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W.W. II and HOLLYWOOD

THE year 1940 saw the parting of Al Jolson and Ruby Keeler. (Jolson was through by 1940, anyhow, it was said.) Douglas Fairbanks died—and a way of life died, too, for even though the war was in Europe, it was affecting the looks of Hollywood. Robert Montgomery went to France to drive an ambulance. Leslie Howard and young Richard Greene packed their gear, preparatory to going back to England. The beautiful glamour girls began going out with older men, Garbo with Gaylord Hauser, the food faddist; Norma Shearer with George Raft; Ginger Rogers with Howard Hughes (*definitely* they would marry!) and sweet Livvy de Havilland was seen everywhere with Jimmy Stewart—not knowing then that he would be the first man from Hollywood to enter service in our flying corps.

War nerves were beginning, but Joan Blondell and Dick Powell, when questioned, said, "We never let a night go by feeling mad." Just one year later, Mayo Methot said the same thing about herself and Humphrey Bogart. She pointed out, that as the third Mrs. Bogart she understood the guy perfectly and *nothing* could ever part them. At that time Bogie had not discovered "Baby" Bacall. Not even Howard Hawks. There was one fully anticipated wedding in 1940, that of Loretta Young to Tom Lewis, the advertising executive and one very surprising one, that of Bette Davis to Arthur Farnsworth, a hotel man and Dottie Lamour began going everywhere with Greg Bautzer.

With 1941, the war was coming closer to us. War pictures were coming out, particularly "I Wanted Wings" in which the leading woman was Constance Moore, but the standout performance was given by an apparently one-eyed girl, Veronica Lake. Two new boys were discovered that year, Dan Dailey Jr. and Glenn Ford. The only trouble with Glenn, said Hollywood, was that he had so little sex-appeal! Nobody anticipated "Gilda" with the girl who played a bit in Joan Crawford's "Susan and God," which was released right then! She *did* have sex-appeal, this Spanish girl, Rita Cansino, screen-named Hayworth, but she was so demure and so very married to Ed Judson that nobody expected very much of her.

After Pearl Harbor, the men really began leaving town. David Niven was gone now. So too, was Flight Officer Laurence Olivier. And more and more from the Hollywood ranks kept leaving. Gable, Fonda, Reagan, the well-knowns and the lesser-knowns. Power, Taylor, Payne, Skelton and many others. And backing up the soldiers in uniform were the soldiers in greasepaint—Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Kay Kyser, Jack Benny—that list is endless, blazing with tragic brilliance with the name of Carole Lombard who died in a plane crash coming back from a bond drive in January, 1942. Mickey Rooney, before donning uniform, took time off to marry Ava Gardner and Lew Ayres startled everybody by dating his ex-wife, Ginger Rogers. Jackie Briggs was heading toward the Marines at that moment, but who knew, including Jackie, that he was also heading toward a very happy sea of matrimony with the ex-Mrs. Ayres? Very

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diversified people took that fatal step.

The year's "romantic" marriage was that of Vaughn Paul and Deanna Durbin. They had waited for two years to marry. Time began to telescope in Hollywood as in the rest of the world. The war front was fighting. The home front was waiting. Hollywood opened its famous Canteen. Greer Garson made "Mrs. Miniver" and began going about with the young man who had played her son, Richard Ney. Victor Mature, having said goodbye to Rita Hayworth went into the Coast Guard. Humphrey Bogart made "Casablanca" with Ingrid Bergman and they were stars immediately. And a little kid had to be discovered to play a pathetic English child. Thus Margaret O'Brien was found.

More Hollywood regulars went away, so other, newer newcomers had to be found to replace them because the box office was booming. And thus Sue Carol got a chance for her client who, she argued, had been kicking around Hollywood too long and too unappreciated. It was, of course, Alan Ladd. And Van Johnson got his chance at Metro in "The War and Mrs. Hadley," Warners previously having dropped him. And Frank Sinatra, who would certainly replace Crosby, began to be heard from. Gene Kelly came along and Joseph Cotten and a very blonde bombshell, Betty Hutton and a darling small clown named June Allyson.

IN 1943 they discovered a fellow in "Bataan" named Robert Walker and his wife, Phyl, called Jennifer Jones for screen purposes, made "The Song of Bernadette." Such a divinely happy, darling couple they were. Linda Darnell, playing the *Virgin* in the latter picture, eloped with her cameraman, Pev Marley. An impossible marriage, said Hollywood. It couldn't last. And the Garson-Ney marriage looked bad, too, but the Ladd marriage perfect. There was the fantastic marriage between Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles, the genius. Bette Davis's husband, Arthur Farnsworth, died most unexpectedly.

By 1944 time was whirling faster. There was that great palship between Van Johnson and his very best friends, Evie and Keenan Wynn, the happy couple. Dick Powell and Joan Blondell separated and Betty Grable had her first daughter, Victoria Elizabeth James.

Then the Germans and the Japs fell. Peace came. And Hollywood didn't know it but its second chapter wrote its own ending then. For the men came back from war to replace the new boys. The new boys were badly hurt—Van, Frankie, Lon McCallister and the rest, but the men who came back, including even Gable, didn't come back to quite the prominence they had known before. Yet, astonishingly, an "older" star was tops and stayed tops, the one and only Bing, of course.

And what has happened to Hollywood since 1945 does not belong in its third chapter. For the box office has changed completely, and your box office demand is scaring Hollywood badly. Because naturally, Hollywood is still staying itself. With the rest of this country in a boom, Hollywood is going through a depression.

So, what's the third chapter? Television maybe? Maybe. And where are the new stars coming from? Right where they have always come from, from the ranks of some pictures now shooting. Somewhere in some picture now shooting there is a kid playing a bit. And you'll find her, you, dear public, or find him, and you'll make him, bless you.

And ten years or twenty from now, I hope, I'll be writing Hollywood's third chapter for you.

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