

Hollywood After Dark

Gail Gardner takes you for a trip through the "Real" Side of the Motion Picture Lots

DEAR FOLKS:

You write me that you are just a little tired of reading about the glamour of the movie stars, the super-colossal pictures and whatnot and that you prefer some "real-ity" occasionally.



"Shoes Must be Kept Sorted"

Okay. Suppose you meet me at 7 p. m., at the big iron gate of Paramount studios? There we will join my friend Kenneth Whitmore. He will take us on a tour which will reveal to you the "real drama" of Hollywood.

For it is not until the day ends that this great epic begins. The metamorphosis of night accomplishes a miracle of change within the walled interiors of these picture-making palaces.

New actors arrive to take the place of the daytime pretenders of emotion—only these are players of practical parts. These people hold no contracts. The time clock evaluates their earnings, not that fabulous meter, the box-office. Their costumes are blue shirts, overalls, a hammer swung from a thong at the belt, the uniform of the watchman, the worn dress of the seamstress.

THEIR jobs are to build great cities and a few weeks later—perhaps a few days—destroy them. They launch great ships, set up kingdoms, evolve castles from wood and stone, plan crusades, send airplanes screaming through the night—only to crash in flames.

But no matter what the job, it is theirs without glamour. And these men and women, these workers with their hands, take them in their stride.

The night payroll clerk checks them in as the day crews file out into the darkness. There are hundreds of them representing every craft. The crew bosses set them to their tasks. For the picture business is a restless thing, of constant change.

UP IN the wardrobe department a half hundred sewing machines are whirring, electric cutters shear through bolts of rich fabric. Toil-worn hands bend over a swirl of silver fox worth a fortune, patiently stitching it to an imported silk that a Mae West or a Marlene Dietrich will wear tomorrow in a make-believe scene.

SEVERAL hundred yards away is a barn-like room—the mill. There the whirr of bandsaws, the whine of power planes and the angry snarl of a great circular blade fills the air with a symphony of wood working. Ten new sets must go up tonight. The intricate monorail that connects this



A half-hundred sewing machines were whirring.

huge room with the fourteen widely scattered stages on the lot will be busy until dawn.

THE swing gang is already moving from one stage to another. More sets must be "struck" to make room for the new. The Alpine railway station that was here yesterday must make way for the elaborate New York penthouse which will be here tomorrow.

Only last week this stage was an Italian fishing village and the week before that, the throne room of a Saracen king.

