

Uncle Jack, Duke, and Dobe

COWBOYS

INDIANS

THE MAKING OF *THE SEARCHERS*, 50 YEARS LATER



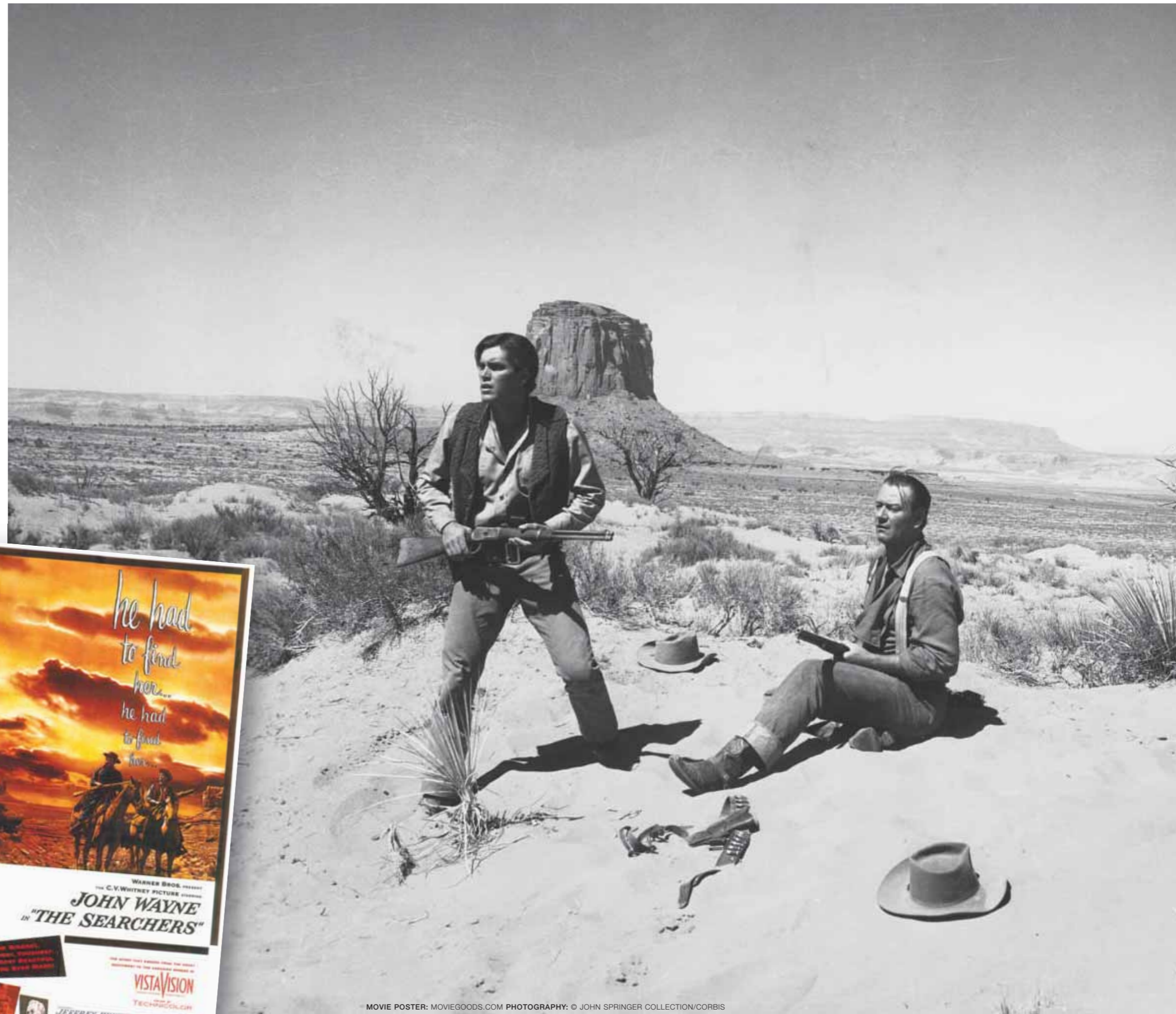
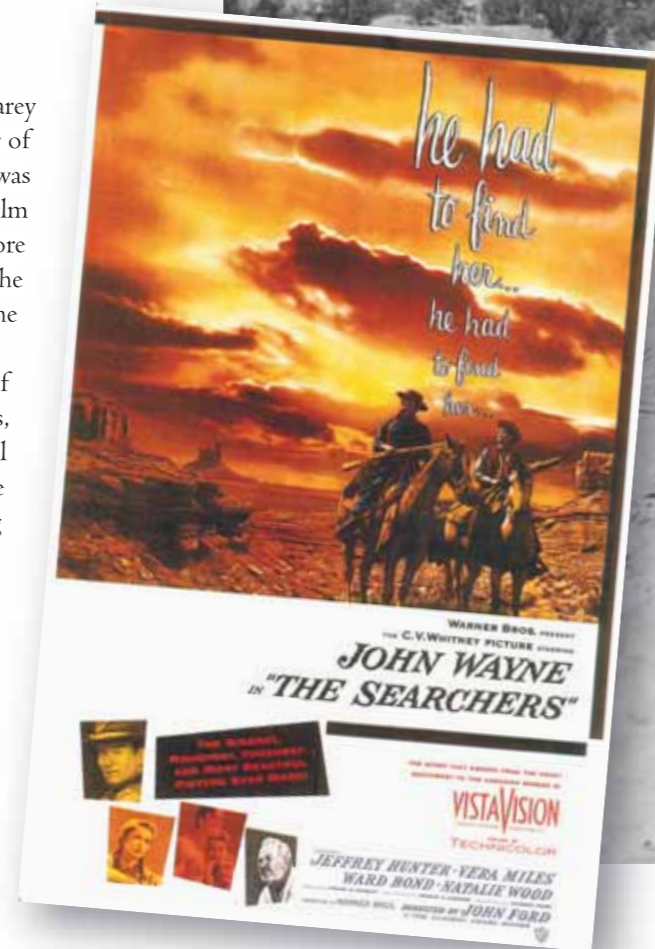
by William C. Reynolds

