

NEWSREEL ASSOCIATION PRESENTS:

"NEWS OF THE DAY"

At a get-together last Friday night for the stars of the Royal Command Show, Reginald Bromhead and Bob Wolf, joint chairmen of the Cinematograph Trade Benevolent Society, greeted the artistes from Britain and Hollywood who have come to make their bow at the Empire tonight before Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. Preparations for the Royal show had been going on for many months, but this was the first time that the stars had met the stars.

But this night of glamour was the elegant preliminary to a weekend of intensive rehearsal. Saturday and Sunday passed, busy days and nights of preparation. Then the great day itself. Monday, October the 27th, a cool, Autumn morning in the City of London, its early silence broken only by the sounds of the great markets.

As the City stirred to life, Leicester Square was already wide awake. The square where so much entertainment history has been made was prepared for yet another day when it would be royally honoured. And London still slept as the little army of Mrs. Hopps marched into the huge theatre to begin their work.

The front of house had yet to be decorated. Display pieces were put into showcases and inside the foyer, every scrap of brass was given the extra polish and shine reserved for such occasions as this.

Day had not dawned inside the theatre for work had gone on all night. Seats had been removed, but the rostrum where Her Majesty now sits had still to be built and another small army began the task of erection and decoration to make a royal box fit for the Queen.

Down on the huge stage, sets were still being built and scenery being moved into the best positions so that there should be no hitch when the curtain went up. There was still a lot to be done. It was already past breakfast time and the people of London were flocking to work - the typists, the clerks, the millions of "someones in the City."

Back at the Empire the order was "flowers for the fair and the famous" Load upon load, basket upon basket of them to decorate both inside and out. Yes, the Empire's a big place - you ask the florists!

Soon the stars were beginning to arrive. Maurice Denham and Veronica Hurst were first there, but soon they came thick and fast. Here's Patrice Munsel.

James Hayter was followed in by Bill Owen and screen villain, Herbert Lom. Next on the list the man whose films just won't let him get a haircut, Richard Todd.

Out in the streets, crowd barriers were put in place and preparations made to keep the roads closed to traffic. As the morning wore on, the vacuum cleaners went to work.

Mr. and Mrs. John McCallum (Google Withers to you) were going over their lines together as their fellow-stars assembled on stage. There are a hundred-and-twelve artistes in the show, so producer John Varley had quite a handful. Choosing a baton was Louis Levy, whose job it is to conduct the orchestra of top-flight musicians gathered in this theatre tonight.

The Royal Box was soon fixed and the handsome, gilded chairs put in place for the Royal guests. Down on the stage, dancing star Gene Kelly checked up a few points while Douglas Fairbanks looked rather concerned about the whole affair. The morning drew to its close all too soon. "Lunch-time" said the clock and already in the square mile of the city, the people took their snacks in restaurants, cafes - or even outside.

The performers, too, took a short break - for even the famous get famished. And what a chance for star-spotters. Here are Michael Medwin, Anthony Nicholls, Peggy Cummins and Joan Greenwood.

Harold Warrender was at a table with Evelyn Keyes. Nearby were Edward Chapman and Guy Middleton - but naming them all becomes impossible - pick the stars out for yourself.

London was soon back at work after lunch. In the Stock Exchange British funds were in renewed demand and strengthened considerably. Over in the Baltic came news that the good ship "Almason" had been chartered to bring sugar here for Britain.

Life continued in its stately fashion at Lloyds, too, and there was plenty of excitement over the "Queen Mary" docking at Southampton later in the day.

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Elsewhere London was entertaining herself at the Model Engineers Exhibition which his Royal Highness had opened - in between inaugurating national playing fields by the dozen. And the Motor Show was offering its temptations. But the only cars you can buy are those no-one can afford - well, unless you have a few thousand to spare.

Back to the the Empire, the stage show was beginning to take on its final shape and John Varley was adding that little extra polish. And the great theatre quietened for a moment as they watched lovely ballerina Tamara Toumanova go through her paces.

Laurence Olivier is followed onto the stage by Vivien Leigh, with a professional audience out in front. Their part in the stage show is to re-enact a scene from "Lady Hamilton."

Manager Charles Penley checked the smartness of the usherettes who showed you into the theatre - nothing could be overlooked for this great night - least of all the film itself which was hurried straight to the projection box.

The Newsreels set up their cameras, ready to record the royal occasion for 350,000,000 people. Backstage the feeling of tension grows - the show is soon to begin. The electricians give a final check. Now the great moment for which they all have worked -
Curtain Up!