

# Melody Maker

incorporating "RHYTHM"

Vol. XVII. No. 406

MAY 3, 1941

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## TROOPS TO GET JAZZ-RECITALS

### MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR BOWLLY IS BEING ARRANGED

AFTER a short but impressive service conducted by Father James, of the Greek Orthodox Church, and in the presence of his wife, his stage partner, Jimmy Mesene, and a number of friends and fans, Al Bowly was laid finally to rest at the Westminster Council Cemetery, Hanwell, last Saturday.

Floral tributes had been sent, by the profession and from admirers, and we are asked by Mrs. Bowly to thank them all, and particularly those who went to the cemetery.

She is particularly grateful to Jimmy Mesene, who arranged the religious side of the ceremony, and in deference to her wishes we gladly record the fact here.

Arrangements are going forward to hold a service at the Greek Church in Bayswater, when all those who found it impossible to be at Hanwell will have the opportunity to pay their last respects to the grand singer and all-round good fellow who was Al Bowly.

### VAN STRATEN TO BATON "ORCHIDS" SHOW

VAN STRATEN takes over the baton in the successful West End show "Orchids and Onions" to-day (Friday), thus releasing Lew Stone, who has been combining this engagement with his work at the Dorchester. All also broadcasts to-morrow morning (Saturday) in "Music While You Work," and will be heard regularly on the air during the forthcoming weeks.

It is surprising that this excellent leader, whose stay at Quaglino's rivalled Al Collins's apparent permanence with the Savoy firm, has not recorded regularly.

His only record date was immediately prior to this war beginning and the resultant uncertainty prevented any more being arranged.

### REG. FORESYTHE, R.A.F.

THE call of the Services is gradually denuding the West End of the great names of the jazz business, and the latest to go is Reginald Forsythe, who has now gone into the R.A.F.

He attested some time ago, but has now been called and it is expected that full use will be made of his musical ability.

### MICHAEL CARR IN THE ARMY

HIT-WRITER Michael Carr added his great talents as a tunesmith to the East Surrey Regiment this week, and is temporarily stationed just outside London.

He expects, however, to be transferred soon to the R.A.O.C. Since Michael is not only one of Britain's finest writers of popular melodies; but also an entertainer of the very front rank, the boys of the East Surreys should find soldiering much more pleasant than they have been doing.

Trombone-leader Miff Ferrie, one of the pre-war air-favourites, who has not been heard broadcasting for eighteen months, will be featured this Sunday afternoon in a Forces programme, directing his twelve-piece band at a concert at Luton.

### MAYERL PICKS HIS MEN

BUSILY rehearsing this week for his opening on Monday at Grosvenor House, Billy Mayerl promises that his brand of dance music will hold interest for musician listeners as well as dancers on the regular air dates which are already being scheduled from this venue.

Here is the line up: Billy Mayerl and George Myddleton (pianos); George Radcliffe (1st trumpet); Tommy Porter (2nd trumpet); Al Roach (trombone); Ralph Wilson (1st alto and clarinet); Jerry Grant (2nd alto and clarinet); Eddie Farge (tenor and clarinet); Harry Martin (bass); and Reggie Mills (drums).

Billy expects to engage a regular croonette, and for his broadcasts he will use two or three vocalists; but so far no actual singers have been set for the job.

As we stated last week, piano duets between Billy and George Myddleton will be a regular feature of the band's programmes, and medleys of numbers by Jerome Kern and George Gershwin have already been arranged by Billy himself for this purpose.

In addition to his engagement at Grosvenor House, Billy has a number of radio dates set, mostly for solo piano recitals.



Billy Mayerl

### "CLASSICS" ON WAX AND ON THE AIR

SINCE its commencement in October last year, Bill Elliott's weekly "Classics of Jazz" series has met with an ever-growing appreciation from a host of readers.

Not only THE MELODY MAKER offices, but the gramophone companies, also have been inundated with correspondence asking for the issue and re-issue of American records and cut-outs starred in this series.

Now comes the announcement that Wally Moody has decided to include several of these discs in Parlophone's "Jazz Classics" series.

First to be issued will be Higginbotham Blues/Give Me Your Telephone Number, played by Jay Higginbotham and his Six Hicks. This will be available on July 1, and will be followed by Indiana and Bill Coleman Blues, both trumpet solos by Bill Coleman, for which there has been a great demand.

Other records suggested by Bill Elliott will follow in due course, and on each he will write a descriptive note in the Parlophone monthly supplement. The B.B.C., too, has not been blind to the success of Bill's feature, and he has been invited to broadcast on the series.

This will take place in the Radio Rhythm Club programme, during the week commencing May 20, the exact date to be announced in due course.

### Army Education Authorities Sponsor Big New Scheme

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ARMY EDUCATION CORPS, JAZZ RECITALS BY "WELL-KNOWN AUTHORITIES" AT CAMPS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY ARE NOW BEING PLANNED.

The Army Educational Corps functions as a unit for giving the ordinary serving soldier an opportunity to carry on his peace time studies, and remarkable results have already been obtained.

Easily first, however, have been the musical recitals which have been given voluntarily to troops all over the country, and now this activity is to be co-ordinated into one central group.

#### THEY ASK FOR JAZZ

So many requests have been received from swing fans now serving in the Forces that, in addition to the well-known "legitimate" musicians who have already been approached, it is the intention of the Army authorities to form a separate swing panel of experts who will visit camps to give record recitals of the best in swing music.

It is possible, we understand, that where the best camp dance bands are available instrumentalists from them will actually co-operate with the lecturer in educating our soldiers, airmen and sailors in modern dance music.

Many officers are enthusiastic about the idea, but we understand that the

intention of the authorities is to use civilian lecturers almost exclusively in order to keep the lectures as non-military in atmosphere as possible.

An at-random plebiscite has proved that the regular airings of the Radio Rhythm Club have so many adherents that official action about the interest of the troops in swing music is considered advisable.

It is expected that a full programme will be complete in the course of the next few weeks and full details will be published in the MELODY MAKER as soon as they are available.

### 400's Heft-y Leader

IN charge of the music when the "400" Club reopens on May 12 will be Canadian pianist Matt Heft.

Matt, who has been for some time pianist to Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon, and who was formerly John Boles's accompanist in the States, will be leading an eight-piece band of whom trumpet player Kenny Baker and drummer Bennie Midgley, both formerly members of Syd Millward's "Garrison Theatre" Orchestra, are already fixed.

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**BILLY PLONKIT:** "This is Cpl. Cornflake, our Flint Lock Musketry Instructor. He wants an audition on his serpent... he says he can busk all the popular tunes since the Relief of Mafeking!"

## WINSTONE PULLS OFF ANOTHER "DOUBLE"!

**DOUBLE-RECORDING** leader Eric Winstone, who leads his Swing Quartette on Columbia and his London Accordion Band on Regal-Zonophone, has a double airing on May 7.

From 11.30 a.m. till 12.15 p.m. on the Forces programme the Accordion Band will be featured with Jack Plant, Vivienne Paget and Roy Marsh, and Eric returns to the studio at 10 p.m. for a variety spot on the Forces wavelength with his Swing Quartette. His morning feature is entitled "Sing out the Old—Sing in the New," the script of which he has written himself.

Thus listeners will have the unusual opportunity of comparing these two "rival" bands on the same day.

Nelson, Lancs. Increasing interest in swing music in this town has prompted J. Woodcock to set about forming a Rhythm Club, and all interested should contact him at 20, Swaine Street, Nelson, Lancs.

## LATEST RECORDINGS

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## M.U. ARRANGERS' SECTION: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**THE** Arrangers, Composers and Copyists Section of the Musicians' Union held their Annual General Meeting Saturday a week ago, which proved to be a very good turn-out indeed.

Notable absentees were Eddie Carroll, Jack Nathan, Sid Phillips and Barry Gray, who are all in the Forces.

The meeting was very lively, with plenty of good discussion.

There were only two changes in the office-bearers, George Evans being elected the new Secretary in place of Alf Ralston, who is now in the R.A.F., and Ray Terry was elected Treasurer. The full list of officers is now: President, Phil Cardew; Vice-President, Peter Yorke; Trustees, Lew Stone and Bretton Byrd; Treasurer, Ray Terry. The Committee elected consists of Jack Beaver, Rosie Bramson, Sid Phillips, Arnold Clayton, Ben Frankel, Harry Hines, Percival Mackey, Robert Gill, Jose Norman, Van Phillips, Alf Edwards and Reub Silver.

### PRESIDENT CARDEW

In his Presidential speech, Phil Cardew reminded members how the Section had brought into association and unity most of the foremost arrangers, composers and copyists in popular music. The Section had been able to make rapid strides in its first six months—that is, up to the commencement of the blitz.

Nearly all of the rates laid down had now come into operation and this had had a stabilising effect in this field of music. Unfortunately, since the blitz, with telephonic dislocation, changes of address, and the call up of Alf Ralston to the R.A.F., matters had been slowed up a bit, but the General Organisation of the Musicians' Union, Alec Mitchell, had now pulled the Section out of the doldrums.

Alec Mitchell then presented a report on behalf of the Secretary, and concluded by saying that there were important problems, peculiar to the Section, yet to be overcome, and that the A.C.C.S. must develop and fulfil its essential part in organised musical life, side by side with their fellow instrumentalists in the broader organisation of the Musicians' Union.

## SHELTER ROMANCE LEADS TO WEDDING BELLS FOR SHEARING

**AT** 3 p.m. yesterday (Thursday), at the Bloomsbury Register Office, the marriage took place between George Shearing and Miss Trixie Bayes.

They met last October at a time when George used to stay in town during the blitz and go down to the shelter to play the piano for the other occupants.

Miss Bayes herself is the daughter of a former concert party and cinema pianiste, and her immediate interest in George's playing formed the foundation of their early friendship.

Readers will join with us in wishing both these young people every happiness in the future.

## DANCE BAND DON'TS—No. 26

### DON'T FAIL TO CULTIVATE BUSKOLLOGY.

Witnessed the let-down the other evening of a band which had not followed the above advice. Dancer after dancer came up to the band, muttered something to the bandleader, who looked embarrassed, and then the dancers turned away with disappointed expressions on their faces.

