

**Mary Pickford (America's Sweetheart)**  
**Film Icon – Entrepreneur – Philanthropist**  
**1917 – 1979**  
**(version Jan 21, 2024)**

**INTRODUCTION:** Mary Pickford (born in 1892) began acting on the stage at the age of 7 but did not get into films until 1909 when she made 40 films for D.W. Griffith. When the famous producer moved his operations to California in 1910 – she went with him. As her fame grew so did her salary. She soon became an international film star. After divorcing her first husband (Owen Moore) she married famous actor Douglas Fairbanks Sr. in 1920. She married her third husband (Charles “Buddy” Rogers) in 1937.

**AIM, PURPOSE AND SCOPE:** The Aim and Purpose is to use postal history and ephemera that shows the development of Mary's life from a film Icon to her growth as an entrepreneur and philanthropist. The Scope is from her early career in 1917 until her death in 1979. 1912 is the first recorded piece of fan mail known to this exhibitor.

**TREATMENT AND IMPORTANCE:** The exhibit's Plan is comprehensive and flows logically for the theme. This five frames exhibit is primarily chronological within each section. The importance of the exhibit is an examination of a world-wide-cultural icon's growth and influence in our society and her impact on the growth of the movie industry.

**EXHIBIT PLAN:**

**Film Icon** – Silent film star - could not successfully make the move to “Talkies”.

**Entrepreneur** – Formed Studios and became the wealthiest woman in the world for a few years.

**Philanthropist** – Supported WWI and WWII activities and other philanthropic causes.

**KNOWLEDGE, STUDY AND RESEARCH:** The exhibitor has collected and exhibited movie related items for over 40 years and has co-authored four American Philatelic Congress Yearbook articles on movie mail; four movie related articles in the American Philatelist; a monograph “*Private Auxiliary Markings on Hollywood Fan Mail*”, published by the Auxiliary Markings Club. In addition, the exhibitor has authored over 60 movie related articles. Original research is



shown with this marking.

**CHALLENGES, RARITY AND CONDITION:** Mail from the organizations that made up the movie companies is very illusive as some had very short periods of existence and/or were smaller entities. Fan mail in the early years is also hard to find as the Studios did not encourage it since the stars would want more pay if they knew how much fan mail they received. Later (1914) the studios used it as a measure of the star's popularity and it was used to determine if actors should be given a raise, appear in more films or have their contract renewed. The exhibit contains the earliest known piece of fan mail, the only cover of Interrupted Mail (Plane Crash) known addressed to Mary and mail to/from various studios some of which were in existence for short periods of time. Also shown are unique Telegrams to and from Mary and others.

**REFERENCES:**

Hoffman, Regis and Richards, Thomas; *Letters to the Stars*, American Philatelic Congress, 2020 Yearbook. p. 29 – 77.

Hoffman, Regis and Richards, Thomas; *The Golden Age of Hollywood*, American Philatelic Congress, 2018 Yearbook. p. 89 – 124.

Hoffman, Regis and Richards, Thomas; *Private Auxiliary Markings on Hollywood Fan Mail*, Auxiliary Markings Club (AMC) 2010