Zip! Zam! Wham!

What happens when a railroad man goes Hollywood

By FRANK J. McNELIS

A BRISK young man, still in his uniform of the World War, though he had been out of the service two months, threw open the door of a little bungalow in Shavertown, Pennsylvania, a village near Wilkes-Barre.

"Mother," he announced, "I've decided what I'm going to do.

"Certainly," said the mother. (Folks in Shavertown know her as Mrs. W. L. Tracy.) "You're going back to college,"

"No,", said son Lee, with a rather weak grin, "I'm going to be an actor!"

It all happened as simply as that.

But Lee Tracy, the launty, rather coquettish young man, little realized the struggles and problems he was bringing upon himself. And he has been told that within ten years he was to be one of the most sought-after stars of motion pictures. He probably would have turned to you with his infectious grin and said, "Quit your kidding! This is a serious business with me!"

And it was!

But let's look first into the environment and antecedents of this young man without a drop of stage blood in his veins, who was to make veteran Hollywood producers sit up and take notice, and who was to give fan audiences more big, new thrills than any male star of recent years.

Lee's early life was a constant succession of changing background and aspects. His father, the late W. L. Tracy, was a railroad official, whose exploits in organizing and developing railroad centers will be remembered by many of the brotherhood, moved from town to town, in pursuit of his calling.

Lee attended school in Louisville, Kentucky; Kansas City, Kansas; Saint Louis, Missouri, and the Western Military Academy at Altoona, Pennsylvania. From there he went to Union College at Schenectady, New York.

When the war broke out Lee was sent to Camp Lee, Virginia, where, because of his early military training, he was commissioned a second lieutenant. He emerged from the war without a scratch, entirely unscathed and still retains his commission as second lieutenant. He is a member (with good standing, let me add) of the Army and Navy Club of Philadelphia.

The war left Lee with nothing to do. He didn't want to continue his military career. He didn't want to continue his college plans to become a surgeon. In fact, like many of the discharged soldiers, he didn't know, exactly, just what he wanted to do. But he had what was then called a "crush" on a girl.

So he went home to talk things over with his parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Tracy had moved to Shavertown, where Mr. Tracy was in charge of the S. & R. Railroad, Pennsylvania, shops of the Lehigh Valley Railroad and Mrs. Tracy was near friends of her childhood.

Just why at this point he should sell himself to make a new act he himself never told you. Perhaps it was a hazy ambition, which he had always secretly cherished, suddenly blossoming as an expression of rebellion against a life he wasn't interested in.

But he knew he didn't want to study medicine, much as his family had always thought the idea.

But to do them justice, they were willing to help—and did. They were (Please turn to page 8)
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**The New Movie Magazine, August 1933**

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