

# Melody Maker

INCORPORATING RHYTHM

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## STOLL PICTURE HOUSE FOR VARIETY: COTTON TOPS

GOOD NEWS FOR LONDONERS IN GENERAL IS CONTAINED IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE FAMOUS STOLL THEATRE IN KINGSWAY IS TO REOPEN AS A VARIETY HOUSE ON SEPTEMBER 1.

Good news for musicians in particular lies in the further announcement that one of the principal attractions for the opening week will be Billy Cotton and his Band, fresh from provincial variety triumphs, to give London a taste of the stylish music, plus effective showmanship, which has enabled this band to carve its own especial niche in the topmost column of variety entertainment.

Bill's place in the show will be essentially on the stage; his band will not be used in accompanying work, according to present arrangements.

A pit orchestra will be installed, and, as is usual with Stoll houses, it will be supplied and looked after by Jack Frere.

### FINE ACOUSTICS

Sharing the honours with Bill Cotton for the first week's show will be the well-known light comedian, Randolph Sutton, and the amusing double turn of Clifford and Marion.

There seems little doubt that the Cotton outfit will be able to do itself more than justice at the Stoll, because, the theatre having been originally built as an opera house, its acoustic properties are exceptionally good.

For many years now the Stoll Theatre has been used as a cinema, and quite an amount of structural alteration has been necessary in order to turn it into a house of variety.

The question of a broadcast from the theatre during the first week's show, and one which would doubtless include Bill Cotton, is under consideration.

## Loss Fixes

### Jamboree: M.S.B.C. Rhythm Recital

THE Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council is inviting all rhythm fans, whether members of the Musicians' Union or not, to a record recital at the Workers' Music Association, 9, Great Newport Street, W., on Thursday, August 7, at 8 p.m., entitled "Why Does Jazz Change?"

The proceedings will be opened by Ben Frankel with a statement from the chair, after which the recital will be by well-known Rhythm Club recitalist, Peter Tanner, using records from his vast and rare collection.

In the subsequent discussion, prominent members of the musical profession have promised to take part.

There is no entrance fee, and refreshments at popular prices will be supplied by members of the M.U. Women's Guild. It is hoped that, should this venture meet with the success it deserves, it will inaugurate a series of such recitals for the rhythm fans by the M.S.B.C.

Details of the Jazz Jamboree are being fixed, and the first big band definitely to signify its willingness to appear is that of Joe Loss.

The Jamboree takes place on Sunday, September 7, and as tickets (costing 5s.) are all issued in rotation, early application is advised to Reg Knight, Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council, 27, Rupert Street, London, W.1.

## BAND FOR NEW FIRTH SHEPARD SHOW

DISCERNING London theatre-goers have a date on August 21, which is the occasion of the opening, at the Princes' Theatre, of that feast of good fare which Firth Shephard has gathered into another of his appetising vaudevilian dishes under the title of "Fun and Games."

Many of the stage stars of "Shephard's Pie"—Vera Pearce, Richard Hearne, Sydney Howard, Arthur Riscoe, etc.—are appearing again in "Fun and Games," and many of the musical notabilities also, for John Borelli (or John Blore to his friends) is again in charge of the large and versatile orchestra.

Included in this will be found: Frank Johnson, Micky Lewis and Joe Jeanette (saxes), Gwen Austin (Mrs. Pogson to the profession) and "Cherry" Reynolds (pianos), Miss Wilson (harp), Bob Lamont (bass), Jack Williams and Tommy Balmforth (trumpets), N. Wethmar, Theodore Guittar and A. Green (violins), Vic Banister (cello), and Bob Jolley (drums).

"Fun and Games" will be essentially a high-class show, and the orchestra will have some complicated scores to play, including two sessions of ballet—joint productions of John Borelli's musical efforts and the genius of that most artistic and original of "comics," Richard Hearne. Especially prominent among the ballet performers will be the new sensation of this show, Carol Rave.

"Fun and Games" opens at Manchester on August 4 for a short season before coming to London.

## Watford Rhythm Ball

AT the Rhythm Club Ball, to be held on August 26, at the Watford Town Hall, it is learned that Harry Parry is not to play throughout the evening, but will make a special hour's appearance with the Radio Rhythm Club Sextet.

Starting at 7.30 p.m., dancing will continue till 1 a.m., when there will be late coaches to London. All-in price of 7s. 6d. will secure seat in a special coach leaving London at 7 p.m., admission to the dance, and return journey leaving at 2 a.m.

These tickets are obtainable from Bill Elliott, 506, Kensington Close, W.8.

## FERRIE ON THE AIR

MIFF FERRIE and his Orchestra are co-starred with Nut House compere Al Burnett in a new radio show, "New To You," which is being broadcast to-night (Friday) on the Home and Forces wavelength from 10.20 to 10.45 p.m.

Trombonist Miff is using an eight-piece outfit, smaller than the one with which he has been doing such successful stage-shows around the country. He is, of course, the resident band at the Nut House.



## George Elrick Comes To Town

"WHEN You're Smiling," that grand old melody, became North London's theme-song during the past week, when George Elrick (see photograph above) and his 12-piece stage and broadcasting band appeared at the Finsbury Park Empire as a big item in variety's first presentation—before packed audiences reminiscent of peace time days—of the popular B.B.C. show "Piccadilly."

