

## FEBRUARY 27, 2019

**Anita Frances Garvin** was born in New York, the youngest of 3 children. By the age of 12 she was 5 feet 6 inches, enabling her to pass for 16 and get a job in a Mack Sennett bathing beauty stage show. Later, she became a Ziegfeld Girl in the Follies, but having always been interested in films took the opportunity to try and find work in films when the touring company of *Sally* (the story of a poor dishwasher who rises to fame as a ballerina in the Ziegfeld Follies) arrived in California in 1924. Her good looks and expertise soon got her work in comedies produced by the Christie Film Company and Educational Pictures. In 1925 she was hired by producer Joe Rock as leading lady for an up and coming comic actor named Stan Laurel. The following year Stan asked Anita to appear in *Raggedy Rose* (starring Mabel Normand) which he was co-directing at the Roach Studios. Stan admired her dedication to comedy and introduced her to Hal Roach. Anita wound up working with Charley Chase, *Our Gang* and Laurel and Hardy with whom she made 11 films including *From Soup To Nuts*, *Sailors Beware*, *Hats Off*, *Blotto* and *Be Big*. She once said, "I took pratfalls better than anyone else. You got bruised up once in a while, but it didn't show". "Stan and Ollie were terrific." She married band leader Clifford 'Red' Stanley in 1930 and during the mid 30's they owned a restaurant together in downtown Hollywood which attracted the top stars. They closed it in the late 30's and she went into partial retirement preferring home life and raising their two children. After appearing with The Three Stooges in their 1940 film *Cuckoo Cavaliers* she retired permanently. She was rediscovered by the Sons Of The Desert in the 1970's and was always a popular guest at many meetings, banquets and conventions. She spent her last years in the Motion Picture Country House in Calabasas, California.

**SAILORS BEWARE** - Filmed April 4 through April 14, 1927. Retakes filmed on April 18, 1927. Released September 25, 1927.

Hal Roach both wrote and directed this comedy, but did not take screen credit for this effort.

Stan plays the part of a cab driver named Chester Chaste and Ollie plays the part of Purser Cryder. While Laurel & Hardy have very few scenes together, it was evident that either Hal Roach or Leo McCarey noticed the on screen chemistry between these comedians and that the potential for a teaming was a possibility.

The opening scenes, were filmed at Berth 156 at the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro. The Los Angeles Steamship Company had only three ships with one of them playing the part of the S. S. Miramar in this film.

**Anita Garvin** - plays the part of Madame Ritz.

**Lupe Velez** - (Baroness Behr) was bornas Maria Guadalupe Villalobos Velez. She was sent to Texas at the age of 13 to live in a convent. She later admitted that she wasn't much of a student because she was so rambunctious. She returned to Mexico and worked as a sales girl for a department store for \$4 a week. In 1924 Lupe started her career on the Mexican stage and wowed audiences with her natural beauty and talent. By 1927 she had emigrated to Hollywood, where she was discovered by Hal Roach, who cast her in *Sailors Beware* with Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy. Next, Douglas Fairbanks cast her in his feature film, *The Gaucho* (1927), with himself and wife Mary Pickford. Lupe played dramatic roles for five years before she switched to comedy. Her popularity produced a series of "Mexican Spitfire" films were written around her which audiences loved in these madcap adventures.

**Will Stanton** - (Baron Behr) British-born small part supporting actor in several feature films and in silent screen comedies for Hal Roach from the late 1920's to the early 1930's. He would debut in a feature film with a small role in Raoul Walsh's 1928 silent film, *Sadie Thompson*, starring Gloria Swanson, Lionel Barrymore, and Walsh. During the following 20 years he would appear in another 70 films, mostly in small and supporting roles. He also appeared in some Pete Smith educational shorts at MGM.

**Harry Earles** - (the husband Roger / baby) At 3' 3" tall, Harry was the first of his family to begin a film career. With director Tod Browning for the Lon Chaney vehicle *The Unholy Three* (1925) he was the ruthless little person Tweedle-dee. He reprised the role for the 1930 sound remake, again with Chaney. Harry was also cast Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's 1932 film *Freaks*. In fact, Harry himself brought to Browning's attention the Tod Robbins story "Spurs" on which the film was based. Harry was also one of the Munchkins in *The Wizard of Oz* where he played a part as a member of the Lollipop Guild.

**Frank Brownlee** - (the Captain) He was frequently seen in westerns as gold miners or second-string henchmen. After the coming of sound, Brownlee was increasingly relegated to playing background characters, usually military or police officers, guards or farmers. He was originally cast as the brides father in Laurel & Hardy's *Pack Up Your Troubles*. The scene was rewritten and reshot with Billy Gilbert.

