Roach Studios, he also appeared in comedies with Our Gang and the Thelma Todd and Patsy Kelly series.

Patsy O'Byrne - Character comedienne of the silent screen, who played busybodies, matrons and an assortment of wicked old women. Associated with the Hal Roach Studios well into the sound era. She is best remembered as the busy body in Laurel & Hardy's *Chickens Come Home*.

Francesca Santoro - After playing Aggie in *The Great Dictator* and participating in several other films, Francesca Santoro grew up in Los Angeles, went to Holland to study voice at the Amsterdam Conservatory of Music. She married Freddy L'hoir with whom she had five children. In 1970, she went back to school as an undergraduate, attending the University of California (Irvine and Berkeley). In 1981, she won a Fulbright Scholarship to Rome, where she lived for seven years. In 1988, she earned her PhD in Ancient History and Classical Languages. The author of two published academic books on Roman Historiography, Francesca won the Rome Prize and was elected as a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, 1997.

This comedy was filmed in 1939, yet Laurel & Hardy are still driving a Model T automobile from the 1920's.

The scenes at the pier were film at Fish Harbor in East San Pedro, California. The mixed up plumbing and wiring routine was dreamed up on the set. A stunt double was used during the driving scene where Stan drives through the wall of the apartment house.

It's fitting that the final line, in their final Hal Roach film would be Ollie's "Here's another nice mess you've gotten me into!"

While everyone would go on to work on other films, this is the final time that Laurel & Hardy would work with James Finlayson, Charlie Hall, Rychard Cramer, Eddie Borden, Harry Bernard and the crew of Art Lloyd, T. Marvin Hatley, Elmer Raguse and Roy Seawright.

On October 25, 1939, articles of incorporation were filed for Laurel & Hardy Feature Productions. Their plan was to become independent producers after their contract ended with the Hal Roach Studios on April 5, 1940.

After leaving the Hal Roach Studios, Laurel & Hardy appeared at a benefit in San Francisco in August of 1940, then went on a 12 city tour from September to December. Upon their return, they were ready to begin their new professional life together making comedies their way. Unfortunately, their plans did not work out the way they wanted.

In May of 1955, production was to begin on four Laurel & Hardy specials titled Laurel & Hardy's Fabulous Fables. It was to be patterned after Britain's Christmas pantomimes that used children's literature as a framework for comedy. Stan suffered a minor stroke in late April of 1955 that delayed this production.

In 1947, Laurel & Hardy had become members of the Grand Order Of The Water Rats, a fraternal organization for charity causes and

good fellowship. In October of 1955, Laurel & Hardy were filmed for a brief farewell to the Water Rats.

During this same period, Oliver began a diet to address his heart condition. Over the next year, his weight decreased from 350 pounds to 210 pounds. He suffered several strokes beginning in 1956 through 1957 from which he never recovered.

On April 17, 1961 Stan Laurel was honored with a special Academy Award for his creative pioneering in the field of cinema comedy. Stan had planned to go to the ceremony, but on the day of the event, his eyes were giving him trouble due to his diabetes. He was afraid the television lights would blind him. As a result, he could not attend. Danny Kaye accepted the award for him.

In Stan final years, he spent his days in his Santa Monica apartment at the typewriter answering fan mail and greeting guests who wanted to meet him.

REFERENCES

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