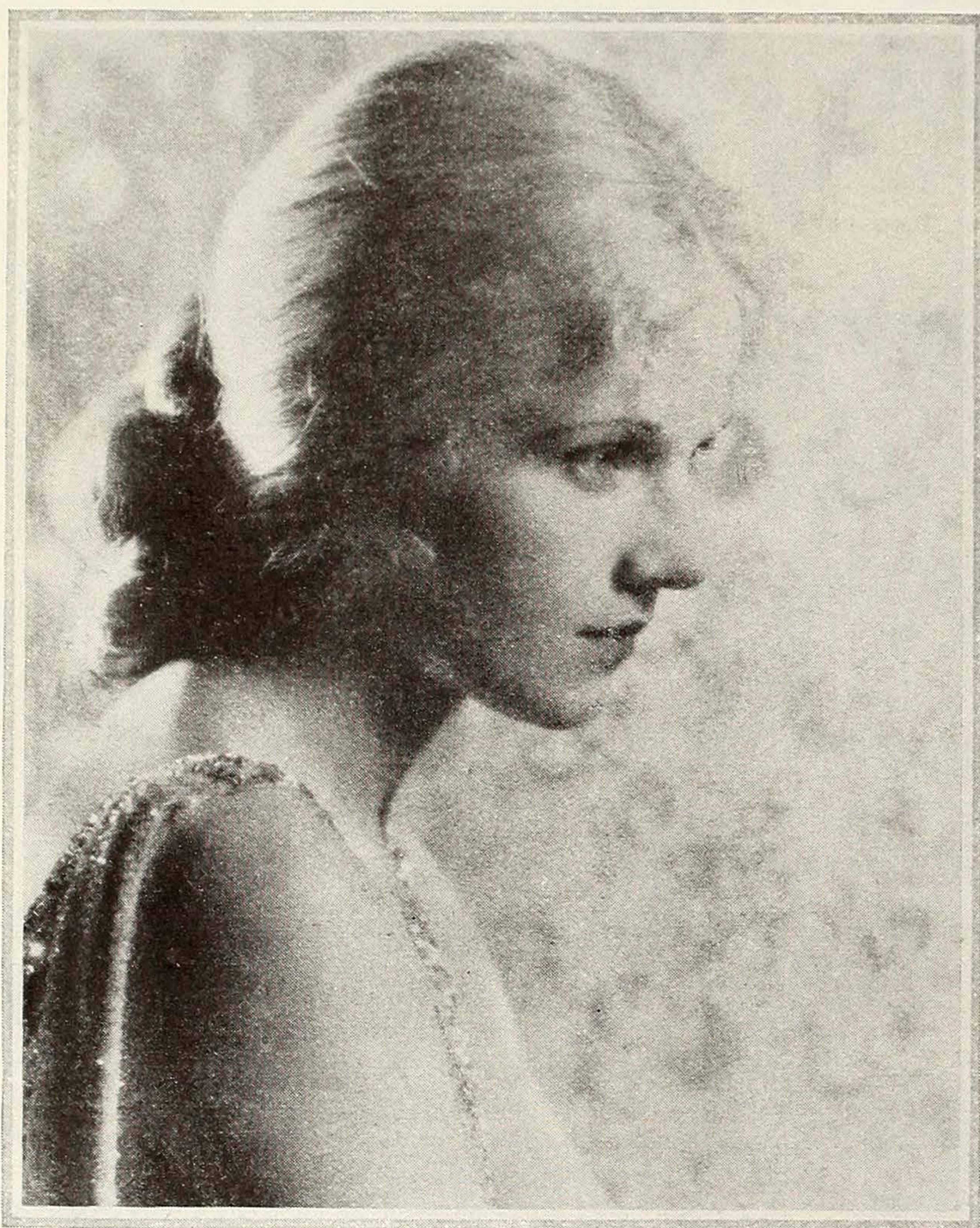


The BROADWAY BLONDE

By Jean Cunningham



"Well, here's our baby," said Alice in decidedly motherly, albeit not at all 'maidenly' fashion, if one may be permitted a poor pun.

