Looking at Hollywood with Ed Sullivan

The Revolt of Ann Sothern

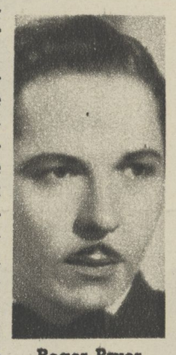
By ED SULLIVAN

Hollywood.

AS A RESULT of her fine job in "Trade Winds," which she followed up with "Maisie," youthful and attractive Ann Sothern is the talk of the town. She should be the talk of the town, because she gambled $50,000 and a year of her movie career on the proposition that Hollywood was wrong and she was right. She came close to starving, but she won, and that, as the rabbit said, is a tale of importance.

Miss Sothern is a rarity in this town because she refuses to be a yes-ma'am. She's a rarity because she went on a year's sit-down strike. One fine afternoon the young woman walked into the executive offices of RKO, where she was under contract at $50,000 a year, and informed them that she wanted to be a comedienne. Failing in that, she told them, she'd retire from pictures.

At first they thought that the California sunshine had addled her pretty head. She assured them that she was sound of limb, wind, and intellect. "At present I have a good job here," she explained, "but it won't last long, because the parts I'm playing are daffy, as well as dopey, and they will wash me up in pictures quickly." The executives tried to josh her out of it, but she told them that they had been served with an ultimatum —"give me different parts or else."



Roger Pryor

In such an exaggerated case of player independence studios have learned that it is sound economic reasoning to suggest that the performer take a long layoff and cool off. "That is what I had in mind," said the amazing Miss Sothern. "I'm quitting now."

Now, other players had carried their fight for different parts to this extent. Then, after they'd missed a few pay days, they returned to the studio sensibly and went back to work again. The security of a weekly check is the most compelling argument in the world. And then there is the added consideration that a performer knows that he or she must keep in action to stay before the public.

Weeks passed, and the resolute Sothern girl stuck it out. The money she had saved started petering out, and to give herself a greater degree of security Ann gave up the place in Beverly Hills and took a cheaper apartment in Hollywood. A month passed, three months, six months. The bank roll was getting smaller all the time, and in addition to her natural desperation there was the almost nightly irritation of the parties she attended to keep up "front."

"At every party people were discussing rôles they had in pictures," she recollected. "It seemed sometimes that their conversation just was pointed at me. Of course, that was silly on my part, but when you're out of work for a long time you start getting sensitive." She was denied even the consolation of explaining to people that she had embarked on a sit-down strike, because out here, when you tell people that you are out of work because of a deliberate desire on your part, they move away hurriedly. "Martyrs lead a very lonely life," observed Miss Sothern.

Ann Sothern—she stuck it out and won.

The race with time continued. It was easy enough for her to observe the struggle, because the bank book served as an indicator. Six months dragged into seven, then into eight.

"It got so that when I'd go to the bank to withdraw another sum of money for expenses, even the teller seemed to be pitying me," said Ann. "It was awful."

Friends now started urging her to give up her foolhardy cause, pointing out as delicately as possible that the public soon would forget her completely if she didn't get back on the screen to prod their memories.

Then, with the year almost exhausted, Ann Sothern was offered a rôle in Walter Wanger's "Trade Winds." She had rejected other rôles because they didn't give her a chance at comedy. She grabbed this one hastily, because the part was made to order for her. She was an instant hit. With equal care she selected her next rôle, in "Maisie," opposite Robert Young. She ran away with the press notices.

The Sothern eyeful who conducted this one-girl revolt and carried it through to a successful conclusion was born in North Dakota (the town is Valley City) and lived most of her life in Minneapolis. Her real name, and the name under which I knew her back on Broadway, is Harriett Lake. A lot of girls out here claim to have been Ziegfeld girls; she actually was a Ziegfeld girl, having worked in several of his shows.

One of four sisters, she took readily to the stage, because her mother was Concert Singer Annette Yde, and from the time she was old enough to toddle around the daughter's environment was musical. Her career was charted when the mother went to Hollywood to teach voice to actors and actresses who suddenly had been plunged into talking pictures. Harriett, in the course of a visit, was signed to an M-G-M contract.