Bright and ebullient as his own signature tune, George Elrick conscientiously and unflinchingly carried through his own not inconsiderable part of the performance, singing, conducting, comping, telling stories, and generally clowning through the show, all in a manner that proved him to have acquired much knowledge of stagecraft and showmanship since those far-off days when, as Henry Hall's singing drummer, he used to lose himself in that "thick, thick fog in London."

### 14-YEAR-OLD FIND

As a unit the band, too, worked very hard, reaching its peak of rhythmic exuberance in a completely incredible version of the evergreen *Bugle Call Rag*.

The band showed great restraint, and very musicianly qualities, too, in its accompaniment of the several artists appearing in its own part of the show, including Primrose, the well-known singing star late of Jack Hylton's and Roy Fox's bands, giving a beautifully balanced rendering of *The First Lullaby*.

There was also Lorna Martin, the internationally famous accordionist, who took us, via an abnormally slick technique, for a short trip into spheres of more serious music; and Johnnie Hudson, the amazing 14-year-old trumpet player from Dundee, who, in his playing of *Stardust*, showed a mastery of intonation and tone that seemed scarcely possible in one so young.

George's own concluding number, a droll piece of nonsense concerning the writing of a signature tune for everybody (including Hitler's father and mother!), was put over in a manner that left no doubt of George's ability to appear purely as a solo singer and comedian any time he wants to.

The present venture of the Elrick combination had of necessity to be undertaken with but little rehearsal, although there was absolutely no sign of this in the performance. The boys did not complete a month's enjoyable stay at Green's Playhouse, Glasgow, until the previous (Please turn to p. 2, col. 4.)

# HYLTON BOOKS BLUE ROCKETS FOR STAGE

ONE OF THE BIG SENSATIONS OF DANCE MUSIC AMONG THE FORCES HAS BEEN THE R.A.O.C. BLUE ROCKETS BAND, LED BY TROMBONIST L/CPL. ERIC TANN, AND BIG NEWS BREAKS THIS WEEK WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT JACK HYLTON IS BOOKING THE BAND (SUBJECT TO WAR OFFICE PERMISSION) FOR A SERIES OF STAGE DATES AND OTHER ENGAGEMENTS.

The Blue Rockets are the resident unit at a large camp somewhere in the Midlands, and have, up to now, performed engagements only to their colleagues and around the immediate district, plus a few broadcasts.

But a big Tanks Fund scheme is now under way at the camp, by which it is hoped to raise at least £10,000 in two months, and Eric had the bright idea of approaching his superiors and suggesting that the band be allowed to perform commercial engagements in aid of the Fund.

### JACK GETS BUSY

This was agreed to, and on Tuesday of this week, Eric, in company with ex-Hyltonian trombone player Ronnie Rand, came to London to see Jack Hylton, who, having heard the band on the air, was extremely interested in the proposition.

As a result of their deliberations, the Blue Rockets have been offered three engagements—at the New Theatre, Oxford (week commencing August 18); Birmingham Hippodrome (week commencing August 25); and Nottingham Empire (week commencing September 8).

In addition, Sunday concerts, dances, etc., are being arranged for the band, and further dates are being fixed.

At the time of going to press, the project is still awaiting complete and final approval from the War Office, but, in view of the fact that the engagements

constitute the band's personal contribution to the Tanks Fund, it is not anticipated that there will be any hitch.

The Blue Rockets consist of sixteen of London's best-known instrumentalists, and their stage show also includes a troupe of eight dancing girls drawn from the A.T.S. and trained by Mrs. Jean Baverstock, wife of the band's pianist, Jack Baverstock.

Readers have the opportunity of hearing them on the air on Wednesday, August 13, when they are to broadcast from noon to 12.30 p.m. (Forces).

## 'UNCLE SAM IN SONG'

CURRENT trend of America's war outlook is shown clearly these days in the new slant on titles adopted by songwriters in the States, and to-morrow (Saturday) American-born Joe Brannely, of Peter Maurice, airs a new record programme entitled "Uncle Sam In Song," illustrating how the boost in patriotism has affected Tin Pan Alley over there.

Devised principally for the ordinary listener, the fact that all the records used are unobtainable in this country should make it doubly interesting for the musician.

Starting with *I Am An American*, played by Gray Gordon and his orchestra, the half-hour includes *I'm Nuts About the Good Old U.S.A.*, played by Mitchell Ayres and his *Fashions in Music*; *You're A Lucky Fellow, Mr. Smith* (Tommy Tucker and his Band); *You're In The Army Now* (Abe Lyman and his Californians); *What'll I Do If I Marry A Soldier* (Shep Fields); *The Bill Of Rights* (Horace Heidt and his Musical Knights); *I'd Feel At Home If They'd Let Me Join The Army*, sung by Billy Murray; *The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, sung and swung by the Andrew Sisters, and finally Irving Berlin's famous *God Bless America*.

The programme is being aired from noon to 12.30 p.m. (Forces).

## "K.P." 16<sup>TH</sup> STAR PARCEL

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# BLUES & TASTE

## The New Swing Records Reviewed

by  
**EDGAR JACKSON**

**ARTIE SHAW AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

\*\*\*Chantez Les Bas (Sing 'em Low) (W. C. Handy) (Am. Victor OA.055070) (Recorded September 7, 1940).

\*\*Pyramid (Mills, Gordon, Tizol, Ellington) (Am. Victor OA.055186) (Recorded December 3, 1940). (H.M.V. B.9197-3s. 8d.)

