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Melody Maker

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'RHYTHM'

FEB. 8, 1941

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Your Diary for 1941—

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JERRY DAWSON'S NORTHERN GOSSIP

ON the north-east coast is to be found a rather unique band composed jointly of members of the Army and the R.A.F.

My information regarding this band comes from one Reg Smith, an ex-member of the No. 144 Rhythm Club, London, and he tells me that the band, which has been formed only recently, is known as the "Rafarmians."

Under the leadership of Sid Everitt, late of Stan Atkins' Band, the line-up is as follows: Pte. Everitt and A/C Adam (pianos); Sgt. Wynn (bass); A/C Conquer (drums); Cpl. England, Cpl. Pipe and A/C Merritt (saxes); Pte. Hawkins (trumpet), and A/C Haynes (trombone).

The band recently played its first dance, and was a riotous success. I hope to have the pleasure of hearing these boys in the near future.

* * *

After a long stay at the Ritz, Manchester, Ivy Benson tells me that the firm has now decided to transfer her to the Locarno, Glasgow, commencing the first week in March, where she will open with an augmented band.

Ivy's present drummer, Tony Heaton Parker, is remaining at the Ritz, and at the moment is in the throes of forming an entirely new ladies' band, which will be featured under her own name.

In her place for the Glasgow job, Ivy will utilise the services of Joan Donaldson, and she has already fixed an extra saxophone—who actually starts with the band on Monday next—and trombone.

This means that, so far, the line-up will be as follows: Ivy Benson and Gwen Hughes (altos); Blanche Colman and Joan Taylor (tenors); Celia Wakeley (trumpet); Betty Thomas (trombone); Lillian Whittle (piano); Kay Yorstan (bass and vocals); Joan Donaldson (drums); and Joan Marriott (guitar).

Ivy is still in need of a second trumpet to complete the brass section, and also a violinist doubling sax, and if any ladies are interested in a steady job at good money—I mean that—perhaps they would contact Ivy at the Ritz Ballroom, Whitworth Street West, Manchester.

Tony Heaton Parker, too, is in need of instrumentalists for her band, and can be contacted at the same spot, c/o Ivy Benson's Band.

By the way, Ivy particularly wishes to contact Toni Beale, last heard of at Tidworth.

* * *

Further to my appeal for available musicians to contact me, I have received a host of letters, and, believe it or not, more than two-thirds of them are from drummers, of whom there appears to be a glut rather than a shortage.

One of the drummers is very perturbed about things, and states that, in his opinion, the shortage of musicians which I have proclaimed is a myth, as he has written to "every leader in the business," and has not been able to fix up.

So far as his particular instrument is concerned, I am afraid he is right, but

there is still plenty of work for reed and brass players, both in the provinces and in London.

* * *

Writing from Leeds, a correspondent tells me of the activities of a band which is doing good business at the Broadway Hall, Horsforth.

Styled the "Melo-Rhythmics," this outfit is led by trumpet-comedian Les Long, who has with him: A. Dewhurst (alto and clarinet)—this boy is only 14 years old; A. Nash (tenor and fiddle); H. Dewhurst (piano); and Les Hallam (drums).

In a hall which normally holds 200 people, these boys are pulling in crowds of 300 and more.

* * *

For the first time for several months I spent a couple of days last week in London, and was very surprised to find quite a lot of activity in the dancing world, in spite of the blitz.

One of my first ports of call was the Astoria in Charing Cross Road, where Liverpool's Jack White accorded me a truly northern welcome, including the inevitable cup of tea, amongst other beverages.

In spite of losses due to men being called up, and the fact that on this particular night there were several depts. in the band, it sounded particularly good to me, and I should imagine it is very popular with the dancers.

One thing I must hand it to Jack for—come what may, he never lets anything get him down, and always has a smile for everyone. Whatever success he has achieved certainly hasn't gone to his head. He is still a northerner at heart, without any big-time complex.

* * *

On my first evening in town I met—for the first time—Van Straten, currently featured at the Embassy Club with a four-piece outfit. From then on I just couldn't lose him, for almost everywhere I went for the rest of my trip he seemed to pop up.

Van is playing a lot of troop concerts these days; on Sunday last, for instance, he played a further one of these in the Midlands.

* * *

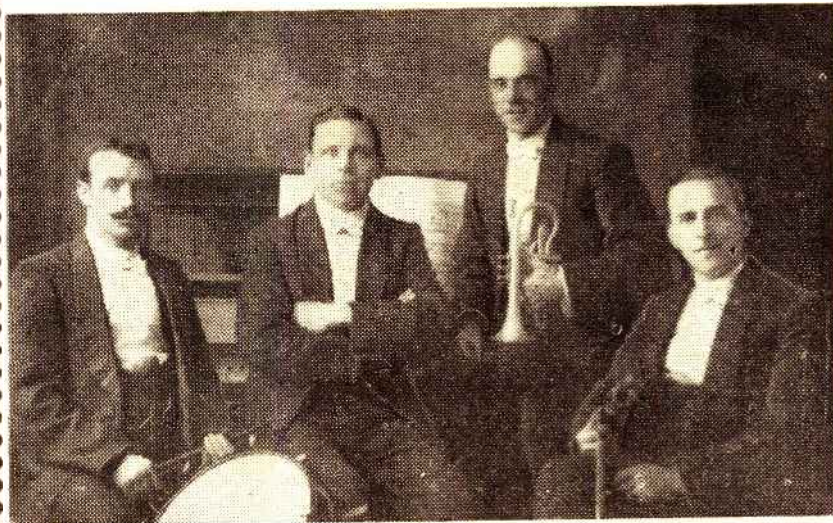
Spent a very pleasant hour in the Café de Paris listening to Ken Johnson and his boys playing their swaggiest music, and making the Mayfair socialites do things which one would never have believed possible a couple of years ago.

Ken and the boys are certainly favourites with the "smart set" these days, and after the way in which he made them enjoy themselves during the period I was in the Café, I can quite see why.

* * *

Had lunch one day with ex-Piccadilly maestro Sydney Kyte, who, although not in a resident job these days, appears to be doing quite well for himself with concerts and—strangely enough—gigs.

On Monday next Syd and his Band will be on the air again, and this will be the first of a fortnightly series of



ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND?

NO, this is not a "Jive Four" or even a "Swing Quartet." It is Fred Wilson's Quadrille Band—one of the forerunners of Jazz, and one of Manchester's leading gig outfits of thirty years ago.

Note the sartorial perfection of the ensemble!

Fred played piano himself, and the rest of his boys were:—John Armitage (trumpet); Albert Dawson (violin); and George Ogden (drums).

John Armitage is the elder brother of Nat Armitage, well-known Manchester Olde Tyme Dancer and now Ballroom Manager at the Higher Broughton Assembly Rooms.

broadcasts, which should help re-establish him as a broadcasting "name."

* * *

Although not known to Joe Public, one of the best known—and liked—figures at Broadcasting House, Manchester, is Miss Lee, who for many years now has been secretary to the various variety and dance band chiefs. It has been her responsibility to fix and arrange a great number of air dates in both spheres, and her charm of manner has endeared her to most northern broadcasters.

On February 5 she has fixed one of her biggest and most important dates, when she is due to change the Miss to Mrs.

I am sure that her host of friends amongst bandleaders and artists will join me in wishing her and her husband-to-be all the luck in the world.

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NORTHERN RADIO NOTES

NORTHERN radio fare for February and March is, without doubt, as varied as is possible under present-day circumstances.

On February 8, Mae Bamber and Gerry Chantler present the second of their "Serenade in Season" programmes, from 1.15 to 1.30 p.m., whilst on the 11th, from 8 to 8.30 p.m., Jack McCormick and his Band play once again in the Forces programme.

On the 18th, from 4.30 to 5 p.m., Richard North will present "Here We Are Again," which brings to the microphone again a number of artists who recently made their first radio appearance in "Brand New." Two of these

will be pianist Frank Horrocks and the Ralph Bruce Sextette.

The 17th brings us a broadcast by an Army band—no names, no pack drill—whilst three days later (20th) Johnny Rosen and his Band will be heard in the "Milky Way—Tea-Time With the Stars," which also features Tony Heaton, Alec Pleon, Violet Carson, and Francis Wall.

On February 26, Joan Blackmore will be heard in a further edition of "Flippant Fingers" (5 to 5.15 p.m.), and from 7.40 to 8.20 still another Forces band will be heard. On March 3, from 12 noon to 12.30 p.m., the third "Serenade in Season" will be heard, whilst on March 8, from 1.15 to 2 p.m., Peter Fielding plays dance music once again.

LETTERS

Golden Age...

IS Mr. Wickens really fed up with continual reference to the "Golden Age," or is it that the "Stone Age" (or "Tin-Can Age") is getting mixed up with it?

Perhaps the worthy who introduced the term "Golden Age" (I believe it was "Mike") would be good enough to define or redefine the period to which he refers. I have always assumed it to be roughly from this country's introduction to Red Nichols, Trumbauer, etc. (say, *Washboard Blues*, *Singing the Blues*, etc.), to about Dorsey Brothers' Dynamics' records.

If I am correct, it would appear to me that what the "Golden Ages" are trying to point out is that the present stars have advanced little beyond this era, nor is there little of the present-day jazz which was not amply covered then.

From the suggestion that the "Golden Age" fame was based on a few records, it seems to me that Mr. Wickens is influenced more by the progress of recording and amplification than by the respective merits of performance.

What does Mr. Wickens mean by obscurity? Does he mean obscurity from modern jazz or what? Take, for example, say, the original Red Nichols' Five Pennies.

I should hesitate to suggest they had sunk into obscurity—as they seem to be doing quite well in other spheres of popular music—and after all one cannot prevent people from dying.

SWING BALLOTS

As regards swing ballots, I think that, like film stars' fan mail, they only represent the views of a small rabid percentage compared with the total following.

I myself am not particularly enthusiastic over Benny Goodman, so perhaps Mr. W. can appreciate my feelings after having "B. G." bugged at me for a matter of years now.

At the best, he is only a by-product of the Golden Age as is Spanier, neither of whom appear to have improved particularly by advancing from instrumentalist to bandleader, and furthermore the present Goodman outfit seems to be little more than an elaborate accompaniment to a series of clarinet solos which you may like or are still permitted not to.

Crosby, as a non-playing leader of a ready made band, could scarcely claim to be a milestone in Jazz. Rather, I would suggest that for anything he and Goodman have done the credit should go to Ben Pollack. With regard to Basie, I do not know what he has done that was not covered by, say, Hines, Edgar Hayes, Hopkins, the Hendersons, or Pats Waller, or Russell.