It was then that she met famous Florenz Ziegfeld at a Hollywood party. Ziegfeld signed her to play the supporting lead to the late Marilyn Miller in "Smiles." It was after a succession of Broadway musicals that she was signed again to a Hollywood contract, because the coast was looking for singers. Up to now Miss Sothern has yet to sing a song in a flicker.

She is married to Roger Pryor, himself a former stage and film player who became a band leader when he became convinced the movies were typing him out of existence. Pryor's father was the bandsman, Arthur Pryor.

Newfoundland's New Airport

A Big Help to Ocean Flying

By WAYNE THOMIS

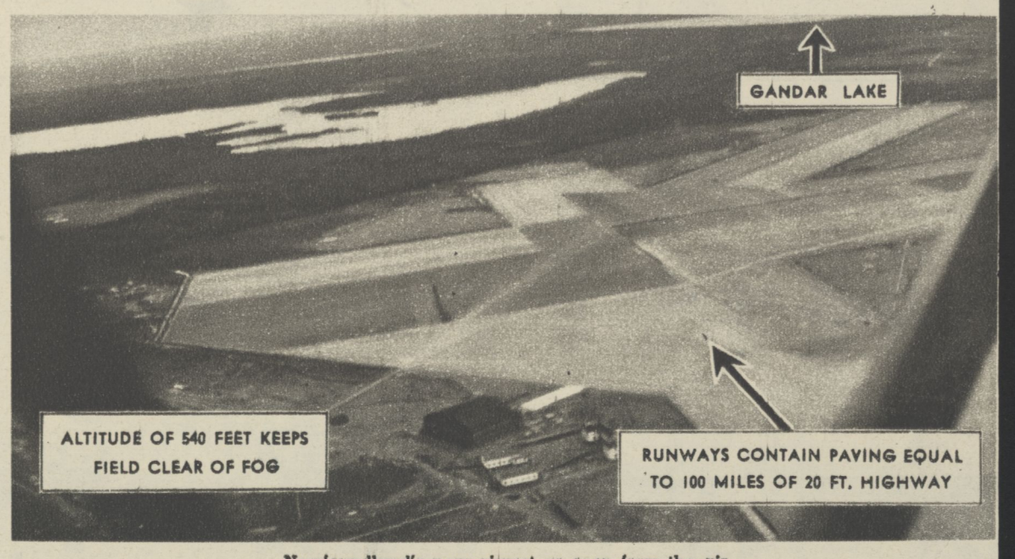
ONE OF THE least known airports in the world—the Newfoundland flying field, situated in the midst of 500 square miles of virgin timberland on the bleak little triangle of rocks and scrub brush in the mouth of the bay of the St. Lawrence river—is destined soon to become one of the world's most important aviation terminals.

The field that has just been completed after nearly three years of heroic work by a crew of more than 1,000 men, is to be the jump-off point for most of the east-bound trans-Atlantic airliners and the initial port of arrival for most of the ocean air trafic that is west bound.

Naturally the airport will be used only by machines capable of take-offs from and alightings upon land. But less than two miles from the hangars, hotel, and passenger terminal on the airport lies Gandar Lake, some thirty miles long, two miles wide in the narrowest point and more than 1,000 feet deep. Gandar Lake will become, with the completion of docking and refueling facilities there, the port for the big flying boats used in the Atlantic passenger and mail service.

• • •

Within a short time, however, both European and American companies will begin making the ocean crossing with huge substratosphere land planes. Pan-American Airways expects to make experimental mail flights this summer in a Boeing 307 stratoliner if delivery of the three planes now on order is completed in time. And Imperial Airways has on order three huge Fairey land planes that will cruise at high speeds at 20,000-foot altitudes.



Newfoundland's new airport as seen from the air.

Map of Newfoundland, showing location of airport and Gandar Lake, proposed seaplane port.

