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# JEAN BURT REILLY:

# MOTION PICTURE HAIR STYLIST

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

Born in Montana and reared, because of a peripatetic father, in a half dozen other states, the life of Jean Burt Reilly reads much like the scripts of some of the films for which she has created the hairstyles. Always prepared to take up a challenge, she learned hairstyling because she was informed that she could never do it. Because of a lifelong interest in dramatics, and with a background of several years' experience in both the wig department and the make-up department at Max Factor's, Miss Reilly was uniquely prepared to assume her duties at Warner Brothers studios, where she is now head of the hairstyling department.

In the following tapescript, Miss Reilly describes the frustrations as well as the satisfactions of a career in the motion picture industry. Included, of course, are some of her experiences with a few of the stars with whom she has worked: among them, Errol Flynn, Bette Davis, Ingrid Bergman, and Frederic March.

The recording sessions for the following tapescript were conducted in North Hollywood in the home of Craig Stevens and Alexis Smith in the fall of 1962. In Miss

Reilly's words, she was "house-sitting for them" during a protracted European trip. The interview was conducted by Mrs. Elizabeth I. Dixon. The tapescript was edited by Mr. Bernard Galm and indexed by Mrs. Adelaide G. Tusler. Records relating to this interview are located in the office of the UCLA Oral History Program.

## CHAPTER I

## CHILDHOOD AND PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION

I was born in Vananda, Montana, which I don't think you could find on the map. My mother wanted to homestead some land, and so they went out to Montana and homesteaded and that's where I was born. I don't remember the homestead because we only lived there for about a month after I was born. Then we went back to South Dakota. My father was a doctor. He was born in Pennsylvania, but he met my mother in Iowa.

My father was a doctor, but he was also a vagabond--he loved to travel. No sooner would we get set in one place than my father would have to move on to someplace else. When I was in the fourth grade, he took a special course here in Los Angeles so we came here and then moved back to South Dakota again. Then I went with them to Iowa, Nebraska, Tennessee, and California--all in the fourth grade! We came to Santa Ana and I went to school there for awhile. Then my father went to El Centro. I hadn't been in school much, because of moving around so much. They gave us an IQ test and I got the highest IQ score in the class. I can't quite figure this out--perhaps I just got it through osmosis while traveling around the country. I think they gave us most of the

questions on geography [laughter].

We moved to San Diego when I was in the fifth grade. I was supposed to skip a grade, but I was so busy watching my mother and the principal that I didn't do the long division problems, and she put me in the class where I was supposed to be. I liked that better anyway because I got to graduate in June. My mother, at that time, put her foot down and said we had to stay put because I should stay in one school, so I finished school in San Diego. I finished grammar school there and then I went to junior high and high school.

In junior high and high school, I majored in art and dramatics. I loved both of them very much. I particularly liked dramatics and I was always in a dramatic club. I was always in all the good parts of the plays and trying out for all the contests. I would also enter the contests in art class. One Christmas I won the Christmas card design for the county. That was fun; I was very pleased.

My parents never paid much attention to what I did, really. I think they took it for granted that I would do well, and I never got compliments one way or the other. They never really paid any attention to me at all.

In junior high school, I ran for class president, and I didn't win; a boy won, which they nearly always did. But I was chosen by the faculty to be Captain of the Guard, and was the first girl who had ever gotten that honor.

I felt very important.

I also remember Book Day in junior high. We had to come dressed as one of our favorite characters from a book.

My girl friend asked me, "What are you going to go as?"

And I said, "I don't know, maybe Joan of Arc."

She said, "You couldn't make a Joan of Arc costume."

I said, "Oh, couldn't I?" which of course was all I needed.

So I worked night after night making a Joan of Arc costume. For the armor, I got flexible cardboard and painted it silver. I cut out all the pieces for the leg pieces and the thigh pieces, and I even made pointed pieces for the knees and flexible feet, you know. Then I got white muslin and painted gold fleur-de-lis over it. Then I got grey cretonne and some crayons and made chain mail for the undergarments.

Well, my girl friend came over, and we got up at four o'clock in the morning to get me into this--with all these pieces of cardboard. I was propped in the back of my father's car. I got to school and paraded down the hall stiff-legged because I didn't want anything to break before the contest at noon. The teachers were just amazed. They started to hear about it and would come into the room where I was and look at me. The principal said, "Jean, as long as I've been in the school, I've never seen anything like it." When it came time for the contest to begin we had to

walk across the lawn, and I remember the secretary of our class said, "Now, Jean, move." Now I could move; if it fell apart it was all right. As I walked, everything went, the knee pieces, the foot, the arm, and everything else. Maybe I was just prejudiced, but I always thought it was a great miscarriage of justice. The sewing teachers were the judges, and the one who won (which somehow or other never seemed too original to me or new) was a little fat squat girl in an Uncle Sam costume. I never quite believed in justice after that.

My art teacher came to me and said, "Jean it's unbelievable. I can't believe it, I've never seen anything like this."

And so when they had the pictures taken for the paper, the principal called me down and said, "You have got to have your picture taken anyway, because you should have won." But that experience did something to me, and I thought, "Why work so hard?" But anyway it was fun, and then I went to high school, and I began majoring in dramatics and art and was the president of our dramatic club for two years running. I was also the lead in our high school class play. In the One-Act-Play tournament for southern California, I won for the most outstanding characterization for San Diego County. Then we came up to Pasadena and we tried out there. I came in second, which just about broke my heart. That's just wicked! I had a

a series of running second, and the man who had been a judge in San Diego came up to me afterwards and said, "Jean, what happened? Your whole characterization was changed, even your costume."

Well I hadn't thought about it--again this sounds like sour grapes--but my dramatic teacher, everyone knew, had a pet in the class, which was the other girl in the play. When I won in San Diego, I remember she couldn't even congratulate me she was so jealous. But I was always a person that trusted everyone, so it just went right over my head. This teacher started to work with the other girl constantly. She changed my whole characterization and my costume and put me in the background. Of course, I thought it was for the good of the play, but the judge came to me and said, "What in the world happened? If you had done it like you did in San Diego, there wouldn't have been any question." He said it was so outstanding [in San Diego].

Of course, I cried for two nights over that because I <u>wanted</u> the scholarship to the [Pasadena] Playhouse. But I did win honors in dramatics when I graduated from high school. Then I went out for the Shakespearean contest. There were two that came in at the finals and they couldn't decide between us, so we had to draw straws. We drew six straws and we came down to the last two, and she drew the long one and I got the short one, so I missed on that.

Then I went out for class orator. We had a very, very

large class--there were over four hundred. I went out for class orator. I remember standing in the hall waiting for the outcome, and the teacher came out and said the editor of our school paper won. He came over to me and said, "Jean, if it will make you feel any better, you came in second." Well, by now, if anyone said second to me I wanted to die. And I felt badly about that because my grandmother had been the orator, and my mother had also been class orator, and I wanted to be class orator too. But, the art and the dramatics were a good combination for what I am doing now.

When I came up to Los Angeles I studied dramatics further and did some shows at the Pasadena Playhouse. Then I did some modeling, and when I did a show down at the Biltmore Hotel, I was a brunette model. It's funny how your life can change over the slightest thing. Because this hair stylist from New York, I don't know his name even, while doing my hair (in reply to my comment "My, but this should be interesting"), said "Oh, you'd never be able to do anything like this." As I say, I didn't even know the man, but for some reason that did something. It was like the comment about the Joan of Arc costume, that I never would be able to do it.

I went to beauty school and took up hair dressing. I took it up really for fun, to use my hands, to create something. I had just finished my course and had taken my

examination (I didn't know whether I had passed it or not), when my mother and father decided to move to Montana. They were moving again, and my father wanted to drill an oil well. I just did not want to go to Montana. I was about twenty-one and the thought of going out into the wilds of Montana was just draadful. I had remembered meeting a man at Max Factor's who was head of the make-up department at the time I was in dramatic school, and he had said to me, "If you are ever interested in doing make-up come and see me." Well, I didn't know, until I knew him later, that he was that kind of a guy. "Come over and see me young lady, if you're here."

So I said to my mother, "I'll be back." And she said, "We are all packed, and will be leaving at noon." I said, "I know, I'll be back."

I went up to see this man at Max Factor's and said, "Could you use a make-up artist?"

And he said, "Well, no, we've got as many as we need here now." But he said, "If you can do hair styling maybe I can get you a job."

And I said, "Well, as a matter of fact, I can, but I don't know really because I don't know whether I've passed or not. I've taken my examination, but I don't know."

He said, "I wouldn't worry about that. You go over and see Mel Berns at RKO."

So I went over to see Mel Berns at RKO, and Mel said,

"I think I have a job for you." I didn't know the motion picture business, and I didn't know that this meant nothing. I went home, and I told my mother and father that I had a job, and that they could go on to Montana. Well, if they hadn't already packed, my mother would never in a million years have left me here, but it was panic time, you know. They knew my aunt and uncle were in town, and they knew I would be safe as far as that was concerned. The house was rented a week later. I could live there for a week, and I had a car with a tank full of gasoline, and ten dollars.

So they went to Montana and I waited for a phone call. As I was waiting I went to see an agent that someone told me to see. When I went to see this agent he said, "Jean, I think that we can use you. I think something is coming up and you are the type. . ." Well, again you hear that, and I knew that end of it, so I said, "Well, that's fine."

I went home and I got a phone call from Mel Berns from RKO to come to work as a hair stylist. I went over there and I knew nothing about wigs. I was fresh out of beauty school, and I hadn't worked at a beauty shop, so, you see, I really didn't know croquignole curling, which we use in the studios. Of course, when you go into a new job all the girls are looking at you thinking, "Well, prove yourself, girl." They aren't about to give you a hand, and there were two hairpieces being used on the player I was working on. I didn't know you used spirit gum to put

hairpieces on. One of the make-up artists told me to use liquid adhesive. Well, that's fine if they tell you how to clean it out, but no one told me you had to clean it afterwards. Well, it was an inch thick, but anyway I got through the picture and realized that I didn't know anything. I realized that there was an awful lot that Jean had to learn.

While I was on the set one day when they were making the picture New Faces of 1936, they had six girls as I recall. They were all tall girls and being tall was one thing that I had constantly had trouble with at that time. I went in and they would say, "Jean, it looks like you would photograph very well, but you are so tall." That was the era when the only tall ones were Garbo and Kay Francis, and you could name the rest on one hand. The rest of them were small. These girls were all tall girls which was quite unusual. While I was on the set, this agent walked in and he looked at me and said, "What are you doing and where have you been?"

I said, "Here."

He said, "I've been trying to get hold of you."

And I said, "Oh? Why?"

And he said, "You would have been one of the six girls."

So that's how fate can play your hand one way or the other. Well, in the long run as I look back, and I've seen the careers of different ones, I'm probably far better off. Who knows? It's a gamble especially in the business I'm

in. I've been very fortunate.

After I finished that picture, I knew I had to learn something. I was sent over by someone to Max Factor's, and I said, "I want to learn how to do wigs."

They said, "Well, why don't you go and see the secretary of the Guild."

So I went to see the secretary of the Guild, and she said, "Why don't you go see Nina Roberts at (I can't think of the studio, it's changed hands so many times) United Artists. I made an appointment to see Nina Roberts and she did see me, and I said, "I would like to learn wigs, so could I come here, please, and watch?"

She said, "Oh, no, you couldn't do that."

I said, "Would Max Factor?"

She said, "Why don't you go down to Max Factor's?"

I said, "Well now, . . .well now."

She knew that you couldn't go into Max Factor's and do this, any more than you could do it at United Artists Studio. She happened to know the girl who was in charge of the Wig Department at Max Factor's, so she could have called her, but it was an easy way out. But I agreed, so I went over to Max Factor's, and I asked if I could see the head of the wig department, and they said, "Well, you better see Mr. [Max] Firestein, go upstairs."

So I went upstairs to Mr. Firestein, and Mr. Firestein said, "Well, I think you better see Fred Fredricks."

So I went down and I saw Fred Fredricks, and Fred (who later turned out to be a wonderful friend to me in my business) said, "Well now, we don't have people that watch, but if you would like a job here, there is going to be one open in about two weeks because one of our girls is going to have a baby and she is retiring."

And I said, "Well, how much do you pay?" Because at the studios I've been getting sixty dollars a week, and I thought that was a lot of money.

And he said, "Eighteen dollars."

Well, that was quite a come-down, and I said, "I don't know, I'll think it over."

He said, "All right. Will you let me know as soon as you can?"

I thought and thought and thought, knowing that if I was to be in this business I would not be happy unless I knew what I was doing. Learning in the studio is hit-or-miss and maybe someone will show you and maybe someone will not, but more than likely, like the liquid adhesive, they'll show you wrong. So I phoned him and I said, "If the job is still open I would like to come to work."

He said, "Fine, start August the twenty-sixth," which was my birthday.

I started at Factor's and I worked in the wig department for two years. I've tried to remember this as a lesson to myself about new people coming into a business--

not helping them absolutely proves nothing. But, unfortunately, there are a great many people that do it that way.

I walked in and the woman who was in charge, who is a very talented woman, didn't like me. Not for me, but because Fredricks had hired me, and she and Fred were having a feud at that time. I didn't know any of this and I was caught in the middle. She handed me a wig with long hair to dress. As I say, that was in the thirties and long hair was out. Everyone had short hair and, in beauty school, I had not learned how to do long hair. Well, I remember the hair of the wig as being three feet long--which I'm sure it wasn't. It was probably a foot and a half at the most--but to me it was the longest hair I had ever seen.

And she said, "Dress this." Well, I didn't know what to do. I looked around. I saw the other girls taking out one of these wig blocks. At the time I didn't know it was called a wig block, but whatever it was called, they took this and they put the wig on it. They were using pins somehow and were poking the pins in somewhere, and they were getting the wig to stay on. So I watched a little bit and then I started putting pins in. I saw the woman in charge looking over, and I knew I was doing it wrong. You know this awful feeling you have and yet you don't know what to do about it. And no one in the room would come over and help me because she was the boss and she wasn't

helping me. So I sat there.

I never spent such a long morning in my life. I put the wig on somehow. I had been taught to roll curls from the bottom of the hair up--which does make a beautiful curl, and I had been taught to make little tiny curls because in those days the women wanted to keep their curl in forever. So I rolled this hair up in tiny, wee, little strands, from the bottom up, and then put in these long, wig pins--they are like a straight pin but are two inches long. In good wig dressing, people who dress wigs do not use bobby pins, or hairpins or clips--they didn't have clips then. They don't use anything standard that is used in the beauty shop. They use these long pins. And they use three. When you learn to do it, it's wonderful because you can get a perfectly round curl with those three, but if you don't know, you make the craziest curl you will ever see in your life. When I got through with those little bitsy weensy curls, about two strands of hair apiece on the three-foot long hair, you can imagine the size of that wig. The hair was sticking out all over. I had used all kinds of pins, and I knew it was wrong.

When lunchtime came, the boss went to lunch and one of the older girls stayed behind and asked, "Would you like to have me show you how to make a papillete?"

"What is a papillote?"

"Well a papillote is what you call pin curls in

beauty shops (she hadn't known that I hadn't even worked in a beauty shop), but in wigs they are called papillotes."

I said, "I would appreciate it very much if you would show me how to make a papillote."

And she said, "Also, when you pin on wigs you do not put pins down the parting because that makes holes all down the parting. You put the pins. . ."

I was so grateful to that girl; she was an absolute angel I thought for teaching me how to make papillotes, which were large round curls with three pins propped in just right. If you did it right, you had a nice pretty round curl, and when you could make a pretty round curl, well, you were on your way. Maybe you had a chance.

Well we put the first wig that I had done in the oven. It must have been there for six months because I was afraid to take it out. I kept pushing things in front of it and hoping no one would ever see it. Finally one day, when no one was around, I took it out. By then, of course, I had made a couple of friends there, and we laughed and tried to get the curl out of it, but you couldn't have if you had boiled it. In wig making, as in giving a permanent, they roll the hair on spools in the same way, but they boil the hair and that gives the permanent curl. If we had boiled the hair, it couldn't have had a tighter curl. It was in there from now on. Oh, we had to take a hackle to get it apart, and it was just awful. Anyway that was

my first wig I ever did. But I did learn about wigs, and that was a great asset to me and proved a great help to me on the first picture I ever did when I went back into the studios.