Shaw (clart.) with Les Robinson, H. Plumb, C. Bassey, Jerry Jerome (reeds); T. Wendt, J. Cathcart, Bill Butterfield (tpsts.); Jack Jenny, Vernon Brown (tmb.); T. Boardman, T. Klages, B. Brower, B. Morrow, A. Beller, E. Lamas (vlns.); A. Harshman, K. Collins (violins); F. Goerner (cello); J. Guarnieri (piano); A. Hendrickson (gitar.); J. de Naut (bass); Nick Fatool (drums).

I BELIEVE I'm right in saying this is the outfit (now disbanded) which Artie Shaw hand-picked to take to Hollywood for his film "Second Chorus."

Anyway, it's the same line-up as he used for his record of *Concerto For Clarinet* (12 in. H.M.V. C.3231—see review in the "M.M." for June 7 last), which he featured in the film.

Don't let the name of W. C. Handy as composer of *Chantez Les Bas* mislead you into presuming that the veteran blues writer has suddenly jumped his groove and blossomed forth as a scribbler of French ruderities.

*Sing 'Em Low* (as the translation is, near enough) is merely another way of saying they've rung the changes on one of the old man's familiar blues, but apparently not sufficiently to be able to get out of giving him the credit for (and presumably the royalties on) the opus. You'll recognise it for sure when you hear it.

### 23-PIECE

Now, a Handy blues may not seem the sort of thing to suffer such an array of strings, and all that they usually imply, and yet remain anything like good jazz.

But for the most part it's worked here.

And mainly because the arranger has had the taste not to be overcome by the fact that he's got a twenty-three piece combination to show off with.

He's made Butterfield's trumpet, Guarneri's piano, and most prominently Shaw's clarinet, the chief characters in the piece, and used all the other front-line instruments, which he always keeps as sections moving together in harmony, more on the lines of a supporting chorus.

Now and again the brass and saxes come in for short passages on their own, but for the most part they are, like the strings, employed as a backcloth to give effect and perspective to Shaw's clarinet—a task in which they shine none the less adequately because of the bold colours the arranger has presented in the most uncomplex, open way; because of the fine balance and tone which good musicianship has given the sections; and because of the clean, vivid, well-forward manner in which excellent recording has brought out everything.

*Pyramid* is treated on much the same lines, and equally commendable recording has made it an equally attractive display of bright, rich tone colour.

But the composition is on more "commercial" lines, and consequently gets a more "commercial" interpretation at the hands of both the arranger and the band. For which reasons it is better purely as music than as jazz.

Which is just the one thing everyone concerned should have gone all out to guard against, especially in view of the nature of the tune and the instrumentation of the band with its mass of strings.

Or is it?

**JIMMIE LUNCEFORD AND HIS ORCHESTRA.**

\*Dinah—Pts. I and II (Lewis, Young, Akst) (V. by Joe Thomas) (Am. Columbia LA.2164 and 5) (Recorded February, 1941). (Parlophone R. 2803—3s. 8d.)

Lunceford directing Willie Smith, Ted Buchner, Earl Carruthers, Dan Grissom (altos); Joe Thomas (tenor); Gerald Wilson, Paul Webster, Snookie Young (trumpets); Elmer Crumpley, James Young, Russell Bowles (trumbones); Edwin Wilcox (piano); Al Norris (guitar); Moses Allen (bass); James Crawford (drums).

SEEMS I spoke too soon when I said the other week that Lunceford invariably enjoyed the benefit of good recording.

In these two sides the surface is rough, there is a sad deficiency of bass, and the tone is generally nasty—muzzy and boxy. Sounds as though the band was playing through a telephone.

Now, I candidly confess that my opinions of a record are often considerably influenced by the reproduction.

To some extent it's wrong that they should be. In the first place, it's unfair on the artistes; secondly, it may give readers a wrong impression, especially those who are more interested in studying jazz technically than they are in listening to it purely as entertainment.

But I am sure there are many who will agree with me that it's the noise as a whole that governs one's enjoyment. It doesn't matter how good the performance may be. If the recording is bad, the noise that comes out of the speaker will be bad; and that's the end of any enjoyment so far as I'm concerned.

### MAD RUSH

All of which is, however, rather beside the point, because even if the recording had been perfect I don't imagine I should have had to worry about thinking out any superlatives for this version of the long-suffering *Dinah*.

The whole thing is just a mad, noisy rush in fast tempo. Saxophones play lots of notes, but get nowhere. Trumpets squirm around on a trapeze of ledger lines as they squeal high notes in a veritable orgy of ecstasy.

First past the post wins in the extravagantly over-elaborate ensembles. Nothing's barred. There are no rules any more than there is any relaxation or anything that could be called music.

There's just one part that is in a way interesting—the scoring of the accompaniment for Joe Thomas's muzzy and indistinct (probably because of the recording, one must concede) vocal chorus, and that because it's a bit different from the usual run of treatments that have been meted out to *Dinah* during the many years the lady has graced (or disgraced, as the case may have been) us with her presence.

And that's what they waste two 10-in. sides to give us, just because Lunceford's name has for some unaccountable reason come to mean something to the dear British public!