However, the friendly greeting seemed to ruffle the beautiful Ann's composure not at all.

"Oh, you sweet things!" she cried. "Here you are waiting for me, after working so late last night."

It seems that Alice and Gladys had worked the previous evening preparing Kay Hammond, who plays an important part in "Her Private Affair," for some sequences in which Miss Harding did not appear. Hence her appreciation at their early presence on the set—a fact, gentle reader, which only too many stars would have taken for granted.

After Gladys had dressed Ann's long golden tresses in a bewitching and very sophisticated off-the-ear fashion, and Alice had garbed her in the beaded chartreuse chiffon gown she wore in the morning's scenes, I found a chair beside the two obvious admirers of the star.

"You like Miss Harding, don't you?" I questioned.

"Like her?" asked Alice. "Who wouldn't? She's an angel. There are no pretences or

little poses about that young lady. And do you know why?"

Ann Harding's million-dollar blonde hair—all real money, too!—lends itself to one of the most interesting and unusual coiffures in screenland.

I did not, but signified that I would be interested in finding out.

"Because she was born a lady," explained Alice in effect. "There are those who scoff at the part good family, good blood and good breeding play in a person's character, but I'm not one of them.

IT is rumored that some few Broadway stars packed a superiority complex in with the latest dress models when they departed for Hollywood. But Ann Harding is not one of them. Take it from the studio maid and hairdresser who attend her, the star who scintillated so brightly in "The Trial of Mary Dugan," "The Woman Disputed," "Tarnish" and other New York successes, absolutely neglected to equip herself with an inflated ego when she came West.

It was on the set at the Pathé Studio where she was working in her second dialog picture, "Her Private Affair," that I learned of Miss Harding's negligence in this respect.

Alice, the studio maid, and Gladys, the hairdresser, were chatting just outside the door of Miss Harding's portable dressing-room when the young actress and her husband, Harry Bannister, who plays with her in "Her Private Affair," appeared.

"I've seen stars who started out as the daughters of servants—some as servants themselves. As they climbed to the top of the ladder they felt necessary to adopt affectations and temperamental gestures to prove to themselves that there was nobody higher up than they were. I've read books on psychology in which this is described as 'an inferiority complex,' and I think it's true. In their innermost minds such people are aware that they have not had the advantages of education and environment enjoyed by people who had always had money, so they felt that they had to go to them one better in other ways.

"Now, Miss Harding is entirely different. She is the daughter of a general in the United States army. Her