**Tiny Sandford** - making another of his 23 appearances with Laurel & Hardy.

**Viola Richard** - Evelyn Viola Richard was born January 26, 1904 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. The family relocated to the United States in 1910. The 1927-1928 season at Roach's wrapped at the end of March, at which time Viola would have been finishing her

scenes in Laurel and Hardy's *Should Married Men Go Home?* It is speculated that cutbacks at the studio may have ended the career of Viola, along with other leading ladies Edna Marion and Dorothy Coburn. However as early as 1935, Viola is credited with walk-on appearances in two Hal Roach productions during that year, *Our Gang's Sprucin' Up* and Laurel and Hardy's *Tit For Tat*.

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**FROM SOUP TO NUTS** - Filmed December 27 through December 31, 1927 and January 3 through January 5, 1928. Released March 24, 1928.

Working title: *Let George Do It*.

The film was directed by E. Livingston Kennedy better known as Edgar Kennedy.

Buddy the dog makes another appearance in this Hal Roach comedy. We have seen him before in *Perfect Day*. His trainer was Henry East, who was married to silent screen comedienne Gale Henry. The couple owned a two acre kennel just outside of Hollywood. Their most famous dog was a terrier named Skippy who is best remembered as Asta in *The Thin Man* series.

The most memorable scene is with Anita Garvin trying to gracefully chase a cherry around her plate with a spoon. She recalled, "Nobody told me anything, I was just told I'm trying to get this cherry and I don't know what instrument to use - what was about it".

During the time of this filming, Stan Laurel's weekly salary was \$500 and Oliver Hardy was making \$350.

**Edna Marian** - played comic supporting roles in more than 60 films. She began her career in the 1920s, starring in Edward

Ludwig's *Broadway Beauties*, followed by several appearances in Francis Corby's productions and spending a year (1927-1928) at the Hal Roach studios, alongside comedians Charley Chase and Laurel & Hardy. The Western Association of Motion Picture Advertisers was a promotional campaign which honored 13 young actresses each year whom they believed to be on the threshold of movie stardom. In 1926, Edna was named one of the WAMPAS Baby Stars, along with Mary Astor, Mary Brian, Dolores Costello, Joan Crawford, Dolores del Río, Janet Gaynor, and Fay Wray. Like Viola Richard, her career at the Hal Roach Studios ended abruptly on April 7, 1928 after being employed since April 25, 1927.

**Otto Fries** - we recently saw him as the dentist in Laurel & Hardy's *Leave 'Em Laughing*. He transitioned to film in the early 1910's and was with the [Keystone Cops](#). Around that time, he entered a lifelong friendship with [Stan Laurel](#), which led to appearances in Laurel's early films for [Bronco Billy Anderson](#). He later landed at [Hal Roach Studios](#), where he supported not only [Laurel & Hardy](#) and Charley Chase, but also Max Davidson and James Finlayson. Fries also played scores of bit parts and walk-ons in grade-A films. One of his more notable appearances was as a shiphand in the Marx Brothers' *Monkey Business*.

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**BLOTTO** - Filmed December 11 through December 21, 1929 and resumed December 26 through December 31, 1929. Released February 8, 1930.

During the filming of this comedy, Stan Laurel signed a new contract with Hal Roach as an Actor, Director and Writer.

Two hundred extras were used for the nightclub scene.

The telephone number Oliver gives the operator to call Stan is actually Stan Laurel's real telephone number.

Anita Garvin shared her remembrance of Stan and Ollie's laughing routine: "I think that's one of the greatest scenes of all time. When I see those two together, especially Stan, when he's holding his sides - Oh! I think they were acting to a certain extent - but after laughing so much, you do go into it."

Jackie Gleason liked the plot of this film so much that he had his writers for *The Honeymooners* adapt quite a bit of it for an episode titled *Head Of The House* which aired on March 31, 1956.

**Charlie Hall** (the angry landlord in *Laughing Gravy* and *Leave 'Em Laughing*) makes a brief appearance at the end of the film as a cab driver with a big moustache.

**Tiny Sandford** - maitre'd

**Baldwin Cooke** - (waiter) We remember him best as the net door neighbor in *Perfect Day*.

**Frank Holliday** - this was his sixth and final appearance in a Laurel & Hardy comedy. He also had made uncredited appearances in films with Charley Chase and Frank Capra.

## REFERENCES

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