Personally, I think the only sensation of recent years is Lionel Hampton.

In support of my argument that there is little or nothing new in modern Jazz, and that even present-day supporters really admit it and are themselves seeking something fresh, are the articles appearing in the "M.M." (together with the customary arguments in correspondence) on the records of the really old-timers, many of which were no doubt studied and dealt with in their day by enthusiasts of the time, they, while they might agree those records had certain points of interest, would not have considered them of the importance with which they are attributed to-day.

If Mr. Wickens includes these in his reference to the Golden Age (and it is these per-

formances to which I allude as the "Tin-Can Age"), I agree that the continued reference to them is certainly overdone.

I think the present stagnation in the progress of Jazz is due to misplaced enthusiasm by the ignorant for noise and flashiness—hence the "jitterbug" and "swing" and too many classically trained and minded performers (it is a pity one can only get a good training in technique and harmony from this source—the jazz way is too tedious) who play with about as much feeling as a first-class copying-typist.

I think Ellington and Co. are the only people, with the exception of, say, Hawkins, Allen, Berry and a few early whites, who play jazz from a jazz point of view.

It should not be overlooked that good jazz need not necessarily be fast and noisy, that cracked or wrong notes have no place in it (a feature surprisingly scarce in the Golden Age), that hackneyed phrases soon become monotonous, and it is not so much what is played or how, but why that matters.

BINK AVIS.

Iver Heath, Bucks.

Shaw's 'Wailings'...

RE V. L. Bellerby's letter, in which he attacks me for using the statement "wailings of Shaw and Co." in my recent Jimmy Noone article. I can only say that his defence of the modern pseudo-jazz school leaves me totally unmoved.

As my friends will readily testify, I have always stressed the point that jazz criticism is largely based on personal opinion, so it was only to be expected that many readers' views on the quality (or otherwise) of Shaw's clarinet playing would differ from mine.

After all, the world would be a very dull place if everybody liked the same things and held the same opinions.

Therefore, rather than start another of those inane and interminable "A is better than B" controversies, I refuse to pursue the matter any further, leaving Messrs. Noone, Dodds, Mesriow, Shaw and Goodman to those morose and argumentative individuals who fill the correspondence columns of the "M.M." each week with their fustian dissertations.

Turning from Mr. Bellerby to Mr. Edgar Jackson, I should like to set Mr. Jackson's mind at rest regarding the various soloists on the new Benny Carter disc, namely, *Pom Pom* and *Serenade to a Sarong* (Brunswick 03088).

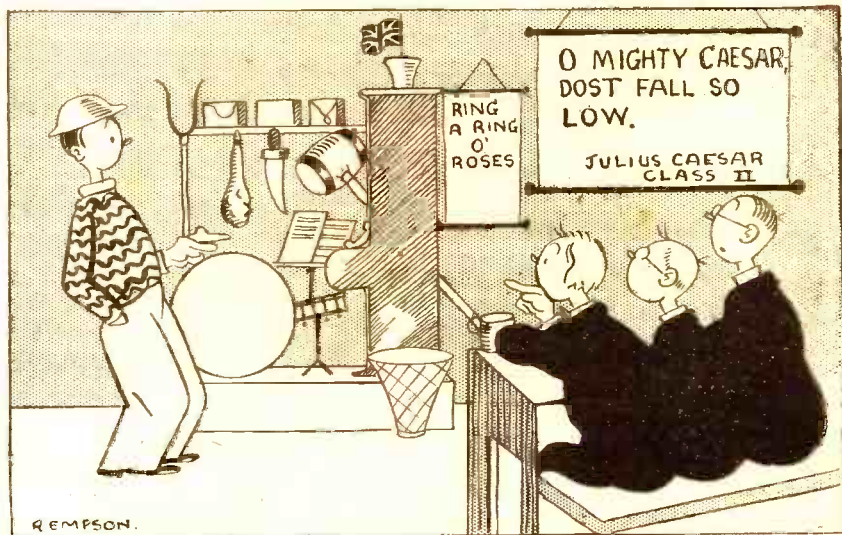
On this particular session, Benny played only alto and clarinet, and so it is he who is responsible for the clarinet solos, as well, of course, as those grand alto solos.

The fine open trumpet solo on *Pom Pom*, which Mr. Jackson imagines to be the work of Carter, is actually played by the one and only Bill Coleman.

Further, the muted trumpet in this number is played by Lester "Shad" Collins, and the muted trumpet in *Serenade to a Sarong* is the work of ex-Hendersonian Russell Smith.

The trombone soloist is Sandy Williams (remember him with Chick Webb?), and the tenor is Stafford "Pazuza" Simon (ex-Willie Bryant and Louie Jordan).

The following was the personnel of Benny's band round about May, 1940, when these titles were waxed, and may possibly be identical with the disc line-up—Carter (alto and clarinet), Carl Frye, George Davis (altos), Stafford Simon, Sonny Davis (tenors), Russell Smith, Bill Coleman, "Shad" Collins (trumpets), Milton Robinson, Ferdinand Abello, Sandy Williams (trombones), Sonny White



BILLY FLONKIT: "Yes, we bring these along with us in case Jerry tries an invasion. . . . We ain't got our instruments insured."

(piano), Ulysses Livingston (guitar), Hayes Alvis (bass), Reg Purnell (drums).

Finally, I'm sure Mr. Jackson (and all Carter fans) will be glad to know that the other two sides of this session (yet to be issued over here) are as good, if not better, than the aforementioned titles, for *Night Hop* has a typical Carter sax section, a muted solo from Collins and some fine piano work, whilst the reverse, *O.K. for Baby*, boasts another grand Bill Coleman solo.

Both sides, needless to say, contain glorious examples of Benny's wondrous alto.

ARTHUR PARKER.

Liverpool.

Dance Band Choirs...

RE your front-page story, "New Ideas In Dance Band Radio, Geraldo Leads The Way."

Although I certainly agree that Geraldo leads the way with novel radio ideas in this country, I would like to inform you that on March 17, 1936, the late Wilf Hamer and his Band—then resident at the Grafton Rooms, Liverpool—broadcast in the North Region, with a Prize Male Choir eighty strong, the special feature broadcast being "St. Patrick's Night on Merseyside."

Wilf Hamer and his Band broadcast a 45 minutes programme of Old-Time Dances, and the Choir (one of the best on Merseyside—the famous St. Silvester's Male Choir) was responsible for many of the Waltz Vocals, which included *Eileen Alannah*, *Erin The Tear*, *Dear Little Shamrock*, *Meeting Of The Waters*, and a thrilling rendering of *Tipperary* in the Grand March.

The Hamer Band is still resident at the Grafton Rooms, under the leadership of Mrs. Wilf Hamer, the line-up being as follows:—

Mrs. Wilf Hamer (conductor and pianist); saxes—"Chips" Chippindall (originally with the Hamer Band), Dennis Bland, Miff Hamer, George Birchall, Walter Stott; brass—Percy Emmett, Tommy Barnes, George Davies, Harry Fisher; drums—Red Carter; bass—Jack Morgan.

The Hamer Band, one of the biggest

combinations, and playing to over 6,000 dancers weekly in one of the biggest ballrooms in the provinces, as far as the B.B.C. is concerned, does not exist.

They seem to prefer any scratch combination or restaurant band to a regular and recognised running dance band.

M. MUNRO;

Manager for Mrs. Wilf Hamer and her Band.

Grafton Rooms, Liverpool.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Jack Payne, Henry Hall and Gerald himself have also used chairs in their dance-band broadcasts in the past, but the point about Gerald's innovation mentioned in the "M.M." was that he used a Negro choir.]

Praise for "Mike"...

I FEEL that my first word must be one of praise for the supremely interesting article written by "Mike" in the MELODY MAKER—January 25 issue.

"Mike" is the only person in England who understands jazz in its entirety and can write about it in picturesque language. I fully endorse his statement about the condition of jazz in England.

Those who listened to my broadcast talk last August, "America and English Jazz of To-day," will recall that I made similar criticisms.

Says Mike: "The bandleaders have been the greatest handicap British jazz could ever have had."

Too true! By a series of lucky circumstances they have achieved a certain amount of prominence. Ninety per cent. of them are grossly incompetent.

They are allowed to go on year after year bluffing the public, and, in addition, some of them are impertinent enough to hold a miserable grudge in their hearts against their competent colleagues.

Well done, "Mike"!

RUDOLPH DUNBAR.

M.o.I., London, W.C.1.

Hot Club...

IT was with much pleasure that I read Mr. C. H. Short's letter concerning the records made by the Quintet of France.

As a keen student of Rheinhardt's style, I was interested in the comments about the recordings of *My Sweet* and *I've Had My Moments*, and, whilst these numbers prove Django's undoubted technique, I prefer him in the more restrained style of which Mr. Short mentions, *Tea For Two*.

Two of my particular favourites are *Honeysuckle Rose* and *Three Little Words*.

The former title is played with a wealth of ideas, sometimes not attributed to Rheinhardt, who, on this disc, uses the whole range of his instrument and produces a beautiful tone.

Three Little Words has some lovely phrases also, produced with a clear tone and easy style.

These two titles I mention are in quite a different style from the Quintet's faster numbers, of which *My Sweet* is one of the hottest. I would like to hear some comments from other Rheinhardt fans, and, in conclusion, would like to contact Mr. Short. My address is "Friars Cottage," 128, Shirehall Road, Hawley, near Dartford, Kent.

A. BOWLES.

No. 157. The first meeting of the Eastnet Rhythm Club was held on January 29, when a recital of violin and guitar records was given by Don H. Culpin. A selection of Glenn Miller records followed, and the evening ended with a Jam Session. All correspondence to Peter J. McCall, 96, Northumberland Road, New Barnet, Herts.

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DUKE FINDS A NEW JAZZ FORM

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

****Harlem Air-Shift (Ellington) (Victor OA.054606) (Recorded July 22, 1940).

****Sepia Panorama (Ellington) (Victor OA.054625) (Recorded July 24, 1940). (H.M.V. B.9135—3s. 8d.)

Ellington (pno.) with Bigard (clar.); Hardwick, Hodges (altos); Webster (tenor); Carney (baritone); "Cootie" Williams, Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart (tpts.); L. Brown, J. Nanton, Tizol (trmps.); F. Guy (gtar.); J. Blanton (bass); S. Greer (drums).

ONE of the bricks still thrown at jazz is that its form, as governed by the 16- or 32-bar movement, only slightly relieved by the 12-bar blues, becomes inevitably monotonous.

