

Melody Maker

INCORPORATING RHYTHM

Vol. XVII. No. 418 JULY 26, 1941

CARROLL GIBBONS ON SIX WEEKS' TOUR

THE PROVINCES ARE TO HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY OF SEEING PIANO MAESTRO CARROLL GIBBONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE FOR, TAKING HIS USUAL HOLIDAY FROM THE SAVOY HOTEL, HE IS TO EMBARK ON A SIX WEEKS' TOUR ROUND THE COUNTRY.

In past years he has toured with his band, but on this occasion he is relying on his own pianistics, plus the vocalising of Anne Lenner.

The tour kicks off at the Tivoli, Aberdeen, for the week commencing August 4, and then goes to the Glasgow Empire for the following week.

B.B.C. FORTNIGHT

For the two weeks commencing August 18, Carroll again takes up the baton to lead his band for a fortnight at the B.B.C.'s provincial hide-out, and then the tour continues with further dates which will be announced as soon as they are definitely settled.

M.U. WOMEN'S GUILD GETS GOING

WOMEN members of the Musicians' Union and wives of members have formed themselves into a Guild under the auspices of the London Branch, and three very successful meetings have now been held.

The chairman is Joyce Stone (Mrs. Lew Stone), and the Con- venger is Lily Mairants (Mrs. Ivor Mairants).

Following the very important part of the proceedings, which is the tea interval, members of the Guild contribute musical items.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 31, at 3 p.m., at the Workers' Music Association, 9, Great Newport Street, next to Leicester Square Tube Station, and members have been invited to bring along gramophone records which they or their husbands have recently recorded.

LADIES INVITED

Any lady readers of the MELODY MAKER are invited to be present at this final summer meeting.

Reg Knight will be speaking on how the members of the Guild can participate in the work of the Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council and in the forthcoming presentation of the annual Jazz Jamboree on September 7.

At past meetings of the Guild there have been talks on the problems of women musicians by Alec C. Mitchell, General Organiser of the Musicians' Union, and on the clothes rationing by Margaret Yarde, of Actors' Equity. Question and discussion time is always lively.

So ladies, remember—next Thursday at 3 p.m.

Arthur Forrest, noted dance promoter of South London, is starting an E.N.S.A. tour next Wednesday, and is in urgent need of a lady pianist, doubling accordion, and a lady saxist. He can be contacted c/o the "M.M."

Parry To Play Big Rhythm Club Ball

A GRAND RE-UNION OF RHYTHM CLUBBERS FROM ALL OVER ENGLAND WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE WATFORD TOWN HALL, UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE FINEST HALLS IN THE COUNTRY, ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 28.

Chief attraction will be the appearance of Harry Parry and the Radio Rhythm Club Sextet, who will play for dancing throughout the entire evening from 7.30-1 a.m., although there will be a Grand Jam Session early on in the proceedings.

Lauderic Caton, the sensational guitarist from Jig's Club, will be featured in solos, and Doreen Villiers will show that her reputation as a swing singer is deserved.

BIG-TIMERS ALL

Other great names in the business will be making personal appearance during this evening which will undoubtedly be the greatest event in the war time history of the rhythm club movement.

One of the best semi-pro bands in the London area, Tommy Hunt and his Blue Rhythm Band, will alternate with Harry Parry and the Sextet during the dancing periods. There will be a fully-licensed bar in this really sumptuous hall where variety has been featured regularly for some time. Ambrose's "Mayfair Merry-Go-Round" has been intriguing locals this week.

Watford has been chosen because of its ease of reach for the many Midland fans who have signified their intention of attending and there is bound to be a tremendous demand for tickets.

These are 4s. on the night and 3s. 6d. by post from Bill Elliott, 50a, Kensington Close, London, W.8, to whom early application is advised.

Simmons Leaves Van Straten For Own Band

CHERRY SIMMONS, who has been vocalist and drummer with Van Straten's Band for the past twelve years, is taking his own band into the Bristol Grill, Cork Street, W., starting on Tuesday.

Cherry is sorry to leave Van Straten after all these years, but the opportunity was too good to refuse, and he has selected the following boys for the Bristol job: Frank Davis (bass); Harry White (piano); Al Leslie (fiddle) and Cherry himself (drums and vocals).

1,100 CROWD LINGS HALL TO SEE R.A.F. BAND WIN "M.M." FINAL

THE UNBROKEN SEQUENCE OF SUCCESSES KEPT UP TO THE END WHEN LAST FRIDAY, JULY 18, JUST ON ELEVEN HUNDRED PEOPLE PACKED TO CAPACITY THE SPECTATORS' GALLERY AND DANCE FLOOR OF THE PALAIS DE DANSE, ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE, TO WITNESS THE "M.M." NORTH BRITAIN DANCE BAND CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL.

The event took the place of the famous All-Britain Final (held during past years at Blackpool) as the culmination and semi-pro. bands throughout the country.

The Championship was organised and presented by Mr. and



The judges at work during the "M.M." North Britain Championship. Left to right: Edgar Jackson, Eddie Macauley and Joe Kirkham.

and conclusion of the contesting season—a season which, owing to war time difficulties, has this year been small as regards the number of eliminating area championships it has been possible to hold, but which has maintained the traditions of vast crowds, the keenest enthusiasm and true British sportsmanship which have always been such enviable features of this effort on the part of the "M.M." and its contest organisers to help amateur

Mrs. Lewis Buckley, of Royton, to whom the thanks of all concerned must go out, not only for their enterprise on this occasion, but for their indefatigable efforts which have, in these

Oh, Mr. Coster!

"This [Embassy] saxophone band, consisting of three altos and four tenors as the front line, is comparable with the combination which American leader Shep Fields is now reported to be fronting after a surfeit of 'rippling rhythm.' Fields, however, has ten saxes."

"Melody Maker," July 19.

"Saxes 'n' Sevens,' new combination of eleven musicians, including seven saxophones led by American Shep Fields, will play at Embassy (reopening tomorrow)."

"Evening Standard," July 22.

(Is George Evans' face red? They're all calling him "Shep" now!)

difficult times, made it possible for so many other contests to take place this season.

Sixteen bands had earned the right to compete in this Final, but many had become unavailable owing to call-ups and other war-time contingencies.

Seven bands had, however, signified their ability to compete, and all duly turned up.

Taken all round, the standard of the performances was well up to that expected at a Final, and a terrific fight ensued.

In the end, the R.A.F. Weetonians, a service band appearing in uniform who, incidentally, nearly missed arriving owing to transport difficulties, just beat Al Harvey's grand Liverpool unit, who in turn only just beat Ron Davenport's swell little crew of hot buskers from Warrington.

[See Judges' Report, page 12.]

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Accordionist-bandleader Cipsy Dawn serenades some soldiers taking it easy (with ice-cream sodas!) somewhere on the coast.

WILLIE LEWIS IS NOW IN SWITZERLAND

SWING fans who used to listen-in to Willie Lewis and his Orchestra in the days when they broadcast from Paris every week-end may have wondered what has happened to this—the only coloured American orchestra left in Europe when the war broke out.

In a letter just received, the "M.M." learns that Willie and his boys succeeded in leaving Holland in mid-May and, travelling uneventfully through Germany, reached Zurich in Switzerland, where they are now playing.

In deciding to leave Occupied Holland, Willie doubtless had an eye on the future international situation, but the more immediate reason was the Nazi ban on dancing.

Plans were afoot for the band to play at the Estoril Casino in Portugal, but these fell through

and at present they remain in Switzerland. At Berne they encountered another well-known American musician in Glyn Pacque, who used to play alto with Fletcher Henderson, Willie Bryant and Bobby Martin. He is now in the Lewis sax section.

MISSING MEN

The line-up at the moment is: Willie Lewis (leader and alto); Glyn Pacque (alto); Johnny Russell (tenor); Louis Bacon and Henry Mason (trumpets); Billy Burns (trombone); June Cole (bass); Tommy Benford (drums); plus a Swiss pianist.

Two familiar names are missing—Freddie Johnson (piano) and John Mitchell (guitar), both of whom elected to stay on in Holland when the band left. Mitchell had been with Willie Lewis ever since 1926, when they first came to Europe with Sam Wooding's Orchestra.

COMMERCIAL RECORDS REVIEWED

by "CORN"Y

WHAT do you think has become the successor to Amapola as America's No. 1 song hit? Give you fifty guesses.

No, it's not unfair, because you've probably heard the tune dozens of times.

It's *Intermezzo*, or, if you prefer its sub-title, *Souvenir de Vienne*.

Still no wiser? All right, I'll make it easy for you. It's the piece Roy Rich uses as the signature tune for his "Record Time" broadcasts. Now you know, don't you?

The number was written, round about 1935, by a Swede named Heinz Provost.

Subsequently Hollywood got hold of it and featured it in a Leslie Howard-Ingrid Bergman film originally entitled also "Intermezzo," but later re-titled for release over here "Escape To Happiness."

All through the life of the film in America the number meant precisely nothing, but now, after the film has for months been laid to its well-earned rest, up pops the tune as a raging hit. And nobody can say why.

WHAT'LL HAPPEN HERE?

The next question is, what's likely to happen to it here?

Already, as the result of Roy Rich's adoption of it, it's doing quite nicely. The B.B.C. have received so many enquiries for its name and the record of it they use, that they have had the reply printed on post cards.

But the number hasn't been plugged, and whether it will be depends on whether its English publishers (Southern Music) decide to spend money on it. That in turn may depend on whether they can find a good lyric for it. They don't like the American one and have refused to allow it to be used here or for recording companies to issue

any of the American recordings featuring it.

Nevertheless, there are many non-vocal records of the tune already available.

The best is probably the one used by the B.B.C. for the aforementioned Roy Rich broadcasts. It is by Mantovani (violin) and Sidney Torch (organ) on Decca F.7563.

Others are the original record, by Otto Kynel (violin) and Sune Waldimir (piano) on H.M.V. B.9026, Albert Kerry's violin solo on Rex 9880, the Albert Sandler Trio's version on Columbia, DB.2004, and Guy Lombardo's fox-trot version on Brunswick O.3176.

VOCALISTS

Vocalists seem to be the chief attractions in the new mid-July releases.

Bing Crosby sings four of the songs from his film "Road To Zanzibar"—"It's Always You and You Lucky People," on Brunswick 03184, and on 03185 *Birds Of A Feather* and *You're Dangerous*. 03184 is perhaps the more attractive coupling.

Deanna Durbin sings *Perhaps* and *Love At Last*, from her new film, "Nice Girl?" on Brunswick 03186.

Anne Shelton is among the first out with the current sob success, *There Goes That Song Again*, on Rex 10007 (coupled with the aforementioned *Love At Last*). She also sings the refrain in Ambrose's record of the number on Decca F.7902 (coupled with the potential hit *I Understand*).

Seems the song doesn't suit her too well. She isn't up to form in either of the records, and though the band's part on the Ambrose disc is well up to standard, I think the best record all round so far of *There Goes That Song Again* is Oscar Rabin's (with vocal by Bob Dale), coupled, on Rex 10005, with *I Should Have Known You Years Ago*, with vocal by Diane. The *Years Ago* number, which, incidentally, is by Hoagy Carmichael, from the film "Road Show," is also available on Decca F.7908, by Beryl Davis, who on the obverse does an equally good job with *Isn't That Just Like Love*.

But by far the best vocal record of *I Should Have Known You Years Ago* is Carol Bruce's, coupled, on Brunswick 03183, with *If I Feel This Way To-morrow*.

All I know about Carol Bruce is that she's an American artist, and that this is her first record to be issued here. I guess it won't be her last.

SEMI-PROS AND THE JAZZ JAMBOREE

TO THE EDITOR.

REFERRING to the coming Jazz Jamboree and all it stands for, I think it would be a grand idea if one of the leading semi-pro. bands were invited to take part in the programme.

When everything is taken into consideration, although the profession and the M.U. do not love the semi-pro, they must admit that it is the semi-pros, and their friends who comprise about 80 per cent. of the Jamboree audience.