It was the old story. "Have you got So-and-so?" "Will you play This-and-that?" And the bandleader had to confess that they hadn't got the parts.

How much better it would have been had he been able to say: "Well, we haven't got the parts, but I expect one of the boys knows it, and we'll have a go at it for you." Which is what most experienced (and successful) bandleaders would have done.

But to be able to do it calls for a high degree of buskology. Earlier in this series has been explained how to cultivate an "ear," but the essence of it is to know your way about your instrument so well that, with the tune running through your head, your fingers instinctively pick out the notes.

It is a first-class idea to devote, say, a quarter of an hour of each band rehearsal to busking practice. Pick some easy tune at first—Home, Sweet Home or something like that—and have a cut at it. Fortunately, pianists are particularly good at this sort of thing and can usually pull the band through.

Eventually you can progress through hard study to busk such as *Rockin' In Rhythm*, and you'll be surprised to see how much more popular your band becomes with dancers if you can give them anything they ask for.

No. 31. The April 26 meeting of the Portsmouth Rhythm Club, at the "County House," Commercial Road, was attended by about 30 people to hear Mr. Matthews give a recital on Joe Venuti. Next week's talk will be by Mr. Leggatt on Bix Beiderbecke. Among the Jam Session instrumentalists were Phil Bryant (trumpet), Pete Cochrane and Ron Male (clarinet), Cyril Breeze (tenor), Roy Brewer (piano), Bill Proctor (drums), Jack Restall (trumpet), Roy Leggatt (cornet), Ted New (trombone), Ron Male (clarinet), J. Miller (piano), Freddy Gage and Jimmy Robbins (drums).

## TIPS FOR TRUMPET TYROS—No. 37

**IF** you ever have to play a solo in public (as apart from a solo with the band) do be careful about your top notes. Many a trumpet player has come forward from the band, played quite a nice solo with lots of expression and nice tone, only to wind up with a split top note which sets on edge the teeth of every one of the audience.

And all his excellent work in the other 99.9 per cent. of the solo is wasted.

It's very nice if you can finish up on a crystal-clear top D, and it certainly fetches the gallery. But, unless you can produce top D's as regularly as clockwork, it is far better not to attempt to.

The only way in which you can test yourself is, of course, by trial—by playing the last phrase of the number over and over again and getting the last top note with unfailing regularity. But even this isn't an invariable guide.

Nerves have a lot to do with split notes, so does moisture on the lips from playing in the heat of stage lighting, so does the tension under which the average inexperienced performer suffers when taking the stage alone.

The answer is, of course, experience. But you can't learn experience overnight, and, until you do, it is wiser to keep away from such a yawning pitfall.

On the other hand, it is an awful let-down to build up to a high note by natural musical sequence, and then take it an octave lower. That is even more humiliating than splitting on the top note.

Even if the average member of the audience doesn't know A from a bull's foot, he can at least recognise that the last note ought to have been a high one of sorts.

And that is your let-out. Play the whole number a couple of notes down. Transpose it for yourself, and, if necessary, for the rest of the band. So that instead of having to take a top D you can finish on B, or even B-flat. (Or, if that is too much for you, as low as you like.)

Some solos, of course, go too low for this. If so, pick another one. But keep well within your safe range and you're not likely to be humiliated. It's a tip worth knowing—paste it in your hat.

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# DUKE ON THE AIR

**H**IGH-SPOT for swing fans of last week's radio was, of course, the broadcast on Saturday, April 26, at 2 p.m., in the "Forces" programme, of the recording, made in America, of Duke Ellington's airing which was relayed from C.B.S. by the B.B.C. on June 10 last, nearly a year ago.

The programme consisted of, in addition to parts of *East St. Louis*, which the Duke is still using as a signature tune, *Ko-Ko* (H.M.V. B.9078), *Blue Goose* (B.9115), *So Far, So Good* (B.9068), *Cotton Tail* (B.9090), *Concerto for Cootie* (B.9105), *Jack the Bear* (B.9048), *Boy Meets Horn*, and *The Sergeant was Shy*.

As will be noted from the numbers I have included, since the original relay records of all but the last two titles have been issued here.

This may have knocked some of the novelty out of the broadcast for some of you, but, on the other hand, the fact that you may have known many of the tunes probably added to your enjoyment.

So much has already been said of Ellington and his music that any comment on this airing must to a great extent be repetitive.

## THE WORLD'S GREATEST

The fact, however, remains that, redundant or platitudinous as the remark may be, Ellington's band is still the world's greatest, just as Ellington's compositions and methods of presenting them are such that no one has yet succeeded in emulating.

The main thing about this Ellington music—and it is probably one of the reasons for Ellington's uniqueness—is that the Duke makes no attempt to compromise with the "contemporary trend," any more than he allows himself to be influenced by popular clamour or vogues introduced by others which may have met with momentary approval, and consequently produced the more tangible rewards that such approval may bring in its wake.

His music is to-day, as it always has been in the past, the outcome of his own soul and talent.

The only basic differences one sees in it are those which are the outcome of the maestro's experience—experience which has developed his imagination as it has increased his technical command of orchestration.

But even these differences cannot destroy the fundamental character of the music, because it is the character of the man who creates it—the character which, for all its modern cul-

ture, remains essentially the character of the Negro and the vast jungle and all the grand, mystifying bizarre that is the foundation of its deeply colourful but impenetrable interior, that is the Negro's heritage.

## WATTS' DIXIELANDERS

After Ellington any music worthy of the name of jazz must seem tame, and it says much for the efforts of Phil Watts and His Dixieland Seven, who were the feature of the Radio Rhythm Club's meeting last Thursday week (April 24), that one can mention them without the inevitable comparison proving odious.

Last time Phil's combo was broadcast it was from a recording, and the reproduction was pretty dire.

On this occasion we had a chance to hear the band "in the flesh," and the result was something of an eye-opener.

The line-up consisted of Frenchie Sartell (tpt.), Harry Roach (trmb.), Aubrey Franks (tenor), Sid Kreiger (piano), Sam Molyneux (bass), with Phil himself on drums, Chris Townsend making up on clarinet and Betty Kent as the vocalist.

The whole thing can be summed up in the few words that we to-day have quite a number of boys who are not only good musicians but are really beginning to realise the meaning of jazz.

If Aubrey Franks's tenor was the outstanding attraction, Sartell's trumpet, Townsend's good clarinet style and the rhythmic melodiousness of Roach's trombone were very little behind. A bouquet, too, to Kreiger for his piano solo in his own blues composition.

## GRAMOPHONICS

Last week the gramophone played a big part in providing programmes for the B.B.C.

This was more or less as usual, but what was not so usual was the enlightenment shown by some of the recitalists in their choice of records.

In a most attractive programme entitled "Hidden Treasures," Charles Maxwell showed his taste by including as one of his gems Louis Armstrong's recording with the Lynn Murray Chorus of *Shadrack* (Decca F.6835).

This may be one of Louis's lesser known discs, but in my humble opinion it's one of his best, and I haven't forgotten any of his early sides with Earl Hines, or such records as *Knockin' A Jug*, in which Teagarden, Lang and Sullivan played.

Another pleasant record programme was Kay Cavendish's "The Record Goes Round and Around." Kay, your taste in jazz is coming on nicely, too.

Apologies for erroneous announcement in the "M.M." of March 29 last, to the effect that Harry Parry would adopt, as from week commencing April 6, suggestion previously made in this column that he should introduce a guest soloist at all his Sextette's Radio Rhythm Club broadcasts.

Various difficulties made it impossible to get the innovation going by the stated date.



The first picture of ace comedian Max Bacon since he came out of hospital. He is seen here celebrating his success in "Hi! Gang!" in a group which includes Mr. & Mrs. Issy Bonn and Elm Warren.

But it will be commenced on Monday next, May 5, when David Wilkins, famous coloured hot trumpet from the late Ken Johnson's Band, will appear with the Parry outfit as the R.R.C.'s first featured visiting star.

## LETTERS

From Mildred Nasmith, Chislehurst:

"If 'Oi' can be classed as a curate's egg, then both the curate and the egg must be abnormally good."

"If you ask me, the only sensible regular articles in the M.M. are those by Edgar Jackson, Pat Brand and

## Wartime Radio . . . by "DETECTOR"

Jerry Dawson. So, 'Mike' and 'Detector,' keep a civil tongue in your heads—and if you dare publish this I'll bet I'm not the only one with this opinion."

From Agnes Stewart Clark, Dumbar-tonshire:—

"I agree with everything you had to say about 'Oi,' even when you found fault with it. There are a lot of weak spots in it. I am sure it will never come up to the standard of 'Hi! Gang.'"

"I enjoy reading your articles very much, and I hope you will continue to give us the same frank criticisms of B.B.C. programmes."

Thanks, girls. You're just two of dozens who write in the same strain every week, but luckily for my pay cheque most of them support you, Agnes.

Hope you both heard "Oi" last Saturday. A great improvement.

But, Mildred, just in case you think I'm trying to get off with you, they had to bring in Vic Oliver, Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon to do it.

Seems to me rather unfair to us and them. You can have too much of a good thing. They'll get stale if over-worked.

And it's not as though there weren't others.

If the B.B.C. want a couple of comedians to build up into top-line stars to create shows around, they should turn their attention to that dialect genius Max Bacon, and the "Umbrage" merchant, Jackie Hunter—both of them, oddly enough, ex-drummers.

Max's turn in "Hi! Gang," last Sunday was one fat scream from beginning to end.

And whoever wrote Max's script ought to be made script-writer No. 1 for some more of these radio variety shows. He's got it all. Definitely, our Maxie is as good as he's ever been.

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# HIGGY ON WAX

by  
**REX HARRIS**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is the discographical article on J. C. Higginbotham promised you when Leonard Feather's article on Higgy as a personality was published in the "M.M." dated March 29, 1941.



Higginbotham receives his trophy from Editor Dave Dexter for winning a place as All-American trombonist in the recent "Down Beat" poll.