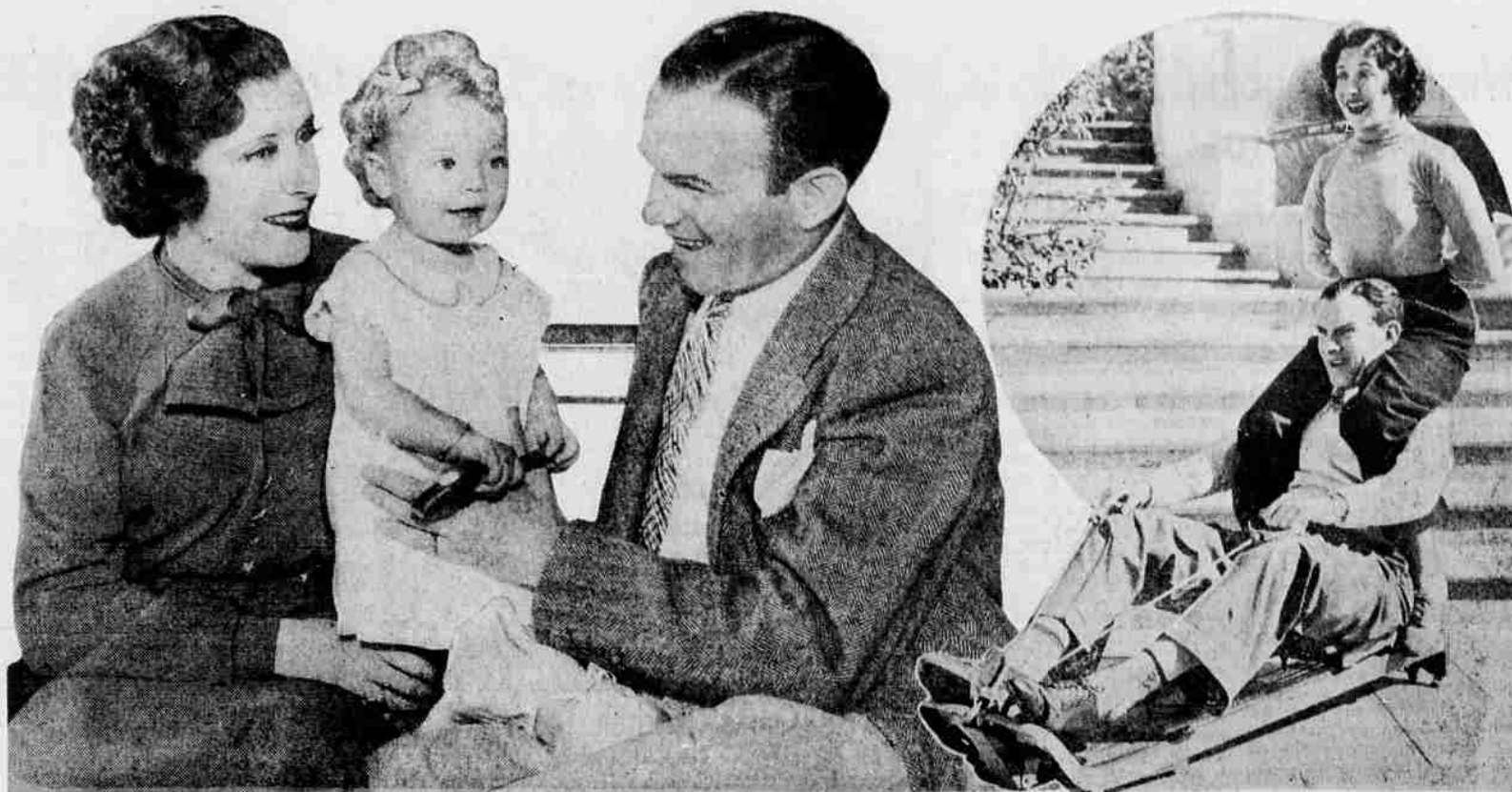
ADIM LIGHT burns over the desk of an orchestra-trator in the music department. This man must have ready for tomorrow morning a score for a fifty-piece orchestra that will accompany Bing Crosby in one of his numbers. To the right, a nurse in the hospital treats a crushed thumb. In the cafe, the night chef and his helpers put up 300 box lunches for the company going on "location" tomorrow. A Japanese janitor wades through the drift of paper on the floor of some writer's cubicle, a fireman makes his rounds through the bins and storage sheds.

PLAY — Pretense — and Pantomime.

Those are for the day, my dear folks. Hollywood's real drama begins at night.

Yours,

GAIL.



The Burns family, George and Gracie, whose particular brand of insanity for entertainment purposes boosted them into the starring class. Left above, Gracie and George with their adopted daughter, 1-year-old Sandra Jean, and right, Gracie illustrating how easy it is for her to lose weight while George does all the work on the rowing machine.

If You Don't Believe Dumbness Pays, Just Ask Gracie Allen—or George

It Has Lifted Them to Stardom—But Here's the Story of What You Find When They're Off the Set, at Home With Daughter Sandra Jean

By Donna Risher

LOOK for George Burns and you'll find Gracie Allen.

She will be giggling and gushing inanities at his side, and though George feigns madness at Gracie's silliness, this is only for effect. They both know that dumbness pays and pays and pays.

These two are deeply devoted... and no wonder they've never been separated in eight years of married life—a fact which led a cynic at Paramount to remark, "No wonder they're crazy."

Both went on the stage when children... Gracie at three and George at twelve. Later Gracie started as a leading lady in San Francisco stock with the Larry Reilly company... and quit flat when refused billing showing that in youth she had sense.

Gracie likes violets... sweaters... and little hats... and she never forgets a face... or an injury. She is tiny and brunette... which has nothing to do with her chief hobby of riding bicycles, boy fashion... fishing... and... matching pennies.

Burns was born in New York... started his career as a boy singer... in a group called the Pee-wee Quartet. He calls Gracie "Googie" never musses his hair... won't carry a cane...

Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire Capture Audiences With Dancing And Songs in "Follow the Fleet"

ONCE upon a time, Fred Astaire made a brief screen appearance in "Dancing Lady" with Joan Crawford—the movie-going public forgot to remember

Three years passed. Today, Astaire and his partner, Ginger Rogers, are out in full glory in "Follow the Fleet." Their combined efforts have given the movie customers one of the finest musical extravaganzas ever to come out of Hollywood.

This picture will leave no doubt in the minds of the producers regarding the box-office draw of this popular dancing-acting team. Astaire and Ginger are now on top of the heap and their efforts in this particular film will, undoubtedly, make fabulous sums for their sponsors, and at the same time afford splendid entertainment for many, many thousands.

