

Melody Maker

INCORPORATING RHYTHM

EVERY FRIDAY Vol. XVII No. 439

'BIRTH OF THE BLUES' IS A "MUST" FOR ALL SWING FANS!

At last, America has sent us over a film for swing fans. Paramount's smashing new musical, "Birth of the Blues," is dedicated "to the musical pioneers of Memphis and New Orleans, who favoured the hot over the sweet—those early jazz men who took American music out of the rut, and put it in the groove." That tells you the sort of film it is, and any MELODY MAKER reader who misses it when it gets around to his local cinema is doing himself a great injustice.

The star of the film is the one and only Bing Crosby, singing and acting as well as ever, but he has a rival, as far as this critic is concerned, in the first screen appearance of young-veteran Jack Teagarden, who talks, sings, and plays divine trombone in a manner that will get him even more fans than his records have done over the years.

The story is slight—the vicissitudes of a hot band—the "Basin Street Hot Shots"—led by Bing Crosby, which played Dixieland jazz at a time (1910) when dancers and café proprietors only thought in terms of waltzes. The band wins through, and we leave them just about to open at Chicago in the big time.

IT'S THE MUSIC

Interspersed with the musical story is a romance between Bing, chirper Mary Martin (not very well cast as a hot singer), plus a little bit of third-party interference by Brian Donlevy; together with some gangster stuff and gunplay to add a few dramatic touches, and some delightful

HARRY PARRY SIGNS UP ON WAX TO 1944

FOR some time now the record sales of Harry Parry and his Radio Rhythm Club Sextet on Parlophone have been steadily increasing, and now Harry and his boys have the proud distinction of being the only British swing band successfully to compete with the top American outfits from the point of record issues.

So pleased are the Parlophone Company with these results that Harry was asked to accept a new contract this week extending to January, 1944, and the dotted line was duly signed.

"Java Joint" and "Oceans of Notions" is the latest Sextet record, and from advance reports it should prove another best-seller, while "Parry Opus," Harry's own composition, is featured a lot on the air these days. Jack Payne being the latest of the name bands to play it.

MIDNIGHT SESSION

Forces listeners who heard the Sextet's grand broadcast in the Forces programme last Friday have no idea of the difficulties under which it was broadcast. The programme was recorded on B.B.C. wax on Thursday morning, and it was not until late afternoon that Harry was informed it would have to be re-done owing to a break in the transmission.

The only time the boys could be gathered together again was 1.30 a.m. Friday morning, and so at that dark and chilly hour the brilliant swing you heard coming from your loud-speakers on Friday night was duly waxed.

There is no truth in the rumour that Harry's new signature tune is "In The Still Of The Night."

humour from Jack Benny's "Rochester."

But you won't notice the story; it's the music that counts, and the informal jazz atmosphere that the film so convincingly creates.

MYSTERY CORNET

On the screen the band that Crosby is seen leading consists of Jack Teagarden (trombone); Harry Rosenthal (piano); Harry Barris—one of the original Paul Whiteman Rhythm Boys—(bass); Dan Beck (drums); Perry Botkin (guitar); and Brian Donlevy as the hot cornet player from Memphis.

All of these boys happen to be musicians, but only Teagarden and Perry Botkin are really heard playing. With other instrumentalists drawn from Jack Teagarden's Band, and John Scott Trotter's Orchestra.

The brilliant clarinet which Crosby ostensibly plays is actually recorded by ex-Ambrose ace Danny Polo, but the problem that has set all the fans by the ears is—who plays the cornet?

Advance publicity from the States gives the name of Manny Klein, which our ears refuse to believe; Charlie Teagarden has been mentioned, but the tone is too rough and Negroid for "Little T." and jazz detectives have even gone so far—knowing Bing's great friendship with Satchmo—to suggest that the great Armstrong himself amused himself playing background stuff.

T. INSPIRED

Anyway, the "M.M." has cabled over to the States for the lowdown on this most interesting problem (which has already set our 'phone ringing all week), and as soon as we know ourselves we shall publish the information here.

The big numbers in the film are "St. Louis Blues," "Memphis Blues," and "Melaucholy Baby," all these being outstanding for Jack Teagarden's inspired trombone.

There are fifteen numbers altogether, and although not all of them were written at the time the action of the film was supposed to take place, understandable musical licence has been taken with this part of the production, in order to get in as many of the jazz evergreens as possible.

But a little too much licence was taken in the composition of the screen band, because a string bass was never used in a jazz outfit until after the last War, and the instrument that should have been shown was, of course, the tuba.

Anyway, that is a minor point. Go early to see this film and take some sandwiches; you'll want to see it all through again. R. S.

"M.M." OUT AGAIN ON TUESDAY (23rd)

In time for Christmas!

NO AIR WAR NOW!

M.U. and B.B.C. Settle Rates For Recorded Programmes: New Principle Established For Broadcasting Musicians

AFTER PROTRACTED AND DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE MUSICIANS' UNION AND THE B.B.C., TERMS HAVE BEEN FINALLY AGREED WHICH SETTLE, FOR THE DURATION OF THE WAR, THE LONG-STANDING PROBLEM OF ADEQUATE PAYMENT FOR THE USE OF RECORDED PROGRAMMES.

As is well known, broadcast programmes are often recorded and broadcast again, either for home consumption or on the many overseas wavelengths. While a recorded programme is on the air, the live performers are deprived of a session, and it is this fact that has set up a problem that has been agitating the Musicians' Union, and, of course, the more progressive broadcasting musicians, for a long time.

In the past, the B.B.C. has made payments which the Union has considered to be either inadequate or without relationship to the value of the broadcast reproductions to the Corporation. In most instances only one payment was offered, regardless of the number of times the programme was repeated.