**W**HO could have foretold in 1908, when a small coloured bit of humanity was born into the Higginbotham family and christened Jack, that twenty-one years later he was to be the star player of the Luis Russell Band?

It's a long step from Cincinnati to New York City; but that boy made it. In his youth, practising on horns which were almost certainly "old and battered," he developed a style that ranks high amongst the trombonists of jazz, whether he is using that not-sufficiently-heard muted delicacy of his, or that explosive and tremendous reserve with which we have come to associate him so consistently.

You will have read all about Higgy as a personality in Leonard Feather's interesting article ("M.M.," March 29), so my job is to discuss his playing—playing that puts him in the very front rank of jazz sliphorns.

## INCREDIBLE SOLOS

Let us, therefore, think of him when he leapt into fame in the '20's, when the Russell band was playing with reckless fervour and abandon at the Saratoga Club in Harlem; when he was interpolating explosive riffs and smears amongst those incredible solos of his; solos which by their strength and amazing construction will surely last in the ears of his contemporary players.

Think of the instrumentalists whose style is so individual that they may be recognised by even recent newcomers to jazz. Names spring to the mind.

Louis, Fats, Tesch, and Coleman Hawkins are perhaps representative; but here is one man who has played

consistently and recognisably since he first recorded with the Russell group in 1929.

There is a fierce tearing quality in his attack and tone which is as noticeable in those fine eight bars he played in *Shanghai Shuffle* with Buster Bailey's 7 Chocolate Dandies in 1935, as it is in that grand old J.F. 36 H.M.V. *The Call Of The Freaks*, with the Russell contingent led by King Oliver in 1929.

1929 seems to have been a vintage year for Higgy, not only for his "live" playing at the Saratoga, but (what is more important to jazz lovers) because he recorded largely, prolifically, and splendidly.

*I Can't Give You Anything But Love*, and *Mahogany Hall Stomp*, that everlasting tribute to what has become an immortal bawdy house, were two titles with Louis Armstrong; and then those absolutely electric sessions with Luis Russell's Burning Eight: *Savoy Shout*, *Call Of The Freaks*, *It's Tight Like That*, and *Jungle Blues*.

And *Feeling Drowsy*; that chorus shared with Charlie Holmes seems one of the very satisfying passages in jazz, where question and answer are so complete and logical.

Russell's was an ideal band for Higgy; in fact, one might say that he was one of the chief causes of its fire and force.

That drive and vigour of the rhythm section, particularly of Pops Foster, must have inspired much of his playing; and, in turn, have been sent by him.

Occasionally he was in a more pensive mood, as in *Pleasing Paul*, where he takes 32 bars of quite restrained but very recognisable sliphorn, which was, no doubt, very pleasing to Paul

Barbarin and others at that session on September 24, 1929, when three other numbers were recorded: *Funny Feathers Blues*, *How Do They Do It That Way?* and *Makin' A Country Bird Fly Wild*, the last title being graced with Victoria Spivey, of *Toothache Blues* fame.

Still in the same year, he played at a session for the Chocolate Dandies under the leadership of Benny Carter, making only two titles, *That's How I Feel To-day* and *Six Or Seven Times*.

In 1930, under his own name, J. C. Higginbotham and his Six Hicks, comprised of Allen, Holmes, Luis Russell, Will Johnson, Pops and Barbarin, he waxed two titles that should be in every jazz lover's collection: *Give Me Your Telephone Number* and *Higginbotham Blues*.

These were unobtainable for some years, being issued on Okeh 8772, but thanks to the Hot Record Society they were reissued on H.R.S.14—and a grand 75 cents' worth that disc is!

## "BELLY-STABBING"!

The autodiscographical title might be taken as a representative record of his playing, whilst the "organ-grinder" coda is not only amusing, but delightfully belly-stabbing (if the Editor allows it).

Though still working for the Russell band, he was often called upon for special studio recordings, as indeed were most of that famous company.

Together with Allen, Nicholas and others he helped Jellyroll Morton turn out some discs for Victor such as *Strockin' Away*, *Low Gravy*, *Mush-mouth Shuffle*, and the only side which so far as I know has been released in England delighting in the name of *Fickle Fay Creep*.

About this time, too, that ill-fated and much underrated trumpeter, Jack Purvis, engaged him to play on six titles; but to me, at any rate, Higgy doesn't seem happy on these sides—he gives the impression of being out of his element and ill at ease.

By this time, Louis Armstrong was

using the Russell band, and some fine jazz he made with it.

*St. Louis Blues*, *Dallas Blues* and *Bessie* stand out, particularly in my mind.

Dallas perhaps most of all—for he takes an inspired chorus just after Louis in that lovely twelve-bar blues that fits the pattern like the right piece of a jig-saw puzzle, whilst Pops and the rhythm section are giving everything.

But, alas! there are some changes to be made.

After making a few more discs with Russell, which included the famous *Muggin' Lightly* and *Saratoga Drag*, Higgy left them and joined Fletcher Henderson in 1931, taking Claude Jones' place, but only for a relatively short time.

He made fifteen or so titles, perhaps the best representatives being *The New King Porter Stomp* and *Honeysuckle Rose*.

It was a great pity that he had to leave them at that time, his style being so admirably suited to the Henderson atmosphere—but circumstances over which he had no control intervened.

In October, 1933, he was recording again, this time with Benny Carter, and, of the four sides available, he takes solos on two of them—*Symphony in Riffs* and *Blue Lou*, the Higgy to be heard on the latter sounding a very chastened and subdued trombone.

## HAWKINS SESSION

Even during the following month, when he was on that famous Hawkins session which made *The Day You Came Along*, *Heartbreak Blues* and *Jamaica Shout*, he is only to be heard on the last-named, but nevertheless it is grand stuff for the few bars he does play.

1934-35 saw him with the Blue Rhythm Band under the direction of Lucky Millinder, some of whose recordings were issued on English Parlophone and Columbia.

I always feel sorry that Buster Bailey's Seven Chocolate Dandies, who got together in 1935 to make *Call Of The Delta* and *Shanghai Shuffle*, didn't cut more at that session.

With Allen, Higgy, Buster Bailey, Bennie Carter and the others, they had the personnel to turn out some first-class jazz at a time when Paris was seriously rivalling the States in its production and quality.

And of the two made, it is unfortunate that Higgy didn't take a solo on the slower tempo side of one of Decca's finest two bobs' worth (2s. 5½d. to you).

## BACK WITH SMACK

However, this is not to be a lament for the sessions at which Mr. J. C. didn't play, so listen again to *Shanghai Shuffle* and pick-out his short but very good solo—a half-chorus practically at the end.

Little is heard of him again during 1936—probably another period of enforced inactivity—but 1937 saw him back with the Henderson band in company with George Washington and Edward Cuffee.

But it didn't seem to him that this was the old Henderson band he knew, and after staying with it for only a short while, in company with Geo. Washington he joined Louis in the Russell-Armstrong group, with whom he has been since that date.

But 1937 saw him turning out some of the "good ole good 'uns" with

(Please Turn to Page 7)

## REPRESENTATIVE HIGGY DISCS

"The Call Of The Freaks"	King Oliver's Orch. (H.M.V. JF36)
"Mahogany Hall Stomp"	L. Armstrong's Orch. (Parlo. R571)
"Feeling Drowsy"	L. Russell's Orch. (H.M.V. B4070)
"It Should Be You"	L. Russell's Orch. (H.M.V. B6487)
"New Call Of The Freaks"	L. Russell's Orch. (Parlo. R1645)
"Dallas Blues"	L. Russell's Orch. (L. Armstrong) (Parlo. R973)
"Bessie Couldn't Help It"	L. Russell's Orch. (L. Armstrong) (Parlo. R698)
"New King Porter Stomp"	Fl. Henderson's Orch. (Col. CB701)
"Honeysuckle Rose"	Fl. Henderson's Orch. (Col. CB584)
"Blue Lou"	Benny Carter's Orch. (Col. CB720)
"Shanghai Shuffle"	Buster Bailey's Orch. (Decca 5492)
"Blues In Disguise"	
"That's How I Feel To-day"	Mezz Mezzrow's Orch. (H.M.V. B8656)
"Hot Club Stomp"	
"Swing Session's Called To Order"	Mezz Mezzrow's Orch. (H.M.V. B8646)
"Roll Along, Prairie Moon"	Henry Allen Orch. (Vocalion S29)

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New Swing Discs

# GREAT BENNY

Reviewed by Edgar Jackson

## BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

\*\*\*\*Benny Rides Again (Ed. Sauter, Arr. Sauter) (Am. Columbia XCO29065) (Recorded approx. February, 1941).

\*\*\*The Man I Love (I. and G. Gershwin, Arr. Sauter) (V. by Helen Forrest) (Am. Columbia XCO29063) (Recorded approx. February, 1941). (12 in. Parlophone E11450—4s. 10½d.)

Goodman (clt.) with Skippy Martin, Gus Bivona, Bob Snyder, George Auld, Jack Henderson (reeds); Alec Fila, Jimmy Maxwell, Irving Goodman (tpts.); Louis McGarity, Red Gingler (tubs.); Bernie Layton (piano); Mike Bryan (gtar.); Arthur Bernstein (bass); Harry Vaeger (drums).

TAKEN ill in January of last year with sciatica, the complications of which virtually paralysed his left leg, on July 10 last Benny Goodman found himself, on the advice of 19 different specialists, on the way to the famous Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., to undergo a major operation.

Realising that he might be away for some weeks, Benny had reluctantly felt himself compelled to place his band under notice, and after finishing out the last week of its then current contract at the Catalina Casino on Catalina Island under the direction of Ziggy Elman and Kay Kyser, it broke up.

### NEW BAND

In due course, the operation, having happily turned out successful, Benny returned to work. But most of his old boys had meanwhile found other jobs.

A number had gone to Hollywood to augment the band Artie Shaw already had there for his film "Second Chorus" and for his Burns and Allen N.B.C. radio hour. Others got fixed up elsewhere.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising to find that Benny took advantage of the situation to form a new band which he believed would be better than any he had ever had before.

