

= The Medico of Painted Springs =

The Medico of Painted Springs (also known as Doctor 's Alibi) is a 1941 American western film produced by Columbia Pictures . Based on the novel of the same name by James Lyon Rubel , the film stars Charles Starrett , Terry Walker , Ben Taggart , Wheeler Oakman , and the Simp @-@ Phonies in a cameo appearance . It was directed by Lambert Hillyer and written by Wyndham Gittens and Winston Miller . In the film , Starrett 's character , Dr. Steven Monroe , travels to a tumultuous Painted Springs and attempts to resolve a raging conflict between two camps ? the cattlemen and the sheep ranchers .

The film received mixed reviews from contemporary film critics . After the release of the film in June 1941 , Columbia allowed the release of two more Medico films , Thunder Over the Prairie (July 1941) and Prairie Stranger (September 1941) . Starrett , who went on to star in around sixty other western flicks , found The Medico of Painted Springs to be his favorite film . The film has many noticeable differences from Rubel 's original work .

= = Plot = =

Upon arriving at Painted Springs , Dr. Steven Monroe witnesses a clash between sheep herders and cattle breeders . As Monroe starts to investigate the cause of the conflict , he finds out about Fred Burns ' diabolical scheme ? he intends to steal John Richards ' cattle and frame sheep rancher Ed Gordon for the deed . After a series of fights , during which Burns and his men kidnap Richards ' daughter Nancy , Monroe rescues Nancy and manages to get Burns to confess . With his evil intentions revealed , the two camps cease battling , and Monroe quietly leaves Painted Springs .

= = Cast = =

= = Production = =

Charles Starrett , who had previously appeared in the 1940 western film The Durango Kid , was cast as Dr. Steven Monroe . Terry Walker was chosen to play Nancy Richards , and Ben Taggart portrayed John Richards . Ray Bennett was announced to play Ed Gordon . Wheeler Oakman was cast as Fred Burns . The Simp @-@ Phonies made a cameo appearance in the film . Then @-@ novice actor Lloyd Bridges , who joined Columbia Pictures in 1941 , also had a brief and uncredited role in the film . It marked one of the earliest films he made an appearance in .

Lambert Hillyer directed the film . Winston Miller and Wyndham Gittens wrote the screenplay based on James Lyon Rubel 's 1934 novel The Medico of Painted Springs . Jack Fier was in charge of production for Columbia Pictures . Benjamin Kline served as cinematographer , while Mel Thorsen edited the film . Filming began on May 5 , 1941 , and ended on May 14 , 1941 .

All of the songs in The Medico of Painted Springs were sung by the Simp @-@ Phonies . There were a total of four distinct songs in the film , namely " Corny Troubles " , " We 'd Just as Soon Fiddle as Fight " , " Lonely Rangeland " , and " Rocking and Rolling in the Saddle " .

= = Release and reception = =

The film premiered at the Lido Theater , a cinema in Newport Beach , California . It was released in the United States in June 1941 . Up till at least January 1942 , screenings of the film were still available at cinemas . It was re @-@ screened in September 1957 at the Apollo Theatre . It received mixed reviews from contemporary film critics . A reviewer for Variety wrote , " Saddled with sophomoric episodes and dialog , The Medico of Painted Springs will find a groove for Saturday matinees , where the kids will stand for anything as long as it 's western . "

In an entry for the film in his book The Western Film Encyclopedia , Phil Hardy commented that " [t] he picture 's main failing is Miller and Gittens ' dialogue which has Starrett oscillate between a

brash cowboy and a wild @-@ mannered medico . "

Michael R. Pitts , in his book Western Movies , found the film to be " [a] pretty good actioner in Charles Starrett 's Columbia series . " Towards the end of his film career spanning sixty @-@ odd western flicks , Starrett commented that his best films were from the 1940s , and that his favorite one was The Medico of Painted Springs .

= = Differences between the film and the novel = =

The film has a handful of differences from Rubel 's original work . Many character names were changed for the film , including Cliff Monroe to Steven Monroe , Puff Gordon to Ed Gordon , and Nancy Starweather to Nancy Richards . Additionally , the majority of the characters in the film were nameless in the book . The ending was also tweaked . In the novel , Monroe professes his love for Nancy Starweather and they happily marry in Painted Springs . In the film , this does not happen , and Monroe just leaves the area .

= = Sequels = =

The film marked the first entry of the Medico film series by Columbia Pictures . The following two films in the series were Thunder Over the Prairie (July 1941) and Prairie Stranger (September 1941) . However , they were not based on Rubel 's works . More sequels to The Medico of Painted Springs were planned for production , but were never greenlit after the dismal box office performance of the two released sequels . All three films had Charles Starrett playing the role of Dr. Steven Monroe .