Personally, I have always thought this contention rather absurd.

The very foundation of jazz is the even "balance" of the common-time measures of which it consists. You will realise the truth of this if you try to imagine jazz written in any of the triple-time measures, waltz measure, for instance.

Equally, if one tried to write jazz without the same, as one might say, mathematically even "balance" in its form that there is in its measures, the result would probably be only something that wasn't jazz in its real sense at all.

Nevertheless, a too pedantic adherence to the splitting up of the 16- or 32-bar movement into eight-bar stanzas, sub-divided again into set four-bar statements and repetitions or answers, certainly has placed unnecessary limitations on the music, and the question is how to get over the difficulty without destroying the balanced form which is one of the basic characteristics of jazz.

EXPERIMENTS

Ellington is one of the people who have for some time been, and still are, the leaders of experiments to discover an answer to this problem, and you will find an advanced instance of the lines on which he is working in this record of one of his latest compositions, *Sepia Panorama*.

The piece consists of:—

- (a) A 12-bars introductory passage.
- (b) A 16-bars theme.
- (c) An 8-bars theme.
- (d) A 12-bars theme in the form of a piano solo.

EDGAR JACKSON REVIEWS THE NEW SWING RECORDS

(e) Theme (d) developed in the form of a saxophone solo.

(f) A repeat of (c).

(g) A repeat of the last eight bars of (b) and

(h) A repeat of (a), plus a chord to close the proceedings.

Now all this may not seem so unconventional. But the way in which some of the movements are split up and linked certainly is.

Take, for instance, the introductory movement (a), repeated again later at (h). The first eight bars consist of five bars by the ensemble, then a three-bars bass solo, then two bars by the ensemble, and finally two more bars by the bass.

The splitting of the first eight bars into sections of five and three, instead of the conventional four and four, bars is not only unusual in itself, but the way it is done immediately suggests a line of thought that is as promising as it is original.

There are sundry other ingenious little devices which the ever imaginative Duke has introduced in his endeavour to give the record a semblance of something new in the way of form without departing too drastically from what may be described as the traditions of jazz, but space prevents me from going into them in detail.

I draw your attention to them, however, for two main reasons.

OUT OF THE RUT

First, they tend to make it anything but easy for those who have lazily allowed themselves to become too accustomed to having their jazz served up cut and dried to grasp the continuity of all that is taking place, and these amiable people will have to give more heed to sorting things out for themselves if they are to appreciate, and so enjoy, the full significance of the music.

Secondly, and more important, the record is, as I have said, a further effort towards getting the jazz form out of the rut into which it has too readily been allowed to drop, and as such is, of course, a notable step along a road in its evolution which we may fairly expect to find being travelled more universally before so very long.

All of which is just one aspect of a record about which a book could—and should—be written.

But I haven't space to say more of it than that you will find it and *Harlem Air-Shift*, with which it is coupled, two more delicious examples of the work of a man and a band who are to-day still so far ahead of the rest that they have become not only a law unto themselves, but a law which they alone seem capable of propounding.

You must get this disc if it costs you your last three bob and eightpence.

But both sides appear to have been dubbed, and the reproduction, muzzy and raspy, leaves a very great deal to be desired. American Columbia (Okeh), it's all the same) reproduction is often pretty rough, anyway, and Parlophone should think twice before they put out records from this label which have to be dubbed.

Each side would have earned at least one more star had it not been for this fuzzy reproduction.



ANDREWS SISTERS.

***I Love You Much Too Much (Raye, Olshey, Towber) (Am. Decca 63048) (Recorded September 5, 1940).

***Pennsylvania 6-5000 (Gray, Sigman) (Am. Decca 68019) (Recorded August 3, 1940). (Brunswick 03089—3s. 8d.)

Acc. by Vic Schoen and his Orchestra.

FIRST side shows the Sisters in something new for them—a sentimental ballad, complete with harp in the accompanying orchestra.

It's a good record of its kind, but I preferred the livelier *Pennsylvania 6-5000*, which brings back the girls in the sort of thing that has won them the reputation of being the finest canary-trio on the wax these days.



SID PHILLIPS TRIO.

***I Got Rhythm (Gershwin) (Parlophone E.10471) (Recorded May 6, 1940).

***I Never Knew (Fierito) (Parlophone E.10474) (Recorded May 6, 1940) (Parlophone F.1803—2s. 5d.)

Phillips (clar.) with George Shearing (pno.); Barry Wicks (drums).

SID PHILLIPS QUINTET.

***Pennsylvania 6-5000 (Sigman, Gray) (Decca DR. 5185) (Recorded December 20, 1940).

***Southern Fried (Leonard, Culliver, Ross) (Decca DR. 5186) (Recorded December 20, 1940).

Phillips (clar.) with Rex Owen (tenor); Max Goldberg (trpt.); Bert Barnes (pno.); Max Abrams (drums).

THE Deccas are the best of these four sides, and not necessarily because they are by a larger combination.

It is true that at times the effect of relaxation goes almost to the extreme of apathy, or, at any rate, lack of attack, but the presentations are, on the whole, not uninteresting, and some of the individual playing is decidedly good.

ACADEMIC CLAR.

Max Goldberg and Bert Barnes show up particularly well, with Rex Owen and his tenor a good second.

In the Parlophones something about the recording seems to have made Barry Wicks' rather noisy, but otherwise ordinary, drumming overshadow George Shearing's piano.

So we are left, especially in *I Never Knew*, which is not improved by the lack of inspiration from all concerned, with little but the academic musicianliness of Sid Phillips' clarinet.



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COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

***Blow Top (Tab Smith, Arr. Tab Smith) (American Okeh WCO. 26870).

***Gone With "What" Wind (Basie, Goodman) (American Okeh WCO.26871). (Parlophone R.2782—3s. 8d.)

Basie (pno.) with Earl Warren, Lester Young, Buddy Tate, Jack Washington, Tab Smith (reeds); Buck Clayton, Ed. Lewis, Al Killian, Harry Edison (tpts.); Victor Dickerson, Dicky Wells, Dan Minor (trmps.); Fred Green (gtar.); Walter Page (bass); Joe Jones (drums).

THESE two sides ought to have been among Basie's best.

Basie's piano (boogie-woogie style at the start) and Dicky Wells' trombone are high-spots of the fastish *Gone With "What" Wind*, which is conspicuous also for the incisive way in which the ensemble swings out in the riffs which constitute most of the last part of a good arrangement.

Lester Young's tenor, more good Basie piano, an ensemble that rides with a clean bite, and a rhythm section that is still one of the grandest, are among the high-spots of Tab Smith's *Blow Top*.

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M. M. 8/2/41

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GOING on with that reading practice idea—the one with any old piano parts you can find.

As I said, read along the top line. Do this first, using side drum only and getting accustomed to the unusual look of the part. Then try to take in the left-hand part as though it were the bass drum part.

You'll find, in the majority of cases, that the right-hand plays first and third beats—which suits the bass drum fine, but when it doesn't, then follow the part by all means.

It'll sound very odd, but no matter. You must get into your head that it is reading you are practising this time—not swing drumming.

Then, when you get so expert that you can fake along easily on side and bass drums, try to get all fancy by calling all notes above the staff, say, cymbal; all below, tom-toms—or anything else you like.

Any old idea that will help to co-ordinate your eye with your hands, so that your mind gets into the habit of receiving a message from your eyes and immediately transmitting the right kind of orders to your hands and feet—which is, after all, the whole secret of good reading.

Don't, whatever you do, stick on one piece of music. If you make a ghastly mess of it, then perhaps you may run over it again, more slowly. But NOT a third time.

Pass on to another one—you MUST NOT give yourself a chance to learn what's coming next—which is the fatal flaw in books of drum exercises—you get to know them too well.

Give yourself half an hour a day on this sort of practice, and in one month I'll guarantee you'll be reading like a veteran.

PALESTINE RHYTHM

ALF ROGERS, former popular North London bandleader, is now serving with the R.A.S.C. in Palestine, but his sax and clarinet are by no means idle.

He has formed a seven-piece band comprising J. Charlesworth (piano, organ and accordion), J. Askew (bass), R. Gotsworthy (drums), J. MacNaughton (trumpet), and A. Barnett (tenor), with himself, of course, leading.

Playing for officers' and troop dances, they are especially popular in view of their providing entertainment in a locality where little enough opportunities for relaxation exist.

RHYTHMIC PROGRESSION

AGE 5 DON'T care if I am naughty. Don't like music. Hate music. Want to listen to Children's Hour. . . .

AGE 10 JAZZ is O.K., but crooners are soft. I like comedy numbers best. Bet you don't know as many bands as I do. I know all the best ones like Nat Gonella an' Henry Hall an' Charlie Shadwell. . . .

AGE 15 AMBROSE is simply super. I always buy his records. Some of the American bands aren't bad, but there isn't anybody to touch Bert. Have you heard *Hors D'Œuvres*? Boy, it's the tops. . . .

AGE 20 REALLY anybody who tries to suggest that Artie Shaw plays better clarinet than Benny Goodman is just plain nuts. Benny is the greatest jazz-man ever. And he can play Mozart. Though I don't know why he bothers. It's such a bore. . . .

DANCE BAND DONT'S—15

Don't Be Dot Watcher No. 2.

Let's deal with the first of the three points that'll help you not to be a dot watcher—confidence in your "ear."

By this is meant that instinctive ability that most good musicians have for knowing what comes next. So highly developed is this faculty in some players that they almost know exactly what is coming before they see it.

How to attain this ability is a question mostly of experience. But you can encourage this growing ability (which every musician has to a greater or lesser degree) by getting a feeling for harmony.

As you know, most dance tunes are based on a few simple chords—learn these off by strumming them on the piano and you'll have a pretty good idea of how the average dance band part goes.

Even if you can't play the piano you can pick out the notes, so get a few commercial piano parts and just play the chords—harmonium style.

If you can't sort out the chords from the piano part, try the guitar part. If this baffles you, get the pianist or guitarist to write you out the chord symbols.

If this is too much for you to read (even very slowly) then you'd better start to learn, for you've a long way to go yet, my lad, before you begin to get that good "ear" which is so essential to ease in reading.

TRUMPET TIPS—26

THE best way to practise top notes is to approach them slowly. Play slow scales in tones or semitones, going a semitone higher each time.

In this way your lips will get gradually accustomed to the requisite pressure.

That's all very well, but, as I warned you, it is easy to get into bad hard-pressure habits by doing this. So, just to keep check on yourself, here's what to do.