Having come into being round about August, 1940, after a few minor changes the line-up became set as given above, and here are the first records by it to be released here.

It will be noticed that except for Irving Goodman, Jimmy Maxwell,

Artie Bernstein, and vocalist Helen Forrest, whom Benny had kept under salary during his illness, all the men are new.

That is to say, new to the Goodman firmament, but not new to the profession.

Many famous names will be recognised; in fact, it is perhaps no exaggeration to say that it would have been hard to find a more brilliant array of talent suitable for building an outstanding ensemble.

And the band has turned out to be as competent as anyone could have expected.

But that is only the first part of the story of these records.

Having acquired a superlative combination, Benny set out to do something entirely different with it.

And he has succeeded!

### NEW JAZZ VOGUE?

On the whole this remark does not apply so pertinently to the Gershwin standard, *The Man I Love*.

In this sweet, slow-tempo arrangement the band plays with all the expected perfection of phrasing, precision and general polish, but the side, which is mainly a shop window for Helen Forrest, says in its quasi-concert way little that could not have been adequately said on a 10-in. disc.

But *Benny Rides Again* is a different proposition.

Though its Goodman-Vaeger duet revives memories of Goodman's spectacular *Sing, Sing, Sing* (12 in. H.M.V. C2936), it has none of *Sing, Sing, Sing's* brazenness or exhibitionism.

This ultra-modernist, yet often quite simply melodic, Ed. Sauter composition, with its original mode of construction, has, for all its definitely jazz character, an almost classical atmosphere.

For all its occasional outbursts, it has the delicate texture of fine embroidery, and instances a degree of tasteful ambition which may even herald a new vogue in jazz—a vogue in which the pastel tint may replace much of the extravagance in scoring and physical boisterousness which have been among the more obvious retarding influences on so much of our modern so-called swing.

Anyway, even if this is going a bit far in the dangerous task of forecasting, the fact still remains that *Benny Rides Again* is a record that is not only different but most entrancing.

Benny's clarinet is delicious—artistic, yet full of the jazz character. This Goodman fellow not only has something to say, but knows how to say it musically in every sense of the word.



"The Cats and the Fiddle"—A new American vocal and instrumental quartet on Bluebird records, who are proving very popular.

The other side is a slow, sentimental "commercial" pop. All right of its kind, but not likely to interest readers of this section.

### SID PHILLIPS' QUINTET.

\*\*Strut Miss Lizzie (Creamer, Layton) (DR5125) (Recorded November 27, 1940).

\*\*Wabash Blues (Mecken, Ringle) (DR5187) (Recorded December 20, 1940). (Decca F7758—2s. 5½d.)

Phillips (clart.) with Rex Owen (tenor); Max Goldberg (tpt.); Bert Barnes (piano); Max Abrams (drums).

If the solos had been up to the improvised ensemble parts, I could have spoken a good deal more highly of these two bunks of evergreens.

But apart from Phillips's clarinet (mainly for its musicianliness), the only soloist who can be called outstanding is Rex Owen.

Although good in *Miss Lizzie*, the usually elegant Bert Barnes is not up to form in *Wabash Blues*, and Max Goldberg gets a bad break in *Miss Lizzie* because the time values of Max Abrams' after-beat cymbal wallops are not always consistent. Not like Max A., who is usually most accurate.

Still, on the whole, the good points of both sides outweigh the bad.

Expert on all matters concerning music primarily for ballroom dancing, Joe Loss has had his record of *Frenesi* (H.M.V. BD5668—2s. 5½d.) described on the label as a "Beguine."

In case you don't know, this "Beguine" business sounds like a slow rhumba. And a nice, sweet record, too.

### WILL HUDSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA (AM.).

\*\*Peakin' At The Deacon (Hudson, Arr. Hudson) (Am. Decca 68135) (Recorded September 19, 1940).

\*World Without You, The (Hudson, Kramer, Arr. Hudson) (V. by Kay Kenny) (Am. Decca 68129) (Recorded September 19, 1940). (Brunswick 03137—3s. 8d.)

Hudson directing George Siravo, Joe di Maggio (altos); George Berg, Bob Dukoff (tenors); Will Mutton, Frank Berardi, Carl Warwick (tpts.); Ray Heath, Walter Burleson (tubs.); Mark Hyams (pno.); Tommy Morgan (gtar.); Marty Blitz (bass); Billy Exiner (drums).

WILL HUDSON, best known as composer of such pieces as *Organ Grinder's Swing*, *Moonglow* and *The Maid's Night Off*, and as co-leader (with Eddie de Lange) of the Hudson-de Lange Orchestra (Brunswick and Vocalion), now takes for his *Peakin' At The Deacon* a leaf out of the *Tuxedo Junction* book.

This slow opus has been neatly and tastefully arranged in its commercial-swing way, and if little outstanding happens in the way of solos, any more than anyone would mistake the band for any but a white one, at least the combination is musicianly and plays with a nice sense of relaxation.

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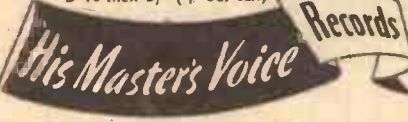
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### ROYAL AIR FORCE DANCE ORCHESTRA.

\*\*All Of Me (Simon, Marks) (Decca DR5234) (Recorded January 10, 1941).

\*\*Indiana (MacDonald, Hanley) (Decca DR5235) (Recorded January 10, 1941). (Decca F7782—2s. 5½d.)

Sgt. Jimmy Miller directing AC/1 Tom Bradbury, Harry Lewis, Andy McDevitt, Jimmy Durrant (reeds); Cpl. Tom McQuater, AC/1 Archie Craig (tpts.); George Chisholm, Eric Breeze (tubs.); Ronnie Aldrich (piano); Sid Colin (gtar.); Arthur Maden (bass); Jock Cummings (drums).

ALTHOUGH the records may fail to capture some of the attack and élan which are such features of this band's broadcasts, at least they let you know that it's still about the best outfit this country has managed to produce.

In addition to a general standard of understanding and performance well above average, both sides present good commercial swing arrangements.

There's a good spot of Chisholm and a good sax solo in *All Of Me*, as well as some very nice work by the sax team. Andy McDevitt's clarinet adds to the attractions of *Indiana*.

Note to "Detector": I'll go halves with you on a bouquet to Decca for labelling this band *The R.A.F. Dance Orchestra*. At least, it's one up on the B.B.C.'s "A Band of the R.A.F." which description has to do duty for every R.A.F. dance band, good and bad, that goes on the air.



# BRAND'S

**D**URING the course of his stage-show at the Wood Green Empire last week, the lights dimmed on the band, and the spotlight picked out MANTOVANI as he stepped forward to play his own arrangement of *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life*, with Ivan Fosello at the piano.

Thus, unknown to themselves, the audience was given a foretaste of a radio programme due to take the air on May 10 under the title of "Sweet Is The Melody."

For the B.B.C. approached Monty a little while back, asking him to prepare a small show for the radio public (in view of the difficulty bandleaders are having these days in collecting enough musicians at one time in one place) and this was a sample of the type of listening you and I will be getting during this forthcoming programme.

Of Monty's qualities as a violinist I need not speak. Of IVAN FOSELLO'S playing I can only say that I'm sorry not to have had the opportunity of hearing him before. And when I add that JACK PLANT will also be the vocalist in this programme you will understand why I am pretty confident in predicting that listener-demand will result in its developing into a series.

And whilst the name of Mantovani is before us, let me settle a question that seems to have been puzzling many readers of late, who ask us the title of ROY RICH'S signature-tune.

For it is Monty again who is playing *Intermezzo* (yes, that's the title) with SIDNEY TORCH at the organ, and you can get it on Decca F.7661, with *Barcarolle* on the other side—one of a series that Torch and Monty are making for Decca.

With the tragic death of AL BOWLLY still poignant in our memory, a postscript to last week's article of appreciation by Stanley Nelson seems to have a special significance for us all.

There seems to have been no doubt at all in Al's mind that his end was imminent. JIMMY MESENE told me of his last parting with his partner as they left the stage-door of the Rex, High Wycombe.

Jimmy wanted Al to stay the night at High Wycombe, but Al, worried about his throat, thought he'd better get back to town to see a specialist.

Al turned to him and took him by the hand, before catching the train back to the West End that fateful night. "If anything should happen to me,"



**DORIS LOWE**, 18-year-old vocal sensation, who is slaying 'em with STAN ATKINS and his Band at Velling (Kent). She was heard on the air last Thursday in Stan's excellent broadcast.

he told Jimmy, "remember the Greek spirit."

An unusual sympathy existed between these two vocalist-guitarists of Greek extraction, which resulted not only in perfect unison in their work, but also in their relations one with another away from the mike.

And remembering the "Greek spirit," Jimmy did not let down his pal. He went on the stage the very next day, and, as a gesture, has adopted *Buddy Can You Spare A Dime* as his signature tune.

This week, Jimmy is bravely carrying on at the Glasgow Empire, and he tells me that he has no intention of ever taking another partner into the act. We all wish him the best of luck, and hope that the pluck in the true tradition of the stage that he is showing will be rewarded by outstanding success.

The trouble about having friends on the variety stage is that the more successful they are the less you see of them.

# ESSENCE

Which is why HAL SWAIN and I never seem to meet these days. And having last seen him, and his Swing Sisters, at the Dominion, Tottenham Court Road, sometime before the commencement of the London "blitz," I can't say I'm surprised.

Nor am I surprised that he has been chosen to appear in the forthcoming tour of the B.B.C. "Happidrome" show which goes on the road on June 16.

Hal's voice seems to improve every time I hear him, his sax-playing has been known throughout the profession for years—and it isn't only the singing, dancing and accordion-playing of his "Sisters" that makes me envy him his job!

You can hear them all when they make a return date with the "Happidrome" show on the air on May 25.

Many of you were interested in the views of HARRY MADENBURG, in a recent issue, regarding South London's anti-blitz dance policy. Almost immediately came the Regal Ballroom, Beckenham, and the Romford Palais to line themselves up with his opinions.

