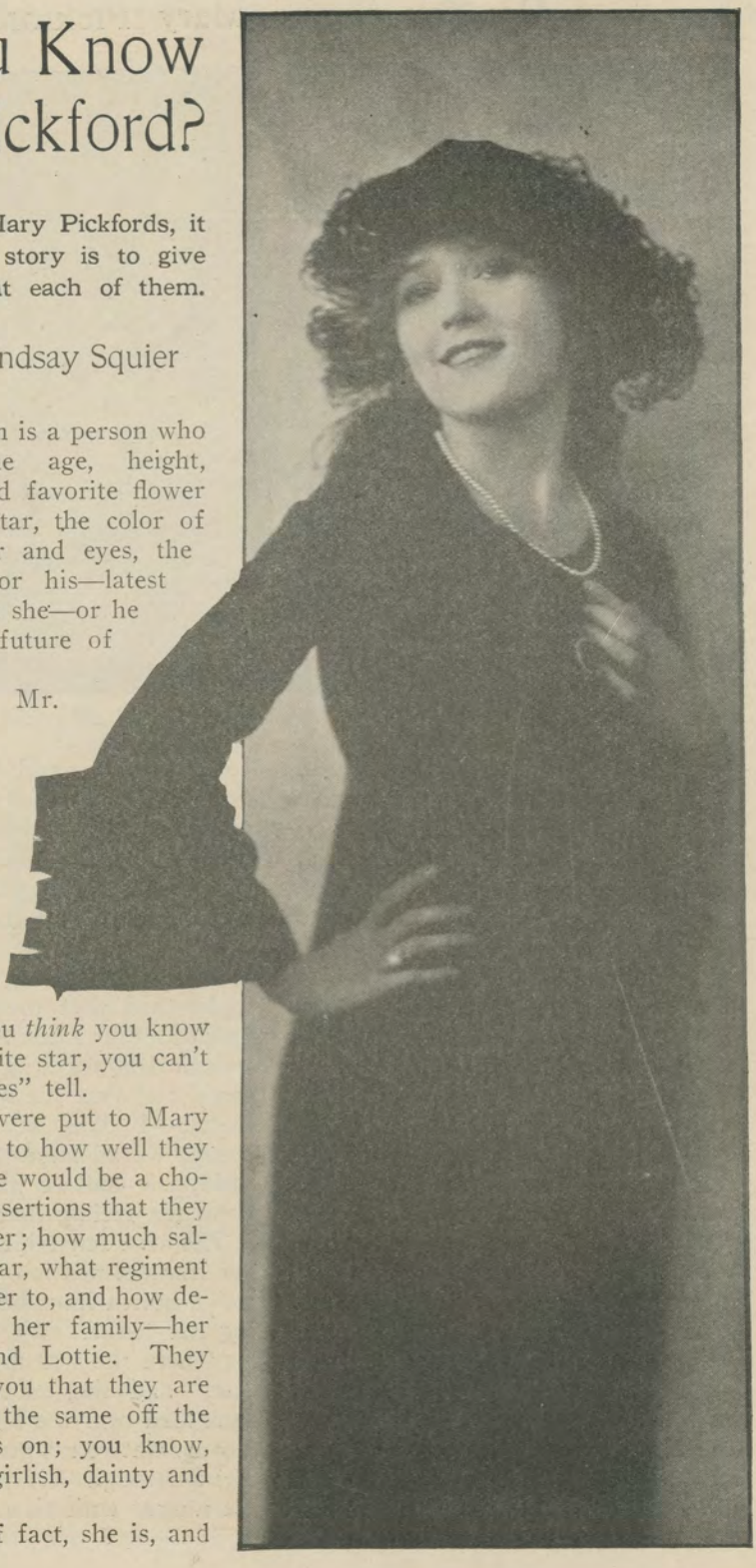
Do You Know Mary Pickford?

There are two Mary Pickfords, it seems, and this story is to give you a glimpse at each of them.

By Emma-Lindsay Squier



A MOVIE fan is a person who knows the age, height, weight, and favorite flower of his favorite star, the color of her—or his—hair and eyes, the names of her—or his—latest picture, and what she—or he—thinks of the future of the films.

That is not Mr. Webster's definition. He died too soon to include such information in his valuable work, but it suffices for the moral of this story, which is, that however much you *think* you know about your favorite star, you can't "always sometimes" tell.

