

Mary Pickford

An Appreciation

MARY PICKFORD is not interviewed; she is appreciated.

In writing about the world's most popular woman, I am continually tempted into superlatives, knowing all the time that if I fall, Mary Pickford—who is great but not simple—will laugh at me.

And it is not because she is the world's most popular woman that I am afraid to write about her. I should love Mary Pickford if she wasn't Mary Pickford at all but a little librarian in an Indiana college town. I do not idealize Mary Pickford—I don't have to.

But what can I say? Here I've been growing up with the movies and going to see every one of Mary's plays from "In the Bishop's Carriage" to "M'Liss" and praying to meet her and now I have met her and—what can I say?

Of course I wanted at once to do a story about her. But the Editor said, "Everything has been said about Mary Pickford." But I said, "They didn't see Mary Pickford as I saw her that day in the rain." And I'm not selfish. So I'll just tell you all about it.

Mary came to Chicago to sell bonds, and I tagged after her all day; saw her close-up; watched her bob up here and there, unexpectedly, in the crowds that followed her about in the rain; heard her "speak," and finally, met her.

I watched her take down her hair and brush it; it's real.

I watched her wash her face—and nothing came off on the towel.

She made half-a-dozen speeches; shook hands with at least five thousand people; and signed her name to hundreds of bonds. I could find it in my heart to forgive Mary Pickford if she decided to retire from private life.

Why, Mary hasn't even a bowing acquaintance with temper or its twin sister, temperament. Once out at the studio a thoughtless person irritated her. Hurt, she fled to her dressing room, covering her face with her hands and crying like a little child.

Mary belongs to the people. In that crowd, when she was signing Liberty Bonds—most of them for thousands of dollars—she found time to rise and throw kisses to a few small boys who stood in the rain trying to get a glimpse of her from the fire-escape of the office building opposite.

There was a year-old child whose mother lifted him up to see Mary. The kid didn't know Mary Pickford; but he knew he was frightened and wanting to cry. Mary looked down and saw him. "Are you afraid of me, honey?" she said softly. The child stared and then smiled. Mary bent and kissed him.

On the stage her small figure was outlined against a dark drop. The audi-



rd, the Girl

By Delight Evans

ence applauded; then settled back a bit uncertainly. Mary began to speak. She told them she'd come on business; she meant to forget she was Mary Pickford and make them forget it. They sat forward as she told them of the wounded American boys—the first—whom she had visited in Washington; of one boy with both legs gone; of another, blind—it seemed fitting somehow that Mary Pickford should tell it; and she told it all so quietly. A stage-hand turned to me, tears in his eyes. "Ain't that sweet?" he said.

Little Mary was the only one of the Big Three who went through with her speaking schedule. Douglas Fairbanks broke under the strain; Chaplin contracted stage-fright. Mary said she was "pretty tired"—that's all.

Mary met the President in Washington. She told me about it. "I was nervous at first, until I saw him standing there with his hands in his pockets. He told us a story about an Iowa farmer who wrote to him and said, 'Mr. President, I've bought some Liberty Bonds; please tell me when the interest is due on them so I can send you a check for the amount.'"

She wore the military costume you saw in "The Little American." By the way, she says she liked that picture; but it was not her favorite. "There wasn't enough comedy in it," she explained; "I liked 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm' much better; and 'How Could You, Jean?' is good, I think."

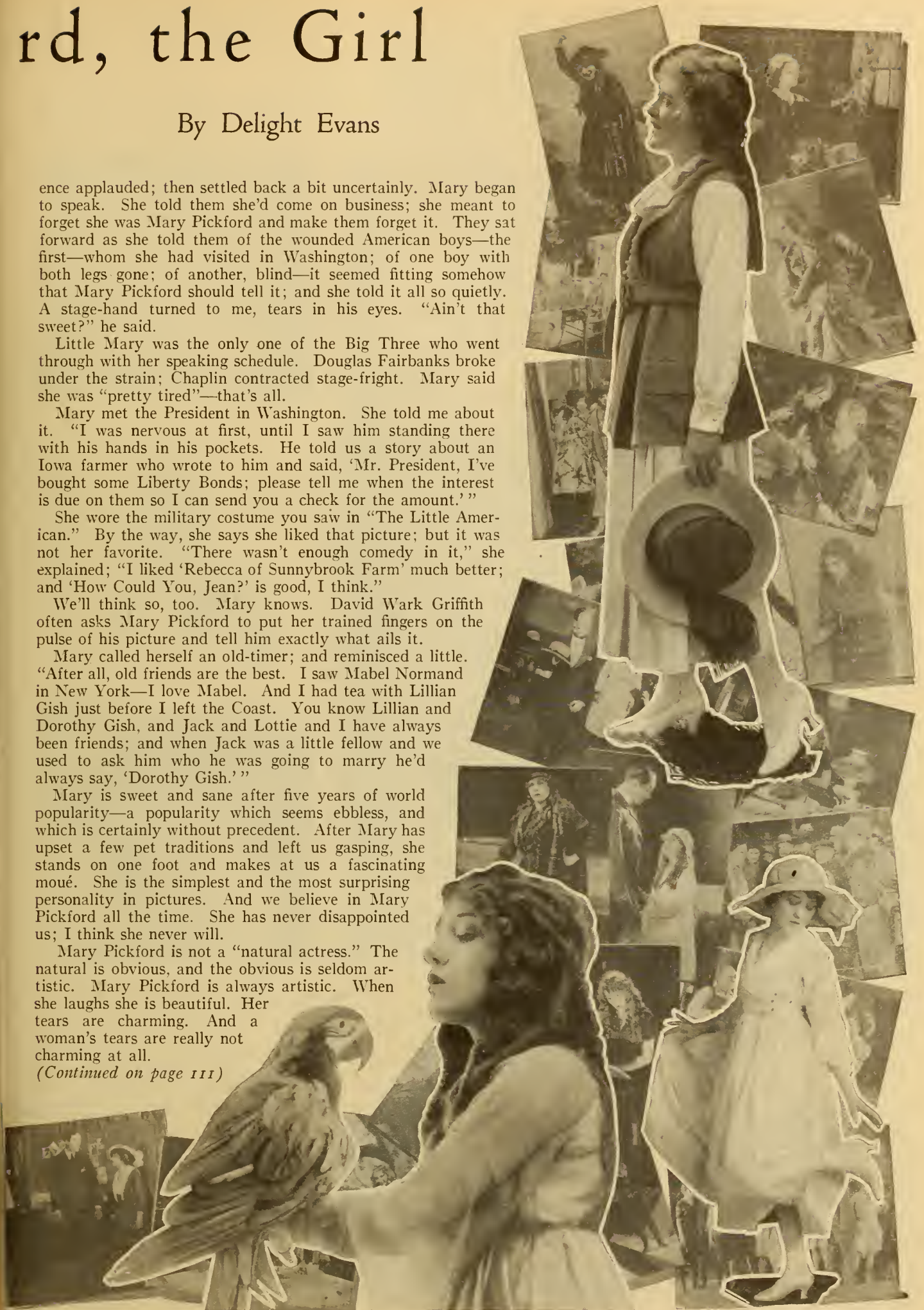
We'll think so, too. Mary knows. David Wark Griffith often asks Mary Pickford to put her trained fingers on the pulse of his picture and tell him exactly what ails it.