I worked in the wig room for two years, until I just could not stand it any longer. To sit on a stool and to dress wigs all day was not for my type of individual. I could wait on customers, but the customers that I waited on were unpleasant--some of them were wonderful. On the whole it was a dreary routine. My personality just wasn't cut out for it. Then I'd come back and sit on that wig stool. I finally got an occupational pain in the middle of my back. The minute I would go away for the weekend, I was fine, but just let me get on that wig stool and this horrible pain would come right in the center of my back.

One day, Fred Fredricks, who had hired me (he was wonderful to me), walked in and out of that room until finally, he said, "Gee, do you think you could maybe do another wig today."

I had been on that same wig all day. I was hoping to be fired because I wouldn't quit, and yet I knew I couldn't stand it any longer. I didn't know what kind of a job I could get aside from that because at that time jobs were not plentiful. But, I simply couldn't stand it any more, so if they fired me it was off my shoulders.

He came over to me and said, "Jean, may I talk to you?"

I said, "Yes."

"Have you ever thought that maybe you would like to work in the make-up salon?"

"Oh, I would love that!"

He said, "Well, I don't think that you care about this."

I said, "I can't stand it any longer."

And he said, "Well, why don't we go out to make-up tomorrow and we'll see about it."

There was an opening which I didn't know about. I went out to the make-up salon, and I started to learn make-ups which I thoroughly loved. And I worked in the make-up salon for three years. I lectured on make-up; I would go to schools and to women's clubs and lecture. I remember it was interesting.

One time, I taught make-up at USC--a night class. I taught the Maria Ouspenskaya Dramatic School make-up class which was a way of making a little extra money. I would go out on these big balls that they had, you know, like the Spinsters', and things like that. And I would do the make-up for some of these very important social women and would see their beautiful homes and their beautiful gowns. I was paid extra for these make-up jobs.

And then, one day, Rita Hayworth came in--she was just starting. She had done, I don't know whether it was one or two pictures, but she had just really begun to be a name.

And she came in and wanted a make-up artist to do her make-up for a play she was going to do at the El Capitan. At that time I was the top make-up girl at Max Factor's, so Mr. [Abe] Shore, who was in charge of the make-up department said, "Jean, would you like to do this?"

And I said, "Yes, I would." I knew it was extra money.

I went over every night to the El Capitan and made her up. She didn't let me touch her hair because I was only a make-up artist, but I did do her make-up.

Several years later, when I was doing a picture at Twentieth Century-Fox, I walked in as she was being made up, and she said, "Jean, how are you?"

And I said, "Fine."

And she looked up at the make-up artist and said, "Jean gave me one of the most beautiful make-ups I've ever had in my life."

Well, I'll have to explain about this. If the brush in the make-up artist's hand had been a knife, I would have been dead because it so happens that in the motion picture business the make-up artists are men and the hair stylists are women, and they do not encroach each other's territory, but at Max Factor's this wasn't the case--the make-up artists and hair stylists were both men and women. So when he heard that I gave a make-up--a hair stylist doing a make-up--I had to quick explain how this came about;

and that it was while I was at Max Factor's; and that at Max Factor's it was all right. But it was very funny, because I was new at Twentieth and that was all I needed to have someone say, "Well, about this girl, she does make-up!" No union card for make-up, and, of course, Max Factor's was not union.

I worked at Factor's in the make-up salon for three years. One day Fred Fredricks (he keeps coming through my life kind of like Santa Claus, or like a guardian angel) said, "Jean, are you a member of the hair stylists' union? Well, what in the world are you working here for this kind of money when you can be working in the studios as a hair stylist and getting a lot more."

And I said, "Well, Fred, I like this work. I only worked at RKO. I did work a little bit at MGM, but I've worked so little, and I just don't know."

"Yes," he said, "but you've gotten quite a foundation behind you since then."

"Well, now I've been out of hair styling for three years, five years out actually, dressing women's wigs, yes, but not women's hair. I don't know--to go into a motion picture studio with all those top hair stylists. This is pretty scarey."

"I don't know," he said, "one of these days I'll see what I can do about this, because this doesn't make sense."

So one day, Joanne St. Oegger came to us--one of the

finest hair stylists in the motion picture business. She started, as a matter of fact, in wigs with Hepner, which was an old wig organization years and years ago. At that time, she was head hair stylist at Warner Brothers.

Freddy told me, "Jean if you go into the studios, I want you to go to Warner Brothers."

"Well why Warner Brothers?" I asked.

"Because it has the best make-up department in the business."

He was so right, but, of course, at that time I didn't know. I thought, "MGM--the roaring lion or something like that."

He said, "No, Warner Brothers has the best hair styling department in the business and if you go into styling I would like you to go there."

So Joanne came in and he introduced her and told her that I had a union card and she said, "Well you will be hearing from me."

Well, I again thought, "That could mean when?" I was all jittery about it. I phoned my husband. He worked at Max Factor's as a chemist. I told him I had met Joanne St. Oegger and she said she would give me a call.

Well, I hadn't even finished the day's work when Warner Brothers Studio called me and said, "You will report to work tomorrow at seven o'clock." (I don't recall for certain.) I almost fainted.

I told Fred and he said, "Fine, go ahead."

"Oh, but Freddy, I don't know anything. Would you please talk to Mr. Shore and keep my job open here? I know I'll be back."

"Well, don't worry about that because they aren't going to hire a replacement right away, I'm sure."

And so I talked to my brother-in-law, Bob Roberts, who at that time was head of the wig-dressing room under Fred Fredricks. Fred was and still is in charge of all the wig departments. Bob Roberts real name is Joe Weible. When Bob came into the business he didn't care too much for the name of Joseph which he probably would have been called. So I remember him going over the list of names and deciding on "Robert." Eventually it became Bob Roberts. He is such a fine, fine technician and hair stylist; he does absolutely beautiful work with wigs.

I said, "Please, Joe, will you come in with me tonight, and let me dress a couple of wigs because I've forgotten."

And he said, "Sure!" So the two of us stood there that night and dressed wigs. The next morning I went to Warner Brothers and, with the exception of a very short length of time, have been at Warner Brothers ever since. This is unusual in our business too, because you may be at a studio for awhile, and then there are layoffs and slow periods when you may go someplace else--but it just happened.

## CHAPTER II

## THE FIRST YEARS OF STUDIO WORK

I went to Warner Brothers in March or April of 1941; met Perc Westmore, who was in charge of the department. He was not only a fabulous personality but quite a remarkable artist, and one of the greats in our business. When I met him, I remember he bowed a little bit, and I said, "How do you do, Mr. Westmore. It's a pleasure. . ."

And he said, "Perc, please!" He looked very immaculate and always dressed very, very well.

I said, "Well, I have to go out and give a make-up lecture on Thursday."

"Very well," he said, "we'll make arrangements for that." I didn't know whether I would still be working Thursday.

Joanne came in and gave me a cup of coffee which I immediately spilled down my nice new suit--I was so frightened. She gave me a wig to dress, and then I saw these other wigs that had been dressed--some of them were beautiful. And I thought, "Oh, dear!"

One little hairdresser came back and said, "Your name is Jean?"

I said, "Yes."

She said, "My name is also Jean. There is another

Jean in the department, too. So you better change your name because you're the last one here."

I looked at her and said, "Well, I don't think Jean Burt is too hard to remember or too hard to say. I think I better stick with my own name."

Then she proceeded to tell me whom I should be careful of in the department. She mentioned one woman who was there and who just at that moment came in and stood and looked at every move I made, at every curl I put on that wig. This woman had a great way of tucking her purse under her arm, pulling her head down, looking up, and with her face about two inches from the wig, watching every move that I made. I thought, "I'll be back at Factor's tomorrow."

It turned out that she was wonderful and became a very good friend. She is still working at Warner Brothers and is a wonderful hair stylist. And I heard the report that she went to Joanne and told her, "Well, I think the kid will be all right with a little training." But I didn't know that, of course.

I watched the different people work, and Joanne St. Oegger was wonderful to me. I didn't know how to use an iron, and I still hadn't learned how to use a croquignole iron. One day she told me to do one of the starlets, Maris Riskin, and I went in and was trying to curl her hair. Joanne had said to croquignole it, and so I tried. She walked by and could see that I wasn't doing it right, so

she came in. She had a wonderful way of doing things without making you feel inadequate. I remember her saying, "Oh, Jean, there is a little something here I want to see if it will work." Well, bless her heart, she did that whole head for me--just curled it beautifully. I knew then that I better start practicing croquignole-curling.

She also told me, "Jean, watch Helen Turpin every chance you get because she is a beautiful hair stylist." So I used to go into Turpie's room. Helen Turpin was an awfully sweet girl; she was working at Warner Brothers then. She did Ann Sheridan a great deal and also Ida Lupino. I would stand and watch her dress heads. She too turned out to be one of my very best friends. Later she requested me to go on a picture with her; we went on location in San Diego for the picture, Navy Blues.

The next picture that was coming up was a big picture, which, of course, I didn't know then. I didn't follow what pictures were coming up like other people do. They get the schedule, and immediately say, "I wonder if I'll do that one," or "I wonder who will do that one?" All I knew was that they gave me a call every day and that's all I cared about.

Then Joanne told me, "Jean, you will do They Died With Their Boots On. You will take care of Errol Flynn." So Errol Flynn was my first assignment, and it was the first picture that I did. I had worked on other shows.

As I said, I had worked on a picture with Helen Turpin, and I did bit players, but this was my first picture. Errol wore a fall in that to make his hair long like Custer's.

When the others in the department found out that the new girl was going to do <u>They Died With Their Boots On</u>, I began getting such comments as, "You better watch out for Flynn; you know you're young--you're pretty; he likes young girls; you better watch out for Flynn.

Well I thought, "Just who is this Flynn anyway?" Then I met him, and he was very charming, very nice, and was wonderful to me. As far as I'm concerned, I can't say enough nice things about him. As long as I ever knew him (of course, he was a big Warner Brothers star for many, many years), he was always great to me. He knew I was new, and he couldn't have been sweeter and more helpful to me. The make-up artists on the show were also wonderful to me. Besides Errol's being in the picture, of course it was a tremendous picture.

Again my old story, ignorance is bliss. I would get into the darnedest things just because I didn't know better. This was one of the biggest pictures of that type. There were all kinds of Indians and all kinds of Indian wigs. My background at Max Factor's was the thing that saved me on that job. They brought in Indians from South Dakota, North Dakota, and Montana. There were fourteen, or something like that, of the real Sioux.

That was really fascinating because I had remembered being very impressed by them as a child. We had gone back to Montana when I was five. My father kept retelling the story, and that probably is the reason I remembered it. The Indians were having a big encampment. These wonderful looking northern Indians were on horseback. They were so straight and so handsome. There was this big chief, and I remember I was fascinated with him. Evidently I had said something to him, what it was I don't know, but I remember my father thinking "Oh!" The Chief looked down at me, patted my head or said something to me, and smiled. That was a big day!

So when the Sioux came in I felt at home with a thing like that, even though it wasn't home at all. They spoke no English, and they had an interpreter. Well, this was very funny because they would stand with those wonderful, wonderful, straight faces and look around--absolutely stoic expression, and with all the people's comments still not the flicker of a muscle on their faces. The interpreter would interpret for them, "You will have to have your wigs put on here." Fine, if he said it in Indian. If he said it in English, they wouldn't move.

There was one of them--bless his heart--a great big man, who looked more like an Eskimo to me than an Indian. He took a tremendous liking to me and wouldn't let anyone but me put on his wig. He would stand back and hold his

wig and wait for me. I was so busy putting on wigs and being efficient that I didn't notice it until someone told me.

They said, "Jean, you know who has a crush on you?"

I said, "Who?"

Finally Raoul Walsh, the director of the picture, ended up calling me Mrs. De Rockbrain, because the Indian's name was Andrew De Rockbrain. In our office there they called me Andrew. For years, when Walsh would see me he would say, "Well, hello, Mrs. De Rockbrain!" He just recently has stopped it. So everyone was on to this long before I was.

As I got to know the Indians, it turned out they could speak English, of course, as well as we did. Some of them were college graduates and were down on their summer vacation to make a little extra money. They didn't break down for a long time. They felt the whole thing out first--whether they liked this whole thing, and whether they wanted to speak English or not. They just waited to see.

There was one old chief--oh, he was wonderful--who would talk to me. He said, "You know, they say that we are dirty. You know, we were a lot cleaner than the white man. We would go down to the river every day and bathe. The Indian women had combs. They weren't the kind of combs that <u>you</u> use. We carved them out of bone. The Indian women took great pride in their beautiful hair and they

would go and wash it and comb it and comb it. We were not dirty. From what I read of the white man, I don't know how they can say anyone was dirty because they were the dirtiest." [laugh]

As a very young man he had been a part of the Custer battle. Oh, he was a fine-looking man, very old! He often stood apart from the others. The Indians were the most beautiful riders. Most of them were rodeo riders. Oh, they could take those horses and make them do the most. . . oh, it was just beautiful. That's why they were brought in for the picture. Those things aren't done much any more in pictures because it costs so now. That picture was a great experience.

I have forgotten now how many Indian wigs I had, but it was in the hundreds. I didn't know that when you went out to location that they put up tables and mirrors for hair stylists. They often put tents over the tables, so that there was someplace to put your make-up kit, your combs, your stove, and the things that you needed. I didn't know that. We had a production manager, but as long as I didn't know it, he didn't do anything about it. So I was out there with a lot of the hairdressers, and no one told me. I was the new girl--"let her sink or swim." I didn't know where they were. I was so busy and so new that I didn't know that they should be helping me or whether I should call them over to help me, if I really got in a

bind. I would say, "Would you mind coming over and helping," but I didn't know that they should've been there.

I remember laying the wigs out on the fenders of the trucks. It was out in Lasky Mesa, and there wasn't a tree, not even a patch of grass, so I laid all these wigs out on the fenders. In those days the trucks had fenders, you see. The driver would come and he'd say, "Sorry kid, but I'm going to have to move." I had to pick up all the wigs, find another truck, and then lay them once more over the fenders. They would then come and say "We are changing the cavalry back to Indians. OK, all the wigs go on the cavalry." Off they'd go, and then he'd say, "OK, we are changing the Indians back to cavalry." All the wigs would come off; I would lay them down.

Finally the make-up man said, "Jean, you know you can have tables and setups." So he went to the production manager and said, "Now wait a minute." When I went out the next day, I thought they had imported the Ambassador Hotel. I never had seen anything like it! There was a big tent, and in the tent were tables with mirrors, a water bottle--even chairs. Well, this was heaven! I found out that the motion picture business could do about anything they wanted to--all you had to do was know, but I sure learned the hard way.

I finished that picture, which turned out to be a wonderful picture, but I was almost sabotaged on the

picture. There was a hair stylist, whose name will not be mentioned, but who at that time was one of the important hair stylists in the business. She came on the picture late because she was going to do one of the principals. When she did come on the picture, she took over. That was all right with me, because after all she certainly had precedence, not only as far as talent was concerned, but also years in the business.

One night I came in late, after having taken off Errol's fall; all the girls in the department were doing Indian wigs. Fortunately for me, one of the regular Sioux Indians was late. I had them all numbered; he was number fourteen. I came in and said, "This is wig number fourteen." I looked up at where all my wig blocks, one, two, three, up to fourteen, were; they all had wigs on them. And I said, "Well, this is fourteen."

Nobody said anything, at first. Then someone said, "Well, they are all done."

How can they be all done?" I had the wig in my hand. "Not only that. . ." Now I couldn't believe my eyes; every wig on those wig blocks was a weft wig. They were not hairlace. Now there are two different kinds of Indian wigs. There is a weft wig, and there is a hairlace wig. Your hairlace wig is your good wig, which is put on principals and has what we call a hairlace, which is a hairline. Each hair is put in separately by hand, and

woven in to create a hairline that looks like a human hairline. The hairlace is glued to the forehead, and on the screen you wouldn't know but what it was real. The other is a weft wig, which is sewn with strips of hair around the wig in circles; it has no hairline. It's fine for extras, and it's not noticeable. Each hair of a hairlace throughout the wig, is put in and woven in with a needle.

But on the wig blocks were cheap extra wigs, on all my principals' wig blocks. This girl said, "Well, if you don't like the way we are doing it, we'll go home." They packed up their bags and out the front door they walked. There I was with a box of wigs that stood about four feet tall. What she hadn't counted on was my training at Max Factor's. I had learned enough about wigs, for when I gave out those wigs to the Indians, I took their names and wig numbers. All I had to do was to stay there until ten o'clock that night and go through the box of wigs and find my numbers, because every wig in that box had a number. After going through all those numbers and finding the corresponding numbers that I needed, I dressed the wigs and put them on the blocks. Well, it taught me that you had to be very careful. I dreamed of Indians that night--Indians were on top of my bed, they were under my bed, they were scalping me, they were doing war dances around the room. I was up at four o'clock the next morning and at the studio. I had those wigs off their blocks, and

I saw that this would not happen again.