The M.U. have made no secret of their dislike, and have tried to stop contests and broadcasts, etc.; but the semi-pros, don't bear them any malice, hence their support for any concert on these lines.

After all, most of our pros. of today were semi-pros. yesterday, so I think the inclusion of a semi-pro. outfit in this "pro." concert, sustained by the semi-ditto, would do a lot to end this "rift," and at the same time acquaint the pros. with the fact that semi-pro. bands can sound decent and extremely musical.

ARTHUR MAYKIN.
Sireatham, S.W.

ARRANGING Axioms

IN the course of a long letter I have been somewhat taken to task by a Chester correspondent, who discusses the sixth and diminished chords and suggests that the theoretical origins of these chords which I gave are questionable.

Let us, working backwards for no reason at all, take the Diminished Seventh. On page 205 of Stewart Macpherson's "Melody and Harmony," will be found this definition:—"The inversions of the chord of the Dominant Minor 9th (when the root is omitted), produce the harmony which is often conveniently described as the 'chord' of the Diminished Seventh."

I think that effectively disposes of this reader's quibble about the "origin" of this chord, although the fatuity of the whole question of the names of chords is obvious in Professor Macpherson's use of the phrase "conveniently described." Merely to say that a seventh must come before a ninth is manifestly absurd.

ADDED SIXTH

And now for the Added Sixth. Prout calls the term "misleading" anyway, and as it is figured like the first inversion of the chord of the Dominant Seventh, it would appear even more than that except that the Added Sixth always has a major sixth above the bass, while the first inversion of the Dominant Seventh always has a minor sixth.

Macpherson defines this chord as the first inversion of a Secondary Seventh on the Supertonic, and says that the term "added sixth" probably arose because the sixth from the bass note was first used as merely a passing note decorating the Subdominant chord in a Plagal Cadence.

I instance all this to show that the whole nomenclature of chords is very elastic and you have only to talk to a teacher of harmony about, say, a "G7" chord, and he doesn't know what you are talking about. All harmony is arbitrary, for discords of only a few years ago are regarded as concords to-day.

As I have told you, the amount of harmonic knowledge needed to make good arrangements is not tremendous, and in any case a great deal of the theoretical text-book stuff is now completely outmoded.

No. 3. Heaton Park. Last meeting highly successful, with the usual raffle, a discussion between J. Thornton and H. Chestney on "White V. Negro Jazz." Jam Session consisted of Frank Dixon (tenor, bass clarinet, vocals); Reg. Dyson (tenor); Charlie Maycock, Les Marriott (pno.); Jack Turner (drums). Next week's meeting consists of Al Bishop's recital on Artie Shaw, a Jam Session and a Rhythm Intelligence Competition.

No. 41. Leeds. July 20 meeting opened with a short Jam Session, followed by a recital on "Spike" Hughes by D. F. Gallimore. Another Session completed the programme. Participants in the Sessions were Bert Quarmlie (tmb.); George Atkinson, Pte. Telford (tp.); Pte. Tong, Harry Wormald (gtrs.); Jeff Chappell, Cliff Gray (pno.). July 27: Recital on "Development of Jazz Styles" by George Atkinson, and ten-piece swing band, etc.

No. 65. Manchester. Met on July 15, at 8 p.m., at Mamelok's Ballroom, 31, Oxford Road, Manchester, 1, to hear Merton Savage's "Twentieth-Century Jazz Album" recital, leading to a discussion of "The Definition of English and American Jazz Styles." New members and friends invited to bring instruments every Tuesday.

N.W.3 Group. Biggest attendance ever at the July 18 meeting and best Jam Session to date, with Ted Snood, Andre Goers (ten., clar.); Pete Smith (ten.); Norman Waring (tp.); Harry Poppy (tmb.); Geoffrey Kitchener (pno.); Dave Cohen (gtr.); Jaap Sajet (bass); Bernie Silver (drums). Picture Post cameraman took several pictures, and more will be taken next meeting, August 1, 7.30 p.m., at the "King of Bohemia," Hampstead High Street, when the same band will appear and Recitalist Arthur Hall will talk on Milton Mesirov and the second recitalist will deal with clarinettist Fazola.

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HIGGY IS THE STAR AMONG THESE STARS

The Latest Swing Records Reviewed

"METRONOME" ALL-STAR BAND.

***Bugle Call Rag (Pettis, Meyers, Schoebel) (Am. Victor OA.060331) (Recorded January 16, 1941).

***One O'clock Jump (Basie) (Am. Victor OA.060332) (Recorded January 16, 1941).

(H.M.V. B.9195—3s. 8d.)

"Toots" Mondello, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins, Tex Beneke (reeds); Benny Goodman (clart.); Harry James, Ziggy Elman, "Cootie" Williams (tpts.); Tommy Dorsey, J. C. Higginbotham (tmbs.); Count Basie (piano); Charlie Christian (gtar.); Arthur Bernstein (bass); Buddy Rich (drums).

TOWARDS the end of last year the American music monthly *Metronome* held its usual annual ballot for the best, most popular or what-have-you musicians. These records are one of the results.

Presumably, because some of the winning musicians were unavailable for the date, the lineup doesn't quite tally with the result of the ballot.

Benny Goodman is O.K. as the walk-away winner in the only Clarinet class. So is—

Toots Mondello as the unchallenged Lead Alto. But—

Benny Carter only came 3rd in the Hot Alto class to Jimmy Dorsey (1st) and Johnny Hodges (2nd), and 4th in the Lead Alto class to Mondello. Hymie Schertzer and Dorsey (in that order). In the places of—

Coleman Hawkins and

Tex Beneke, who came respectively 4th and 3rd in the Hot Tenor class, we should have had Charlie Barnet and Eddie Miller, who were respectively 1st and 2nd in this class, though Beneke can claim the right to a place in the band by virtue of having been placed top in the Second Tenor class, a class in which Hawkins was only 7th.

ALL ACES

Harry James won in both the Best Lead and Best Hot Trumpet classes, so he is unassailable. So is—

Ziggy Elman, who was 2nd in both these classes. But—

"Cootie" Williams is an interloper, in so much as the best the *Metronome* readers could do for him was place him 6th in the Hot Trumpet class (Bunny Berigan was 3rd, Muggsy Spanier 4th, and Louis Armstrong 5th), and not in the first twenty in the Lead Trumpet class.

Tommy Dorsey justifies his inclusion by being top in the Sweet Trombone class. But Jack Teagarden, Glenn Miller or Will Bradley ought to have been in the place of—

Higginbotham, who only came 4th to them in the Hot Trombone class and was unmentioned among the Sweet Trombones.

Count Basie is another usurper. He was only 2nd in the One Piano class, the winner of which was Jess Stacy.

Charlie Christian is all right. He won in the One Guitarists class. But—

Arthur Bernstein was only 2nd among the bassists to Bob Haggart and—

Buddy Rich only 2nd among the Drummers to Krupa.

So, you see, this band isn't really the *Metronome* All-Star Band.

Which, however, doesn't matter one little tiny tinker's cuss!

Not more than a superficial consideration of the result of the ballot is necessary to enable one to realise that it was (as such ballots inevitably are and

by EDGAR JACKSON

inevitably always will be) greatly influenced by the extent to which the various musicians could keep in the public eyes—that is to say, the amount of broadcasting and other publicity they were able to get.

But even if the voters had not been susceptible to these extraneous influences, and could have been relied upon unerringly to gauge the respective merits of musicians whose individuality makes such a task as impossible as it is silly, it still wouldn't have meant anything as far as forming a band is concerned.

Everyone knows that the greatest solo instrumentalists don't necessarily make the greatest band. You can have too many big-timers.

To an extent that is what has happened here.

SHOW-OFFS

In *Bugle Call Rag*, by far the better side, the ensemble, with its stinging brass, is musicianly enough, but there's a very stagey show-off atmosphere about the way it plays, and only Higgy and the easily distinguishable Cootie mean

Rhythm Clubs

No. 22. Nottingham. Recital on July 14 by Mickey Steinhilber on "His Pick of Jazz," and a debate on Swing, Jazz, Corny and Commercial Music. On Sunday last Ken Allsop gave a recital on "The Winners of the Down Beat Poll, 1940," and Bill Kinnell on "His Biggest Kicks in Jazz," followed by the usual record raffle. A visit is proposed to the Leicester Rhythm Club on July 30. All interested, please contact the Secretary, 127, Burton Road, Carlton, Notts.

No. 24. Southport. Met at Y.M.C.A., Eastbank Street, July 15. Recital by Ernest Spacey on "The Tenor Sax in Jazz," a competition; and Jam Session featuring Dave Wilson (ten., clart.); Ernest Wilson (acc.); W. Rothwell (pno.). Club meets Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m. Next recital: "Clarinet Kings, No. 2." Details from Jack Turnbull, 7, Bolton Road, Birkdale.

No. 33. Southsea Jazz Club. July 18 meeting opened with two talks on Fats Waller, first by Miss V. E. Stevens on his life up to 1935, and the second from thence onwards by Louis Watkins. The Club welcomed well-known collector, Charlie Smith, as a new member. After the record raffle several sessions were given by small bands comprised of Club members, including those who played last week, with the addition of Bob Crawley (clart.) and Bernard Wheatley (tp.).

No. 87. Hitchin. At the Church House, July 24, ragtime held sway when a Stevanage rhythm fan gave a recital on Muggsy Spanier. The Club is actively assisting the local council's entertainment scheme. On July 25 the Club provided amplified jazz throughout the Bancroft Recreation Ground. Ken Payne compered, and Peter Jenkins gave a helping hand. A resultant influx of new members and keener local interest in true jazz is confidently expected.

No. 149. Bournemouth. Proposed to resume meetings in the near future, when R. P. Longley, awaiting call-up into the R.A.F., will remain an active member though handing over the secretaryship to J. Donovan.

33, Court Road, Bournemouth, to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

No. 161. Sidcup. Met on July 21 at the Station Hotel. Recital by F. Fawkes on the Bob Crosby Orchestra.

July 28 meeting will be devoted to a Guessing Competition, testing members' jazz knowledge. All details of membership from J. Godbolt, 84, Willersley Avenue, Sidcup, Kent.

No. 171. Whitstable. At July 29 meeting at the Conservative Hall, at 7 p.m., Bruce Fatscher will give a recital on Muggsy Spanier. A band is being formed for local gigs. Details from R. Chandler, "Hillside," Bayview Road, Whitstable.

anything as soloists, flashy as some of the sax men do their best to be.

Basie's *Jump* on the other side is neither better nor worse than any averagely good American band should be able to do—except for Basie's piano and again Higgy's trombone.

In fact, the despised Higgy, whom the "Metronome" fans found inferior to Glenn Miller and Will Bradley, turns out to be the only man big enough to be himself in this galaxy of would-be show-offs, and thus shines as the star of them all.

But perhaps all this is a little unfair. Perhaps it's the tunes more than the players that have prevented these records from being all that the names of the musicians promised.

What this band needed was a slow, simple melody, spread over both sides of the disc. That would have given the soloists long enough each to do something worthwhile, instead, of cramping them all into one—or, rather, two—tear-up bring-downs, in which nearly everyone more or less falls into the trap of trying to crowd a quart of his own particular line of brilliance into a pint of wax.

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

"Amapola (Lacalle) (V by Helen Forrest) (Am. Columbia CO.30069) (Recorded approx. February, 1941).

"I Hear A Rhapsody (Fragos, Baker. Arr. Ed. Sauter) (V by Helen Forrest) (Am. Columbia CO.29503) (Recorded January 2, 1941). (Parlophone R.2802—3s. 8d.)

29503—Goodman (clart.), with Skippy Martin, Gus Bivona, George Auld, Jack Henderson, Bob Snyder (reeds); "Cootie" Williams, James Maxwell, Alex Fila, Irving Goodman (tpts.); Lou McGarity, Bob Cutshall (tmbs.); Teddy Wilson (piano); Mike Bryan (gtar.); Artie Bernstein (bass); Dave Tough (drums).

