

DARE DEVIL MOVIE ACTORS

Some of the screen stars risk death every week in order to provide sensation lovers with thrills—women of film drama will try any stunt once

ONE way of earning a living is by jumping from one speeding train to another; by riding motor cycles off open drawbridges; by running pell-mell over moving freight trains, only to clutch an overhead cable and to hang suspended in midair; by grappling with an infuriated man in the cab of an onrushing locomotive, and in a hundred ways risking life and limb. This is what scores of motion picture actresses and actors do every day with hardly the wink of an eyelash in the performance of the stunts.

It is all in answer to the cry for realism in the movies which has recently been raised by directors. Realism is now a watchword. Above all, the production must be realistic. The directors argue that the public has become tired of faked dangers and mechanical feats that make ordinary scenes appear hazardous. The desire for realism may be all right for the public and the director, but it is hard on the performers.

Patrons of the pictures are so familiar with scenes depicting rough riding, descents of mountain sides on horseback and leaps from cliffs in which the rider falls clear of the mount and in other ways flirts with death that they never stop to think of the real danger incurred by those actors who dare so much for the silent drama. Of course there are certain pictures in which the danger is faked. But those pictures are almost equally balanced by the kind which depicts a real danger encountered to accomplish the desired result.

Jumps From Moving Trains.
"When I first began to jump off moving trains," said Helen Holmes, when asked for her impressions of daredevilry in the films, "I must confess I was somewhat timid, but now I take it as something which must be done to complete the picture."

"In one picture in which I worked about six months ago I went through the action with my heart in my mouth, and for a moment at least I felt like quitting. It was a railroad picture in which I was to drive a big engine across a bridge which was to be blown up as the engine reached the middle."

"A torpedo on the track about twenty feet from the spot where the dynamite charge was placed to wreck the bridge was to give me my signal to dive from the cab to the river thirty feet below. From the moment that the engine reached the wooden trestle I kept thinking what would happen if the torpedo did not go off and I should be carried down into the wreckage."

"The run of about thirty yards seemed interminable, but everything worked according to plans and I made the dive safely, but I was shaking like a leaf when I reached the river. I was so frightened I could hardly keep myself afloat."

"But now I have become so used to risking my neck that I accept it as a matter of course. It is much like the case of an aviator when he starts flying. At first he is cautious and only makes slight ascents and safe descents, but soon the spirit of daring enters his soul and he is looping the loop and doing spirals 2,000 feet in the air, and other dangerous stunts."

Danger in the Quicksand.

There was Marlon Swayne, who thought it pretty hard when she was called upon recently to allow herself to be rescued from quicksands on a treacherous bit of picturesque Florida beach. It would not suffice to have her buried in a sand hole on a solid portion of the beach where she could easily be extricated without danger to herself. George Foster Platt, who was directing the five-reel feature entitled "The Net," insisted that the best results could only be obtained by having the star caught in the real quicksand.

Outside the range of the camera a group of men were ready with planks and rope to rescue the actress in case the scene as planned miscarried and she should need other help than that offered by Bert Delaney, the leading man and hero. Miss Swayne was reluctant at first to try the scene, but finally consented and timidly went out to the treacherous sandbar. The feeling of helplessness that came over her when her feet sank slowly from under her without means of staying them alarmed the screen star. As she sank to the waist her features registered a genuine fear, and at this point the camera man began "shooting" the scene while the gallant hero with a stout rope lassoed her. It required all his strength to drag her from the sands which were engulfing her. When on solid ground again Miss Swayne with a tremulous voice said: "I suppose on the screen that will look easy, but I don't care to try it over again."

Leap From High Cliff.