As the years went by, this woman has turned out to be a very good friend of mine, but I've never forgotten that experience. I wouldn't do a thing like that to anyone. I wouldn't do it to my worst enemy. This could happen in any business, I'm sure, and we have it in ours, too. We have the wonderful ones that will help you right down the line, and then we have the others who for some reason protect themselves. I've never quite understood this, because if a person is capable, unless times are very hard, or there are unusual circumstances, he will be working. I have found that out. This particular woman has always worked. She is a talented woman. There was no reason for her to have to do something like that, but that happens to be her nature. She also has a very good side.

That was my first picture at Warner Brothers, and Errol Flynn was wonderful to me, just wonderful to me. All during it, he was a help. He would see things that, maybe, I didn't know, and he would very sweetly and quietly point these things out to me. His make-up artist was wonderful to me, and the other make-up artists and hair stylists on the set were great, too. On my first picture, they didn't start me small; I started on one of the tough ones. After that picture was finished, there was a layoff at Warner Brothers. I wasn't used to being laid off--to me, it was being fired. I remember stopping on the way

home (we had moved not far from the studio and it wasn't built up like it is now) at a place where there was quite a distance between houses, and I cried and cried and cried. I didn't know how I was going to tell my husband that I wasn't working any more. We had bought a lot of pretty furniture, and it was terribly important for my paycheck to come in. I didn't work for a couple of months; it was real tough on us.

Then I went to work at RKO, and I did a picture there. I was the third girl on the show. Then I went to Twentieth Century and I did a picture there and that is when I ran into Rita Hayworth. It was a B picture. I worked night and day; I never did see sunlight. I'd leave before the sun came up in the morning, and I would come home after the sun had gone down. I was exhausted at the end of the picture. I made good money, and we paid our bills. But, I was so tired; the hours are unbelievable in the motion picture business. I just don't think that people realize this. Those who have been around the business know it, but the vast public doesn't believe that we work so long. I don't know of any other business that does.

DIXON: Most of them think, "They are making a fortune, what do they have to kick about?"

REILLY: Oh, they get paid for it, but the public figures that we work the same hours that they work. If we did, we would be making the money on overtime and double-time

and all that. In those days we worked much longer than they do now. The motion picture business has always been about twenty years behind as far as working hours are concerned. We worked six days a week, long after everyone was working five. I'd be in the studio at six-thirty and would work until six and often we had to work later than that. If we had wigs I would stay and dress wigs after six. They were very long days--all day Saturday.

It had something to do with the breaking up of my first marriage, not entirely, but it did play a very important part. You can imagine my fatigue, and then my husband did not work hours like mine. He didn't even have to punch in. If he was out late the night before, and got there at ten o'clock it was fine, as long as he got his work done. He could take longer lunch hours, and he was off at five. He didn't work Saturdays; one Saturday, he came out to visit the studio, and that night he said, "Don't tell me you work so hard. All you do is sit around the set."

Well, it does appear that way, but I'm telling you, sitting around a set is like sitting quietly at attention. I don't know how else to explain it. You have to be constantly ready when they say, "OK, let's shoot," to jump up and be sure your player looks all right; to sit and do nothing at attention for hours is probably the most tiring thing you can do. My husband didn't understand this, so

he couldn't understand why I would come home tired.

I knew nothing about unions; I hadn't been raised with unions. Since my father was a doctor, I had been raised around professional people. I had heard about unions, but it was something that concerned other people. Unions hadn't become the thing that they are now. In school we didn't study about them. Actually it didn't cause me trouble, but it could have caused me a great deal--not knowing.

When my mother and father decided to go to Montana, I didn't want to go. I went to see this man; he thought he could get me a job. He sent me to see Mel Berns, who is head of make-up at RKO. When I went to see him there was a strike in the studios of the make-up artists and the hair stylists. As I went in, I saw some people walking up and down in front, but it didn't mean anything to me. He offered me a job paying a lot of money, more than I could have ever imagined. I mentioned to him something about the strike, "I see people. . ."

He said, "Don't worry about that, I'm head of the department. If I hire you it's perfectly all right. Don't worry about that." So he's the boss, I should question. I didn't know about things like this, so when he called me for a job, I was delighted. It paid sixty dollars a week. I thought that was the most money that anyone could possibly make in the whole world. I went to work. The

regular members were out, and there were people like myself there, with the exception of maybe one or two that knew the business a little bit. I knew nothing about motion picture hairdressing. I was right out of beauty school and hadn't even had any beauty parlor training. A certain kind of iron work, called croquignole curling, was done in the studios that I knew nothing about. It is done with a curling iron, an old-fashioned curling iron but in an electric stove. You'll never see them in beauty shops, in fact they don't even teach this type of curling any more. In the studios we still use it, because it's the most wonderful way in the world of picking up hair during the day. If it's damp, or if the hair falls a little out of curl, we have to pick it up. I'll explain later about the different techniques of hairstyling in the studio as compared to the beauty shop. There is a tremendous difference, of which I knew nothing. The player on whom I was working, who had begun the picture before the strike started, said, "Well, Jean, could you use the iron on her hair?"

"I thought, "Iron?" I did have an iron because a friend of my aunt, who had been a beauty operator, said, "I think they use an iron in the studios; you better take mine."

I started it, rolling it from the bottom up but had fish hooks. Fish hooks (you probably don't know what that

means) means having a piece of the hair going the wrong way, instead of having a perfectly smooth curl out to the end. When you are an amateur you stop just short of the end. When it is combed out, there are horrible, little ends sticking out. You try to hide them and tuck them in, but you can't and it's just awful. Then I was given two hairpieces to put on the back of the neck. Her hairline was high, and for photographic reasons, they wanted it to come down further on her neck. I had never seen a hairpiece before. It was made on a strip of hairlace. Hairlace is used in the studios but, except on men's toupees, generally not outside the studios. Hairlace was so named because it was made of actual hair. Made in Europe, it was woven under water like a fine net. It was very expensive. Now, since the war, it's a fine net, impregnated with plastic. In fact, my first husband perfected the first substitute for hairlace.

I was given these two little bits of things, but I didn't know what to do with them or how to hold them on. I asked the make-up man how to put them on, and he gave me some liquid adhesive to use. It will hold it on, but it's terribly difficult to clean out, much harder than spirit gum which is usually used. He neglected to tell me--no one did--that I should clean the piece out. It just built layer upon layer upon layer. I thought that I was doing what I was supposed to do.

On that picture, I had another amusing experience. Basil Rathbone and Ralph Forbes were in it. I've forgotten who the others were, but it was mostly an English cast. I have a habit of picking up mannerisms from people I'm around, whether they intrigue me, or annoy me. For instance, when an Englishman speaks, I think it's quite pretty. Ralph Forbes was very charming and would take me to lunch. I thought that was very sweet, and he was a very attractive man. One day, we were sitting and talking on the set. There is time between setups to sit and chat. It's a friendliness. It's a business, but still there is a lot of camaraderie. There is time to talk; there is time to discuss things. In fact, that is one thing I do like about my work. I don't think I could stand a confined job that eliminated this kind of relationship with people.

So Ralph Forbes and I were sitting on a rock and talking. And he said, "You know, Jean, it's just quite unusual."

I said, "Oh? What do you mean?"

He said, "You have such a beautiful speaking voice. It's so unusual for an American girl to have a voice like yours, and to speak like you do."

"Oh," I said, "Well, thank you very much."

He asked, "Did you go to any special school at all?"

I said, "No." I wondered what he was talking about--I don't speak differently. Suddenly it dawned on me. I

was as British-sounding as he was; I had picked up all the British inflections and hadn't even been conscious of it, until he mentioned it. Now I had the terrible task, now that I was aware of it, to continue the accent through the picture, or the others would wonder: "What's happened to her; what was she trying to do; who was she trying to play?" But I wasn't--it was strictly an unconscious thing on my part. Well, it was so amusing, and I had to follow this through for the rest of the picture. Oh, yes, he was terribly impressed with my English.

I didn't know anything about the picture business. No one coached me; no one told me. I was given a call to work that night. Well, I didn't stop to think, should I ask if it was outside night work. It was summer, and during the summer I reported at five o'clock. They sent me out to a lake, and I almost froze to death. I just had a summer dress on; everyone else was in sweaters and coats. I had never been so cold in my life. California--all night long--outside! It gets very cold. So, I learned things the hard way when I started in this business.

Before the picture was finished, the strike ended. And the girl who had been on the picture came back on it, and I was let out. That's when I realized that I had to learn something about hairdressing. That's when I finally ended up at Max Factor's to learn about wigs. The girl that went back on the picture could have killed me; I was

a scab, which was unspeakable. She was one of the top people in our industry, and she had been fighting very hard outside for conditions and wages. I knew nothing about that; all I knew was at sixty dollars, who wants conditions! Then she comes back, and this scab hairdresser has been there and sabotaged her by putting liquid adhesive on her hairpieces. I just didn't know better. I didn't know this for years. Later we knew each other well, and everything was all right. A long time passed before I overcame the stigma that was attached to it. Quite a stigma. Now, having been in the business, I know unions. I know there are both bad and good features to the unions, and I know why we have to have them. Had I known, I certainly would have gone out on strike, too.

After I finished <u>They Died With Their Boots On</u>, I was laid off. I wasn't used to being laid off. Employment in the studios fluctuates. In another business, a person can hold a job for years and years, unless he does something wrong, but in the studios, if there isn't a production going, you don't work. So, I came in one night, and I was laid off. Well, I knew this was a layoff, but to me, it was that I, Jean Burt, personally, was laid off.

Then I got a call to go to RKO. The girl who was in charge of the department at that time was Gertrude Reed. She was very sweet and very nice to me. One morning, she said, "Jean, before you go on the set, I would like you

to stay here for awhile. I would like to talk to you. Jean, did you ever work here before?"

I said, "Yes." I thought, "Here we go, Jean, your past is creeping up."

She said, "Did you ever know Marion Towne (I believe that was the name)?" She was a lovely girl, a singer from Chicago.

I said, "Yes, I did."

So she said, "Please wait, I'd like to talk to you." I waited and when everyone had cleared out of the room, she sat down and said, "Jean, tell me how you knew Marion." She didn't scream at me in front of everyone, which I have known other people to do.

I said, "I did a picture with her during the strike." She obviously knew, and if she didn't know, why lie about it. It was the truth.

She said, "Why did you work during the strike?"

I explained to her, "Gertrude, I didn't know about unions like I do now." I explained very honestly why I did it. I said, "I didn't know--I didn't realize what you were fighting for. All I knew was that I needed a job and that Mel Berns told me that it was perfectly all right. He was head of the department (and still is) and if he said it was all right, I figured it was all right. That is the reason why I worked. I wouldn't do it now, but I didn't know then."

"I accept your explanation," she said, "but you know there has been a lot of ill feeling about it."

I said, "I know. I know there has."

And she said, "I accept your explanation but the other girls on the picture could have killed you. Do you know what you did to those hairpieces?"

"Well. . . ," I said. I was so naive that I hadn't remembered what I had done, and so I said, "No."

"Did you know that you put. . ."

I said, "That's right." Well, right then I knew.

"Oh, that poor girl!"

She said, "'That poor girl' is right. She could have killed you. If she had gotten hold of you, she would have strangled you."

I said, "I don't blame her."

So I did the picture at RKO, and then I was laid off again for about a month and a half. I thought all the world was falling around my husband's and my ears. We didn't know what we were going to do. We stayed awake nights worrying about the bills. But I must say, it was a very good lesson to us both. We never went into debt again, unless we felt that we could somehow make it. We would go in debt for big things but as far as relying on the picture business, we always lived close to what we made.

Then I got a job at Twentieth Century-Fox and did a picture. Again, I was one of the new girls and everyone,

even the players, were skeptical of me. They think you don't know what you are doing, and "who has she done?" I was working on a girl, who shall be nameless, and she also was skeptical, because she hadn't heard that I had done anyone.

The other girl with whom I was working said, "Jean, I told her that you had done Marlene Dietrich. So, if she questions you. . ."

I said, "Oh, my, I don't even. . ."

She did question me, but I got out of it by changing the subject. Then this actress thought that I was a very fine hairdresser. It was a matter of psychology, I guess.

At that time, we had what we called "B pictures." We had "A pictures," which were the big, big pictures--the best pictures supposedly, and with the biggest stars. The B pictures were for the younger players coming up or for the players not of star caliber and were billed as the second feature. Now, instead of the B pictures, we do TV. There is some good TV production, I don't mean that, but in the studios, where we once had the A's and the B's, we now have the A pictures and the TV productions. And now the players get their experience in TV, whereas before, they got it in B pictures. The only trouble is that television players now feel they are big stars because of their fan mail. They have nothing with which to relate themselves. In the B pictures the young contract players

got the little parts in them, but could go to the other sound stages and maybe see Bette Davis acting, or Frederic March, or Humphrey Bogart, or any number of stars. And these real pros, as we called them, were on time; they knew their lines; they knew their craft. It was actually quite an experience, for it was a work of art these contract players were watching. The TV actors don't see this any more. When we do a big picture, they will perhaps go over. But they are already so self-conscious, they think they are just as important as any other star, because they receive the same adoration that the big stars used to get. They watch, but don't realize that there is so much for them to learn. It's too bad, I think; many of them are not professional. They are late; they are arrogant. They don't know any differently, because they haven't seen. When they do see a real professional, I don't know what they must think about them. Perhaps, they just don't think; I don't know what they do think.

DIXON: They probably think they are kind of square for working.

REILLY: I think they must. That's the only way I can figure it.

I finished the picture at Twentieth. I worked very long hours, but in our business we have long hours. Hour-wise, we are way behind the rest of business in this country. In those days in pictures, the hairdresser reported at

seven o'clock to do the player, first. If there were wigs, you would have to get there earlier to get your wigs dressed. At night, you would finish shooting (with luck) at six o'clock, but without luck, it might go much later. If you had wigs to dress, it meant sitting back in a wig room and feeling as if you were the only one in the world working that late. And you'd get home, maybe at seven, seven-thirty, eight, eight-thirty--exhausted.

After I left Twentieth, I went back to Warner Brothers, and I've been at Warner Brothers ever since, with the exception of when the studio closed down a few years ago. They closed down for three months to reorganize--to get things straightened out. That was the longest rest I've had for twenty years. I've never been out of work since then. I've been one of the very fortunate ones in this business.

DIXON: Did you enter in the jurisdictional strike between the IATSE and the CSU?

REILLY: Of course, I remember when they had it, but the make-up artists and hairdressers were not on strike during that period. They would bring us in buses. We would meet at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, where the buses would be waiting for us, and then we were driven to the studios. During one of the strikes, I was on vacation and didn't have any involvement at all. Many people slept in the studio during that strike. I'm not good at dates, but the

first one was sometime in the '40's. Both of them were during the '40's. The first was during the war; the second one was right after the war. The one after the war is the one in which I was driven to the studios; the first one was while I was on vacation.

DIXON: Then, the '37 strike?

REILLY: That was when I came into the union. I did work a while during the strike. After the strike, they were still using people, as they hadn't settled the jurisdictional part. I worked at MGM on a big call; I worked with a lot of extra people, putting on falls and things.

At the end of the strike, I went to Factor's. While there, I was notified by the union that I had been accepted. Fate played its cards, because I had only worked at two studios. You had to have recommendations from two department heads to belong to the union, and my name had been recommended by both Mel Berns and the department head of MGM. I didn't even know that I was noticed at MGM, because I was with so many other people. But I was noticed--that's the only thing I can say. I was voted in and took the oath with everyone else who went into the IA. Before that, the make-up artists and hairstylists had not belonged to the IA, as they had their own guild. But, at that time, they went into the IA.

After I got my union card, I didn't work in the union.

I had my card, but instead, I worked at Factor's. I paid my ten dollars dues every three months, or was it nine dollars? My husband felt that it was a lot of money. I had been making sixty dollars a week at RKO, but when I went to Max Factor's my pay was eighteen dollars. It was quite a reduction, but I did want to learn. Later, my salary went up to twenty-two dollars a week at Factor's, but that still wasn't much money. My husband was making twenty-four dollars at the time, and so nine dollars was a lot of money to us.