I SUPPOSE this had to happen. It would have been too much to expect any recording company over here to resist the temptation of trying to sit on the two stools of commercial and fan appeal on finding a popular hit like *Amapola* played by a band with such a fan appeal as Goodman's.

But it's all a pretty awful tragedy.

I'll pay Benny Goodman the compliment of believing that he was too bored with *Amapola* to take his own chorus even half seriously. But even so, I find his joke too feeble to be at all funny.

The rest of the record is Helen Forrest's vocal and a last all-in chorus. Helen is a good enough "commercial" croonette, and if you can hear it you'll find there's some neat, if not exactly inspired Teddy Wilson piano going on behind her. The last chorus is good enough as everyday "commercial" jazz.

MOONLIGHT "POP"

And that's the best one can say about a record that purely for greed has been honoured with the label of the at any rate once-famous Parlophone "Rhythm-Style" Series.

But I am forgetting. There is, of course, also the *Rhapsody* side.

Well, that's just another sentimental moonlight "pop," without the advantage of being anything like such a catchy tune as *Amapola*.

Benny plays a watery, uninspired solo. Helen Forrest mixes sentimentality with whatever



Leonard Feather, one-time Record Reviewer of the "Melody Maker," and now our correspondent in New York, has taken unto himself a wife, charming Miss Caryl Rorvig, and here is a picture of the happy couple.

else she's got. The whatever else comes off second best.

But George Auld plays some good tenor, for which I'll go the whole hog and give the side a second star.

ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER ORCHESTRA (Am. N.)

"I'm The Lonesome Gal In Town (Von Tilzer) (V) (Am. Decca 68331) (Recorded approx. December, 1940).

"Muffin Man, The (Fitz-

gerald (V) (Am. Decca 68562) (Recorded approx. March, 1941).

Brunswick 03188—3s. 8d.)

Ella Fitzgerald (vocalist), with Chauncey Haughton, Pete Clark (altos); Lonnie Simmons, Teddy McRae (tenors); Richard Vance, Irving Randolph, Taft Jordan (tpts.); George Matthews, John McConnell (tmbs.); Tom Fulford (piano); Beverly Peer (gtar.); William Beason (drums).

LONESOME gal in town? Well, you've only got yourself to thank, haven't you, Ella? Better try the "Muffin Man." Or would you prefer "Potato Pete"?

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M.M. 261/141

Taking Up His Pen Again On Musical Subjects, SPIKE HUGHES Has Something to Say On—

★ BOB CROSBY AND BAND WASTED IN NEW FILM ★

ACCORDING to the bills, a new film, now enjoying its pre-release at the London Pavilion, "features" Bob Crosby and his Band.

Whether it does or not depends on what is meant by the word "features."

In my opinion "wastes" would have been a much more appropriate word.

The picture is called "Sis Hopkins"—the name of a poor country gal who finds herself at a co-ed college, much to the disgust of her town-bred, moneyed, intriguing (you can take that adjective both ways) cousin who is also there.

Other pupils at the college are Bob Crosby and the boys of his band.

The first shot of them playing is in the train going up to the college.

INSPIRED BARS

Fazola and Eddie Miller get short solos and Muggsy Spanier plays a few inspired bars. And that—apart from eight grand bars from Ray Bauduc's drums, later on—is all the chance the soloists get.

Now and again the band appears in various numbers. It does well in the "commercials," better in a parade march, which as regards both composition and performance is worthy of the old New Orleans street-parade band jazz which no band can to-day play better than Crosby's.

But even this music is to a great extent spoilt by the situation and scene in which it is set. They have nothing to do with the origin or traditions of the music. The scene is a students' protest parade to the Dean in the college grounds.

As popular fare this film is good enough. The story is the usual nonsense, but adequate for the purpose of slap-stick comedy entertainment. The production is fine, the photography better.

Boysish Bob Crosby plays and sings a medium part with plenty of shy "It"; Judy Canova (as Sis Hopkins) is a versatile comedienne and singer with plenty of talent and

personality; Susan Hayward (as the spoilt, jealous daughter of a would-be Society mother and self-made father) is one of the loveliest youngsters of the present-day screen; and Jerry Colonna (as a professor) is a good comedian of the Groucho Marx type.

But if you want to hear the Bob Cats swing, to hear Muggsy, Miller and Fazola and all the rest of them go to town, you'll still have to stay at home with your gramophone and records.

MYSTERY SECOND EMBASSY LEADER

WHO is the mystery leader in charge of the second band at the Embassy Club?

Having already devised the idea of the Embassy's Seven-Sax-and-Rhythm Band, of which we gave details last week (and which is not led by Shep Fields!), Anglo-American Artists thereupon looked around for something equally novel and attractive, and, lit upon Lorenzo Brito and his Rhumba Band.

The name hides the identity of Maxwell Clinton (drums); Dennis Walton (trumpet); Clarry Wears (piano)—led by a well-known West End instrumentalist.

Specialising in rhumba and West Indian music, it is predicted that this new venture will speedily result in Lorenzo becoming as widely known under his *nom-de-baton* as he is already under his real name.

Anglo-American further inform the MELODY MAKER that Overseas and Forces broadcasts, as well as Columbia sessions, have necessarily postponed Felix Mendelssohn's Hawaiian Serenaders' forthcoming stage tour, though negotiations for this are proceeding apace.

A.C.2 Foresythe

IN Town this week was AC.2. Reginald Foresythe, now a fully qualified radio-telephonist, and really excited about his job.

Reggie was determined to go into the R.A.F. as an ordinary individual, although it was not long before his services were in very much demand at concerts.

But apart from being continually mistaken for Reginald Foort and being asked about his mighty organ, Reggie is thoroughly enjoying life at the moment and sketching out a musical suite based on morse diagrams.

His piano concerto, too, is having attention for the first time for several months.

No. 151. Dewsbury. July 20 meeting opened with Ernest Love's story of the Hot Club of France, followed by the College of Swing Knowledge. Jack Wood then gave a recital on Glenn Miller's Orchestra, and meeting ended with a Jam Session starring Cliff Fewster (bass); Rodney Macchell (tpt.); Brian Blackburn, Kenneth Farnell (gtr.); Alan Leatherhouse (pno.). Next Sunday: V. R. Thorne on Benny Carter; College of Swing Knowledge; Jam Session. New members invited to the Dewsbury Labour Rooms every Sunday.

No. 166. Rotherham. July 17 meeting heard Peter Laister's "The Guitar in Jazz," followed by "Records at Random" and a record raffle. The Jam Session comprised D. Ballantine, T. Bailey (altos); J. Moors (pno.); C. Lunn (gtr.); W. Spencer (bass); J. Percy (drums); vocals by Vic Nustard. Next meeting on July 30 at the Park Hotel. On August 14 a dance will be held at the Carlton Dance Salon.

BECAUSE I consider that I know more about music than most film critics, and more about the films than most music critics, I came away from "Fantasia" feeling less bewildered than the film critics, and far happier than the music critics.

The truth is that this new Disney picture is a near masterpiece; and yet there is scarcely a foot of it about which you



THERE seems to be some confusion about the style to adopt in solo piano work in the minds of some of my readers.

One asks, for example: "When playing rhythmic piano from the orchestral piano conductor part, or from the piano song copy, should the right hand take the melody in full-note chords and octaves and play the tune one octave higher than the voice range, or should the melody be taken in single notes and three-note chords round about the voice pitch?"

The whole question of solo style is a personal one, of course, depending on a number of things. I cannot quite see what this particular reader means by these two alternatives. The fact is that there are so many styles which one can adopt and it is on that style which you will be judged.

RHYTHM, NOT REGISTER

To play an octave higher in a manner comparable with Carroll Gibbons, for example, always seems to me very attractive, but it is hardly swing style. On the other hand, Basie's staccato ejaculations are often the negation of the older methods.

It doesn't matter in what register you play—it is the rhythmic result which is the crux of the matter.

I am against this high treble stuff with the hands at both ends of the keyboard, anyway. It's like arranging a piece for the piccolo and string bass. Although the piano is primarily a rhythm instrument in the dance band, it can still be employed in something like its normal fashion.

My ideal interpretation uses left and right hands as a complement one to the other, and it is possible to do this and get the utmost rhythmic effect without swinging the left hand in the old way, but using it contrapuntally—as George Shearing does very often.

All this about Solo and Piano Orchestral Conductor parts which agitates this one particular correspondent is quite definitely well beside the point.

All-Britain Champion's Bereavement

THE sincere condolences of the whole semi-pro. fraternity will go out to Billy Lawrence, leader of the winning "M.M." All-Britain Championship band, and to Mrs. Lawrence, in the sudden and tragic death of their ten-year-old son Michael.

Billy is now working in Glasgow.

don't find yourself saying: "Oh, I wish he wouldn't do that!"

But he does do it, and you get over it, and you find yourself for hours afterwards trying to remember little details and wishing you could go and see the whole thing all over again. And the main thing is that, once you've seen it, you keep talking about it to your friends.

Right... I loved it.

But I want to argue about it. I want to argue with all the rather pompous people who were worried because Beethoven's Sixth Symphony was used as accompaniment for a pure Disney Silly Symphony. The music was played straight; the Disney cartoon was straight, so what's the trouble?

The best parts of this episode of "Fantasia" have been praised even by the purists; they admitted that the lovely white mother Pegasus and the little baby Pegasus were among the most beautiful and enchanting of all Disney fantasies.

BAD DRAWING

But immediately Disney goes wrong, and draws badly—as he did in parts of "Snow White"—the whole episode is condemned because Beethoven's music happens to be on the sound track.

The truth is—and we've all said it for years—that Walt Disney cannot draw a convincing human being. Animals, insects, birds, beasts and flowers, fantasies and grotesques—yes; but any figure which demands a human face is at once bad Hollywood, chocolate-box, and lacking in personality.

It happened long before "Snow White," whose characterlessness was surpassed only by that of the Prince. It happened in a lovely Silly Symphony called "The Goddess of Spring." All right; that is Walt Disney's blind spot, and maybe one day he'll get out of it.

The blind spot in the Beethoven sequence was undoubtedly the scenes between the centaurs and their girl/mare-friends. The drawing of the human parts of centaurs and "centaurettes" was bad; the girls certainly had a certain—and to me rather *risqué*—sex-appeal, but the young men were about as interesting as the love-interest in a Marx Brothers' picture.

Indeed, I expected them to start singing in a tenor voice any minute.

But do I raise my hands to heaven and shout that this is sacrilege, merely because Beethoven supplies the sound-track? Like hell I do. Thank God there was Beethoven on the sound-track, because Disney let me down on the screen.

"INTERPRETATION"

I fail to see that it is any worse for Disney to draw rather vulgar human faces to the music of Beethoven than it is to do the same to music supplied by Frank Churchill.

Far too much importance has been attached to the idea that "Fantasia" is only the "interpretation" of the music. The original idea of the film, the Mickey Mouse "Sorcerer's Apprentice," was never an "interpretation." Disney liked the story and found some ready-made music to go with it.

The fact that Dukas' scherzo was never turned into a ballet is explained by the fact that it is rather impracticable to cover a stage with gallons of water for a piece lasting less than fifteen minutes. But the story was always there, and it was up to the films to make the most

of it. Which is what Walt Disney has done.

In the case of the Pastoral Symphony, Walt Disney has shown a sense of form, of beginning-and-end, which seems to have escaped the notice of most critics.

The figure of a very drunken, hiccuping Bacchus would have delighted Beethoven, who had a very coarse sense of humour; there was a magnificent storm, and the grace and beauty of the white Pegasus (if we must have "interpretation") were entirely in keeping with the flowing, easy tunefulness of the first movement.

TUT-TUTTING

I'm afraid I've taken up rather a lot of space discussing the Pastoral Symphony, but I feel that this is the one movement of this super Silly Symphony which has not been treated in its right proportion by my colleagues. The film critics all tut-tutted to show that they appreciated Beethoven, and the music critics tut-tutted because they completely misunderstood Disney.

