

**April 3, 2019**

**Two Tars** - Filmed June 22 and 23, 1928. Filming Resumed June 26 through July 3, 1928. Released November 3, 1928.

Working title: Two Tough Tars

This film is another classic reciprocal destruction comedy by Laurel & Hardy.

Filming took place in Los Angeles on Centinela Avenue which now borders the Santa Monica Municipal Airport. The finale at the railroad tunnel was filmed at the Southern Pacific Railroad station near Santa Monica.

**Thomas Benton Roberts** did construction work for the Hal Roach Studios making \$1 an hour and \$1.50 for overtime. In addition to making all of the break-away cars for this comedy, he was one of the drivers on the road who wound up in the middle of this free-for-all. By 1932, he was specializing in supplying boats and marine equipment for motion pictures. By his own estimation, Thomas had assisted on the production of over 2,200 films.

**Thelma Hill** - Although she worked with both Stan and Ollie separately in a few of their solo films, this is her only film with Laurel & Hardy as a team. From 1919 to 1926, she was one of Mack Sennett's Bathing Beauties. Her most notable film role was in *The Fair Co-Ed* starring Marion Davies. In 1930, she married W. C. Fields stunt double and drinking partner, John Sinclair. Unfortunately, this union led to alcoholism and an early end to her life.

**Ruby Blaine** - Her background was in low budget westerns and performed as a leading lady in features. Thomas Benton Roberts recalled seeing her as a professional wrestler in Pasadena, California. She left films after 1928 and worked as a commercial model for several years. She retired to White Plains, New York and Citrus County, Florida.

**Edgar Dearing** plays the frustrated motorcycle cop. He served in World War I as a motorcycle courier to General John J. Pershing. As a member of the Los Angeles Police Department, Edgar worked crowd control during numerous location shootings, which led to his career in films, quite often playing a policeman. He had a final run-in with Laurel & Hardy in their 1944 20th Century Fox feature, *The Big Noise*.

Edgar Kennedy, Sam Lufkin (who plays two parts) and Charley Rogers are among the angry motorists.

The motor oil that Ruby Blaine sprays in the face of Edgar Kennedy's wife in this film is actually chocolate syrup.

It took Thomas Benton Roberts and his crew four motorcycles to create the smashed motorcycle gag at the end of this film. Also, the tomato rubbed in his face had been previously cut open and filled with ketchup, so it would film better.

Film Editor Richard Currier recalled that the scene where Sam Lufkin slashed the tire on Laurel & Hardy's car created some problems with regional sensors because it showed young people how to slash automobile tires.

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**Men O'War** - Filmed May 7 through 15, 1929. Released June 29, 1929.

This was Laurel & Hardy's third sound film.

Exterior filming took place at Hollenbeck Park in Los Angeles. The soda fountain scene was filmed at the Hal Roach Studios.

Charlie Hall and Baldwin Cooke are among the combative canoers.

**James Finlayson** - This is his first talking film with Laurel & Hardy. We get to hear his catch phrase "D'ohhhh" for the first time.

**Ann Cornwall** who played the giggly brunette had a film career that lasted over 40 years, which included 40 silent films. Today, however, she is only remembered for the part she played in this comedy and also as Buster Keaton's girl friend in his 1927 feature, *College*. Ironically, one of her last film roles was in 1957's *The Buster Keaton Story* starring Donald O'Connor and Ann Blyth.

**Gloria Greer** - In addition to his film, she worked in other Hal Roach comedies and also for RKO. She left films in 1930, got married and gave birth to a son the following year. Sadly, she experienced complications from the childbirth and died at the age of 23, just nine days after her giving birth to her son.

**Pete Gordon** - worked with both Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy separately in Larry Semon comedies. By 1925, he was starring (as Eddie Gordon) in his own comedies for Century Film Company. In Laurel & Hardy's *Babes in Toyland*, Pete can be seen as the Cat with the Fiddle.

The soda fountain routine was a reworking from Laurel & Hardy's 1928 silent short comedy *Should Married Men Go Home?* This routine goes back to 1912 when Joe Weber and Lew Fields recorded *The Drinking Scene*.

In the end, there were fourteen people on the canoe before it sank.

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**Beau Hunks** - Filmed July 15 through 18, 1931. Studio closed for one week. Filming resumed July 27 through August 11, 1931. Added scenes filmed on August 24, 1931. Released December 12, 1931.

The title of this film is a pun of the word "bohunk" which is a 1920's slang for an unsophisticated person. Since American slang did not translate well in Britain, this film was retitled *Beau Chumps* for the English.

This film was reissued in 1937 with a few cuts to comply with the 1934 Production Code, including a dialogue about fertilizer at the beginning. The 1937 version is the only one surviving, as the original cut was lost.

The idea for this film most likely came from a Loretta Young and Ralph Forbes feature from RKO titled *Beau Ideal* which was released in January of 1931. Several elements from this film are referenced in this Laurel & Hardy comedy.

Although **Jean Harlow** was no longer under contract to the Hal Roach Studios, her photograph is quite prominent in this film as you will see. She gave Hal Roach permission to use her photograph in this film for free. When *Beau Hunks* was released

in December of 1931, Jean Harlow was starring in Frank Capra's *Platinum Blonde*.

On January 21, 1992, seven days after Hal Roach celebrated his 100th birthday, he appeared as a guest on *The Tonight Show*. On that occasion, Jay Leno was subbing for Johnny Carson. When Leno asked Roach which of the movies he had made was his favorite, he selected *Beau Hunks*. Roach said it was strictly because "leading lady" Jean Harlow—who started her career at Roach's studio and then moved on to become a star at MGM — appeared in *Beau Hunks* for nothing.

The Chief of the Riff-Raff who is Abul Kasim K'Horne is played by this film's director, **James Wesley Horne**. According to Stan Laurel, the reason for this was that the original actor for this part was "a very bad actor".

**Charles Middleton** - is probably best remembered as Ming The Merciless in Universal Studios *Flash Gordon* series. As an actor, he was in high demand. In 1931 alone, Middleton appeared in fourteen films. During his career, he worked in four films with Laurel & Hardy. He recreated his *Beau Hunks* role as the commandant in Laurel & Hardy's *The Flying Deuces* from 1939.

**Harry Schultz** - This was his only film with Laurel & Hardy, however he did also work with Charley Chase and Todd & Pitts while at the Hal Roach Studios. He also worked in other films uncredited with Wheeler & Woolsey, Frank Capra, Spencer Tracy and W. C. Fields.

**William Gillespie** - made seven appearances in Laurel & Hardy films, most notably as the piano salesman in *The Music Box* and the hotel manager in *Double Whoopee*. He also made numerous

appearances in comedies at the Hal Roach Studios from 1917 to 1933 with Harold Lloyd, Snub Pollard, Charley Chase and Our Gang.

The sandstorm sequences was filmed at Palisades Del Rey dunes in Playa Del Rey, northwest of El Segundo, California. During the filming of these scenes, both Laurel and Hardy were treated for sunburn while several extras went to the hospital for various burns, blisters and eye injuries from the manufactured sandstorm.

The set for the fort was filmed at a property owned by Hal Roach just south of the studio's backlot.

## **REFERENCES**

Laurel & Hardy: The Magic Behind The Movies  
by Randy Skretvedt

LordHeath.com

Internet Movie Database