

Melody Maker

incorporating "RHYTHM"

Vol. XVII. No. 404

APRIL 19, 1941

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SYDNEY KYTE for GLASGOW SEASON

BRITISH
BANDLEADER
1941 MODEL



This bandleader will be easily recognisable by his braces as Carroll Gibbons. He donned his gas-mask, as did the rhythm section of his Orpheans, during the broadcast of their "Saturday Diversion" programme last week. It was a test, and Carroll and the boys say that the gas-masks did not interfere at all with their performance.

CONTINUING ITS POLICY OF ENGAGING THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE BUSINESS, THE PLAYHOUSE BALLROOM, GLASGOW, HAS NOW SIGNED UP SYDNEY KYTE, WHO WILL TAKE OVER FOR A THREE WEEKS' SEASON COMMENCING MONDAY.

The policy of getting ace bands to play for dancing there has proved eminently successful in the cases of Joe Loss, Teddy Foster, Oscar Rabin and Harry Roy, and now Sydney Kyte's long experience should prove invaluable for a date of this kind.

LINE-UP

Sydney has managed to get a most interesting band together in spite of the present paucity of musicians, and with the exception of a saxophonist, yet to be fixed, here is the complete line-up: Sammy Sharp, Jimmy Redmond and Spike Romano (trumpets); Stan Smith (trombone); Sid Williams (violin); Len Edwards (piano); Nobby Richards (drums); Frank Davis (bass); Jack Clapper and Harry Hines (saxes).

Some of these men have recently been with Maurice Winnick, whose present indisposition has enabled them to be released to go with Sydney Kyte. The vocals will be handled by Sylvia Handel and Stan Smith.

Sydney was scheduled to play a Sunday concert at Coventry this week, but owing to enemy action this date has been postponed until his return from Glasgow.

That cancellation was the first free Sunday he has had for many months, for his band has been pulling in big business around the country on concerts, one-night stands, etc., while his undoubted personal popularity in the north should ensure the success of his Glasgow engagement.

CHICK HENDERSON IN SEA DRAMA

BACK in London for fourteen days' leave, and lucky to be alive, is former Joe Loss and Harry Roy vocalist, now Petty Officer, Chick Henderson.

And the fact that this is technically known as "survivor's leave" will give some indication of what this fine singer has been through since leaving the profession last autumn to undergo training as an Engineerroom Artificer.

One hundred miles out in the Atlantic, his ship caught fire (though not through enemy action), and the crew had to take to floats. A sixty-mile-an-hour gale, that had already driven the vessel seventy-five miles off her course, was whipping the seas into a maelstrom that soon took terrible toll of the helpless crew.

Chick was among those picked up and finally set ashore at a Scottish port. Possessing only the clothes in which he had been rescued, he found himself for a few hours in Glasgow on his way back to London, and naturally looked in at Green's Playhouse, where Harry Roy is now featured.

Harry at once insisted on his taking the stand, and—despite the many months that have elapsed since last he appeared professionally—the crowd immediately clamoured for the song with which his name is ineradicably associated: *Begin the Beguine*.

Now Chick is busy renewing old professional acquaintances, and, despite his experiences, looking forward to the feel once more of a deck under his feet.

JOHNNY ROSEN LEAVES LEWIS'S AFTER FIVE YEARS

AFTER an association lasting for more than five years, Johnny Rosen has now severed his connection with the well-known northern firm of Lewis's, Ltd., owing to the directors deciding that a name band is no longer necessary to attract people into their restaurants.

The band finished up on Thursday last (April 10) at the Liverpool store where it has been featured for a considerable period.

It was after fourteen years' service with Jack Hylton that Johnny Rosen surprised the profession by leaving the maestro to undertake the job of forming a ten-piece outfit for the restaurant at Messrs. Lewis's store in Manchester—a job which had always been entrusted to a small "light" orchestra.

Johnny quickly established his band as probably the best in the provinces, and has since kept his reputation well up to standard, despite call-ups.

This policy of retrenchment on the part of the management of Lewis's has also affected Jack McCormick, who has been featured at the Manchester store since he changed places with Johnny Rosen.

Jack, however, is not leaving the firm entirely, as he is remaining at the store, but with only a five-piece outfit.

He will continue to play alto himself, and the rest of his boys are: Harry Dunn and Bunny Davis (saxes, etc.), Joe Zanzottera (piano), and Syd Hall (drums).

Johnny Rosen, too, had the option of remaining with a small band, but preferred not to do this, and, with his fine reputation for musical excellence, should not remain out of a berth for many days. He is now back in London.

WINNICK IN HOSPITAL ON EVE OF WEEK ON AIR: AMBROSE TAKES OVER

SCHEDULED AS THE B.B.C. BANDLEADER OF THE WEEK COMMENCING NEXT MONDAY, MAURICE WINNICK WILL SPEND THAT TIME IN BED CONVALESCING FROM AN OPERATION WHILE AMBROSE WILL TAKE HIS PLACE.

Maurice played last week at the Grand Theatre, Derby, in increasing agony from internal trouble, and, as soon as the curtain was rung down on Saturday, he was rushed away to hospital and all his current engagements cancelled.

BEST WISHES, MAURICE!

For his extra week Ambrose expects to be able to use the same combination which he has been employing all along on the air.

His many friends in the profession will wish Maurice Winnick a speedy recovery from his indisposition, which comes at an unfortunate time, since Maurice was booked well ahead on the stage.

SOMERS' NEW SHOW

ON Thursday, April 24, the Victoria Palace re-opens with George Black's third Intimate Rag, "Black Vanities," now playing a preliminary week at the Brighton Hippodrome.

In charge of the music will be Debroy Somers, who has for some time past been starring at the Scala Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, in Jack Hylton's Forces' variety programmes.

He will also be featured on Sunday next in "Services Variety" at 12.30 p.m. on the Forces wavelength.

EDMUNDO ROS'S HOME AIR DEBUT

EDMUNDO ROS and his Cuban Orchestra will be broadcasting over the Home Service wavelength for the first time on April 26 at 2.40 p.m., though they are by no means strangers to the microphone.

Playing at Martinez' Spanish Restaurant in Swallow-Street, W., and also at the Coconut Grove in Regent Street, W., the band has been extensively featured of late on the Overseas broadcasts to South America.

Edmundo himself has also been heard over the Forces wavelength in his own feature entitled "Caribbean Rhythms," the second of which, featuring Xavier Cugat and his Waldorf Astoria Orchestra, will be heard on April 30.

Bert Inglis, whom Edmundo introduced to the air in this country, is also being featured as a solo pianist, his most recent airing being on April 16.

Swing organist Fela Sowande has gone all "legitimate" for his airing on April 27 and composed an organ improvisation on the song *The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise*, which he will include in his programme at 11.5 p.m. on that date.

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M.M. 19/4/41

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"OI"—OH!

War Time Radio Reviewed by "DETECTOR"

LOOKING through recent copies of the "M.M." for some information I wanted, I came across the following headline splashed across the top of my War Time Radio article for February 22 last: "The B.B.C. Is Getting Better."

The reason for this optimism turned out to be the couple of lines with which I finished up an hour-by-hour listing of the programmes it had been possible to hear the previous Sunday.

Well, it only shows how careful one must be not to give sub-editors a chance to take an inch lest they stretch it to an ell.

Whatever that Sunday may have provided, our week-day radio entertainment, taken as a whole, has, I am afraid, not improved.

Following the slatings it was being given a few months ago in this and other papers, the B.B.C. made what looked as though it might be a definite effort to liven itself up.

VARIETY SHOWS

All sorts of new variety programmes began to appear—"Happidrome," "Quiet, Please," "Saturday Diversion," "This Thing Called Swing," "Merry-Go-Round," and, more recently, the Flanagan and Allen show "Oi," which has replaced the rather sadly waning Saturday night "Music Hall."

But, generally speaking, they have been merely unimaginative rehashes of old ideas, and can only be written off as flops.

It is the old, old story. Good artists having to struggle against barren ideas and infantile scripts.

Even the much-heralded "Oi" can only be classed as a curate's egg.

Bud and Chesney work hard, and were really funny last Saturday in the "Casting A Film" sketch, which developed into everything but casting a film.

But in such poor material as "The Week's Heartbreak," "The Week's Insults" (which completely failed to capture the healthily good-humoured spirit of the Lyon-Oliver-Daniels feud in "Hi, Gang"), and the introduction of the guest artist through the medium of dropping a pin in the telephone directory, and then summoning the genie to transport the owner of the thus found telephone number to the studio, they had no chance.

I blushed with shame for them.

CREDIT SIDE

On the credit side, however, may be placed "Your Songs," though, until I heard these first two editions of "Oi," I never realised that so many people could write so many songs so much alike.

Surely, even if one is writing for one particular artist, there is no need to copy slavishly the songs he has hitherto featured, just because he has made a success with them.

Still, most of these numbers were at least a head and shoulders above the bright effusions by the man (a stooge, of course) who would persist in singing his own numbers himself.

Although many people don't seem to have tumbled to the fact, these songs

were purposely written with about every conceivable fault—including such "howlers" as lyrics which, in addition to neither scanning nor rhyming, didn't fit the music, and music which broke every rule of construction.

Of course, the whole thing was a dig at those thousands of amateur song-writers whose hopeless efforts clutter up the shelves of every music publisher.

I hope that some of these irrepressibles were listening in. At least this holding up, of the mirror to them should have taught them something—provided they were capable of recognising themselves in it.

By the way, also on the credit side of "Oi" is Gerald's Orchestra, tasteful and musicianly as ever. Congrats, Gerry, on your "Open House" programmes, too; and the way you are building Jackie Hunter into a real comedy ace.

LOUIS PRIMA

I hope many of you heard last Sunday morning's broadcast of the American recording of Louis Prima's airing, which originally took place in a club in Boston, Mass., whence it was relayed through C.B.S. by the B.B.C. on March 31, 1940.

Louis P. is one of those people who, like, for instance, "Fats" Waller and "Wingy" Mannone, will persist in attempting to gild the lily by vocal pleasantries, and in consequence have acquired the somewhat dubious reputations of being the clowns of jazz.

But behind all their superfluous levity these people happen to be able to play good jazz—and none the less so because they seldom attempt to go in for gallery-fetching pretentiousness.

Because it could hardly do anything else, since it consisted of just Louis (on trumpet, of course), a clarinet and a rhythm section, this little band of Prima's relied entirely on collective improvisation.

That can mean anything, or nothing. In this case it meant pretty well everything implied by the former. About the only thing better than the easy, natural, but often quite inspired, solo playing of Louis and the clarinet was the way these two worked together. Seldom have I noted such understanding between two players.

Or, for that matter, in a band, for the rhythm section was as quick on the uptake as the two lead instrumentalists.

Honours, too, to the swell pianist in this broadcast, which, taken all round, was jazz in one of its most genuine and attractive forms, even though the would-be "concert" presentation of *Lover, Come Back To Me* did rather run it off the rails.