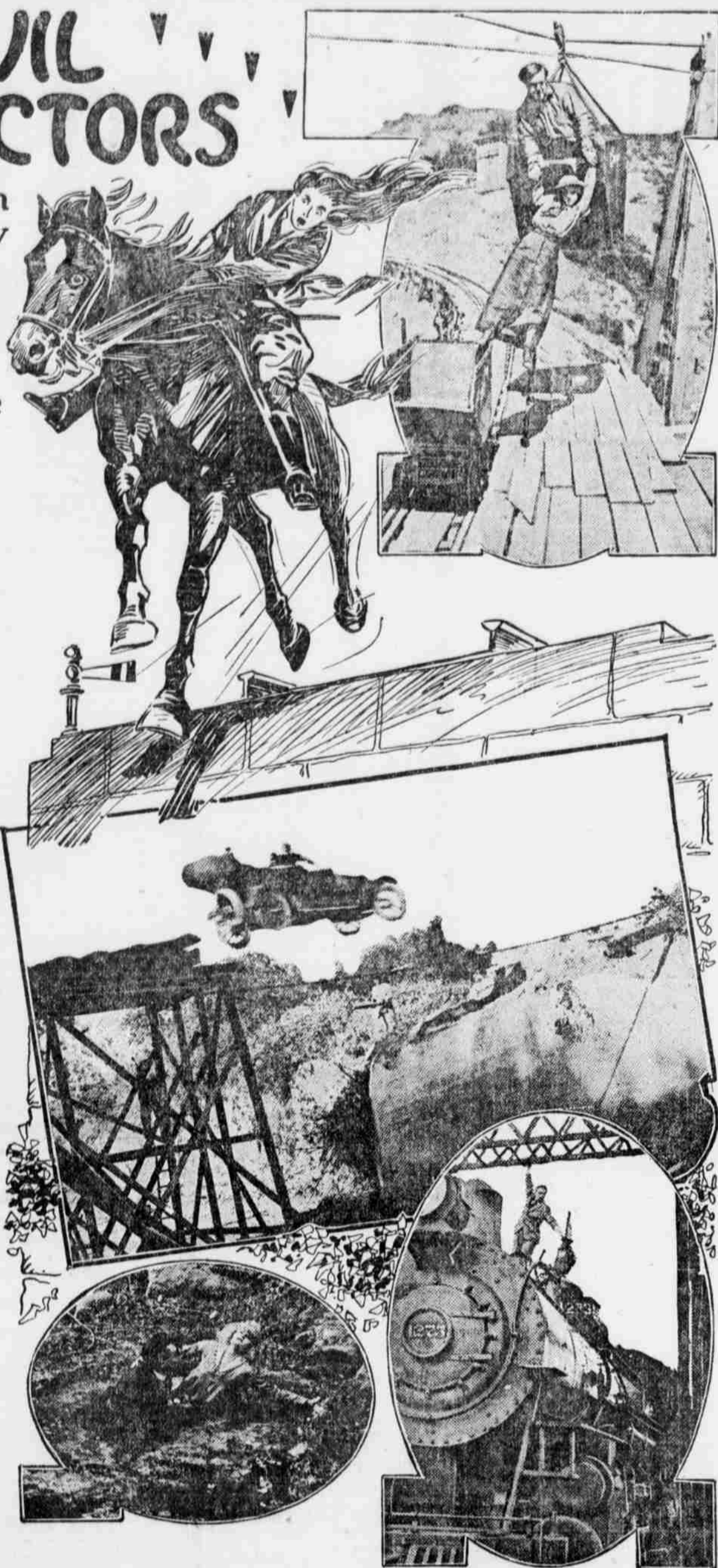
Wide publicity was once given to a stunt picture in which a trained acrobat jumped a horse from a hilltop into a chasm, inflicting injuries upon himself and the animal and getting into trouble with the humane society officials. This man was not a regular member of the picture company, but was engaged at a big price to perform the daring act.

Anna Little had a somewhat similar experience, although part of it was not done intentionally. Under the direction of Frank Borzage, a glutton for realism, Miss Little was to slide down the side of a cliff some seventy feet high on horseback to escape a band of Indians in pursuit. The ride called for a skilled equestrienne, unflinching courage and a sure-footed horse. It was impossible to rehearse the scene because the director knew that after having gone through it once neither Miss Little nor the horse could be persuaded to repeat the action.

This scene was to be the big thrill in the picture. Much care was taken in preparing it. Three camera men were stationed to catch the slide from three different angles, thus insuring a good picture from at least one of the machines.

Barely Escaped Death.

Careful instructions had been given the actress and she started on the slide. At first the horse



hesitated, but urged on he braced his forefeet and prepared to reach the bottom in safety. Everything moved swiftly, the camera men ground their machines and the director shouted encouragement through his megaphone. But about twenty feet from the bottom the horse caught his foot in a rock fissure, stumbled and hurled Miss Little over his head. She flew through the air head first, landing in a clump of mesquite bushes more than ten yards away.

Spectators rushed to her side, expecting to find her either dead or seriously injured, but aside from the shock and a number of scratches she escaped unhurt. The dumb actor in the scene was less fortunate, suffering two broken legs, and had to be shot.