He said, "Gee, do you want it?"

And I just said, "Well, I think it's good insurance." Good insurance is right. Thank goodness, I kept up my dues, because when I did go into the studios, I had no problems, being already a member. That was how I got in.

I remember my first union meeting. The only thing I had known about conducting meetings was from studying parliamentary law in school. At class meetings, I was often the president or chairman and would run the meetings. Since there was a teacher present, it was always conducted in a pretty nice manner. But these were adults at the union meetings and from my profession. I had never seen such carryings-on. People were getting up and screaming or were getting off the subject. Personalities clashed.

Oh, my goodness, I went home and said, "Glenn, if I have to be a part of this!" I had never known anything like

that; I was just shocked. At least, it was wonderful that they could get up and say what they wanted to: this was the greatest thing in the world. Of course, the union was in its infancy. Now our meetings are conducted very well, but then it was like a growing child. Many people in the business didn't know anything about parlimentary law, just as I didn't know anything about unions. They didn't know that you had to stay on the subject. It has taken years to get them to understand it, and now our meetings are conducted beautifully. But at this first meeting, I wanted to run for the hills. I thought, "What kind of group have I gotten into?" Just frightful!

DIXON: Did Herb Sorrell ever address you?

REILLY: No, he never did.

DIXON: He's quite a character.

REILLY: That's what I've heard. My second husband had quite a long talk with him one night on Hollywood Boulevard. I remember my husband saying, "Well, I don't know how he feels, but he is certainly a dedicated man." Evidently whatever Sorrell believed, he was very dedicated about it.

DIXON: He still is. He would go out and do the same thing all over again, because he believes so much in the rights, as he says, the rights of the working man, regardless of color, or creed, or whatever.

REILLY: Well, I'm with him on that. I think it's wonderful that we have some people who are willing to get out and

fight for things, because I certainly believe in that and in unions. Once I didn't think this way, and my family still feels that unions are horrifying. But when you get unfairness--now the unions in many ways have been unfair too. There is always right and wrong on both sides. If the producers, in our particular case, had been fair and not exploited their workers, there would never have been a need for unions. But they didn't.

Our hours were long, at best. They would work us for unreasonably long hours and wouldn't break for dinner. I never saw this, but I heard it many times from the people who worked in the business before the union. Dinner would be served to the director and the cast, but the workers got nothing and had to work right through the dinner hour. And they couldn't care less about the workers. Well, when you have conditions like this, you're going to end up with unions or their equivalent, because human beings just can't tolerate such abuse.

We still have the class-consciousness thing. I remember being on location, before I had the job that I have now. The director and the cast would be served at a special table, which would be set with a tablecloth and nice dishes; the rest of us would eat wherever we could. Sometimes, there were tables for us, but, maybe, they would be in the sun. There were certainly no tablecloths--who needs tablecloths on a picnic anyway! But it is annoying

to see a certain group being served and eating on a table-cloth. I grant that, perhaps, they had business to talk over--that's fine. I didn't care whether I ate with them or not, although often I did. Someone would invite me, "Jean, why don't you sit with us." But I didn't like to do that. After all, the whole group was working towards the same end. That kind of thing, carried to an extreme before the unions, caused us trouble. The director and the cast would be served different food than the workers would get.

I say "workers," and they were workers, too.

I'll never forget an actress who came to one of our parties; she got up and made a speech. She said, "We are so glad to come here because the little people have been so good to us." I wanted to vomit! Who are little people? We all have our work to do, whether it's the electrician, the grip on the set, the wardrobe girl, or make-up artist. What makes these people "little"I have never quite understood. To me, a person is a person, depending on his individual feelings, on how he conducts himself. If that's the case, the stars can be just as little as anyone else or just as big. But, we get this in every stratum in life. There is always one race that wants to feel superior to another, if they are not secure enough within themselves. In every business, there is somebody who feels that he is more important than someone else. His job may be more important, or he may have more authority--this I respect. But as far

as referring to the "little people," I always burn at this.
DIXON: They forget that it's the company that makes them big, and not them that make the company big.
REILLY: Right. There are some very brilliant people behind the cameras. There are some stupid ones, too, but there are also brilliant ones.

Over the years, I have watched players come into the studio, which has been interesting. It would be very difficult for anyone to keep his perspective and still be a motion picture star. Now, some can, and I admire these people. For whatever reason in their life, whether it's family or background, they have a basic security when they enter the business; they are well-grounded. They don't have to seek reassurance that they are important people. All through their careers, no matter how big these people get, they keep a perspective on themselves, but such people are almost a rarity. Some have done it and are wonderful, but it is most difficult. All of us have our insecure spots; therefore, we love to hear nice things about ourselves, and we want to believe it.

All right, you have a player who comes in--take a woman player. The first thing, she comes to the hairdresser in the morning. She sits in the chair, and the hairdresser starts working on her hair. The hairdresser has to say nice things to her. After all the woman has to look good before going in front of the camera. You can't say, "My

heavens, you look horrible today? What's the matter with you?" You don't dare do this. So you say, "Hi, how are you? Gee, you know that is a pretty pair of slacks you have on, today." We don't dare say, "Gee, you look awful." So they don't hear much that is derogatory about themselves. Everyone concentrates on them.

After working on their hair, they go to the make-up man, and the make-up man is there only for the purpose of making them look as good as possible. Unless they are playing some kind of a character role, but for a straight part, we make them look just as good as possible. He must not say, "You have the ugliest pair of lips I've ever seen." Instead, he must think how he can correct them. Then she goes back to the hairdresser, and her hair is combed out in the most becoming fashion. She goes to the wardrobe; the wardrobe mistress or costumer dresses her in something that is attractive.

Now she goes on the set, and everyone says, "Good morning, how are you? My, you look pretty, today. Oh, isn't she pretty." She <u>is</u> pretty, and we love to hear that we are pretty.

She gets in front of the camera; the director concentrates on her; the cameraman concentrates on her. "Hello, dear, how are you today? My, you look lovely. Put the light around here." All day long it's concentration on this individual. Everything is done to make her feel well.

The publicity man comes on the set and says, "What have you done that I can write about?" He doesn't dare say that she is a shrew and acts awful and that she has a terrible disposition, because he'll be fired. She is an important property of a studio, which wants to make money. He has to go back to his office and write all the good things about her. She reads this (we want to believe that we are lovely and pretty), and pretty soon how can she help but have it become reality to her?

We have the expression in the studios: "They believe their own publicity." This is true, and it is formed by all these days of concentration on just themselves. If anyone comes out of it without becoming egotistical and self-centered, she is a very well-grounded person, and there are not many who could make it. It's almost, as if they were brainwashed to make them narcissistic. As I say, I have noticed this over a period of years. It's almost inevitable that in a little while a new actress will have her head turned. I don't see how they can help it. The few that don't are great.

Anyway, I came back to Warners, and I did many, many pictures. One of them I did was with Errol Flynn; he asked for me on the next picture he did, which was Gentlemen Jim. I was terribly pleased that Errol would ask for me. He was very pleasant to work with; he was wonderful to me. He was just a darling.

Ingrid Bergman was then new in this country, and she came to Warner Brothers to make Casablanca, and the head of our department put a hairdresser with her who was very small. Bergman went to Margaret Donovan, the woman in charge, and said, "I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings, but could you, maybe, find a hairdresser that is a little taller. I'm so self-conscious, because I have to stoop way down when she works." Maggie made a switch and took me away from Errol, after explaining to him.

I went with Ingrid Bergman, which was a very nice experience. I liked her very much, and she liked me. I was still quite new at the studios, and she was also new, as far as our country was concerned. She had an English speech coach working with her, and she would always call me "Yean." Ingrid Bergman was just a little taller and bigger-boned than I, but I often wore high heels. She was intrigued when I did, and she loved it because I would then be taller than she. That made her feel good, and she would stand very straight.

That was Casablanca, which was an Academy Award picture, and she also won an Academy Award, I believe. Selznick was handling her at this time, and he was going to give her a present. She was wondering what she should ask for. We told her to ask for a mink coat--what else. "Oh, no," she said, "if I ask for a mink coat, then what would there be to look forward to? I don't want a mink coat.

What else is there?"

So we said, "How about Persian lamb?" I don't know what she settled on, but I doubt if it was mink. She was fun.

Every era has a certain type of joke; well, that was the era of the "little moron" stories--why did the little moron do so-and-so? I would come in every morning with little moron stories, and she would laugh, but I didn't think her laugh sounded quite right. But she always listened to them and always laughed.

I kept passing on the moron stories until one day, Ruth Roberts, her speech coach and a delightful woman, came to me and said, "Jean, I have to tell you this. Evidently you have been telling Ingrid little moron stories."

I said, "Yes."

"Well, what has been her reaction?" I said, "She laughs, so I keep telling them."

She said, "I'll have to tell you. She came and asked me what a moron was?" [laugh] Isn't that wonderful? After she found out what a moron was, the next time I told her a joke, she laughed. I knew then that she knew what was happening.

That was during the war, and women were wearing tailored suits. Being tall, I was able to go to a men's shop and buy the small size in tweed jackets and such. She thought that was so wonderful that she had to go down and

get a tweed jacket. She said, "You know, Jean, you make me so self-conscious with my clothes."

I said, "Why?"

"Well, I never paid any attention to clothes before. I'd get up early in the morning, and who wants to fuss with clothes. Maybe, I'd have on one colored sock and the other one would be another color. Now, you've made me so self-conscious that I watch to be sure I have the same pair of colored socks on."

I thought this was very amusing. She would always wear flat heels, never high heels.

DIXON: I didn't realize she was so tall.

REILLY: Yes, she is tall. Much had happened to Ingrid Bergman during that time. When I was in Rome in 1954, Robert Wise, the director on the picture that my husband was cutting at that time, had talked to Bergman. I had asked him if she was in town. And he said, "I think so, Jean."

"Gee, I would like to call her. I would love to see her." It so happened that she was in Milan, doing Joan of Arc, and so I didn't see her when I was over there. When she was here three years ago for the Academy Awards, I was backstage and went up to her. She was talking to Cary Grant. I said hello to her, but she didn't recognize me at first. My hair had greyed. I said, "I'm Jean Burt."

She said, "Oh, Jean, how good to see you. Your hair

is so grey."

I said, "Yes, and yours isn't." Well, that's the way life goes, but it was wonderful to see her.

After that, I did a picture with her, Saratoga Trunk. She wore black wigs in that, and she did it with Gary Cooper. That was a fun picture to be on, although it was hard work. But it was a good movie. Ingrid was very good about wearing the wigs, even though they were uncomfortable to wear all day, particularly period wigs, which had so many hairpins in them. Her own hair was bound tight underneath them, and the pressure could be painful, but she was good about it. Sometimes I would have to change wigs during the day. She wore very elaborate hairdresses that were very tricky, and the wigs would have big switches and curls and all kinds of things.

In one scene in Saratoga Trunk, she was sitting at her dressing table, and Gary Cooper had to grab her hair, bring it around her neck, and pull her head back to kiss her. I stood there and thought about her wig, "I hope it doesn't fall off during the take. Oh, I hope the hairlace doesn't show." Cooper was a wonderful man, and I said, "Please be careful of my wig.

He said, "All right, Jean, I'll try to be careful of your wig." But he still had to do the scene right. He grabbed it, but it didn't fall off, and the hairlace didn't show. It stayed put.

Ingrid looked lovely as a brunette. I've found that most blondes look very good as brunettes, but not always, do brunettes look good as blondes. I don't know one blonde that hasn't looked good as a brunette.

It seemed ridiculous and a waste of time to shampoo her hair, because it always looked so clean. She wore very little make-up; in those days that was unusual. Girls now have that pale look, but in those days they didn't, and they did do their eyebrows. She always looked so clean and well-scrubbed.

In Casablanca, she wanted practically no setting in her hair. I could set it and comb it in such a way that it didn't look set. I couldn't use one bobby pin or hairpin and that was during the days when hair was quite contrived. That was during the pompadour period, and we used rats or crepe wool in the hair to pile it up; Bergman had none of that. When you see Casablanca on TV now, her hairdo, because it was simple, looks as right now as it did then, whereas we are amused now by the pompadour.

Her hairdos are never dated, because they were so simple and natural. They were very difficult for me, because the hair had to be back off her face to show her face. Her hair was inclined to fall forward; actually, the law of gravity is working against you on these things. If she would tip her head down, her hair would fall, and I had to be combing that hair almost constantly. Because

I wasn't allowed to put one pin in her hair, not even hide a hairpin, I had to stay with the setting and with the combing to keep it back. So, I was on my toes every minute.

I remember one scene; it was the great scene with Bogart. He was at the piano, and she was sitting at a table. No, they were both at the table--. Oh, my, again names--that wonderful colored man that did the singing in that, the piano playing? What was that wonderful song that was so famous from that?

DIXON: The only name I can think of is Louis Armstrong.

REILLY: Louis Armstrong. I thought I would never forget that song; it was such a famous one. Anyway, it was a very delicate scene.

Michael Curtiz was the director. He was quite an individual in his right too. If something went wrong, Mike would blow up and would say, "Make-up, voom!" He would scream at the cameraman, or he would go into a Hungarian tantrum, if there is such a thing. The whole set was quiet as they were taking the shot. They had had trouble getting it, and no one was breathing, practically.

In those days, lacquer bottles had first come out. We had to pour lacquer into a glass tube that was fitted with a rubber bulb. When you squeezed the rubber bulb, lacquer would shoot out through a small hole in the glass tube. The opening could be plugged with a little rubber cork. The lacquer bottle was left on the edge of a table,

right off camera, and I was sitting in a chair, watching her hair to see that it didn't fall and hide the Bergman face. The man shooting the smoke into the scene (it was supposed to be smoky, saloon type thing) was right by me, and he was going, "whish, whish," with the smoke. Every-time he would whish, my lacquer bottle would start tipping, and I thought, "Oh, no, please, please don't let that lacquer bottle fall!" All of a sudden, it didn't tip, but the little cork popped out and went, "bing, bing, bing," hitting everything as it fell to the floor.

Mike Curtiz turned around and looked at me. I'm dead--I'm lost--what do I do? Fortunately, he didn't say a word. He just said, "OK, let's take it again."

Oh, I could have died. That poor little cork had sounded like it had been shot out of a cannon. It was just terrible.

## CHAPTER III

## THE PRINCIPLES OF STUDIO HAIRSTYLING

I'll talk about the difference between hairstyling in the studios and hairstyling in beauty shops. There is quite a difference. We recruit all of our new hairdressers from beauty shops. If we are very busy, if hairdressers drop out of the business, retire, or move away, or if our production increases and we need more hairdressers, we get them from beauty shops. To be a hair stylist in a motion picture studio, you must have a license from the State Board of Cosmetology of California. So, we bring them in from the beauty shops. I'm probably the only one in the business that has never actually worked in a beauty shop, but I still had my license and background at Max Factor's which--in a sense--was comparable to beauty shop experience. In a way, I wish I had had the beauty shop experience.

In a beauty shop, you have so much time to do your patrons. We have time in the studio, too, but you don't have to match it every day. If a woman comes in every week, she may want the same hairstyle, but it doesn't have to be exactly the same. You can create something different, or you can try something new on her. Women are more inclined to stick to a certain pattern, and until recently, women

wanted their hair to stay in from one shampoo to the next. They wanted the curl tight, so that it wouldn't fall out, and the vast majority of American women still want that. Only society women, in the higher money brackets, are able to afford having their hair done twice a week, or are able to have a hairdo that may fall out the next day. They only want it for one night.

When a hairstylist comes into the studio to work, she has to learn a different way of curling hair, of dressing hair. We dress it for one day only; in fact, it doesn't even last one day. It has to be very casual-looking. If the actress is playing a housewife, it has to look like a hairdo that hasn't been done for several days, with the curl almost out. She has to learn how to dress and curl the same head every morning, so it looks just the way it did the day before. This takes talent.

Today they are using rollers which gives a large curl, but when I started in the business, they made a very tiny pin curl. In the studios, we made our curls over two fingers, sometimes over three fingers which would make a much bigger curl. It made a much softer and prettier head.

Once, I was on a trip (my hair is naturally curly) and I asked the girl, "Please, set my hair in two-finger curls." She didn't know what I was talking about, and I had to explain how to wrap the hair around two fingers and make it large.

And she said, "Oh, I can't do that. It won't hold the curl."

I said, "Believe me; it will. Please do it."

She said, "Oh, I can't do it. It won't stay in, and I'd get fired."