In the cinematic world of John Ford, young Harry Carey Jr. was close to the director's heart. Almost a member of Ford's family, "Dobe" Carey, as he was nicknamed, was the son of Ford's first major star from the silent film era, Harry Carey Sr. (1878-1947), with whom Ford made more than 20 Westerns. Carey Jr.'s father had given him that nickname the day he was born, apparently because he had a thatch of red hair the color of the Carey ranch house's adobe bricks.

In his 20s, Dobe became a member of John Ford's stable of actors, being cast in a number of the director's early Westerns, including *3 Godfathers*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, and *Wagonmaster*—all three of which starred John Wayne. In 1955, flame-haired Dobe once again found himself on a John Ford set, but this time getting ready for one of the most important scenes of his acting life. The location was Ford's favorite, Arizona's Monument Valley; the star was once again the Duke; and the film was a new Western titled *The Searchers*.

RIGHT: The original movie poster, circa 1956.

FAR RIGHT: Jeffrey Hunter as Martin Pawley and John Wayne as Ethan Edwards look after Dobe Carey, who has just run out of the scene.



MOVIE POSTER: MOVIEGOODS.COM PHOTOGRAPHY: © JOHN SPRINGER COLLECTION/CORBIS



Wayne's Ethan Edwards surveys the Comanche camp.

Seriousness permeated the making of *The Searchers*.

"Of all the John Ford pictures I worked on, the set of

The Searchers was unlike any other."

—Harry (Dobe) Carey Jr.

the scene opens, Brad is running back to his companions. Dobe Carey described the direction Ford gave him for this scene in his book *Company of Heroes, My Life as an Actor in the John Ford Stock Company*. "Kid, go back there about 40 yards," Ford told him. "When I yell, come running in here like hell and sit down on Duke's left, and pull your boots on. You'll be pulling them on during dialogue. You've taken them off so you could sneak up on the Indian camp and not be heard."

With those instructions, Carey took his place some 40 yards away from where The Duke and Jeffrey Hunter were positioned. "Action!" As Carey described it, he ran like hell. As he got closer he saw Ethan Edwards—not The Duke—looking at him, with eyes like "an angry snake." He leapt into the sandy loam beside Wayne, and this unforgettable dialogue began:

Brad: I saw her! I saw Lucy!