If a question were put to Mary Pickford fans as to how well they know Mary, there would be a chorus of positive assertions that they know *all* about her; how much salary she gets a year, what regiment she was godmother to, and how devoted she is to her family—her mother, Jack, and Lottie. They would also tell you that they are *sure* she is just the same off the screen as she is on; you know, sweet and little girlish, dainty and Mary Pickfordy.

As a matter of fact, she is, and

Here is Mary Pickford of the films, the adorable little girl of the golden ringlets and dimples

—she isn't. Or, rather, we'll put it this way; there are two Mary Pickfords. One is dimpling, sweet, and pouting—the Mary of the films. She is an adorable little girl, and has that helpless, fragile look that makes you want to break through the screen and cuddle her. And there is Mary of private life; very womanly, gracious, sincere, and perfectly poised. She doesn't drop her r's or pretend to speak French; she is a wholly fascinating conversationalist, a delightful bit of femininity that you want to listen to, watch, follow around forever never—that is the Mary Pickford whom the fans do not know.

When I met her for the first time she was making "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm." She wore a gingham frock that came to her knees, and her feet were incased in quaint Mary Jane slippers. She looked—well, just as you'd expect Mary Pickford to look; like a little girl who can't possibly have any interests in life other than playing house and dressing dolls, and whose conversation would be about promotions in school and picnics and party frocks. But she began talking about Ibsen's "Wild Duck," which she had just finished reading, of how Nietzsche's philosophy was ruining Germany, of how "worried" she was about Jack, who was on a fishing trip, and how she understood that the orphanage taken care of by the Little Sisters of the Poor was in debt for a street-paving assessment, and that she must look into the matter—I dare say I gasped. Of course we all *know* that Mary isn't a little girl—but we just can't get away from the feeling that she *ought* to be.

The next few minutes, however, saw her transformed into the little girl that we've gotten into the habit of expecting her to be. We went out on the lot where she was to work in a porch "set," and she, as *Rebecca,* tumbled backward over the hedge, sold soap to a compliant young gentleman, and frolicked through *Rebecca's* moods with the utmost enthusiasm. And then the

And this is the grown-up Mary Pickford, very womanly, gracious, sincere, and perfectly poised.

minute Marshal Neilan told her she was through for the day—she grew up, charmingly, of course, but matter-of-factly. She said she would send me downtown in her limousine, and told me how hard it was to select a car—as she was getting one to give to Lottie.

Back in her dressing room, which, at that time, was a dear little bungalow on the Lasky lot furnished a là Japanese, the phone rang, and Mother Pickford, who is never very far away, wanted to speak to Mary.

"You must wear your heavy coat tonight; it's quite cool," she admonished her star daughter.

"Yes, mother," replied Mary submissively, like a little girl. That was Mary of the films. And when she hung up the receiver she turned to me with a glint of amusement in her hazel eyes. "Mother thinks I'm four, instead of twenty-four——" That was the Mary of private life.

When I next saw the little star she was trying on frocks for "The Little Princess," and she told me she had designed them all. They were the daintiest, fluffiest things imaginable, some of baby blue and some of peach-blow pink, some of prim black velvet and some of frilly organdie. And she looked exactly ten years old. So when she swung her silk-incased legs from a chair and looked at me from under those long, curling lashes of hers I'd have *sworn* that she was going to ask me if I had an all-day sucker with me, but instead she remarked rather plaintively that she had sold the designs of the frocks to a big firm in the East to be called "Little Mary" dresses, that they were only giving her twelve thousand dollars for them, and did I think that was enough?

If she had spoken of anything else, I'd have replied, "Yes, Mary," but it being a matter of high finance I swallowed my gum and said, "Yes, ma'am!"

And again she spoke of the orphanage, and wondered why the sisters didn't tell her if they needed help; per-

The little tots just can't keep their eyes off from Mary.

haps they thought it would bother her, or that she had done enough for them by that time.

"But you can't do enough to make other people happy," she assured me gravely.

So, after she was dressed in an adorable sport suit, with a wide Panama hat, we motored out to the orphanage to do some quiet scouting around. And while there I got another angle on Mary Pickford. Her connection with the institution is something she doesn't talk about for publication. Her largess is given freely and gladly and with no sound of trumpets or heralding of press agents. It was quite by accident that I found out what I did, and it wasn't from Mary, either.

