

HULLO MARMADUKE

Year of release: 1924 • Scenario: Beaumont Smith

Initially scripted under the working title, *The King of Australia*,¹ *Hullo Marmaduke* is the story of a naive young remittance man and his adventures in Australia. It was the first of two moving pictures to star English variety comedian Claude Dampier during his second lengthy visit to the Australasian region, the other being *The Adventures of Algy* (1925). Both films were written, directed and produced by Beaumont Smith. Dampier was given leave of absence from his contract with Fullers' Theatres to take part in shooting, as was Jimmy Taylor, then a member of Dampier's revue company. Another prominent Australian-based vaudeville performer to appear in the film was [Cyril Northcote](#). *Hullo Marmaduke* is now considered a lost film.

The youngest son of a noble English family, Marmaduke is sent out to Australia on the R.M.S. Osterley with his faithful valet Huggett. At Fremantle he is swindled by two card sharps out of most of his money. With his remaining money he travels to Adelaide and then the gold fields where he hopes to make his fortune. On the voyage he meets up with Mrs Mary Morton, a barmaid, and her young daughter Margie who are searching for their husband and father, Mike Morton. Mary is later killed during a burglary, however. Complicating matters is the fact that one of the men is Mary's husband. With her dying breath she asks Marmaduke to look after her daughter. Faced with this new responsibility he goes on to make his fortune as a prospector and lavishes money on his ward. As she grows older Marmaduke begins to fall in love with her, but the possibility of any relationship developing is threatened when she is taken hostage by a lunatic who puts her on board a ship and threatens to blow her up. Although Marmaduke comes to the rescue his love is unrequited when Margie marries a wealthy suitor.



The climax featured the scuttling of the battle cruiser HMAS *Australia* outside Sydney heads in April 1924. Actual production on the film did not begin until September, however. Interior shooting took place at Australasian Films' studio at Rushcutter's Bay with exterior filming undertaken at Sydney's Domain, The Spit, Newport, Cockatoo Island, the Wentworth Hotel, Potts Point, Balgowlah and the Woolloomooloo wharves among other Sydney locations. Some scenes were also filmed aboard the Osterley.² Filming continued into October. Two of the principal cast members, Jimmy Taylor and Grafton Williams had previous film experience in South Africa.³

The film, which was given a joint premiere at Sydney's Lyric Wintergarden and Lyceum theatres, was well promoted and proved popular with the public and critics alike.

A theater advertisement for the film 'Hullo, Marmaduke'. The top part features the text 'THE LYCEUM WINTERGARDEN' in a stylized, bold font. Below this, it says 'SYDNEY'S TWO BIGGEST HOUSES—NOW SHOWING "HULLO, MARMADUKE" with CLAUDE DAMPIER & MAYNE LINTON.' To the left is a sketch of a man's face. The advertisement lists showtimes and prices for both theaters. At the Lyceum, it features 'FLORENCE VIDOR in "BORROWED HUSBANDS."' and 'WARD & LONG, the distinctly different duo.' At the Wintergarden, it features 'KENNETH HARLAN in "TEMPORARY MARRIAGE."' and 'ANNA and LOUIS, Europe's Greatest Comedians and Instrumentalists.' The bottom of the ad is dated 'Sun (Sydney) 15 Nov. 1924, 6.'

¹ The new title was adopted during filming in September

² "Personalities: Stars in Films - On the Osterley." *Sunday Times* (Sydney) 12 Oct. 1924, 241.

³ "Personalities: Stars in Films - Australians and Others." *Sunday Times* (Sydney) 26 Oct. 1924, 21.

- 1924:** Lyric Wintergarden and Lyceum Theatre; 15 Nov. [joint world premiere]
 - 6,000 ft; black and white; silent.
 - **Production Company:** Beaumont Smith Productions.
 - **Dir/Prod.** Beaumont Smith.
 - **Cast incl.** Claude Dampier (Marmaduke), Mayne Lynton (Mike Morton), Jimmy Taylor (Huggett), Constance Graham (Mary Morton), Grafton Williams (Squid Squires), William Coulter (Old Bill), Fernande Butler (Margie, older), Lucille Lisle (Margie, child), Cyril Northcote, Loretta May, Pinky Weatherley, J.P. O'Neill.⁴
 - **Distributor:** Union Theatres Ltd.



SEE ALSO

- **Claude Dampier** • **Beaumont Smith**
- *The Adventures of Algy* (1925)

FURTHER REFERENCE

- "Amusements." *Geraldton Guardian* (WA) 7 July 1925. 2.
 "Australian Picture." *Advertiser* (Adelaide) 15 Dec. 1924. 11.
 "Film Flicks and Footlight Flashes." *Labor Daily* (Sydney) 26 Sept. 1924, 6.
 "Fine Music and Films: Special Attractions at Wests." *Register* (Adelaide) 15 Dec. 1924, 13.
 "Hullo Marmaduke." *Katoomba Daily* (NSW) 17 Nov. 1924, 3. [incl. synopsis]
 "Hullo Marmaduke: Popular Screening - Australian Comedy Drama." *Sun* (Sydney) 18 Nov. 1924, 6.
 "Movie Specials." *Sun* (Sydney) 26 Sept. 1924, 12.
 Pike, Andrew, and Ross Cooper, *Australian Film 1900–1977: A Guide to Feature Film Production*, Melbourne: Oxford UP, in assoc. with Australian Film Institute, 1998, 123-124.
 Ross Cooper. "Filmography: Beaumont Smith." *Cinema Papers* March–April 1976, 333.
 "Screen Personalities: *Hullo Marmaduke*." *Sunday Times* (Sydney) 28 Sept. 1924, 21.
 "Week's Pictures, The." *Evening News* (Sydney) 2 Oct. 1924, 15.



Sun (Sydney) 16 Nov. 1924, 28.

⁴ Pinky Weatherley and John P. O'Neill both featured in Beaumont Smith's 1923 films *Townies and Hayseeds* and *Prehistoric Hayseeds*. O'Neill also appears in *The Adventures of Algy* (1925).