Ethan: "What you saw wasn't Lucy... What you saw was a buck wearin' Lucy's dress. I found Lucy back in the canyon. Wrapped her in my coat, buried her with my own hands, I thought it best to keep it from ya."

Brad: "Did they...? Was she...?"

Ethan: "What do you want me to do? Draw you a picture? Spell it out? Don't ever ask me! Long as you live, don't ever ask me more."

The look on the face of an enraged Ethan is haunting as he unloads a memory, remembering the unthinkable moment of discovering the body of his niece. A moment he had kept inside like all the anger he had felt in his life. A moment he decided not to force upon his two naïve

The Searchers was for many Ford's darkest and most disturbing Western. Based on the novel by Alan LeMay, the film is disturbing primarily due to Wayne's lauded portrayal of the antihero Ethan Edwards, a bitter, lonely figure back from the Civil War and caught on the losing side, both in war and life. The story opens with Ethan's return, after a long absence, to his estranged brother's homestead in Texas. After a brief reunion

with Ethan, most of his brother's family is brutally killed by Comanche warriors. Ethan's nieces (Debbie, played as a child by Lana Wood and later by her older sister Natalie Wood, fresh from playing opposite James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause*; and Lucy, played by a teenaged Pippa Scott) survive the massacre only to be kidnapped by the Comanches. Driven by his growing hatred of the renegades who killed the only family he had ever

known, Ethan—joined by Lucy's boyfriend Brad Jorgenson (Dobe Carey) and Martin Pawley (Jeffrey Hunter), a ward of the Edwards family whose own family had been killed earlier by Comanches—begins an obsessive five-year quest to hunt down and kill the Indians who took the girls. And he plans to kill his nieces as well: They have become "the leavin's of a Comanche buck," says an embittered Ethan.

Wayne's portrayal of the dark Ethan Edwards is commonly regarded as his finest performance. And one scene in particular, which he shared with Dobe Carey, would be chiseled into film history and the memories of audiences everywhere.

In this scene, Ethan, Brad, and Martin have come upon the Indian encampment under the cover of darkness, and Brad has crept in to see if he can spot the girls. As

charges, until an excited Brad returned, thinking he had seen Lucy alive in the camp. It allowed—forced—Ethan to open the gate on his anger. Dobe Carey said of the moments following that scene, "There was silence. Duke put his hand on my shoulder and didn't say a word. He didn't have to."

Seriousness permeated the making of *The Searchers*, according to Carey. "Of all the John Ford pictures I worked on, the set of *The Searchers* was unlike any other. Uncle Jack [as Carey called Ford] was much more serious, and that was the tone that pervaded the cast and crew," he said. "The first scene I was in with Duke was the one where I discover my family's prized bull had been slaughtered. When I looked up at him in rehearsal, it was the meanest, coldest eyes I had ever seen. I don't know how he molded that character. Perhaps he'd known someone like Ethan Edwards as a kid. Now I wish I'd asked him. He was even Ethan at dinnertime. He didn't kid around on *The Searchers* like he had done on other shows. Ethan was always in his eyes."

In mid-1955, John Ford was sitting in his office on the Warner Bros. lot preparing to direct *The Searchers*. Many felt that *The Searchers* could be the best Western—as both a book and a film—since *The Ox Bow Incident* in 1943. Both novels depicted a West with a dark side. *The Ox Bow Incident*, based on the book by Walter Van Tillberg Clark and directed by William Wellman, carried a sense of meanness and suspicion as portrayed through its main characters. The bitterness of the outcome of the Civil War played a part, and *The Ox Bow Incident* delivered a scathing indictment of



LEFT: “No you don’t, Ethan!” Martin Pawley (Jeffrey Hunter) draws a pistol on Ethan, protecting a young Natalie Wood as the much searched-for Debbie. RIGHT: Actress Dolores Del Rio sits beside *The Searchers* director John Ford. Behind them are film cast members John Wayne, who plays Ethan Edwards, Jack Pennick, who plays a Union soldier, and Jeffrey Hunter, who plays Martin Pawley.

