

PHOTOPLAY

DECEMBER, 1942

p. 32

The Truth About Hollywood Deferments

Yes, a lot of the stars have been deferred—and they haven't been able to tell the public why!

HERE'S THE INSIDE DOPE

By "Fearless"

WHILE it is true that publicity often overemphasizes Hollywood happenings and that the smallest mistakes of stars are exaggerated, draft deferments in the film industry will take explaining.

The personalities of the fabulous films are on the spot in the matter of serving their country. It is useless to deny that motion-picture stars have been getting the best of it (as to immunity from draft.) Some have been given special deferments and choice assignments and, even when taken, often have been allowed extra months to finish pictures before having to report for active duty.

Husky film heroes without dependents or physical disabilities have frequented sporting events, night clubs and social gatherings, apparently without fear of the draft board—while their country cousins and city pals were being called from their jobs and their homes by the Army, or were cleaning up their affairs to enlist in the Marines or the Navy.

Nor were other members of the film industry so immune. Pictures were held up because technical men, crew hands and laboratory workers were drafted or had volunteered for service—while the ranks of the stars seemingly thinned not at all.

As late as August of this year few important players were to be seen in uniform. Jimmy Stewart, Robert Montgomery, Doug Fairbanks, Wayne Morris, Ronald Reagan, Bill Holden, Jeffrey Lynn, Gene Raymond, Burgess Meredith, Tim Holt and one or two others were notable exceptions—an amazingly low percentage in view of the statements regarding those supposed to be on the verge of going.

Months passed with the stars still among those present and the public began to ask why. Wives, sisters, parents and sweethearts of drafted men who had little worldly goods to fight for wondered why their loved ones should face danger and death

The Truth about Hollywood Deferments

while the men to whom America had given so very much remained behind.

The stars have sensed this growing resentment, rubbed to a rawer edge by the actions of those few who pulled strings to get commissions in behind-the-lines jobs as Army, Navy and Marine press agents, intelligence officers and "specialists," this latter covering a multitude of assignments such as Tony Martin's job of running a theater.

Yet, when a star would have responded to this spur of public opinion and joined the fighting forces, he ran head on into an unyielding wall of pressure. For that is the paradox of Hollywood deferments. The stars are, in the main, deferred—not by request, but because of circumstances. No more than in Milwaukee or Spokane have Hollywood's draft boards put into 1-A men who are married, who have children, or who live under other special circumstances allowed for by the Selective Service Act.

There is, of course, no law against a man with a family volunteering. But there has been, in a surprising number of cases, the ceaseless, urgent plea of the studios, of fellow workers, of friends and well-meaning advisers to "stay on the job."

Then Clark Gable kicked the flood gates open by joining up as a private in the officers training school for the Air Corps. Tyrone Power, who had been none too happy over the failure of his attempt to enlist as a non-commissioned officer in the Navy and the publicity that followed his move, threw off the shackles and enlisted in the Marines. At the same time Henry Fonda signed up as a seaman with the Navy and the movement of star enlistments began in earnest.

But not all stars who would willingly have followed the example of the Three Musketeers were free to do so. Yet in no case has a star been able to speak and say why.

Even those whose physical disabilities placed them out of the draft have had to keep their mouths shut. Some who might better have gone into service but who took advantage of technicalities to stay out have welcomed the cloak of censorship Hollywood flung over itself.

So "Fearless," who feels it is only fair to tell the whole truth about Hollywood deferments, has compiled as complete, as authentic and honest a list of Hollywood men who have not yet gone into service, together with their draft status, as it has been possible to make. Not every Hollywood personality is covered, due to lack of space, but you'll find most of the significant ones represented here. Also, our chief concern is with Americans, not those of other nationalities.

"Fearless" now asks, in return for

The Truth about Hollywood Deferments

this information, obtained from a hundred different confidential sources, that with the evidence before you, you bring in an unprejudiced verdict.

Below, you will find listed the name of the star in red, followed their dependents, their status and war activities

Bud Abbott Wife, one child
Active in Bond drives, Government shorts, camp tours.

Don Ameche Wife, four children
Radio programs for different charities and Government. "Command Performance" show and U. S. O. appearances.

Humphrey Bogart Wife
Radio for patriotic and war programs. Personal appearances Coast Guard Auxiliary. Has turned his boat over to Coast Guard.

George Brent Wife (not dependent)
Going on full-time duty as civilian instructor with Army Air Force.