"Please just roll it over two fingers."

When I finally got under the dryer, I could see this poor girl going to all the other operators and pointing to me as if "that crazy woman under the dryer--wait until you see her. She is not going to have any curl; she insisted having it curled around two fingers." But that's the way we do our heads.

We used rollers in the studio long before rollers were used as they are now. We used them for wigs; we used them on heads once in a while, too. We would make them out of wrapping paper. Finally, we went down to the machine shop and had some balsa-wood rollers made, which were light. So, we were using rollers years ago. If I had been smart, I would have marketed them, and I would have done very well.

In the studios, we have found that hair stands up a bit in the front. It seems a little strange to say this because our styles are now that way. Everything is pulled up high, but this era will pass, and the hair will again become flat. Even if it's a so-called flathead, raising the hair a little from the forehead gives a softer contour

to the face. Photographically, it's much better than just a flat wave or curl. In the studios, we would make standup curls on top of the head, instead of flat against it. When it was combed out, it would give a little raise.

The girls coming out of the beauty shops would have to learn this whole new technique; they would also have to learn to use a croquignole iron. Years ago, they made croquignole irons, but don't any longer. We use the old curling iron that grandmother used. Not an electric one, but the old curling iron that was put over a gas jet. Of course, we put them in electric stoves. Such an iron is standard equipment for a studio hair stylist. In beauty schools, they don't teach the use of such an iron. As soon as a girl comes to the studio, she buys her iron, borrows a stove, and is given an old wig. She'll have to sit by the hour and practice curling.

To make a croquignole curl is an art. It's difficult to describe how it's done; the hair is not rolled from the end up. Instead, it's taken from close to the scalp and twisted back. Then, while keeping the hair spread, you click your iron and roll your iron. When finished you have a perfectly beautiful, round curl that is like a very large pin curl. Then you pin the curl to the head to hold it until the rest of the head is done. Sometimes we moisten the curl with just a little water before applying the hot iron because the water helps the set.

Some people say that if you use an iron all the time, the hair will dry out, but it won't if the operator knows the correct temperature for the iron. A stylist gets so used to using her iron that she can tell by bringing the iron within a few inches of her nose whether it's the right temperature. If it's too hot, it will burn the hair, but at the right temperature, the curl will be in just right and still not damage the hair. The iron is just warm enough to put the curl in. When combed out, this curl makes a perfect large wave, with the curl at the end. From that curl, you can dress the head to almost any possible style.

Modern beauty-shop magazines show many different heads and how to roll the head for each particular hairdo, but in the studios, we rarely roll a head in one particular way, for one special hairdo, unless it happens to be something quite odd and different.

We learn to do, what we call the "basic set." From that one basic set, we can comb the head into almost any necessary style. In beauty-shop work, it's an entirely different concept. For instance, if a starlet comes into the studio to test, they may want to see her in many different ways to see how she will look. We give her the basic set; then we will comb it down for the first hairdo. We will then alter that by pulling it back a little or pulling it back on the sides. We end with an up hairdo

without having to reset the hair. It is all from the same basic set, and then we will do it updo. A great deal of time is saved by not having to constantly reset the hair.

In the newspapers or in different magazines, I would read that Monsieur "so-and-so" or Miss "such-and-such" had won the hairstyling contest for that year, or the gold cup for the best hairstyle. There would be a picture of the hairstyle. Looking at it, I simply could not understand how anyone could have won a cup for that atrocious hairstyle. It made the woman wearing the style look ridiculous.

I decided one day that I wanted to take a brushup course in haircutting. The woman teaching the course had won many cups for outstanding hairwork; she was a fine hair stylist. There was the picture of the winning style and there was the cup, but it didn't make sense to me.

I would listen to her as she taught, and she would speak of the need to balance the head. I would think, "Yes, that's right--we must balance the head." In the motion picture studios, we have learned to "balance" the head. The motion picture screen is large, and it makes the person much larger than he really is. The actor has to be photographed from all angles; therefore, every angle of the head must be attractive. From the pictures of the winning work, the photographed woman wasn't attractive from many angles. She had used an elongated hairdo on a face that was already long, and yet she would speak of the

the need to balance the head. I couldn't understand it.

Finally it dawned on me one day, and I got her aside. "When you say, 'balance the head,' you are balancing the head strictly from the hairline."

She said, "Why, yes."

I said, "But, don't you ever take into consideration the face of the woman who you work on?"

She looked at me strangely. Evidently, this is something she didn't consider. In the studios, it would be like dressing a wig on a block without knowing the woman who would be wearing it. It might be a beautifully dressed wig and a beautiful hairstyle, but put that wig on a certain woman and it might be perfectly awful. We would have to re-dress the wig for the proportions of the face of the woman wearing it. In shops, this principle is ignored.

For some reason, women will accept the strangest hairdos and wear them, but I don't understand why. Perhaps someone has told them it's "styled." Trends in hairstyling are said to come from Paris or New York, but I think the motion picture industry has set more styles that have lasted and have been becoming to women than any place in the world. We do not create the ridiculous high style hairdos that are shown in Harpers and Vogue, or your Parisian magazines, simply because they are not becoming to women. Our movie players, unless they are playing a model or a character role, are supposed to be very lovely feminine

beautiful women.

To put one of these ridiculous styles on an actress is not making the most of that particular woman's attributes. On the screen, it's enlarged. Then, too, the picture might not be released for a year, maybe two years, and by that time a faddish hairstyle would be dated and, therefore, comical. We have to moderate our hairdos so that they do not go out of fashion. Looking at a movie filmed ten years ago, we now laugh at the pompadours of that day. But, if you look through the magazines of that time, the photographed hairdos were more ridiculous than those seen on the screen.

We get to know a face, the proportions of the head to the proportions of the body, and what will look best on that person. If they have a square face, we dress their hair to make their face look less square. The perfect face is the oval face. We try to achieve the illusion of an oval face, whether they have it or not. If they have a high forehead, there are many ways of achieving a correct appearance by using bangs or, perhaps a break. That doesn't necessarily mean using bangs straight across the forehead, they may be just to one side to create an illusion of height in the middle.

A set of rules of what should be done and what shouldn't be done doesn't always apply. I am a tall woman, and it is said that tall women should wear horizontal stripes, but short women shouldn't. That makes sense on

the surface, but with the wrong horizontal stripe, a tall woman can look like the Empire State Building, like stair-steps going up forever.

The same is true of hairdos. If a woman has a very short forehead, she is told not to wear bangs. But, on a short forehead I can put bangs and make that person look as though she has a very high forehead. If the jaw is broad, there are certain things which we can do; if the face is too long, there are other solutions. I hear the same thing now from the young girls as I heard when the pompadour was in. "I have to have height--I got to have hhight." We try to modify the beehives that are now worn. They are really atrocious; they looked uncombed. You can't see the face! Height is fine, but there are many ways of getting height without wearing a basket of fruit on the head. A half-inch, if it's done properly will give the same illusion of height and also give the correct proportion to the face. Whereas, a foot wouldn't achieve it.

But, it's difficult for people to see themselves as they are. I strongly believe that we cannot really see ourselves properly, and yet, we have such opinionated ideas of how we look best. Instead of trying a new style and wearing it for a time to judge its correctness, they say, "Oh, no, I can't wear that--I need height--I have to have hair down over my face--my ears are terrible." There is a player at the studio now who has a beautiful face

and beautiful ears, but she has an absolute phobia about her ears. She always has her hair combed down over her ears; she looks like she is peering from behind old-fashioned lace curtains. To get her to understand this is almost impossible. If we take the hair away from her face and show her beautiful oval face, and her delicate little ears, she feels lost and insecure. Therefore, our business requires as much diplomacy as it does talent.

I've always felt very strongly that the face, rather than the hair, is the most important part of the head. The face is your picture, your portrait. Hair is lovely; it should be done well and kept clean, but it's only the frame for the face. The minute you make the hair more important than the face, you've lost your portrait, the artist's work. Unfortunately, the present trend of hairdos does this very thing. The hairdo is becoming more important than the face. When you see a woman, you first see the hairdo. Finally, you get through the foliage and see the face. But, you should see the lovely face first.

Any woman can achieve the appearance of loveliness without having perfect features. Some of the most attractive women that I've known, have not been beautiful women according to beauty standards. Many have been quite unattractive after the first glance at them. In lecturing to young girls' groups, I've tried to tell them this. When they have asked, "Oh, gee, how can I be as beautiful as

so-and-so?" Often, the people they name are not basically beautiful. Instead, it's the person within. They have a sparkle that makes them enchantingly beautiful people. To make the hair more important than the eyes, the most important feature of a face, or more important than a lovely mouth is a shame. But, you will go through a period when this happens.

The ratting of the hair is a mark of the present period. That will go, because it's very hard on the hair. Several years ago it was in, and it will go again. But everyone now is ratting her hair like mad, even though it never looks combed.

The one thing I just can't stand to see (this hasn't anything to do with motion picture work) is a woman with curlers in her hair on the street. This is the greatest offense to your fellow man. It's so unfeminine, so unflattering, and in utter bad taste. Over the curlers, they will wear a dirty scarf that is wrinkled and tied under the chin, and they seem to think that it is proper. Some women keep their hair rolled for days, because they are saving it for Sunday or something. One of the worse things you can do to hair is not letting air to it. I would much prefer to see beautiful, clean, hair; any hair can be beautiful if it's clean, even without curl.

Ingrid Bergman's hair always had to be very simple, very clean, very shiny. I told you about doing her in

Casablanca--that she wouldn't allow one pin in her hair. It was a very simple hairdo, and such a hairdo doesn't go out of style. Even now on TV, it doesn't look strange. Being so simple and right on her, it will be timeless. Had we used the high pompadour of that day, she would look ridiculous. Yes, we set styles, and many of them have lasted. But we did not set the hairstyles that became a fad only for a time. Few women can wear a style that borders on the bizarre. Young girls often will, because they like to experiment.

Evening eye shadow in the daytime is one of my pet peeves. The picture, Cleopatra, is somewhat responsible for bringing back eye shadow. Eye shadow will be used for evenings, but it will be used more and more for street wear. Even your blues, your greens, your silvers, and your irridescents will be with us for a long time. When lipstick was first introduced it also was thought of as a fad, but I think eye shadow will become a part of make-up. They should learn how to put it on correctly.

When I was working at Max Factor's, men came in to ask for make-up for their wives. They wondered why I was working in a cosmetic place, but didn't wear any make-up.

I said, "I am wearing all the make-up that I'm selling."

They said, "We can't believe it."

And I said, "If your wife comes in, I will give her a make-up and you will see what I mean." It's all in how

the make-up is put on. The aim is to create an effect of natural beauty by the use of rouge, lipstick and eye shadow. But, if your eye is forced to jump from one to the other, you don't see the face. Make-up is to enhance the beauty of the total face.

Make-up is not my subject, but there was the era of rouge. The girls used much rouge to create bright apple cheeks, then the girls went to no rouge at all. One extreme as bad as the other. Rouge, if used correctly, models the face, brightens and gives color to the eyes, instead of the blank, unbaked-pie look that many of the girls now have.

In the studios, we dress the hair to look beautiful from all angles because an actress is constantly turning her head on the screen. In a fashion magazine, the girl is photographed from one angle, and you don't know what the back looks like or the profile.

Successful New York models have often given us trouble. They are highly paid; therefore, feel that they know best how they look. What they don't realize is that they only know the one or two angles from which they photograph best. If we have had time, we have proven that there is a difference between magazine and studio hairstyling. We let them first do their hairdo as they like, and then we will do their hairdo. But they are always dissatisfied because they think that we really don't know what we are

doing. Then they will see the rushes and see our hairdo from all angles and will say, "I'm sorry, you were right." They will generally relax and are wonderful people. It usually takes a while for them to see that we are not trying to sabotage them.

New York stage people come with the attitude, "Don't let them change you in Hollywood." We don't want to change them that much in Hollywood. We want their individual personalities, but there are certain things done on the stage which are not acceptable on the screen. On the stage, the audience isn't that close to the performer. Details are magnified on the screen. After realizing that, they calm down. But it's the little initiation that they go through that is fascinating. Finally, they learn that the Hollywood craftsmen are very competent.

DIXON: I get a permanent every nine or ten months. What about the woman who is in the motion picture business, can she get permanents?

REILLY: Oh, yes, they have permanents all the time, but they are given such a light permanent that it may last two months at the most. It is so light that all it gives is body. It doesn't take two or three months for it to relax. It's all right the day it's done, or the actress would be ruined as far as a picture is concerned. We cannot have curly permanents; so we have special girls that give a very light permanent with just enough curl so

that it doesn't fall out. As I said, we put in a light hairset that looks like maybe it hasn't been done for two or three days. If it's a damp day, and the girl has limp hair and the curl falls out easily, we then use the iron. On the set, the hair stylist has her stove and iron, and between setups, she will recurl the head to match the particular scene. It is always curled exactly the same. She has to learn how to match it from scene to scene in case they shoot the picture out of continuity. Two weeks ago, they may have shot her as she approached the house, and then two weeks later, as she came in the door. The hair stylist has to match that head exactly as she had done it two weeks ago.

DIXON: Do you make notes?

REILLY: We make notes; we also have still pictures made. But, if we haven't a still man at that moment, we have to remember what they did. This is a whole different way of doing it. They have to stand by the camera every minute. For instance, if the star walks in a door and happens to drop her head, causing a hair to fall in her face, you have to remember that the hair dropped in her face as she moved toward the table. But if they go back to reshoot the scene at the door for a closeup, the hair has to be back off the face, because it hadn't yet fallen in the face. When they do a closeup at the table, the hair has to be in the face again. All these things the hair stylist has

to remember.

When the picture is edited, errors are often made. You may have caught such mistakes, at one time or another. All of a sudden, out of the blue, there is something hanging in the face that wasn't there a second ago. Maybe, that was shot three months ago. It's remarkable how seldom these mistakes happen, when you realize the method of shooting.

We have directors who insist upon very natural hairdressing. Did I mention [Elia] Kazan and Streetcar Named Desire? Kazan was one of the first American directors who insisted upon natural hairstyles, and who had the strength to get by with them. Many times, the players in a scene insisted upon looking beautiful even if they were getting out of bed in the morning. This isn't the hair stylist's fault. Nine times out of ten it is the star's. They want to be beautiful. You have your exceptions; Bette Davis was one for realism. In Mr. Skeffington she cried, and the mascara ran down her face. Bette Davis was wonderful for doing parts in a realistic way. I did her hair on that picture. Mr. Skeffington was a very difficult and long picture. Bette had lost her husband just before the picture had started. She is a very high-strung woman, and it was a very trying picture. She had many different hairdos. As the picture began, she was a young girl, and then aged. There were wigs; there were hairpieces.

As I said, she was a stickler for realism. In the story she played a young girl at the time preceding World War I. How to do the hairdo for that period! How did they roll the hair then? They used what we call a round curl. The young operators would not even know what a round curl is. Many of the beauty shop girls now don't even know how to make a pin curl; they use rollers so much. A round curl is rolled on a stick. Taking hold of the end, you roll it round and round and round, so that when it comes out, it has kind of jiggles in it. Instead of a smooth--again my hands can't express what--a smooth-curved wave, it has a little jiggles in it. When you back-comb this a bit, it has that old-fashioned, puffy, full look that they had. She was delighted with it, and, as a matter of fact, she looked very pretty in it. It had the long curl on the side. I did it the same way that they would've done it in that particular period. But many players won't let you do those things. It is fun to work in period.

She also wore wigs, and at the very end of the picture, she had to wear a rubber cap to hold her own hair down, and then a thin wig with wispy hair, that looked like all her hair had fallen out. Bette Davis has a beautiful, full head of hair, hair that works beautifully. It molds well; it holds well. Bette Davis could wear practically any hairdo and wear it well. No matter what period it was, whether it was down over the face straight, whether it was

high, whether it was bangs, she could wear any hairdo. Now, you couldn't do this on Hedy Lamarr, who was considered a great beauty. Bette's face was oval, and her whole head shape was such that she could wear any hairdo, which was fortunate since she plays so many different character parts.

Toward the end of Mr. Skeffington, I was sitting on the outdoor set of a street scene next to a fifteen-foot parallel. Parallels are big scaffoldings for lights. The lights are mounted on top and are supposed to be tied off with rope but this particular light wasn't. Another hairdresser was sitting next to me underneath it, and when the electrician got up to move it, he accidentally hit it. The lamp fell, hitting me on the top of the head, then glanced off and hit the other hairdresser on the forehead. I'm sure I would have been killed, had I not been wearing a silk scarf around my head, tied on top with a knot. My hair was long at the time, and I often wore a silk chiffon scarf, popular then. The knot of the scarf was resilient enough, but my head was cut open. I was out of the studio for six weeks.