The importance of the Newfoundland airport is that it lies at the extreme eastern point of the North American continent. From Newfoundland airport it is 1,940 miles to Foynes, Ireland, or roughly 2,100 miles to Croydon, the big international airport of entry outside London, England. Thus trans-oceanic airplanes bound east will land there to fill their fuel tanks for the long ocean crossing. And westbound planes will refuel there before continuing to Montreal or New York.

Indeed the natural location of Newfoundland field may cause the southern route—New York to Horta, Azores; Lisbon, Portugal and thence to either Paris or London—to be neglected. This route is nearly 1,000 miles longer than the northern airway, but it is preferred at this time because none of its harbors ever is locked by ice. Ice can prevent the flying of big clipper ships such as Pan-American Airways flying boats from using the shorter northern passage. But when the land planes come into use winter will have no terrors, and the land planes can make the northern crossing the year round.

• • •

The site, specifications for the field and the funds for the creation of this airport out of the raw wilderness were provided by the British air ministry. More than one and a quarter millions of cubic yards of earth were removed in clearing and flattening the field. A small hill was cut away and a lake in the airport area was filled.

Then paving equal in area to 100 miles of road twenty feet wide was put down. The field was surfaced with two and three-quarters million gallons of asphalt, and graded to a perfection of smoothness and level pitch. Four vast runways were laid out, three of them 4,500 feet long and 600 feet wide and the other 4,800 feet long and 1,200 feet wide.

The airport site is 25 miles southeast of Botwood, the seacoast town that is being used as the port for the early clipper plane flights. From the coast the country rises to a broad rolling plateau 540 feet above sea level. This places the airport, and incidentally Gandar Lake, above the thick coastal fogs.

As an assurance for all-weather operations the field will be equipped with the latest types of radio and blind landing facilities in the way of flush type lights, a million candle-power rotating beacon, and lights outlining the field boundaries and obstructions.

The First Spot News Color Picture

ON PAGE ONE of today's Picture Section is a color photograph of the $4,000,000 fire which on May 11 destroyed five Chicago grain elevators and killed nine men. When The Tribune reproduced this picture in its morning editions of May 12 it became the first newspaper to illustrate a spot news story in color.

Less than twelve hours elapsed from the time the picture was taken until it went to press, although the complicated processing of color photographs for commercial publication is usually expected to consume anywhere from ten days to two months.

Behind The Tribune's ability to beat a daily deadline with an exclusive color photo lies three years of pioneer work with a color camera adapted to newspaper needs. This is the Bermphol single-exposure, natural-color camera. The Bermphol contains three plates and three color filters with mirrors to record the red, yellow, and blue primaries of all colors simultaneously.

But the process of color photography in 1936 was still considered too painstaking and delicate for outdoor photography—unless one wanted to use a color motion picture camera and wait for days while the film was sent away to be processed. The use of the Tribune camera at first was confined to the color studio, where conditions could be controled and models made up. Production was limited to illustrations for the Sunday sections and advertisments.

Then in the spring of 1937 the color cameramen went outdoors for the first time—to try for photographs of wild flowers in their natural state. They got them, remarkably real reproductions, but the effort was great to make plant life "hold the pose." Muslin screens had to be used to prevent the wind from blowing the flowers, and wires fastened to weaving branches. Time exposures were needed, and the shutter was closed every time a leaf began to move, and then reopened.

Gradually the color staff was able to speed up its shutters and plate sensitivity by using faster emulsions on the film. This made outdoor conditions less hazardous to good work.

But the long processing of the picture—from development to engraving—still remained as an obstacle to achieving daily press tempo. The photographer had to do six things to his three plates: (1) Develop a negative for the red, the yellow, and the blue. (2) Make black-and-white positives of each. (3) Apply color pigment tissues to the corresponding three prints. (4) Transfer these single-color images to celluloid. (5) Transfer the three images to a single sheet of paper, one exactly on top of the other. (6) Make a finished print by another transfer.

This finished print was then sent to the color engravers, who again had to separate the three colors, one to a plate. This is done with color filters and color-sensitive emulsions in a camera which provides the correct dimensions for printing and the half-tone screen "dots" to pick up the printer's ink. Then three copper engravings—one to reproduce each color—are made.