Given all that cheery TV Western content, imagine sitting down in the loge section (remember that?) of the local theater, ready to watch the familiar heroics of another Ford/Wayne adventure. The opening credits of *The Searchers*—vanilla-like in their 1950s simplicity—didn’t hint at what was to come. They start rather typically of Westerns of the period with a sort of generic “Indian warpath” orchestral theme—which stops after the title “The Searchers” appears in red. Then, slowly, comes a period ballad by the “hot” Western score composer of the time, Stan Jones (who also wrote the themes to the TV shows *Cheyenne* and *Texas John Slaughter* as well as one of the greatest Western songs of all time, “Ghost Riders in the Sky”). Sung by the Sons of the Pioneers, Jones’ ballad plays throughout the remaining titles. This short five-stanza song bite, “What Makes a Man to Wander,” sets the primary theme of the story for the unwitting audience, the story of one man’s lonely trail and obsessive search:

What makes a man to wander?

What makes a man to roam?

What makes a man leave bed and board

And turn his back on home?

Ride away, ride away, ride away.

the heretofore optimistic frontier spirit as depicted in most Westerns of the era. *The Searchers* had both qualities—darkness and optimism—with Ford’s direction giving characters individual reasons for their years of searching for little Debbie. This conflict between despair and hope appears fully as Ethan’s anger meets head-on with Martin’s desire to find Debbie, the only one left of the family that had taken him in as a child. Given the innocence of the time, the dark aspects of *The Searchers* were disturbing to many.

Filmed in 1955, the picture hit theaters in 1956. It was a golden era of Westerns—both on the big screen and on television. No fewer than 47 Western films were released that year. Today that would be called “genre oversaturation.” In 1956, it was simply fulfilling audience expectations. *The Searchers* opened

in a year crowded with other important Westerns, not the least of which was George Stevens’ epic *Giant* with James Dean, Rock Hudson, and Elizabeth Taylor. Other pictures that year included William Wyler’s *Friendly Persuasion* with Gary Cooper and Dorothy McGuire and the film version of the popular television series *The Lone Ranger* with Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels.

The Western was an important part of the culture. The 1950s was an optimistic era. World War II and the Korean War were behind us, and as a nation, America was on the move. The American Dream was within reach. Television in the 1950s was a happy place for the romance of the cowboy. Roy Rogers and Gene Autry had shows. Other television Westerns included *Sky King*, *Annie Oakley*, *Cheyenne*, *Kit Carson*, and *The Adventures of Rin-Tin-Tin*.

Fade to black. The film’s opening scene is loaded with symbols with which the director alludes to what will follow. In this scene, a door opens from inside a darkened cabin, framing a wind-driven, barren expanse. This visual of a doorway—be it a cabin, a tepee, or a cave—is Ford’s symbol of a transition between two worlds—the warmth of home, family, and consistency inside the darkness as opposed to the harsh, glaring brightness of a threatening and unknown frontier. This scene brings



together a family reuniting from two distant worlds. The rider, Ethan Edwards, approaches the homestead of the family of his estranged (we never find out why) brother, Aaron. The reunion is not a joyous one, but it will be the happiest we see Ethan as he moves, uncomfortably, among his brother’s family. The doorway visual will play a similar role at the end of the film—although it will be a different door, in a different cabin. These visuals speak to a beginning and an end—the literal opening and closing of a family’s harsh and bright reality.

According to Peter Cowie in his book *John Ford and the American West*, Ford showed the glaring contrast of the cabin at the film’s beginning as Martha Edwards emerges from darkness into the blisteringly bright world outside—an almost blinding light. The scene suggests the overcoming expanse and heat of the area, a rather desolate depiction of the frontier in contrast to typically optimistic pioneer spirits. In *Code of Honor: The Making of Three Great American Westerns*, Michael F. Blake

writes that Ford used light in an almost painterly fashion to suggest emotion, “...such as bathing the sky outside the Edwards’ cabin in an eerie crimson glow, just prior to Scar’s attack, suggesting the approaching bloodshed.” Interestingly, Ford had gone into a hospital for the removal of cataracts prior to the making of *The Searchers*. While recuperating after eye surgery, according to Cowie, Ford became impatient with the bandages and pulled them off earlier than his doctors advised. This action apparently resulted in his total loss of sight in one eye. Joseph McBride, author of two books on Ford’s life, felt that “Ford’s tendency toward bolder visual strokes in his later films and his diminishing interest in minute detail work can be attributed in part to his poor eyesight.”