Having worked up to your top note (say C or D) in easy stages by scales, so that you can hit the required note every time you climb up to it, relax for a few seconds and then try to hit it stone cold—from a standing start, as it were.

You may be shocked and surprised to see how much pressure you need to get it—if you can get it at all.

If this is so—beware. You are getting into bad habits.

So go back and start on your scale climbing again, watching yourself like a lynx to see that you are not applying pressure in too great amount as you climb.

This is the only way—slowly up the scale until you feel perfectly at home above the staff.

I'll give you some exercises later to help in this—for the moment just cultivate high notes by slow climbing to them—and beware of undue pressure.

How age can wither
and custom stale the
infinite variety of Jazz

by

**JOHN
ARTHUR**

AGE 25 IT'S purely personal taste, and I've no intention of supporting it by silly arguments about him being the best ever, but I must confess to a definite weakness for Fud Livingstone. I could rave about his style for days on end. Incidentally, have you seen the *M.M.* this week? Some B.F. who obviously hasn't bothered to check up on the matrix numbers says it's Secret and not Bix on. . . .

AGE 30 WELL, no, old man. I'm afraid I can't. The wife and I usually go to the orchestral concerts on Sunday afternoons—she's rather keen on that sort of thing, you know. Matter of fact, I haven't bothered much about jazz lately. Getting older, you know. No, I didn't know there was a new Bix Memorial Album. . . .

AGE 35 THERE'S no need to make a scene just because I told your precious friends the Tophams I liked Wagner. Anyhow what's wrong with that? I'm entitled to my own opinions, aren't I? Trouble with you is that just because you've learnt to play the violin you think you're the only one with any musical taste in this house. . . .

AGE 40 I DON'T profess to be an authority on his music by any means, but I must say I've derived more pleasure from Tchaikowsky's work than any other composer. I only wish these jazz fiends didn't spoil so much of it by stealing his themes and absolutely murdering them. . . .

AGE 45 THERE, I've surprised you, haven't I? You didn't think your father, who's so "early Victorian" in his views, 'u'd ever have heard of Ellington, did you? As a matter of fact I know quite a lot about him, because I've always made it my business to be tolerant about everything that had any sense in it at all. But as for this other—stuff you listen to. . . .

AGE 50 I FEEL I may speak with some just cause as I've devoted not an inconsiderable part of my life to the study of Beethoven's last quartets. They are without a shadow of doubt the most brilliantly thoughtful music in the world. All my life I have been impressed by them; but it is only in the last few years that I have realised. . . .

AGE 55 OH, Good God, turn it off!!! This is the Last Straw!! It—it's infamous!! Is nothing sacred from these jazz lunatics? I shall write to *The Times*. . . .

AGE 60 IF that child of your sister's devoted half as much time to her homework as she does to mooning round the radio listening to the perverted mouthings of some emasculated youth and that eternal tummy-tummy-tum, she might do a bit better at school. I don't know what the younger generation is coming to. . . .

AGE 65 I CAN see no merit at all in the work of these modern composers. I don't care whether it's the Russian influence or what it is. I don't believe there was ever a time in musical history when so little worthwhile music was being written. . . .

AGE 70 DO you remember this song, my dear? They played it on our honeymoon. Such a pretty little tune. What was it called? *Love is the Loveliest Thing*, wasn't it? . . .

AGE 75 AND let me tell you I don't care if I am being rude. I don't like music. I have no wish to hear music. Who's had my spectacles? I'm going into the study. Music. . . . Pah! . . .

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(This last record has since been withdrawn from the catalogue by the request of the Works Progress Administration.)

PERSONNEL.

SAXES: Gigi Bohn, Ray Tucci, Gabe Gelinas (altos); Ed Clausen, Francis Ludwig (tenors). BRASS: Jimmy Campbell, Johnny Austin, Jack Hanson (trumpets); Al Leopold, Ben Pickering, Robert Gushall (trombones). RHYTHM: Gene de Paul (piano); Guy Smith (guitar); Morris Rayman (bass); Johnny Blowers (drums). ARRANGERS: Jan Savitt, Johnny Watson. RECORDS: Am. Decca.

LEADERS of well-known orchestras have often been accused of musical illiteracy, and not so long ago the MELODY MAKER published an article by Artie Shaw in which he affirmed that it didn't matter, in many cases, if the leader were on the stand or not; the band would play just the same, maybe better, without him.

Though this is, of course, rather an exaggeration, there are leaders on both sides of the Atlantic who are mere baton-wavers; but this certainly is not true of dark, dapper and cultured Jan Savitt, who is a Doctor of Music and played for many years in the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra before taking up jazz as a career.

Jan Savitt is an American citizen now, but he was born in Russia in 1912, and his father was a member of the Czar's Imperial String Orchestra, while his grandfather, as well as being a composer of considerable merit, was also a close friend of Tchaikowsky.

However, when Jan was still a baby, the family migrated to the States and settled down in Philadelphia.

PRODIGY JAN

Jan started to play the violin at the tender age of six, later taking lessons under the celebrated violinist and instructor Carl Flesch.

Possibly on account of his musical background, this instruction did not prove very difficult to Jan, and he won a scholarship to the Curtis Institute, finally emerging with a Doctor of Music degree.

It was during his training at the Curtis Institute that Jan first met Leopold Stokowski, who became so interested in the young prodigy that he invited him to join the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra.

But Jan refused the offer, preferring to wait until he was fully trained, at which time he was still only sixteen, and the story goes that he wore his first long trousers for this auspicious occasion!

During the course of the seven years that Jan spent with the Philadelphia Orchestra he organised a string quartet. This quartet became quite well known, and even won the gold medal presented by the New York Philharmonic Symphony Society, and was given a coast-to-coast broadcast.

This broadcast attracted the attention of officials of the National Broadcasting Company, who offered him a job as musical director at the KYW studios in Philly.

Jan accepted this, and took the responsibility of organising and arranging programmes for some thirty assorted musical groups.

One of these orchestras was relegated to play dance music, and yet somehow

its programmes always sounded singularly uninspired and lifeless.

Jan became interested and reorganised it thoroughly.

He gave it slick arrangements to play, and it became known as the "Top Hatters," on account of their theme, *Top Hat, White Tie and Tails*, epitomising the style of the band.

But Jan found that the public liked their jazz sweet and sugary as well as hot, so he gave the same musicians commercial arrangements of all the current pops and named them, rather inaptnly, the "Rhythmairs" for these programmes.

The Top Hatters were, of course, on what is known as sustaining programmes—that is, unsponsored.

However, one day a sponsor came to the studios in search of a band for a series of shows that he was about to put on the air.

The studio executives suggested the Top Hatters and an audition was arranged; but the sponsor didn't care about the band and went away rather disgruntled. That night he happened to tune in to the Rhythmairs, and he felt much better.

TWO BANDS—SAME MEN

"That's the band I want," he told the studio over the phone. "Have them audition for me to-morrow."

His astonishment at seeing the same men as on the previous day may well be imagined! Still, he was smart enough to realise that he was being offered a very versatile combination, and the band was duly signed up!

Gradually the Top Hatters began to attract attention, partly due to their frequent airings (short-wave listeners will remember their programmes from KDKA and WPIT), and also to the peculiar shuffle rhythm which Savitt had adopted, which consisted, simply enough, in doubling the basic beat on the piano.

About this time—the winter of 1938—Artie Shaw was being heralded as the king of swing, but was due to leave the Hotel Lincoln in New York to go on tour.

The management began to look around for a successor, finally deciding on Jan Savitt. Jan accepted this offer,

but it gave him plenty of headaches, for most of the band, with the exception of vocalists Bon Bon and Carlotta Dale, refused to leave their homes in Philadelphia.

So Jan was faced with the difficult task of rehearsing an almost entirely new band for an important job in a very short space of time.

After a couple of months of barnstorming, the band was ready, and

moved into the Hotel Lincoln in March, 1939.

Here they were an immediate success. Stage bookings followed, and their Bluebird recordings began to sell well.

When Jan left Philadelphia he decided to adopt an original composition of his own called, appropriately enough, *Quaker City Jazz*, as his theme, being a tribute to the city which had treated him so kindly.

However, last year, when his success was assured, he wrote a new signature tune, calling it, just as appropriately, *It's A Wonderful World*.

Wonderful is just the right word to describe the success that Jan has made of his excursion into the realms of jazz, where he now rates a front rank position.

He attributes his good fortune to first-class musicianship from all in the band, and to this end he will work to all hours of the night on new arrangements and ideas for the band.

In the arranging field he has the very able assistance of Johnny Watson, himself a musician of note.

The main feature of the Top Hatters is their team phrasing and terrific punch, coupled with the curiously effective shuffle rhythm.

Incidentally, this shuffle rhythm business has got Jan into a certain amount of trouble, as at least two other orchestras, one of them Henry ("Hot Lips") Busse, have accused him of pinching the idea.

IT'S LOUD

However, as, according to a recent letter in the MELODY MAKER, the official Savitt Fan Club call themselves "The Shufflers," it would seem that Jan has won out on this matter.

The only serious criticism of the band is the loudness of its playing; in fact, it might be said that Jan has simply blasted his way to the top. Listen to his recording of *That's A-Plenty* and you'll see what I mean.

To be fair, though, I must say that the band has toned down considerably, as can be heard on its more recent releases, such as *Blues In The Groove*.

One of the undoubted highspots of the band has been the vocals by dusky Bon Bon (real name George Tunnell), and all credit is due to Jan for having been for so long the only white leader employing a coloured singer; even Gene Krupa was forced to dispense with Leo Watson, it will be remembered.

Lately news has come to hand that

(Concluded on page 9)

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BRAND'S ESSENCE OF NEWS

YOU know how the B.B.C. studios are dotted around Town these days. One at —, another in — House, another on the corner of — Street.

JACK SIMPSON had this decentralisation business brought forcibly home to him the other morning.

Mind you, the Fates seem generally to have had it in for this Lipton, Ambrose, Somers, Wilbur drummer and xylophonist.

He'd left his kit at — after a previous broadcast, and drove over from Palmers Green to pick it up and take it on to — for a rehearsal with his own combination at 11.30 a.m.

Before motoring on, it occurred to him to open one of his cases and make sure it contained an extra piano-part. It didn't. The case was full of soldiers. Tin ones.

A nice thing to happen at the crack of dawn. He'd taken his kid's case instead of his own!

Time was pressing. Piling in the rest of his kit, he dashed back to Palmers Green at about a mile a minute, exchanged cases with his young son (already fed up trying to play extra piano instead of soldiers), and tore back to —, where the rehearsal was being held.

