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ARIZONA

Hollywood, Nov. 19.

Columbia release of Wesley Ruggles production, directed by Ruggles. Stars Jean Arthur; features Warren William, Porter Hall. Screenplay, Claude Binyon, based upon story by Clarence Buddington Kelland; camera, Joseph Walker, Harry Hallenberger, Fayte Brown; editors, Otto Meyer, William Lyon; asst director, Norman Deming; music, Victor Young; musical director, M. W. Soloff. Reviewed in Projection Room Nov. 18, '40. Running time, 125 MINS.

Phoebe Titus.....	Jean Arthur
Peter Muncie.....	William Holden
Jefferson Carteret.....	Warren William
Lazarus Ward.....	Porter Hall
Solomon Warner.....	Paul Harvey
Haley.....	George Chandler
Pete Kitchen.....	Byron Foulger
Grant Oury.....	Regis Toomey
Estevan Orhoa.....	Paul Lopez
Bart Massey.....	Colln Tapley
Hilario Gallego.....	Uvaldo Varela
Judge Bogardus.....	Edgar Buchanan
Joe Briggs.....	Earl Crawford
Sam Hughes.....	Griff Barnett
Meyer.....	Ludwig Hardt
Terry.....	Patrick Moriarty
Joe.....	Frank Darlen
Timmins.....	Syd Saylor
Longstreet.....	Wade Crosby
Mano.....	Frank Hill
Teresa.....	Nina Campana
Capt. Hunter.....	Addison Richards

Another expensive epic of western pioneering, this time the early settlement days of Tucson, Arizona, unfolds with usual melodramatics, including bad men, warpath Indians, hardy settlers, wagon trains and romance. Despite overlength, it's exciting entertainment of its kind that will click profitable biz in regular runs as solo or billtopper. Needs exploitation hypo for generally extended runs.

Providing fictional trimmings to factual history of early Tucson years, picture is set against scenically expansive background. Unreeling at slower tempo than is general policy for lusty western of epic proportions, picture devotes much footage to exposition of characters and incidental sidelights that veer from direct story telling. This procedure in both script and direction results in bogging down of audience interest in several instances, and prevents sustained drive of picture through the period depicted.

Story opens in 1860 when Tucson was nothing more than collection of adobe huts. Jean Arthur, first American woman settler of the place, is a frontier hellcat with plenty courage, spirit and vision in future of valley. Wandering adventurer William Holden rides in from East, falls in love, but goes on to California. Miss Arthur sets up freighter supply train to Fort Yuma, and competes with partnership of Porter Hall and Warren William to start trouble. Pair attempts to block her at every turn, even setting Indians against her wagon trains and stealing her savings. Holden returns with Union infantry from California to see her through successfully to establishment of dreamed ranch, stock of cattle and marriage of pair.

Picture's reputed cost set at \$2,000,000. There's a constructed replica of a townsite, with hundreds of extras culled from present Tucson populace for authenticity. Indians' attack on the cattle herd and Holden's turn of latter into Apaches is the highlight production punch of picture. Much footage is devoted to pointing up strange and unusual characters among the early settlers, which might be okay for historical purposes but drag on entertainment side.

Jean Arthur dominates throughout with strongly convincing performance of a pioneer girl, shading character believably from hardness in dealing with men to softening for romance with Holden. Latter clicks as the hero, and rates more western assignments needing he-man zing. Warren William is the slick conniver of gentlemanly manner; Porter Hall fine as head of town's outlaws; Paul Harvey good as sole storekeeper. Edgar Buchanan gives an arresting characterization as town bewhiskered judge. Support includes typical western types. Photography excellent.

Walt.

VARIETY