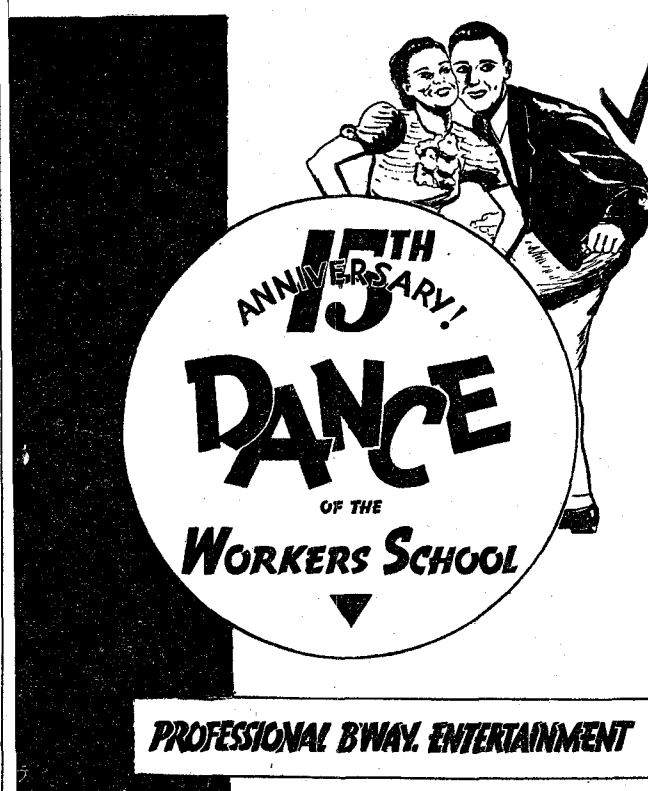


## History and Mr. Zanuck

MR. DARRYL F. ZANUCK, digger of some of the largest voids in the field of culture, has turned his pretty fellows to the excavation of the Suez Canal. For the role of stubborn De Lesseps, engineer of the big imperialist ditch, there was little hesitation in the casting. The Suez Canal, mused Mr. Zanuck to his attendant alter egos, who of all my lads can I trust to dig it? Who else but Tyrone Power, echo answered. Mr. Power will be remembered as the stripling who corrupted Chicago and made the big fire morally necessary, who then went on to struggle manfully with the frivolities of Marie Antoinette. When this failed he drowned his despair by composing most of our contemporary sentimental songs in *Alexander's Ragtime Band*. An adroit fellow and just the lad to dig the canal. So it is this very day that the lowly moviegoer can toil up the plush slopes of the Roxy and be rewarded at the summit with the sight of Tyrone's triumph, Suez. After scanning the gripping business around the big mudpile—the grim emotional force of Mr. Power as he grapples with Nature, as he searches among the ruins in a Searching-Among-the-Ruins scene that hasn't been equaled since the one in *In Old Chicago*, and the climactic catastrophe without which Darryl Zanuck could not face the cutting room—in this case a big dust storm—your reviewer was galvanized to action. I ripped open an old mattress and dashed down to the Black Bourse with my meager store of valuta. There I confidently shot the wad on a few shares of laughing stock in the 20th Century-Fox Film Corp. As a new if modest partner in the firm I want to make some suggestions to the management of my company.

For Tyrone's next role, I want him as Cheops. I can see him now, in his regal robes by Adrian, furrowing his brow over the building of the pyramids. We can twist history a little and cast Alice Faye as Cleopatra. It might be better for the story to have Alice as Queen Hatchepsut and we could have sort of a race between the queen and the pharaoh to see who could get their job built first—Hatchepsut's temple or Cheops' peak. Lots of chance here for snappy dialogue—the queen and Tyrone pretending they don't love each other and talking tough, but deep down they're nuts about each other and we get a big clinch in the last reel with Tyrone and the queen—what's-her-name—sitting in the sunset beside the Nile (see if the prop department can fix over those junks from *The Good Earth* into Egyptian barges), billing and cooing and looking at the little love nest Cheops has carved out of the center of his pyramid. The only trouble is that nobody ever heard of this guy Cheops, let alone Hatchepsut, and we can't have two unknowns in the same picture. So it'll have to be Cheops and Cleopatra. Cheops and Cleopatra—it has a real marquee sound.



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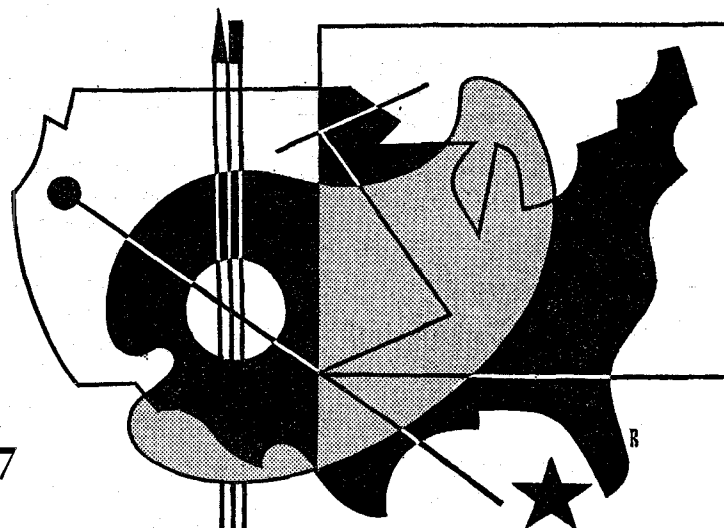
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Next we can make over all those old George Arliss pictures for Tyrone. Then maybe we can do a Michelangelo story—it'll wow the Italians and the culture crowd. We can get Barrymore for the Pope who gave Michelangelo the job of painting up the ceiling of the Vatican. We get a good twist in here by having Annabella dress up like a boy and get a job as the assistant who mixes Michel's paints. We have the Pope come in to look over the job and Annabella is up on the scaffold with Mike who has just found out she is really a girl. Mike is scared as hell because he'll lose the contract if the Pope ever finds out. Plenty of suspense here. And a real historical number, too. Why, every school kid has heard of Michelangelo. Call in the legal staff and see if the Catholic angle is okay. We don't want Joe Breen down on our necks.

But before you get going on these suggestions, Mr. Zanuck, I want to give you the perfect idea for Tyrone. What I propose is to put him in the title role of a screen biography of Freddie Bartholomew.

THE CAMEO'S NON-FICTION BILL includes a well mounted essay on Soviet womanhood by Dziga Vertov and the film *Diary of Papinin*, from the notes made on the drifting Arctic station by the effervescent and charming little leader of the four Soviet scientists who set up scientific Socialism for 274 days on an ice floe at the North Pole. Papinin, Krenkel, Shirshov, and Fiodorov took turns snapping each other in their daily routines—reading the meteorological apparatus, cooking and savoring with broad winks the compressed foods made for them by the Soviet food experts, and generally giving a quite cozy and attractive picture of the incidents of the most important Polar expedition in history.

The four heroes are quoted with laconic and sometimes humorous bits from their diaries and the shots they took explain the actual work. While they were drifting south to Greenland and their ice floe was being diminished by cracking ice, Krenkel was working his sparkgap in constant communication with the USSR. When they learned that all of them had been elected to the Supreme Soviet, Papinin's diary remarks that their little snugger was the "only point on earth where the population consisted solely of deputies to the Supreme Soviet." They struck me as being a bunch of swell guys, doing a tremendous and daring task with the matter-of-fact efficiency of the true Bolshevik.

JAMES DUGAN.

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