The General Encyclopedia Article

The General

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Johnnie Gray (Buster Keaton) has two loves: his locomotive The General and Annabelle Lee (Marion Mack). As the Civil War begins, both The General and Annabelle are captured by Union spies and taken north across enemy lines. Johnnie follows and rescues both his loves. Although it was a flop when it was first released in 1927, *The General* is probably the best known and most popular of Keaton's films; it has a more cohesive plot than many of his other works and a larger background with an elaborate battle sequence. Johnnie is consistent with other Keaton characters: he meets every adversity with a solemn lack of facial expression and an unbeatable determination.

Further Reading:

Buster Keaton's The General. New York, Flare-Avon, 1975.

Rubinstein, E. *Filmguide to "The General."* Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1973.