

= Richard Smith (silent film director) =

Richard Smith (September 17 , 1886 ? 1937) , also known as Dick Smith , was a screenwriter , actor , and film director . Smith was born in Cleveland , Ohio , and became a comedian active in the vaudeville era . He met his wife Alice Howell in 1910 and the two performed together as Howell and Howell . After working under direction of Mack Sennett at the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company in New York , Smith moved to Los Angeles , California . Smith and his wife starred in reels together produced by L @-@ KO Kompany .

While Howell was contracted at Universal Studios , Smith directed her in films described in the book *Clown Princes and Court Jesters* as , " some of Universal 's most memorable comedies of the twenties " . With colleague Vin Moore , Smith directed actor Oliver Hardy in the 1920 film *Distilled Love* . Smith directed the Marx Brothers in 1921 in their first film , titled *Humor Risk* , which has since been lost . In 1925 , Smith 's directing work included films starring Bert Roach , Neely Edwards , and Charles Puffy . His contributions at Universal included a series of comedy films called " *The Collegians* " .

= = Career = =

= = = Vaudeville = = =

Richard Smith was active in the field of comedy , and participated in the vaudeville scene . He met his wife Alice Howell when she was a member of a production by DeWolf Hopper , in 1910 . The two utilized the title of a previously known vaudeville group , and performed together as Howell and Howell . The Howell and Howell duo performed together for three years . Their performances included burlesque and vaudeville . Mack Sennett directed Smith at the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company in New York . Sennett offered Smith a chance to go with him when he started the company Keystone Studios , but he declined the opportunity .

= = = Film director = = =

Due to a medical condition , Smith decided to switch his residence from New York to Los Angeles , California , where his wife began to gain roles in the film industry under Sennett in 1914 . The two starred together in reels including *Dad 's Dollars* and *Dirty Doings* , a comedy by L @-@ KO Kompany . Under the production company Reelcraft Pictures , Smith wrote and directed several films which his wife starred in . In the book *Clown Princes and Court Jesters* , authors Kalton C. Lahue and Samuel Gill describe these films directed by Smith and starring Howell as " low @-@ burlesque charades and as such were slanted toward the neighborhood and second @-@ run houses , where they found receptive audiences . "

After his wife became an actress in features at Universal Studios in 1921 , Smith directed her in multiple comedies . Lahue and Gill characterize these films as , " some of Universal 's most memorable comedies of the twenties " , and note , " Starting with the usual framework provided by the situation comedy format , directors William Watson and Richard Smith inserted a sufficient amount of subdued slapstick to flavor these single reels with laugh after laugh . " Comedian Oliver Hardy acted under the direction of Smith and associate Vin Moore , in the 1920 film *Distilled Love* ; Smith also had an acting role in the film as an artist . He served as director in 1921 of *Humor Risk* , the first film starring the Marx Brothers . Smith directed actors including Bert Roach and Neely Edwards in the 1925 film *A Nice Pickle* , and Charles Puffy the same year in *Muddled Up* . After Howell retired from film in the 1926 , Smith kept up with his contracted work at Universal and wrote a set of comedy films called " *The Collegians* " . Smith died in 1937 in Los Angeles , California , at fifty years old .

= = Filmography = =