The sisters wear habits of blue—denim, I guess it is—with full skirts and white kerchiefs over the bodices. They have white starched caps that stick out at either side of their heads like wings, and they look as if they had stepped out of a Van Dyke painting. When they welcomed Mary they were almost as excited as the children, who crowded about her crying ecstatically: "Mary is here; Mary has come to see us!"

She remembered all their names and asked about the children who weren't there and ordered ice cream sent out for dinner that night. When she went out into the playground with a satellite group of adoring kiddies I stayed behind for a little chat with the sisters.

"Daddy Long-Legs," Mary's first picture in her new series, is about a little orphan girl.

They all talked in chorus—mostly about Mary and what she had done for them, but Mary says that that is posit-*ively* not for publication, so I can't repeat it.

But I'm going to tell what Sister Cecelia told me; I know Mary won't mind just this once. One of the littlest girls in saying her prayers asserted that she was going to pray to "our patron saint to bring some more pie."

"What patron saint is that?" asked Sister Cecelia.

"Why, Mary Pickford, of course!" was the quick response.

Through tactful questioning we found out about the assessment, which was a huge one, and the sisters were in despair about it, but to have Mary take care of it—oh, they couldn't think of that——

"All right, then," said Mary; "then we'll have a benefit and give every one a chance to help."

It was to be an all-star benefit, she explained to me on our way back to the studio, at good, stiff prices, but with a vaudeville program such as Los Angeles had never seen.

"The idea's all right," I said dubiously, "but the stars generally promise to make a personal appearance—and let it go at that."

"They'll come to this one," she said firmly; "I'll see to it that they do."

And they did.

That night was one of triumph for Little Mary's executive ability. The

brightest stars of the film firmament of the coast appeared in original acts. Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, William S. Hart, Jack Pickford and Olive Thomas, Lottie Pickford and Kenneth Harlan, little Frankie Carpenter—and Mary. She came on to the stage pulled in a little red wagon drawn by two brawny giants from the Sennett Studios, and after she had done her little "stunt" she brought out before the footlights two of the tiny tads of the orphanage and told the audience in a sweet, simple little talk that it was for these little, homeless children that the benefit was being given.

Mary's speaking voice is as charming as her whole personality. I saw people crying, and they weren't ashamed of it. Over four thousand dollars was taken in from the performance, and Mary added a check that nearly doubled the amount. Sister Cecelia said, between sobs, that she would sleep soundly that night for the first time in weeks without the overwhelming worry of the debt.

And now Mary is a producer on her own account by her new arrangement with the First National Exhibitors' Circuit. She does everything but build the sets, she tells me. When I saw her she was beginning "Daddy Long-Legs," the first picture of her new series; she was busy casting people for the parts, and a most charming, gentle way she had with all of them. She didn't overlook any one, even the most impossible persons.

That day she was wearing a black velvet dress, cut long and narrow, with a hat trimmed with ostrich feathers, and she looked, for once, quite grown up.

"I feel like an actress in this dress," she told me a little ruefully.

"Well——" I suggested.

"Oh, I know I am, but I don't want to *look* like one," she explained. "When I go downtown shopping or to a movie, which isn't often, I put on the oldest and plainest thing I have, bring my hat down over my eyes, and kind of *sneak* in. I don't want to be pointed out as a movie actress; I want to be just a person!"

Do you wonder that they think of her as their patron saint?

Mary's home in California.

Perhaps you know the story of "Daddy Long-Legs." It's about a little girl in an orphan asylum—a little Cinderella sort of person to whom a fairy prince came in the oddest sort of way. *Judy,* the little orphan, didn't know what he looked like, but she saw his shadow once, and so she called him Daddy Long-Legs. He knew her, of course, and that made their meetings very interesting, both for him and for the audience. *Judy* is a delightful rôle, and I'm sure that Mary had more than the usual amount of pleasure in making it.

No story about Mary would be complete unless it told a little something of her "early" life. It's been told again and again, and Mary says people are tired of hearing about it, but I don't believe that.

She was born in Toronto, and went on the stage at the tender age of four. She and Lottie played together quite a bit, but Mary got the most work. "It was my curls and my eyes, I guess," she explains modestly.

She played in stock in New York, and knew the Gish girls there.