And with reason, for since the beginning of the war the Regal—where "The Varsity Revels" play every Saturday—has only been closed on eight occasions—first when all entertainment packed up at the beginning of hostilities, and again when some Jerry ironmongery broke all the windows and spoilt the black-out arrangements.

ERIC RANCE and his partner FRANK HEMMINGS tell me they have been carrying on ever since, and the present line-up of piano, drums, guitar, tenor, baritone, alto and trumpet has BILL CHRISTMAS sitting in with his trumpet.

Bill, now with the Canadian Forces, is the brother of Art Christmas, Jack Payne's star multi-instrumentalist, and was featured recently in "Services Spotlight" from the Hammersmith Palais.

As regards Romford, Bill Batt writes on behalf of "SPIKE" WILLIAMS and his Palais Band to tell me that, although they play five sessions a week, they have only been closed on one occasion, despite having had their full share of D.A. bombs and kindred scares.

In addition to Bill on bass, the band, led by "Spike" on piano, comprises Frank Turner, Geoff Clayton and Stan Dawson (reeds); Johnny Evans (trumpet); Les Kirkwood (drums). They're on the top floor of the building, but, as Bill points out, "the crowd don't worry—so why should the boys?"

In fact, on the only occasion they were absent, it took a land-mine to upset their record.

But J. W. Bennett, manager of Streamline Promotions, Ltd., claims to go one better than these in that they have been running dances at the New Cross Palais with AL TALLACK and his Band since early December.

"Not only," he tells me, "were Streamline the first promoters in this part of London to get going again after Hitler's autumn sallies, but they have for months been running dances at the Bell Hotel Ballroom, Bromley, and the Fellowship Inn, Bellingham, S.E."

To which I can only add—Carry on, London!

But now comes sad news in the form of a letter from the fellow who started this spate—Harry Madenburg—who writes to tell me that the Borough Council, apparently not being satisfied with a beautiful new Town Hall, which boasts a magnificent ballroom, and ignoring several empty schools, which, incidentally, pay no rates, has cast envious eyes on the only dance hall left.

And so ends the Embassy Ballroom. Catford, for the duration, likewise the splendid efforts of the Manhattan Band, who during this short period built up a fine following of enthusiastic dancers.

"When I wrote recently," says Harry, "I thought I had taken everything into consideration—including the blitz. But I had forgotten the Local Authorities."

Now he's looking for a hall that nobody wants—except the public.

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"Take 'em!"

"Watcha say, gate? Are you anywhere?"

"No place, my fren', no place. Could you oblige me with a ready roll?"

"Surely can! Latch on to some of this fine Lucky jive."

"Solitude!"

"Man, I sure am beat to my socks this mornin'. I was out ballin' with some fine chippies, and we fell into Monroe's and knocked ourselves out, right on through to the early bright."

"Well, all rout, ole man, all rout! Tha's a killer-diller from Manila, Mr. Miller, with vanilla and sassafrilla!"

"Yeah, man, but I gotta make time to-night. We hit at ten, and I'm apt to miss out on it."

"Aw, man, don't be a slave, let's misbehave!"

"Man, you got something there. Let's get tall and have a ball!"

"Let's be like the trout and cut on out!"

"Well, all reet! I'm like the kangaroo, and how about you?"

"I'm straight from the zoo, I'm jumpin', too!"

"Solid!"

"Hello!"

"Hello, old pal! How are you?"

"Only fair, old boy, only fair. Could you furnish me with a cigarette?"

"Certainly. Help yourself to one from this packet of Lucky Strikes."

"Splendid!"

"Old chap, I am thoroughly weary this morning. I was out having a good time with some comely damsels, and we arrived at Clark Monroe's Uptown House club and exhausted ourselves right up to dawn."

"Good!"

"Agreed, but I have to be punctual this evening. We are scheduled to start playing at ten o'clock, and I fear I may be late."

"Pray forget your obligations!"

"That is a commendable suggestion. Let us get inebriated and enjoy ourselves!"

"Let us depart!"

"Certainly! I am ready, are you?"

"Yes."

"Solid!"

## CLASSICS OF JAZZ

No. 22—"Sent For You Yesterday" and "Swinging The Blues" (Count Basie and his Orchestra)  
Brunswick 02619 . . . by Bill Elliott

THE feeling I always get when listening to Basie's outfit is that of the relaxed swing of a small band, yet, as you can see, this is a large and powerful orchestra.

A lot of this feeling is due to the inspired solo work and to the fact that the ensembles are so arranged as to give the necessary drive to the soloists.

*Sent For You Yesterday* (and *Here You Come To-Day*) has a short intro. by piano leading to a sax phrase. This phrase is repeated throughout the record and serves as a theme.

### SIMPLE COUNT

Warren's alto leads the first ensemble and Basie himself takes the first solo in his usual clean-cut style. The Count is a very simple player, but I know of no other pianist who gets more swing from a piano with less effort.

Listen to the brass figures behind him, and also to Evans' tenor that follows. He plays a very Hawkinsesque tenor, but it is none the worse for that.

Our little sax phrase then

**PERSONNEL:**  
Ed. Lewis, Buck Clayton, Harry Edison (trumpets); Benny Morton, Dickie Wells, Dan Minor (trombones); Earl Warren, Jack Washington, Herschel Evans, Lester Young (clarinets and saxes); Count Basie (piano); Freddie Green (guitar); Walter Page (bass); Jonah Jones (drums).

leads to James Rushing singing two choruses, and I want you to lend an ear here to two things: (a) Edison's trumpet and the piano behind the first one; (b) brass and saxophone teams behind the second.

Rushing is a great favourite of mine, and his work in this record is really a "sender."

Edison takes the next solo, his high-register trumpet being answered by the saxes, and this arrangement is featured in the last two ensemble choruses, when the brass team are answered by the sax quartet.

Listen how some drum breaks cleverly placed give a terrific lift to the last chorus. The record finishes with the sax-phrase and Basie's piano.

A lot has taken place, but don't get the idea that it's over-arranged; far from it.

*Swinging the Blues* is a fast tempo blues which opens with some grand teamwork by the saxes, which they continue behind the first solo, taken by piano. The ensemble take the next passage and then there is a lovely spot for three trombones. The tone Basie gets from his scored ensemble passages is amazing, and in this respect he can rank level with any band in the world.

### YOUNG'S "HONK"

Lester Young is the next soloist, playing a fast tenor solo that starts with a glorious "honk." I like Lester on tenor but I prefer him on clarinet, and wish he would record more on this instrument.

After some more ensemble, Buck Clayton has a good muted trumpet solo in his usual delicate, almost nervous, style, and then Herschel Evans gets off on tenor against some brass work.

The brass are featured strongly in the last three choruses, with Edison's trumpet, some fine drumming from Jones, and Page on bass all prominent.

## No. 1 RHYTHM CLUB OPENS WITH A BANG

THE reopening of the No. 1 Rhythm Club at its new premises—the old Bag o' Nails, Kingley Street, W.1—on Sunday can only be described as a colossal success.

An attendance of about a hundred was hoped for, but, instead of that, no less than 225 people crowded the well-equipped hall to capacity, and if it is a cliché to say "a good time was had by all," we shall have to use the cliché because it exactly describes what happened.

Compèred in sparkling style by the B.B.C.'s Leslie Perowne, the proceedings were kicked off by Ray Sonin, Editor of the MELODY MAKER, who made a speech which (since he is writing this report!) can only be described as having gone down very well with the audience.

Rex Harris retold his interesting B.B.C. broadcast on Pee Wee Russell, Bill Elliott played records of some of the "Classics of Jazz" which have caused so much interest in this paper, and an exhilarating programme

was put over by Johnny Claes and his Band, from the Beach Club—an outstanding swing outfit that fully deserves the eulogies that have been showered on it since its inception.

On Sunday next the big attraction will be personal appearance of Harry Parry and his Radio Rhythm Club Sextette. Owing to other engagements they have to appear early in the programme, so fans are asked to be in their seats by 2.45 p.m. The meeting starts at 3.

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH JAZZ MELODY—AND WITH THE BLUES

by

"MIKE"

IT isn't often that I openly disagree with the policy of this journal, but I must say I strongly disapprove of the competition which has been set to define (shortly) Ragtime, Swing and Jazz. At least, I don't disapprove of the competition as such.

I merely think that five bob is an entirely inadequate reward for something which has occupied the finest brains in the jazz world (mine included) for many years without any of us ever having reached anything like a satisfactory definition. However . . . "where angels fear to tread," and all that.

Now, about what I—being unable to define it at all—call "jazz." If I have confessed publicly that I have lost interest in jazz, I do not mean to imply that I have either ceased to like it or that I would not regain some of my former interest if something turned up which struck me as really new and worth while.

### MELODIC SIMPLIFICATION

At odd times during the past seven years I have heard isolated instances of jazz which have fascinated almost as much as jazz did in the years before 1933. *Blues of Israel* was such an instance; and there have been others, but not sufficiently important for me to remember their names.

But for some reason the fascination of even these pieces of what I consider good jazz has not lasted as well as that which earlier music still has for me.

I am not certain why this should be the case, but it is so. And I do not attribute the fact to any waning of my own interest in jazz. The reason, I believe—or one of the reasons, at least—is that melody no longer plays the part in jazz that it used to.

I find myself not being able to remember the names of records because there is no distinctive melody by which I can recall the music played on them.

As with harmony, which we discussed last week, melody in jazz has had little new to offer us in the last seven years of the decade 1931-41.

Up to a point this may be explained by the fact that where there has been a tendency to harmonic simplification, rather than development, melody has been simplified, too.

It has been simplified, in fact, almost to the extent of being non-existent.

This has happened principally because of the wholesale reversion to the blues form. The blues is primarily a harmonic basis for improvisation, not a melodic one. I know there are fine tunes written in the blues idiom—*St. Louis, Basin Street*, for instance—but for the most part "playing the blues" means improvising on a chord-sequence instead of a melodic line.

The first result of this is obvious: we get variations without a theme.

Such variations are in themselves devoid of a distinctive melodic line because there is no tune for the variations to suggest (and a good variation will always suggest the tune, however complicated or ingeniously remote from the theme the variation appears).

