

Bill's Sweetheart. Western drama (about 1000 feet). Copyright, May 1913, **Edison Manufacturing Co.** Released, May 3, 1913. Cast: Bill (Sydney Ayres), Little Maverick (as a baby: Josephine Woodman; as a child: Virginia Printzlau Clark), Joe Black (R. W. LaReno), The Child Grown Up (Betty Harte), Mexican Pete (Duane Wagar).

Commentary: Born in November 1912, Mrs. Woodman, played the part of "Little Maverick," when the early Edison movie was being filmed in Long Beach. Wrapped in a blanket, in the arms of Sydney Ayres, Josephine Woodman appears in the photo encircled by cowboys and one lonely cow.

Summary: A bunch of cowboys on their monthly pilgrimage to town run across an overturned prairie schooner, dead horses and other mute evidence of a terrific struggle and while going over the outfit to see if they can find some identification marks, they find a small baby beneath a box. Bachelor Bill, having seen the baby first, claims first right and takes the child to his own home.

His little charge becomes a great friend to him and he spends many happy hours teaching the babe and watching it grow. One pleasant afternoon, five years later, while Bill is sleeping, "Little Maverick" is attracted by a gaudily colored butterfly and chases it until it finally flies away and she is lost. She wanders on until she stumbles across a freighter's wagon standing beside a water hole. She manages to clamber into the wagon bed where she falls into a deep sleep.

In the meantime Bill, waking up, becomes aware of his loss and frantically saddling, he searches everywhere but without result and finally tired out and saddened, he accepts the inevitable conclusion that "Little Maverick" is gone for good.

During all this time the baby has slept on peacefully in the wagon bed until at length the "skinner" reaching a rough general store, to his great surprise and disgust, finds her and concludes "I might as well keep it" and with that phrase indicating the nature of his parental care, the years pass on.

For twelve years the freighter plies his trade with this young child travelling with him from camp to camp, passing as his daughter.

One evening pulling up before a saloon, he becomes involved in a card game, loses all his money to Mexican Pete and in his drunken desperation, offers to wager the girl against the Mexican's winnings. Bill, now a ranch owner, is in the same saloon and as the Mexican wins the girl, Bill offers to take the freighter's place, staking the money he has just received from the sale of his cattle against the girl. It is an exciting game but Bill wins. He takes the girl home and turns her over to a woman neighbor that she may receive a mother's care.

Every day he rides over to see her and the companionship between them grows more and more intimate.

They say "Love is blind" and it seems so in this case for Bill sorrowfully believes that she loves a young man and, giving his consent to the boy, he sadly goes to tell the girl of the proposal. But a great surprise is in store for him when he breaks the news and we leave them together happily looking into the future (The Kinetogram, pp. 4 & 16).