

CAVALCADE

1939

GINGER ROGERS

**A Charleston Contest Started
Ginger on Her Road to
Hollywood Stardom**

AT 14, Ginger Rogers won the Texas State championship for the "Charleston," with a four-week's vaudeville tour included in the prize. And that's how the Titian-haired actress began her rise to stardom on the screen.

If it hadn't been for this Charleston rage that swept the country, Ginger, or Virginia, as she originally had been christened, might have become a school teacher. She had always wanted to be an actress, but she believed teaching to be a calling more within her reach. It's a fact, though, that all those "might have been" pupils can gladly bear the loss of having such a lovely school-mistress in view of their ultimate gain as that star's fans.

Ginger definitely decided to become an actress at the termination of the aforementioned vaudeville tour. Aided and abetted by her mother, Lela Rogers, who has always been her best friend and advisor, Ginger adhered to the idea that the stage was the best route to Hollywood and a screen career.

As a consequence, mother and daughter went to New York. Ginger worked diligently on her music, dancing and dramatics. It was finally Paul Ash, who once had starred her in one of his stage presentations in Chicago, that had the ambitious Ginger join his stock company at the Brooklyn Paramount Theater.

Work with that group proved to be her great opportunity. Messrs. Bolton, Kalmar and Ruby saw her there and signed her for their musical revue, "Top Speed." Then she accepted an offer from an eastern motion picture company and successfully did two things at one time appeared before foot-lights at night and cameras during the day. Following a 45-week run of her next Broadway assignment, "Girl Crazy," she played her first featured role in "Young Man of Manhattan," filmed at a Hollywood studio. Continued work in pictures was the result.

In 1933 Ginger was rewarded for her persistency and hard work. She had her first taste of real success on the screen with the winning roles in "Gold Diggers of 1933" and "42nd Street." Then she made "Flying Down to Rio," her first picture with Fred Astaire and her first assignment at RKO Radio Studios, where she is still under long-term contract.

"Bachelor Mother" is her most recent film. "The Castles," marks the ninth vehicle in which she and Fred Astaire have co-starred. It marks the first vehicle in which they have worn period clothes because it is based on the lives of Vernon and Irene Castle, who comprised the first internationally-famous dance team which started gaining renown in 1911.

Virginia Katherine McMath is the real name of this famous star and she was born in Independence, Missouri, on July 16, but most of her childhood was spent in Fort Worth, Texas.

She is five feet, four inches tall and weighs 108 pounds. She never has to diet because dancing keeps her in perfect condition. Dancing is listed as her very favorite hobby, too.

Now Ginger has the reputation of being one of the best all-around actresses of film-dom. When she was in high school the records show that she was the best all-round athlete of her class, in addition to being adept at her studios and taking active part in school dramatics.

Friends and business associates are amazed at Ginger's vitality and versatility, whether it be between picture assignments or when she is working before the cameras. She has shown marked talent in charcoal sketching, painting and wood-carving. Her latest accomplishment is modelling in clay. A sculptured bust of her mother, recently completed is the work of which she is most proud.