

# "Gone With The Wind"

# Subtle Propaganda Of Anti Negro Film Told by Reviewer

Dream of Old South Comes to Life in  
Technicolored Brilliance on Screen

By Dan Burley

**SUGAR-COATED** in technicolored brilliance and making the most of its running time of three hours, 37 minutes to ram home its anti-Negro propaganda, Margaret Mitchell's widely discussed "Gone With the Wind" now lives on the silver screen.

When one sees "Gone With The Wind" he understands more clearly why the State of Georgia kept Angelo Herndon on the chain gang; why the State of Alabama persists in holding in shackles the remnants of the nine Scottsboro Boys; and why the urge to don the white hood and robe of the Ku Klux Klan throbs in the breasts of Miss Mitchell's Gallant Knights of the Old South.

"Gone With the Wind," to this reviewer who saw the picture Saturday at the Capitol Theatre represents the pus oozing from beneath the scab of a badly healed wound and aggravated by the subtlety of its presentation by the master directors and technicians of Hollywood. At once it tells every Negro in this country that he is still a chattel slave in the eyes of his former masters, and at the same time tries to convert to this viewpoint through various devices the millions of the various races who will see it.

## Tells Love of Scarlett O'Hara

All too vivid is the impression one carries away of the tempestuous Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh), whose reaction to the invasion by the blue-clad Yankees of a fair-land South provides the major points of interest in the picture as it did in the novel.

Briefly, the story describes most of the life of Scarlett O'Hara, a typical belle of the Old South and her loves in which she takes on three husbands while still loving an ideal not present in the weak-charactered Ashley Wilkes (Leslie Howard).

The picture shows on the screen in actuality the Margaret Mitchell story, starting at page one, chapter one, and carrying through to the last bit of dialogue when Rhett Butler (Clark Gable) rushes pellmell from his home, telling his wife, Scarlett, he doesn't "give a damn" what happens to her. Faithful portrayal of Miss Mitchell's idea constitutes the main feature of the film. It drives home the diverting belief of southern die-hards that all Negroes are "darkies" with their "place"—the cotton patch, the kitchen, the stable, and the henhouse unmistakably presented.

## Husband Dies of Measles in Civil War

Scarlett, beautiful and unscrupulous, loves Ashley Wilkes who obeys his "honor" and marries Melanie Hamilton (Olivia De Havilland). For spite Scarlett marries Charles Hamilton (Rand Brooks), who dies from measles-induced pneumonia in military camp at the outbreak of the Civil War. Rhett Butler, soldier of fortune and glamorous boy of the gay southern capitals, pays court to the lovely Scarlett, but unsuccessfully as she battles to salvage the O'Hara plantation in Georgia from the Yankee soldiers and the "carpetbaggers" marching into the Southland on the heels of the Union victory. She marries Frank Kennedy, fiancee of her sister, Suella, to get enough money to rehabilitate her plantation, and when he is killed in a "chivalrous" attempt to blot out an encampment of renegade soldiers, she finally agrees and weds Rhett Butler.

The birth of a child to Rhett and Scarlett and the hopes the father has for its future provide material of highly emotional acting and the furtherance of the Southern conception of "chivalry."

## Hattie McDaniel Brilliant As "Mammy"

Buxom Hattie McDaniel as Mammy performs most brilliantly and convincingly and "steals" with consummate ease nearly every scene she is shown in. Most touching is the scene in which she pleads with Melanie that the latter should convert Rhett Butler to the point of allowing the burial of his baby daughter.

Prissy, (Butterfly McQueen) should convince most of the audiences who see "Gone With the Wind" that Negroes are ignorant, superstitious, incapable "darkies," for her part as servant girl to the impetuous Scarlett could not have been better fashioned for such a purpose.

While the epithets, "Kike," "Wop," "Polack," "Sheeny," and etc. are conspicuous by their absence in most American-made talking pictures, the offensive term, "darky" is spoken with all the venom the author intended to express when she wrote "Gone With the Wind." The Negro who sees the picture leaves the theatre with a scene played by Scarlett and Prissy indelibly stamped on his mind.