James Cagney Wife, relatives
Executive member of Hollywood Victory Committee. Was on Caravan—made personal appearances, went on radio.

John Carroll Wife (divorced), one child
Radio shows and personal appearances for Bond sales.

Gary Cooper Wife, one child
Radio appearances for charity and war shows.

Lou Costello Wife, two children
Active in Bond drives, Government shorts, camp tours.

Bing Crosby Wife, four children
Favorite entertainer for all branches of service. Has appeared at many camps. Also appeared for Red Cross and other causes. Tours with the Crosby-Hope Golf Circus.

Robert Cummings Wife, mother
Flight Commander with Civil Air Patrol. Also captain in Air Corps Reserve assignment to active duty.

Brian Donlevy Wife
Personal appearances on road.

Nelson Eddy Wife and mother
Air-raid warden.

Errol Flynn Wife (divorced), one child
Rejected physically after trying to enlist. Radio programs for Government.

Glenn Ford Mother
In training for Coast Guard. Radio and personal appearances.

John Garfield Wife, one child
Toured Army camps.

Cary Grant Wife (not dependent)
Personal appearances; Victory Caravan; "Command Performance" radio shows. Very large contributor—first to British, now to American relief organizations.

Jon Hall Wife (not dependent)
On radio for Treasury Department. Also personal appearances. Awaiting call.

Van Heflin Wife
Entering service within sixty days.

The Truth about Hollywood Deferments

Bob Hope Wife, two children

Probably has done more charity and service shows than anyone else in country. Radio shows and recordings for service use. Tours with Crosby-Hope Golf Circus. Toured camps with own show in Northwest, Alaska and Aleutian Islands.

John Howard Mother and father

Radio shows.

Alan Ladd Wife (not dependent), one child

Reported physical disability.

Fred MacMurray Wife, one child

Radio shows for Government. Very active worker for Hollywood Victory Committee. Active in civilian defense service.

Joel McCrea Wife (not dependent),

two children: Government air programs and show for Mexican Army.

Ray Milland Wife, one child

Considerable radio work for Government.

George Montgomery Single,

Radio and personal appearances for Bond-selling.

Dennis Morgan Wife, three children

Air-raid warden.

George Murphy Wife, one child

Camp and Government air shows. Hollywood Victory Committee. Personal appearance for Treasury Department.

John Payne Wife (divorced), one child

Has just enlisted in Air Corps as a private. Reports for duty on completion of "Hello, Frisco. Hello."

Walter Pidgeon Wife, one child

Bond-selling tours.

Robert Preston Wife

Radio, war program shows.

George Raft Wife

Has a group of young boxers that he takes from camp to camp—at his own expense, to entertain service men.

Roy Rogers Wife, one child

Personal appearances selling Bonds, camp tours.

Cesar Romero Single, family dependents

Personal appearances. Government radio programs. Air-raid warden. Lieutenant in the State Guard. Member of the Evacuation Corps.

Mickey Rooney Wife (divorced pending)

Radio programs, camp tours, personal appearances.

Red Skelton Wife

More than two hundred personal appearances. Toured small camps and barracks not big enough to draw regular shows.

Robert Stack Single

Just received commission as ensign in Navy. Now training in aerial gunnery.

Robert Sterling Single, family dependents

Going into Air Corps training school for pilots as soon as called. Radio war program show. Active in civilian defense services.

The Truth about Hollywood Deferments

Robert Sterling Single, family dependents
Going into Air Corps training school for
pilots as soon as called. Radio war pro-
gram show. Active in civilian defense
services.

Robert Taylor Wife (not dependent)
Does considerable privately for men in
uniform.

Franchot Tone Wife
Victory Committee and San Diego Navy
show.

Spencer Tracy Wife, two children
Radio shows for Government.

John Wayne Wife, four children
Air-raid warden.

Johnny Weissmuller Wife, two children
Radio "Command Performance" and has
made Red Cross golf appearances, filling
in for Bing Crosby or Bob Hope.

Orson Welles Wife (divorced), one child
Rejected because of physical disability.
Good-will Ambassador to South Amer-
ica. Government radio programs. "Stars
Over America" Bond-selling tour.

Robert Young Wife, two children
Bond-selling tours, radio programs
for Government, active in civilian
defense organizations.

NOTE: You will not find listed the names of
those stars who are over active military age.
Be it said once more, up to the moment of
our going to press, this is the most complete
information obtainable.