Out of the car he scrambled, and on to the stage, unpacked his kit—and all that could be found of his xylophone was the frame!

In his haste he'd left the notes behind at —!

With a moan of despair like the dying notes of a siren, he leapt back into the car, dashed back to —, retrieved the missing notes, and hared back to —. (After the war I'll be able to fill in all these —s for you.)

Still a little breathless, he and his boys eventually played Music while you Worked at 3.45 p.m. But it was touch and go.

Another thing that seems to be going round and round is the MELODY MAKER.

I've just had a card from **PHIL HOWE** through the Kriegsgefangenenpost, and he writes:—

"As an old and regular reader of the MELODY MAKER, now abroad, I wonder if I could presume on you for a few numbers for a band I have formed for the benefit of my fellow-tourists!" And goes on to add: "Actually saw a copy of the old paper here the other day, dated August, '40."

Yes, despite his light-hearted style of writing, Phil is now a prisoner of war in Germany, and, furthermore, is de-

by PAT BRAND

termined to make his enforced absence abroad as cheerful as possible for himself and his fellow-exiles.

But the trouble about sending music abroad is that it must be purchased from a firm holding an export licence to Germany before the Red Cross will undertake to pass it on to prisoners of war.

So we are doing our best to satisfy his needs, and in the meantime will be glad to pass on any correspondence from any of his pals who may see this page.

A Battery SOS comes to us from **JOCK McLEAN**, late trumpet with Jack Payne's Band, who writes from Somewhere-in-the-West, where he is with an R.A. battery.

"We'll be leaving shortly for some miles-from-nowhere gun site, and we have quite a respectable dance band lined up to entertain the boys. BUT we have no drums!"

Yes, that's the rub. Jock says it doesn't matter what condition they're in as they could easily be patched up there.

Carriage will be paid at his end on anything that is sent, or anyone with a drum to spare could write first c/o me, and Jock will make arrangements to have anything collected.

"Incidentally," he goes on, "we could do with —." Yes, you've guessed it. Some orchestrations. Though the drums are more important at the moment.

So what about it? Do try to help. And, as regards orchestrations, let me have any you've got, at any time, however old.

There'll always be a welcome for them from these lonely lads and the thousands like them.

Not that they are entirely forgotten. Down in the Chelsea Studio Club the other evening (where, incidentally, the radiogram puts out more true swing per night than any other club I know of), I came across famous West End pianist **BOB ROSE**, partly busman's holidaying as he listened to some of his own pianistics coming through the loud-

speaker, and partly taking a rest from his own efforts to cheer up the troops.

Under the auspices of **GWEN FARRAR**, a perfect galaxy of talent has been entertaining troops all over the country. The company includes such stars as Lea Seidl, of "White Horse Inn" fame, Courtney Hope, the celebrated radio singer, and Bob is pianist to this star-bill.

He tells me that "our big shows with Beatrice Lillie and innumerable other stars seem to panic them in the Midlands, and we still have room for an occasional swingaroo."

The whole thing was Gwen's own idea and has nothing to do with ENSA. And, apart from the bigger towns, she is really out to entertain the smaller places that, as she puts it, "no one gets to."

And the isolated units have not been forgotten by another of my co-dwellers in Chelsea, vocalist **VIRGINIA DAWN**.

The fact that I came across her after long absence in this same Studio Club is not so strange as that I came across her at all, for she's about the busiest person I've met lately.

Christmas Day concerts for Canadian troops; Boxing Day star artist at Oaklands Park Hotel; hospital concerts for Lillian Braithwaite; Officers' Sunday Concerts at the Dorchester; charity shows in South Wales for the troops, and ENSA Half-Hour broadcasts with Gerald; airing with Jack Jackson; "Danger, Men at Work," and "Love is on the Air," among other broadcast productions; Pathé Weekly 563, wherein she sang *Six Lessons from Madame La Zonga*.

And still she doesn't forget the smaller units, for she has been giving any number of shows for the Royal Corps of Signals and A.A. Batteries around London.

Now, in addition to everything else, she's just popped in to invite me along to the Wellington Club in Knightsbridge, where she started last Monday.

I'll be there, and I'll let you see her photo. on this page before long.

I don't keep all the good things to myself!

This page seems rapidly to be turning into a Lost and Found department. Here's one Canadian musician Pte. **D. FRONGER**, trying to trace another, saxophonist **ARTHUR LARGE**. Both these lads played in the same orchestra in Hamilton and Toronto.

Furthermore, I have a letter waiting for **HARRY PACKHAM** from Captain **MARSH**, so let's have the new address. Harry, now that you're out of hospital.

Next, will **PHYLLIS THACKERAY** get in touch with me as I have an interesting looking parcel cluttering up my desk for her?

A lot of correspondence has been coming in for drummer and xylophonist **JACK MOLINE**, and it'd save me a lot of time if people now wrote to him at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool, where he'll soon be playing with **DICK CREAM'S** 14-piece band in the Empress Ballroom.

Or you could write c/o the Blackpool Fire Brigade if you like, since he's transferred there from London!

And finally, **FELIX MENDELSSOHN** tells me he's been asked to supply a number of Hawaiian bands owing to his success at the Café de Paris, and wants to get in touch with first-rate electric guitar players.

Write to him—c/o me.

Oh, yes! One more. **STEPHEN RACE**, at present piano-playing at the Paramount in Tottenham Court Road, W., is taking a five-piece band into the R.A.F., as a unit, and is looking for a tenor player doubling violin.

Though he's still willing to consider double-handed musicians who would enable him to increase the line-up to seven.

With him will be saxist **SAM SIMON**, who has just had to turn down an offer from **OSCAR RABIN**, thereby failing to renew an association of twelve years ago.

Get in touch with Steve—no, not through me this time. Ring him at the Paramount any day between 2 p.m. and 11 p.m.

DANCE MUSICIANS IN THE R.A.F.



LAST week the "Melody Maker" was invited to attend a Ceremonial Parade held at a Balloon Centre on the occasion of the inspection by Air Commodore W. J. V. Guilfoyle, C.B.E., M.C., and reunion was effected with many famous dance-band personalities now in the R.A.F.

The top picture shows the full band, under the direction of George Beaumont, marching on parade, and below that readers will recognise several well-known dance-band personalities lined up for inspection.

George Beaumont (seen in the third picture at an R.A.F. football match, standing next to Ted Drake, famous Arsenal footballer) was formerly with Caumont British and the Prince of Wales Theatre orchestras, and was asked by the officers to form three bands last year.

Eventually obtaining permission to enlist boys he knew, he is now directing two dance bands of 14 and 12 pieces respectively, a military band of 40, and a string band of 26.

The line-up of the No. 1 Dance Band, seen in action at a dance in the bottom picture, comprises Chick Smith (first trumpet), late of Lew Stone's Band; Alf Horton (second trumpet), late of Harry Roy's Band; Ted Allaby (third trumpet), late of Prince of Wales Theatre and Eastbourne Municipal Orchestra; Paul Fenoulhet (first trombone and arranger), late of Carroll Gibbons' Orchestra; George Thorn (second trombone), late of A.B.C. and Gaumont Theatres; Issy Duman (first alto), late of Carroll Gibbons' Orchestra; Billy Apps (second alto), late of Lew Stone's Band; Cliff Timms (first tenor), late of Jay Wilbur's Band; Basil Skinner

(second tenor), late of George Beaumont's Band; Pat Dodds (piano), late of Al Collins' Band; Jack Purvis (bass), late of Jack Harris' Band; Jock Reid (bass and sousaphone), late of Eddie Carroll's Band; Rube Mason (guitar), late of George Beaumont's Band; and Jack Dobbs (drums), late of Oscar Rabin's Band.

This is an entirely voluntary band, all the boys working in Air Force trades in the camp, though they are in a position to be called for musical duty when George wants them.

Twice a week they provide lunch-time dances for airmen and W.A.A.F.s, and once a week there is a dance and a cabaret. Furthermore, such was their success that it was not long before the officers wanted them in their own mess, where they now play once a week.

(Photos by Stanley Nelson.)

A TERRIFIC HIT!

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Taking a rest from Jazz this week, our Critic-at-large "MIKE" writes about AIRING AIR CRITICISM

THERE comes a time when it is very difficult for one to resist the temptation to give Youth a hefty kick in the pants for trying to be too clever by half.

At present my foot is itching to get at Mr. Alfred Foster, of Leeds, a letter from whom appeared in "Detector's" column last week. I can only presume that my colleague was doing some Homeric nodding at the time to have printed the letter at all.

Mr. Foster, announcing "another assault on the B.B.C.," is almost speechless with horror, having "just heard a recital of dance records on the 'Forces,' and was shocked to hear Tommy Dorsey announced as a trumpet player, and a 'hot' one at that." After the record he "thought there would be an apology, but none came."

"Later on," protests Mr. Foster, "Nat Gonella was announced as having played with Paul Whiteman! I was too enraged to laugh."

This astonishing letter suggests two things: that Mr. Foster doesn't listen at all carefully to what is said on the air—about three people in a hundred can ever tell you correctly what they have heard in a news bulletin, anyway—and that Mr. Foster is very young and very thoughtless.

Why on earth should the B.B.C. apologise for making a perfectly correct statement of fact, merely because Mr. Foster is too young to have heard of Tommy Dorsey as a trumpet player?

TRUMPET TOMMY

For the benefit of our enraged, unlaughing know-all and others, Tommy Dorsey is quite a considerable trumpet player and a "hot" one at that.

What is more, as his recording of *Tiger Rag* on Parlophone will show, he was something of a pioneer in the style which has since been adopted by most white players of the instrument: Tom Dorsey, indeed, was one of the very first white players to show the influence of the Negro in his trumpet playing.

So the B.B.C. was quite right to say so. That the reference was made in a biographical passage is suggested by the following phrase concerning Nat Gonella.

What is so strange about Nat Gonella

having played with Paul Whiteman, since during his visit to the States Nat was a guest artist with many of the most famous bandleaders?

The B.B.C. would have been quite right to say that Nat Gonella had played not only with Paul Whiteman but with other American bands, though what would have happened to Mr. Foster then, I shudder to think.

I mention, being neither enraged nor particularly amused, this typical piece of nagging on the part of Mr. Foster, as it is so frequently to be found where the subject of B.B.C. programmes is concerned.

3d. A WEEK RADIO

"Criticism" of the B.B.C. is the easiest game in the world. It is so easy that none but the completely ignorant will ever indulge in it without first having verified their facts thoroughly.