Ford’s use of dark and light and shadow are intrinsic to the contrasts of safety, danger, and anger in many scenes in the picture. At the beginning of *The Searchers*, Ethan’s sister-in-law emerges from the shadows of the safety of the Edwards’

homestead, straining to see the approaching horseback figure, hand over her eyes, shielding herself from the harsh reality she lives in. She watches the approach of the shadowy figure of Ethan. By contrast, in a later winter scene, Ethan and Martin come upon a herd of buffalo. The hulking buffalo appear as dark masses against the gray of the sky and the blank, snow-covered landscape they inhabit. Thinking they would kill one for fresh meat, Martin walks in closer with Ethan to get a better shot. After one buffalo is killed Ethan rapid fires his Winchester, shooting buffalo after buffalo. Martin tries to stop him, but Ethan’s hatred for the Comanche has surfaced again and the flatness of the light and shadow seem to amplify Ethan’s anger:

Martin: “Ethan, this don’t make no sense.”

Ethan: “Hungry, empty bellies, that’s the sense it makes you blanket head! At least these won’t feed no hungry Comanches this winter!”

Edwards in pursuit. For Wayne's Ethan Edwards, Scar represented pure evil.

“Brethren, we must go amongst them!”
—Ward Bond (Reverend Sam) as he launches the charge against Scar's renegades

In a later action scene, the Comanche Scar (played by the late German-born actor Henry Brandon) and several of his warriors are pursuing Martin and Ethan. Scar is the focal point of Ethan's hatred—the one who kidnapped Lucy and Debbie and who in Ethan's mind killed Lucy. Martin, with Ethan wounded in the shoulder by a Comanche arrow, must take refuge from the attack in the shadows of a narrow arch-shaped cave. Ford uses the image of the mouth of the cave as a doorway of transition from danger to safety, just as in the first shot of the film, Martha emerges from the safety of the dark cabin. In the action sequence, Ethan and Martin head into the cave archway—and the darkness within—to find some relative safety against the oncoming band of hostiles. Ford uses the contrasts of dark and light to illustrate the contrasts of safety and exposure.

Various critics over the years have compared the plot lines of some contemporary non-Western films to that of *The Searchers*. Some have gone so far as to state that Ethan's quest inspired a plot line in George Lucas' *Star Wars*. Or that it's at the center of Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, written by Paul Schrader, who used it again in his own *Hard Core* (Scorsese said of *The Searchers*, “The dialogue is like poetry!”). “The hero in each of the Schrader screenplays is a loner driven to violence and madness by his mission to rescue a young white woman who has become the sexual prey of those seen as subhuman,” said one reviewer. Another described Harry Dean Stanton's search for Nastassja Kinski in Wim Wenders' *Paris, Texas* as “a reworking of the Ford story.” One critic went so

far as to say that Ethan Edward's famous line, “That'll be the day” inspired a song by Buddy Holly. True or not, it is safe to say that the obsession that drove Ethan Edwards became an inspirational plot device for future filmmakers.

Dobe Carey said that John Wayne was born to play Ethan Edwards and that the role was significant not only to Wayne's career but to the lore of Hollywood. Carey knew even as they were filming that something special was happening on the set of *The Searchers*. “From day one Duke was Ethan Edwards,” Carey says. “That character seemed to be built for him, and no other actor, no matter how great his talent, could have played that part as well. Ironically, it was not Duke's favorite role, he told me. His favorite was Nathan Brittles in *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*.”

Even so, he portrayed his *Searchers* character with such strength and intensity that it is forever inscribed in cinematic history. The Duke's Ethan Edwards burns with a deadly anger that is cleansed only at the end of the film with the death of the Comanche Scar. Ironically, young Martin kills Scar as Ethan alone rescues Debbie, who must flee ahead of the cavalry charge on the Comanche camp. Having waited for Martin to attempt Debbie's rescue, part-time ranger and full-time Reverend Sam (Ward Bond) launches the waiting cavalry charge. He gives the word to his troops in a humorous combination of sermon and order: “Brethren, we must go amongst them!” The action, at this point, gets classically Western. Again, Ford's use of dark and light reappears as Ethan chases the fleeing Debbie into the darkness of another cave near the camp. In the light of the

cave opening, in a moment of great suspense, Ethan chooses a different path, to hold high the only remaining family he has, and says the words to his niece that open his heart: “Let's go home, Debbie.”