This untoward incident in making the scene caused a complete revision of the scenario.

Miss Gertrude McCoy is known as another daredevil of the screen. She gives a good account of herself in every branch of athletics, besides being a skillful driver of a motor car. Miss McCoy drives her own machine and has used it to advantage in many of the pictures in which she is starred. Her most recent exploits have been in connection with what is known in the movie vernacular as "water stuff." Strange as it may seem, the stunts in her latest picture do not show up with the same dangerous thrills that really characterized their making. This is often the case in motion pictures; what looks hard is often easy.

Foolhardiness Meant Injury.

A "water-stuff" picture which almost put Miss McCoy's life in jeopardy was taken for "The Isle of Love" and was made near Jacksonville, Fla. In one of the early scenes of the photoplay the star yields to the temptation to go bathing in a pool upon a rocky bit of coast. The shore at the point where the picture was taken happened to be made up of myriads of shells and pebbles compressed into a crumbling, jagged stone formation. The water, moreover, was far more shallow than Miss McCoy suspected.

Despite the warning of her director, Edwin Middleton, she jumped boldly into the water, cutting her feet, ankles and legs severely. She was too good a picture player, however, to stop while the camera was grinding. Although suffering from a number of extremely painful cuts she bravely finished the scene. This episode, which certainly was not down on the program, laid her up for nearly a week.

As the final "punch" of "Lost in the Everglades," which is part of "Gloria's Romance," the film serial

in which Billie Burke is appearing, a perfectly good seven passenger automobile is driven straight out into the Atlantic ocean off Palm Beach, Fla. This may be termed recklessness or pure extravagance, according to one's point of view. Needless to say the damage done to the car by its immersion in the salt water was considerable.

To prove that the film manufacturers aren't the only people who can be reckless, Miss Burke wore a Lucile creation that had been specially designed for her use in the picture, and utterly regardless of the certain ruin of the frock she hopped out of the runaway auto as it cleared the first line of breakers, found herself up to her knees in the surf, laughed gayly and then waded ashore.

Auto Jumps the Gap.

In order to eliminate as much danger as possible, this scene was carefully staged beforehand; that is, everything was simplified. A sloping platform was erected at the place where the leap was to be made and well re-enforced. Across the ditch some thirty or forty feet away a pile of brush wood had been placed to break the fall as the car landed.

Down a sloping piece of ground approaching the jumping-off place Miss King came with lightning speed in her little machine and took the leap while the cameras clicked. She landed without serious mishap in the pile of brush, and beyond a severe shaking up and a few bruises was none the worse for her experience.

"It's the butts and its connected with such stunts as these," she remarked later, "that make the dangers undergone really greater than they seem to be. If something had gone wrong there might have been a very different story to tell. But—and here the but comes in—I suppose it's all in the day's work, so I have nothing to complain of," she concluded with a laugh.

The dangers have also to be faced by the camera man. An example is the recent experience of a news camera man in Mexico. A pictorial weekly representative, hearing that Villa's body was being brought to Chihuahua for identification, hurried thither.

"From the time I crossed the border until I returned," he said, telling of his adventures, "I was a constant target for Mexican abuse. It was not until I reached Chihuahua, however, that any physical violence was offered. Then there was a demonstration in the market place despite the fact that I was under the protection of a Mexican army officer. Shots were fired at me and I was glad to get back to the good old U. S. A. with a whole skin; but I got some pretty good pictures after all."

IN THE LIMELIGHT

NEW AMERICAN COUNTESS

The new countess of Sandwich, formerly Miss Alberta Sturges, the daughter of a Chicago banker and a stepdaughter of the late Francis H. Leggett of New York, is scarcely known in her native country. Her mother, Mrs. Leggett, went to Europe to live many years ago, and Miss Sturges was educated in Paris and made her debut in London 15 years ago, when her mother became one of the lavish hostesses in the American colony who inaugurated the brilliant regime of King Edward as soon as he ascended the throne.

The late earl of Sandwich and his nephew, the new earl, had a serious disagreement about the inclusion of the American girl into the family. The bridegroom's father, Rear Admiral Victor Montagu, who died last January, and his wife, a daughter of the earl of Hardwicke, fully approved of the marriage. Yet even they could not win over the old earl. Sixty-six years old and a widower of two marriages when George Charles Montagu made Miss Sturges his bride, Lord Sandwich vowed that, although he had never had any children, he would take into himself a new wife at once and defeat Miss Sturges' plans of becoming countess of Sandwich by bringing up a family. He plunged at once into the gayeties of society, accepted invitations right and left, but soon found this to be a bore, while his new niece-in-law succeeded in impressing him with the fact that she had married her husband for love and was, after all, a charming lady.



