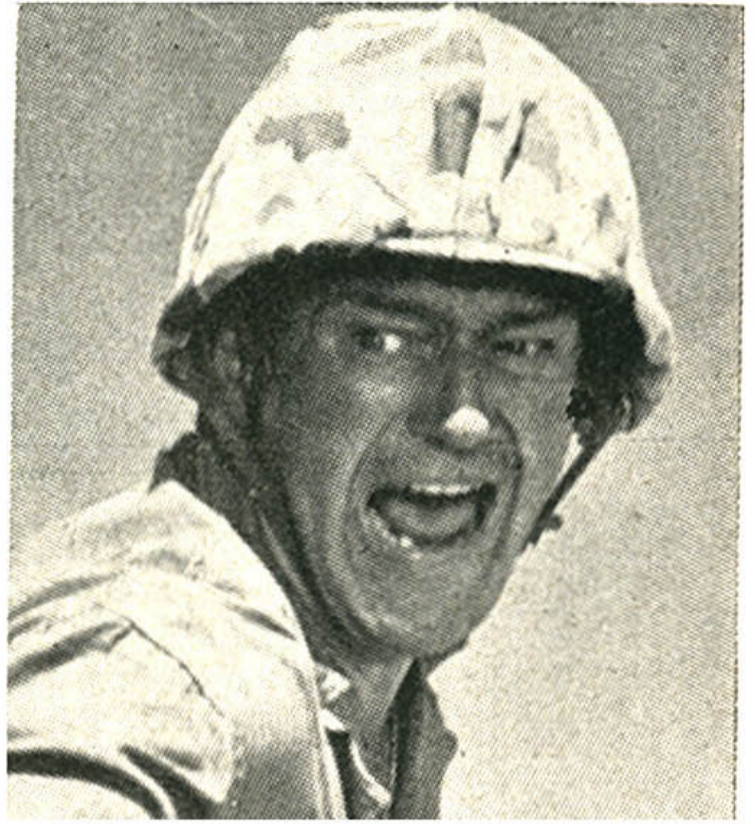


John Wayne: Main Street's Hero

Big, rugged John Wayne carries dynamite in his large fists. This, and the charm in his crinkly eyes, give him tremendous pull at box-offices all over the country. His drawing power is especially potent in the small towns, where any John Wayne picture, whether it is new or 10 years old, will pack the house. Reason: adventure-film fans know they can expect at least one good fight, and lots of action in any of

WAYNE IN IN OLD OKLAHOMA

OldMagazineArticles.com



JOHN WAYNE LENDS EQUAL CREDIBILITY TO HIS ROLE AS A MIDDLE-AGED CAVALRYMAN IN HIS CURRENT *SHE WORE A YELLOW RIBBON*, AND THAT OF A YOUNG MARINE IN HIS FORTHCOMING *SANDS OF IWO JIMA*.

his films. Result: John Wayne has this year reached fourth place among Hollywood's box-office champs.

Wayne reached this eminence by turning out film after film for 18 years. Working with a steady, un-nervous strength for four different studios—Republic, RKO, Argosy and Warner Bros.—he shifts back and forth between Westerns, sea-epics and war pictures. With each movie he makes (most of them re-hashes of standard action-film plots, but a few of them film classics), his fans grow.

One female fan summed up his appeal for women with: "He doesn't look like an actor—he looks like a real man." Men just put themselves in Wayne's characters, and none can imagine his not coming out top man in a fight. Montgomery Clift, explaining why he wanted to play the scrappy cowboy in *Red River*, in which he bests Wayne in a bloody fight, said: "Imagine *me*, beating up John Wayne!"

At 41, the 6-foot-4-inch, 225-pound Wayne looks and acts more like a line-gang foreman than a screen celebrity. He happened into acting via a job as prop man at 20th Century-Fox, where John Ford, now his good friend, saw him, started him acting in West-

OldMagazineArticles.com



ONE SURE-FIRE INGREDIENT IN EVERY WAYNE FILM IS A FIGHT.

erns, later gave him his first big break in the 1938 hit, *Stagecoach*.

He's a great deal like the roles he plays, except he's bigger than he photographs, not nearly as gangling, not at all shy, a great talker. He's in his element when he can appear unannounced on a Western set, stop production while he backslaps and shakes hands with all the extras he knows, swap lies, and then go into a whooping-and-hollering round of puppy-like wrestling with some old crony like Ward Bond. Between pictures, Wayne's favorite recreations are all-night poker sessions with the John Ford gang, and fishing and hunting with his wife, former Mexican star Esperanza Bauer.

Of his success, he has this to say: "I guess I've made more bad pictures than anybody. But I think people were getting fed up with all those pictures about sick people and their minds. They were ready for some open-air action when I came along."

Quick

December 9, 1949: p. 48

OldMagazineArticles.com