But, alas, the country is full of critical fools of the B.B.C. who rush in where more reticent angels would fear to tread!

Thus it is that we find questions being asked in the Press, in the House of Commons, which anybody with the most elementary knowledge of broadcasting and its circumstances would never bother to ask.

It is no use criticising the B.B.C. unless you can do so constructively, knowing that whatever you want done can be done.

The majority of attacks on the B.B.C. show no understanding of the difficulties of programme planning, some of which is certainly bad and avoidably so; but I notice no more imagination on the part of the critics of programme planning than on the part of the planners themselves sometimes.

Take Mr. F. Mears, of Tottenham, writing to "Detector" last week: he is perturbed because he doesn't know when programmes which are likely to appeal to him are coming on the air.

"The B.B.C.," he says, "will probably say there is always the *Radio Times*, but I don't have time to go through it every day."

He hasn't got time! To digest one day's programmes as set out in the *Radio Times* takes up precisely 1 minute 17 seconds of my valuable time.

Less than nine minutes a week is

needed to read the programmes from A to Z, but Mr. Mears hasn't the time. I envy a man who is so busy.

But what is all this spoon-feeding, anyway? Does Mr. Mears—do you?—realise that the B.B.C.'s service is costing you less than 3d. a week?

And yet you carry on sometimes as though you were forced to listen twenty-four hours a day in the utmost discomfort, so exhausted by the effort that you cannot even muster enough energy to read the *Radio Times* to get information about what you don't want to hear for your threepence.

I know somebody will point out that you have to buy a radio set in addition to the licence; but I have never heard anybody complain because they had to buy a suit of clothes to wear when they go to the pictures, without which they would probably be denied admittance.

Clothes, of course, can be worn elsewhere; so can a radio set be used for listening to stations for which you do not have to pay 3d. a week.

Even if you paid only a penny a week, you have every right to complain when the B.B.C. merits criticism, for it is a public service. But let it be reasonable criticism, constructive and based upon at least a slight acquaintance with facts and circumstances.

Remember, too, that the B.B.C. is spending thousands of pounds a week on programmes which have a direct bearing on the outcome of the war, programmes which you probably never hear and which you would not understand if you did.

NEXT WEEK . . . JAZZ

The least I feel you can do is to see whether (by your own effort) you cannot find entertainment to the daily value of less than a halfpenny in programmes as they are, by spending a couple of minutes a day looking at the *Radio Times*.

And don't rush hastily into print like Mr. Foster, damning the B.B.C. eternally because it was the Corporation who knew the facts, and Mr. Foster who should apologise.

And next week we'll return to the British musician as seen by Alan Jenkins.

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HARRY BIDGOOD THE SAME MAN IN DISGUISE PRIMO SCALA



ACCORDION ALIAS

ERIC WINSTONE'S PAGE



REMEMBER Primo Carnera, the giant boxer?

Remember Emilio Scala, the ice-cream vendor who won a fortune in the Irish Sweep?

Take the Christian name of one and put it with the surname of the other, and what have you?

None other than **PRIMO SCALA**, famous broadcasting and recording bandleader, who during the last 10 years has actually made over 500 records for Rex with his accordion band.

Not bad going.

Especially so when you consider the fact that he really doesn't exist. . . .

* * *

To solve the mystery we must go right back to 1913, when a young pianist was cleaning up in variety with a musical act called "Hidden Voices."

His name was **HARRY BIDGOOD**, and in those days he used to sit at a grand piano in the centre of the stage while his partner roamed the audience asking members of the public to whisper the name of their favourite tune.

Although obviously unable to hear anything that was said, Harry would immediately play the request on the piano, while a mysterious voice from nowhere would sing the refrain over to the astonished house.

Worked on the old number system, the act necessitated Harry memorising over 1,000 popular tunes.

When a melody was requested, his partner signalled the appropriate number to an accomplice in the wings, who,

turning it up in an index, wrote the name of the tune on a slate and held it up for Harry to see.

The hidden voice was obtained by a wiring system in the theatre, with loud-voiced telephone mouthpieces in the dressing-rooms for the singers.

This was, of course, a long time before the advent of wireless and the stage microphone, and, as might be expected, the idea was an enormous success wherever they played.

However, with the outbreak of war in 1914, his music-hall career came to an end, and he was posted to a regiment boasting a band sergeant, four bagpipes, but only three musicians to play them.

The inevitable happened, and for some time he held the post of fourth bagpiper with distinction, being the only member of the quartette who never managed to produce a note from his instrument.

The war over, he returned to his rightful instrument and was soon established as pianist at the Old Vic, eventually leading a band at the Piccadilly Hotel for three and a half years with Leon Benavente.

Soon he was recording on both ARCO and Broadcast Records under the name of "Harry Bidgood and his Broadcasters," and, quick to realise the commercial possibilities of the accordion with the record buying public, formed an accordion band with the intention of making records under a *nom de plume*.

For days he tried to decide upon a name for his new venture. It had to be original. It had to be attractive. And yet from the start it had to possess a familiar ring in the ears of the public.

At that time, Primo Carnera was front-page news in every paper in the country. Then came Emilio Scala, and his colossal good fortune that lifted him out of obscurity into the concentrated limelight of Fleet Street.

By combining the two, Harry solved his problem.

The following month's lists from the

gramophone company contained a new artist, Primo Scala and his Accordion Band.

And thus, in the terms of Hollywood, a star was born. . . .

* * *

Guest at the Beaver Club last Friday afternoon to hear the weekly "Quiz" programme for the Forces, I had the pleasure of meeting a young Canadian soldier who gave up a promising career as a vocalist back home in order to be among the first contingent to reach this country.

His name is **GEORGE PATTERSON**, and although, naturally enough, Army duties leave him little time for singing over here, nevertheless he has already aired in several programmes including Geraldo's "Open House," "Canadian Capers," and "Services Spotlight."

A well-known singer of Negro songs and spirituals on the other side of the Atlantic, George first made a name for himself barnstorming with dance bands back in 1933.

Success with a singing scholarship, however, turned his thoughts towards the field of straight music, and he soon became a featured baritone soloist with both the Queen's University Glee Club, and the Kingston Symphonic Choir.

From dance music to opera is quite a step in the musical world, but that is where his ambitions lie, and I have no doubt that he will eventually make it.

You see, I happen to have heard him sing. . . .

* * *

Some musicians collect stamps, others collect match-box tops, and some merely go in for blondes, but definitely the most interesting collection of them all is the one owned by **DICK ROYLE**, ace contact man in the Professional Department of Chappells in New Bond Street.

A keen antiquarian, with a leaning towards ancient weapons of war, Dick must be the only member of the song business to possess his own private armoury.

Although to-day most of it has been packed away for safety, at one time an entire room in his house was given over to his fine collection of swords, muskets, helmets, and suits of armour.

* * *

Broadcasting last Saturday from 10.30 to 11 a.m. on both Home and Forces wavelengths, **ROBIN RICHMOND** amply proved everything I had said about his fine musicianship in last week's page by putting on an organ programme that really contained something of interest for both straight and swing fans combined.

Listeners should watch out for a new and original series of broadcasts starting March 3, entitled "Judy With Punch."

Sweet singer Judy Shirley is the lady in question, and the punch part of the airing will be supplied by Robin and his boys from Hammersmith Palais.

From the ingredients that are being put into the bowl, I should say that this particular brand of punch is going to be a really hot mixture. . . .

* * *

With the shortage of musicians growing more acute every week, **BILLY COTTON** put a crack over the air last week that must have been appreciated by every leader in the business.

Broadcasting in a late night dance music session, he announced the theme number from the last Mickey Rooney film by saying, "The next number is called *Let The Band Play* . . . which is a great idea if you can only keep one going." . . .

* * *

Phoned **TOMMIE NICHOLS** to congratulate him on passing his recent radio operator's examination, thus

qualifying for the post of Wireless Officer in the Mercantile Marine.

In spite of his success in this new field, Tommie does not believe in resting on his laurels, and still attends classes on radio telegraphy whenever he can get away from the studios and his job on the other side of the microphone.

Strangely enough, he assured me that dance musicians make good operators where Morse is concerned.

Apparently their musical training enables them to quickly memorise the rhythms of the different sequences of dots and dashes in the code.

Must be quite a sight to watch Tommie taking a chorus on his buzzer. . . .

* * *

Following last week's picture of film star James Stewart, and the news that he was first discovered playing in a college band, it is now said that glamorous **DOROTHY LAURENCE** is also a keen accordionist when away from the studios.

Her favourite tune?

Just A "Sarong" At Twilight. . . .

* * *

Musical entertainer for Richmond (Surrey) Council, that old-timer of the accordion, **AL WRIGHT**, plays regularly these days in the shelters of the Corporation.

A well-known and popular figure in the locality, Al was the first musician to introduce the instrument to the district back in the days when an accordionist was still a novelty on the variety stage.

Al became representative in this country for a firm of Italian manufacturers, and sold the idea to local music dealers.

Something of an early bird, in fact. . . .

* * *

Hollywood has a name for it.

In William Powell's new film, they call it "amnesia," and I can think of no other reason why I should have omitted to include the names of those very elegant vocalists **THE GREENE SISTERS** in last week's article on the "Hi, Gang!" programmes.

Especially so in view of the fact that their talented excursions in close harmony are, to me, one of the high spots of the broadcast.

To each of the charming Greenes in turn, I salaam with humility and proffer my apologies.

U.S. HIT PARADE

Here is the latest available list of the ten most popular tunes in America, as assessed by the weekly nation-wide ballot conducted by the American Tobacco Company:—

1. THERE I GO (1-1-1-x-x-x-x-9-10).
2. FRENESI (2-7-8).
3. I GIVE YOU MY WORD (10-10-9).
4. SO YOU'RE THE ONE (8-9-10).
5. I HEAR A RHAPSODY.
6. TONIGHT.
7. SAME OLD STORY.
8. YOU WALKED BY.
9. KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR HEART.
10. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT (0-0-0-x-x-x-x-2-2-1-5-6-x-9-10-9).

Note.—This information is received by short-wave radio from the Columbia Broadcasting System, New York, by our technical contributor, "Dabbler." Set used this week: Murphy A92 with G.E.C. all-wave anti-interference aerial.

(Figures in brackets indicate previous placings. X indicates rating unascertained owing to reception difficulties.)

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BOUQUETS FOR PAYNE AND COTTON

Radio Reviewed by "Detector"

Fred Allen, the famous radio comic, and his wife, Portland Hoffa, in one of their amusing "Town Hall To-night" programmes over N.B.C.



