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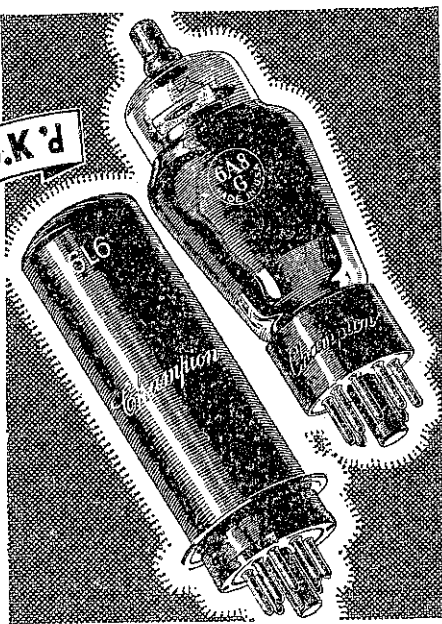


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Over The Wall

SECURING MAGIC PASS

(Continued from page 13.)

paid her 25 dollars a week for saying that.)

"Call again or make a written application" was the formula for dealing with visitors who persisted.

If one really did have legitimate business inside the studio there was a form to be filled in and considered "in due course."

From the reception room a locked steel door led into the interior of the studio. It could only be opened by the reception clerk pressing a button. When the door opened, a buzzer sounded to put the studio police on the alert.

AFTER observing this procedure for 30 minutes, Doug Snelling realised that his chances of being passed by the clerk were remote enough to be considered non-existent. He tried elsewhere.

He went to the office of RKO's publicity director in Hollywood, Nick Ermolieff. Gaining an audience with Mr. Ermolieff was not easy, but at last he managed it.

The visitor mentioned that he knew some RKO executives in New Zealand.

"Oh, yes, let's see now," said Mr. Ermolieff. "That would be So-and-So and So-and-So" (stringing off some fictitious names).

Mr. Snelling intimated that he had never had the pleasure of meeting these gentlemen.

"Of course not. I remember now. They're in India," said the wily Mr. Ermolieff. "But of course you know So-and-So?"

No, he didn't even know that So-and-So, replied the visitor.

"What am I talking about?" said Mr. Ermolieff. "Why, of course, he's our man in China."

Whereupon Mr. Snelling mentioned the names of several people who really did work for RKO in New Zealand.

Mr. Ermolieff seemed satisfied. He intimated that he would like to see some of Mr. Snelling's sketches.

And then, says Mr. Snelling, you could almost see something go click in Mr. Ermolieff's brain as the idea came into it. Almost in a flash it seemed he had a campaign worked out to build up Doug Snelling as a famous New Zealand artist and get him to do sketches of the stars for publicity purposes.

The first assignment was Jack Oakie. You can see a reproduction of the result at the beginning of this article.

"I suppose only one person in two or three million would have got the lucky chance I did," says Mr. Snelling. "And I'd have been thrown out quick and lively if I hadn't been able to sketch fairly well."

AFTER that, the going was fairly easy. Mr. Snelling was able to secure the magic passes which enabled him to pass within the zealously-guarded walls of the studios—not only those of RKO. He hitched his easel to the stars and sketched many famous people—including Paul Mauli, Spencer Tracy, Joan Crawford, Errol Flynn, Myrna Loy, Clark Gable, and New Zealand's own Ra Hould, now known as Ronnie Sinclair. He sold his sketches to the stars, and secured copyright over them for reproduction in magazines.