

1939

PAUL TERRY

*For Twenty-five Years One of
the Industry's Better*

Known Animators

By **ROLAND JONES**

FROM coast to coast is an ordinary phrase, but unusual in the instance of Paul H. Terry's career, for he reversed the process of the industry's eastern-born. Whereas they, in many cases, sought cinematic fame and fortune by journeying to the Pacific's strands, Terry, who was born in San Mateo, California, is sitting pretty right up in New Rochelle, N. Y., where are conceived and produced those world-famed Terry-Toons.

This objective was arrived at, to be sure, in a roundabout way, the first phase having been Terry's newspaper cartooning and illustrating on the Call, Examiner and Bulletin in San Francisco.

Supplementing this wielding of the pen for readers residing in and about the Golden Gate, the Terry trek got under way with a stopover in Montana where he worked for the Anaconda Standard in the same capacity as for his Frisco bosses, and landed in New York in 1911 and rolled up his artistic sleeves in the interests of the New York Press and King Features, drawing for the latter a popular comic strip of that day.

The theatrical cartoon was something of a springboard via which he leaped, but carefully, into the realm of animation. The first real results from an industry standpoint are recorded in the archives as having come about when he gave motion to drawings at the old Thanhouser studio. It was a 400-ft. subject entitled "Little Herman," and is declared by contemporaries to have been a right mirthful subject.

Then was created "Farmer Alfalfa" which was so successfully received by the public that Terry uses the character every now and then in his present-day footage.

Came America's entry into the World War, and went Terry. Uncle Sam evidently held the pen mightier than the sword, for his new recruit didn't get a gun but a crow-quill, drafted into drafting, as it were. In the picture department he worked along in triumphant and effective fashion, incidentally being commissioned to make an animated history of the conflict.

Advent of peace found Terry enlisting in the forces of Paramount Pictures which had set up an animation department. During this aspect of his business saga, the determination siezed him to set up his own studio which he did, and out of which issued the famous "Aesop's Fables" which he released through Pathe.

Where there's progress, there's change, so it's said. He inaugurated a Long Island City studio, then moved up to the Edison Studio in the Bronx, and began releasing via Educational.

Today, the fountain of Terry-Toons is a thoroughly modern studio in New Rochelle, employing some 130 hands, all skilled in the imparting of life, motion and voice-expression to the characters created on the drawing boards.

When Educational and 20th-Fox parted, Terry stayed on with the latter through a distribution arrangement, and joined MPPDA in mid-June of 1938.

During Paul Terry's notable career in the film industry, he has produced more than 1,000 pictures. In October of the current year he celebrates 25 years of continuous work in the cartoon field, which he helped to pioneer. He asserts that he intends "to keep on doing tomorrow what he is doing today, and what he did yesterday."