AS readers were kind enough to give me a holiday last week by writing this page for me, it is now three weeks since I had to write it for myself.

So much has happened in the meanwhile that I don't quite know where to begin.

Let's start with "The Old Town Hall"—a new variety show which is being broadcast at 9.35 p.m. every Thursday in both the Forces and Home programmes.

It may interest you to know that although what goes on in the Old Town Hall may be original, the title and general idea of the programme are not.

"Town Hall To-night" was a big radio show which ran every Wednesday night for years in America. Many a night have I sat up until the wee sma' hours listening to it over the short-waves.

It was a curious coincidence that B.B.C. announcer Fred Allen should have appeared in a sketch in the English version on Thursday, January 23, because Fred Allen happened to be the name of the comedian who was the life and soul of the American production.

"BEATING THE BAND"

What with the tricks and stunts he used to devise, and the side-splitting way he and his wife, Portland Hoffa, put them over, he became a greater attraction over there than even Arthur Askey became in "Band Waggon" here.

I'm afraid our English "Old Town Hall" has a long way to go before it can compare with America's "Town Hall To-night." Clay Keyes is a fine compère, but the show shrieks for a better script and a good comedian to act as a foil to Keyes.

Still, it has its amusing features. The "Beat The Band" item, consisting of getting listeners to send in sentences to be completed by the name of a well-known tune which the band has to discover and play, or be fined, is good.

A reader has taken the trouble to write to tell me that he thinks it is all a bluff, because the whole thing is, he

believes. rehearsed. Personally, I neither know nor care if he is right. The point is that it makes entertaining listening, and that seems to be all that matters.

Coming to the dance bands, the most notable feature of the week has perhaps been the improvement in Jack Payne's broadcasts. Not only has the band become so much better since it commenced its current long-term engagement for the B.B.C., but the programmes have been made so much more attractive by the enrolment of Arthur Young, the wizard of the Novachord.

Also, we have had some quite brilliant arrangements from the band—notably Bob Busby's swing orchestration of Rachmaninoff's *C Sharp Minor Prelude*.

This is not only original, but good as both jazz and "straight" music. Peggy Cochrane made a good show of the solo piano part, mainly because it called for a "straight" technique, the jazz character being wisely left to the band.

COMPERE COTTON

Until I forget it, or get fed up with it, I propose from now onwards to honour the personage who has, in my opinion, made the most outstanding contribution to the week's radio by doffing to him (or her) my literary hat.

The first recipient of the distinction is friend Bill.

He knows how tunes should be arranged to make them attractive, without overdoing it. He also has a capable band.

But it's not for this alone that I allow him a sight of my august pate. It is mainly for his announcing.

Billy Cotton has become the most

entertaining dance band compère of the air, and it is only necessary to think for just a second how much compèring means to realise what such a remark implies.

"The Man Who Comes Around"—which reminds me, when I get home to-night, to bang on the front door and then rush round to the back to see who comes out—is just one sample of the many amusing cracks he makes when announcing his titles.

What a refreshing change from the trite utterances of so many others!

But it's not so much what Bill says as the way he says it. That dry, ironical way he has of using his provincial-cockney (all right; I know; but you know what I mean) voice is worth a chuckle a time. And a chuckle in these days is worth its weight in gold.

RADIO RHYTHM CLUB

And since I last banged this box of tricks that calls itself a typewriter we have had also three meetings of the "Radio Rhythm Club."

The first (on Monday, January 13) by Phil Watts and his Dixieland Seven was not so hot.

It was a recorded programme, and the recording was about as bad as I have heard. The bass was thuddy, the tops were conspicuous mainly by their absence, and the volume was all over the shop.

Even so, and making full allowance for this "technical" deficiency, the airing could have been better.

Frenchie Sartell played good stuff on his trumpet, but his lip didn't seem too sure. His singing might well have been dispensed with.

Ted Heath's trombone was always enjoyable, so were the piano solos, but all round the band sounded soggy and uninspired. Nat Temple seemed to lack the means of saying on his clarinet the little he seemed to have to say.

Very different was the show by Harry Parry's "official" Rhythm Club Sextet the following week—Monday, January 20, to be exact.

This group, consisting of Harry Parry leading on clarinet with George Shearing (piano), Joe Deniz (guitar) and Tom Bromley (bass), both of whom come

from Ken Johnson's Band, and Ben Edwards (drums) with Roy Marsh and his vibraphone, is the best swing outfit on the air these days.

As an ensemble it plays with an ease and relaxation which are an end in themselves. As soloists the boys not only have plenty to say, but know how to say it.

George Shearing gets better every time I hear him. His own boogie-woogie solo *Jump For Joy* is not only a good composition, but was played with a piano technique which was at times quite terrific. And this lad is blind!

The only thing this outfit needs to make its broadcasts quite sensational is a great soloist.

In spite of the imagination of all the boys as soloists, the instrumentation, with only one actual "melody" instrument, tends to make all the numbers sound too much alike, at any rate for the ordinary listener, and a different star instrumentalist as guest soloist in each broadcast would give just the necessary added variety.

DRUMMER ON DRUMMERS

The third meeting of the club—on Friday last, January 31—took the form of drummer Ben Edwards talking with Charles Chilton about drummers and drumming and illustrating his opinions with gramophone records.

Far be it from me to question the opinions of such an expert, but I cannot help wondering how many people will agree with Ben's statement that "*Ray McKinley is the best drummer in existence*."

Nor can I reconcile his advice that drummers should play for their bands with some of the records he chose. They seemed to be merely of drummers having a flare-up on their own while their bands admiringly (I hope) looked on—e.g., *Dusk In Upper Sandusky* (Ray McKinley with Jimmy Dorsey's Orchestra, Brunswick 02706) and *A Man And His Drums* (Buddy Schutz with Dorsey's Orchestra, Brunswick 02950).

But then, of course, so many instrumentalists are interested mainly in their own instruments, which probably explains Mr. Edwards's love of drum solos and the technique these undeniably displayed.

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JAN SAVITT (from page 5)

Jan and Bon Bon have parted company, as the latter has decided to appear as a solo act; but it is hoped that he will return to the fold for recordings and important radio dates.

The band manages to boast some fine soloists, in spite of the fact that it concentrates on ensemble playing.

For instance, the trumpet work of Johnny Austin and Al Leopold's trombone solos; while Francis Ludwig on tenor, a Jan Savitt discovery, is worth noting, as are the pianistics of Gene de Paul, who composes on the side.

Jan himself is responsible for most of the arrangements, and has entirely given up the violin these days.

In spite of his success in the field of Jazz, Jan has not given up his interest in classical music, and he is often to be seen, score in hand, at concerts and recitals.

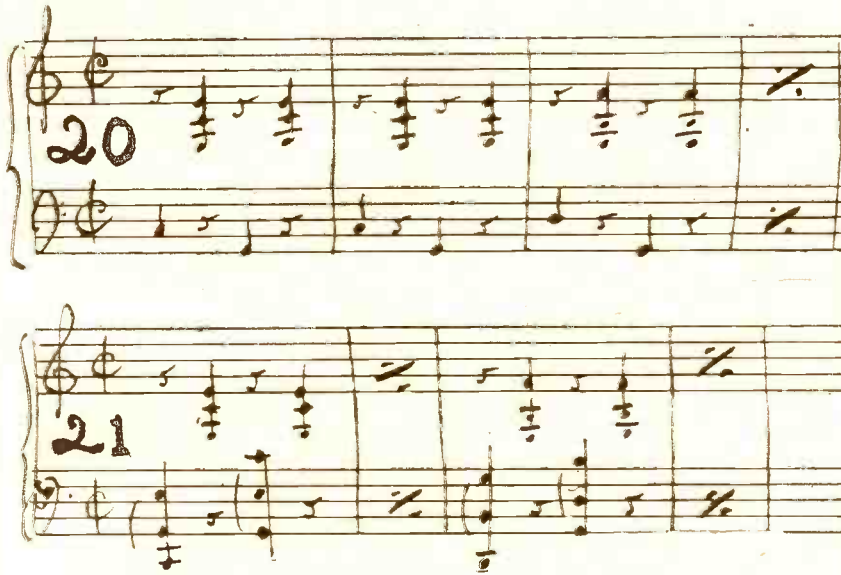
Also, his secret ambition is still to conduct a symphony orchestra; or, failing that, just have more time to go yachting or listen to some of the records, in his enormous and varied collection.

Certainly Jan Savitt is very different from the majority of bandleaders; and this article could not be rounded off better than by a quotation from a recent discourse by him in *Down Beat* in praise of this thing called jazz.

"Jazz," says he, "is not only the true, the only American music, it is the greatest expression of the tempi of the confused world in which we live. . . . I hope that I can bring to it some of the sober, intelligent musicianship I found about me in my years with the Philadelphia Orchestra."

ARRANGING HINTS

The Piano in the Rhythm Section



by Sid Phillips

★ SO far in these hints we have dealt with the bass of the war time rhythm section, and I now propose to deal with the piano, which is one of the most important instruments in the band and certainly of paramount interest in the rhythm section.

In this article I shall not discuss the piano as a solo instrument, but only in its functions as an integral part of the rhythm.

After long experience I have found that the best method for the piano is that shown in Ex. 20.

As you will see, it is not the least bit complicated, and the clean-cut simplicity of the type of parts shown here is an excellent basis for the band, especially when a soloist is "going to Town."

A good many pianists have asked me what I thought of the "Rolled-tenth" type of bass for ensemble playing.

I have always replied that it can be used in piano solos by all means, but it is certainly not advisable when the piano is just part of a section.

To my mind, a part similar to that in Ex. 21 confuses the rhythm and defeats the whole function of the bass as outlined in my last article.

The modern "boogie woogie" style of playing is, of course, a different proposition. This opens up entirely new fields in jazz piano playing.

If the number is definitely "boogie woogie" in type, then I should be the last to advocate

slavish adherence to a stereotyped style.

In this case it can safely be left to the pianist, always on the assumption that he is capable of playing effectively in this form.

When in doubt, revert to the old and tried method of 1st and 3rd beat in the left hand and 2nd and 4th in the right.

MORE RHYTHM CLUBS

No. 150. The secretary of the Ilford Rhythm Club wishes to correct an error in his last announcement. The next meeting of the club will take place on Sunday, February 9 and not February 2, as stated.

