

My Darling Clementine Encyclopedia Article

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My Darling Clementine

The film *My Darling Clementine* (1946), based on Stuart Lake's novel *Wyatt Earp, Frontier Marshal*, was a re-make of the 1939 film *Frontier Marshal*. Its director, John Ford, had built a reputation on directing Westerns, and *My Darling Clementine* is considered by many to be his best and most poetic Western. Ford used the story of the O.K. Corral to create the image of a triumphant postwar America. The film centers on Wyatt Earp (Henry Fonda) and Doc Holliday (Victor Mature) and their shoot-out with the Clantons at the O.K. Corral. Tombstone, the town over which Earp presides as sheriff, rids itself of evil and thus transforms itself from a wilderness into a garden. Holliday struggles to overcome his sullied past, while Clementine Carter (Cathy Downs) brings a future of innocence to Tombstone. The film ends with a triumphant ushering in of the new church with a social dance at which Earp accompanies Clementine.

Further Reading:

Bogdanovich, Peter. *John Ford*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978.

Davis, Ronald L. *John Ford: Hollywood's Old Master*. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1995.