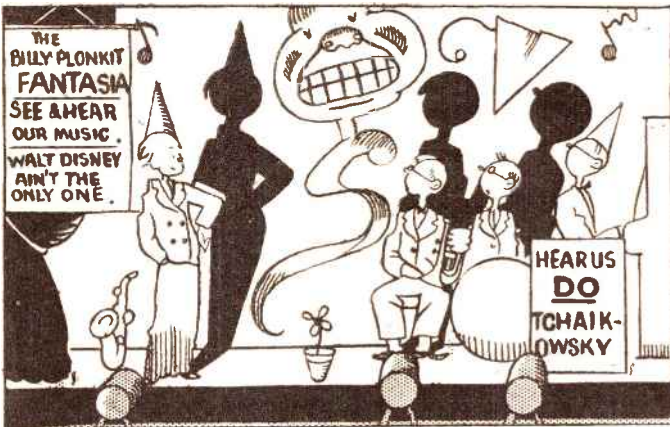
### FORCES' LETTER-BOX

A.C.2 Bob Allen is very keen to hear from his former tutor, Bert Kibby, who was formerly with Frank Storey and his Masqueraders, of Stratford, London, and is now in the Army. Will Bert write to him, c/o the "M.M."?

Will Arthur Fall, formerly pianist with Syd Millward, etc., please get in touch again with Phil Watts, c/o this office?

Driver T. A. Ure, attached to the R.A.S.C., stationed in Scotland, is trying to form a Rhythm Club in his unit, and asks if any readers have any old Goodman, Ellington, Dorsey or Basie or other hot discs they can spare, for which he will gladly pay postage.

Pte. T. Bainbridge has just come out of hospital after a serious spinal injury, and wants to get drumming again and to form a small orchestra among Pioneer Corps colleagues. His kit was lost through enemy action prior to his injury, and he asks if any reader can let him have one, on which he will readily pay carriage.



BILLY PLONKIT: "Don't forget, Stanley, you have to rattle the coal scuttle when we get to the storm bit; but the caretaker says we must not turn the cloakroom taps on for our flood movement, unless we agree to fill the inkwells."

### "DETECTOR"

## CHISHOLM ON THE AIR

WITHIN the last week the redoubtable George Chisholm, somewhat lost to us jazz enthusiasts since he joined the R.A.F., has made two appearances on the air.

The first was last Friday (July 25), when he appeared as guest soloist with Harry Parry and the Radio Rhythm Club Sextet; the second was two days later, when *The R.A.F. Dance Orchestra* came to the mike for a programme with the Central Band of the R.A.F. entitled "As Band To Band."

Although it gave him what in many ways were far greater opportunities, George's performance with the R.R.C. Sextet was a little disappointing.

The programme was a recorded one. More than once lately I have noticed these recorded programmes sounding out of tune. Whether or not it was the fault of the recording on this occasion I am not prepared to say, but Mr. C.'s trombone was definitely off pitch, especially in his first number—*Can't We Be Friends?*—and all round he didn't seem quite so inspired or at home as usual.

The rest of the airing was, however, well up to the usual high—if rather too set and now too familiar—standard of the Sextet.

### BASS CHANGE

The substitution of Charlie Short on bass for Sam Molyneux has done nothing to disturb the relaxed precision of the outfit, and the addition of coloured guitar soloist Lauderie Caton was a decided asset.

George Shearing, Roy Marsh and Harry Parry were well up to form, and all round the broadcast, with its grand performance of *Softly As In A Morning Sunrise* and *Honeysuckle Rose*, was another of those all too rare moments we get from the B.B.C. of good jazz.

To return to Chisholm, he made up for any shortcomings he may have had on this occasion by his performance with the R.A.F. Dance Orchestra the following Sunday. He had comparatively little to do, but the way he did it was masterly. His chorus

in *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans* was a treat.

In fact, this number was the high spot of the programme. The arrangement ought to be published as a jazz classic, and not only for the most unusual and interesting scoring of the accompaniment to what was in every way a brilliant tenor solo.

Many readers have written in to ask why I did not mention the new Sunday night Jack Buchanan show, "Going Places," which had its premiere last Sunday week (July 20).

Well, the reason was that I decided to give it a second chance. Many of these B.B.C. variety presentations have started off weakly, but have subsequently grown into popular successes. "Band Waggon" and "Happidrome" are but two classic instances.

After hearing both the first and second airings, I am, however, forced to the conclusion that "Going Places" will never reach the hit class.

Jack Buchanan may be a good stage personality, but means little over the air, and the script does nothing to help him.

In fact, taken all round, "Going Places" is just another of those inoffensive everyday sort of shows which any second-rate concert party could do just as well.

Harry Roy's is the "Band of the Week" for next week.

### "Corny"

## COMMERCIAL RECORDS REVIEWED

WITH the new August records not to hand at time of writing, I'm taking the opportunity of mentioning some leftovers from the mid-July lists which are well worth your consideration.

The vogue for South American songs, the result of their success in the U.S.A., which has, of course, found its reflection in films and records, has produced among other good melodies a new song called *Boa Noite* (Portuguese for Good Night).

It's from a new film, "That Night in Rio," and is already on the way to becoming a hit.

One of the first records of it to come out here is by Ambrose (Decca F.7903), and what with the nice arrangement, fine musicianship and vocal by Sam Browne, it should certainly prove to be one of the best.

The coupling is *They Met in Rio*, from the same film. Ambrose treats it just as tastefully, but in the vocal by Sam and Anne Shelton, Anne is not up to form. She sounds like a mature woman, which is hardly more in keeping with the song than it is with her actual seventeen years.

And still from the same film there are I, Yi, Yi, Yi, Yi, and *Chica Chica Boom Chic*.

