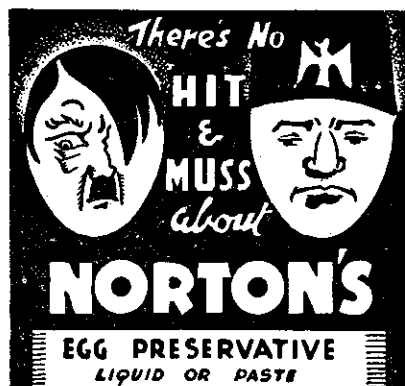




INTERVIEW

AN ARTIST LOOKS AT THE WORLD

"WE'RE only young once," we say. "We're going to travel and see the world." So we start taking sandwiches to work and cut down on cigarettes. And our bank balance grows slowly but steadily.

Then a friend wants us to go with her to the Chateau, so we think "Oh, well, there's plenty of time," and draw out ten pounds.

Our parents say to us, "You've got a very good job. It seems silly to give

it up. What will happen if you get to England and can't get a job? Why not go to the Sounds instead?"

We pooh-pooh the idea. But we are getting tired of being cigaretteless. And we're very happy where we are. And it seems foolish to leave one kind of happiness on the off-chance of finding another. And of course there's Jim.

So we stay home and perhaps get married and live happily ever after. Occasionally we think it would have been fun to contact a world outside our own, but usually we're too busy wondering what to have for dinner.

Here is the story of a young Wellington artist who did what so many of us would have liked to do, but didn't. Perhaps we didn't "like" hard enough.

Freedom First

"I went to England in 1935. I settled in London. I didn't know anybody, and I had refused to take letters of introduction because I wanted to be completely free. I had some money and some years' experience as a commercial artist, so I started out to find a job. It took me five months. I had come to the end of my money when I decided to try a well-known studio. They did not like the idea of employing a woman, but I took the decision out of their hands by arriving the following Monday morning with my brushes and beginning work. I announced that I would work for a month without pay, and if they then found me unnecessary I would leave. I stayed for two years.

"My two years in that studio had taught me a lot. I decided to set up as a free lance, and I set out to search for a studio of my own. I found it the first day. It was a large attic room in Hampstead Heath, where I met other people with the same ideas as I had, and we lead a sort of communal life. My money was kept under a soup-plate in my room, and if anybody wanted money she came and took it. When she

had some money she would put it under my plate. Similarly if I was short I could borrow from anyone else in the house.

The War Came

"Unfortunately the war broke in upon this idyllic existence. During the first few weeks I took a place as Air Raid Warden. We did not know what was coming, so we were issued with outfits to protect us from mustard gas. Complete with gas mask and tin hat, I clanked through the silent streets of Hampstead Heath, trying to tread softly to avoid waking the layers of sleeping people. It's a beautiful district; the houses and trees are both very high. At the beginning of the war we had a series of bright moonlight nights, and as I strode along with my rattle the houses and trees stood black against the sky-line. One by one the occupants had left our house for the safer country districts. As each left she said to me, 'You can use my room and my radio till I come back.' I will always remember wandering from room to room through that large empty house turning on each radio in turn to see if there was any fresh news. I seemed to be living in a dream world—there was such a feeling of insecurity.

"One night an air-raid warning was given during my period on duty. I had to see that everybody got down to the cellar. I rushed into our house waving my rattle and called on my landlady to go down to the cellar. She was standing in the hall arranging gladioli in a vase. She picked up each flower in turn and with unhurried movements put it in the vase. Then she picked up the vase and carried it into the sitting-room. To me each second seemed eternity. Finally when the job was done she came down to the cellar. Once there she spent some minutes telling the absent Hitler what she thought of him.

(Continued on next page)

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IT'S THE SAME IN AMERICA!

[F the observations made in Los Angeles by Beau Sheil, deputy-controller of the CBS, are anything to go by, New Zealand women have nothing to complain about in the shortage of silk stockings. Since Japan's entry into Indo-China and America's immediate economic sanctions against her, American women have been grappling with a shortage very nearly as acute.

Mr. Sheil was in Los Angeles the day Japanese assets were frozen. One result was that several freighters, one carrying well over a million dollars' worth of raw silk, turned back without entering port, but the most immediate repercussion was a rush for silk stockings. Within a few hours it was almost impossible to purchase a single pair in the whole of Los Angeles.

Apparently many women who could afford to were buying up stockings in large numbers. An executive of one large firm told Mr. Sheil that Claudette Colbert, the film star, had asked him to reserve 250 dozen pairs of silk stockings for her.



CLAUDETTE COLBERT