Lyrics for the picture were written by that master songster, Irving Berlin. Seven of his most rhythmic tunes are introduced by various members of the cast, assisted by well-drilled choruses. A newcomer, Harriett Hilliard, a New York radio entertainer, does much towards putting over the songs, making her screen debut a most successful one.

The dancing Miss Rogers turns out is the best performance of her career. So alert and graceful is she in her featured numbers with Astaire that her every movement is fascinating. Astaire's dance with the sailor chorus, on the other hand, is a clever bit displaying the superlative ability of the nimble Astaire feet.

The settings, nautical in design, are extravagant and attractive.



Fred Astaire

won't fish but will play golf at the drop of a hat.

GEORGE likes the color gray... has played 100 vaudeville acts, and it was while in vaudeville that he met Gracie. She was visiting a girl friend in a Union Hill, N. J., theater at the time... George was looking for a girl partner. Neither had ever done dialogue, but the audience laughed at Gracie... instead of George... and George reversed the act playing "straight" to Gracie ever since.

Both believe their marriage is the greatest and most fortunate event of their lives.

Gracie says George is the world's sweetest fellow. "Because he puts up with me."

The pair got their radio break when Gracie went on the air with Al Jolson... and ten days later Gracie and George were signed together... They made their picture debut when the studio wired them to come to Hollywood to add a few laughs to a picture then in the making... They remained to play featured roles. Since then George writes all their dialogue but doesn't consult Gracie. He says he knows exactly how she'll react to any question he "feeds" her... which Gracie thinks is a compliment.

GRACIE receives as much fan mail as any of the more glamorous movie stars... in fact she reached an all high once, when she received 360,000 fan letters in four days during her daft "missing brother" search.

In Hollywood the two live quietly and their family life revolves around 12-months-old Sandra Jean, an adopted daughter.

Gracie superintends everything in the home but the cooking.

"For if Gracie ever tries to cook," George declared, "we'll all have to call a doctor."

Humor and Finery in "Ziegfeld"



The inimitable Fanny Brice steals Sally Rand's fan dance number in a hilarious scene from "The Great Ziegfeld," while pretty Lorna Lowe of Newark, N. J., left, becomes one of the most glorified in the same M-G-M production.

Gossip

FROM THE STUDIOS AND SOCIAL CENTERS OF HOLLYWOOD

By Jane

WATCHING the gay parade along Hollywood Boulevard, we'll tell you what we see:

Joan Crawford, dressed in a navy-blue street suit, hunting for yellow lampshades, the only other bit of color she has added to her favorite home scheme of blue and white... Virginia Bruce lunching with Edmund Lowe and Director Ed Marin... Allan Jones looking at yachts in a shop window... Claire Trevor swinging down the street towards a beauty shop.



Joan Crawford

REQUIRED by the script to ride into her scene on the hurricane deck of a camel, Rosalind Russell reported her first experience with sea sickness.

Despite the fact that the animal's lurching up and down made the earth come up and hit her in the face, Rosalind clung grimly to the side of the howda, praying all the while that her ship of the desert would not get an uncontrollable desire to lie down and roll over.

Three times Miss Russell went through the scene. "And three times," said she, "I got three knots in my stomach."

WHEN three-year-old Joan Russell grows up she can boast that she's the only person who ever socked Robert Taylor in the eye with a custard pie and got away with it.

Joan, who is working with Janet Gaynor and young Taylor in "Small Town Girl," is supposed to be a temperamental youngster who won't eat her dinner. One bit of action required Taylor to bend over Joan and beg her to eat. Joan was supposed to say, "No." Instead she socked Taylor in the eye with a piece of pie.

Director William Wellman and Miss Gaynor thought the action very funny. So did everybody else—except Taylor. Three times more Joan socked him and it wasn't until much later that the actor learned the first "take" had been eminently satisfactory and the supposed "re-takes" were the result of the practical joking of Miss Gaynor and Mr. Wellman.

IN ORDER to offset any alibi by noisy people that they did not know a scene had started, Director William Seiter has now established an official horn-tooter on his sets.

The tooter blows a toy horn and a loud ta-ta-taaaa reverberates through the sound stages. Seiter had tried giving signals with whistles, bells, handclaps, sirens, yells and whatnot, but none of them worked.

HERBERT MARSHALL has signed a five-year contract with RKO. Constantly in demand, Marshall in the past steadfastly refused to align himself exclusively with any one studio.

The RKO contract, however, was so attractive he changed his mind.

ROCHELLE HUDSON has not been in snow since childhood, but she is getting her desire for it fulfilled on a strenuous location trip into the High Sierras near Truckee for "The Country Beyond."



Robert Taylor