### BOB CROSBY

Bob Crosby and his Orchestra do these on Decca F.7900, and as regards jazz they are at least as good as you'd expect this swell swing band to do with "Commercial" titles. But the numbers are typically South American, and you'll probably find more entertaining characteristic vocals than Bonnie King's if you wait for later records.

Arthur Young and His Swingette take credit for one of the first records of the new comedy success, *Hey! Little Hen* (Decca F.7906).

Except for a few hen cackles and Dave Fullerton's appropriate vocal chorus, the comedy aspect is happily less conspicuous than the bright swiny dance rhythm which this little outfit, with its capable guitar and clarinet soloists, not to mention Arthur's Novachord, so capably produces.

But even more attractive is the neat Callope Jane, with plenty of Arthur's Novachord again, on the obverse.

## F & D's ORCHESTRAL CLUB FIRST PARCEL CONTAINS

### JUST RELEASED

**BOA NOITE (Good Night)**  
**I YI, YI, YI, YI**  
**CHICA CHICA BOOM CHIC**  
From the Film *THAT NIGHT IN RIO*

**My Wonderful One Let's Dance**  
**The Johnson Rag** **America I Love You**  
**The Little Boy Who Never Told a Lie**

## No. 10 LULLABY LANE

**I Shall See You To-night (Waltz)**  
**The Road That Leads To Home**  
**You Say The Sweetest Things Johnny Peddler**  
**You Don't Have To Tell Me, I Know (Waltz)**

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## PERSONALITIES IN PARAGRAPH

by Eric Winstone



Morton Fraser

WARM sea coasts break gently on the beach at Atlantic City. Hot sunlight shines on yellow sand... and the sky is as blue as a musician's anecdote.

Under a large striped umbrella sit a small gang of swing stars, including Venuti, Arthur Schutt, Red Nicholls, and Jimmy Dorsey, with his equally famous brother. And in the centre of the group a young man jives softly on a mouth-organ to the rhythm of a softly strummed ukulele.

Y.S. the name is MORTON FRASER, and the music is mellow.

'Way back in 1924 Morton used to play with the famous Mound City Blue Blowers and at the Beaux Arts Café, where the band was a star feature, he made the acquaintance of most of the big names in jazz at that time.

A stylist in a land of stylists, he became known as among the leading exponents on his instrument, and, after playing as guest star with many of the leading bands, came to this country in 1929 to put on a double act with his partner Eddie Lee, now with Carroll Lewis.

For two years the act topped bills throughout the country, until eventually Lee went to Germany to join up with the Three Admirals.

Just about this time Morton decided to quit the business,

and went into the film industry on the distribution side.

But the old mouth-organ still had a habit of finding its way into his pocket from time to time, and in 1935 he once again made up his mind to return to the halls as a solo turn.

Since then he has probably done more broadcasting and television work than most other players of the instrument, and has toured both Australia and the Far East, headlining his way across Europe and the Continent as an accepted maestro of the mouth-organ.

Rapidly making a name for himself as a composer of hit themes, he first hit big-time in songland with *Small Town, Goodnight And God Bless You, Drink A Toast To Britain*, and currently that popular number in the new Ambrose stage presentation, *V For Victory*.

And to think people once used to make jokes about sucking and blowing.

By the way, I hear that ace fiddle lead SIMONE, late of the Trocadero, spent a successful week at the Parade Gardens, Bath, recently, when he played a seven-day star engagement with Cecil Black and his Dorchester Band.

With friend Cecil playing his usual elegant drums in the rhythm section, and sweet singer Julie Dawn dispensing charm and vocalism in equal quantities, Simone proved once again the telling powers of that charming personality of his by standing out front of the band and wooing the hearts of local fem-fans with his eloquent technique both as a musician and as a vocalist.

Playing concert sessions every morning, afternoon and evening, the engagement was undoubtedly an enormous success, not only for the band but also for this young, pleasant-mannered member of the profession, and I hope it will not be long before he is once again back in front of his own band in town.

Accordianist CHAS. ROBERTS, back in town after successful E.N.S.A. tour, writes to tell me he is looking round for a regular berth again in the West End. Leaders can contact him at 1, Harley Villas, Harley Road, Harlesden. And remember, it's the early caller that gets the services of this excellent young musician.

## THE GOODMAN FAMILY TREE

by "MIKE," Our Critic-at-Large

I STARTED out to design this course of a progressive study of jazz in a dispassionate and purely educational way. As so often happens when one tries to teach things to other people, however, one inevitably finds the subject so absorbing that there is a tendency to pursue it and forget that it is really intended to concern two other people.

Thus it is that, having begun to trace the musical genealogy of Benny Goodman, which I outlined last week, I find myself on the verge of reminiscing in a manner that is fatal to the progressive study of anything.

## HALF-FORGOTTEN JAZZ

It is a matter of association of ideas mostly. As I begin to think of Benny Goodman and his recordings, so a whole world of half-forgotten jazz comes back to me.

It should not be difficult, for instance, for the 1941 Goodman enthusiast to appreciate the original Trio recordings of 1934, or whenever it was. Indeed, I would not insult the Goodman enthusiast by suggesting—once he has taken to the latter-day chamber-music jazz of the Goodman group—that he does not possess these early recordings as a matter of course.

My own personal difficulty, though, is to avoid branching off from those Trio performances in the direction of jazz played, not by Benny himself, but by Teddy Wilson and Gene Krupa in their pristine glory.

