

## Aileen Pringle, 94; Star of Silent Screen

Aileen Pringle, an urbane socialite who became a silent-screen star and the darling of such literary figures as H.L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan, died Saturday in her Manhattan home where she had entertained regularly since her retirement from movies nearly 50 years ago.

She was 94.

Miss Pringle played leading roles in more than 60 films. Two of her best known—"His Hour" and "Three Weeks"—were based on scripts by Elinor Glyn. Miss Glyn had hand-picked Miss Pringle for the latter role, that of a sensual heroine.

Known for her sometimes off-color wisecracks as the silent camera captured her movements, she was credited with a notable piece of Hollywood lore.

According to the book "The Movies," Miss Pringle and Conrad Nagel were filming a scene from "Three Weeks" in which he was carrying her horizontally. Her lips are seen to move and, according to the book, she was not whispering words of endearment to Nagel but was saying, "If you drop me, you bastard, I'll break your neck."

Her other leading men included John Gilbert in adventure movies and Lew Cody in domestic farces.

Among her other films were "Souls for Sale," "Earthbound," "Wife of the Centaur," "A Kiss in



Aileen Pringle in 1932

the Dark," "Soul Mates," "Beau Broadway" and "Puttin' on the Ritz."

She continued in films after the advent of sound but never with the impact of her earlier pictures.

She made brief appearances in two films of the 1940s, "Laura" and "Since You Went Away," before retiring.

Born Aileen Bisbee in San Francisco to a wealthy family, she was educated in private schools in Europe and first went on the stage in 1915. Her first film was "Redhead" in 1919.

Her first husband was Charles McKenzie Pringle, son of a former governor of Jamaica, and her second was James M. Cain, author of "The Postman Always Rings Twice" and "Mildred Pierce." Both marriages ended in divorce, the second in 1946 after less than a year. Cain died in 1977.

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Thu, Nov 14, 2019