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**The True Story Of
Jesse James
(C'SCOPE-COLOR)**

Poorly plotted with confusing flashbacks, Jesse James takes another screen ride. Routine results probable.

Hollywood, Feb. 15.

20th-Fox release of Herbert B. Swope Jr. production. Stars Robert Wagner, Jeffrey Hunter, Hope Lange; costars Agnes Moorehead. Directed by Nicholas Ray. Screenplay, Walter Newman; based on a screenplay by Nunnally Johnson; camera (De Luxe Color), Joe MacDonald; editor, Robert Simpson; music, Leigh Harline, conducted by Lionel Newman. Previewed Feb. 13, '57. Running time, 92 MINS.

Jesse James Robert Wagner
Frank James Jeffrey Hunter
Zee Hope Lange
Mrs. Samuel Agnes Moorehead
Cole Younger Alan Hale
Remington Alan Baxter
Rev. Jethro Bailey John Carradine
Anne Rachael Stephens
Dr. Samuel Barney Phillips
Jim Younger Biff Elliott
Major Cobb Frank Overton
Attorney Walker Barry Atwater
Rowena Cobb Marian Seldes
Askew Chubby Johnson
Charley Frank Gorshin
Robby Carl Thayer
Hillstrom John Doucette
Sheriff Trump Robert Adler
Sheriff Yoe Clancy Cooper
Bill Stiles Sumner Williams
Deputy Leo Tom Greenway
Deputy Ed Mike Steen
Peter Jason Wingreen
Wiley Aaron Saxon
Bob Younger Anthony Ray
Tucker Clegg Hoyt
Hughie Tom Pittman
Clall Miller Louis Zito
Sam Wells Mark Hickman
Dick Liddell Adam Marshal
Bill Ryan Joseph Di Reda
Jorgenson J. Frederik Albeck
Archie, age 4 Kellogg Junge Jr.

On celluloid Jesse James has had more lives than a cat, and "The True Story of Jesse James" suggests it's time screen writers let him roll over and play dead for real and reel. In the many past film reworkings of the 19th century delinquent's shoddy career just about every angle has been covered. There's nothing new to report in this CinemaScope-De Luxe Color glorification. It's a routine offering for the outdoor market with Robert Wagner and Jeffrey Hunter in top roles.

Herbert B. Swope's production had plenty of opportunity for commercial action to bolster a formula plot, but these opportunities are mostly dissipated by slowing the film with a story told in nu-

merous flashbacks. The attempt to view the James character through the eyes of pro and con contemporaries only makes for confusion, depriving an audience of clear-cut plot line that might keep it interested. Dialog, too, is poor, continually veering from period to modern idioms in the Walter Newman script, based on Nunnally Johnson's screenplay for 20th-Fox's 1939 "Jesse James."

Nicholas Ray directs in stock fashion, adding little of substance to the picture. Admittedly, he didn't have much to work with, but there's no apparent attempt to help build performances into meaningful portrayals—an assist all of the cast members sorely needed. As Jesse and Frank James, respectively, Wagner and Hunter go through the motions of telling why the former took up the gun when Northern sympathizers made it difficult for them to live in Missouri after the War between States. Both are adequate to the demands of script and direction, as is Hope Lange, playing Zee, the girl who married Jesse. Costar Agnes Moorehead goes way overboard in her role of the mother of Jesse and Frank.

Alan Hale, as Cole Younger; Alan Baxter, the railroad detective; John Doucette, a sheriff, John Carradine, Barney Phillips, Biff Elliot, Frank Overton, Barry Atwater, Marian Seldes and Chubby Johnson are among accepted performers in the large cast that acts out the incidents in the James career. Joe MacDonald's photography does a good action job on showing the various sorties against banks and trains by the James gang, and the period decorations come off okay.
Brog.