AMBROSE

The improvement in Ambrose's Band is being well maintained, and now his programmes are shaping like those that we know him to be capable of.

Ann Shelton is undoubtedly one of his greatest finds, and her versatility (she does anything from swing songs and ballads to Donald Duck noises) is terrific in one so young. She's only 17, and comes from Dulwich—in case you think, from her style, that she's American.



Rehearsing a B.B.C. musical. Producer Douglas Moodie (on right, leaning against piano) takes some of the players through their parts in his recent air-version of the film, "Tin Pan Alley."

1,000 SWINGERS WANT TO AIR WITH PARRY!

ANNOUNCE the news that there's a chance to broadcast, and it seems that you set every budding entertainer in the country agog with excitement.

The announcement, made over the radio and in these columns on March 29 last, that the Radio Rhythm Club is to reserve a night for amateur and semi-pro. swingers to show over the air what they can do, has resulted in the club's musical director, Harry Parry, receiving close on 1,000 applications from those desirous of taking part in the proceedings.

"Even after weeding out the many who apparently failed to grasp the statement clearly made in the MELODY MAKER, that no group might consist of more than three performers, and that only out-and-out swing exponents would be eligible, I still have hundreds of applicants left," Harry Parry told the "M.M." yesterday.

"From these I have chosen, on the type of performance they claim in their letters to give, twenty-five individuals and groups, whom I am auditioning next Sunday with a view to selecting the best six for the actual broadcast, which is due to take place in about seven weeks' time.

"That was my original intention. But in view of the hundreds of others who also seem to have good claims for consideration (and, incidentally, a very large percentage of them are those who wrote in as a result of seeing the announcement in the MELODY MAKER), I am now hoping that it may be possible to arrange a second, and even third and possibly fourth of these 'amateurs' nights."

"So those who have not been invited to appear at this first audition need not despair. They may still get a chance later."

RHYTHM CLUB SEC. DIES IN AIR RAID

THE death is reported of Bob Brettell, former secretary of the West Bromwich and District Rhythm Club.

He was at the time serving as engineer on the s.s. *Hardwicke Grange*, and had recently returned from a long voyage to South America.

He had been back at an English port only a few days when he was killed in an air raid.

Last year he reorganised the No. 122 Rhythm Club.

Even whilst serving at sea, his interest in jazz was not forgotten, for in a letter from Buenos Aires he wrote: "I have searched both the low and the high dives for good jazz, but found very little—a Negro trombone and Negro drums in one night club, and a South American Indian blues singer in a low dive on the waterfront. . . ."

Bob Brettell's body was taken to his home at Smethwick, near Birmingham, where he was buried.

MIDLANDS DANCE HALLS: EASTER BOOM

WHAT has the dance business been like over the Easter holidays?

So far as the Midlands are concerned, this is what the managements of the principal ballrooms throughout the area had to say when the MELODY MAKER representative put the question to them.

Mr. Tony Winship, manager of the Palais de Danse, Nottingham (Les Thorpe and his Band):—

"Exceptional. If you are doing a story, the headlines should be 'Queueing for Dancing.' We had to close the doors on Saturday evening at 9.40, with 1,600 inside. To-day (Monday) we have had long queues awaiting the opening of both the afternoon and evening sessions. This is surely something new in dancing."

Mr. George Gibson, manager, Victoria Ballroom, Nottingham (Rube Sunshine's Band):—

"The biggest Easter since the ballroom opened. Despite the fact that, unlike last year, all local ballrooms were closed on Good Friday, we shall easily outstrip last year's figures. All three sessions to-day have been packed."

Mr. Sam Ramsden, manager and proprietor, Plaza Ballroom, Derby (Billy Merrin's Commanders):—

"I've never experienced anything like it in all my career. To-day (Monday) we turned away 250 from the Coffee Dance this morning. Four hundred were unlucky at the Tea Dance this afternoon, whilst, when I came to open up to-night, the people were standing four deep in a long queue in front of the ballroom. I have got the New Mayfair Band and Harry Prince's Band at a dance at the Town Hall, Loughborough, and they have just rung through from there to let me know that they will probably be closing the doors before 8 o'clock!"

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EDGAR JACKSON
reviews the new
Swing Records
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approvingly on

WOODY

HERMAN'S VERSATILITY

BENNY CARTER AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

***O.K. For Baby (Carter) (Am. Decca 67783) (Recorded May 20, 1940).

****Night Hop (Carter) (Am. Decca 67781) (Recorded May 20, 1940). (Brunswick 03117—3s. 8d.)

WHAT this man Carter hasn't got when it comes to jazz just doesn't matter.

When he leads a sax team, it immediately acquires a warmth of tone and individuality of style that make it the next best thing to Benny's inimitable solos.

But if the sax team and Benny's own little solo passages are the high spots of both these sides—made, incidentally, at the same session as his *Pom-Pom* and *Serenade To A Sarong*, issued on Brunswick 03088 last January—they are by no means the end of what Mr. C. has done to make both titles among the best of Brunswick's recent releases.

Benny, as compère, arranger and band producer, shines with almost equal brilliance in all rôles. *Night-Hop* is an especially tuneful little piece, well up to the usual Carter standard of attractive melody, and the way he has scored it does it full justice.

As a tune, *O.K. For Baby* may be on the rather more stereotyped lines of contemporary riff compositions, but this is, to a great extent, made up for by the good arrangement and the capable way in which the band puts it over.

Nice trumpet playing by Benny on this side, too.



WOODY HERMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

***Bessie's Blues (Bishop, Herman) (V. by Woody Herman and Steady Nelson) (Am. Decca 67524) (Recorded April 10, 1940).

****Beat Me, Daddy, Eight To A Bar (Raye, Prince, Sheehy) (V. by Woody Herman) (Am. Decca 68227) (Recorded October 10, 1940). (Brunswick 03122—3s. 8d.)

***Frenesi (Dominguez, Whitcup) (V. by Woody Herman) (Am. Decca 68157) (Recorded September 27, 1940).

**A Song Of Old Hawaii (Beecher, Noble) (V. by Woody Herman) (Am. Decca 68158) (Recorded September 27, 1940). (Brunswick 03129—3s. 8d.)

67524—Herman (clart.) with Herb Tompkins, Ray Hopfner (altos); Saxie Mansfield, Sammay Armato (tenors); Walter Price, Horace "Steady" Nelson, Cappy Lewis (tpts.); Tody Tyler, Neal Reid (trmps.); Joe Bishop (flugel horn); Tom Linehan (pno.); Harry White (gtar.); Walter Yoder (bass); Frank Carlson (drums).

WHETHER intentionally or not, Brunswick have given us in one month the best chances anyone could imagine to realise not only what a grand band this Herman outfit is, but also its versatility.

Bessie's Blues is the work of Joe Bishop, originally a tuba player, who switched to flugel horn to show how it could be used in jazz, and succeeded probably beyond even his own most cherished hopes.

As this band is always at its best in the blues, you will hardly be surprised to hear that *Bessie's Blues* is the best of the four sides.

Tom Linehan, playing a 12/8ish boogie-woogie piano, opens it, and then we have two choruses in which the trumpets decorate ever more excitingly the theme as played by the trombones.

Note, too, Linehan's piano in the accompaniment.

Herman's always tasteful clarinet, effectively offset by Hy. White's guitar, comes next, but personable as this chorus is, it is almost put in the shade by Bishop's nostalgic flugel horn which follows.

Herman's good vocal is not made any more effective by Steady Nelson's falsetto impersonation of Bessie, but the record ends gloriously as the climax is built up by developments on much the same lines, only more so, as those employed in the first two choruses.

BAND COMMENTS

Only very little behind this elegant performance comes *Beat Me, Daddy*.

Woody Herman and Harry White again tie up in a clarinet and guitar duet, Tom Linehan has a swell boogie-woogie piano solo made none the less exciting by the comments from the band, and the ensemble has a couple of great choruses at the end in which it once again shows its ability to build up quite terrific climaxes.

All found, this is about the best record of this *Beat Me* opus I have heard, and not only because the fact that it is played at fast tempo has helped to give it a character that is quite different from all the others.

From out-and-out jazz we go in the next two titles, on 03129, to sweet music, but, in its way, the band is quite as outstanding here—at any rate in *Frenesi*.

The arrangement is really lovely, and whatever you cats may feel about melody for melody's sake, you'll have to agree that this Herman version of Dominguez's lovely tune is music in every sense of the word.

NEW SERIES OF RECORD COMPETITIONS

Which are Louis Armstrong's six best records?

I am a novice wishing to study true jazz. Which twelve records would you suggest I obtain to start off with?

On which records are Bud Freeman's best ten solos?

What is the difference between Swing and Jazz?

THESE and dozens of similar questions not only reach the "M.M." regularly but are, we are told, constantly put to jazz enthusiasts by their less enlightened friends.

To provide answers to these "stock" queries, the "M.M." is starting a new series of weekly competitions.

Each week we shall ask one question similar to those instanced above, and a cash prize of 5s. will be awarded for the best reply to each week's question.

Winning entries will be published regularly in these columns, so that they may be retained for reference by those interested.

Where practicable, the winning entry will be deemed to be that which coincides most closely with the majority. In other cases Edgar Jackson, the "M.M." record critic, will act as judge.

This week's question is:—

WHICH ARE THE TWELVE BEST RECORDS ISSUED IN THIS COUNTRY OF GENUINE BLUES PERFORMED IN SLOW TEMPO?

Replies must be marked G1 in the top left-hand corner of the envelope, and addressed to the MELODY MAKER, 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2, to reach us not later than Monday, May 5 next.

The result of this first competition in the series will be published in the "M.M." dated May 17 next.



Ex-Charlie Barnet hot trumpet, Bobby Burnet, with his new Negro Orchestra, which has opened at the Cafe Society, New York. (l. to r.): Sammy Benskin (piano); Manzie Johnson (drums); Leonard Feather (manager and arranger); Charlie Holmes (alto); Hayes Alvis (bass); Bobby Burnet (trumpet and arranger); Albert Nicholas (clarinet).

It may lack the vividness of Artie Shaw's famous recording of the number, but it's more tasteful and, in its way, more original, even better played, and all round quite a bit more fascinating.

My pressing of *Song Of Old Hawaii* is, unfortunately, a dud, but it plays well enough to suggest that here again the Herman band shows how pleasantly it can put over a "commercial."

Normally this would have been the end of my Herman rave, but, following the current vogue, friend Woody has lately built from his full aggregation a small get-off group.

Its first records appeared recently. They are:—

WOODY HERMAN'S FOUR CHIPS. ***Chips' Boogie Woogie (Herman) (Am. Decca 68057) (Recorded September 9, 1940).

****Chips' Blues (Herman) (V. by Woody Herman) (Am. Decca 68058) (Recorded September 9, 1940). (Brunswick 03118—3s. 8d.)

Herman (clart.) with Tom Linehan (pno.); Walter Yoder (bass); Frank Carlson (drums).

IN their way Woody Herman's Four Chips are the equal of Goodman's Trio, Quartet, Quintet and Sextet, and Bob Crosby's Bob Cats.