Mary called herself an old-timer; and reminisced a little. "After all, old friends are the best. I saw Mabel Normand in New York—I love Mabel. And I had tea with Lillian Gish just before I left the Coast. You know Lillian and Dorothy Gish, and Jack and Lottie and I have always been friends; and when Jack was a little fellow and we used to ask him who he was going to marry he'd always say, 'Dorothy Gish.'"

Mary is sweet and sane after five years of world popularity—a popularity which seems ebbless, and which is certainly without precedent. After Mary has upset a few pet traditions and left us gasping, she stands on one foot and makes at us a fascinating moué. She is the simplest and the most surprising personality in pictures. And we believe in Mary Pickford all the time. She has never disappointed us; I think she never will.

Mary Pickford is not a "natural actress." The natural is obvious, and the obvious is seldom artistic. Mary Pickford is always artistic. When she laughs she is beautiful. Her tears are charming. And a woman's tears are really not charming at all.

(Continued on page 111)



Questions and Answers

(Continued)

M. B., NORFOLK, VA.—Jack Pickford is in the navy, but any communications sent to him at the Lasky studio in Hollywood will be forwarded safely to him.

MARY MILES MINTER BEAU, OAK PARK, Ill.—Juliet Shelby was originally the name of Mary Miles Minter. She was sixteen on the first day of April, this year. William Lerche is the real name of Bill Russell. Bill's thirty. Both he and Miss Minter answer letters from their admirers. Doris Kenyon's mail comes to Pathe; Shirley Mason's, Famous Players; Mary Mac Laren's, Universal City and Madge Evans', World. Alan Forrest is married to Ann Little. Fox eastern company is the address of June Caprice. The Minter and Russell pictures are made on the coast, not in Chicago.

I. T., SPRINGFIELD, MASS.—Famous Players studio in New York for communications to Pauline Frederick and the western Fox studio for the Theda Bara ones.

M. W., VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.—Neither Mahlon Hamilton nor Lionel Barrymore give their ages. The latter is appearing on the legitimate stage in "The Copperhead." No Olive White in the cast of Fox's "The Tale of Two Cities." Marshall Farnum is dead.

BILLY BLUE GUN, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.—Thanks, Billy, very much for the Australian booklet. Believe we could find our way about Sydney now without a guide.

S. F., NEW YORK CITY.—Alice Brady is with the Select company.

V. C., THOMASVILLE, GA.—William Hart appeared in both "The Silent Man" and "The Desert Man." The cast of the latter follows: *Jim Alton*, William Hart; *Jennie*, Margery Wilson; *Joey*, Buster Irving; *Razor Joe*, Henry Belmar; *Tacoma Jake*, Milton Ross; *Dr. Howard*, Jack Livingston; *Old Burns*, Walt Whitman; *Katy*, Josephine Headley.

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Mary Pickford, the Girl

(Concluded from page 91)

Once a popular actress in New York, portraying a slavey, desired realism—and in one scene blew her nose. The next day a critic wrote, in effect: "Miss — is determined to be natural. Very well, let her have realism if she likes. But please, Miss —, do not blow your nose!" Mary Pickford, so to speak, never blows her nose.

Mary herself is calm; matter-of-fact. But she has the saddest eyes in the world. Even while she laughs, her eyes stay wistful, and seem ready to brim over with tears. I asked Mary Pickford about it—and she laughed.

Writing about Mary, one always dedicates at least a paragraph or two to Mary's mother. Mrs. Pickford, quite apart from her business ability and brains, is charming; I liked her at once. And Mary says, "Mother is my world."

This is what Julian Johnson said about Mary Pickford in his Impressions: "Dawn, over a daisy-filled meadow; the spirit of spring imprisoned in a woman's body; the first child in the world."

What can I say? But one does not understand Mary Pickford. One loves her.



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