

They never told Gracie . .

GRACIE FIELDS went to America after her triumphant London Palladium Royal Variety performance, and she was sitting in the sunshine having breakfast at her Hollywood hotel when I telephoned her from London yesterday. "Cancer? Oh, no, they didn't dare to use that word when I went in for my operation," she said. The great comedienne, pictured left radiating health and energy, looks ten years less than her sixty-six years. But she recalled the grim summer, twenty-five years ago, when she was rushed for an emergency operation. She was at the height of her fame. She was

forty-one. Then illness struck. Lord Dawson of Penn ordered an immediate operation. "He didn't say it was cancer. Nor has anyone ever told me since." In 1939 no one used the word. Bulletins merely said "a grave operation." But when news flashed round the world that Gracie was gravely ill everyone guessed. Said the star: "It seems the surgeon did a good job." In 1954 tests on her recorded a complete absence of any malignant cells. So Gracie is one of the 300,000 British men and women who have had cancer, been cured of it, and are now alive and well.

"I'M HOME AGAIN" SAYS GRACIE FIELDS



Photo: C. C. Ashton

"I'M HOME AGAIN," cried Miss Gracie Fields as she stepped from the car bringing her from Manchester yesterday morning to be received by the Mayor and Mayoress (Councillor B. C. Bowden, J.P., and Mrs. Bowden) at the Town Hall. Later she went to the Infirmary to have lunch with Sir James Lythgoe, C.B.E. (chairman of the Manchester Regional Hospital Board), Mr. N. R. Woolfenden, J.P. (chairman of the Rochdale and District Hospital Management Committee), and other members of the committee before opening the new out-patient department.

The photograph shows (from left to right) the Mayor, Miss Fields, the Mayoress, and Mr. Boris Alperovici (Gracie's husband).