When I came back, Mr. Skeffington was still being made, and I went back on the picture.

Then, we did Streetcar Named Desire at the studio with Vivian Leigh, Kim Hunter, Karl Malden, it was Karl Malden's first picture, and, of course, Marlon Brando. Mr. Kazan wanted Kim Hunter to look like a girl from the

poor section of New Orleans who didn't know how to do her own hair and certainly couldn't afford to go to a beauty shop, but would try to pin it up any way she could. Kazan said, "Jean, I do not want it to look like she's been to a beauty shop. I wat it to look like she has done it herself." So, I explained exactly what he wanted to the hairdresser.

I was busy doing something else, when I got a phone call from Kazan. It was Gadge. That is Kazan's nickname and everybody at the studio called him by that. He said, "Jean, come down here immediately."

I thought, "What is wrong?"

I went down to the set, and Kazan pointed to Kim Hunter, "Is that what you thought I wanted?"

And I looked and thought, "Oh!" I said, "No, I'm very sorry."

He said, "OK, take her in and see if you can fix it."

Kazan is a man who will listen and knows what he wants. If he feels you are intelligent enough to give it to him, you have no problems with him. He makes demands, but he is not a tyrant. If you give him what is possible, everything is just fine. I love working with such people. He demands respect from his players. If he says something, that is what is done. That's a pleasure to see, because so often you see the players on a set run over the director.

And so, I took Kim Hunter back to the hairdresser and

told her, "This is not right. Now forget all the hairdressing that you've learned. Try to imagine that you have never rolled a curl." I rolled three-cornered curls; I rolled square curls. I put one high and one low; I put one on top of the other and turned one backwards.

The hairdresser said, "Jean, I can't do this. Please don't let anyone know that I did this picture. Oh, this is terrible."

I said, "Never mind." We dried Kim's hair and combed it out, running my fingers through it more than combing it.

I took her down to the set, and Kazan said, "Right. Just exactly what I wanted." That was the effect in this picture this hairdo should have.

This kind of hairdressing is very exciting, because you are creating a character that is real. To do a beautiful hairstyle takes talent, yes, but to me it really doesn't take imagination.

DIXON: Not as much as to do an unbeautiful style.

REILLY: No, it doesn't. I know hairstylists who are fabulous, creative artists, but in this situation they are absolutely lost. They don't know how to do it. When a picture demands this kind of work, whether it's an Alfred Hitchcock or an Elia Kazan, I never will put these hairdressers on the picture.

One girl, who was one of the finest artists in the business, worked with Hitchcock, and I thought he was going

to go right through the ceiling of the studio. She did not know how to make a hairdress look casual. She would say, "Jean, it's the messiest-looking thing I've ever done." Every hair was in place; she just couldn't bring herself to do a hairdress that looked messy. It is a part of studio work that is an art, and many beauty operators just can't do it.

DIXON: Can a studio operator go back to a beauty shop?

REILLY: Oh, yes, many of them have. When times are very slow in the studios, some of the girls have gone back to the shops, and they become some of the top operators. It takes a little doing to go back, because it's a different routine. But it's easier to go from the studios to the shops than the other way.

Saratoga Trunk was a fascinating picture to do. That was with Ingrid Bergman and Gary Cooper. It was a colorful picture; laid in New Orleans. The sets were wonderful. People have asked me, since working on that picture, if I have ever been in New Orleans, and I always want to say yes. But I have never been. We never left the Warner Brothers lot during the shooting of Saratoga Trunk. Now, they would probably go to New Orleans to shoot backgrounds, but that was during the war. The sets were so authentic, that to me, I've been in New Orleans.

Bergman wore a black or very dark brown wig in that picture. She had four different wigs and would have worn

each of the four wigs sometime during the day. She was wonderful to work with because she was patient. After I would put the wig on, she would never touch it. She would hardly move; she would never complain. When I would take it off at night, whe would say, "Oh, it's so good to get that off." She was professional, and this was part of her acting job for that day. Not only did I have four wigs, but I would change hairdos on one wig many times during the day. On that wig, there would be extra switches or extra curls.

Gary Cooper was also wonderful to work with. I always was very fond of him. He did many pictures at Warner Brothers. Between pictures, he would often come to the department and kind of amble into my room. If I wasn't busy, he'd sit down, and we would chat. He was always a gentleman, always considerate, always on time. I say, "always on time," because we have a new generation of TV actors that they don't know what being on time means. They don't know what it is to be professional, especially, when you think of your Gary Coopers and your big stars. Why if Bette Davis was late, even she was in trouble. Now these youngsters do things that the biggest stars wouldn't have dared to do. But they have nothing to relate themselves to. They don't know how a true star acts.

Errol Flynn would do things, but Errol Flynn was also a sick man. These TV stars are not sick people. Errol had

a drinking problem, but he was wonderful to the people who worked close to him. He was marvelous to me and very helpful. I was always very fond of Errol Flynn, and I know that, in his way, he was very fond of me. He was very colorful. He was a star, as we think of stars. His manner and everything. The way Errol would hold himself and carry his head when he walked, the way he would dress--well, <u>there</u> was a movie star.

And his smile--I've rarely seen a person with the charm that Errol Flynn had. He could take a person who disliked him, and in five minutes, the same person would be saying that Errol Flynn was the most wonderful person. And he did it with such graciousness. Of course, he had the Irish charm. I remember there was a production man once on location, and Errol wanted something but the projection man said, "Well, Errol, you can't have this." And I heard Errol Flynn talk to this man for a few minutes. This man was a hard-headed production man, but suddenly, he was doing what Errol wanted without really realizing it. I watched this, and I thought, this is really enchantment.

He was lord of the manor, that was all. He would wear a scarf at the throat and use a long cigarette holder, but on him, it did not look affected at all. It was a part of his personality.

When he came back to the studio and did his last picture, it was the Barrymore picture, he was so sick. It

hurt me because, you know, I did my first picture with him. Shampooing his hair, I said, "Errol, I'll never forget my first picture with you. You were so wonderful to me. You were so kind, and I was so naive and so frightened."

And I remember, he looked up and said, "Who could help being nice to you?" And from Errol, you knew that he meant it. If he didn't like someone, he'd just have nothing to do with them. He could be brutal, too, but he would usually just ignore them. I was glad I had the privilege of working with Errol Flynn. There have been so many stories about him, and I was always told to watch out for Errol Flynn. Well, if you behaved like a lady, Errol treated you every inch a lady.

I've never yet had a man be offensive in any way. There is one man who had a tremendous reputation as a wolf, and he was still one of the least likely. It was Frederic March. But he did Mark Twain at Warner Brothers, and I was put on that picture until Errol Flynn started his picture. Then, they took me off the Errol Flynn picture and put me with Ingrid Bergman. Gordon Blau, who is now in charge of the make-up department at the studio, was doing the make-up on Frederic March.

Gordon told me, "Now look, Jean, when you go to put on Freddie's wig, don't go in the room unless I am there with you."

And I said, "Oh?"

He said, "Just believe me. You've been with Errol Flynn, that's fine, but this is a different cup of tea."

So, I said, "All right." I would wait for Gordon, and the two of us would go into the room together.

Well, Frederic March would try everything in the world to get Gordon out of that room. He would pick up an eyebrow pencil, start to use it, and deliberately break the point of the eyebrow pencil. He would say, "Gordon, you better go to the department and get me another eyebrow pencil."

And having worked with him before, Gordon would have six eyebrow pencils in his pocket. "Here's another one, Freddy."

Freddy would then break that one; he would do everything. He would say, "Would you mind going and telling the wardrobe man that I would like so-and-so?"

Gordon would say, "I will in just a few minutes." Gordon wouldn't leave me for one minute. The minute I would finish with the wig, we would leave the room together.

It was almost a game with Freddy. Evidently he just had to try with any girl that he came across. I didn't know him well, and I didn't work with him very long. I was on the picture only a few days, until I went over to the Flynn picture. There were some pretty fancy stories about Frederic March and the many slaps in the face he got.

## CHAPTER IV

## HAIRSTYLING FOR PERIOD PRODUCTIONS

In motion picture hairdressing we have to know about the different styles of period pictures. I know many of them, because I've worked on so many different pictures. But, every once in awhile, a picture is made of a period that I haven't done while at Warner Brothers.

Some hairdressers we get in, for some reason, do not remember styles well. This has always puzzled me, because it would seem as though they could remember hairstyles that were popular in their own lifetime. Yet, I've found that a great many girls do not remember. They will put on a hairdress that wasn't in a certain period at all.

For instance, in the early 1930's, the first updo since the pre-World War period was popular. And yet, when we do the Roaring '20's, some girls will do updos. I can't supervise all of them, and I'll walk on the set late and see these updos.

They say, "Oh, yes, I remember."

And I will say, "You couldn't, because updos weren't in." They don't seem to remember these things. They had swept up the back with the little curls on the top; that was the early '30's.

The pageboy (we seem to have lived with it most of

our lives) didn't actually come into existence until 1936. I remember that so well, because I modeled one of the first pageboys in Los Angeles. But even so, you'd think they would have an idea that it was sometime in the 1930's.

But, if they don't, Warner Brothers has quite a wonderful research department. By looking at the magazines and books of that period, we can get a feel of what the hairdos were like.

A thing that we have to be careful of, is to adapt the hairstyle to the player. Unfortunately, producers will often look in a book of a period, and they'll say, "Oh, this is a wonderful hairdress. Put this on her." If she had lived in that era, she couldn't have worn that hairdress. It is very difficult sometimes to explain that the woman in the photograph looks nothing at all like the player that they want to put the hairdo on. Had the player lived at that time, she would have adapted it to her face.

One time, Henry Blanke, one of the big producers at Warner Brothers for many years, was doing a picture with Alexis Smith. I was working with her, and he picked out a certain hairdress for her.

I said, "She just can't wear this."

And he said (he had a very strong German accent), "I think she will look wonderful in this. You put it on. We see anyway. Jean, you try."

I said, "All right."

So I put it on her. Well, she looked so funny, we just broke up laughing. She is a very beautiful girl; she can wear a variety of styles, but she looked so funny in this. He tested her, and when the film was run, he started to laugh, "Oh, you're right, you're right. Turn her off." So then, I had to create a hairdo that still had the feeling of the period.

In the movies, we also find that we adapt the hairstyle of the period to conform somewhat to what women are now wearing. For instance, many of the old Jeanette MacDonald movies were costume pictures. Her hairdos gave the feeling of the period, but also had the feeling of styles at the time of the making. Those are things that we have to constantly work around and adapt.

With the TV western and other TV productions, we don't really have the fun of creating hairdos like we used to. Now we have to tap what we know. We haven't the time to do research. When we did the major pictures, we had three or four or five wigs made for testing purposes, only. If we used one, fine. If none of them were all right, we would have another made. Even for big pictures, that is now a thing of the past. Casting is done at the last minute, and we will have to order wigs on short notice. I have to use my judgment, and thank heavens, I have been fortunate in my choices. I must create immediately what is right, because we don't have time to test. We may not get the wig

out for production until the night before it is shot. This puts us at a great disadvantage, because you haven't time to create new things, not being sure whether it's perfect or not. If you have a chance to test, then you can correct your errors. You can make it a little higher here, a little fuller, or you may try an entirely different approach to the hair. We can't do that any longer, and it's too bad.

In TV, we can't even get hairgoods made; we have to use what stock we have from former pictures. If it fits the person, fine; if it doesn't, too bad. We have to make the short hair of the TV players look as though it's long. We have to add switches, curls, puffs, or if we have a wig, we will use it, but not all wigs fit all people.

We can often use a wig that has been used before on another player; the Bette Davis wigs have been used and used on, I can't tell you how many people. For some reason, her wigs seem to look right on almost everyone. I've never quite been able to understand this. The Errol Flynn wigs have been often used, and they always have looked well on someone else. Wigs that have been specially made for other people are tried, but we can't use them. They just don't look right.

Humphrey Bogart was once making a picture, and he wore hairpieces. A hairpiece for a man is a very individual thing. Occasionally, you will find someone that you can use

it on again, but not very often, and especially not on some other star. It would be a thousand-to-one chance that it would fit. I had the two new hairpieces made. But, Humphrey Bogart got ill, and another player took his place (strange, I can't think now who it was). I said, "We will have to have new hairpieces made, and this will take another week or two."

"We can't. We have to start production next week. Don't be silly. We had the hairpieces made for Humphrey Bogart, use those."

And I said, "Well I can't."

They said, "They are brand new. There is nothing wrong with them, is there?"

I said, "No, but you can't put them on this other man. They just aren't right."

"What do you mean? We are using the same wardrobe."

I said, "Taking in or letting out a seam is quite different from a hairpiece. You can't take in seams or let them out."

They said, "We can't understand it."

Finally, I said, "Look, you wouldn't want him to wear someone's false teeth. You don't think that would look right do you?" I couldn't think of anything else that would work.

The producer looked shocked. It was a terrible example to use. And he said, "Oh." That took care of that; we got

some new hairpieces.

But, as I said, men's hairpieces are quite individual, and occasionally we have been able to reuse them. Gene Kelly's hairpiece has been used many times on other men. I don't know why. It's very difficult to figure out why.

Men can be very funny when they first come into a studio. They may have never had their hair done before. Sometimes, they are not combing their hair correctly. On the stage, it may look all right, but on the screen, there is something about the style that doesn't look just right. That's when I will get into the act.

They will say, "Jean, can you do something with the hair?"

Starting to work with it, I'll part it differently, or I'll take a part out. I may put a lift in front to give them a higher look. A lift is not really a wave; we try not to have too many waves in men's hair. We can either trim the hair more so it doesn't stick out, or make it a little fuller if his ears stand out too much. There are many things that can be done with a man's hair; people are beginning to realize this now. Men just combed their hair. We have learned to do various things with a man's hair to make him look his best, to give the best proportion to his face.

When I first get them in my chair, they are so embarrassed. For some, I've had to put curl in their hair

and then brush it out. I put the curls in and the clippies, put a net over them, and put them under the dryer. They die.

They say, "Oh, no. Can't you lock the door? No one will see me, will they?"

I laugh and say, "No, if you don't want them to, I'll close the door."

After they have been in the studio for awhile, they are soon walking down the hall with a net on. Who cares, they've become used to it. I have to send them to the House of Westmore, occasionally, to get a permanent. They may have very straight hair, and their hair has to be curly for an entire picture. Oh, my goodness, you should hear them. They are like little boys sent off to their first party with girls. They don't want to walk into a beauty shop. "I'm not going to do this." Finally, they don't mind at all getting their hair done.

Paul Newman, who did the Silver Chalice, had to have his hair done in the Roman style. We curled the hair all over his head, making tight ringlets. The first time we did this to him, you've never heard such squawking. He was so embarrassed; he was so flustered, he was so upset. Wasn't there some other way that we could do it? Would I please close the door?

Finally he got used to the pincurls. We would say, "Won't you keep them in until you get through make-up. It will make them set a little bit better."

"Sure," he didn't care. He'd go down the hall with the pins in his hair. But it must be quite a shock at first. It's pretty sissy to look like that.

As I was saying, we do have a wonderful research department, and we have many books that we can get our fingers on, right there. Perhaps, I'll want to see the Iroquois Indians, or I'll want to see what the military looked like during the Civil War. Interestingly enough, you would think men in that period had very long hair, but many of them had short clipped hair. The reason was that they couldn't bathe as often. If they would get lice in their hair, they would have to shave the head. But we don't think of that. All we think of is the Lincoln-type hairdo, which was longer. Many of them had a very short, what might be called a military cut.

DIXON: Do people accept a short haircut on a Civil War man?

REILLY: We get some repercussions. They think that we weren't authentic, because we didn't do something about that modern haircut. We once tried to be more authentic than we are now. Because of TV, we literally can't. They cut down on production costs, and we can't hire the necessary people to do it.

When we made a western picture or a pioneer picture, all the men would wear falls.

Have I explained what a fall is? A fall is used both on men and women; the women's are longer. Falls come in

different sizes. There is the neck-fall, which fits just at the neckline. The person's hair is combed over it, and with the false hair underneath, it makes the hair appear longer.

There is the half-fall which comes to a halfway point on the back of the head, and that also gives length.