There is nothing to suggest but harmony, and because the only way you can suggest harmony is by splitting up the chord into its arpeggio, the majority of improvisations on the blues sequence are little more than passage-work.

I don't say that there is no melody in blues playing, but because really inventive artists are rare, most of the variously titled blues recordings that are issued every month have very little to recommend them beyond the rather doubtful virtue of "sincerity."

### THE BLUES

It seems to me that the blues has been a somewhat mixed blessing in jazz. In one way it brought back an atmosphere of spontaneity to jazz when it was badly needed; in another, it enabled almost anybody to save themselves the trouble of creating new tunes for their improvisations.

That I recall the name of *Blues of Israel* as one of the pieces of jazz which I have liked is not due to my remembering its tune; indeed, though I played it many times when it was first issued, I doubt if I can remember a single bar of it.

But I do remember that it was some of the finest blues playing I have ever heard. What I mean by good blues

playing is another matter, and it would take too long to define it, so you'll have to take my word for it.

Paradoxically, some of the jazz I have liked least in recent years I have been able to remember because it either has an easily memorised tune or no tune at all in the accepted sense.

In the first category I place "swung" classics—*Song of India, Black Eyes, Blue Danube*, and the rest. I have discussed this particular epidemic already, so there is no need for further comment.

### EASY-MONEY METHODS

The second category is also a product of the last seven years, and is characteristic of the easy-money methods which have crept into jazz.

This second kind of jazz is founded not on melody but on what can most politely be termed *motifs*. In plainer jazz-language: riffs taken from their proper surroundings and extended to fill most of three minutes.

All that is necessary in this way of doing things is to pick on a four-bar phrase, give it an incongruous title and spin it out until the more sensitive among us are nearly crazy with the repetition.

But I will come back to the question of melody and *motifs* next week.

## HIGGY (From page 4)

Mezzrow and his Ork at a recording session when those two terrific H.M.V.s were made—8656 and 8648—*Blues in Disguise, That's How I Feel To-day, Hot Club Stomp and The Swing Session's Called To Order*.

Perhaps it would be better to stop at this point and just note the fact that he played last year for the new famous Blue Note Company on Nos. 6 and 7, *Basin Street Blues* being made under his own name—J. C. Higginbotham Quintet. I find them a little below the high standard he has always set for himself. His solos are wooden instead of his usual fiery ripping and tearing metallic timbre.

Well, he's only 32, so he's got plenty of time to make Cincinnati still prouder of her son's trombone playing.

And now that he's joined Count Basie, let's hope he keeps '29 and '30 in mind when he next hears that shout of: "Take another one, Jay!"

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ROLAND  
PEACHEY

## Personalities In Paragraph

**M**EET ex-Canadian bank clerk **ROLAND PEACHEY**, the young man who came to London to see the Coronation and stayed on to become one of the best-known electric guitar players in the country.

Five foot and a bit, with pleasant features half-hidden behind slouch hat and horn-rims, he'll tell you, always providing you ask him, that way back home music was just a hobby to relieve the monotony of big business.

Once over here, however, he found that London had other plans for him. 'Tis true that he brought his guitar with him on the trip, but believe it or not, most of his time in between learning the language was spent in going the rounds of famous and ancient monuments which in those days, of course, were slightly more numerous than they are to-day.

Starting out one evening armed with regulation guide book and a burning desire to see the Tower of London, he seemed to get the instructions mixed slightly more than somewhat, for instead of spending the night in the vicinity of the "Pygmalion" Tower, he finished up guitar and all at a club in the West End where, sitting in with the boys, he began to send both guests and musicians alike by the startling originality of the jive phrases that issued from his peculiar-looking three-necked instrument.

Morning found the name of Peachey the new topic of conversation in Archer Street, and it was not long before he received his first offer of a regular job.

This was in the shape of an engagement for George Black at the Palladium for the new Crazy Gang show "These Foolish Things," and for the next nine months his working hours coincided with the opening times of this famous music-hall.

With the war bringing the job to an abrupt conclusion, the old indecision returned whether to stay on in England or to return home.

Luckily enough, the offer of a job at the Florida Club caused him to remain, and shortly afterwards fate in the disguise of Felix Mendelssohn stepped in with the suggestion that he should become featured artiste in a new grass skirt combination that was being formed for recording and broadcasting.

The sessions were for Columbia, and soon Ron found himself a success with the hardest taskmasters of all... the public, and with the band booked into the Café de Paris, the office stool finally became a thing of the past.

The sight of this young, slight, earnest-looking musician concentrating over the triple neck of his unusual-looking instrument went over big with the patrons of this famous eatery, who, if they do not buy gramophone records, at least buy the band champagne, which amounts to practically the same thing if your tastes are in this expensive direction.

Time, as suggested by Hollywood, marched on, and eventually there came the inevitable break between artiste and leader with Ron leaving Felix to join the House of Hylton.

For some time he appeared as featured artiste at the Scala Theatre, and also recorded with his own band for Decca.

Now, with plans afoot for several airings in the near future, it seems that the young bank clerk is definitely on the way up.

And then they tell you that fretting gets you nowhere.

Battered bowler turns Lancastrian musician **JIMMIE MAYERS** into trumpet-playing clown during band sessions at Hammersmith Palais.

With headgear at angle of 45 degrees, he'll stop in middle of jive chorus to exchange ribald comments with regular dancing patrons on the floor, to

## DRUM DOPE—35

### BEWARE OF STICK TWIDDLING.

**I**N the bad old days of jazz band drumming it used to be considered part of the drummer's job to act the clown. Fortunately that is over and done with, but it still survives here and there in stick twiddling.

Now a spot of stick twiddle won't hurt you so long as you don't let it interfere with rhythm—that's the danger.

The method of twiddling is to hold the stick between the tips of the thumb, forefinger and second finger, and to push it round with a sort of slow finger snapping movement. It takes a lot of practice in order to get it going swiftly and surely.

If you **MUST** twiddle, and can't get the hang of doing it properly, one way is to stick a thin nail firmly into the stick half up its length, hold this between the thumb and forefinger and spin it round with the second finger.

But, above all, you **MUST** keep the rhythm going. And the way to ensure this is to see that you only twirl one stick at a time, meanwhile the other beats a steady four. Now and then perhaps, for about one bar, you may be able to twirl both sticks, but beware of letting the habit grow on you.

The most effective way of twirling is with the wire brushes, but we'll get round to that next week.

amazement and amusement of uninitiated.

Starting career some time ago up North with gig band run by Eddie Macauley, he graduated to town via Bertini at Blackpool and played for some time at the Ritz Hotel, London.

Appearances on the stand are at the moment governed by duties as War Reserve Policeman, but, whenever he's there, he certainly manages to cram in the maximum amount of cheery personality during the time he spends on the job.

And speaking about trumpet players, there's a job waiting at the moment for any good brass man who cares to apply to **HARRY LEADER** at the same address. But I'm telling you... he's got to be good.

Those members of the profession who have had the pleasure of meeting sweet singer **HELEN MCKAY** around the studios will, I know, be sorry to hear that she is now in a nursing home awaiting an operation for appendicitis.

On the air last Friday with Arthur Salisbury in "Break For Music," she left the studio immediately afterwards to finish a film, only to end the day as previously stated.

Helen has been with Salisbury and his orchestra now since the war, and has done many factory concerts with him besides the numerous air dates that come the way of this popular leader.

Incidentally, Helen's last number on the air was that beautiful hit melody by Roy Lee, the new English song writer, titled *Someday*.

Let's hope that someday very soon we shall be hearing her singing again, fully recovered from her current illness.

First musician: "How's your wife?"  
Second musician: "That's my business."

First musician: "Well, how's business?"

My sympathy and your sympathy to accordionist **VIC PARKER**, last seen hobbling round the studios with ankle encased in plaster cast.

The damage, a sprained ankle, was probably the result of trying to be on two sessions at the same time.

Once an organiser always an organiser, it seems, and last Thursday evening, watching khaki-clad **FELIX MENDELSSOHN** introducing a galaxy of West End talent to an audience of fellow soldiers, I could think of few other personalities in town for whom the profession would so gladly turn out without remuneration to assure the success of an evening show.

With a bill that included Vera Lynn, Carl Carlisle, Vivienne Paget, Ron Chesney, Sam Bennie, Tessie O'Shea and many other famous acts, it was small wonder that the concert had to run overtime to allow for all the encores demanded by the enthusiastic house.

Seems there must be something about a soldier, or at least a Press agent, after all.

Things are coming to a pretty pass, as the girl said when she married the football player.

Calling on Lafleur chief **TOM ELLIOTT** at his new, palatial and slightly disordered office in Regent Street, I not only found the entire staff surrounded by salvage from his previous blitzing, but was also introduced to a massive and uncrackable-looking safe in which were being placed all available parts of current orchestrations.

Maybe it's the paper shortage.

Maybe it's just lack of space.

But what are bandleaders going to do for hit tunes if someone loses the combination?

by  
**ERIC WINSTONE**

## OUR RECORD COMP.

**E**NTRIES are already pouring in for the first two of these now regular weekly gramophone competitions, announced in the M.M. for April 19 and 26.

Result of the first competition, "Which are the twelve best records issued in this country of genuine blues performed in slow tempo?" will be published next week. Results of subsequent competitions will follow regularly.

This week's competition is as follows:

**WHICH DO YOU CONSIDER THE TWELVE BEST RECORDS (SIDES) BY DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA, ISSUED IN GREAT BRITAIN?**

A prize of 5s. cash will be sent to the reader whose list corresponds most closely to that of the majority.

All entries must be marked G2 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 19.

Name of winner, together with his entry, will be published in the M.M. for May 31 next.

## CROSBY'S WAX-RECORD

**W**HATEVER the highbrows think about crooners, the public is going for them in a bigger and bigger way, and Bing Crosby actually created a new record for any recording artist when 448,700 of his discs were sold in January last.

The Baron of Boo-boo-boo has thus a flying start in his chance to beat his last year's figures of 3,500,000, and it is estimated that he should increase his earnings from recording from the £15,000 odd which he netted last year to the £20,000 mark.