Neither faction has been willing to admit that Beethoven might be brought off his Olympian perch for a moment and supply good film music without "losing face." Disney has always demanded rhythm in his sound-tracks, and on this occasion he still has rhythm, though he may have gone to an unexpected retailer to get it.

If Beethoven had been "swung" or "hotted up," then perhaps one might complain; but so long as the Pastoral Symphony is played intact—which it is in "Fantasia"—then it is a quite legitimate accompaniment to a Disney cartoon. All music is—so long as you don't take this stupid business of "interpretation" seriously.

BLUSHES!

I will agree that parts of this Silly Symphony made me blush—for Disney. Not for Beethoven. If Walt Disney wants to draw badly, then I'd rather he did so to the accompaniment of good music which interests me than to the accompaniment of second-rate music which doesn't.

So far I seem to be the toughest critic that's seen "Fantasia." I'm so tough about it, indeed, that I hope to be able to write a little more about it in another issue. After all, it does last two and a quarter hours, and it's not the sort of thing you can scribble about in an off-hand way.

Walt Disney once told me that he was so unmusical that he "couldn't carry a tune in a bucket." I'm glad he can't, for it means he has no preconceived notions, prejudices and fancies about music. It all comes the same to him, as it will to the public that sees and hears "Fantasia." Thank goodness.

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What's the Matter With Bunny Berigan?

IT certainly seems time someone, preferably Bunny Berigan himself, answered this question. Not so long ago he was proclaimed as one of the greatest white trumpet players; while in a MELODY MAKER Popularity Contest he was placed second after Louis Armstrong.

But recently, with the exception of a few months with Tommy Dorsey last year, and very commercial at that, he seems to have been pushed, or maybe pushed himself, right into the background.

It is high time we had some more good Berigan records comparable with those he made with Red Norvo and those other grand accompaniment discs to Mildred Bailey with the Dorsey Brothers' Orchestra.

Maybe having a signature tune entitled *I Can't Get Started* has had something to do with it, which reminds me, for some illogical reason, that H.M.V. has still got some good Berigan sides up its sleeve dating from his 1938 band; the band that included Joe Bushkin on the piano and some really swell tenor work from underrated Don Lodice.

LONDON, 1930

Notable among these Berigan omissions are *Jazz Me Blues*, *They'll Be Some Changes Made*, and *Davenport Blues*; so how about it, H.M.V.?

Bunny Berigan is another of those musicians who, though only familiar to fans through his recordings, have been heard

in the States with numerous pick-up bands and radio house orchestras.

In fact, there are few people probably who remember that he came over with Hal Kemp's Band and played for some months at the Café de Paris in 1930.

The high-spots of that visit were the Saturday afternoon jam sessions with Muggsy Spanier and Jimmy Dorsey, over here with Ted Lewis, sitting in with the Kemp band, doing all that Ted Lewis refused to let them do on the stage.

Bunny Berigan was born in 1908 at Green Bay, in the heart of Wisconsin. By the time he had reached the tender age of eight, he had made quite a name for himself—in Wisconsin, that is—as a concert violinist, and even distinguished himself by playing in his grandfather's band for country dances!

WITH KEMP

Later, while at the University of Wisconsin, he switched to trumpet, for, as Bunny himself says, violinists never get a chance to play solos in school bands, and anyway they were short of brass players.

Bunny soon discovered this to be his instrument, and decided to take it up professionally directly he left college.

After short spells with several more or less unknown local bands, he was heard by the late Hal Kemp, who was impressed enough to offer him a job with the band in New York. In 1930, as I have already mentioned, the Kemp band came over to Europe, and its slick playing and Bunny's trumpet



BUNNY BERIGAN

work attracted quite a bit of attention wherever the band played.

Soon after the band's return to the States, Bunny left to join the Dorsey Brothers' Orchestra, and his stage appearances and recordings with this band did much to bring both his name and his playing before the public.

Of the many fine records that date from this period, *I Can Make Most Anything and Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn* are representative; while also worth noting is his brilliant introduc-

tion to *Is That Religion?* which Mildred Bailey sang so delightfully, and which shows his amazing trumpet range to good advantage.

After leaving the Dorsey Brothers in 1933, there followed a long period during which Bunny played with various orchestras, including Paul Whiteman and Rudy Vallée; while all the time he was recording with many different pick-up units.

His recordings with Gene Gifford, Bud Freeman, Frankie Trumbauer and Dick McDonough date from this period. Then he joined the Benny Goodman Orchestra, but not for long; for, like several others, he couldn't see eye to eye with Benny, and soon he was once more looking around for a job, leaving behind him some good recordings on Victor, including *King Porter Stomp* and *Ballad in Blue*.

JAM RECORDS

Now followed a long period playing with C.B.S. house orchestras and various recording outfits at the Decca Studios, including Red McKenzie, Bob Howard, and even some under his own name.

During this time, 1936-37, he also played with Red Norvo and Red McKenzie, and was featured on the famous Saturday Night Swing Club broadcasts before Mark Warnow and afterwards Leith Stevens took it over.

On the strength of his C.B.S. reputation, American Vocalion contracted him to make a series of jam recordings for them. These included such sides as *I Can't Get Started*, *Swing Mister Charlie* and *Rhythm Saved The World*; some of which found their way over here, while those that didn't might well be worth issuing even now.

After this Bunny formed his own orchestra, following Benny Goodman into New York's Hotel Pennsylvania; you know, the one that bears the famous

asks
PETER TANNER

telephone number Pennsylvania 6-5000. He also landed a weekly radio programme over the Mutual network called *Fun In Swingtime*.

However, in spite of almost immediate success and a long-term RCA Victor contract, the band never really developed into anything. Many personnel changes took place, and in 1939 Bunny was forced to give the band up altogether and join Tommy Dorsey as first trumpet.

Here for a short while Bunny seemed right back on form, and the band featured some really swell blues arrangements while it was playing at the Frank Bailey's Meadowbrook.

This should have given Bunny the chance he'd been waiting for, but instead his playing became more and more commercial until, after a quarrel with Tommy, he once more quit to strike out on his own.

COME ON, BUNNY

This was just about a year ago, and since then Bunny has been gigging around with a small and rather mediocre band, and lately there seems to have been no news of him at all.

So come on, Bunny! There are plenty of jazz enthusiasts who want to hear you again playing the blues as only you can. Anyone who has heard your recordings of *Chicken And Waffles*, *I Can't Get Started* and *Blues In E Flat* knows what to expect from you, and you certainly haven't lived up to that reputation lately.

Let's hope that this year will see Bunny Berigan right back to the top, where he belongs, and where jazz enthusiasts on both sides of the Atlantic would like to see and hear him once again.

NAT ALLEN CHEERS UP MALTA SUNDAYS

SUNDAY, July 13, saw the first of a regular series of Sunday airings to Malta, from 7 to 7.30 p.m., starring Nat Allen and his Music, with Anne Shelton vocalising.

This series comes about as a direct result of producer Alec Hayes hearing Nat's boys during one of their "Eastern Starlight" airings to Egypt, when the versatility of the band struck him as being ideal for his forthcoming series, and is proof that the B.B.C. is realising the ever-growing percentage of swing-minded members of H.M. Forces stationed abroad and cut off from normal sources of entertainment.

Featured in this thirty-minute programme is a special hot spot which Nat has been given a free hand to build up eventually to include guest Service swing musicians.

Leading on accordion and electric guitar, he has with him Jerry da Costa (drums and vocals); George Romano (baritone and clarinet); Jock Salisbury (trumpet and vibraphone) and Bobby Davis (piano). Arrangements are by Dennis Hedges.

This is the same group as he was leading at the Café de Paris on the night of its tragic bombing, when the boys had a miraculous escape from injury or death. Now, with replaced instruments, they are together again and maintaining the same high standard of playing as gained them that enviable post.

No. 173, Stratford. Next meeting to-day (July 25), at 7.30 p.m., at the Ashburton School, when B. T. Passey, of Warwick, gives a recital on "Swinging the Classics." It is hoped there will be many new members as a result of the recent Recruiting Campaign. Details from D. J. Rouse, 148, Evesham Road, Stratford-on-Avon.

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- "Yes, Yes! My, My!"—Louis Armstrong's Orch. (Decca F5915)
- "Devil And The Deep Blue Sea"—Benny Goodman's Orch. (H.M.V. B8389)
- "Song Of India"—Tommy Dorsey's Orch. (H.M.V. B8563)
- "Blues In E Flat"—Red Norvo's Swing Octet (Parl. R2241)
- "Hopeysuckle Rose"—Jam Session at Victor (H.M.V. B8580)
- "I Can't Get Started"—Bunny Berigan and his Boys (Voc. S26)
- "Blues"—Bunny Berigan's Blue Boys (Parl. R2316)
- "Study In Brown"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (H.M.V. B8632)
- "I Can't Get Started"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (12 in., H.M.V. C2939)
- "Livery Stable Blues"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (H.M.V. B8855)

U.S.A. RELEASE.

- "Swing Mister Charlie"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (Am. Voc. 3179)
- "Davenport Blues"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (Victor 26121)
- "Jazz Me Blues"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (Victor 26244)
- "Walkin' The Dog"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (Victor 26123)
- "Azure"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (Victor 25848)
- "Ain't She Sweet"—Bunny Berigan's Orch. (Victor 26753)

BRAND'S ESSENCE

by
PAT BRAND

IT is not often that I find myself really thrilled by dance music these days. Too often, in the course of duty to the slave-driver in the Editorial office, have I had to travel into the wilds to listen to indifferent bands with critical ear; too often have I been forced patiently to sit through competent but uninspiring sessions and comment on them afterwards.

So that when I find someone who can really thrill me—well, it's an event that sticks in my memory.

The other night there occurred such an event. I sat fingering a lager that had long lost its lustre of ice, listening to a boogie-woogie pianist who could really send that tremor down my spine.

But when I tell you that it was **LEONARD FELIX**, playing at the London Studio Club, I feel rather like someone bursting into print with the news that Coleman Hawkins plays pretty good tenor.

For his name is well enough known around Town, and members of the No. 1 Rhythm Club have had more than one opportunity of hearing him.

But listening to him in the ordinary course of his nightly job, beating it out to dancers who (alas!) are only too seldom aware of the pearls of rhythm being flung at their feet, is very different from listening to a man give a recital before an audience that knows what's what.

And probably the all-too-brief half-hour during which I forgot my lager gave me more idea of Leonard's abilities than any number of recitals.

For I had heard this trio led by **LEN NEWBURY** on tenor giving out waltz, fox-trot and rhumba during the early part of the session; I'd heard them play through a varied cabaret, including Hungarian Rhapsodies, and admired the precision of **FRANKIE MORGAN'S** drum beats accompanying the eccentric dancers; and then I heard them getting into the groove again for the final half-hour's dancing.

A pretty good group, let me tell you. And if I've picked on Leonard especially, it's probably because, being a thwarted pianist myself, and having driven myself crazy trying to get that complete independence of hand essential to boogie-woogie playing, I can only sit in spellbound stupefaction at a bloke who can so apparently easily achieve it, and with a melodic inventiveness in the right hand that sets his playing right apart from the many Ammons and Basie imitators.

I like this guy's work. He makes the second English boogie-woogie pianist I can listen to endlessly. You all know the name of the other. I wonder if there are any more.

There may well be one on the outskirts of Town in a line-up of which **L/Cpl. JIM BIRNIE** writes in rapturous terms.

Any of you live round Bromley (Kent) way? Well, just pop into the Bromley Country Club and see if he's right in his estimation of the five-piece playing there Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Three civilians—a tenor player whose name he doesn't know, a skinbeater named Rodney, and a bassist named Billy—and two Canadian gunners comprise the team, both of whom had their own

Pat Brand signals American interest in Iceland by a blend of both in this photo, of which he writes: Torch singer from Iceland, **NOLA DAY**, born in my favourite foreign capital, **Reykjavik**, now sings over the NBC network.



bands in Canada, and both, he assures me, really solid swing men.