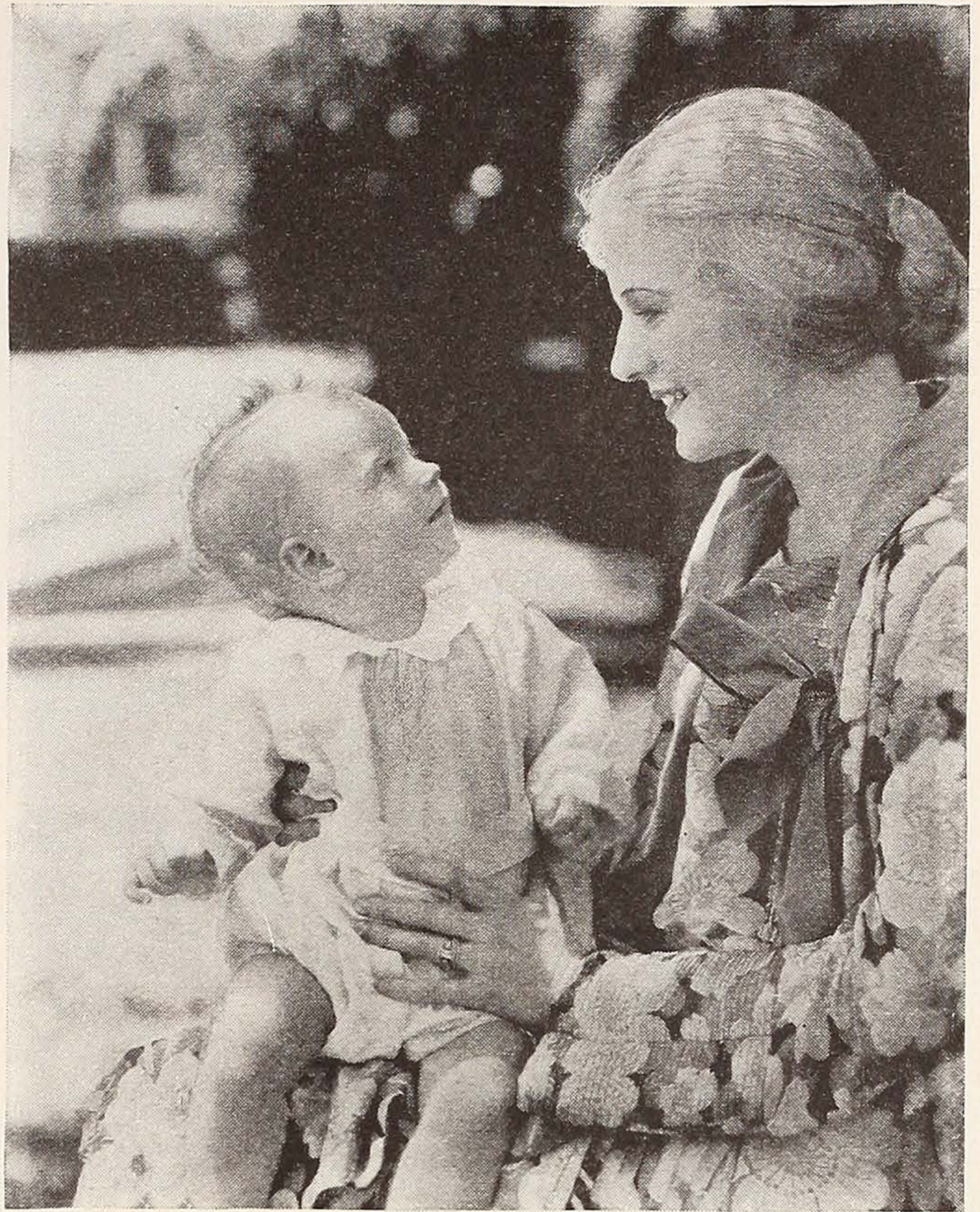
Ann Harding has Won Hollywood with her Beauty and Charm

family has been one of the finest in the country since the Revolution. She had just as many advantages in life before she began to be a successful actress as she could possibly have now. And when she cut herself adrift from her family to go on the stage, she had a couple of years of decidedly hard going, so she also knows what it is to earn a living and work hard and economize. As a result she is finely balanced. She is equally at home in several different spheres of life.

"Miss Harding is a wonderful actress, but she works hard and gives everything she has to make each part perfect. For that reason, I think she has a great deal of respect for anyone who works hard at whatever he is doing, no matter what the occupation, and who is successful at it. She is friendly to everyone, and it is not a condescending friendliness either, but a real heart-whole interest in the work which is the main interest of someone else.

"Then, too, she is beautifully happy. God bless her, she deserves it! I think it perfectly beautiful to see her and Mr. Bannister together. He is so proud of her youth and beauty and ability, while she defers to his judgment in so many matters, and is just as proud of his work as he is of hers.

"Let me tell you something. A little extra girl who had been married once, very unhappily, worked on this set a couple of days last week. She had been thinking of marrying again—a young business man who seemed to be very much in love with her. But she had been disillusioned once, and she was afraid that it would be the same old story of boredom and lies and wandering apart just as soon as the honeymoon glamour wore off.



The small person with the appealing smile is Jane Harding Bannister, daughter of Ann and Harry Bannister.

"Well, after working a few days around Miss Harding and Mr. Bannister, she told me that she had made up her mind that nothing in life could be as beautiful as a happy marriage, and she was going to take a chance. Now, isn't that lovely? And don't you think it wonderful that they are playing husband and wife in this picture? Their love scenes should be convincing."