What, if anything, they lack in that sheer ingenuity (many have called it exhibitionism, and I'm not certain they have always been wrong) which has made the Goodman and Crosby outfits so popular, they make up for in taste, authenticity and sincerity.

There is genuineness in every bar of *Chips' Blues*, with its characteristic vocal choruses by Woody, his soulful clarinet, and Tom Linehan's unpretentious but bold piano.

Equally unexaggerated but effective is *Chips' Boogie Woogie*, with Frank Carlson's fine drumming and Walter Yoder's bass sharing solo honours with Herman's better than ever clarinet and Linehan's piano.

Good as Linehan is in the other titles, he excels himself in this boogie-woogie presentation.

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★ TUITION CORNER ★

DRUM DOPE—33

HAVING got the positions of the hands, body and drum right, let us now proceed with the actual roll. The left-hand stick should be thrown against the head with a twist of the wrist, as previously described, gripped only in the fork of the thumb and forefinger. It will tend to give a series of bounces.

Let it bounce ONCE (that is, two beats—the initial one and one bounce) and prevent it bouncing further by twisting the wrist back so that the third finger (which is under the stick) lifts it free of the head.

This is called the controlled rebound stroke and is the basis of the roll, or "daddy-mummy."

Next, execute a similar beat with the right hand. Remember that this is held back uppermost, the stick gripped lightly between the top joint of the forefinger and the ball of the thumb, the other fingers being quite clear of the stick.

The stick is thrown on to the drum by a downwards hinge action of the wrist (not a twist), the stick allowed one bounce (i.e., stroke and bounce) and then lifted clear of the head by the whole hand being hinged upwards. The under fingers do NOT control the stick.

DANCE BAND DONT'S—24

DON'T FORGET THE LIGHTS.

At first sight, this may be a puzzling abjuration. As if one would forget the lights!

Yet the other night I saw a dance band disaster because of this very point. The band was up on the stage.

The M.C. announced a spotlight waltz. The band started off. Then someone pulled the switch and blacked out the dance hall except for exit lights and spotlights on the dancers.

Strange sounds proceeded from the band platform... the melody disappeared... the harmony gave up... the guitar cut out... the piano and bass stopped abruptly... and even the drummer, after a couple of bars absolutely solo, gave it up, too.

The trouble was, of course, that the boys couldn't see a note, and weren't sufficiently familiar with the tune to busk it, or experienced enough to slide into a tune they could busk.

In other words, they had forgotten the lights!

Remember this story, because it may happen to you, and you may have to suffer as much mirth as this band received.

Also, don't forget to have good lights. Bad eyestrain is often due to musicians

trying to read indifferently in a poor light.

Another common trouble is flooding the band with light from the front. This is all right for a half-hour stage show, but for four or five hours' solid reading for dancing it is sheer murder. So don't forget the lights!

TRUMPET TIPS—35

IT is quite remarkable how many trumpet players do not know how to put in and take out a mute.

There is an instinctive desire to twist the mute home and untwist it when removing. This is quite wrong.

Not merely does it not make the mute hold any tighter, but sooner or later it will pull off the corks. The mute should be pushed in, and pulled out, with no twisting movement at all.

If you find that the mute tends to slip out, roughen the corks with a bit of sandpaper (the side of a box of "Swan" vests will do admirably). If this doesn't improve matters, fit new corks.

This is easily done by cutting strips off a large, firm bottle cork (it must be of heavy consistency—it's no use if it crumbles) and adhering the strips to the mute with a little melted shellac—gum or glue is no good, it dissolves in the moisture from the breath.

The strips should be carefully rubbed down to the correct height, otherwise the mute might put the instrument out of tune.

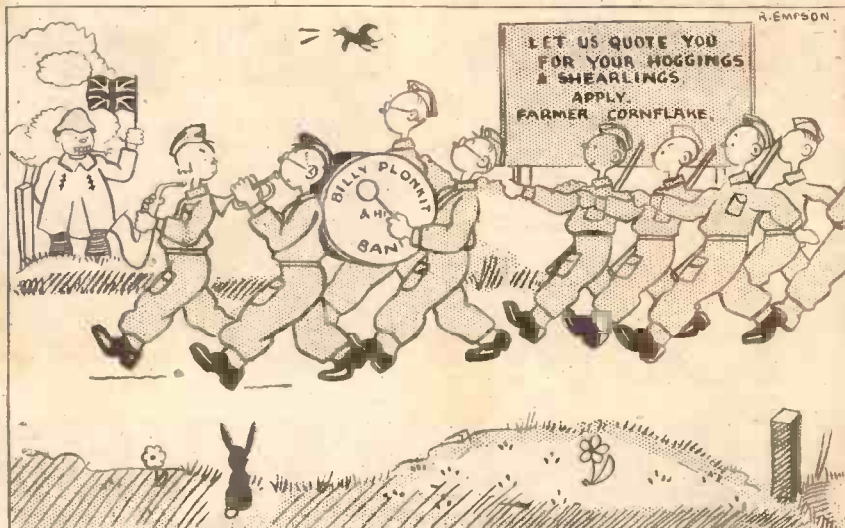
BILL MERRIN ON THE AIR AS HIT-COMPOSER

ON Tuesday week (April 29) Billy Merrin has one of the most interesting and novel dates of his long and successful broadcasting career.

It is in the Forces' programme, and is entitled "Me and My Songs."

With this broadcast, the long jealously guarded secret concerning the identity of "Jerry Mason" will be exposed, and Billy, with his Commanders, will be broadcasting a programme of recently published numbers made popular under the signature of his now famous nom de plume.

Riding On A Rainbow, Every Day Is One Day Nearer, Over The Hill, and Never Mind are not such a bad little bunch to be going along with, and it is small wonder that it is a proud Billy Merrin who is looking forward to being at the mike next Sunday.



BILLY PLONKIT: "The Major has sent up he wants us to keep it straight and not play hot, Red; our machine-gun section have started jitterbugging at the back."

JACK TEAGARDEN SET FOR BIG BAND BREAKS

News Flashes from New York

THE big American news of the moment concerns Jack Teagarden.

After two years of struggling against bad breaks for his band, which underwent a complete overhaul of personnel last year, he has at last managed to figure in a couple of deals which should help to make a belated name for him with the general public.

The big break is twofold: first, Jack and a contingent from the band will have an important part, including a speaking rôle for Jack, in the new Bing Crosby-Bob Hope picture which has just gone into production.

Secondly, the entire band has landed a six-week engagement at the celebrated Casa Manana, not far from Hollywood, the same spot where Duke Ellington played two successful months not long ago.

With his new Decca records clicking solidly, the whole picture looks rosier for Mr. T. than at any time since he left Paul Whiteman to branch out on his own.

GOODMAN NEWS

Benny Goodman featured Red Norvo recently on the first of his (Benny's) series of commercial broadcasts for Old Gold Cigarettes, a programme which was for many years held by Paul Whiteman.

One of Norvo's ex-soloists, Pete Mondello, is permanently with B.G. in Jack Henderson's place.

Teddy Wilson, Count Basie and others have been booked for guest appearances with Goodman on the new show, which features good music and the usual corny script. (One of the lines Benny had to say was: "Hello, all you cats and kittens"!)

Goodman still seems to be changing his pianists almost daily. Milton Raskin had been with the band, but is now out. Last night Benny told me he had been using Bill Boland from Les Brown's Band for a few jobs, but can't keep him as Les has him under contract. And since Basie and Teddy Wilson, the only two pianists who would satisfy Benny, are both unavailable, who will eventually sit the Goodman piano stool permanently is as problematical as ever.

"Cootie" Williams, ex-Ellington star, and guitarist Charlie Christian are still with Goodman, and well featured on the broadcasts.

Nevertheless, Goodman is still not satisfied with the band, and plans one or two more changes.

He has been trying hard to induce ex-Dorsey drummer Dave Tough, who played a one-night stand with the band at the Golden Gate, when this new combination of B.G.'s drew a crowd of 4,000, to rejoin him. But Tough can't make up his mind.

Playing opposite Goodman at the aforementioned gig was a band led by Christopher Columbus, a Harlem drummer who swears that's his real name.

And a little boy who sat in on drums for one number, and gave an amazing exhibition, turned out to be Christopher Columbus Junr.!

To return to Red Norvo, his excellent band has now broken up finally, having been workless since the short Canadian jaunt.

Red's former vocalist, Linda Keene—one of the very few who are both talented and attractive—is now, with Tony Pastor's bunch at New York's Lincoln Hotel.

Artie Shaw is now back in town, looking prosperous, but otherwise unchanged.

He told me that Lee Castaldo, who worked in his original 1936 band, is back with him on trumpet, but that otherwise he has virtually a new band for the few weeks he's spending in New York. Nevertheless, trombonist-arranger Ray Conniff is still with him; so are the tenor men Bus Bassey and Jerry Jerome, alto-player Les Robinson, ex-Bob Crosby trumpeter Billy Butterfield, ex-Goodman pianist John Guarnieri, and ex-Goodman drummer Nick Fatool.

After making five of his commercial broadcasts from here, Artie returns to Hollywood to start work on a new picture.

Alec Templeton, Jack Hylton's blind English pianist discovery, guest-starred the other week in the first anniversary broadcast of the popular "Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street."

This feature now has Dolores O'Neil in the vocal spot formerly occupied by Dinah Shore.

Will Bradley and Ray McKinley are guesting in Templeton's own Alka-Seltzer hour shortly.

Bandleader Buddy Rogers and his wife, Mary Pickford, are defendants in a suit brought against them by Rogers' managers.

The managers allege that Mary threatened to divorce Buddy if he didn't give up his bandleading career and take one of the Hollywood executive or acting jobs she wanted to get for him.

By giving up his band Buddy broke a ten-years' contract, it is claimed, constituting £75,000 worth of breach.

PAY CORPS SWING

THEY do other things in the Royal Army Pay Corps than dole out the weekly wage packets, and at one pay depot in London they have a seven-piece band which does much to alleviate the pain caused by the meagre amounts some of their customers receive.

This is led by well-known Scots trumpeter Dave Mitchell, who used to play with Harry Carmichael and Neil McCormick, and with Tom are Geoff Knight (alto), Bill Davies (fiddle, tenor and vocals); Ron Jutson (piano); Ivor Golley (guitar and vocals); Doug Earles (bass and guitar), and Len Taylor (drums).

Femme appeal is provided by Volunteer Margaret Poyntz, of the A.T.S., and the whole band is under the control of Lieut. J. P. Murray. Bill Davies will be remembered as a former member of Ron Miller's Modernists.

— KEITH PROWSE 15TH STAR PARCEL —

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STARS BEHIND THE VOCAL

DOUGLAS STANNARD

Discusses Accompaniment Jazz

JAZZ, we are sometimes told, is basically music for dancing. This may be true; but it is beyond dispute that for many of us it has increasingly tended to become something more.

A listening cult has grown up during the last ten years—a cult shared (albeit for different reasons) by both the fans and the icky public.