One of Bing's biggest sellers, by the way, was the British number *A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square*.

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DENVER ALTO, S.P.G.B. ... £22 10  
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BESSON PROTEANO, gold lac. ... £20  
WORLD (HAWKES), silver plated ... 10 Gns.  
KING, gold lac., slide change ... 15 Gns.  
WASHINGTON TROMBONES, S.P.G.B. ... 12 Gns.

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# WHO'S WHO IN JAZZ

From time to time "Who's Who" presents biographies of personalities who were either inadvertently omitted from their alphabetical place or who have risen to prominence since it was passed.

**GUARNIERI, JOHN:** W., pianist. Descendant of the famous Guarnerius family of violin makers. Father also plays and makes violins. Studied classics first; started touring with dance bands at eighteen. First important job was with George Hall at Taft Hotel, N.Y., for three years continuously, except for two brief jobs with Mike Riley. Through Nick Fatool, with whom he had worked in Hall's Band, got audition with Benny Goodman, and replaced Fletcher Henderson on piano. Featured with band and sextet until the group broke up in California, after which he joined Artie Shaw, playing with the full band as well as the Gramercy Five contingent.

**CAMARATA, TUDIE ("TOOTS"):** W., arranger, trumpet; b. New Jersey, 1913, son of symphony musician. Studied trumpet and arranging at Juilliard musical college, also played violin for a while. Worked with Frank Dailey's Orch., also briefly with Charlie Barnett, Red Norvo, and Joe Venuti, before joining Jimmy Dorsey in 1935 as first trumpet. Gave up playing in 1937 to devote his full time to arranging for the band. Best work includes *Dirieland Detour*, *The Breeze And I*, *Six Lessons From Madame La Zonga*, *I Got Rhythm*, *Hep-Te-Hootie*, *Bugle Call Rag*, *My Prayer*. Has also written a number of stocks.

**CACERES, ERNIE:** W., clarinet, saxes; b. Texas, 1911. First prominent as member of Emilio Caceres trio, featuring his brother on violin, which recorded for Victor. At that time played mostly baritone sax, on which he was also featured with Bobby Hackett's first small band, recording on Vocalion. Later with Bob Zurke's Orch., also featured with Jack Teagarden on alto and clarinet; joined Glenn Miller 1940, playing hot clarinet and baritone solos.

**BIVONA, GUS:** W., clarinet; b. New London, 1915, of musical family. Studied violin before taking up alto sax and clarinet, getting his first job with Spider Johnson, coloured leader; later toured with Leo Scalzi's Brunswick Orch.; later with Jimmy Monaco, and in 1935 with the Hudson de Lange Orch. After the latter group broke up he joined Bunny Berigan, and was heard in solos on several of this band's Victor discs. Joined Teddy Powell autumn, 1939; recorded on Decca. Leaving Powell spring, 1940, formed his own band, but found very little work, and gave it up to join Benny Goodman's new combination, opening with him October, 1940. Considered to be one of the best clarinetists to have risen to prominence in the past year.

**SOUTH, EDDIE:** C., violinist; b. Louisiana, 1904. Started on violin at ten; first pro. job at Sunset Café, Chicago. With Charlie Elgar at Dreamland Ballroom, 1921; continued studying with classical teachers, but spent six years with Jimmy Wade's Band, then in pit band with Erskine Tate; formed his own small group at Club Alabam, Chicago, took it to Europe 1927-31, playing at London's Café Anglais and noted Continental spots, also studying in Paris and Budapest. Back in States, guest starred with Rudy Vallée, toured in concert and club work; back to Europe in 1937, playing Club des Oiseaux at Paris Exposition, and recording a few solos with Django Reinhardt and duets with Stéphane Grappelly on French Swing label. Worked in Holland 1938, returned to States; recorded album of classical and light standard solos for Columbia, 1940. Opened at Café Society Uptown, N.Y., October, 1940. An outstanding musician technically, unequalled in his combination of both classical and jazz talent on the violin.

**DONAHUE, AL:** W., leader, violinist; b. Massachusetts, 1903. Studied at law school and at musical college, later dividing his time between work with a law firm and gigs with his own band. Later went on theatre tour. Built up big connection for supplying bands to ships, and at one time had 37 groups on cruise boats and liners. Played at the Rainbow Room and coined slogan

"Low Down Rhythm in a Top Hat," switching to a swing style late in 1939 and recording for Vocalion and Okeh. Is good concert violinist and has written several songs, incl. *Do You Wanna Jump*, *Children, Sweet Sorrow*, and his theme. Best swing discs include *It Had To Be You*, *Southern Fried*, *Tuxedo Junction*, *In The Mood*, *Route 23*. Arrangers who have written swing numbers for him include Dean Kincaide, Stewie McKay, Edgar Sampson, Red Bone, Junie Mays.

**HALL, EDMOND:** C., clarinet, baritone sax; b. New Orleans, 1901, of family of clarinetists. Played with various pioneer local bands, incl. Buddy Petit, with whom he left New Orleans in 1921; back there in '23,

joined Mack Thomas. While with Alonzo's Poss' Band, 1926-7, made his first records on Victor. Arrived in N.Y. 1928; worked with Billy Fowler, Charlie Skeets, and opened with Claude Hopkins at the Savoy January, 1930, remaining with him five years. With Lucky Millinder, 1937; later that year with Billy Hicks' small band, also recording for Variety with Frankie Newton. Played with Zutty Singleton's trio, then late in 1939 joined Joe Sullivan's mixed band at Café Society, remaining with a new group under Sullivan autumn, 1940. Recorded with Sullivan, Ida Cox (Vocalion), Lionel Hampton and W. C. Handy, also with Zutty and Red Allen in Decca's New Orleans album. One of the foremost yet lesser known of hot clarinet men.

**MOORE, WILLIAM:** C., arranger; b. 1915. Worked in a butcher's shop for some time and did some arranging as

Continuing Our Series of Potted Biographies of Jazz Personalities. Back numbers containing the previous instalments are still obtainable.

a sideline for a little-known New York coloured band, Bob Kelsey's Orch., until Sy Oliver took an interest in him and got him a job with Jimmie Lunceford's Band, when Sy himself left to join Tommy Dorsey in autumn, 1939. Moore, who plays no instrument and has not studied arranging, is rated by Oliver and other musicians as one of the greatest young jazz writers. His work for Lunceford includes original compositions such as *Belgium Stomp*, *Bugs Parade*, *Monotony in Four Flats*, and *I Wanta Hear Swing Songs*; also *I Got It*, *Pretty Eyes*, *I'm In An Awful Mood*, *Chopin Prelude No. 7*, *What's Your Story*, *Morning Glory*, *Let's Try Again*, etc. In September, 1940, he was signed to arrange for Jan Savitt.

## Emptying shelves and filling shells

EVERYBODY knows that our normal peacetime standards of living must be cut during a war. Everybody knows that ships must carry war needs; that material and labour must all work for the war effort. But does everybody realise that while a shortage of supplies means inconvenience to the buyer, it must mean hardship to the seller?

All honour then to the great mass of traders who accept the new conditions with good grace.

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## RHYTHM CLUB NEWS

No. 85. Owing to the rapid expansion of the S.W. London Rhythm Club it has been found necessary to hold over the next meeting until larger premises can be found. Anyone able to recommend suitable quarters is asked to communicate with the chairman, Mr. E. F. Brown, 38, Cedars Road, Morden, Surrey, or Mr. D. Tilt, 14, Stanford Way, Norbury, S.W.16.

No. 140. The next meeting of the Stockton Record and Instrumental Club is on May 4 at the "White Hart" Clubroom, Dovecot Street, Stockton, at 7 p.m., when a record recital will be given by Billy Walker. The club sends its best wishes to members serving in the Forces, especially ex-Secretary E. L. Morgan, now in hospital with a leg injury.

No. 114. The Bradford Rhythm Club now holds its meetings every Thursday. On April 24 they met to hear a "Spot the Tune" competition by Alan Holgate, which was won by L. Jones. Next, S. Barraclough and S. Fletcher offered their favourite discs, and a discussion on Artie Shaw and Benny Goodman apparently ended in a riot. However, the evening closed with a Jam Session comprising Alan Holgate (piano), L. Jones (trumpet), P. Craven (trombone), T. Gikinas (accordion), H. Shaw (tenor), S. Barraclough (clarinet), and J. Whelan (drums). Next meeting May 1 at 7 p.m.

No. 150. At the meeting on April 27 a Jam Session by the Club Group, was the feature, with Billy Bryant (trumpet), Len Wood (tenor), Ken Franklin (clarinet), Alan Mead (piano), Johnny Crowe (guitar), Jack Surridge and Reg Pillay (basses), and Tom O'Callahan and Harry Martin (drums). Ron Collis and Johnny Crowe (guitar) also contributed a short session. The next meeting is on May 4, when, in addition to a Jam Session, there will be a number of important announcements, so all members are asked to attend.

No. 152. High Wycombe Rhythm Club's next meeting is on May 4 at the White Hart, when Rex Harris will give a recital entitled "Discs

I Like," and the Club will also have a personal visit from Harry Parry, who will play in the Jam Session, comprising George Oliver (alto-clarinet), Les Wilson (baritone), Ron Meachen (piano), "Buster" Greenwood (trumpet), Tim Tolden (trombone), Maurice Goodearl (guitar), Bob Lord (bass) and Ron Clark (drums). Details from P. J. Duffell, 295, West Wycombe Road, High Wycombe, Bucks.

No. 151. On May 8, at 7 p.m., in the Ambulance Hall, Dewsbury, the Dewsbury Rhythm Club is presenting Bob Jackson and his Empress Swing Stars in aid of club funds. Tickets 2s., H.M. Forces 1s.

No. 153. Last Sunday's meeting of the Chelmsford Rhythm Club heard "Spider" Kelly's recital of old and new Chicago-style discs, and "Spider" also won the Jazz Knowledge competition which followed. Keith Briggs's recital on famous guitarists has been held over until May 11, meeting at 2.30 p.m. at 31, Sunningdale Road, Chelmsford.