"And you don't find that she considers herself a little bit—well, superior—to her director and the screen players in her pictures?"

"Say," Gladys took up the story, "all that girl is interested in is making her pictures as good as she can. She wants to absorb everything anyone who has been in a studio for years can tell her. And I bet she was just the same way when she started on the stage. That's probably why she was so successful.

"You know what a clear, musical voice she has. Well, my dear, after almost every scene she asks the recording engineers just how it sounded to them, so that she can tone it down or speak louder as they think best. She knew all about stage make-up but when she found screen make-up was something else again, she started out to absorb all she could on this subject, too. She knows exactly what she herself likes in the way of clothes, but if she finds that the line or color she prefers might not photograph well, she is perfectly willing to alter her opinions.

"Take her (Continued on page 96)



Ann's leading man in "Her Private Affair" is her own devoted husband, Harry Bannister.

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the conclusion of which I hope to be able to visit Hollywood.

Strangely enough, it was Rudolph Valentino who first interested me in the value of pictures. That was five years ago in Paris—just a short time before he passed on. At a large dinner party at a chateau just outside of the city, Valentino was the host and I the guest of honor. As I sat at Valentino's right at the big oval table beautifully set with thin old silver and rare Sevres porcelain, I wondered what on earth I would talk about to this youth. I had seen many moving pictures, of course, but of the film people, I knew nothing.

"Suddenly Valentino looked me full in the face. And I was shocked. Astounded. Here was a man whose personality had conquered the women of the world *en masse*. Yet as I regarded him, I saw immediately that he wasn't a handsome, magnetic animal. He was instead a true spiritual type.

"How we talked! What a dinner it was. Valentino and I both believed the same. I can't say we believed the same religion. I don't like that word and never use it. For what the world needs is more Christianity and less Creed. But we held to the same spiritual principles. That Valentino evening remains a vivid memory. I never saw him again. I thought then and I think now that he was an unhappy man. He was seeking the spiritual qualities which he could not find in his present material world.

"I have always been interested in spiritual things. As a child I used to ask our priests: 'What is life—where are we going—where do we come from?' They never answered me satisfactorily.

"Then I grew up. As a young man

I went into the Navy. And there I remained until the end. As I married and my children came into the world, they asked the same questions that I had asked years before. And I had no answer for them. But all this time I was seeking—hoping for a solution. Then came the war. The revolution. Finally with my wife and children I escaped to the Crimea. But there I was imprisoned. It looked like the end for all of us. But it wasn't. I knew then just as I know now that we were and always will be protected. Eventually we all escaped, and arrived safely in Paris.

"But I was no longer satisfied to live as heretofore. I wanted to find the answer to the riddle that had been haunting me all my life. And I have. It's Love. Love not for riches or power or fame. But Love—each man for the other, and for the beggar that stands outside the door.

"It was at this time that I went to the Peace Conference, where I tried to make understood the true condition in Russia. But they had no time to listen to me.

"I would make every man wealthy—rich in Love, and comfortable in material circumstances, so that he is no longer tortured by poverty nor tempted by wealth.

"This can only be accomplished by educating the children. And at this time when Premier Ramsay MacDonald and your President are working for the peace of all nations, I am so anxious for the people of America to realize that they must do their part. It is not alone by treaties and delicate diplomacy that war can be averted. Every person must help. For peace will not endure so long as man has the lust to fight. So long as we give children toy soldiers to play with and send them to military schools, so long will wars continue. We

must force the cessation of hostilities by educating the children—both at home and in the schools, in the theaters and in the churches. By teaching them less of varying gods and more of permanent Godliness, as the years roll by we will arrive at the ideal of peace towards which every thoughtful man and woman is striving.

"There is no means more potent for educating children than the motion picture. In five years, I understand, there will be talking pictures in two hundred thousand churches and parish houses, there will be talking pictures in one million public schools, and these same talkies will be universally used in the teaching of medicine, surgery, science, history, art and music.