The film ends with a one-minute, one-camera scene that has been spoken of since *The Searchers* premiered. The words of Harry Carey Jr., who stood off-camera as the scene was shot, best describe the closing frames:

“With the camera rolling, there he was! The big man standing alone in the doorway, the red desert stretching out behind him. The other players in the scene, which included my mother [longtime Ford Company actress Olive Carey], had passed by the camera, a joyous moment. Debbie was home at last, brought there in the arms of the man in the doorway. Uncle Jack told Duke [that] he was to look and then walk away, but just before

he turned, he saw my mother, the widow of his all-time hero, standing behind the camera. It was natural as taking a breath. Duke raised his left hand, reached across his chest and grabbed his right arm at the elbow. My father, Harry Carey Sr., did that a lot in the movies when Duke was a kid in Glendale, California. It was Duke's tribute. He'd spent many a dime just to see that. He stared at my mother for a couple of beats, then turned, walking

away into loneliness across the red sand. The Jorgenson cabin door slowly closes.”

As in the opening credits, the Sons of the Pioneers sing Stan Jones' ballad:

*What makes a man to wander?
What makes a man to roam?
What makes a man leave bed and board?
And turn his back on home?
Ride away, ride away, ride away.*

The screen goes black and an American film genre is changed forever.



PHOTOGRAPHY: © 1956 WARNER BROS./MPV

John Wayne's Legacy

C&I's EXCLUSIVE VISIT WITH JOHN WAYNE'S CHILDREN



by William C. Reynolds



John Wayne in *The Quiet Man*.

A legacy is at once a strong and delicate thing, held together by the thinnest gossamer strands of memories, love, and caring. The enduring legacy of John Wayne, and what he means to so many, continues to thrive and be held high through the actions and love of his children. They are joined by an ever-growing legion of fans, many whom were not even born at the time of Wayne's death some 26 years ago. "In an age of few heroes he was the genuine article," said President Jimmy Carter when Wayne passed. Born May 26, 1907, The Duke succumbed to what he himself described as "the Big C"—stomach cancer—on June 11, 1979. It was a passing America didn't want to admit to, this death of a legend who had come to be defined worldwide by his roles as the quintessential American icon, the cowboy.

Wayne's grace under the pressure of the cancer diagnosis was amplified by his decision to play the character John Bernard Booker in what was to be his last film, *The Shootist*. Booker is an aging gunman who, ironically, has been told he is dying of cancer. In the film, Wayne's character, an anachronism in a modernizing world, has to face his own mortality while realizing he has "plain plumb outlived his time." Even with that realization, Booker holds on to his personal creed: "I won't be wronged, I won't be insulted, I won't be laid a hand on. I don't do these things to other people and I require the same of them." As Russell Martin states in his book, *Cowboy, The Enduring Myth of the West*, "It was as if Wayne himself, the consummate mythic cowboy, had seized one last opportunity to express his personal Western golden rule before his long and incredible career was over."

Wayne's father, Clyde Morrison—The Duke described his dad as the "kindest, most patient man" he ever met—taught his son three important rules for living that may have set the



LEFT: John and Patrick Wayne in *The Searchers*.

ABOVE: John and Aissa Wayne on the set of *Donovan's Reef*.

groundwork early on for Wayne's portrayal of the sentimental John Booker. Number one: Always keep your word. Number two: A gentleman never insults anybody intentionally. And number three: Don't go around looking for trouble, but if you ever get in a fight, make sure you win it.

Today, John Wayne's legacy and fighting spirit are paramount in the work of his children and grandchildren. As hard as it was for the family to lose their patriarch to cancer, they have turned the tragedy around with both the John Wayne Cancer Foundation and the John Wayne Cancer Institute. In the family tradition, while they may have been forced into a fight, they are making sure they will win it—a fight against the disease that took their father.