And then we have, what we call, a three-quarter fall. If the player has short hair, high on his head, which men and now many women do have, we can use a three-quarter fall. It comes up to the top of the head, and we then comb their own hair back over it. It looks like they have long hair, as long as need be.

We also have what we call a five-eighths fall, which comes over the head almost to the hairline. We only use the hairline over that.

We used a fall like that on Elizabeth Taylor in Giant, because she had short hair. But they wanted to use her own dark hair. She has a lovely hairline, and her hair in front was long enough to use for the hairline. We had five-eighths wigs made which came almost to the hairline, and then we combed her own hair over it.

Now, if she had had very short hair, or if they had wanted to use a different color hair, we would have used some other solution. Jean Simmons, in Home Before Dark, was to be a brunette, then go grey, then blonde, and then brunette again. In this case, we had to use wigs on her.

We had to bleach her own dark hairline for the grey wigs, and then use a hairlace wig.

It's easy to put a brunette wig on a blonde, because the blonde hair underneath doesn't show through. But it's very difficult to put a blonde wig on a brunette, because the dark hair will show through. To correct this, we have to either bleach the player's hairline, or use a wig band. The wigband used to be fine on a closeup when we were doing small-screen pictures, but with the introduction of the big screen, we have found that the best way is to bleach the hairline.

Jean Simmons was a good sport about it, even though she had a two-inch width of bleached hair at the hairline and the rest of it was black. It was peculiar, but, you know, that was her art and her job.

For instance, Bette Davis, when she did Elizabeth and Essex, shaved her head halfway back so that she could raise her hairline like Queen Elizabeth. She could then wear a red wig to look like Elizabeth. There are not many actresses that will do in a role what Bette Davis does to be authentic. Many of them will attempt the opposite; they have to look pretty in a scene, even if they are just getting out of bed in the morning. This is ridiculous. In one scene from Skeffington Bette Davis was crying, and she deliberately had them apply a mascara that would run.

Toward the end of the picture, she was supposed to

have lost all her hair from typhoid fever, I think it was. We had to put a rubber cap on her which is a plastic rubber that is molded to fit her head shape. It is pulled over her own hair, which has been packed and wrapped underneath, then the wig is put on top of the rubber cap. Oh, it's a long, long process--about a three hour make-up job, together with the make-up and the wig. A big picture of that type, which calls for aging or special hairdressing, means extra production time. The hours really become extended; it is an eight- to nine-hour day, and sometimes additional overtime. We begin with a three-hour make-up call and then at the end of the day, the wig must be taken off, and the make-up too. The hairdresser must then dress the wig; it really goes into long hours.

We used to be so much more authentic than we are now. If the picture was a period picture, all the men had falls. We had many hairdressers working on it, who would be dressing falls. Everything would be very authentic, and we would be very careful. Even the most minor extra, if he were in range of the camera, would wear a fall. We still do this on our big pictures, but not on our other pictures and most of the TV pictures.

Of course, many fellows who work in the westerns all the time keep their hair a little longer than average, just to do work in westerns. But if someone with a short hairstyle comes in, they'll maybe put a hat on him or try

not to turn him too much to the camera, unless he plays an important character. You'll see more and more short-haired players than we ever thought of allowing on the screen at one time.

With the cut in production costs and the fast TV films, we lose, what we call "production value." It seems a shame, because it takes away much of the feeling of the period. It makes them less authentic; it makes them less believable; it makes them more Hollywood-like.

All the Indian tribes have completely individual hairdos, but now Indian hairdos have become standardized. Since they have to wear wigs, to have special wigs made is too expensive. Wigs with the center part and long braids are cheaper, because we can get those in quantity. Nearly all the Indians wear this style of wig if they are the Northern Indians. We use two different wig styles. If they are the Northern Indians, they all get the long braids; if they are the Southern Indians, they get the Apache wigs, a short shoulder-length wig. And that is the Hollywood Indian.

Research on Indians and the various tribes, is fascinating. If a big picture calls for an Iroquois Indian, the whole head is shaved except for a width of hair down the center. We have never done any TV pictures with Iroquois Indians, because of production costs. With many make-up artists putting on rubber caps and hairstylists

putting on those strip hairpieces, it just runs into too much money, especially when trying to cut down production costs.

We did one picture with Florida Indians and we had to have special things made. The Indians wore their hair in different ways, and they wore things in their hair. Now we've got it down to the one-feather headgear or perhaps a war bonnet, on a big chief. The rest of them wear the two braids. If we have time we will wind something in the braids and we use a band with a feather. If they really want to cut down costs, why we don't even use hair-lace wigs. The Indians look as if they are peering from between black curtains, because we can't allow the hair line to show.

DIXON: What would happen in a Navajo picture?

REILLY: The Navajo women <u>should</u> wear those wonderful hairdresses. Again, we can't. We don't have the time to do it. That would mean wigs; that would mean special hairdressing; that would mean several hairdressers instead of just one or two. Many Indian girls who come to the studios as extras, keep their hair long in braids. Therefore, we do a picture, and all the Navajos have braided hair. This is too bad because the Navajos have such beautiful hairdos. Unless it's a big picture we have to stick to the routine. We haven't got the time or budget. We also use many of the standard hairstyles on the leading

ladies in westerns, because we just have time to do routine things.

We were doing a big western, and they said, "Jean, we will do tests." I did some tests. It was an interesting character, and the girl who was playing it had different features; so I decided to work out some kind of a new hairdo that hadn't been used.

We've often pulled the hair back in a ponytail and put a barrette on it, or we've pulled it back and then put a leather thong on it. The leather thong has become a running gag with me. After putting a leather thong on the hair, everyone comes up and thinks that it is a brand-new idea that no one has thought about before. So, I did some hairdresses, and I was quite pleased with them.

I sent the test pictures up to the head of production and he looked at them and said, "Well, you know now, this is wonderful!"

It was the same thing I had done before. I thought that I would give them what they were used to--the same old thing with the hair pulled back down on the nape of the neck.

He said, "If there was just something we could do with it."

I said, "How about a leather thong?"

He said, "Great, great, just great!"

If you read about this in books, you would say, "I

don't believe it." But so help me, it happens all the time, whenever we try to do something that is unusual or different. We are so often hampered by such unimaginative men. They can look at a frequently seen hairstyle and think it's different. They even think they have come up with a great new hairdo. It makes you sick.

I took the test pictures, and I thought, why try? But, I took a leather thong and tied it around her hair. Big deal!

Once in awhile, we run into the same trouble when we are doing a high-style hairdo. If the men aren't accustomed to seeing it on their wives, they don't want any part of it. We do have to be very careful that we don't use the extreme high styles. Our styles, as a rule, are more wearable and more flattering to the woman.

## CHAPTER V

## REMINISCENCES: CLINT WALKER, CRAIG STEVENS, TOM REILLY, MIRIAM HOPKINS, BETTE DAVIS, JAMES GARNER

I want to tell you about Clint Walker. Clint is a very big man; he makes even a large man appear small. He is about six-foot-five, and has tremendous shoulders. He is built beautifully for a man. About 1955, my husband and I went to Las Vegas for the weekend, and it was in the Sands Hotel, I believe, that we saw this extremely tall policeman. He was on duty. He seemed very self-contained, reserved, and quiet. In his uniform, he just looked great.

My husband noticed him first. "Hey, take a look at that policeman over there, in light tans." He was dressed in tan instead of policeman blue. "Oh," I said, "my goodness sakes, he's a big man."

My husband said, "He's a good-looking man, too. Someone should spot him for the movies. He's the right age, and if he can act, I would like to put my money on a guy like that."

I said, "I bet the women would think he is attractive."

But, he was very quiet and self-contained, and he is to this day. Clint doesn't go out of his way to talk to people. He is friendly if you speak to him, but he would much rather go out alone in the woods and the hills. His

life is kept very private. He hasn't in any way "gone Hollywood," as the term is used, and his friends are not Hollywood either. I understand that he has a very happy home life. You say, "Good morning," to Clint, he'll say, "Good morning," and off he goes to make-up, and then over to the set. There is no nonsense.

DIXON: He's not struck with himself either.

REILLY: No, he doesn't seem to be. It just seems to be his way of making a living. He'll do it, but then go home and enjoy himself. Clint is a great one for health foods. He's read all the books and he lives by what he has read. Right to the very letter. At that time, whoever thought Clint Walker would be in pictures! He was just a policeman in Las Vegas, but he was a standout even there.

Clint Walker is Cheyenne; he is the Star of the TV program, Cheyenne. This week is the last Cheyenne picture, In the script he is going to be shot, and that will be the end of the Cheyenne. So, Clint will take to the hills, and we will probably never see Clint Walker again, unless he comes back for a picture. There will be no more Cheyenne. The little kids will be broken-hearted.

DIXON: Is it a secret that Craig Stevens is making a new series?

REILLY: Yes, he's making a new series in England. It's being made by the largest TV organization in England. He's making it for British viewing, but it will also be shown

here in America. It's a story involving a photographer, which is a wonderful idea because there are few restrictions as to plot, because a photographer can get into any kind of situation.

DIXON: I hope he keeps as suave as he is.

REILLY: I think he always will. Craig is that way in real life, and always has been. When he was doing Peter Gunn, Life magazine did a layout on the resemblance between Craig and Cary Grant. People would wonder why he would copy Cary Grant, but he never did. Craig was always like that. Whether in the living room, in the den, or out with friends, this is Craig. He has a charming sense of humor, a light buoyancy, and he dresses beautifully.

I've seen Craig out in the backyard making furniture; or cleaning the yard. He'll have on dungerees and a shirt, yet he looks like the well-dressed man. Whatever Craig puts on, he always looks good. Unfortunately, if he goes into any kind of a script where he is supposed to look untidy, he just doesn't look that way. There are other people who look messy even when dressed up. Craig has always had beautiful taste in clothes, and the Cary Grant quality is Craig's very own manner, unacquired.

In the Peter Gunn series, his style of dressing set a whole new trend. Blake Edwards, the producer-writer of the series, chose Craig because his personal style was right for the Peter Gunn role. Edwards did not want the standard

detective type. Craig was ideal. Craig tells delightful stories; he has a clever way of recounting experiences that are light and humorous. He comes from a very nice family; his father was principal of schools in Kansas City, Missouri, and his background shows. Craig is a good citizen, an allaround nice man.

DIXON: I was wondering too if you would tell some of those Tommy Reilly stories?

REILLY: Oh, dear, I'm not good at telling Tommy Reilly stories. I can't begin to compete with his wonderful delivery. It would be impossible for me to try.

One was an amusing thing. He was in the service, stationed in Washington. He was cutting documentary films for the [armed] services. The services made short subjects. One day, some top-secret material came in, and so he was cutting it for all the brass. It was before our landing in Casablanca, and the staff was trying to get an idea of the locale and inform those of rank. It was very top secret. He was working in the cutting room on the Casablanca film when he saw a clip of film from a newsreel he had been cutting. It was a shot of Mussolini with two aides on either side of him. Mussolini picks up field glasses and looks through them; he looks to one aide, nods his head, and smirks. Since the documentary material that he was cutting was very boring, he cut this clip in at a very important time.

He went to lunch, and when he came back, someone rushed up to him, "Where have you been? We have been looking all over for you. They have been calling for you. All the generals are down in the projection room, and they want you down there, immediately."

Tommy said, "Oh, my gosh, do they want the film?"

They said, "We have already sent that down because we didn't know where you were."

Tommy said, "You couldn't have."

They said, "Well, get down there."

What could he do? He went down and walked in. The film was already running, and the brass was watching this very quietly. It was very heavy material.

Suddenly, right in the middle of it, came the clip of Mussolini looking through the field glasses and then at his aide. Mussolini might have been saying, "OK, we know what they are doing now."

You couldn't hear a pin drop in the place. There were a few "ahhhhh's" and then all of a sudden, someone said, "Reilly!"

My husband had one of those wonderful Irish faces, but he played it very straight. What could they do? They all broke up and started to laugh. They couldn't help it.

It became a gag in the Pentagon, and if he was seen walking down the halls, people would poke each other and would say, "That's Reilly." That was just one of the many

wonderful Reilly stories.

He could take the most insignificant thing and make it funny. A trip to the laundry to get his shirts after having asked for no starch, and telling what had happened to his shirts, could be a delightful story. No one could tell this one like Tommy did. People will still mention this story to me.

DIXON: Were they full of starch?

REILLY: They always had starch, no matter how he begged!

On the picture Old Acquaintance, Bette Davis and Miriam Hopkins were the leading stars. I was doing Bette Davis. Miriam Hopkins and Bette Davis didn't get along very well; it seems Miriam Hopkins didn't get along with very many people.

Bette usually got along with her co-workers very well. She was a temperamental woman and high-strung, but intelligent and professional. Certainly she is a fine actress. She would have her own ideas, and she would stand up for them. Those were the days when productions went for three to six months or maybe longer. Often, the whole set would be stopped because of a disagreement. Everyone, with the exception of Mr. Warner, would be in her dressing room, and, I swear, I could see the walls bulging. I could hear all their voices going--the production manager, the producer, the assistant director, everyone. Miss Davis would be standing up for an idea or insisting that something

wasn't right. These discussions or arguments might go on for half a day. Finally they would get it all cleared up and shooting would start again.

On this particular picture, Miriam Hopkins was playing the unsympathetic character in the script; she was the villainess in the picture. But, she had a knack, when the director, Vincent Sherman, would say "Roll 'em," to switch her characterization from the way it had been rehearsed. She was gaining sympathy, which, of course, ruined Bette's characterization. Bette, rightfully, became very upset about it.

They would stop, and Mr. Sherman would talk to Miriam Hopkins. She would say, "Oh, I understand. Fine. Yes, of course." But she would do it again, until Bette was just a bundle of nerves. Finally, Bette would march off the set and go to her dressing room, and they would call the First Aid people down. Miriam would also march off to her dressing room and the First Aid Department would be called. Two men would come down, and one would go to each dressing room. The two stars would have their necks rubbed and be given an aspirin. The poor director would have to run from one dressing room to the other, trying to calm them both down, so he could get them both back to do their scenes.

There was one scene that was just fascinating to watch. It took place in the large entrance hall of a home.

A table was in the middle of the hall, and they had a scene to play by that table. Both stars were masters on knowledge of camera angles, but Miriam Hopkins would take such advantage, and, of course, Bette Davis was not about to stand by. Their vying and moving for that camera angle was something to behold. We still do big pictures, but you seldom get that combination of temperaments. They were both big stars and professionals.

They shot that scene I don't know how many times. Miriam would try to block Bette's light, or get the better angle. Bette wouldn't allow it, and she would move. It was the most subtle fight I have ever seen. On either side of the table they were trying to see who could catch the other. We were all glad when that picture was over.

DIXON: Did Warners make Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?

REILLY: Warners is releasing it, but we did not make it at Warner Brothers.

I've never worked with Joan Crawford, but she has been at Warners. I have done her hair, but I've never worked on a picture with her. She certainly is a big enough star, to throw weight around if she wanted to. But both Joan Crawford and Bette Davis are very wise women. Both of them know that they can't push the other person around. And I would have guessed, that they would have gotten along while making that picture, if only to show everybody that they could. They are both very astute women.

DIXON: They are old pros from way back.

REILLY: They certainly are. It's a pleasure to see, because the young stars really don't know what the meaning of "pro" is. Maybe they will learn it, but becoming a star now, seems to be done in a different way. They don't have the background for it; they come to it too fast. And they don't even have a chance to watch the professionals. Many of them get their first chance, making TV shows. There they see TV actors who also are Johnny-come-latelies. None of them get a chance to work with real professionals and if the time comes that they do, they may already have a name for themselves and lack the humility to watch the professionals. They think that they are just as important as the professionals.

DIXON: I think [James] Garner is probably a typical example of that. He looks like a nice guy, but I think he did have a sort of inflated opinion of himself.

REILLY: I don't think there is any doubt about that. When the Maverick series hit, he became an overnight success. He was a charming man; he was just delightful.

If you could have seen him before he ever became a movie star. He was around Warners for quite awhile before he ever did anything. But if you had seen him, you would say this man has to be in pictures. He was just a natural. He was like Clint Walker. If we had seen Garner in Las Vegas, we would have said that this man should be in pictures.

He is one of the best-looking men.

There are male types that some women will like and others they won't, but Jim Garner, I just don't think there is a woman that sees Jim Garner that doesn't say, "Oh, isn't he a doll!" Not only is he big and masculine, but he has also that little-boy quality that women invariably are attracted to. It is a combination that is difficult to beat. Jim Garner always reminds me of Li'l Abner--good-looking and with a little-boy quality. Now Li'l Abner, of course, abuses the privilege. Jim Garner doesn't.