"More than ever, therefore, is it necessary that this greatest of present day industries, the moving picture, with its sisters the radio and the gramophone, should bring to the people of the world those things which are essentially good and beautiful. And it is towards this end that I would wish to speak with your great stars and with the leaders of this great industry. I want to bring to them the message which is as old as Christianity itself. A message which their endless rolls of film and endless rounds of disc can unfold to the world this year, next year, and all the coming years. And this message is: Hold Fast to That Which is Enduring and True. For in this way only can we achieve eternal life—the life of the spirit."

In this twentieth century we have had many cases of those who give up their souls to gain the world. But in His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Alexander Michaelovich of Russia we have a man who loses the whole world—and counts it well lost—to gain his own soul.

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hair, for instance. She likes to wear it parted in the middle, drawn over her ears in Madonna fashion, and in a coil at the nape of her neck. But when Paul Stein, the director of the picture, decided that this was not sophisticated enough for the part she plays in 'Her Private Affair' she agreed to have it changed. As a result of her sweetness I lay awake several nights trying to think out brand new coiffures, exactly suited to her particular type.

"It's the same way with everyone else. The cameramen are all crazy about her, and they pay more attention to lighting and photographing her than anyone I've ever seen them work with. She works so hard herself that she inspires everyone else to equal effort. Why, I remember one day when she played a scene in a tight pair of shoes, which really hurt awfully, rather than hold up the company an hour until another pair came out from town. Can you imagine anyone not co-operating with a girl like that, no matter how much effort it took?"

Having finished her scene, the young lady who was the subject of so much praise, joined us.

"What deep, dark secret are you three whispering about now?" she queried as she sank into one of the canvas set chairs beside us.

"Speaking of secrets, have you any secrets that your new-found fan public might be interested in?" I queried in reply.

"I never have secrets," she answered, "even if this picture is called 'Her Private Affair.' They're dangerous. For if they are really secrets, they usually worry you. And if they cease to be secrets, they usually worry someone else.

"One thing, certainly, that is no secret, is the way in which Harry and I have become attached to California. Neither one of us had ever been here until Harry came with the 'Strange Interlude' company and I arrived in Pasadena to recuperate from a strenuous season of playing 'Mary Dugan' too soon after the birth of our baby. But we consider ourselves natives, already. They say that a New Yorker who comes to California usually has to return to New York before he can get the proper perspective on this state, but we are so completely fascinated by California, that we don't even need the New York trip."

For some time, I had wondered just how and where this new screen star lived. I had never met anyone who had encountered her at the Montmartre, the Cocomanut Grove, the Blossom Room at the Roosevelt, or any of the other bright spots most frequented by the celebrities of Hollywood.

"Do you live in Beverly Hills?" I asked. "Bless you, no!" she replied. "As soon as Harry and I signed our contracts with Pathé, we moved from Pasadena to the cutest little place in Van Nuys that you could imagine. It's not a new place, but

it's homey, and it has a nice garden and a big yard for Jane to crawl around in and we have two dogs and lots of chickens and flowers. Such flowers! They would be worth a small fortune in any florist's shop on Broadway!"

If you have never been in Hollywood, you cannot understand just how completely Ann Harding had defied all rules of motion picture existence by not only living in Van Nuys, but openly admitting that fact. It might be compared to a famous New York stage star living in Hoboken. And you can well imagine what a sensation that would be!

"Harry and I have just bought the most gorgeous lot high up on the very top of one of the tallest Hollywood hills," she continued in her enthusiastic praise of California. "And we are going to build a home there immediately. On Sundays and the few days when we are not working, we pack up a nice lunch, take along a canteen of water, put Jane into the back seat of the car and spend the day there clearing off our lot. It's great fun, but can you imagine what our friends in New York would say if they could see us with grimy hands and faces, working like day laborers?"

Well, I couldn't, and what's more, if I had not seen snapshots of them at work, I would have thought they were playing some sort of joke on me. But no high-hat for Ann Harding!