If, however, the willing student is willing enough to follow me along what may appear to be the by-ways of jazz, then we are likely to get far nearer to a progressive and comprehensive study of jazz than I ever hoped for.

Anybody who has the patience and the time to spare could draw up a fascinating family tree of jazz, which would simplify the whole question of jazz education and appreciation. A family tree at any time is really only the question of association of ideas.

With the size of this column being somewhat narrow, I haven't the space to sketch the Goodman family tree; but let's see what we can do without illustrating the answer with a diagram.

Let us start, for instance, with Goodman, 1941. From there, as I explained last week, the comparatively ignorant enthusiast should be able to proceed without tears to the big-band-Goodman of a few years ago; Benny

played his clarinet then, as now, so the manner should not be strange even at a first hearing.

Agreed? Then let us listen to *King Porter Stomp*. This piece, as recorded by Benny Goodman, was arranged by Fletcher Henderson. Now we're well away on our by-ways.

The route runs: Benny Goodman's Henderson version of *King Porter Stomp*—Henderson's own band version of the same tune—Henderson's own band in other tunes—Hawkins, featured in Henderson's band as a soloist in *One Hour* and *Oh, Lola*—and that's the end of that association of ideas. *One Hour* had no known forbears.

But suppose we ignore Hawkins, and continue with Fletcher Henderson; we find ourselves tracing jazz back to its earliest days, through *House of David Blues* and *Just Blues*, right back to *Henderson Stomp* and the even earlier *Hot Mustard* and *Have It Ready*.

Do you get the idea? It is simple, if rather costly; but each record prepares the way for the next.

Perhaps you have difficulty, as a newcomer to jazz, in appreciating the early Red Nichols records. They sound odd, rather awkward to you.

All right. Let Benny Goodman, 1941, be our starting point again. The connection between the two forms of jazz may appear impossible at first sight until you begin to trace the family tree.

In this case the route runs: Benny Goodman, 1941—Benny Goodman, Columbia, 1933-34—Jack Teagarden as soloist—Jack Teagarden as soloist with Red Nichols in *Tea For Two*—Teagarden as soloist in Nichols' *Dinah*—Nichols' version of *Ida*, which is very similar in mood and tempo to *Dinah*—Nichols' *Japanese Sandman*—and by then you are quite at home with the early Red Nichols period, and therefore find nothing strange in *Washboard Blues*.

## OTHER ROUTES

Or again: Take the Goodman Trio with Teddy Wilson. From Teddy Wilson we branch off to Benny Carter's recordings with this artiste. Thus we become acquainted with Benny Carter, who can act as one of the most profitable junctions of all in our route. Benny Carter leads us to the Chocolate Dandies, to the earlier Chocolate Dandies led by Don Redman, to Redman playing with Louis Armstrong, and thus to the early Armstrong records. Or Benny can lead us direct to McKinney's Cotton Pickers, which is one of the finest coloured bands anybody ever forgot about.

Reverting to Benny Goodman for a moment: try Benny Goodman playing with Venuti and Lang's All-Star Orchestra. At once you get acquainted with the work of these two great players; and from them a knight's move brings you to Trumbauer, and thence to Bix. Thus, in a very short while, you are listening to Golden Age jazz and scarcely realising it.

I'm only sorry I was never any good at drawing diagrams, but if the Willing Student will be patient and follow my outline of the family trees of jazz, I can guarantee that there is very little in the historic past of our peculiar art which he cannot easily appreciate and understand.

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## Busy Bretherton

ONE of the busiest West-end musicians of the year is Fred Bretherton, late Jack Hylton pianist and conductor, who is nowadays M.D. at the Palladium, where the successful George Black riot "Applesauce" is still drawing all London.

In addition to the exacting work of conducting the pit orchestra, Bretherton enjoys the task of accompanying on piano that fine artiste Florence Desmond. On August 24 Freddy will be doing a special broadcast with the Palladium orchestra.

In the world of arranging Fred Bretherton also has his hands permanently full. Many of the "Applesauce" arrangements were his; likewise some of those used in "Black Vanities," the other successful George Black show; while his pen has been particularly prolific among the scores of the new His Majesty's show, "Lady Behave," in which Mantovani wields the baton.

Despite all these activities in the West End theatrical world, Fred remains, strictly speaking, still under contract to Jack Hylton, and may be busy again under this maestro's management when his present activities show signs of a lull.

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# JUNK-SHOP JAZZ

"HAVE you any old records?" I shouted to the untidy old woman who plied her way through a mass of the most assorted collection of oddments I had ever seen.

"Well, I'll have a look for yer; what type was it you was wantin'?"

"Oh, any old stuff, chiefly jazz," I answered.

Once more she struggled through the mass of junk in the shop, and a few seconds later I had a pile of dusty platters in front of me.

In great hopes of finding a rarity out of the sordid pile, I ploughed through the records, and when I finally emerged into the open I had with me three of the best "finds" I had ever had: Redheads' *Baltimore*, on Actuelle; Bix's *In A Mist* on purple Parlophone; and Bessie Smith's *Kitchen Man Blues* (with Ed Lang), on Am. Columbia. And all for the price of twelve coppers.

## BOTTLE-SHOP GEM

For me this was the end of a perfect day's work. Admittedly, my shoes were more worn than they had been earlier that day. I was tired and hungry after fruitless searches round back streets, and my hands were black with looking through hundreds of old wax discs, but I felt now that I was on top of the world, and with my prize under my arm I trudged to the nearest Underground and home.