Of **ERIC TRUMAN** he says: "He has a boogie-woogie style which will make anybody jump, and a perfect sense of rhythm. **BILLY CHRISTMAS**, the trumpet player, whose brother Art plays with Payne, has got steel lips that give out a natural style which he has copied from no one."

The place has a swimming-pool, two bars, and the dance floor. What's to-day? Hang! it's Friday.

Incidentally, he raises an interesting point when he asks, in effect, why so many first-class jive groups playing in niteries should be virtually barred from the air owing to the fact that the B.B.C. might be chary of giving publicity to bands whose premises may at any time fall under the attention of the raiding police.

He asks is this fair to the musicians? No need to tell you what I think.

Awful moments in the lives of the Great: Election Ball at the Albert Hall. No expense spared. Accompanying projection of results upon the screen, **AMBROSE** and specially augmented orchestra.

Skillfully stage-managed by the Conservative Party was the climax, to occur when the final victory of that Party (already assumed) came to be announced.

Together with the 75 violins, 38 clarinets, 23 bassoons, rows of timps, and one piano, the mighty organ was to roar forth the opening bars of *Land of Hope and Glory*, and lead into the not-so-well-known verse sung by a world-famous soloist.

Came the time for this stupendous effect. The orchestra sat tense under the command of "Ammy." Twin spotlights shot across the domed roof to light upon the soloist and . . . the organ.

Not a sound. No organist! Instantly the spot man switched the beam from the organ, past the serried ranks of the musicians, on to the solitary piano.

Whereat, staggered and blinded, sat **BERT BARNES**. Everyone looked at him. He stared aghast at "Ammy," who had the only piano part of the special arrangement in order to conduct. He didn't know the key; he didn't know the verse! And the soloist was waiting. Beads of perspiration began to trickle down upon his immaculate shirt-front.

Then came deliverance . . . in the shape of trumpet player **FREDDIE MANN**, who called a chord. Bert struck it. The soloist began. Another chord. Bert struck it. Dazedly he chorded his way through that verse, until, with a soul-stirring spontaneity, the rest of the mighty orchestra crashed on to

the opening bar of the chorus . . . and Bert's valiant piano was drowned in the roar of melody and voice.

The honour of **Ambrose**, the Conservative Party and Bert Barnes was saved.

But it was touch and go!

Rehearsal was called for 11 a.m. **Ambrose** and his Orchestra were due on the air at 3 p.m. for a special Christmas Day "concert" broadcast. Special orchestration, including oboe part to be played by the one and only **E. O. POGGON**.

Eleven a.m. and no "Poggy," so they wait a few moments. At 11.30 they decide to begin, "Ammy" beating the silent air through the oboe solos. Eleven forty-five, no "Poggy." No "Poggy" at 12.

By which time "Ammy" is calling out the storm troopers, ringing the publishers, recording studios, home address, ready, if need be, to charter a plane to fetch the missing oboist.

Twelve-thirty, and no oboe. By now resigned, parts are switched, rewritten, the oboe solos given to the clarinets, saxes and trumpets working overtime. The entire programme, specially scored, is rehearsed from the beginning.

One-thirty comes, and coffee and sandwiches are sent for. Munchingly, they recommence at 2 p.m. At 2.30 p.m. they have forgotten that "Poggy" was ever expected to appear.

But it is at this juncture that the door opens. And in he walks.

Hostile silence. He walks across the room, takes off overcoat, muffler, gloves, hat, and hangs them up; puts down instrument case; takes out instrument and reeds; meticulously tests each one before selecting; fits it in; tries a passage or two; is satisfied; turns and walks between the chairs to his place.

He stops, looks around in pained surprise. And utters his first words to the assembly. "What! No—chair?"

Touching farewell recently between **BILLY THORBURN** and his called-up drummer **FREDDY LEEDING**. Little present from Bill, and a promise that "after all this is over and you return to civvies, your job here will be waiting for you."

Off went Freddy . . . and shortly afterwards back he came, discharged as medically unfit. Writes to Bill asking if he knows of anything.

Bill keeps his promise, sends him a typical musician's telegram:

"See you nearest pub Victoria Theatre, Burnley, Sunday evening.—Bill."

Touching reunion in pub last Sunday. Reunion on the stage Monday night. Reunion on the air to-morrow (Saturday) from 5.15 till 6 p.m. on Forces.

Two grand guys. . .

Classics of Jazz

by **BILL ELLIOTT**

No. 33.—"Who Stole The Lock?" / "Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn," by the Chicago Rhythm Kings. (Brunswick 01737. Now out of list. To be re-issued shortly on Parlophone.)

PERSONNEL:

Henry Allen (trumpet and vocal); Pee Wee Russell (clarinet); Happy Caldwell (tenor); Tommy Dorsey (trombone); Frank Froeba (piano); Eddie Condon (banjo); Jack Bland (guitar); Pop Foster (string bass); Zutie Singleton (drums).

IN fear and trembling, this "Classic" is submitted to my long-suffering readers. It's not you I'm afraid of, dear swing fans. Ever since you realised that someone was persuading the gramophone companies to issue a few of the real "Classics of Jazz," you have deluged me with letters, and this is the most requested record.

So thanks to Wally Moody, of E.M.I. who is co-operating with me on the issue of these classics (and who, incidentally, is doing grand work for jazz over here) you will be able to obtain it soon.

E. J. ON HIGGY

In pleasing you, however, I shall no doubt incur the wrath of **Edgar Jackson** who will show his displeasure by docking the record of two stars and making remarks about the recording (which, incidentally, is very good).

I am a patient soul and take a lot of rude remarks with a grin, but **Edgar's** review of **Higgingbotham's** record was the last straw.

To say that **Higgy's** trombone, **Holmes'** alto and **Foster's** bass sound dated to-day is absurd. Their solos are as modern as anything waxed last month and the jazz they play is far from crude.

It's real down-to-earth jazz I admit and far from soft, pretty swing; and from what I know of **Edgar's** likes and dislikes this should have appealed to him.

I definitely don't agree with his remarks about the recording. The bass work is prominent but not over-

recorded. **Edgar Jackson** is fortunate enough to possess a radiogram in a million. I have heard it show up distortion in **Ellington** records that would not be heard on any other machine. Why review this particular record on that machine?

Still, if you do succeed in doing something that someone else has failed to do for years; funny things do happen.

I hope to secure the reissue of all the old Chicago discs in due course, and this one makes a good start.

The gang are all in good form, and in *Who Stole The Lock?* Allen gets the ensemble off to a good start with his horn riding high throughout the first chorus. Pee Wee next, a grand solo in typical style, and it makes an effective lead to Allen's vocal.

Red's singing is infectious and this is good, as he asks who is the thieving gent, and the band display innocence. Tenor next, and **Happy Caldwell** shoots a real Chicago croaky solo.

ROCKING THE RECORD

Tommy Dorsey takes it away on trombone, and this was **Tommy** of the old days, before he became sentimental over something or the other.

Piano and bass have a few bars solo and then a short vocal from **Red** who, disgusted by his inability to find out the culprit in his hen roost, picked up his trumpet and, aided by some grand drumming from **Zutie**, rocked the record to the end.

Gabriel's Horn must be dealt with briefly as space is already over-run. Pee Wee steals the disc from everybody with a swell intro, good ensemble lead and a terrific chorus in his dirtiest manner. **Happy** plays some more tenor, **Red** sings, and **Frankie Froeba** has a fine spot for the last chorus and ensemble.

WHO'S WHO IN JAZZ

(CONTINUED)

SULLIVAN, MAXINE: C. vocalist, b. Pittsburgh c. 1910. Did small club jobs and gigged with local bands until heard by **Gladys Mosier**, pianist with **Ina Ray Hutton's** old band, who brought her to the attention of **Claude Thornhill**. Created overnight sensation at the Onyx Club, N.Y., in 1937, singing *Loch Lomond*, *Annie Laurie*, etc., in semi-swing style, with **John Kirby's** band, playing accompaniments written by **Thornhill**. Recorded for Vocalion, appeared in *St. Louis Blues* and other films. Married **John Kirby**; separated November, 1940; has ten-year-old son by previous marriage. Recorded for Victor, 1938-9; Columbia, 1940; most of her recent arrangements written by **Lou Singer**, a few by **Billy Kyle**. Featured with **Kirby** during 1940 on theatre tour and at the Beachcomber Club, N.Y., also on weekly CBS broadcasts (*Flow Gently Sweet Rhythm*). Now confines her work mostly to folk songs and ballads, though once regarded as outstanding swing singer.

TATUM, ART: C. pianist, b. Toledo, Ohio. Started playing violin at 13, later abandoning it in favour of piano. Appeared in local radio amateur show and got job with the station, remaining three years, doubling in Toledo night clubs. Also worked in Detroit and about 1932 came to New York for first time as accompanist to **Adelaide Hall**, with whom he recorded on Brunswick. Back to Toledo, then went to Chicago and had his own small band at the Three Deuces; this was the group later taken over by **Roy Eldridge**. Made several solo recordings, and also a few sides with a pick-up band in California. Went to England 1938 to appear at **Jack Harris' Ciro's Club**, also in radio and television. Has developed the most astonishing technique ever achieved by a swing pianist; much of his work is given to technical display, though most other swing pianists rate him as the greatest all-round jazz and legitimate pianist in the business. In 1940, featured in Hollywood night clubs; came to New York September to open at **Café Society**; also

recorded his first album of solos for Decca. His favourite pianists are **Horowitz** and **Gieseking**; favourite composer **Chopin**, whose influence can be heard in his work. Tatum's vision is defective; he has been blind in one eye and partly blind in the other since suffering a cataract early in youth.

TEAGARDEN, CHARLIE: W. trumpet, b. Vernon, Texas, 1913. Never studied music. At 16, joined **Ben Pollack** for a year; then with **Red Nichols** a year; later with many theatre pit bands. Joined **Paul Whiteman**, Christmas, 1933, and except for a brief job as co-leader of the "Three T's" group at the Hickory House in December, 1936, remained with **Whiteman** until the band broke up mid-1940. Then did theatre work; played briefly with **Jack Teagarden's** Orchestra, and left to join the pit band in **Ethel Waters' musical show Cabin In The Sky**, October, 1940. Recorded with **Goodman** and **Teagarden**, 1933-4; with **Charleston Chasers** on *Basin and Beale Street*, *Ramona* and *Her Gang* (H.M.V.), **Adrian Rollini** (Brunswick), and **Frank Trumbauer**. Fine pure tone and legitimate technique, also rated well by some critics as hot man. Own favourite recordings, made when he was 17, were *Farewell Blues*, *Someday Sweetheart*, *Beale Street Blues* and *After You've Gone*, by **Venuti-Lang All-Star Orchestra** on Decca.

VAN EPS: W.; family of musicians, including **Bobby** (piano), **Johnny** (tenor sax), **George** (guitar). **Bobby** was featured with **Jimmy Dorsey's** Orchestra, 1936-37; **Freddy** worked with **Bunny Berigan** and other prominent groups (recently with **Jack Teagarden**); **George**, the best known, has been with **Ray Noble** on and off for several years; also with **Benny Goodman** (1934-35), recording on his Columbia and early Victor sides; **Adrian Rollini's** all-star group (Brunswick, 01942); **Red Norvo's** Swing Octet, 1934 (Parlophone, Col.); **Louis Prima**, 1936 (Brunswick); and **Frankie Trumbauer**, 1935 (Brunswick). Their family was famous in the ragtime days for banjo speciality work.

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A Correspondence Course for the Willing Jazzite

I HAVE found that list of records—the first thirteen out of the twelve required for a progressive study of jazz—and I am more perplexed than ever to know how I can possibly expect any student to derive any such thing from any such limited number of examples.

The only solution, as I can see it, is to find twelve records as a first instalment of this correspondence course which I hope may help the willing student.

According to the idea I had last week of working backwards to an appreciation of Landmarks in Jazz, let us look around at the common currency of dance music in 1941.