There may be some who will insist that this passive response to jazz noises is unsound, but even these diehards will not challenge the statement that in one sphere at least jazz can properly be performed without any expectation of a physical response.

All of which serves to introduce the reader to an examination of the work of jazz instrumental groups as accompaniment units, and also to this writer's contention that a great deal of righteous jazz has been created in this way.

So much so that there are many records worth buying merely to hear the inspired instrumental background (although it is often true that, where high orchestral quality is to be found, so also is a corresponding quality from the featured singer).

GRAND STUFF

I sometimes think that our pre-occupation with the classic jazz recordings of the Golden Age and/or of present-day streamlined "swing" bands robs us of the leisure to take adequate stock of the grand stuff which forms the orchestral framework for the musical pictures created by some blues singer, or even a crooner.

Occasionally an individual record is discussed in this newspaper's gramophone review, but I don't recall an article dealing with this fascinating branch of jazz as a whole. We'll rectify the omission right now.*

Now I am not pretending that the recordings listed here represent a complete selection (I'm not in the happy position of being able to buy every disc that comes out, although one often has the opportunity of hearing records one doesn't actually own), and readers who are interested in this particular angle of our music may be able to add to the total.

In fact, I hope they do so: I believe a pooling of information on this subject may well result in the unearthing of some virtually unknown or forgotten gems of real barrelhouse jazz.

But to get ahead. As is the case with purely band records, by far the best accompaniment jazz is to be found when the instrumentalists are backing up a blues singer.

So we begin with Bessie Smith, whose death three years ago robbed jazz of one of its greatest and most representative artists; unlike Armstrong, Bessie was completely uncompromising, recording on the "race" labels, and touring the coloured theatre circuit.

She vocalised the Negro's music for the Negro, without any of the white man's box-office tricks. Fortunately, many of her records have been made available here by the Parlophone company—and those who don't own any can make the ordering of a few the one resolution which mustn't be broken.

GIN MILL

Bessie, on all her recordings that I own or have heard, had that kind of accompaniment which can only be given by musicians speaking the same musical language in every gradation of idiomatic subtlety.

On one memorable session, *Back Water Blues*, in which she tells the story of an old coloured woman made homeless by the Mississippi floods, she is accompanied only by piano—played right out of this world by James P. Johnson, who is still knocking around New York.

On *Nobody Knows You When You're*

Down And Out, the gin mill instrumental jazz comes from Clarence Williams' piano, Ed Allen's trumpet, and Cyrus St. Clair's tuba—which sounds exactly right in this setting.

In 1925 Bessie made many discs with groups alternating between Louis Armstrong on trumpet and Fred Longshaw (who wrote some of her material) on piano, and Armstrong, Henderson, and Green.

These waxings included such items as *Careless Love Blues*, *Sobbin' Hearted Blues*, and *Nashville Woman's Blues*.

Ranking next to the "Queen of the Blues" is Mildred Bailey, and although I know Mrs. Norvo has been guilty of commercialism and even corny tricks, she has made some grand recordings with some equally grand backgrounds.

BACKGROUND PAIR

Her *Willow Tree* is a "must" which hardly needs listing because it is so well known—and only a year ago she made amends for some poor stuff by recording, with her "Oxford Greys," *You Don't Know My Mind Blues* and *Barrelhouse Music* (the latter by Willard [Deep River] Robinson).

I recall "Rophone" giving this coupling a four-star rating. I am personally partial to Mildred's not-so-recent *Downhearted Blues* and *Squeeze Me*, in which she had one of her grandest accompaniments from her own "Alley Cats."

Another version of the latter was made some time ago by blues singer Teddy Grace with a unit which included Teagarden on trombone, Billy Kyle on piano, and O'Neill Spencer on drums.

Incidentally, Messrs. Kyle and Spencer seem to spend a lot of their time backgrounding vocalists, for their names bob up all over the place once you begin to dig for examples of accompaniments to singers.

This pair have figured on out-and-out blues dates, and even with the commercial Andrews Sisters, sitting in with trumpeter Vic Schoen, who does the arrangements for the girls' sessions. (These arrangements, excellent though they are in their way, become monotonous after one or two hearings.)

Then there's Trixie Smith, whose Vocalion discs issued over here have not, I imagine, made any tremendous impression.

Critics seem to vary in their verdicts; some claim she has bad pitch, but, on the other hand, Leonard Hibbs once wrote in *RHYTHM*, discussing Trixie's *My Daddy Rocks Me*, that "... this session will go down as one of the best ever in the matter of accompaniments," adding: "Trixie's singing, Bechet's clarinet, and Charlie Shavers' trumpet make this disc a 'must.'"

I can endorse this judgment in respect to this particular record.

COLOURED GIRLS

On another session Trixie waxed *Jack, I'm Mellow* (which, translated, means "Boy, I'm Drunk") with a combination which appears to have comprised O'Neill Spencer, Shavers, Bechet, and John Kirby, together with an unidentified pianist who (for once) wasn't the ubiquitous Mr. Kyle.

But he and Buster Bailey jive along while O'Neill Spencer vocalises on *John Henry* (*That Sweet Dream Man Of The South*).

While on the subject of coloured gals, get a load of Rosetta Crawford's *Double-Crossin' Papa* (double-entendre more exactly fits the lyric) and *I'm Tired Of Fattening Frogs For Snakes*; and (although the accompaniment is restricted to her own somewhat indifferent guitar) I'll take a disc-full of Sister Rosetta Tharpe if only because her intensely moving "revival-shouting" indicates the link between this type of religious emotionalism and the secular music that is jazz.

Billie Holiday, of course, is already widely known for her fine singing with fine backgrounds provided by Benny Goodman, Teddy Wilson, and her own ensemble.

Among the white fem-singers, that grand old trouper Sophie Tucker has had some notable jam support, parti-

cularly on her recording of *There's A Blue Ridge Round My Heart, Virginia*; while the Boswell Sisters' masterly vocal arrangements were equalled only by the masterly accompaniments furnished by the Dorsey Brothers (who, alas, don't play that way any more).

Jackson Teagarden has, of course, figured as vocalist with terrific accompaniments from Lang-Venuti *et al*—but these are not accompaniment records in the strict sense of the term, since equal emphasis is on the band.

A similar judgment must be passed in re the Mound City Blue Blowers, for, although McKenzie vocalises on this fabulous group's *One Hour*, I don't feel that this is a legitimate example of accompaniment work as such.

Among the crooners and croonettes, Ruth Etting was one of many who had the advantage of the services of both Lang and Venuti and the Dorseys.

As a matter of fact, Eddie particularly was in tremendous demand by soloists, some of whom even had clauses inserted in their contracts stipulating that he should accompany them.

"RACE" LISTS

He was, in fact, the power behind many a star, and those whom he helped in this way included Bing Crosby, the Ponce Sisters, Annette Hanshaw, Gene Austin, Sadie Green, the Tampa Blue singers, and even Boyd Senter, on half a dozen different labels.

I have already stressed the fine accompaniment work to be found on blues recordings. Unfortunately unavailable in this country (except mostly in the case of Bessie Smith) are many such discs tucked away in the American "race" lists.

While some are indifferent, others are veritable gold-mines to all who appreciate crude, honest-to-goodness jazz in its purest form.

Lonnie Johnson (who made those guitar duets with Eddie) has figured as a blues singer on *She's Only A Woman* and *Why Women Go Wrong*, released in the U.S. on Bluebird 8363.

Lonnie uses his own guitar and also has the backing of a pianist—and the result is down-to-earth jazz untouched by the stigma of commercialism designed to attract a cornfed public.

Other such almost unknown artists with gutbucket jazz groups giving out

DISCOGRAPHY

"Back Water Blues" and "Nobody Knows You When You're Down And Out": BESSIE SMITH Parlophone R 2481

"Do Your Duty" and "I'm Down In The Dumps": BESSIE SMITH Parlophone R 1793

"Downhearted Blues" and "Squeeze Me": MILDRED BAILEY and her Alley Cats Parlophone R 2257

"Willow Tree": MILDRED BAILEY Parlophone R 2201

"You Don't Know My Mind Blues" and "Barrelhouse Music": MILDRED BAILEY and her Oxford Greys Parlophone R 2692

"My Daddy Rocks Me" (two parts): TRIXIE SMITH Vocalion S 235

"Downhearted Blues" and "Monday Morning": TEDDY GRACE Brunswick 02688

"John Henry": O'NEILL SPENCER, with Billy Kyle and Buster Bailey Brunswick 02632-4

"Double-Crossin' Papa" and "I'm Tired Of Fattening Frogs For Snakes": ROSETTA CRAWFORD Vocalion S 247

behind them are Monkey Joe, who has recorded *Bitin' On Me* and *Mountain Baby Blues* for American Vocalion; Rich Trice and her *Trembling Bed Springs Blues* on American Decca; and Sonny Boy Williamson, who has recorded *Good Gal Blues* for the aforementioned Bluebird label.

Reverting to Armstrong, his horn was heard to plenty of advantage around 1925, when he recorded it alongside such race singers as "Ma" Rainey, Coot Grant, and "Kid" Wesley Wilson, Bertha Hill, Sippie Wallace, and Butterbeans and Susie.

In some cases Louis sat in with a Fletcher Henderson contingent; in others he used his own Jazz Four and Hot Five, and in still others he and pianist Richard M. Jones provided the sole backing.

Apropos these "race" recordings, I offer the suggestion that it might be worth while to endeavour to secure the release over here of some of the more notable examples, either singly or in a small but representative album.

I believe there would be considerable support for such an innovation. What do you think?

In the meantime, I append a list of some of the available discs which I think are worth the expenditure of a few hard-earned shillings.

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*In the "M.M." dated July 6, 1940, R. G. V. Venables contributed an article, "Voice With Orchestra," which told of the famous accompanying outfits used by Cliff Edwards ("Ukulele Ike") on records.—Editor.

BRAND'S ESSENCE OF NEWS

★ Pianiste for Syd Pettit at the Twickenham Palais is **MARJORIE HOWELL**, who is also in charge of Max Castelli's School of Music and his Accordion Band whilst he's in the R.A.F.



★ YOU have all heard of Chicago style. Many of you admire and seek to emulate it. You come across it in many a West End night-spot.

But there is another Chicago style which few of you will admire, still less want to copy—for it is the style, not of the Chicago musician, but of the Chicago gangster.

And yet, if all I'm told is true, this second version of Chicago style exists to-day in the heart of London's night-life, and has brought about a situation reminiscent of the more sensational form of American tough-guy literature.

Briefly, the facts as I have been given them, are these:—

One of the hottest little bands in Town recently opened at a certain night-spot. They have no contract with the management—have signed nothing. Their style of playing has brought them and the club an enviable reputation.

Another night-spot, due shortly to

reopen with an exclusive clientele, wants to book them at rates that are in excess of Union minimum.

On their present management's being informed, first by the band's manager and next by the leader himself, that the boys wished to give a fortnight's notice, they were allegedly threatened, collectively and individually, with what appears to be nothing short of physical and moral blackmail.