RUSSIA'S LATEST HERO



Gen. A. A. Brusiloff, commander of the Russian offensive against the Austrians and latest hero of the czar's realm, is sixty-four years old and looks forty-five. Brusiloff lives by nerves, strenuous work and a sense of duty. He eats very little. He regards dinner as a necessary evil and it is finished in not more than 20 minutes. Immediately after, he goes to the work-room of his head of the staff and they are occupied together till late at night.

The soldiers worship him. He never courts popularity among them. He talks to them seldom and then with a matter-of-fact abruptness, but in his few words lies a knowledge of the soldiers' soul; a skill in finding the direct road to the soldiers' heart, which could never be taught, but which must be deeply rooted in the man himself.

Brusiloff's physical endurance at sixty-four is said to be amazing. Even now one of the best cavalrymen in Europe, he can outdistance expert and youthful horsemen. Weather does not exist for him.

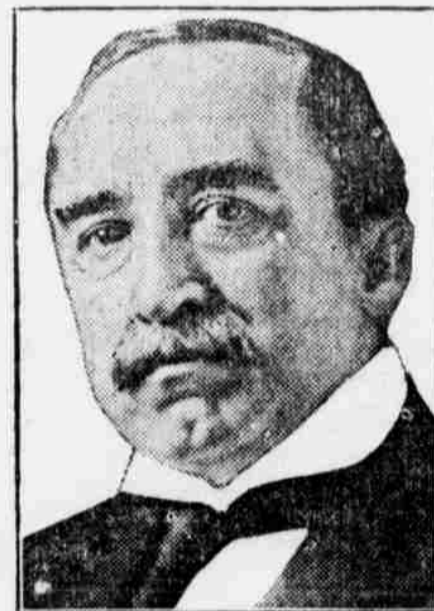
He is noted for his laconic orders. "Hold out, whatever happens!" And they hold out. No frenzied attacks, no tempestuous cananade will drive them back when such an order has been given. There is in currency the following soldier's remark:

"What, retreat? Impossible! We are Brusiloff's!"

HUGHES' CAMPAIGN LEADER

William Russell Willcox, the new chairman of the Republican national committee, who was chosen by Mr. Hughes personally to manage his campaign, is an entirely self-made man. He was born on an upstate New York farm, never saw a city till he was seventeen, went to New York 30 years ago and immediately took an active interest in politics. He has held three important offices, in each of which he distinguished himself as an energetic and capable public servant.

He was park commissioner under Mayor Seth Low in 1902. Two years later President Roosevelt appointed him postmaster of New York, and on the creation of the public service commission in 1907 he was selected by Governor Hughes as its first chairman. He retired at the expiration of his five-year term on February 1, 1913, after having virtually completed the contracts for the new subways which are now being built. It was during his administration of the department of parks that Mr. Willcox, who is always a most forbearing man, proved that it was not impossible to prod him out of a state of courtesy. One of the subway contractors had squatted in Bryant park and despite Mr. Willcox's most engaging smiles and politest requests refused to move. One day the commissioner of parks appeared on the scene with 30 husky laborers, a strong police escort and a number of wagons, and without further parley proceeded to tear up and cart away all the obstructions.



CENSOR OF ARMY NEWS



Maj. Douglas MacArthur, who has been appointed military aid to the secretary of war and military "censor" of the war department, is a born executive and one of the recognized military experts of the general staff.

Major MacArthur comes from a military family. His father, Lieutenant General MacArthur, made a name that will go down in military history.

In 1890 a competitive examination was held at Milwaukee to fill a vacancy in West Point. MacArthur was one of the candidates. He outdistanced his competitors and won the appointment. When he was graduated from the military academy, in 1903, he was number one in a class of 100. He was sent to the Philippines as second lieutenant of engineers and participated in a number of campaigns in the islands.

In 1904 he was sent as military observer during the Russo-Japanese war, later traveling through China, Indo-China, Java and India. As captain of engineers he participated in the first mobilization of troops on the Mexican border in 1911. He went with General Funston's troops and participated in the occupation of Vera Cruz. In 1913 he was assigned to duty as a member of the general staff corps on duty at the war department and was reassigned to that duty in April of this year.