"We used to go around together all the time—Lillian, Dorothy, Lottie, Jack, and I," she said reminiscently. "We only tolerated Jack. He was younger, you see, but was the only available male, so we tolerated him as an unpleasant but necessary nuisance. He and Dorothy had an awful 'case,' and he always used to say he was going to marry her. She and I were pals, and Lillian and Lottie struck it off together; Jack, as I've said before, stuck around on the outskirts until wanted. I wouldn't have anything to do with Lillian; I was afraid of her. Mother used to be always saying, 'Oh, Lillian is too good to live; she'll be taken straight to heaven——' And you know what kind of a Madonna expression she has. Well, she was always like that, and I was afraid to be alone with her for fear she'd up and die!

"We used to go to the theaters together, and I would march up to the manager, holding out my card, and ask if he 'recognized the profession,' and he'd say yes, how many were there of us, and I'd say 'five in the family'—just imagine my nerve!—but Jack was so little he didn't count.

"Once the five of us started out to see a friend of mother's, but we stopped on the way to make mud pies. When we got to the lady's house she put us to bed while she washed and ironed our clothes. Weren't we terrible?

"And I know all about how hard it is for beginners to get recognition," she said, looking serious for a moment. "I've been all through the mill of seeing snappy managers who acted as though they were going to take my head off. When I was on the stage, and trying to get engagements, I'd always scrooch down behind the desk and make myself as small as possible"—that couldn't have been very hard—"and then, if they said I was too little, I could grow suddenly before their very eyes.

"When I got into pictures I was so ashamed; yes, really, I mean it. They were considered cheap, if not downright disgraceful, and I used to sneak in to see myself and shed tears in the darkness because the season was so poor that I had to come *down* to pictures! I took the Gish girls around to see Mr. Griffith one day, and he was charmed with their types, and that's how they started."

During the war Mary has been all wrapped up in her adopted regiment, the One Hundred and Forty-third Artillery, and at Christmas she sent seventy thousand cigarettes to them, with a lovely letter for each company. The

YIELD TO THAT IMPULSE——

MY Dearest Mr. Dalton: I have a strong desire
To write and tell you just how much your acting I admire.
You are my ideal lover—so unlike the modern beau—
Most ably do you rival the glorious Romeo!
In fact, since I have seen you, I cannot tolerate
The young men who would woo me, and indeed intend to wait
Until I find a sweetheart who is to my model true,
And proves as fascinating and adorable as you.
And I'd love to have you write me, and tell me of your life,
(And though it is so personal) your *ideal of a wife;*
Also your "big" ambition, and your favorite hobby, too,
For it would be so thrilling to hear all this from you!
And I do crave your photo, which, if you will but send,
Will ever be prized highly by your *very loving* friend.

boys adore Mary, and gave up a precious period of "liberty" in Los Angeles to help her make "Johanna Enlists." She went to San Francisco to see the football game between them and the Grizzlies, Theda Bara's regiment, and a rivalry developed into something more than a mere contest in sportsmanship. The Grizzlies called the One Hundred and Forty-third Regiment "Mary's Little Lambs," and the "Lambs," in revenge, stole the Grizzly mascot, a goat, and placarded it.

The big thing in her life, outside of her work, is her little niece, Mary Charlotte Rupp, Lottie's chubby little daughter, who thinks that in all the wide world there is no one like "Aunt Mary!"

"It's so sweet to have a child in the house!" Mary told me one day very seriously, at a moment when she was dressed as *Judy*, with demure braids and knee-length apron.

"Pooh, you're nothing but a child yourself!" I said thoughtlessly.

And she smiled, a very earnest, grown-up smile.

"Oh, no, I'm not," she assured me. "I'm quite grown up—off the screen—but no one believes it."

——AND THIS IS APT TO HAPPEN!

MISS FAN: As Mr. Dalton is at present on a tour,
He has little time for writing, as you'll understand, I'm sure;
So to spare you disappointment I am answering instead,
And in his behalf I thank you for the lovely things you said.
Now, his favorite fad is farming, and he spends his leisure hours
In cultivating nature—from cabbages to flowers.
As for his "great" ambition, it is not achieved so far,
Nor, despite his loved profession, has he "hitched it to a star;"
For I've oft heard him declaring no peace in life he'll know
Till he wins a few blue ribbons at the annual Poultry Show.
As to his "Heart's Desire" I'll just add, if I may,
As I am Mrs. Dalton, modesty forbids, I say!
But I inclose this picture—which may of interest be—
Just a little camera "filming" of the Dalton family.

VARA MACBETH JONES.