Razors and knives seem to have been mentioned as means of retaliation should the boys decide to take their talents elsewhere.

Furthermore, as an apparent result of conversations between the first club and the second, the management of the latter now refuses to book the band for fear of reprisals wrecking the opening night and ruining its business for good and all.

Nice goings on, eh?—if my information is correct.

by
PAT BRAND

Some little time ago, in response to appeals in our *Forces' Letter-Box*, I received a most welcome parcel of orchestrations from a photographer in Farnham—which puzzled me a little.

But now the mystery of the swing-minded photographer is solved, for I learn that eleven years ago **EDWARD C. GRIFFITH** was playing tuba with the Quinquaginta Ramblers.

This was immediately after the departure of Fred Elizalde, though he did play with him when Fred visited the Band, which was then being led by George Monkhouse. With this Band he did a ten-minute "Surprise Item," broadcast from Savoy Hill, the Band being coached for this for a few minutes beforehand by Carroll Gibbons.

But the fact that Griffith is now in the country doesn't mean that he suddenly severed all these star connections, for, going over to piano and accordion, he's been running gigs in the district for the past many years, playing regularly at the Playhouse Repertory Theatre and Dance Club as well as at a good number of dances for the Services.

Incidentally, the photographic copy of Venables' drawing of Bix "Bidlebecke" that illustrated Stanley Nelson's article on April 5 was made by Edward Griffith.

Steps to Fame, Chapter Two: Well, some of you at least will have a chance of telling me whether we were right or not about the mystery girl whose photograph glamorised this page on April 5.

For **KARENA** will be singing at the Gaumont, Taunton, on Sunday next, when **MIFF FERRIE** takes his ten-piece Orchestra down to give a Sunday concert.

Latest news is that Buddy Bradley, the famous coloured dancer, is now coaching her feet into the same high efficiency as her voice.

Another young lady who is branching out on her own is **PEGGY DESMOND**, who was for some time on the staff of Lawrie Wright's, and was with the No. 1 Company of the *Fol-de-Rols*.

Peggy is at present negotiating with the B.B.C. with a string of solo dates, and she's also on the look-out for something worth while as featured artist and pianiste with a leading band.

Down in Kent there's an R.A.S.C. dance band that must be feeling exceedingly proud of itself. For sincere tributes to it come from exhibition dancers Alex Moore and Pat Kilpatrick, who recently gave a show there for the War Weapons Week.

These five lads go under the name of the "**RHINOS DANCE BAND**," and comprise Dvr. Norgate (piano); Pte. Sparkes (alto and violin); Dvr. Girling (violin); Dvr. Catterall (bass); and are led by Pte. Mills on drums and xylophone.

They are all members of the "Rhinos" Concert Party, which has been performing since last May, also having been across to France, where all their kit was lost.

However, after a lot of hard work giving concerts for funds, they have now got everything replaced, and have even managed to make a few additions.

Postscript: **REX HARRIS** asks me to thank all the fans who have written to him as a result of his recent Pee-Wee Russell broadcast, and to tell them that he was using Commodore and H.R.S. recordings that are quite unobtainable in this country at the present moment.



TAKING HIS NUMBER!

A Numerical Interview with **BERTINI**

How old were you when you ran away from home with your fiddle?	14
How long was it before you got a job as second fiddle at the Lyceum Theatre, Ipswich?	2 days
At what age did you play fiddle with the choir of the Abbey Street Baptist Chapel, S.E.?	12
How old were you when you joined Lord George Sanger's Circus as bandsman-cum-circus-hand?	16
How many hours daily did you work then?	18
How many instruments can you play?	6
How long were you a member of a ship's orchestra on the P. and O. India service (in months)?	12
How many times have you played your way afloat round the world?	3
When did you address envelopes for the London "Evening News" at sixpence per hour?	1913
How old were you when you formed a band of your own?	29
How much weekly did you earn then?	27s. 6d.
When did you join a divisional orchestra in the Great War?	1915
When did you form a band at the Theatre Royal, Bognor?	1920
When did you become M.D. for Archie Pitt in the show, "A Week's Pleasure"?	1925
How old then was the small boy who, along with his younger brother, played trumpet in your band—and whose name happened to be Nat Gonella?	14
When were you offered the post of M.D. at the Tower Ballroom, Blackpool?	1927
How many broadcasts did you make from the Tower?	600
How many people danced to your music there?	2,500,000
When did you leave the Tower?	1938
When did you appear in the film "Hindle Wakes," starring Gracie Fields?	1925
When did you launch your own band show?	1939
How many piece is your band today?	11
When did your new show, "It's All In Fun," take the road?	13/1/41

CLASSICS OF JAZZ

by **Bill Elliott**

No. 19—"Darktown Strutters' Ball" (by Red McKenzie and his Celestial Beings); "Big House Blues" (by the Harlem Footwarmers)

Parlophone R1044

FIRST remarks this week deal with the choice of this record. I'll tell you why.

In the little competition just finished (results and notes next week, and, by the way, the entries have been any thing but "little"), this was the most requested record, outside the twelve on my list.

Why I left it out, I don't know, and the only excuse I can make is that, in weighing up the claims of several thousand records it is possible to miss one.

At any rate, by way of atonement, here it is. *Darktown Strutters* is a record in the Chicago style tradition, inasmuch as there are solos for every instrument and a last all-in chorus.

McKenzie kicks off with two choruses of blue-blowing and although this style of vocal instrumentation is not much heard to-day, you have got to hand it to Red for his phrasing and feeling for the number.

DORSEY IS GREAT

Dorsey, who follows, takes one of his best clarinet solos ever. Jimmy is a commercial guy to-day, but this record shows him in a most exciting vein, just sitting back and playing the jazz he feels.

Jack Rusin's piano which follows makes an effective lead-in for Red's vocal, and it's interesting to note the close relationship of his singing to his blue-blowing.

The two choruses of Hawkins that follow are among his greatest efforts. I almost wrote that they are his greatest, but then I think of *Heartbreak Blues*, *Hello Lola*

Personnel:

(a) Red McKenzie (vocal and blue blowing); Jimmy Dorsey (clarinet); Hawkins (tenor); Muggsy Spanier (trumpet); Jack Rusin (piano); Eddie Gordon (banjo); Jack Bland (guitar); Frank Billings (drums); Al Morgan (bass); (b) Tricky Sam (trombone); Barney Bigard (clarinet); Cooty Williams (trumpet); Duke Ellington (piano); Sonny Greer (drums); Wellman Braud (bass); Fred Guy (banjo).

and others, and I have to curb my enthusiasm for the record now playing.

This is Hawk in the mood I like—no slow rhapsodising but fast, exciting, gutty tenor, although, at the same time, always musical.

Forgive me if I digress for a moment, but a Mr. Fieldhouse accused me two weeks ago of rating jazz on its exciting rather than musical standpoint. (A statement, I might add, that has caused much amusement among my own circle of friends, who many times have accused me of being almost "corny" when I have made a case for more music in jazz.)

Mr. Fieldhouse says that I eulogised the tenor solo in Norvo's *I Got Rhythm*. On looking up the "Classic" in question, I find my exact remarks were confined to "this boy has heard Hawkins, and learnt from the master. It's a swell solo."

HAWKINS

I'm still sticking to that. It is a good solo and fits into the framework of the record, and I consider the record to be a musical one. Haymer on tenor improvises round the theme, and if Mr. Fieldhouse wants to hear the tune all the

time, might I suggest Guy Lombardo?

I say that quite sincerely because his later remarks re preferring Teddy Wilson in *Don't Blame Me* to Basie and Waller strike me as extremely odd, to say the least of it. Still, it takes all sorts to make a world.

Now, back to Hawkins. After two such choruses, you would think anything else would be an anti-climax, but Muggsy on trumpet takes a solo which, in its way, is every bit as magnificent as Hawk's.

I have written a lot about the Spanier horn lately, so we'll leave it at that and get on to the last all-in, with full marks going to the rhythm section, who, throughout, have done grand work.

IMPRESSIONS

I have, of necessity, to be brief about the reverse, so here are brief impressions after playing it through twice. It's a contingent from the big band playing a tuneful blues.

It opens and closes with a catchy theme stated by the ensemble, and the solos run as follows: Piano (few bars only)—Tricky Sam—Barney Bigard—Cooty (open trumpet and a grand effort)—piano.

Things to Notice Dept.: Duke's piano behind Barney, and Sonny Greer's drumming, which is at its very best in this record.

INVALIDED out of the Army, after spending much time in hospital, trombonist-comedian Les Carew has rejoined Ambrose, and has been broadcasting with him all the week.

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JAZZ HAS LOST ITS ABILITY TO SURPRISE

by
"MIKE"

INTEREST in jazz, like interest in almost anything, depends entirely on the ability of whatever-it-is to hold your attention, to promise surprise, development, and novelty. Immediately this promise shows signs of not being fulfilled interest must inevitably flag.

I confessed last week that, during my ten years of writing on jazz, I had lost most of my interest in it. I attributed this, in part anyway, to the exaggerated importance attached to a form of music out of all proportion to its true worth.

Over-writing-up, which seeks to deify players whom we know to be quite ordinary, competent musicians, instead of stimulating interest, can too often have exactly the opposite effect.

It is the old story of crying "wolf!" of boosting the emperor's clothes.

What is the effect? Well, one hears the name of Mr. A. shouted from the skyscraper tops, heralding a New Genius, etc. All very good. But, alas, too often Mr. A. turns out to be nothing to write home about, and one waits in vain for something to revive one's interest, one's hope that there can still be surprise, development and novelty.

EXPERIMENTS

But there are other reasons, of course, for one's interest fading. It doesn't take the "discovery" of yet another New Genius to convince one that jazz has lost its ability to surprise and develop.

Experience alone has taught me that enthusiasm lasted just so long as interest could be maintained; but I think this is peculiar to jazz.

In other things one may lose the first, passionate enthusiasm for a particular composer or writer without losing interest in each new work that one subsequently hears or reads. Enthusiasm blossoms into admiration, and where there is admiration there is usually interest.

Not always, of course. I can think of many people whose work I dislike intensely, but which I am forced to admit I admire. I am not, however, necessarily interested in their work, certainly not enough to go out of my way to study it.

But with jazz it is different, somehow, and the past seven years have not brought forth enough to keep me as interested as I had been previously.

The truth is that while there have

been innumerable experiments, many of them sufficiently startling to make even the most disgruntled critic sit up and take notice, there has been an air about most of them of experiment for experiment's sake.

Hitherto, new developments and adventures in harmony and form had emerged from the natural artistic development of the artists concerned. They were most of them not even aware that they *did* appear to be experimenting; novelty and development were the result of inspiration; they came naturally.

This being so, how could one fail to be interested? Jazz, one's enthusiasm had taught one, obviously had a future; what it was, of course, one did not know. If I could have known, then I would have sat down and shaped that future myself.