Whose are the most popular records? Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Jimmy Dorsey, Count Basie, Glenn Miller, and the odd Ellington groups which record under their various pseudonyms can fairly safely be said to supply the public with whatever it is the public sees in dance music in these days.

NOTE, MR. GROSSMAN!

Now it is very fortunate that the popular bands of the day may be said—without being rude—to be “degenerate.” By that I mean that Goodman, the Dorseys, Miller and Ellington all have long personal traditions behind them which are more difficult to detect in their music than they are in the published lists of their gramophone records.

(INTERUPTION: Note on elementary balance and dynamics for the attention of Sim Grossman's saxophone section: As I write, you are playing a steady forte in the first chorus of *What Are You Going To Do About It?* The result is that there is no melody coming over at all until the “middle eight”—when it is the saxes who have the tune; you gave the trumpet (?) no chance whatever in the first half of the chorus, because you played the accompaniment as though it was the tune. It is not the B.B.C. engineer's fault in this case; he is helpless unless you co-operate. I suggest you listen to each other and remember that there is such

by
“MIKE”

a thing as mezzo-forte. Or even rarely, rarely com'st thou spirit of delight!—as piano. Best wishes.—“MIKE.”

Interruption over.

Let's consider Benny Goodman as an example. We can trace a kind of musical-genealogical history of Benny which will take us right back to the early days of jazz, for he has been in the public eye (and occasionally in the critics' hair) for nearly fifteen years now.

GOODMAN

You, John Doe, let us suppose to be a Goodman fan. For the past couple of years you have heard almost every record Benny Goodman has made; you have listened to them as they were issued, perhaps even bought them.

Unless you have acquired a great understanding of jazz in a comparatively short while, and/or have a lot of spare cash, it is rather improbable that you possess or have heard many of the records Benny made prior to those couple of years.

So long as Benny still plays the clarinet in his records, you have at once a point of contact with even his earliest work. Which is more than one can say about Tommy Dorsey, for instance, for the younger Dorsey not only played the trombone quite differently ten years ago, but was something of a trumpeter as well.

(One of my favourite records is Tommy Dorsey's trumpet solo of *Tiger Rag*. It is the only version, indeed, which has ever impressed me as having what the older generation would have called “a swing” to it. Everybody else has always played the piece much too fast. Tommy took his time.)

With Benny Goodman, however, his clarinet playing has

always been easily recognisable as Goodman playing. Thus we can lead the 1941 Goodman fan along the path which will bring him to the Golden Age—when Benny Goodman was still the same Goodman, but his surroundings and aims were different.

RETROGRESSION

It is an interesting path, the retrospective path through Benny's work, for it touches on such varied aspects of his music as *Bach Goes To Town*, the 1933-34 recordings for Columbia with Jack Teagarden (*Dr. Heckle and Mr. Jive*, *I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues*, and *Ain'tcha Glad?* among a dozen masterpieces), the famous Venuti-Lang All-Star Orchestra, the original Trio records, and such exquisite things as the Nichols *China Boy* and *Peg O' My Heart* (Vintage 1930-31).

That is a very small selection; there is much else besides.

But the method is one which I am sure can be most helpfully progressive, if you will once accept that progressive study is best undertaken retrogressively.

It is my personal belief that the best of jazz is behind us,

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just as the best of “ordinary” music is behind us. Art goes in cycles, but it also tends to burst forth at some periods in history more strongly than at others.

Thus it is that the Italian Renaissance stands out as a period in art without parallel. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced great music and great literature; the Elizabethan era produced a flowering of lyrical poetry the like of which has never been seen since.

CLASSIC AGE

None of this is to say, of course, that there has been no great painter, composer, writer or poet since the times I have mentioned, any more than I would suggest there has been no good jazz since the early ‘thirties.

But if we are to study and appreciate jazz, we must somehow get back to the classic age; and I believe that, by going backwards, we are more likely to get our students to understand than by any other means.

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NEWS FROM THE RHYTHM CLUBS

WE regret that, owing to paper restrictions, it has been found impossible to continue publishing Rhythm Club reports as fully as hitherto. Club secretaries are therefore asked to assist in saving space by utilising the mode of report printed hereunder, and giving details of forthcoming meetings to cover a period of two weeks ahead of the date of next week's issue (August 2), and thenceforth to submit reports in this fashion fortnightly.

Club No. Town.....
Meets at at p.m.
Sec. Address.....
Forthcoming programmes.....
Special Notes (as brief as possible).....

At the meeting of the Ilford and East Ham Rhythm Club on July 7, Mr. Lewis gave some reminiscences of Golden Age jazz, being the second part of Jack Surridge's campaign for better jazz. This was followed by a Question Bee and Jam Session. Friday, July 11, there was a special meeting in honour of trumpet player Billy Brian, home on leave. It consisted of a terrific Jam Session, featuring Billy Brian (trumpet); Ken Franklin (clarinet); Cecil Prescott (alto); Len Wood (tenor); George

Corderoy (piano), Johnny Crowe (guitar), Jack Surridge (bass), and Tommy O'Callaghan (drums). At next Tuesday's meeting Jack Surridge will continue his series of recitals, and, in addition to a Jam Session, there will be a programme of records made by the club jam group.

No. 1. Sinclair Trail's dramatic presentation of *Boy With A Horn* was received last Sunday by an audience whose complete silence for over two hours showed their intense appreciation. A short jam followed, and the club welcomed Joe Deniz and Max Geldray, and bade regretful farewell to Dave Cohen, who goes into the Army. Next Sunday, Maurice Fleming presents *Out Of The Groove*, and there will be a Jam Session, when it is hoped to present some of the boys from Jig's Club, with featured numbers by Lauderie Catch and Clinton Maxwell.

No. 2. Winchmore Hill. At the July 24 meeting John L. Fryer gave a recital on rare U.S.A. discs, entitled “Personality Unknown.” There was a competition set by Mr. Fryer, and the concluding Jam Session comprised John Ramage (drums); Norman Whiting (clarinet); Ken Whiting (tpt.); Reg. Norton (sax); Wally Harding (sax); Bryant Cornell (pno.).

No. 9. Erdington. July 18 meeting opened with a competition presented by J. A. Robinson, followed by a recital on “Duke Ellington and his Music” by Eunice Merrill. The usual Jam Session concluded the meeting. No meeting to-day (July 25). Next meeting August 1, at 7.30 p.m., at the Church House, Erdington High Street, Birmingham.

No. 175. Streatham. July 29 meeting at St. Helens School Hall, Streatham Common, at 8 p.m. Last week Recitalist A. Black dealt with Teddy Wilson, and a Jam Session followed comprised of boys brought along by Alan Hart. All inquiries to Roy Hardy, 13, Northanger Road, Streatham.

Mild-and-Bitter Maestro

Personalities

In
Paragraph

by
**ERIC
WINSTONE**



HARRY
LEON
(Art Noel)

YES, I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky. And all I ask is a tall ship, and, seeing that the name is **HARRY LEON**, an up-right piano, a piece of manuscript paper, and just enough stars to see how to write yet another of those smash hits we have come to associate with this well-known songsmith, sailor, and rough diamond of Denmark Street. I beg your pardon?

You say the gentleman is not familiar?

Maybe if you reverse the letters of the surname so that Leon becomes Noel, you will recognise him more easily.

Remember Sally, Kiss Me Goodnight Sergeant Major, Down Every Street?

Then you know Harry Leon (alias Art Noel), for to know his songs is to know the person who wrote them.

The melodies are typical of the man. But, strangely enough, it is not Art the songwriter so much as Harry the seaman whom I would like you to meet. For meeting and talking to Mr. Leon makes interesting listening, as you will find if you care to follow up this introduction in the future.

Running away to sea at the age of sixteen, just like the boy in the story-book, he sailed at least six of the possible seven seas, reaching out over the horizon for adventure in such far-off places as Alaska, California, New Zealand, Australia, and the mythical Hawaiian Islands, where the local girl crooners wear nothing but grass skirts and bandleaders die young.

Life aboard ship can often bring monotony, and sometimes during the long voyage home the young sailor would spend his time writing music and putting down on paper odd snatches of melody that flooded his mind during the days he travelled the edge of the world far from the streets of his native Shoreditch.

Home at last from Tampico, with wanderlust sated, he signed off from his last ship and took a job playing piano in a public-house called "The Blue Anchor," in Whitechapel Road.

Every night he would sit at the battered upright with a pint glass balanced precariously on the lid, playing those lilting songs of his that he had written in every odd corner of the world.

One day, together with friend Billy Haines, he wrote a new song. They called it *Sally*; and thus, from the spit and sawdust of the saloon bar, came the appealing melody that, through

the voice of Gracie Fields, was destined to become one of the greatest popular tunes of all time.

Gradually the call of the sea gave way to a more insistent voice. The call of Tin Pan Alley, and with it a new world of smash hits, song plugging, and competition.

A world that had as its formula the magic password: "But is it commercial?" And once again, a stranger in a strange land, Harry showed he could hold his own against all comers.

From that same corner table in the saloon bar, complete with the inevitable mild and bitter, came hit after hit, including *Broken-Hearted Clown*, *Little Drummer Boy*, *Let The Curtain Come Down*, *When The Blackbird Says Goodbye*, and that current national melody *Does She Love Me?*

And now he has done it again. Already the Cinephonic Music Company are speaking in glowing terms of a new song from the bar counter called *They're Building Another Alley For Sally*.

They tell me it is going to be a hit.

I wouldn't be at all surprised at that. It happens to have been written by that same sailor-cum-songsmith who seems to make a habit of pulling off world-beaters.

Yes, Harry Leon is the name and mine's a mild and bitter.

With Max Castelli serving as an Air Gunner, the famous Castelli School of Music at Twickenham is now being run by accordionist **MARJORIE HOWELL**, who, combining feminine charm with a good head for business, has rapidly increased the already large number of pupils attending for tuition during the last few months.

Also under her able management is a sixteen-piece band that recently played opposite the R.A.F. Central Band at a charity ball on Eel Pie Island, and in addition to these activities, Marjorie is doing seven sessions a week with Syd Pettit and his Band at the Twickenham Palais.

Wonder how she ever manages to get a night off to see the boy friends.

Serving with distinction in the last war and awarded the Military Cross, **BRUCE SIEVIER**, well-known lyric writer and author of *The Silver Patrol*, has again gained recognition in the Services.

News to date tells of his recent promotion to the rank of Squadron-Leader in the Royal Air Force.

Congratulations, Bruce... and safe landings!

Lét's take time off for a moment to meet a personality from the other side of the Atlantic.

Hands across the sea, boys, to **TITO GUIDOTTI**, an accordionist who is currently tops in the States, both on gramophone records and on radio programmes put out on the N.B.C. network.

As far as I can remember, his first and only appearance in this country took place quite recently when he got himself a three-minute spot in a musical short titled *Swing Rhythms*, which may or may not have been shown at your local cinema. If you do happen to see it billed anywhere, you can pay your 9d. without hesitation, as, although short, his brief appearance with his accordion quintette is an object-lesson in the art of modern accordionising.

Strangely enough, although known over here amongst professional musicians, the name of **TITO** probably means less to the fans than those of Pietro Deiro, Frosink and Magnante.

A few years ago he was one of those harmless lunatics in that crazy band run by Frank and Milt Britton in Hollywood especially for film work. Tiring of fooling around on the instrument, he branched out on his own and got together a combination featuring himself and two other accordionists, backed with string bass and guitar.

The instrumentation may sound unusual for dancing purposes, but the jitterbug patrons at the Lincoln Hotel, New York, used to get a great kick out of the band when it held the fort there in the evenings before the resident band took over.

Airing regularly, they made four successful appearances in the famous C.B.S. Saturday Night Swing Club, a programme similar to our own Radio Rhythm Club airings, and played last year to over 25,000 swing fans at a huge open-air jazz carnival.

Paul Whiteman himself paid tribute to Tito a short time ago when he said: "Tito can do more things on an accordion than were ever thought of by other players. He is the only accordionist whom I have heard really play swing music."