DIXON: And he had enough acting ability to put the part across. Because he was Maverick.

REILLY: He was Maverick, absolutely. That was perfect casting. Just that devilish little twinkle, a don't-care quality about him, that was so believable. You can't act your way into it; you have to look the part.

DIXON: They made him a natural-born coward in so many instances.

REILLY: That's what I mean. Only Jim Garner could do that. Because he is so big and handsome, you don't care if he is a coward. He is a delightful coward.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF A STUDIO

## MAKE-UP DEPARTMENT

DIXON: How big is your department? How many people do you have working?

REILLY: There must be about thirty rooms in our department. When I say rooms, Warner Brothers, unlike the other studios, has private rooms for most of the make-up artists and hair stylists to work in. Most of the departments have big rooms, lined with chairs, and the stars are done in their own private dressing rooms. But, when Perc Westmore organized the department, he wanted all the stars to be done in the department, which, as far as organization or production is concerned, is much better, becase there is no waste of time. The hairdresser or the make-up artist can also be working on more than one person. While if they are in a star's dressing room, they can do no one else but the star. For many years at Warners, the stars even the biggest ones, came to the department to be made up.

There has been more of an exchange of stars between studios. Now the individual studios do not have the great roster of stars that they once had. Some of the stars will come and insist upon being made up in their own dressing rooms. For the big ones, of course, it is done.

But some of them still come to the make-up department.

When Greer Garson, who is an MGM star, makes pictures at Warner Brothers, there is never any question, she always comes to the department.

When she first came to Warners, she wanted to be made up in her dressing room, but I suggested, "We would like to do you in the department. Would you try it? If you don't like it, then, we will do it in your dressing room."

She said, "I'm willing to try." She liked it; she had a private room in the make-up department.

Greer Garson is a charming, intelligent, lovely woman. I had never met her, and I had only seen her from her MGM pictures. When I went to meet her in the producer's office, I wondered what she would be like. But what a lovely person, and a gracious woman to work on. She is so intelligent and has such breeding. Whenever she comes to Warner Brothers she is always made up in the department.

Joan Crawford, however, insists upon her private dressing room. But in the prominent days of Warner Brothers, when they had all their stars: Bette Davis, Jane Wyman, Errol Flynn, Humphrey Bogart, Paul Muni, Ingrid Bergman, Alexis Smith, and Eleanor Parker, there was never any question of being made up in the dressing room.

When Alexis Smith went to do a picture at MGM, an MGM star who had done a picture at Warners and didn't care for the system, spoke to her. She said to Alexis, "Now

that you are here at MGM, you will see how stars are really treated!"

Alexis Smith, not being that type of a person, said, "This will be interesting. I want to see how stars are treated." After having been treated as a star for a time, she said, "Oh, deliver me from that star treatment. I've never seen anything so ridiculous in my life. They act as though a star is not a human being. They seemed to be frightened to death to speak to you. The assistant comes up and taps and says, 'Miss Smith?' instead of saying, 'Miss Smith, we are ready for you now.' After all, this is my business. I'm being paid for it, you know, but they are afraid to ask you to do your job. I don't understand this at all. If this is the way a star should be treated, I'm not in favor."

That's why, when Greer Garson came to Warners from MGM, I was wondering if the star treatment had affected her. But she was a real person.

I remember an interesting incident about Jane Wyman and Gertrude Lawrence when they were making Glass Menagerie. Gertrude Lawrence was also a wonderful person. She had naturally curly hair. She was not a beautiful woman, and yet, she had learned how to look beautiful. In this picture, she was to look like a dowdy, middle-aged, run-down mother who pretended that she had had great wealth. We were speaking of Craig Stevens, who no matter what you put

on him, always comes up looking good. Gertrude Lawrence, no matter what was done to this woman, still came up looking lovely and beautiful.

The director said, "What can we do?" The wardrobe was putting tattered things on her, pulling them and doing far more than was usually necessary.

Her naturally curly hair proved difficult, because no matter what you do to naturally curly hair, it will fall back into place. But, we put oil on it, and we made it stringy. We would put fuller's earth into it to make it look dull. We would take the iron and pull some of the curl out. We wouldn't put any curl in it, and we wouldn't set it correctly.

Finally, I went to the director and said, "You know where the problem lies, don't you?"

He said, "What?"

I said, "This woman thinks pretty. No one can lick that."

That's true. She had a way of pulling herself together. I don't care what she had on, she was pretty. She had that great knack of thinking pretty; that's the only way that I can explain it. You can dress them in rags and they'll still look better then than some who are dressed up.

DIXON: Now we were talking about the size of your department.

REILLY: We have about 30 rooms, which are divided between

the make-up artists and the hair stylists. There are more make-up artists than there are hair stylists because, as a rule, there are more men than women in a picture. Consequently, there are fewer hairdressings to do. However, one day, two weeks ago, I was working entirely alone. We will go from that to having maybe 100 or 150 hairdressers working. It will fluctuate greatly, depending upon the size and the type of production we are doing. Every picture, unless it's an all-male cast, has one hair dresser on it. A period picture, that has a lot of hairgoods, and requires hairdressings of the period, will need a tremendous amount of people.

Last year, when we were doing Music Man, we had to build an entirely new room. We took over a photographic gallery and converted it to a hairdressing and make-up room. It has since been torn apart, but will probably have to be put together again for My Fair Lady.

There were many hairdressers working on Music Man constantly. A girl worked all night to dress the hairgoods in preparation for the next day's shooting. This saved on overtime. There was the key girl on the picture, and the girls that were doing the stars. On a picture such as Music Man, we would have two or three girls doing the star players, or the featured players. One girl was in charge of production, and I supervised the whole thing. That was a tremendous amount of work, with so many hairgoods to keep

track of and keep dressed. The principals had changes of hairdress, and we had a tremendous picture file of the various changes. We had to know that this was the number one change, and that was the number two change. We had to be sure that the right pose was with the right hairdo. When you ask how many work in our department, it depends entirely upon our production and the type of production being done.

DIXON: Do these girls work on the outside in beauty shops and then come in?

REILLY: No, we have a union. In our particular craft, we are more fortunate than some of the other crafts. The film editors move from studio to studio, but not to the extent that make-up artists, hairdressers, and perhaps wardrobe do. There will only be one editor on a picture, and over a period of years it is possible to tell about how many editors will be needed. The same group may be at the studio for many years. With the hair stylists and the make-up artists, production will go up and down. One picture will need only one make-up artist and one hair stylist. If there were two hair stylists and two make-up artists working on the previous picture, it means that two of them are out of work. These two put their names into the union, and, if MGM is doing a picture and needs them, they will go to MGM. They may not return to Warner Brothers for a week, a year, or maybe, two years, depending on the length of

the production. They may be kept on from one production to another. A film editor is assigned to a picture from the time the picture starts, until the editing is completed. But on a picture in our department, some hairdressers will work for the full length of the picture, but during that time, more hairdressers may be brought in for three or four days, or longer. These hairdressers work on daily checks.

In our department, we work either on a weekly salary, or by the day. You may get a call-back the next day, and you may not. If you don't, your name goes to the union, and you may be picked up by another studio.

In my own case, it's been unusual that I have been at Warner Brothers for so many years, because most hairdressers will work at several different studios over a period of years. Some may stay at one studio for a long while, and form a group at that studio. If they have a slow period, they'll take a vacation. Several of the girls prefer working at Warner Brothers, while others prefer working at Universal, Revue, Paramount, MGM, or whatever studio it might be. If after vacation, there's still no production work, they put their name on the union list.

In every organization, there are some that are the top talent. I'm always delighted to see one of these girls' names come on, because I try to call them to Warner Brothers. Of course, we all know each other in the business. If a

hair stylist more or less belongs at Twentieth Century-Fox and a picture should start there and the head of Twentieth calls me and asks if she is available, I always make arrangements for her release to the other studio. So, we may work day check or all week.

Over a period of time, the girls move around, and a girl may be a Warner girl for a couple of years, then go with MGM and stay there for a time, or whatever the case may be. In five years, she may come back to Warners again.

DIXON: When you say they put their name on the list, do you see the list?

REILLY: When I need a union hairdresser, I will phone the union, and I will ask who is available. They will read the list of names of hair stylists that are available. From that, I pick the girls that I want for a particular job. I have a choice of anyone who belongs to our union. I say a choice, within a certain limitation, there are some girls that prefer working at one studio. For instance, they will put their name only on the Warner Brothers' list. If we get slow at Warner Brothers, I have to lay someone off, and she might ask what the chances are of being back soon. I'll tell her that I honestly don't know whether we are going into a slow period. Unfortunately, production doesn't let us know; we wish they would. Sometimes they don't know themselves. In all fairness, I have never felt that I should hang on to someone and give them false hope.

I'll say, "I can't honestly tell you. If you can find work someplace else, I don't want in any way to keep you from it."

Some girls will say, "It doesn't matter. I want a couple of weeks off anyway. I'll call you at that time, and will see how it's going."

I'll say, "Fine." To hold a girl when I don't know whether I will have a job for her or not, doesn't seem fair. But this has been done often.

There are also girls who put their names on the list for "department head only," which means they are paid the department head rate. They are some of the outstanding girls in the business, and they can take time off if they so choose. They are either married, they don't have to work steadily, or they like to do commercials. At Warner Brothers we do not hire on this basis, because I am the department head. The studio will not pay overscale, unless it's a case of a star requesting a certain hair stylist in her contract. That's the only time that it's done.

I have never had trouble getting some of the top girls in the business to work at Warner Brothers. If they are available, they will almost always come. It is a nice feeling to have.

DIXON: Now, does the union have a limited membership?

REILLY: Yes. I should be able to tell you the exact number we have on the union list, but I can't. When someone

retires, or leaves the business, our quota drops low. We have an agreement with the producers to furnish so many hair stylists. When we drop below our quota and production gets so heavy that we need more, we then can reach out to another group. We also have what we call an "auxiliary list." We are told not to use that name. It's a list of younger and older girls. The older girls have worked in the business off and on, but are over the union age limit. The younger girls may be working in beauty shops, but are trying to break into studio work. The owner of the shop will allow them to leave when they are called for a studio. This is very difficult for them, because our calls for the following day don't go out until about four-thirty in the afternoon. To work, they have to cancel the next day's appointments, and the call may be for only one day. If the next day, a regular member comes on our union list, I have to drop that girl.

Unless we have heavy production, such as Music Man, new girls have a tough time getting into our organization. When we are busy, they may get in their quota of sixty days, that is the experience requirement before they can take the union examination.

We have been trying to initiate an apprentice program; the make-up men have had one for years. We are running into quite an obstacle, however. The major producers are willing to go along with it, but they want the

TV producers to pay some of the bills. The TV producers don't want to do it.

The major studios have always trained the make-up artists. Some of the best men in the business have been apprentices, then the Independents hire them away by paying them more money and take the advantage of all the training that the major studios have given them. You can't blame the major producers for not wanting to pay the bill for a hairstyling program without the Independents helping.

An apprenticeship for hair stylists would be a wonderful way of picking and choosing the right people for the business. If they worked for a set period, we could see whether they were suited. But now, if they have worked sixty days, we are forced to give them an examination and if they pass, we must take them in. Sometimes, we do not get the caliber of person we desire. When we are in a pinch and need someone, we have to reach out and take whoever we can get to fill the production schedule. We have gotten wonderful people, and again, we've gotten some bad ones. An apprentice system would eliminate that. The make-up artists' program has proven that an apprentice has usually stayed and has become a fine make-up artist.

DIXON: Do you think that some of the Independents and minor companies will eventually go along with them?

REILLY: The apprentice system has been talked about for three or four years, but they haven't acted yet. I don't

know whether it will ever materialize.

DIXON: Does the union want it?

REILLY: The union wants it. There was some opposition from our members at first, because they thought the apprentice would eliminate a day's work for a regular member, but we have more or less overcome that feeling. Most of the members now see the advantage of having an apprentice system. The producers see the advantage, but they can't get financial cooperation, so nothing has been done.

I've been involved in negotiations between the producers and our union. Helen Turpin and I have both taken part in labor talks. We have arrived at good agreements, but they haven't materialized.

DIXON: I knew that you didn't maintain a staff of twenty or thirty all the time, that would be an impossibility but I didn't understand how this worked.

REILLY: Last year, we had such heavy production at Warners that we were running over all the time. The rooms were all filled. We converted the back-wing dressing room. We put up mirrors and worked around the ice box. We had tables sitting in the hall, and there were people knocking each other down. We were putting tables for the hairdressers anywhere there was space. This year we have not been that busy, and I have had rooms enough. Even in the heyday of Warner Brothers, we always had enough rooms. Even in the

wartime, when there was a lot of production, we had plenty of space. The TV's have now absorbed many rooms.

DIXON: What does this mean as far as your own job is concerned? Hiring all these people and expanding, does this mean that you work yourself to a frazzle?

REILLY: When we are busy, I'm a pretty busy girl: organizing, ordering hair goods, picking the right hairdressers for the right job. I think one of my biggest responsibilities is answering a million questions. Decisions, decisions, decisions! You have to make them fast, and you can't be afraid of making them in my job. But, that has never bothered me. There was a girl in the department, and everyone knew that there was nothing she would like better than to be head of the department. She was a very fine hairdresser. One time, I took a two-months' vacation and went to Rome. She took my place while I was gone.

And I remember someone saying to me, "Jean, aren't you afraid of your job? Aren't you afraid that you'll lose it?"

And I said, "If my job is that precarious, then it's not for me to have, and I'm certainly not going to worry about it on my vacation. I'm going to have a good time." And I did. Fortunately, I've never taken my job home with me. I went to Rome and had a perfectly heavenly time.

I came back in the middle of the production of the Silver Chalice, and the girl was delighted to see me back.

She said, "Jean, I had no idea. The questions that I have been asked. There have been times, I have wanted to scream at them and say, 'What in the world is the matter that you can't think out anything for yourself?' No sooner would they ask me, than someone else would ask me the same thing. I just don't know how you do it."

I hadn't really thought about it. That's one thing that doesn't bother me; I can answer three or four questions at the same time and still have my mind on something else. Sometimes, I've thought it is a disadvantage, but I've known girls that appear to be so busy, and doing so much, and need assistants to help them. They say, "That poor girl just is working so hard!" Yet, I've been in this job for twelve years, and I've never had an assistant. And we have done very big productions. Somehow it all gets done, and somehow it never looks like I'm doing that much. Do you know what I mean? The big pictures are out; there are no problems; the producers are happy; the directors are happy; everything is on schedule. I've often wished that I had that knack of making it look like I did such a big thing. It's a knack in itself to make people aware of how much you are doing.

DIXON: It's like looking sick when you really are sick.

REILLY: And there are some people who look well when they are sick. Part of it is knowing the right people for the right job. This makes my job less work. I have a

pretty good knack of knowing what girl will be right in what spot. That makes my job easier, and I'm probably a little lazy. On one picture, Gordon Blau, who very seldom tells me who to put on a picture, but once in awhile exerts his male authority, decided that a certain girl was to do a certain job. I said, "You are making a mistake, because I don't think this particular hair stylist, as good as she is, will get along with Alfred Hitchcock. The star was Grace Kelly, and Alfred Hitchcock wanted her to look very natural, very casual. This hairdresser couldn't accomplish it. She was a beautiful hair stylist. I told her, "Now look. She has to look casual, without looking hairdressed. Please do this."

"I will, Jean. I will." Well, she couldn't do it. Hitchcock just about lost his mind. The assistant director came to Gordon and Gordon called me in. The assistant told me, "Something has to be done about this, Jean. You should never have put her on this picture." Gordon was wonderful. He said, "Don't blame Jean for this. She didn't want her on this picture. It was my idea, and I can see that I've made a mistake." Since then, he usually accepts my recommendations. Over a period of time, I know what hair stylists will work better with a certain player, or will be able to do a certain production in the right way. I then don't have to worry so much. When I was just working in the department, I liked to do my own work, create my own

hairstyling, be on my own, and have the trust of the head of the department. I know the capabilities of most of the girls I have. I know what they are able to do. I give them responsibility and they do beautifully. If you stand over a person and have to make every decision for them, they can't do the job themselves. You are creating a monster of a job for yourself. Our department is a good working department. Most of the top girls in the business like to work at Warners and will work for scale, where they won't do it someplace else. They have respect for our department.

# INDEX