But there was enough going on, there was sufficient creative activity in our small world to keep even the most critical in an inquisitive frame of mind. It was not merely a question of novelty.

For the first three years in which I wrote for this paper (once a month, then), the output of jazz was large enough for even the indiscriminating enthusiast to have been bored by it all. Bored, that is, if the quantity had not also had quality.

SAVED FROM SUICIDE

Quality, however, saved us all from suicide. If you who are still young think that we remember the days of ten years ago merely because they were ten years ago, let me draw you a rough picture of the jazz times we lived in.

After an absence of far too long the Red Nichols Five Pennies were just back on the English market. They came back with two star players whom we hardly knew; certainly we did not associate their names with the first vintage of Five Pennies records.

With the release of *China Boy* and *Peg O' My Heart*, the names of Benny Goodman and Jack Teagarden were first bandied about in the pages of this journal. Trumbauer had an exquisite band, which, although Bix had died,

was nevertheless a very special affair.

It introduced to us a peculiar rhythm section with a peculiar noise to it—the noise came mostly from Stan King and Eddie Lang. It was something new as a background *timbre*.

Louis Armstrong suddenly became almost a best seller; he had formerly been something of a curiosity. Don Redman was a new name in jazz; Fletcher Henderson's name was new to many, his latest recordings new to all of us.

Duke Ellington, too, had ceased to be a curiosity; what had previously been dismissed as "crude nigger style" was at last listened to as a new force in jazz.

IN THE EARLY DAYS

Venuti and Lang, with Jimmy Dorsey, created something different from even their own original Blue Four records that had knocked us sideways in our earlier youth.

The Dorsey Brothers—with arrangements by Glenn Miller—played music which was destined to have an incalculable influence on the future of commercial dance music. Vocals by Mildred Bailey, singing with the Dorseys, were attributed to all kinds of then better-known young ladies.

Bing Crosby was just a vocalist, feeling his way timidly as a soloist in his own right following his success in "The King of Jazz."

A group called the Blue Rhythm Band caused an overnight sensation; so did the Casa Loma. The Chocolate Dandies were for the more particular connoisseur.

And there were many more besides.

PAT BRAND WRITES:—

News from ENSA-touring FRANK PITKIN, now with the "Real Meal" Revue, tells me that this show has been breaking records at Garrison Theatres.

His work is bringing him into contact with a number of old pals, notably Canadian tenor player ROY ALLMAN, who was a great favourite with West End bandleaders some nine years ago, and who worked for Ambrose.

Roy is now a Staff-Sergeant in the Toronto Scottish Regiment.

At another camp he came across LES ARTHUR, who only ten days previously had been leading his own band at Oddenino's. Les is in the Royal Marines, training with the Heavy A.A. Regiment of the R.A.

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Personalities In Paragraph EASTER FUN

I WONDER if I ever told you about an accordion player I used to know by the name of JOE SNIDDLEPUSS.

Quite a well-known musician of his day, through his habit of playing swing choruses with one leg in a bucket, although that, of course, has nothing to do with the story, he had the peculiar idiosyncrasy of stooping at odd moments to retie his shoe-laces, no matter where he happened to be at the time. Well, to make a short story long, he happened to be walking over a level crossing one day when he suddenly bent down to tie his shoe-lace, and unfortunately got himself hit by a train, which was the last I ever saw of him.

The silly part of the whole thing was the fact that he needn't have bent down at all.

At the time it happened he was wearing slippers.

* * *

Nothing if not original is reader, song-writer **GEORGE WARREN**, of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Recent letter enclosed copy of new number topically entitled *Welcome to England, Mr. Winant*, and the words of the refrain go like this:—

"Welcome to England, Mister Winant,
We know you will help us get along.
Welcome to England, Mister Winant,
With your help I know we'll carry on.
When this war is over you will hear the people say,
God bless you, Mister Winant—and the folk in U.S.A.
Welcome to England, Mister Winant,
We know you will help us carry on."

Well, at least he ought to feel certain we want him over here after that.

* * *

And speaking of new song successes, it is interesting to see that the current hit, *The London I Love*, mentioned in last week's page, is no imported hit from the States, but, as the title suggests, the work of one of our own leading English composers.

None other, in fact, than **GEORGE**

by
ERIC WINSTONE

POSFORD, who, since the day he first crashed into song business back in 1929 with the unforgettable melody of *Lazy Day*, has written more hit themes than most during recent years.

Writing the brilliant score of *Good-night, Vienna* in conjunction with Eric Maschwitz, he followed this with the score for the Gaumont-British film *The Good Companions*, starring Jessie Matthews.

In 1937, after once again ringing the bell with the music of *Balalaika*, he journeyed with Maschwitz to Hungary to write yet another famous West End musical, *Magyar Melody*, from which came the haunting strains of *Mine Alone*.

And now, with the new "London" song already featured as the principal theme in the *Hulbert Follies*, it looks as if another Posford hit is once again well and truly under way.

* * *

"Faint heart never won fair band girl," if what little experience I have had in these matters is any criterion; but letter from Manchester reader plaintively asking me to publish entire personnel of the ladies' band led by fem-swingster **IVY BENSON** seems to indicate something more than a musically interest in one or other of the fair charmers who go to make up this elegant ensemble.

Spring being what it is, however, and with romance being as good a substitute as any for sulphur and treacle, I herewith assist that familiar nudist Cupid with the following information.

Ivy Benson (alto, clarinet, accordion and piano); Gwen Hughes (alto and clarinet); Blanche Coleman (tenor, clarinet and violin); Joan Taylor (baritone, tenor, clarinet and violin); Celia Wakeley (trumpet and violin); Nan Jensen (trumpet); Betty Thomas (trombone, cello, violin, piano and viola); Lillian Whittle (piano and accordion); Joan Donaldson (drums and vibraphone); Kay Yorstan (bass and vocalist); Joan Marriott (electric and Spanish guitars); and Mae Cooper (vocalist).

The girls are currently playing at the Locarno Dance Hall, Glasgow, and at the moment I am wondering how the fare to Scotland and back would look on the petty cash sheet.

It must be the Mormon in me. . .

* * *

And speaking of femininity, I read in a daily paper recently about a breach of promise case where a girl was awarded £200 damages.

S'right.

And directly underneath in the next column there was a report about a musician who had knocked a lady over with his car and had only had to pay thirty shillings.

There's a moral there, fellows.

Never break a girl's heart.

Kick her in the ribs . . . it's cheaper.

* * *

One moment before you turn over. So that we shall at least part in serious vein, I give you a proverb for the week.

Laugh and the world laughs with you . . . sleep upstairs and you sleep alone.



Swing it, sisters! Saxophone tuition to a comely section of an A.T.S. band.

RAF BAND ANONYMITY IS PAVING WAY FOR SMART PROMOTERS

FORCES' LETTER-BOX

Flight-Sergeant Beland, of the Defence Section, R.A.F., tells us that although they have an R.A.F. station band that does good work on and off the camp, there are other boys who like to get together and make some rhythm. They have their own instruments and a little music, but do need more recent numbers. Naturally, the "powers that be" are already doing their utmost for the station band, so they ask us to appeal to any readers to let them have spare orchestrations, for which they will gladly pay postage or carriage.

Sapper C. W. Dicks, of the R.E.s, lost his alto sax in France. Over there they had formed a band, giving many troop shows and Red Cross entertainments. Now, stuck out in the wilds of the country, they have formed a new band, but are without an alto sax. If any reader could help over this matter, it would be appreciated both by Sapper Dicks and by the hundreds, he would then be able to entertain.

L. Cpl. D. L. Oliver, of the R.E.s, has managed to organise an extremely promising little band, but they are handicapped by lack of music, and wonder if any reader has any to donate or to sell. He would also like to get in touch with anyone who has an old trumpet for disposal, as they have a trumpet player but no instrument.

L. Bombardier V. A. Baxendale, R.A., writes to say that there are five of them making an effort to start a band. If anyone has a drum set and a trumpet for disposal or for cheap sale, they would be extremely grateful, as at present there is no musical entertainment whatever for the boys.

W.O.1 John M. Watt, of the R.A.M.C., has for some time past been most successfully running a small dance band consisting of piano, tenor, trumpet, violin and drums. The rhythm section, as can be seen, is not too strong, and W.O. Watt is looking for a bass, for which he is willing to pay from £4 to £5 if necessary. Can any reader help him—or can reader spare a bass that will further this band's already successful efforts in entertaining members of the Forces?

Pte. H. Coull, of the 5/7 Bttn. Gordon Highlanders, is playing in the battalion dance band. Since joining he has been unable to afford a clarinet, and asks if any reader has an old B flat Boehm system instrument which they are not using or which they could sell at a very low figure.

J. Strong, A.M.I., asks if anyone has an old clarinet that they could let him have as, before joining up, he was saving up to buy one but now finds he can't manage this on the Navy allowance. He has been offered tuition by one of the bandsmen stationed at his barracks, so that all he requires now is the "stick." Can any reader oblige?

THE policy of announcing in the "Radio Times" and over the air, under the one description "A Band of H.M. R.A.F.," the various R.A.F. dance bands which broadcast, is already leading to a state of affairs which is, to say the least of it, most unsatisfactory.

Following established custom, these R.A.F. dance bands, in conformity with other Service bands, are allowed, duties permitting, to accept "outside" engagements.

Often these engagements are sponsored by civilian entertainment promoters, and information has reached the "M.M." that at least one such promoter has presented an R.A.F. dance band in such a way as to lead prospective patrons to believe that they would be hearing the famous R.A.F. group, directed by Sgt. Jimmy Miller, which has come to be recognised from its broadcasts as not only the outstanding R.A.F. combination but one of the finest British dance bands that have ever existed.

"HOODWINKING"

While these promoters are usually clever enough to draft their publicity matter in a way that makes it difficult to prove that they are definitely attempting to hoodwink the public, such phrases as "The Famous R.A.F. Broadcasting Band," and similar catchlines, have certainly misled people, and it is high time that measures were taken to prevent such "misunderstandings" being possible.

The simple remedy would be to give each R.A.F. (and other Service) band a separate name, under which it would always be billed, including over the air and when undertaking other "big-time" engagements through the medium of which it was establishing its reputation.

Our radio contributor, "Detector," has more than once pointed out the desirability of such a procedure, and now that the necessity for it has become proved by the activities of less scrupulous promoters, we hope it will not be delayed any longer.

No. 150. At the next meeting of the Iford Rhythm Club on April 27, at 3 p.m., Len Wood will present a recital of his favourite tenor solos, and Alan Mead will discuss Billy Kyle in the series "Star Pianists." There will also be a Jam Session by the Club Jam Group.

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WHO'S WHO IN JAZZ

● In response ●
to very many requests from readers, we are continuing our alphabetical series of biographies of prominent jazz men. Back numbers containing the previous instalments are still obtainable.