Well, Paul should know. He's certainly heard enough jazz during the last 20 years to be an authority on the subject.

My thanks to reader **CLIFF GRAY** for bringing to my notice an excellent four-piece band playing at the Shaftesbury Hotel in Leeds.

Billed as the Shaftesbury Swing Quartette, and consisting of Ernest Jordan (tenor), Dan Medley (accordion), Les Goodman (piano), and Len James (drums), they have been described by several local critics as "sensational," and are rapidly making an enviable reputation for themselves in the district.

Drummer **ARCHIE PEARCE**, now in Air Force, still manages to find time to watch over interests of an all-lady combination known as The Rhythm Sisters Dance Orchestra playing in and around Eltham.

Consisting of three accordions, drums, piano and violin, even the 100 per cent. femininity of the outfit has not been proof against call-up difficulties, and, with two of the girls

leaving to go on munitions, there is work in plenty waiting for any accordionist of the fair sex who cares to apply.

Readers should get in touch with him at 130, Castlewood Drive, Eltham, S.E., and should be prepared to undertake a large number of good-class engagements in the near future.

Philanthropy is found these days amongst even the most commercial-minded, and I would like to give a little deserved publicity to the publishing houses of Denmark Street for the way they are looking after the many musicians serving in the Forces who once used to be on the air.

Many of the old leaders find that the contact men of Tin Pan Alley still keep in touch for friendship's sake, and free band parts still have a habit of finding their way to far-off military camps, even though there is little at the moment that the recipients can do in return.

A letter from **HARRY GEENTY**, now in the Air Force, brings thanks in particular to Dick Royle, Eddie Standring, Hugh Charles, Charles Lucas, Percy Hiron, Stan Weightman, and many others, who, as Harry puts it, with nothing to gain and only friendship to retain, still continue to keep him supplied with parts while in the Forces.

In many firms, special subscription rates for Air Force and Army musicians are in operation, and I have yet to see a lad in uniform turned away without at least a couple of

spare orchestrations to tide him over until he is able to find the necessary amount for the club.

A little thing, perhaps, but it must mean a lot to feel you are still welcome even if you haven't got a broadcast on the following week.

Used as I have become to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in the shape of my extinguished colleague on Page Six, I find that constant turning can wear out the toughest of other cheeks, and for once I am tempted to pay him the compliment of taking him up on some of his more recent statements concerning my private life.

I see from last week's "Essence" that he is concerned at the moment regarding my regular habitation of music publishers' offices. A strange complex.

Who should be more in touch with the song business than myself, both as a working musician and as a journalist on the staff of a paper dealing exclusively with musicians?

Strange, too, that he should speak so slightly of Tin Pan Alley, especially when one considers the number of lady vocalists that are to be seen there during the course of an afternoon. Could it be possible that this apparent apathy towards music publishers is due to that small notice one finds these days on the counter?

You know, the one that reads: "Free List Entirely Suspended"!

GLASGOW GOSSIP

by Hugh Hinshelwood

ONCE again a well-known name appears on the radio programme, when Tim Wright and his Band go over the air on July 30, in an offering which will include items of Scottish dance music.

Tim Wright is one of the real old-timers, and has played palais and gig work in Edinburgh and the East of Scotland for years. His band is greatly in demand in peace time for the "circuit" of balls held in connection with the Highland games, and it is the long experience in this class of work which makes Tim an almost automatic choice for a programme of this sort.

The playing of "gigs" of this kind involves travelling many hundreds of miles, and not only have the band covered all Scotland in their itinerary, but on one or two occasions they have made the long journey down south to play at society functions.

"COLUMN-DODGING"

Just as an answer to the critics who talk of musician "column-dodgers," it might be worth while giving some details of the line-up of the band which Neil McCormack got together to deputise for Ivy Benson's Band when the latter took their week's holiday from the Locarno.

One boy was on his week's leave from the R.A.F., three were on a "hard-earned" holiday from important war work, one is medically unfit, another over military age, another under age, while the remaining member is waiting his papers.

Just in case anyone should criticise certain of the boys for spending their holidays or leave playing in a dance-hall—well, a few extra pounds are not to be sneezed at, considering the extremely problematic post-war future of most of us.

Tommy Renwick's departure from Jack Chapman's Band was noted recently, and now Jack looks like losing the next "oldest inhabitant," as drummer Jack McLeod, now a member of the Special Police, is likely to find "shift" work a bar to his regular appearance at the Albert. However, *c'est la thingummy*, and happy days may not be long in returning.

Another member of the McCormack family is in the news, this time the youngest of the ménage, trumpet-player James being now fixed up with Gwyn Evans, who is leading Tommy James' Band at Dunoon Pavilion.

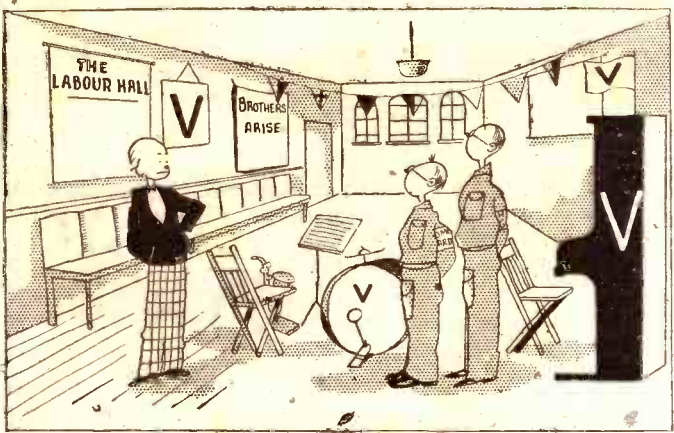
NOBLE ON LEAVE

James was in papa Neil's band at the Locarno, and, incidentally, another member of the brass section here, Watson Reeves (trombone), has just been fixed by Lauri Blandford for Dennistoun Palais.

George Noble, Glasgow saxist, home on leave from the R.A.F., tells us he is getting plenty of practice, with his own band and all. However, that's all the news we could get out of George, as most of our conversation was made up of reminiscences of New York trips with Louis Freeman's "navy," and wishing (once again) that those happy days, etc.

Visits to the Berkeley and the Albert on the same warm evening showed that, despite the heat, dancing is still the "tops." At the Berkeley a happy crowd were dancing to Alf Johnstone's Band led by brother Charlie during Alf's temporary sojourn in hospital.

At the Albert, "house full" was prominently displayed, the occasion being a "match" in the local "ballroom league," dancing tourney which is bringing out the crowds just now.



BILLY PLONKIT: "I'm afraid we haven't got the parts of the 'Internationale,' fellers; but as we're playing in the Labour Hall, we'll busk a couple of choruses of 'Red Sails In The Sunset.'"

OUR RECORD COMPETITION

THE challenge which jazz fans read into our competition G11—which asked why they did not enter the G7 competition, which in turn had asked, "Assuming it to be a foregone conclusion that Benny Carter and Johnny Hodges are the two greatest alto saxophonists in jazz, which do you consider the finer, and why?"—has borne fruit.

Scores of readers, feeling their enthusiasm for jazz had been questioned, rushed to assure us that such an imputation was anything but justified, just as they did their utmost to convince us that it was anything but lack of very definite opinion on the matter which prevented them from taking the opportunity to discuss the merits of two whom they readily agreed were among the leading figures in jazz.

"EXCUSES"

In fact, between them they put forward about every conceivable excuse for not having answered the question, except those which could have exposed them to any accusation that their failure was due to any shortcomings of their own.

Be this as it may, however, a careful consideration of the "excuses," individually and collectively, suggests that:—

1. While the average jazz fan is

THE WINNING LETTER

I CANDIDLY confess I felt your question somewhat beyond me.

My opinion is, that while Benny is delightful to listen to, the charm of his music (as a soloist) lies less in what he says than the way he says it.

He has a real gift for producing tuneful melody, but when I try to analyse his playing I feel that it is more often the simple poetry in his choice of words, than any great depth of character in his meaning, that is the chief allure.

Hodges, on the other hand, is not only equally fluent and poetic, but speaks with an even greater insight into what Edgar Jackson calls the jazz language, because, it would seem, he relies less on acquired culture and more on the instinct he has inherited from his race.

All of which seems to me to be only a poor expression of an immature conception of Hodges, Carter and jazz, and that's why I didn't send it in.

From which you will realise that I am not writing to you now in the expectation of winning any prize, but merely because I feel that anyone who has received as much help and enjoyment as I have from the "Melody Maker" ever since I first heard of it and became a regular reader over four years ago should support it in every possible way.

After all, if anything happened to the "M.M." where should we be?

We should, of course, have records. But where should we find out anything about them, or the people who play them, which means the way to appreciate them? We should have to rely solely on our own taste and discernment, which, in my case, is still too green to be reliable.

That the "M.M." may continue to flourish is the sincere wish of

Yours gratefully,
(Signed)
BENJAMIN T. HARRISON.

THE BANDS BATTLE

MOST of the jazz one hears in this country has for so long been so phoney that no one can be blamed for failing to recognise the real thing when it does turn up.

But the real thing turned up last Saturday when Edmundo Ros and his Cuban Sextet took part in a radio "Battle of Bands" with Eric Winstone and his Swing Quartette.

As usual with the B.B.C., this was a "battle" only in name. Fatuous comping and the absence of a studio audience to give the proceedings an atmosphere did their best to kill the show, but Edmundo Ros's music rose above such obstacles.

Ros's band consisted of himself (vocalist and drums), with Dennis Walton (tpt.), Bert Inglis (piano), Frank Deniz (gtar), Leslie Thompson (bass) and Dudley Misso (maracas, etc.). All are coloured boys and all except Misso are regularly with Ros at Martinez's Spanish Restaurant and the Coconut Grove niterie, both in London's Regent Street.

The success of this band lies in the fact that its music is the genuine native article, not the synthetic apology for it that is about all one can expect, certainly all one usually hears, from the home talent.

BIOGRAPHY

Even the what some would call weaknesses of the band (such as the unorthodox trumpet tone, the curiously incorrect intonation of Ros's singing) are at least typical.

And this is not surprising when you realise that all the boys have a native background if not in every case a native experience.

Deniz and Walton have, I believe, never been out of Europe. At any rate, both are English born, but of native musical parents, who have taught them much of the music of their race.

The others go one better. Although born in Scotland, Inglis has spent much of his life in Mexico. Thompson comes from Central America, Misso from Ceylon and Ros from Venezuela.

Ros spent most of his life playing in bands in that part of the world until 1937, when he came to Europe. It hardly needs me to point out to anyone who has ever heard him play that he is one of the greatest rumba and kindred South American music drummers who have ever played in this country.

Well, that was the little group which, with that nice little vocalist Peggy McCormack, borrowed for the occasion from Dennis Moonan's bunch at Hatchett's Restaurant, kept me (and, I hope, you) enthralled with its rumbas, congas and other South American dapce music forms.

It is a music of which you should take serious notice, because, following what is already

War Time Radio Reported by "DETECTOR"

happening in America, we may well be due for what can aptly be called a South American invasion.

For years it looked as though nothing new was in the offing which could seriously challenge the popularity of jazz. But it now seems that the rumba, conga, etc., may, But more about this anon.

All I have space to say at the moment is that indications which have been looming on the horizon for some little while now look like turning into a veritable deluge. If it does happen, don't say I didn't warn you.

As regards Eric Winstone's contribution to the proceedings, it was essentially more orthodox, but Winstone's own capable accordion was a more than adequate background to Roy Marsh's again outstanding vibraphone.

SWING "Highbrow"

Those who heard Dennis Preston's brilliant lunge at swing violinists last May, which he called "Wanted—A Swing Fiddler," may have found his less controversial—and less biting—opinions on Louis Armstrong as a vocalist very much less gripping when last Thursday week (July 17) friend Dennis took the floor of the Radio Rhythm Club to present a record recital entitled "Trumpeter! What Are You Singing Now?"

