some of the bills before her horrified eyes and suggested that she use the rest for wallpaper. I said goodbye to Ausenberg and advised him to find a doctor. Then I told Miguel to park the truck in front of the Paso del Norte and caught the night train to Los Angeles.

Griffith and Frank Woods congratulated me on the Mexican coverage, but I was a bit uncertain about the picture. Had I directed Villa or had he directed me? “Some of the shots are good and bloody,” Griffith commented. “The censors may faint. But that’s Mutual’s headache.” For once he sat down while he talked. “They’re pushing us for the complete feature. You’ll finish it by playing young Villa. Cahanne will direct.”

In those early days, because money was always short and transportation difficult, motion-picture crews never traveled far to location. San Fernando Valley for Mexican scenes to Portuguese Bend and San Pedro for sea shots, and San Bernardino for desert pictures, was the usual range. We made the Life of Villa studio sequences at Fine Arts and filmed most of the exteriors, including the “Villa house at Parral,” around the old San Fernando mission. When we finished and the cutting room was through, we had a feature-length five-reeler. Typically Mutual never told us how much the picture grossed, but it ran for a long time at the all-Mexican theater on Spring Street and for some years was a regular part of the Cinco de Mayo fiesta.

One day when I was taking it easy between studio shots, Buck Friedman came looking for me. “Two guys at the gate asking to see you. One says his name is London.”

“What’s his first name?”

“I didn’t ask.”

“If it’s Jack, bring them in.

That was how I met Jack London and Wyatt Earp. London was getting on in years, but his seamed face was still as rugged as his stories, which had thrilled me when I was growing up. His books had been published in most countries of the world. The legend-

ary Earp was tall and a little stooped, but I could still see him as the marshal of Tombstone.

“So you’re the man who rode with Villa?” London shook hands and my fingers tingled. For a man who had only a year more to live, he appeared to be in vigorous health. “How was it? Wyatt and I would like to hear about him.” Earp nodded and looked interested.

I gave them a short rundown on what had happened between Juárez and Mexico City. When I had finished, London looked at Earp. “How do you like that? Here we’ve been trying to live up to our reputations and this guy comes out of nowhere and rides with the man who thumbed his nose at President Wilson.” He turned back to me. “Great stuff. I envy you.”

Jack mentioned that he was thinking about writing a Villa book. “The man’s fabulous.”

I advised him to wait. “Right now, Mexico is just one big shooting gallery. You probably wouldn’t have much trouble getting in but the odds are against you getting out.”

“You did,” he pointed out.

“Yes, but I was under the protection of the strongest army in Mexico. I had twenty thousand soldiers to back me up.”

I asked them to dinner that night before I was called back to the set. We went to Levy’s, and London started in almost at once reviling his publishers. “They’re worse than your censors,” he complained. “They won’t hear of me sleeping with a woman, no matter how I try to clean it up. They’re a bunch of goddamned eunuchs.”

I told him I had the same trouble with the movie moralists, then tried to draw both men out about their own doings. Neither wanted to talk about himself, but I did manage to get a few good details from Earp about the Clanton family and the famous shoot-out at the OK Corral. London reminisced about Klondike days and the circumstances that spurred him to write The Call of the Wild.

I was listening with both ears when Charlie Chaplin, sitting
I called him over and he bowed to us with a smile and an arm and produced an order pad. “Cut it out,” I cautioned him, “or I’ll tell Senator you’re breaking your contract.”

He quicked up one side of his mustache in a typical leer. When I introduced myself, he smiled. "You’re the kid, aren’t you? Famed the baddies, huh? I looked at London and nodded. "I know you, too. You almost made me go to London and dig for gold."

I had a fine time just seeing them. I Instrumented. "I had a fine time hearing them and later record Jack went back to his Villa story. Earl followed him there and took some of his experiences. What was my screw-up that in Cleopatra? I did a fine time keeping to them. Later, I think I instrumented. When we got off the train, I didn’t see Chaplin again for ten years.

When the Villa sequences were finished, Frank Wood told me to take a week off. I seemed to have almost no interest in me. He was worried because he had lost weight in Mexico. "Get some honest-to-God American food under your belt. That beans and chili diet will kill you."

I visited him at the Villa later to see how pictures were made. He was sitting in Hollywood with me or 1.

When we got out of the car, the director, D.W. Griffith, was standing there. He looked at me and said, "I’m happy to see you. I’m out and about, too."

We walked up the stairs to his office. He was sitting behind his desk. He said, "I love you."

We took a trip to California and gave me the same change that was our honeymoon.