In classic Wayne form, the Wayne children have adopted a number of their father's "rules for living" in the mission statements of these two important medical endeavors. In describing the work of the John Wayne Cancer Foundation, a quote from Wayne himself underscores its work: "Give the American people a good cause and there is nothing they can't lick." Another Wayne-ism, "Courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway," appropriately describes the groundbreaking cancer research being done at the John Wayne Cancer Institute, which is under the umbrella of the John Wayne Cancer Foundation.

This summer, *Cowboys & Indians* brought together all of the Wayne children, not only to discuss the important

medical research work being done by the family foundation but also to revisit some of their most personal memories of their father along with some of his favorite roles. We met at the Newport Beach Yacht Club across from the site of John Wayne's former home. A passionate mariner, Wayne loved the ocean, so it seemed a family photo was appropriate near the water. For the record, Wayne had seven children, four with his first wife, Josephine: Michael (who died in 2003), Patrick, Toni (who died in 2004), and Melinda; and three with his second wife, Pilar: Aissa, John Ethan, and Marisa.

Cowboys & Indians has received many letters over the years from readers who love The Duke and are interested in his family. One of the most frequent questions our readers have asked is, What was Wayne's favorite character that he played? Pretty much to a person all the Waynes feel very strongly that his favorite role was as Sean Thornton in John Ford's 1952 classic, *The Quiet Man*. Wayne's daughter Aissa explains, "Sean reminded me so much of the way my father was, compassionate yet very strong and protective."

They also saw glimpses of Wayne's personality in his roles in *McClintock* (1963) and *True Grit* (1969). "He had an incredible and endearing sense of humor. He was really very funny," says his daughter Melinda with a grin. "I wish you could have known his humor." Like Melinda, Aissa loved his sense of humor and feels that the world never really got to see the full extent of it. "He really could get people laughing," Aissa says. "One of my favorite memories [is his appear-



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The most important people in John Wayne's life, his children: from left, Patrick Wayne, Melinda Wayne Munoz, Aissa Wayne Conrad, Ethan Wayne, and Marisa Wayne-Ditteaux (son Michael Wayne died in 2003 and daughter Toni died in 2004). Photographed in Southern California at the Newport Beach Yacht Club, September 8, 2005.

ance on] the old *I Love Lucy* show. He loved comedy—and he could take a kidding as well as give it out. He proved that when he went to Harvard. He loved that event.” Aissa is talking about the time in 1974 when Wayne traveled to Cambridge for a roasting by the *Harvard Lampoon*. He arrived on an armored personnel carrier and was presented with the Hasty Pudding Award. “Mr. Wayne, do you look at yourself as an American legend?” he was asked. “Well,” Wayne replied straight-facedly, “not being a *Harvard* man, I don’t look at myself any more than necessary.”

He could take himself lightly and still never shy away from portraying a darker side. “I loved the characters he played in *Red River* and *The Searchers*,” says Melinda. “They were characters who aged, but aged with grace and understanding of the reality they inhabited. My father was always very interested in people and wanted to hear about them and their lives. I know it helped him as an actor, but it was simply his human concern and interest for other people. He loved people.”

And they loved him. Asked why they feel their father has maintained such iconic status around the world, his children’s answers are simple. Daughter Marisa, a mother and real estate agent, believes part of Wayne’s hold on people’s hearts is due to his directness and pride in his country. “My father loved this country and the opportunity it afforded people,” Marisa says. “He was a true patriot and felt America was a gift to the world. He was assertive about this, and yet he was very understanding of others’ views. He was always a gentleman. It was why he felt America was special. Its roots were held fast in the acceptance of diversity. He was the real deal.” For Aissa, the lasting appeal has to do with how he led his life—with integrity: “He based his life on always trying to do the right thing,” Aissa says. “My father was not made

PHOTOGRAPHY: W. BEN GLASS

up—what you saw was what you got.”