SCHOEN, VIC: W. arranger. b. 1916. Started playing trumpet at fourteen; two years later, joined a band which also included Larry Clinton on trumpet. Started arranging in 1934 when he was with Gene Kardos; then with Leon Belasco's Band, 1936-7, when the band was featuring the Andrews Sisters. Remained with the sisters after Lebasco's band broke up; wrote arrangements for their first big record hits, including *Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen*, also playing 2nd trumpet on the sessions. Has also arranged for J. Dorsey, Fred Waring, Basie, Miller, Glen Gray, and played in Dick Stabile's band, but since Andrews' rise, has been identified exclusively with them. Formed special band for stage tour with them briefly, mid-1940, also making a few Decca records, but still uses pick-up band for recording with Andrews. Has written many songs, and is one of the commercial writers of instrumental material, including *Oj Maestro And Men*; *Patty*; *Hit The Road*, etc.

SCOTT, RAYMOND: W., composer, pianist, leader (r.n. *Harry Warnow*). Brother of Mark Warnow, radio band leader on Hit Parade programmes; b. Brooklyn, 1910. Graduated from Institute of Musical Art, joined C.B.S. as staff pianist. His famous Quintet was born in December, 1935, playing *Toy Trumpet* on the Saturday Night Swing Club programme. In 1936, signed by Irving Mills, he recorded for the latter's Master Record label (later transferred to Brunswick), his original works including *Powerhouse*, *Minuet In Jazz*, *Twilight In Turkey*, *Reckless Night*, *On Board An Ocean Liner*, *Dinner Music For A Pack Of Hungry Cannibals*, and similar titles. Went to Hollywood; was seen in several pictures with Eddie Cantor, Shirley Temple, etc. In 1939 decided to form larger band, using pick-up group at first for Columbia recordings, later forming permanent combination with which he went on tour. Recent works include *Business Men's Bounce*, *Huckleberry Duck*. Scott's peculiar style of trick music earned him wide acclaim, though it has little bearing on genuine swing.

SHAND, TERRY: W., pianist, composer, vocalist. Featured with Freddy Martin's Orch., 1934-39, but better known to jazz fans as pianist on New Orleans Rhythm Kings Session in 1934 (Bruns. 02040, 01910, 01988), and pianist-director on subsequent date featuring Muggsy Spanier, Red McKenzie (*Baby Brown*, *Oh Suzannah*, etc.). Also composer of popular hits such as *Cry Baby Cry*, *I'm Gonna Lock My Heart*, *I Double Dare You*, *Dance With A Dolly*. Left Martin and formed own band, working in Brooklyn Hotel and recording for Amer. Decca.

SHIELDS, LARRY: W. clarinet. Started with Tom Brown's original Dixieland group in New Orleans c. 1915. Featured on recordings by Dixieland Jazz Band, 1917-21. One of the earliest influences among white clarinetists, though he disappeared from the jazz scene not long after the Dixieland band disintegrated. Made a brief reappearance later with La Rocca (q.v.), but has been out of the business most of the time since then.

SIDAY, ERIC: W. violin. British-born, featured for many years with Hylton, Ray Noble and Jack Payne before going to America; also recorded with special small swing group for Parlophone. In New York, featured 1939-40 with Fred Waring's radio orchestra.

SIGNORELLI, FRANK: W. pianist. Worked with the Original Dixieland Band after their return from England, but was best known as pianist of the Original Memphis Five, with whom he made many records from 1922 to c. 1927. Also heard on early records of Venuti, Lang, Tommy Dorsey, Bix, New Orleans Blackbirds. Worked with Jean Goldkette; later went into radio and recording house band work, and was heard in recent years on discs by Bob Howard, Manny Klein and various Decca pick-up groups. Also part composer with Matty Malneck of *I'll Never Be The Same* and other popular hits.

SILLOWAY, WARD: W. trombone. With Buddy Rogers, 1933-4; Joe

Haymes, 1934-5; then joined Bob Crosby Orchestra and was featured in solos on many of their recordings. Recorded with Taft Jordan and the Mob (Engl. Vocalion) 1935; also with Wingy Manone, Amer. Vocalion, 1936. With Tommy Dorsey, 1939.

SIMEON, OMER: C. clarinet. b. New Orleans, 1902. With brother Al Simeon's Hot Six, 1920; Charlie Elgar's Creole Band, 1923; made first records in Chicago, 1926, with Jelly-Roll Morton. Worked with King Oliver, 1927, recording with him on alto, soprano. With Erskine Tate, 1928-30; rec. with Jabbo Smith, Harry Dial; joined Earl Hines, 1930, remaining with him ever since except for a brief job with Horace Henderson in 1937. When Hines left the band mid-1940 Simeon remained with the group under Walter Fuller's leadership. Also recorded with Jimmy Mundy, Fletcher Henderson, Lionel

Hampton, Paul Mares' Friars Society Orchestra. Many Hines' records on Bruns., Voc. and Bluebird feature his outstanding clarinet solos.

SINGLETON, ARTHUR JAMES "ZUTTY": C. drummer, b. Louisiana, 1898. Played at Lyric Theatre, N.O., at 22; pioneered with the Tuxedo Band, Maple Leaf Band, and Fate Marable. Had Louis Armstrong in his own small group at the Orchard Cabaret, 1921. Went to St. Louis, 1924, with Charlie Creath; then to Chicago, 1925, working there with Charles L. Cooke, Dave Peyton, Jimmy Noone, Carroll Dickerson. First attracted record fans' attention with his recordings as one of Louis Armstrong's Hot Five OKeh (Parlo.), 1928. Also recorded with Louis when in Dickerson's Orchestra, 1929. With Louis in New York that year at Savoy Ballroom; later returned to Chicago, leading own

band at the Three Deuces in 1935, and recording for American Decca. Has been heard on Chicago style recordings, featuring Billy Banks, Eddie Condon, etc. Also recorded with Roy Eldridge, 1937 (Vocalion); Jelly-Roll Morton, and many pick-up bands. Back in N.Y. since 1937; with Sidney Bechet at Nick's, 1939; own trio at Village Vanguard, 1940. Though not one of most modern style drummers, is still highly regarded by many musicians, and can be heard prominently in new session under his own name recorded for Decca's New Orleans Jazz Album.

Men who put Country before Counter

WHEN the history of this war is written, between brave chapters telling of deeds done in the blue sky of September, and on the sands of Libya, there must be a chapter telling of work done every day behind humble counters and in the stockrooms of ten thousand shops.

This chapter must tell how men (and women too) sacrificed, not lives, but livelihoods for the country's good. How, when ships brought ammunition instead of automobiles,* when silk made parachutes instead of stockings, when men built aeroplanes instead of bicycles, when sewing machines hummed for battle-dresses instead of civilian suits, when collar studs became detonators, and cricket bats became splints, then the British shopkeeper helped to cut consumption by telling his customers how vital was the need. It should be written, too, how many British shopkeepers, when hit, not by bombs, but by the inevitable difficulties and contractions of wartime trade, adapted themselves to changed conditions and buckled to on other war work until better times brought them back to the counter again. The British shopkeeper—and the nation—will be proud to read that piece of history.

*This and the other examples given here are literally true.

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RHYTHM CLUB NEWS

No. 25. The Primrose Hill Rhythm Club (Coventry) met on April 3, when Chic Mayes, Harry Conn, Bob Benstead and Bill Whinnie, from Oscar Rabin's Band, dropped in for a jive after their Hippodrome show. Together with Jack Hardy (trumpet), Arty Dawson (alto and clarinet), Stan Yardley (piano), George Hewitt (bass) and Ron Siggers (drums), the Club had an excellent Jam Session.

No. 31. The meeting of the Portsmouth Rhythm Club at the "County House," Commercial Road, on April 12, began with heated discussion on the relative merits of Teschemacher, Shaw and other clarinetists. The usual Jam Session comprised Phil Bryant (trumpet), Pete Cochrane and Ron Male (clarinets), Cyril Breeze (tenor), Ted New (trombone), Roy Brewer (piano), and Bill Proctor (drums). Meetings occur every Saturday at 3 p.m., and all interested should write D. G. Priscott, at 24, Merton Avenue, Portsmouth.

No. 85. With a membership already 30 strong, the recently formed S.W. London Rhythm Club will hold its first meeting on April 20 at the Savoy Dance Studio (next Savoy Cinema), Croydon, at 3 p.m. There will be a recital of favourite discs, and details of membership can be had from D. Tilt, 14, Stanford Way, Norbury, S.W.16.

No. 151. The April 10 meeting of the Dewsbury Rhythm Club opened with a short review of the April swing discs by Ronald Wraith, followed by a series of Jam Sessions comprising Ivor Mitchell (accordion), High Ramsden (guitar), Clifford Fawcett (bass), and Frank Gillings (drums). The evening's recital, "The Clarinet in Jazz," then followed, and the meeting ended with a Jam Session with Ronald Wraith (trumpet) added, and H. Wilby and J. Wood alternating on drums. The next meeting is on April 19, when Ronald Wraith will give the main recital, discussing the new H.M.V. Swing Album (No. 2). On May 8 the Club presents Bob Jackson (Yorkshire's Finest Clarinetist) and his Empress Swing Stars in a dance at the Ambulance Hall from 7 till 11 p.m. Tickets 2s. (H.M. Forces 1s.).

No. 155. The Watford Rhythm Club met on April 9 for a recital by J. Heywood and D. Stone on "Fletcher Henderson versus Bob Crosby." This was followed by a recital on Fats Waller by Stan Heiser. Details of membership can be had from G. R. Pratt, 124, Mildred Avenue, Watford, Herts.

No. 159. On April 9 the Finsbury Park Rhythm Club met to hear Rex Harris give a recital of "Rare Discs." Eric Preston dedicated his recital to Bix, and this was followed by a Jam Session including Colin Beaton (piano), Dick Barrell and Bernard Jordan (trumpets), Gerry Alvarez (clarinet), Sam Adams (guitar), Stan Best (tenor), and various members deputising on drums.

No. 161. The April 14 meeting of the Sidcup Rhythm Club heard a discussion between M. W. Arney and J. C. Godbolt, championing White Jazz, versus R. J. Ash and G. A. Russell, who stood for Black Jazz. The final vote decided for Black. On April 21 a "Jazz Competition" will be included, when members will be invited to bring two discs for use in this competition. Meetings are held every Monday at the Station Hotel at 7.45 p.m.

N.W.3 Group. The first meeting of the N.W.3 Group Rhythm Club was a well-attended success. Rex Harris' recital of records of Johnny Claes' new band was enthusiastically received, and two discs of Andre Goersch, Ed Oxford and Willie Wilson got a great ovation. The next meeting will be on April 25 at 7.30 p.m. at the "King of Bohemia," Hampstead High Street, and will include a recital by Rick Silverston entitled "In Defence of Benny Goodman," and a review of the Chicago Jazz Album. Andre Goersch and Red Snod hope to present two small groups of the Jam Session. All interested should write Eric Preston, at Keats House, Keats Grove, N.W.3, or phone HAMPSHIRE 2062 between 6 and 7 p.m.