You may say: "Well, was all that toil worth it—just for the sake of three gramophone records?" Certainly it was, and the reason I wrote this article was to show that not all the enjoyment of collecting a jazz library comes from the record shop at the end of the street.

An ardent collector gets as great a thrill at finding a rare record as a big-game hunter does when he is in at the "kill." To me there is no other pastime as exciting and interesting as combing the various towns and cities in this country, time permitting, in the search of jazz platters.

I remember one time when I first began to collect in earnest, I stumbled across an old bottle-shop in Soho, a place where practically any old thing was taken to be broken up; and looking under a pile of broken bottles I unearthed a copy of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band playing *St. Louis Blues* on Victor.

I was so surprised and excited that I blurted out that I had

## Record-Collecting Reminiscences

by  
**SERGT. M. F. HUNTER-MUSKETT R.A.F.**

found a prize, and consequently the shopkeeper charged me the huge sum of 9d.—quite double what he would have charged me if I had kept my mouth closed.

But it was well worth it, and I paid him willingly. Unfortunately, I dropped the precious disc on a 'bus, and that was the end of that; but it is all in the luck of the game.

You have to take the hard knocks as well as the easy ones; many a time I have spent the whole day in and out of second-hand stores without as much as a worn-out Woolworth's best.

At this moment there must be hundreds of rare discs all over the country, waiting to be picked up; cut-outs, rare American, Dutch and French records, and many that are still obtainable in English catalogues, and available at less than the price of a packet of Woodbines.

Some—perhaps many—are scratched and worn, but still playable, while a great many are in tip-top condition, having been discarded with the gramophone, bought in the first place by mistake or out of curiosity, or perhaps sold in bulk for the purpose of melting down.

## LIKELY SPOTS

The foremost places in which to find old records are, of course, second-hand shops, and places like the Caledonian Market, but the following list is also of great help:—

1. Bicycle shops and garages.
2. Old-clothes shops.
3. Auction-rooms.
4. Paper yards and scrap merchants.
5. Public-houses, cafés, hotels and clubs.

And, of course, many gramophone stores, where discs which have not been sold or sent back to the factory are frequently sold off for as little as 4d. each, although brand new. You will find the shops are only too glad to get rid of them.

A great point before setting out on an expedition is to carry

the right equipment. Rubber gloves are excellent for handling records, for obvious reasons, and an ordinary brief case is the best way of carrying "finds," as it is very light and has ample room.

When you do come across a number of discs, don't be put off by the name of the orchestra on the label, since many name bands appear on obscure labels and under different names for contract reasons—e.g., Henderson's *Copenhagen* and Words, under the name of "The Coliseum Dance Band," on English Coliseum.

At any rate, Delaunay's "Hot Discography" or Schlemmer's "Rhythm on Record" will supply most of the answers. When you begin to get expert in this pastime, the record label will be the first thing to look for, and you will be able to slip through the junk at quite an alarming pace without even glancing at the artists' names on many of the labels.

## REPAIRS

A great thing to remember is that, if the record is cracked and is worth while hanging on to, it can easily be patched up by embodying a red-hot needle into the wax at the edge of the crack; this, with care, will last a long time without the record coming to pieces again.

Or if one side is not worth while playing, from the jazz point of view, stick some strong adhesive plaster over the whole length of the crack, overlapping on the reverse side prior to reaching the actual groove.

Four out of six second-hand shops invariably say that they will probably be having some discs in within a few days; but don't just leave it at that. Ask the man to put some by for you, and explain that it is the "dance stuff" you want—don't say jazz; he may not know what you mean.

In this way you can get things organised, and look forward to something being put by for you when you come again.

This record business isn't quite as easy as falling off a horse. In many places, for instance, the shopkeepers are lazy in producing records, if they have any, as it may mean lifting up stacks of furniture to get at them.

## TAKE TROUBLE

Don't be put off by this; many a good "snip" is overlooked by being kind-hearted and saying "It doesn't matter" instead of saying "I'll help you shift the furniture."

Since about 70 per cent. of the discs in junk shops comprise popular songs, comic songs, vaudeville artistes, commercial bands and light music, you may find your search often abortive; but console yourself with the reflection that the percentage of folk who bought American bands a few years back was very small—very small indeed.

If, however, you persevere, and overlook nothing (even the most improbable places), you will find that something always turns up, and many a classic finds its way into a good home.

By the way, regarding the actual playing of the discs, whether they are old or new: a pick-up connected to any radio set can be bought very cheaply, or an ordinary portable gramophone can be converted by purchasing a pick-up arm.

Reproduction is thus doubled, and you should relieve the wear and tear on the disc by using a fibre needle.

So go to it, and good hunting!

# NORTHERN NEWS NOTES

by Private **JERRY DAWSON**

FURTHER to my notes recently with reference to the difficult position of many musician-civil defence workers, it appears that a number of developments have taken place since I wrote these.

In February of this year a story appeared in the *MELODY MAKER* of a band which had been formed by the Manchester A.F.S. under the leadership of Mark Beard, ex-London Philharmonic violinist.

Shortly after this the band was offered an audition by the B.B.C., with a view to its being broadcast at a later date. However, officialdom stepped in and the audition was cancelled.

I am pleased, however, to now be able to say that someone has seen the light to very good purpose, as the band has now been heard by the B.B.C. people, and is due to broadcast for the first time on August 13 in a variety programme.

