



Grandma Martin can still strike a pin-up pose as fetching as a starlet or (left) stand side-by-side with daughter, Heller, and act like her big sister.

and other prima donnas, is amazed at Miss Martin's lack of temperament.

"She never complains, sulks, or belittles another performer," he said. "I think she's the happiest star in show business. For instance, in Alaska when fog forced us to detour into Nome, we arranged to have the show beamed by short wave to the GIs in Kotzebue, above the Arctic Circle. The only place in Nome with a piano in tune was a waterfront saloon, a real dump. There, with an audience of Eskimos who'd never heard of her, Mary put on her show, wearing her lavish Mainbocher gowns. She loved it."

Miss Martin rejoined us, and on our way out of the theater we got to talking about her family.

"When I first left home," she recalled, "Father's only advice was, 'Let conscience be your guide.' Maybe it's corny but I've always tried to live by that rule and I've handed it down to my children. I feel strongly that the moment you go against your conscience, something clicks and you know it's wrong. That happened to me when I went into my first nonmusical dramatic play, 'Kind Sir,' with Charles Boyer. It really wasn't for me and it failed. I felt I hadn't been true to myself.

"There was the time my son, Larry, staged a teen-age rebellion when he was 16. We had reprimanded him for being out late the night before. Larry announced, quite violently, that he didn't want to have anything to do with me or the theater. Of course I was hurt. Larry insisted he

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wanted to be a veterinarian and, since he was born in Texas, he wanted to be educated there and live there. So we sent him to Texas to finish high school. My parting words were, 'Larry, let your conscience be your guide.'

"At school, I heard he was given the lead in two class plays. At the end of the year, he found a job to earn enough for a bus ticket home. He was too proud to write me for money. When he entered our apartment, the first thing he said was, 'Mom, I've made a mistake.' Today Larry is 25, married, and the father of Heidi, my wonderful granddaughter. He's now completely dedicated to the theater. He opened in his first Broadway play last Fall as the second juvenile lead."

With her 16-year-old daughter, Heller, Miss Martin is like a big sister. At six, Heller played Mary's little sister in the road production of "Annie Get Your Gun." In London with her mother, she studied ballet at the famous Sadler's Wells School. At 13, Heller was the maid, Liza, in the West Coast tour, New York run, and phenomenal telecasts of "Peter Pan." She seemed destined for stardom.

But last Summer she worked as a nurse's aide at New York Hospital. There she witnessed death for the first time when a little boy she adored died of leukemia. It was a moving experience. Now, at a Quaker school in Pennsylvania, Heller has decided to forsake the theater and become a nurse.

"No, I'm not disappointed," Mary Martin assured me. "I think it's thrilling. Heller found she was wanted and needed at the hospital, and it's terribly important for her to do what she wants to do. Her conscience is pointing the way for her."

THE HALLDAYS' vacation Shangri-La is their 600-acre coffee ranch in the interior of Brazil. At this hideaway, 50 miles from the nearest telephone, they'll relax next Summer.

It's a long hop from Weatherford, Tex., where the Mary Martin saga started. Her father was a lawyer, her mother a violin teacher. At five, Mary fell in love with an audience when she sang at a firemen's hall, and she went on to take dancing and singing lessons. Sent to a school in Nashville, Tenn., when she was 16, she hated it. To make sure she wouldn't go back to book-learning, Mary married Ben Hagman, a boy from Fort Worth. After two years the marriage broke up and Mary returned to Weatherford with her infant son. When the dancing school she set up burned down, Mary persuaded her father to stake her to Hollywood.

For three years she took so many screen tests that she was dubbed "Audition Mary." One Sunday on a Trocadero "talent night" program, she created a sensation with a hot swing version of the classical "Il Bacio." A New York producer was in

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