

THE WINDSORS

THEY WERE THEIR OWN FAVORITE STARS



Gable and Garbo by proxy

Royalty and rulers of the world are movie fans! The cinema tastes of the great are disclosed for the first time in this article

BY CORNELIUS VANDERBILT, JR.

"MOVIES are changing the face of the world," is a common line of conversation today. And, take it from one who has rambled about some, it is actually so. No catchpenny phrase is this well-worn expression. To prove it, make a hasty survey, just for fun, of the many big and little shots from sunup to sunset who are making our world go round, and then acquaint yourself with their taste in movies. You'll soon find out that the famous know their films—even as you and I.

Late in the spring of 1937, I visited Herman Rogers at Château Cande, at Monts near Tours, France. Mr. Rogers, if you remember, was the likable chap who acted as sort of major-domo for the Duke of Windsor and Madame Warfield, in the then absence of the Charles Bedaux, and Aunt Bessie Merryman. Hundreds of newspaper men and photographers representing the eyes and ears of the world were constantly stationed outside the château gates. It was physically impossible for any one of the distinguished occupants to leave without being descended upon by a veritable band of literary vultures. So, during all their long confinement, the principals in the world's greatest love story spent half an hour every single evening in a private showing of 16mm films of each other which they had taken and developed themselves. Thus were they able to see themselves as others saw them. And to try, if they were sufficiently interested, to rectify their faults.

Again, at Castle Wasserleonburg in the Carinthian Mountains of Austria which I also visited at about this time, I found a full-sized motion-picture projector of American manufacture set up in readiness for the royal honeymooners by their lessor and good friend. This chap—a young German—has an American mother and all his life he has been able to go to the movies whenever he felt like it. Thus it was inconceivable to him that Wally and Davy hadn't seen the latest films, which, incidentally, he gave to them as a wedding present. The first film they saw in their honeymoon home was "Kid Galahad"; next, "Captains Courageous."

From their 16mm films of themselves, extra prints were made and rushed to England, where the Duke and Duchess of Kent and other friends and admirers of the exiled ex-king devoured them from time to time. Even George VI and Queen Elizabeth were given a private showing of these very private films, set to the tune of "Small Hotel," which was the former Edward VIII's and his lady's favorite modern melody.