Tenor saxist Ralph Bruce, who is a member of the band, has written a number of special arrangements for the broadcast, which should be interesting, if only to discover how an out-and-out straight leader will handle a dance band playing modern arrangements.

I for one shall try to hear this particular airing.

The second development which has occurred is the news which has been published this week that other provincial towns are likely to follow the lead of the London Fire Brigade, which has banned all its A.F.S. workers from undertaking any "side-line" work, on the plea that working during what should be their rest periods is likely to impair the efficiency of the men.

In view of the fact that the cost of living is so high these days, and the men earn only something like £3 10s. per week, one can readily understand them trying to earn something "on the side," and once again I would emphasise that the treatment meted out to these "front line" workers does not compare with that of the Fighting Services.

I don't want to wash any dirty linen, but I do think that it is high time that something or someone in high quarters sorted this little lot out in fairness to all concerned.

Manchester's already small list of first-class saxophone players has been further depleted by the calling up for military service of alto man Alf Anspach, who is now with the Royal Artillery, stationed in a coastal town in the north.

Still a young man, Alf has spent most of the years since he left school in the musical profession, and has for long been rated one of the best lead saxes in the provinces. He has of late been in great demand for Sunday concerts around Manchester and district, and has worked for several different leaders.

For many years he led his own band on the Mecca circuit, after which he was a corner-stone for a long time with Ralph Gethie's Band at the Four Ways Restaurant at Delamere (Cheshire).

One of his earliest professional jobs was with Speiro's Band in the Chinese Café in the Blackpool Tower Building, the fiddle player in the band being a youngster called—Joe Loos.

At the end of this season at Blackpool, Alf and Joe were offered a job together in Scotland, but would not accept the terms offered, and their ways parted. I often wonder what would have happened had they stuck together, for Joe stuck to a number of the boys he met afterwards for many years.

Congratulations to Billy Beasley, drummer with Glen Gray's Band, of Middleton, near Manchester, whose wife last week presented him with a fine, healthy son. This is a genuine case of "follow my leader," as it is only a month or two since Glen became a proud father—also of a baby boy.

Nice work, chaps... if the war lasts much longer we'll be needing all we can get.

You can imagine my disappointment at not being able to be present at the "M.M." North Britain Finals at Ashton-under-Lyne the other Friday, but there is a war on, and duties must be done.

However, whilst sympathising with the losers, I was rather pleased at the success of the R.A.F. Weetonians, as this victory bears out the opinion which I formed of the band when I heard it play second to Ron Davenport at Warrington.

I remarked after this event that I considered it among the best Service bands I had heard, and many of my friends who were at the Ashton "do" agreed with this remark.

Those readers who were not present will have a chance of hearing the band next month, when it is due to play its second broadcast. I am not aware of the exact date and time at the moment.

## JACK DOYLE, PAT SMUTS IN ALL-STAR R.A.F. BAND

ALL-STAR R.A.F. combinations are now no rarity, but surely a five-piece stationed at a Midlands aerodrome ranks as high as any.

For it comprises trumpet player Jack Doyle, former star of the Billy Cotton outfit, and later with his own variety act; tenor saxist Pat Smuts, from the Harry Roy and Nat Gonella bands; George Knight, formerly sax, clarinet and violin with Norman Cole's Piccadilly Hotel Band; another former Cole man, Jack Kent, on piano and accordion; and George Hackford, who regularly broadcast with Percy Mackey, Norman Cole, Billy Gerhardt, Frank Stewart's Alphas, as well as solo with the B.B.C. Military Band and Frank Biff's Brass Quintette.

George is in charge of this brilliant combination, and is justly proud of its reputation among the officers and men of the R.A.F. stationed for miles around, since the outfit is a first-class show band, can boast a first-class string trio, and is able to put over a two-hour show with the utmost ease.

Quite recently it had the honour of playing for Their Majesties the King and Queen and Princesses during luncheon at a West Country aerodrome. The Queen passed the boys as they stood to attention, and made them the proudest band in the country by saying: "We have all enjoyed your music very much."

The band's most recent booking is at a distant camp, to which they will have to fly by Wellington bomber, complete with their instruments; and George informs us that it is their firm intention to try a little swing among the clouds!

Incidentally, readers will join with us in congratulating Pat Smuts on recently becoming the father of a fine baby boy.

We are informed that he is already casting envious eyes towards his father's tenor sax!

## GLASGOW GOSSIP

Dave Wilson, who played in Bennie Loban's sax section at the Plaza, did not leave town for Bennie's London job, but joined up with Lauri Blandford at Dennistoun Palais. He also does a session or two with Ronnie Munro's variety orchestra at the B.B.C., Ronnie being in the thick of it just now.

At F. and F. Ballroom, where George McCallum still looks after two bands, a well-known face appeared recently on the stand—George's old contesting friend and rival Tommy Todd

having a session or two with the boys. Tommy's Clydebank activities were, of course, upset by that well-known blitz. Brother Charlie, bombed out, is now living down in Ayrshire, where he was not long in getting a local gig outfit under his wing.

Next Scottish band to get an airing is Jack Chapman and his Boys from the Albert, ever popular with listeners. Jack will broadcast on August 8 at 2 p.m. for half an hour. Manager Alec Warren, not so long with the Forces, will probably have his ear to the speaker on this occasion.

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WRITE, in first instance, to:  
**MECCA AGENCY Ltd.**  
5, DEAN STREET, LONDON, W.1  
(BYRON DAVIES, Managing Director).