No. 155. The meeting of the Watford Rhythm Club on April 23 opened with a recital of American Jazz records by B. M. Lytton-Edwards, followed by a recital on the Austin High School Gang by Bill Nickell. All inquiries to the Secretary, 124, Mildred Avenue, Watford, Herts. 'Phone 4325.

No. 159. Pimsbury Rhythm Club will meet on May 7 for Laurence Henshaw's recital on Benny Carter's Orchestra, and a Jam Session will follow. The team for the inter-club Rhythm Bee which has been arranged with the N.W.3 Group will be selected. Subscription to the Club is 6d., and all enthusiastic rhythm fans should drop in on Wednesday evening at 7.30 p.m.

N.W.3. The next meeting of the N.W.3 Rhythm Club will be on May 9 at 7.30 p.m., at "The King of Bohemia," Hampstead High Street. The Pimsbury Park Rhythm Club will battle with N.W.3 for supremacy in the inter-club "Rhythm Bee," at which Rex Harris will act as "question-master."

## BILL THORBURN "KEEPS IT DARK" FOR 13 MONTHS

PLAYING the Chelsea Palace this week, and travelling on to the Alexander, Widnes, on Sunday next, is Billy Thorburn's show "Sh!... Keep it Dark"—an enjoiner that it is difficult to fulfil in view of the fact that this show has now been on the road for the wartime record run of thirteen continuous months with only one week out, and is booked until the end of August.

The reason for its success lies principally in the fact that it is slick, well-dressed, light and extensively features Billy and his Music—he and the boys occupying almost the entire second half in addition to their spot at the close of the first.

It is difficult to realise that this smiling veteran of the dance profession was at the top of the musical tree way back in the original Savoy Orphean days, that it was he who played first piano in the first British presentation of *Rhapsody in Blue*. His infectious grin and obvious sense of thoroughly enjoying himself throughout the evening, as much as his individualistic style of playing, have maintained his popularity to-day probably higher than ever.

With him are George Kenneth (tp.), Stanley Osborne (sax. and acc.); Ralph Bacon (drums); Wally Windsor (gtr. and vocals); with Terry Devon as featured vocalist both with the band and in her own spot on the bill.

## BRIGHTENING NEW BRIGHTON

After using gramophone records during the winter the Tower Ballroom, New Brighton, decided to use a band for the spring and summer seasons, and Bert Yates, well-known saxist and leader on Merseyside, took his eight-piece band into the place with the result that more than a thousand people attend every Saturday night and on Easter Monday 1,500 turned up.

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Bert Yates, who has played in many fine outfits, is leading the band, but the basis is co-operative and several of the boys have turned down lucrative offers to stay with him.

No. 161. Last Monday's meeting of the Sidcup Rhythm Club heard Pte. Kelsey, of the R.A.O.C., present his "Libyan Desert" discs. Next Monday's meeting at the Station Hotel at 7.45 p.m. will include W. A. Riekus's recital on Benny Goodman, and all interested should write R. J. Ash, 43, Cavendish Avenue, Sidcup.

Leeds.—F. Lee and friends intend starting a Rhythm Club, having had encouraging support from local fans, and all interested should write Mr. Lee at 78, Rookwood Road, Leeds, 9.

## Classified Advertisements

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11.

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MEDWAY



SCOTLAND

**L**ATEST Medway musician to join up is Les Reeves, crack trumpet with Tommy Hewson for the past four years, who reported to the Navy last week. His presence will be much missed, particularly by the "M.M." Medway correspondent, who is on the same fire-watching party!

Tommy Hewson, whose home is at Gillingham's New Pavilion, has not fixed a successor yet, but promises a surprise shortly. His present line-up is: Les Whittell (alto, clarinet), Jock Patterson (alto, clarinet, fiddle), Arthur Cameron (tenor, guitar), "Andy" Wilson (drums, trombone and arranger), while Tommy himself leads from piano.

Besides his work for Lloyd Forsythe, Albert Card (seen here) is also to be found at Chatham's Co-op. Hall on Thursday evenings.

Incidentally, last week I gave multi-instrumentalist Clarence Bones as a member of Card's pack. Actually he is working at the Assembly Hall, Gillingham, but will be heard broadcasting with Albert to-morrow (Saturday, May 3) on tenor and trombone.

Charlie Johnson still reports good biz. at Gillingham's Assembly Hall, where the leader, Private Len Macarroll, is fortunate enough to be stationed near enough to be available for most sessions.

The other lads are Clarence Bones (trumpet), Charlie Phillips (piano) and Norman Compton (drums).

Well-known tenor saxist Reg Bishop, now a writer in the R.N.V.R., was home on leave recently and played around.

He also is expecting to be stationed in the district soon, and no doubt will land up in the Assembly line-up.

Another Medway musical personality to be on the air recently was young George Blackmore, organist at the Majestic Cinema, Rochester. A keen swing fan, George used to do band shows with his Admirals of Swing when musicians were more plentiful. Just now he is awaiting his R.A.F. call-up.

NORMAN H. FRANK.



Albert Card

**A** WELCOME budget of news from the Greenock district reveals plenty of business by our old friend Charlie Harkin, ex-"M.M." Scottish champ.

Charlie may be called up for service soon, as with the de-reserving of school teachers his scientific attainments will probably come in handy.

He has been playing this winter three sessions weekly at Cragburn Pavilion, and also doing quite a few gigs, which, however, are not too numerous through the calls of overtime.

Charlie's present line-up has not been greatly interfered with so far, and consists of himself (trumpet-leader); Wm. Justice (piano); John Christie and Bill Batters (saxes); John Finn (drums); Willie Anderson (bass); and George Malcolm (vocals).

"La Conga," which Charlie saw on the Continent in more peaceful days, is the rage at Cragburn. And another surprise—Charlie is at present engrossed in organ playing and intends taking a degree, Bach to Boogie-Woogie in fact. He has a local church appointment, and plays on a splendid instrument, costing several thousands, and installed by Henry Willis and Sons.

KYTE CLICKS

In Greenock, Messrs. Burton, the tailors, have opened a new ballroom which is leased to Jimmy Miller and Alec Neely, of the Bradley School of Music. Music is supplied by the various local bands, including Bill Batters' Onyx Band, Harry Lawson's Band, Joe Piper's Memphis Band, and Jas. Pherson's St. Louis Band.

These bands play also at the regular H.M. Forces dances held in Greenock Town Hall. Henry Morrison's Swing Stars, another local outfit, play twice weekly at the Moorings Ballroom, Largs, of which more news anon.

Sydney Kyte, now in residence at the Playhouse, dispensing tempos which are certainly pleasing Glasgow's critical dancers. Sylvia Handel in good form, too. Playing with the band at the moment is Jimmy Bell (trumpet), who usually plays for Louis Freeman at the Alhambra.

Home on leave—trumpeter Jimmy Boyle, complete in that sky-blue outfit which seems to be favourite among musician-soldiers. Jimmy used to play with the local Waldorf Astorians band, and is still getting plenty of playing to do with his R.A.F. unit.

HUGH HINSHELWOOD.

Melody Maker

Incorporating 'RHYTHM'

MAY 3, 1941

Vol. XVII. No. 406

LOSS FINDS  
AN ACE CHIRPER  
IN LEEDS

**L**ATEST vocalist discovery is a 21-year-old Leeds girl named Renee Johnson who (writes Jerry Dawson) seems at last to prove that this country can really produce what has always been considered the prerogative of the coloured American—a Blues Singer.

And her discoverer is none other than Joe Loss.

Whilst playing a theatre date in Leeds some weeks ago, Joe was asked to present a cheque to the Red Cross Society which had been subscribed to by patrons of a small hotel in the city.

On arrival, he found the usual pianist-entertainer at work—but with a difference. So impressed was he that he decided to give her a stage try-out at the earliest opportunity.

It was my good fortune to be present at the Ambassador Theatre, Pendleton, on April 20, when Joe played a Sunday concert and, without any rehearsal at all, Renee made her first appearance on any stage, with results that exceeded even Joe's expectations.

There is no doubt that she will prove a terrific asset to Joe's organisation, particularly as her appearance coincides with the departure of Paula Green, who, after a considerable period with Joe, has now taken up a more or less permanent appointment with the B.B.C. as a featured vocalist.

Red Carter, youthful ex-Bram Martin and Teddy Joyce (trumpet), now with Mrs. Wilf Hamer at the Grafton Rooms, Liverpool, will soon go into engineering under the Government scheme. Two other corner men of Mrs. Hamer's in Dennis Bland (alto) and Tommy Barnes (trumpet) are now somewhere on the East Coast.

NORTHERN  
NEWS NOTES

**H**OLDING down a job for seven years is something these days. But Les Marsden, who has led his band at the Empress Ballroom, Preston, for this period, has just signed up for another year with the following line-up:—

Les Marsden (piano and accordion), Everett Beals (alto sax., violin and clar.), Tony Stocks (trumpet and vocals), Bill Marsden and Artie Watt (saxes and clar.), and Dennis Calvert (drums and vocals).

\* \* \*

Fans of Jack Gordon may have wondered what has happened to him since he left the Bear's Paw Restaurant, Liverpool. He is now playing at the King's Hall with M'Lander's Band, and his alto and clarinet are a big feature.

Second alto here is Alf Roberts, from Reece's Red and White Ballroom, with M'Lander himself on tenor. Band's efficiency can be gauged by the fact that the doors have to be closed as early as 8.30 p.m., and it's really the band and not the blitz.

\* \* \*

Replacing Johnny Rosen at the Cambridge Hall, Southport, is the Army Pay Corps Band. Local swing fans find the quartet at the Miramar Café, Lord Street, very intriguing. Two of the stars of this outfit are Roy Davy, vibes, and Ernie Howard, ex-Jack Briley drummer.

\* \* \*

There must be something in this boiler-making business. Harry Middleton, swing piano player, who can also do his stuff on the electric organ, is now working in the very same shop which Harry Davis, of the Romany Band, left some sixteen years ago. Harry Middleton leads a local gig band in the intervals of boiler-making.

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