And you got the real deal—off the screen and on. Some of his children were able to experience firsthand the real-deal actor side of their dad while working with him on the set. As a child, daughter Aissa had roles in *The Alamo* (1960), *The Comancheros* (1961), *McClintock* (1963), and *Donovan’s Reef* (1963). Wayne’s son Patrick, now chairman of the board at the John Wayne Cancer Institute, had a speaking role in *The Searchers* as the young green-horn cavalry officer Lt. Greenhill. “My father was able to become his character,” Patrick says. “During filming, I was in the presence of Ethan Edwards, not my father. When it was over, my father was back.”

Patrick remembers vividly what it was like to be with his father in public. “We all had the experience when we were young to be out at a restaurant or walking with him and have people come up and push us out of the way to get his autograph,” he says. “It wasn’t bad because we all knew he was famous and important to other people. We were having lunch out one day and I did ask him if it ever bothered him—all the attention, fans coming up—and he looked at me said, ‘If they didn’t want to come up, how do you think we could have gotten this lunch?’ So we all realized early on the importance of his fans to him.”

Son Ethan agrees about his father’s appreciation and gratitude toward his fans. “He made it very clear that if it wasn’t for the fans he couldn’t make a living,” Ethan says. “His success was his fans. They really were an extended family to him.”

That extended family continues to enlarge through the family business. Ethan Wayne runs Wayne Enterprises, which controls and licenses the carefully crafted products that carry or are associated with the John Wayne

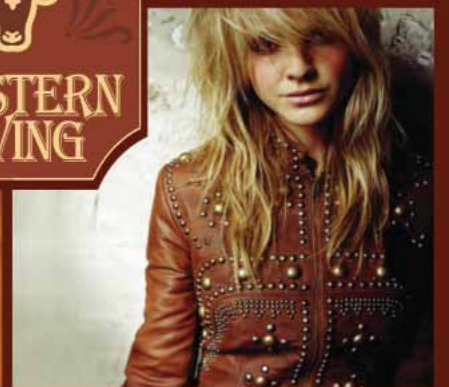
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A John Wayne postage stamp was issued in September 2004 as part of the Legends of Hollywood series.

name. He is also the director of the John Wayne Cancer Foundation, whose mission is to “bring courage, strength, and grit to the fight against cancer.” The Wayne children are all deeply dedicated to fighting the disease that took their father, and the name of John Wayne has helped carry forward much research into a variety of cancers.

It’s all part of The Duke’s humanitarian legacy. “He really was a very caring person,” Patrick says. “He cared about family, his fans, and his country. He was a movie star, but he became more than that to so many, without all of us realizing it. When we were around—he tried to have us with him as much as possible when he was working—he was our father. We didn’t see a celebrity.” They see that celebrity now, though, and how it is helping them in their collective fight against cancer.

“Twenty-six years after his death, his celebrity is like the cavalry coming over the hill. The John Wayne Cancer Foundation and the John Wayne Cancer Institute are doing incredible work in his name and we are all dedicated to that work. The fight will be fought,” Ethan says. He pauses and looks at his assembled siblings, then across the bay to the place where their family once lived. “Our father was a movie actor who became a celebrity—and then went way beyond that. Why or how, we all really don’t know. He touched something in people—and still does. For us, as a family, he was a father—and for many others battling the disease that took him from us, he is a blessing.”



Fighting Cancer

The John Wayne Cancer Foundation was established in 1985 to advance the fight against cancer by supporting research, treatment, and education. In its 20th year, the foundation is committed to bringing courage, strength, and grit to the fight against cancer. Currently, the foundation funds support groups, awareness programs, and various cancer research grants, including grants at the John Wayne Cancer Institute in Santa Monica, California. JWCF is also developing programming that supports men fighting cancer, an audience it has identified as underserved.

The John Wayne Cancer Foundation is proud to have provided the seed money for the formation of the John Wayne Cancer Institute in Southern California. The institute has received worldwide acclaim for its translational research that has enabled rapid advances in immune therapy and the treatment of melanoma (skin cancer), breast, and colon cancer. It is also the nation’s third largest fellowship program training the surgeons of tomorrow. Other areas of research include prostate and liver cancer. With its ability to rapidly turn scientific breakthroughs into innovative approaches to treatment and early detection, the institute provides immediate hope to cancer patients around the globe. For more information on the John Wayne Cancer Foundation or the John Wayne Cancer Institute, visit www.jwci.org.