No. 152. The February 2 meeting of the High Wycombe Rhythm Club included a recital by Bob Lord of his favourite classics of jazz, and this was followed by a Jam Session featuring Les Wilson (baritone), "Speedy" Brittain (alto), Peter Natley and Billy Williams (piano), Bob Lord and Norman Hill (bass), Maurice Goodall (guitar), Bert Campbell and Paddy Fleming (drums). Interested instrumentalists should write the secretary at 53, Millend Road, High Wycombe, Bucks.

No. 154. Hornchurch Rhythm Club held its first meeting on February 2 in rooms above Cramphorn's, in the High Road. The next meeting will be on February 9 at the same address, when it is hoped to hold a Jam Session by the Club Band. All inquiries to Harry Snell, Summerhill Lodge, Pips Hill, Basildon, Billericay, Essex.

No. 155. The inaugural meeting of the Watford Rhythm Club was held at the Oakley Studios on January 29, when Jeffrey Turnell outlined the purpose of the club to an excellent audience. Members' Record Corner followed, when favourite discs of members were played. Next followed a competition, and the meeting concluded with a Jam Session which comprised Mervyn Jones (trumpet and vocals), John D. H. Brown (tenor and clarinet), Bert Wilson and Billy Gibbs (piano), Billy Bignell and Don Shepherd (guitar), Roger Bingham and Reg Sealey (drums). This was a farewell to Mervyn Jones, who is leaving to join the R.A.F.

DANCE BAND NEWS FROM GLASGOW

A WELCOME visitor to Glasgow the other day was Jack McTernan, who plays drums with Andy Lothian's Band at Tay Street Palais, Dundee.

Jack, who used to be with Chalmers Wood, Billy Mason and others, has just finished his "apprenticeship" at a local wireless college, and will shortly be going off to the R.A.F. as an aircraftman.

Andy Lothian, who has certainly been a real "brick in the wall" since he took over at Tay Street some years ago, will also be going to the R.A.F. shortly as a radio operator, and will be accompanied by brother Jimmy, who plays piano in the band.

When Jimmy leaves, his place will be taken by his wife, Marion Shields, who is an accomplished dance pianist and vocalist.

KUNZ AT AYR

Other boys well known in Glasgow who are still with Andy are Duncan Hooks (alto), who "doubles" the A.F.S., and Johnny Devine, who used to play trumpet with Alec Freer. The line-up of Andy's band is completed by two local boys, M. Martin (sax) and Norman McLeod (bass).

The Tay Street hall is still on full time and doing splendid business.

Gordon Ritchie, who until recently was crossing the Atlantic regularly as bandmaster on a liner, was not long out of work following the ship's transference to other spheres, but is now playing the piano with a big concert party attached to an Army unit "somewhere in Scotland."

Syd Loseby was through in Glasgow recently for the day, and informs us that business is still brisk at the Edinburgh North British Hotel, where he looks after the dinner dance music.

Syd, of course, is also in war work in the Edinburgh district.

Glasgow boys home on leave recently included saxists Jimmy Watson and Maxie Wellins. Jimmy was at one time Pete Low's No. 1 man, and was playing at the Berkeley while he trained at a wireless school, but he is now in the R.A.F., while Maxie has been getting plenty of horn practice in the band of a unit down south.

Latest star attraction at Ayr's Gaiety Theatre was Charlie Kunz, who once again gave proof of his great popularity in Scotland.

The Gaiety is one of the provincial theatres to take full advantage of the unsettled variety conditions down South, and there are many more big-timers on the list of coming attractions.

RHYTHM CLUB NEWS

Yardley. Mr. Maurice Troop, of 277, Lyndon Road, Birmingham, intends forming a club for jazz enthusiasts in the Yardley and Sheldon district. All interested, especially instrumentalists, should write or call at this address or 'phone either Sheldon 2175 or Aston 3504.

No. 43. Glen Miller was the subject of a recital by Les Smith and Murray Collins at the Rhythm Club of Leeds' last meeting, and the Jam Session which concluded the meeting comprised Jack Cope and Jeff Chappel (piano), Victor Conway (accordion), Harry Haines (guitar), Laurie Mitchell and George Eddison (drums), Harry Graham (clarinet), Morris Cohen (alto), Ronald Hardy and Alf Foster (tenor and vocals).

No. 153. At the January 26 meeting of the Chesham Rhythm Club, record recitals were given by Keith Briggs on "Swing from Paris," and by Spider Kelly on "The Golden Age." Also, members' jazz knowledge was tested in a competition devised and presented by Keith Briggs and won by Doug Gifford, the prize being a record-token. Next meeting on Sunday, February 9, at 7 p.m. at the Cricketers, Moulsham Street.

Classified Advertisements

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11.

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Vol. XVII. No. 394

FEBRUARY 8, 1941

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GET YOUR SET TO-DAY!
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'STRAIGHT' DISC SESSIONS AT STANDSTILL

BASS-PLAYER IS BRITAIN'S 'LUCKIEST' FIREMAN

ONE of the luckiest of London's Auxiliary Firemen must surely be Ray Leclercq, well-known London bass-player.

Whilst on duty during the recent City fire-blast, he received a direct hit by an incendiary bomb and sustained four severe fractures and two serious wounds to his right arm.

Just prior to this, his home in Brixton, his car—and his bass—were completely destroyed during a raid.

To describe him as "lucky" despite all this may seem far-fetched. Yet his mother and his wife, who were in the house when it was hit, emerged unharmed from where they were sheltering under the staircase.

And Ray himself, we are glad to report, is now on the way to recovery.

BRIAN LAWRENCE IS A FATHER

NEWS reaches us from Sydney that on January 25 a son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Brian Lawrence.

It will be remembered that, shortly before leaving for Australia in March last year, Brian married Miss Jill Clayton, from the London Casino ballet.

Relinquishing his long tenure at the Lansdowne House Restaurant, he sailed to take up an attractive contract at Romano's Restaurant in Sydney, at which venue he is still appearing.

Among his recent recording activities, he accompanied Peter Dawson on his first Australian record of recent date.

He is also a frequent broadcaster over the Australian network, using a combination similar to Fred Hartley's Quintet, with which his voice was for so long an integral part.

Cabling his British representative, Mr. Victor G. Barker, Brian reports great success "down under."

"But every time I hear Fred Hartley on the air," he says, "I feel a yearning to be back in Broadcasting House again!"

VERA LYNN FOR PALLADIUM SHOW

"APPLESAUCE," the George Black show originally presented at the Holborn Empire, is to reopen at the Palladium, and among the bevy of stars featured will be Vera Lynn.

The provisional date for opening has been given as March 3.

Further news of the two Esdaille productions at the London Coliseum and the Prince of Wales Theatre gives the title of the former as "Strike up the Music."

Scheduled to open on February 17, the orchestra will be under the baton of Stoll M.D., Jack Freer.

At the Prince of Wales Theatre, the new Ronald Frankau-Renee Roberts revue, "Nineteen-Naughty-One," will see the return to the orchestra pit of Jack Leon, who is musical adviser to Esdaille productions.

Auditions begin on Monday next, and the show is expected to open at the end of this month.

Gramophone Companies And M.U. In Dispute: Hundreds of Musicians Affected

AS THOUGH THINGS WERE NOT ALREADY DIFFICULT ENOUGH FOR "STRAIGHT" MUSICIANS ON ACCOUNT OF THE WAR, THEIR LOT IS BEING MADE HARDER BY THE EXISTENCE OF WHAT AMOUNTS TO A DISPUTE BETWEEN THE LONDON BRANCH OF THE MUSICIANS' UNION AND THE RECORDING COMPANIES.

Towards the end of last summer the Union intimated to the recording companies that, as from September 1 last, the Union would require all "straight" musicians to be paid for sessions at the same higher rates as were then (and are still) enjoyed by dance musicians.

After considering this demand, the recording companies, acting in co-operation, replied that they were not in a position to meet it.

As a result, not only were a great many projected sessions cancelled, but others which would normally have taken place during the past four months have been held in abeyance.

ARCHIE SLAVIN OUT OF R.A.F.

AFTER ten months in the Royal Air Force, Archie Slavin, ex-Ambrose guitarist, and regarded as in the very forefront of this country's fretlists, has been invalided out of the Service.

Archie has been suffering from severe gastric trouble, and had been in hospital for some time.

He has made a good recovery, but the authorities felt that he was not up to the rigours of R.A.F. life, and have now sent him back home for good.

With the present dearth of first-class instrumentalists, the publication of this news should be enough to ensure that Archie is quickly snapped up into the business again.

Black-out Burglars Seem To Like Music!

DURING last Friday night burglars broke into the premises of Messrs. George Scarth, Ltd., in Charing Cross Road, London, and made off with musical instruments valued at £300.

This is the fourth black-out burglary that Scarth's have had since their windows were blown in by a near-by bomb recently.

Incidentally, Reg Warwick, Scarth's popular manager for a great many years, left London last week to join the R.A.O.C., taking with him the best wishes of a host of friends.

PETER MAURICE, LTD. Important Correction

BY a printer's error, a mistake was made last week in the advertisement of the Peter Maurice Music Co., Ltd., on page 3.

The price of their swing hits—other than "The Original Manuscript Series"—was given incorrectly, and should have read: Dance Orchestra, 2s. 9d. per set (2s. 11d. post free).

The swing hits which come under this price are as follows:—

"Rhumbogie," "Topsy," "Time Out," "Doggin' Around," "Ida" (New Vic Schoen arrangement), "In The Mood," "Cherokee," "Casbah Blues," "Blues Upstairs And Downstairs," "Woodchoppers' Ball," "For Dancers Only," "Chico's Love Song," "The Congo," "Dixieland Onstep," "Between 18th and 19th on Chestnut Street," "Comanche War Dance," "The Snake Charmer," "Undecided," "Tain't What You Do," "Texas Shuffle," and "Well, All Right."

We apologise for the error.

wages, packing materials, distribution, etc., we have not raised the price of records.

"Were we to have agreed to pay the increases demanded by the Union, the cost of producing records would have become so high that we just could not have carried on at all. We should have been trading at a loss.

"Nevertheless, we did make the Union an offer, but it was refused, and there the position rests.

MEN LOSING MONEY

"The effect of all this on us is that, instead of making records which require 'straight' musicians, we are forced to undertake only sessions which do not call for their services.

"The result is much the same to us in the long run, but we are sorry not to be able to give more of our work to 'straight' musicians, since we are well aware that the loss of the session fees must be somewhat serious to them at the moment, when the war has necessarily reduced so much of their other work."

Endeavours to obtain a statement on this matter from the Union have been made, but have so far proved abortive.

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M.M. 8/2/41