Nottingham. A group of genuine swing fans, assembled by Philip Wykes, has got together to form a Rhythm Club in Nottingham. Any other such genuine jazz-lovers should contact Mr. Wykes at 16, Devon Drive, Sherwood, Nottingham.

Rotherham. Will all interested in forming a Rhythm Club in Rotherham get in touch with Alan Rippon, 7, Cowrales Lane, Whiston, Rotherham, who is willing to act as secretary, and has already an excellent selection of swing discs?

Birmingham. The Secretary of the Yardley and Sheldon District Rhythm Club regrets that difficulty in finding suitable rooms and lack of support have made it imperative to close down. He has a list of all the members, and would be pleased to forward them to anyone interested in continuing the club. Write to him at 277, Lyndon Road, Sheldon, Birmingham.

GLICCO CORNERS "DIXIELAND"

THE name "Dixieland" in its association with a dance band has been registered at the Stationers' Hall by famous old-time trombonist and band-leader Jack Glicco, and the use of this name by any other leader is therefore rendered illegal.

Playing only the tunes that were played by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, Jack Glicco's combination is due shortly to make a tour of the halls under the name of the "New Dixieland Jazz Band," and for this Jack is now on the look-out for men who can play in the true Dixieland style.

He would be glad to hear from trumpet, clarinet, piano and drums, who should telephone him at Archway 2059.

Jack, who discovered present Harry Roy chirper, Marjorie Kingsley, whilst his band was at Gatti's Restaurant, promises a sensation in a new seventeen-year-old male vocalist whom he will be introducing for the first time.

Alto saxist Vic Parker, who played with Michael Flome at Harrogate and Ceres Harper at the Floral Hall, Bridlington, got himself a life's engagement last week when he married Miss Vera Lee, of Guiseley. Vic's many friends will probably be interested and hasten to congratulate him.

Since joining the R.A.F. he has played with A/C Sidney Torch's "Contact" Orchestra, but he has now re-mustered as a musician, and expects to be drafted to Ceres Harper's R.A.F. Band, which will be posted to a station somewhere in the North.

SHEFFIELD MUST SWING—OR ELSE!

SWING is obviously the formula in Sheffield! Can you imagine a semi-pro. band taking a job with the express intention of playing a complete programme of swing numbers, and being prepared to turn up the job if the customers didn't like it?

Yet this is what happened with the band at the St. Joseph's Dance Hall, Handsworth, Sheffield, and now the "Swing Squad" has educated its public to like them to such an extent that they have been signed to play on Mondays and Thursdays as well as Saturdays, and crowds of 500 have been attracted to a venue which holds something like 250!

That this policy has been such a success is almost directly due to the war, so Drummer Jack Rede tells the "M.M." for in the old days in Sheffield 100 per cent. "swing" was all very well, but you couldn't hope to satisfy the local dancing public with it.

So the boys decided that, in their own words, "the public would suffer almost anything for their entertainment," since the authorities had taken over most of the local dance halls.

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Here is the line-up of this courageous ensemble: Stan Vickers (alto, clarinet); Harry Tindall (trumpet); Jimmy Hill (piano and accordion); and Jack Rede (drums). They recommend other semi-pro. outfits to follow their example, and we shall be pleased to hear the result. . . .

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11.

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APRIL 19, 1941 Vol. XVII. No. 404

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Special Musician's Diary

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Private JERRY DAWSON, of the Manchester Regiment, finds time from his Army duties to write his NORTHERN GOSSIP

WELL, folks, here I am once again, and only too glad to snatch a few minutes behind a typewriter, after two and a half weeks—it really seems like so many years—learning left turn, right turn, shoulder arms, mount gun, and all the rest of the paraphernalia of training to be a soldier.

* * *

Actually, the life isn't too bad, and I could think of lots of things which would be much worse. I suppose that I am lucky in a way, as I happen to be stationed fairly near to my home at a barracks which is far and away more comfortable than a number of Service camps at which pals of mine are stationed.

By now, of course, I am quite hardened to rising at 6 a.m.—laggards are very promptly dealt with—and shaving in cold water, as I am sometimes obliged to do, followed by breakfast at 7 a.m. and physical training at 8.30 a.m.

* * *

As I mentioned in my last "Gossip," I am in the Manchester Regiment, and its pride and joy is its famous Military Band, directed by the Regimental Bandmaster, L. Statham. This really is a very fine band indeed, and since the outbreak of war a new departure has been the formation of a dance band from the ranks of the parent body.

This latter is very much in demand for dances and concerts at the depot, and it also does several gigs and concerts per week outside the barracks.

* * *

On a recent Sunday the band played a concert at the Salford Hippodrome, and I availed myself of the opportunity of hearing it "in action."

With a combination of seven saxes, three trumpets, two trombones, piano, bass, drums, accordion and guitar, plus three vocalists and an impressionist—all serving members of the Regiment—they put over a very acceptable show indeed, which was chiefly notable for its variety of solos.

Most of the members of the band are members of the Regular Army, whilst others are youngsters who are learning music and Army life at one.

Three members, however, are well known in dance band circles in Manchester and district, these being drummer George Downs (late of Bob Pendleton's Band at Ashton-Palais de Danse); lead trumpet Jack McClennon, who for a long time was associated with Nat Bookbinder and later with Henry Croudson at the Paramount Theatre, Manchester; and Jimmy Marshall, a semi-pro, tenor saxist.

To-night (18th) the band is due to play for the Ashton-under-Lyne Police Ball, at the Palais de Danse, in aid of the local Spitfire Fund.

* * *

Speaking of Ashton Palais reminds me that by the time you read this, its popular manager, Syd Roberts, will also be serving in the Forces—A/C2 Roberts, R.A.F.

Almost seven years ago Syd was playing drums and leading the band at Bolton Palais, when along came the offer of managership at Ashton, which was accepted. At this time the Palais was open only on three nights per week, and business was certainly not sensational.

However, he had not been there many months before dancing was in progress on the six week-nights, with business generally on the up-and-up. It has remained so throughout his sojourn there, except for the fact that, in view of the roller-skating boom of recent years, two nights and one afternoon session have of late been given over to this pastime, with the band in attendance as for dancing.

During his stay at Ashton, Syd Roberts has been responsible for handling the appearance of most of the name bands, and during the current season he has presented a bigger number than ever of these attractions, which have been booked for their northern appearances by H. Newton Lane, including Oscar Rabin (three times), Maurice Winnick, Joe Loss, Henry Hall, Sydney Kyte, etc.

* * *

During the period of Syd's service with the R.A.F., management of the Palais will be in the hands of the resident bandleader, Bob Pendleton, who has been associated with Syd since the Bolton days, when he was pianist in the band.

He will combine the jobs of manager and bandleader, but this should not trouble him much, as he is well versed in the requirements of the dancers in Ashton.

* * *

Have just heard through a mutual friend—A/C Mervyn Frazer—that amongst the sufferers in a recent Nazi blitz on Liverpool was the newly appointed bandleader at the Rialto Ballroom, Artie Williams.

Both Artie and his brother have lost their homes and everything in them, whilst their mother is in hospital suffering from injuries sustained from a practically direct hit on a shelter.

May I express the hope that all concerned will quickly recover from their dreadful experiences.

* * *

At the same time, Mervyn Frazer informs me that the Service band of which he is a member is still keeping busy, and is averaging four gigs per week. Recent appearances have been at Hill Stores, Oldham, Jubilee Hall, Dukinfield, and the Rex Cinema, Wilmslow.

* * *

And so ends my first effort as a soldier-writer, and I don't even know if I shall be able to keep it up with any regularity. You can bet your lives that if I can possibly do it weekly or fortnightly I shall do so, but my chief difficulty is obviously that of getting around to pick up the news.

However, cheerio for now—I'll be seeing you.

DANCERS — 3d. OFF IF YOU BRING YOUR GAS-MASK!

ARE you carrying your gas mask? If you are and you go to a Mecca dance hall you will (a) save yourself 3d. on the price of admission, (b) possibly win a prize for a dance in your gas mask, and see a jitterbugging couple dancing in their gas masks and even the band swinging out similarly equipped!

These are some of the ideas of C. L. Heimann, who intends to promote Gas Mask Balls at Edinburgh Palais, Glasgow Locarno, Ritz, Manchester, Mecca-Locarno, Leeds, Grand Casino, Birmingham, Paramount, Tottenham Court Road, Streatham Locarno, Croydon Palais and Sherry's, Brighton, to-night (Friday, 18th).

Each hall will co-operate with the local A.R.P. to secure the assistance of a squad to assist in gas mask adjustment and direct a short drill of the patrons.

Undoubtedly, many people still do not carry their respirators, and this idea of combining pleasure with utility is a very useful and enterprising tie-up with Mr. Morrison's recent radio appeal.

ALL-YORKS "M.M." CONTEST FIXED FOR KEIGHLEY—MAY 16

GLASGOW NEWS

FINDING it hard to get a seat in Bobbie Jones' place, the Berkeley, the other Sunday night, I was told by Bobbie that as some of the cinemas were open it was rather a "quiet" night for the café, so I couldn't help asking him what on earth he did with the people when things were busy (writes Hugh Hinshelwood).

Here was a sample of the sort of thing the fanatics are trying to put down—a few hundred young people, in a healthy atmosphere, enjoying good music and occasional "variety" from visiting stars, some in uniform.

Before the Sunday café idea started, these young people would spend the Sunday night parading up and down Sauchiehall Street.

FULL TIME SOON?

Charlie Stewart is in charge of the band here, and with saxist Alfie Johnston (recently blitzed but still breezy) acting as compère, everything is all set for a good night's entertainment.

Bobbie tells me that he will soon be in a position to open up the Berkeley on a full-time basis.

The business has been maintained since Bobbie took over what was once the old Ritz.

The old-fashioned dancing promotion which used to be a feature of the Playhouse on Thursday evening has been transferred to a new venue, the West Regent Masonic Halls, and here Louis Freeman is supplying a band for the old-time stuff every week.

FOLLOWING the huge success of the All-Lancashire Championship, which broke attendance records at the Carlton Ballroom, Rochdale, on March 28 last, and at the request of many bands who were unable to take part in the event, another Contest has been scheduled to take place this season under the auspices of the MELODY MAKER.

As briefly announced in our Stop Press column last week, it is to be the 1941 All-Yorks Dance Band Championship, and will be held at the Municipal Hall, Keighley, Yorks, on Friday, May 16 next.

SERVICES WELCOMED

It is, of course, open to amateur and semi-pro. bands from all parts of the country, including Service bands, who will be especially welcome, and entry forms are, now available from the Organiser, Lewis Buckley, 107, Broadway, Royton, Oldham, Lancs (Phone: Oldham, Main, 1431).

Dancing will take place from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., and it may be confidently anticipated that this will be another grand night for competitors and dancers alike.

The usual prizes and diplomas for successful entrants will, of course, be presented.

BUDDY LEE, for nine and a half years on trombone and bass with Ivor Kirchin, is now playing in an R.A.F. band which is frequently on the air, and he would like to get in touch with old friends in the business who are now in the Services.

Letters will be forwarded.

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