If so, the reason may be that Dennis has been elevated by the B.B.C. to what they are pleased to call The Highbrow of Swing, and that he is overcome by the honour. After all, highbrows have something to live up to. They have to adopt (vide my dictionary) a more "detached outlook."

Like our Ministry of Information, they are too big to have to resort to any real ingenuity to get their points home.

Their reputations are established, and all they need to do is sit back and adopt a pose of patronising reserve behind strings of high-sounding phrases. If what they say means little to their audiences, that is the fault of the audiences for being so dumb.

Yes, Mr. Preston deserves his title of Highbrow—but I hope he will soon see the emptiness of the compliment and revert to being just an ordinary lover of jazz with something worthwhile to say on the subject.

The sooner he does, the sooner we may get another of those grand commentaries on jazz which instead of being merely glorification blurbs really give us an insight into the subject

by fairly mixing with their many qualities of genius the failings which even the greatest of the jazz stars must confess to.

Not that Armstrong has so many failings as a singer, but when you find nothing but a rave about him you cannot help feeling a trifle suspicious that either the recitalist has not studied his subject or is trying to conceal something.

OH, SIM!

What on earth has happened to Sim Grossman's Band? Its broadcast last Sunday afternoon (July 20) had hardly a single point to commend it.

The band always playing melody behind the vocal choruses was but the least of many weaknesses.

A raw, messy, dun-coloured ensemble without any sense of light, shade or feeling hacked through the "pops" of the moment in a way that must have made even the least musically-minded shudder.

And the announcing! One knows that leaders, especially those outside London, are not finding it too easy to get musicians these days. But that could hardly excuse this performance of Grossman's.

Other leaders are in the same boat, but they manage to get along. Johnny Rosen, for instance, put up a quite presentable show last Monday week even if his boys did fail to "feel" that anticipated beat which is the essence of the Conga, and even though his vocalist exaggerated his accents and sang AmaPOLa, pREtty Little POPpy.

Henry Hall and his Band are again the "Band of the Week" for next week.

B.B.C.'s American (he was born in Chicago) Variety Producer, Jimmy Dyrenforth, has left for a holiday visit to his home country.

It is expected that he will be away for two months.

This year's edition of Lawrie Wright's famous annual, "On With The Show," with Bram Martin's Band, will be broadcast on Tuesday, July 29, from the northern seaside resort where it is being presented.

The danger of repeating even the most innocent sounding rumours will be proved by Paul Ellington in a broadcast entitled "Rumours," due for the Forces wavelength on Wednesday, July 30.

As Mr. Ellington says, rolling stones, when they are rumours, gather plenty of moss—and we add, the result can produce many a serious mess.

Macclesfield - Wilmslow. All interested in the formation of a Rhythm Club in either of these districts should contact G. S. Pearce, "Granta Cottage," Prestbury, Macclesfield, Cheshire.

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What's Happening in the Midlands

by HARRY FELLOWS

WE don't seem to get much intricate stuff, but well within the range of this capable band. Popping over to Ilkeston, Derbyshire, the other evening, I met another old contesting chum in the person of Walter Aldred, who a few years ago was frequently amongst the prize winners as trumpet lead with Fred Poynter's Band, of Heanor, Derbyshire.

Sorry that I have not recently been able to keep pace with the local news, or honoured that someone, at least, does read it when it is published.

These are trying times, however, and I must confess that "Going to it" for approximately seventy hours each week is hardly conducive to the task of keeping pace with the movements in the local dance music world.

During the past fortnight, however, I have been making a special effort to get the lie of the land, and here are some of my gleanings.

DERBY

First of all I ran over to Derby, to find that everything there was still going in apple-pie order. On a broiling Saturday evening, everyone at the Plaza Ballroom was doing his utmost to ensure that the weather did not get the best of the argument.

Proprietor Sam Ramsden was setting the example, clad only in sports shirt, flannels and sandals—the Commanders were all coatless—whilst Billy Merrin, apparently fighting a battle between dignity and comfort, had compromised with cricket shirt and blazer.

Mr. Ramsden's only news was to the effect that business here has "never been better since the place was opened"—in itself a distinct compliment to a hard-working leader and band.

In common with most leaders in these times, Billy Merrin's chief difficulty is in finding men to replace those called to the Services.

Not one member of the band which he had at the commencement of hostilities is now in his service, and that very night alto Ronnie Bradley was leaving to join the R.A.F.

The only other item of news from the Merrin camp was to the effect that Rita Williams had just celebrated her sixth year as vocalist with the Commanders and her twenty-first on this unhappy planet.

LUCKY 13's

Having chosen the thirteenth day of the month as the one on which to make her arrival, her defiance of superstition was amplified by Mr. Ramsden and the patrons of the Plaza, who presented her with a birthday present in the form of a cheque for £13 13s.

Whilst in Derby, I took the opportunity of dropping in at the Railway Institute to look up the boys of that well-known contesting outfit, the Mayfair Super Band, one of the few local semi-pro. outfits which have defied everything and kept going. Naturally, the personnel has changed considerably, and here is the present line-up:—

Super Syd Arkell (piano and leader); A.C. Pat Murfin (drums); Norman Keen (bass); Horace Ward (trumpet); Eddie Jepson (trombone); Frank Sharpe (alto); Bob Butcher (alto and tenor); Harry Hopkins (tenor); with all three saxes doubling clarinet.

Pat Murfin, Syd Arkell and Bob Butcher are all in the Services, and the last-named, who was formerly a Johnny Rosen man, has written some splendid arrangements for the band.

I heard several of these

Walter now leads his own band, the New Ambassadors, at the Co-operative Ballroom, Ilkeston; which spot, by the way, although only opened since the war began, has already proved its worth by housing record crowds for both Nat Gonella and Billy Merrin, attractions which were previously beyond the capacity of any hall in the town.

The new Ambassadors line up as follows: Maurice Mathews (piano and accordion); Harold Naylor (drums); Tom Draper (bass); Walter and Eric Aldred (trumpets); Joe Stevenson (trombone); Sam Aldred (alto); John Aldred (tenor, accordion and piano); Peggy Hancock and Dolly Lee (vocalists).

An interesting feature concerning this band is that all four Aldreds are brothers which reminds me of another "family" outfit which I recently came across in Bulwell, Notts.

This band, styled as Mrs. Cox and her Boys, is made up as follows: Mrs. Cox (piano and accordion); Colin Cox (drums); Eunice Cox (alto, clarinet and fiddle); Bill Sealey (tenor and clarinet); Ted Osborn (fiddle).

NOTTINGHAM

In all senses of the word, Mrs. Cox keeps a maternal eye—and ear—on the progress of thirteen-year-old son Colin and daughter Eunice; the latter who, although only sixteen, is already the star "man" of the outfit.

Family bands are no war time expedient with Mrs. Cox... she confesses that she has been connected with outfits of this description all her life, commencing as a girl of thirteen with the leadership of one which contained her father, brother, uncle and cousin.

Nothing much has changed recently in Nottingham, except the personnel of the bands. Les Thorpe is still at the Palais de Danse, and Rube Sunshine at the Victoria Ballroom, and both are having a tremendous struggle to keep their bands up to strength.

For instance, Sunshine was last week just congratulating himself upon having solved his tenor problem by fixing Bert Humphries, a George Elrick man, when he was immediately faced with the task of finding a second trumpet to replace Al Winnat, who had his papers for the R.A.F.

In passing, it is interesting to note how the Victoria Ballroom is rapidly becoming a rendezvous for musicians serving in the Forces. From time to time one runs across the big names of the profession there, and only last week-end I had the pleasure of meeting ex-Roy Fox pianist Cpl. Jack Nathan and A/C Syd Dean, who had his band at the Astoria Dance Salon, both boys now being in charge of R.A.F. station bands "somewhere in the Midlands."

I imagine that our meeting turned to our mutual satisfaction. For me, at least, it solved a problem I had been set of recommending "something good in bands" for an important local social event.

Admirers of that now famous Service band, the Blue Rockets, now stationed at an R.A.O.C. depot "in the Midlands," will be pleased to hear that they have been fixed by the B.B.C. for a regular series of fortnightly broadcasts.

North Britain Final: Full Report

JUDGES' REPORT

Adjudicators: Messrs. Joe Kirkham, Eddie Macauley and Edgar Jackson (president).

WINNERS

R.A.F. WEETONIANS

(Three saxes, two trumpets, trombone, piano, bass, drums.) All cons.: Sqd./L. Britton, c/o "Melody Maker."

Individualists' awards for: Trombone, drums. Hon. mention for Trumpet.

THIS band won on its all-round musicianship, and what appeared to be diligent rehearsing of a tasteful and efficient ensemble.

It lost marks for such oversights as a trombone solo in the slow fox-trot *I Understand*, which was practically inaudible owing, it seemed, to far too close muting. Also the tone of the sax team was a little reedy, and the lead alto might have had more strength and definition.

Nevertheless, the trombone was obviously the best in the contest, and all round the band had improved quite noticeably since its by no means inadequate performance when it came second to Ron Davenport at the All-Cheshire at Warrington just four weeks previously.

There was more attack in the band, especially in the brass section, resulting in a more inspiring rhythm; the tenor player, though still not quite prominent enough in his solos, not only played better, but was more forward, and generally the band had more bite to add to its tunelessness and all-round capability as an orchestra.

SECOND

AL HARVEY AND HIS BAND (Liverpool)

(Three saxes, two trumpets, trombone, piano, bass, drums.)

All cons.: 182, South Mossley Hill Road, Liverpool, 19.

Individualists' awards for: Tenor, trumpet, trombone. Hon. mention for: Piano.

ON the whole, this combination can claim to be more advanced as a dance band than the R.A.F. Weetonians. The excellent use made of mutes by the brass in the slow fox-trot *Moonshine* was but one feature which went towards what can fairly be described as a fine sense of jazz interpretation.

Grand work by the trumpet (both as a section leader and as a soloist with tone, bite and style; and by the bass were also strong points.

Where the band just failed was in the work of the trombonist and the tenor player (the latter was lucky to win his individualist's award, owing to shortcomings in other tenor players, who at their best could probably have beaten him) and an occasional raggedness in the ensemble due, perhaps more than anything else, to the ambitious detail it was commendably attempting to infuse into its performances.

THIRD

RON DAVENPORT AND HIS BAND (Warrington)

(Sax, trumpet, piano, guitar, bass, drums.)

Individualists' awards for: Piano, guitar. Hon. mention for: Tenor, trumpet, drums.

BUT for minor errors, this six-piece hot busking band might have won the Championship.

The saxophonist, who, if memory serves us rightly, had in previous contests featured only alto, now used also tenor. He would easily have won the individualist's award for this instrument had it not been for quite a few squeaks.

At first the judges were inclined to overlook this, believing that it might be due to a fault which had suddenly developed in the instrument.

But when squeaks also appeared in the player's alto work it became obvious that such was hardly likely to be the case. Nevertheless, this musician has style, taste and musicianship, and must not be underrated for something which, although it could not be excused, did not conceal his ability.

Excellent style was also a feature of the trumpet player, who missed his soloist's prize mainly because his tone was not quite the equal of that of a man who not only showed an equally good style, but, as already intimated, proved himself to be a grand section leader and all that that implies as a musician.

The quite outstanding drummer only lost his individualist's award because, probably due to nerves, he tended to rush the tempo at times, especially in the quick-step, and thus allowed himself to be beaten by a player who is probably not really quite his equal.

Tone was not the strongest point in the bass player, but he was otherwise good, and honours went to a tasteful and stylish pianist and a guitarist who had the chance to show his ability in a short but effective solo.

Len Marshall and his Band from Lincoln, who secured the individualist's award for alto, were placed fourth.



Top: The huge crowd watching the presentation of prizes to the winning band. Bottom: Al Harvey's Band, who came second.

list's award for alto, were placed fourth. An unfortunate musician was Mike Riley's tenor player, a man with an excellent hot style and an unusual technique, he lost his soloist's award solely because of an exaggerated vibrato and the fact that he spoilt his tone (it was coarse and hard) by overblowing.

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