How could all these time-consuming operations be speeded up? The answer was to eliminate the last four steps in the color studio and the first one in the engraving room. The photographer now sent three glass positives, each marked for color, to the engraver, who made half-tone negatives. The latter now had no color separations to make.

This is what happened in reproducing the fire picture. It was taken at 1 p. m. on May 11, and by 1 o'clock the next morning the first copies were on the street.

Voice of the Movie Fan

Letters published in this department should be written on one side of the paper. If you wish a personal reply please inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Dear Miss Tinée: Mickey Rooney is sure swell! He is truly the greatest actor in America in the younger class. Don't just send orchids; send him the whole flower shop! That's what I think of him.

MICKEY ROONEY
Called "greatest actor in younger class."

I have seen him in "Boys Town," "Stablemates," the Hardy series, "Huckleberry Finn," "Slave Ship," and several others, and I think he is superb in them all. I sure would like to meet him.

Could you please squeeze in a picture, a short biography, and his address?

Much success to you and your column. Yours very truly, G. BANDT.

Editor's note: For such an enthusiast I guess we can do a bit of squeezing. Mickey's real name is Joe Yule Jr. He was born in Brooklyn, N. Y. Educated Dayton Heights and Vine Street grammar schools and Pacific Military academy in Hollywood. Career started when he appeared as a baby in a vaudeville act with his parents. Address him care of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio, Culver City, Cal. Thanks for the kindly wish.

Dear Miss Tinée: I have just seen "Stand Up and Fight" at our neighborhood theater, and by the time I left the theater I was ready to stand up and fight for my two bits. I'll take the third chapter of "Flash Gordon" to it any day. I'd think M-G-M would be thoroughly ashamed to show it! It is certainly no plug for their studio. But I suppose they can't afford to show good pictures all the time. I would like to know where I could send for a photo of Priscilla Lane. Could you please print a little bit concerning her?

Best wishes, and thanks a lot for your grand column. Yours truly, ROBERT BYERLY.

Editor's note: 'Sgrand you think the column grand! You can write to Priscilla Lane care of Warners-First National studio, Burbank, Cal. Her real name is Mullican. She was born in Indianola, Ia., June 12, 1917. She's 5 feet 2½ inches tall, weighs 102 pounds, and has blonde hair and blue eyes. Sang with Fred Waring's orchestra before entering motion pictures.

Dear Miss Tinée: In your Sunday column would you please print a list of the pictures Shirley Temple has appeared in?

Please print her picture as she appeared in "The Little Princess." Thank you.

Sincerely, DORIS STEPHENSON.

SHIRLEY TEMPLE
As she appeared in "The Little Princess."

Editor's note: I'll be glad to! Films in which Shirley has appeared are "Baby Take a Bow," "Stand Up and Cheer." "Bright Eyes," "Now I'll Tell," "Change of Heart," "Little Miss Marker," "Now and Forever," "The Little Colonel," "Our Little Girl," "Curly Top," "The Littlest Rebel," "Captain January," "Poor Little Rich Girl," "Dimples," "Stowaway," "Wee Willie Winkie," "Heidi," "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," "Little Miss Broadway," "Just Around the Corner," and "The Little Princess."

Dear Miss Tinée: I read your column every week and certainly enjoy it. Would you please give me the addresses of the following? Deanna Durbin, Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, Spencer Tracy, Bonita Granville, Frankie Thomas, Richard Greene, and Jackie Moran. Thanks loads. A CONSTANT READER.

Editor's note: Glad you like us. You can write to Deanna Durbin care of Universal studio, Universal City, Cal.; Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, and Spencer Tracy, care of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio, Culver City, Cal.; Bonita Granville and Frankie Thomas, care of Warners-First National studio, Burbank, Cal.; Richard Greene, care of Twentieth Century-Fox studio, Beverly Hills, Cal.; Jackie Moran, care of United Artists studio, 1041 North Formosa avenue, Hollywood, Cal. You're welcome.