Scarlett has been acting as a nurse in the military hospital in Atlanta as Gen. Sherman's blue-clad troops close in on the doomed citadel of Bourbon aristocracy, Melanie, wife of the man Scarlett loves, is in the throes of childbirth in her home, unattended but for Prissy and Scarlett. The former has, in "characteristic darky" volubleness, told Doctor Meade she knows all the arts of the midwife and is capable of delivering the baby. Confident that all will be okay, Doctor Meade continues his work at the hospital and refuses to come to the maternal bedside. Then, with breath-taking drama, Prissy admits she knows absolutely nothing about childbirths, or the duties of a midwife and with rolling eyes and flashing teeth chatters out her fright at the rear of the Yankee cannon, the death that stalks all around her and at the thought of being present at the birth of the baby.

## Scarlett's Slap Contains a Hitch of South

With all the hate, contempt and exasperation a master can exhibit toward his slave, lower to him than a dog, Scarlett slaps Prissy, knocking her halfway down a long stairway, and goes about performing the midwife work herself.

In that slap was Miss Mitchell's and the Old South's answer to everything the modern Negro has done. In it was the impact of a blow the reactionary forces at work even at this moment to undo the efforts of Abraham Lincoln, Wendell Phillips, John Brown and the countless others who helped liberate the American Negro, hope to eventually strike.

The author of "Gone With the Wind" and the class she represents through Scarlett O'Hara slapped Prissy, the servant girl,

and slapped at Joe Louis, the heavyweight boxing champion; at Marian Anderson, the world's greatest contralto; at the memory of Booker T. Washington; at George Washington Carver and at Jesse Owens upholding American supremacy before Hitler in the 1936 Olympics. Miss Mitchell through Scarlett O'Hara slapped down Prissy, and slapped at equal rights guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States. She slapped Negro suffrage and the resounding whack of Scarlett's palm on that black cheek contained all the scorn the Old South feels for the thousands of Negroes who died at Bunker Hill; for Crispus Attucks, the first American to die in the Revolution. It slapped down the charge of the courageous black troops up San Juan Hill and pushed into the dust the record of valor achieved in 1918 in France by the old 15th, 24th, the 369th, the Eighth Illinois; the labor battalions from Dixie and the loyal Negro at home.

## Difference In Technique Shown In Scene

Another scene of "Gone With the Wind" shows Scarlett as a businesswoman in Atlanta, making a buggy trip to her lumber camp. She is attacked on a bridge by a renegade soldier, (Yakima Canutt), and his Negro companion, (Blue Washington). Subtly, the audience is given the perverted view that Negroes are potential rapists and despoilers of fair white virtue, when the renegade and his Negro friend struggle to pull Scarlett from her buggy.

To the rescue comes Big Sam (Everett Brown), former slave and strawboss on the O'Hara plantation, who happens to be sitting around a nearby fire with other Negroes bemoaning the fate that has overcome their former masters. Onto the bridge rushes Nis gigantic black man, his eyes aflame with the servile desire to be of aid to his mistress.

In some mysterious hocus-pocus at which Hollywood is peculiarly adept, the white renegade is disposed of without Big Sam's black hands ever touching him. But a Negro is allowed to kill a Negro as the strawboss wallops Blue Washington into the swirling, muddy waters of the river below the bridge.

## Selznick Production Costly Venture

The David O. Selznick production of "Gone With the Wind," representing an investment of \$3,900,000, is the most expensive attempt to date to show the too rapidly progressing Negro his "proper place."

Alleging to glorify the "romantic idealism" of the Old South, it instead, pays homage to the pampered daughters of fabulously rich landlords as princesses at the expense of horse-whipped and thoroughly cowed Negroes and the "po' white trash" that worked in the textile mills.

"Gone With the Wind" achieves its aim of slandering the Union Army of Emancipation as one of murder, rapine, terrorism, plundering and destruction. It besmirches the name of President Lincoln by implication and thumbs its nose on behalf of the disillusioned South at march of American democracy.

The unpleasant, and at times disgusting, lewdness suggested by Scarlett's philanderings in love were intended to show the ideal state of things so worshipped by the bewildered offspring of the Confederacy.

What Sherman and Grant destroyed are certainly "Gone With the Wind," as the picture implies. With education, with understanding and brotherly love increasingly entering the equation of human relations, the dreams, the hopes and the wishes of the frustrated fringe of the Old South for reality can best be answered in the words of the comic character: "Them Days Are Gone Forever!"