

1933

## She's Designed for the Movies

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# She's Designed for the Movies

By Mildred Bennett

"I THINK I've lived a life time in five years," said Beryl Spinney, when asked to tell of her experience since graduation in 1928.

In August, after graduation, she received a position as one of five dress designers for Nellie Don frocks in Kansas City. This work was difficult because there was much competition. Only the best designs were used. Occasionally she was given one to two weeks' vacation. She was usually sent to Chicago or New York for new inspiration.

After she had been working a little over two years the company sent her to Europe to attend the openings in Paris. Earl Luick, who was head designer for Warner Brothers, was sailing on the same boat. Due to common profession, they became friends.

"I felt so insignificant around him and was so afraid that he would think I was forward, but I was thrilled to talk to him. I learned much about his work," she said.

They parted in England after making arrangements to meet in Paris.

Miss Spinney took a short tour over northwestern Europe before she went to Paris. When she arrived in Paris a note was there for her.

FOR two and a half weeks she and Mr. Luick toured Paris, attending all the openings of houses. They seemed to like the same designs, but Mr. Luick liked some things that seemed "loud" and gaudy to her. She realized that this was necessary taste when one was designing for the movies, for certain dull materials do not photograph well.

He asked her if she could sketch. Although she had never had a chance to try her ability at sketching, she felt sure that she could if she had a chance to try. He asked her to send some sketches to him after she came back to the United States. After she returned to Nelly Don she made the sketches.

One day while she was at work she received a wire saying, "Would you be interested?"

Wires were sent back and forth for several days and in a short time Miss Spinney was at work. She lived in Hollywood and rode to work with Mr. Luick. She worked from 9 to 5:30 and sometimes had to stay until 7:30.

"I was very happy. It all seemed like a dream. I learned much from Earl about designing," she said.

BEFORE making the designs for each movie Miss Spinney read the story of the play. She sketched the clothes which she thought would be most suitable

for the play. These sketches were taken to the star, the director, the production



Beryl Spinney

manager, and then to the head of the wardrobe to be approved.

Warner Brothers hired a new head of

## Alumnae Echoes . . .

Lorene Galbreath, '33, is teaching at Durant.

\* \* \*

Ella Gertrude McMullen, '33, is teaching in a consolidated school near Webb.

\* \* \*

Ruth Stinson, '33, is employed by a department store in St. Louis.

\* \* \*

Edith Bridenbaugh, '28, was married to Frank Beyschlag, '26, on Sept. 2 in Glendale, Calif. They will live in El Centro, Calif.

\* \* \*

The announcement of the marriage of Bernice Sheets, '31, to Lyle Bridgford was made recently. They are living in Bushnell, Ill.

\* \* \*

Ruth Willis, '33, is teaching near Lacon.

\* \* \*

Wilma Luebbers, '33, is teaching seventh and eighth grade sewing in the Burlington schools.

\* \* \*

Margaret Everett, '33, is teaching at Albion this year.

the wardrobe, who was closely connected with retail men, while she was there. Instead of having Miss Spinney design as she had been doing, he sent her down to shops with the stars, where she selected their clothes. This was very unsatisfactory, for by the time the show was produced the people in the audience were wearing the same clothes as the stars. But the "racket" went on, because it meant money for the head of the wardrobe as well as his retail friends. Soon Miss Spinney found herself with nothing to do. Finally she had to come home.

Mr. Luick had had a very severe cut, so he accepted a position with Fox for his original salary.

Miss Spinney had been home only a few days when she went to Milwaukee to design knit dresses. She was there a short time and then went to Chicago, where she designed for two different houses.

She came to Ames last spring and will stay here until some time this fall. Then she will probably go to New York, where she already has been offered positions.

"I have enjoyed my experience, but now I know that I am more suited to work in New York than in Hollywood," she said.

Miss Spinney was very active on the campus. She was a member of Omicron Nu, home economics honorary, and an honorary member of the Dramatic Club.

Margaret Bruechert, '33, is taking her dietetics training at the University Hospital at Iowa City.

\* \* \*

Margaret Stanton, '30, is employed in the Student Organizations Office this year.

\* \* \*

Marguerite Wherry, '30, who taught at Radcliffe the past few years, is now a member of the Home Economics Education Department here.

\* \* \*

Phyllis Penly, '31, who has taught at Jordan the past two years, has a scholarship for graduate study at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, this year.

\* \* \*

Naomi Wilkinson, '33, will teach art in the Jordan public school.

\* \* \*

Announcement is made of the marriage of Ethel Davidson, '31, to Kenneth Eaton, '31, which took place at the home of her parents in Ames on Saturday, Sept. 16.