As a result of negotiations conducted throughout by Mr. F. Dambman, General Secretary, on

behalf of the M.U. Executive Committee, an entirely new basis of remuneration has now been agreed to. Musicians are to be paid for each occasion on which records of their performances are broadcast, thus putting them into line with composers, who draw a royalty on each performance of their work.

A musician, whether or not on permanent contract to the B.B.C., whose broadcast performance is recorded and rebroadcast, is now to receive £1 5s. for each reproduction in the Home or Forces programme, and this fee will be paid every time the record is used.

NEW TERMS

Sometimes, of course, the first broadcast of a performance is from a record, the recording session being attended by the musicians instead of the actual broadcast. In such a case, the first use of the records (but only the first) will be covered by the ordinary broadcasting session fee, or, in the case of the B.B.C.'s contract orchestras (such as the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra), by their usual weekly salary.

So far as reproduction of performances on the overseas wave-

(Please turn to page 2)



Bing Crosby, as he appears in the new Paramount wow, "Birth of the Blues." Jack Teagarden is on the extreme right. All Bing's clarinet playing in the film is the work of Danny Polo.

CHU BERRY KILLED IN CAR CRASH

THE "MELODY MAKER" REGRETS TO ANNOUNCE THE DEATH OF LEON "CHU" BERRY, FAMOUS AMERICAN COLOURED TENOR-SAXIST, AS THE RESULT OF AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT. HE WAS ONLY 29 YEARS OF AGE.

Riding in a car driven by Lamar Right, with other members of Cab Calloway's band, Berry received a fractured skull when it skidded and hit a concrete bridge abutment. He was taken to hospital, but never regained consciousness. Right and the other members of the band received only minor injuries.

Born 29 years ago in Wheeling, Alabama, he was first heard of in New York in 1929, when he played with Carl Jackson's Band at the Lennox Club. Followed a short spell with Teddy Hill, and then he went to Benny Carter, playing on many famous recording sessions.

HIS STORY

In 1936, he joined the outstanding Fletcher Henderson outfit, taking chief tenor solos in many of the band's best discs. Two years later he occupied the tenor-sax chair in the new Calloway band, with whom he was playing at the time of his death.

Chu Berry was greatly in demand at recording sessions, and among the many who will remember his work with affection are Mildred Bailey, Red Norvo, Teddy Wilson, Bessie Smith, Henry Allen and Spike Hughes.

It was, perhaps, with the last-named in his Negro Orchestra recordings that Chu found fame, and people began to realise that here was a worthwhile rival to the great Coleman Hawkins.

In Chu's death, jazz has lost one of its most colourful personalities and a great tenor saxophone player.

A short appreciation, with details of some of his best recordings, will appear in next week's "M.M."

B. E.

"Kid Krupa" To Record

FOLLOWING his sensational success at the Jazz Jamboree, seven-year-old Victor Feldman is at last achieving the success he deserves, and his many admirers will be glad to hear that he and his two brothers have their first recording session early in January.

The records will be released under the name of the Victor Feldman Trio on the Regal-Zonophone label, and their own arrangements will be featured.

The Trio will also appear in the big charity concert for the Russian Red Cross to be held at the Prince of Wales Theatre this Sunday, and a touch of humour should be added to their part of the show, inasmuch as young Victor is to be personally introduced by Teddy Brown!

Sunday, January 11, is another busy afternoon, as following an appearance at Golders Green Hippodrome for a charity concert—to be compered by Davis Miller—the young drummer is to be the star attraction at the opening of a new club for troops somewhere in Surrey.

"K.P." 18TH STAR PARCEL

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STOLEN INSTRUMENTS RACKET—METHOD EXPOSED

An insight into one of the methods used in working the stolen instrument racket, that has for some months past been operating throughout the country, is revealed by what has just happened to a Morden (Surrey) semi-pro. sax and clarinetist.

He is Stan Locke, whose telephone rang on Wednesday afternoon last week, with an offer of a gig. It was a stranger speaking, who explained that a friend of Stan's had given him the telephone number and recommended him.

'PHONE CALL

Terms were agreed upon, and the stranger promised to pick Stan up in a car that evening. So that he might do so, Stan gave him the address.

But before ringing off, the stranger remembered that it would be impossible for him to use the car that night, and arranged to meet Stan at Morden Underground Station.

That evening, Stan waited at the station, but no one turned up. Eventually he returned home, puzzled, annoyed at the falling-through of the job, but unsuspecting.

Though it did strike him as odd when he tackled the friend who was supposed to have recommended him, only to discover that he knew nothing whatever about it.

Next afternoon, however, the

reason behind these odd happenings was brought forcibly home to Stan.

For his flat was broken into, and his Martin tenor sax (No. 674) and clarinet were stolen.

The scheme, like most successful crooked schemes, is thus seen to be childishly simple. The obtaining of the address, the opportunity to look the premises over whilst the victim waits fruitlessly at the station, culminating in the watching of his movements so that an entry can be made.

This example may serve as a warning to other musicians, who should take every means of verifying the authenticity of such telephonic offers before leaving the way open for thieves to purloin their means of livelihood.

And meanwhile readers are asked to keep a look-out for the above-mentioned instruments, which may be offered for sale in any part of the country almost immediately, and to lose no time in communicating with the police should they come across them.

Girls' Garden Band Clicks

On Monday last, Ivy Benson opened at the Covent Garden Opera House with her all-girls band from the Locarno, Glasgow.

Despite the fact that the band had had an arduous journey from Scotland the previous day, were short of two members in hospital, and were not able to use both pianos, there was no doubt of the success that they will make at this famous dance rendezvous.

Their extensive experience of palais work showed to obvious advantage, and the girls played with a precision and team-work rare in ladies' bands.

By mid-week, the band was at full strength, and the completion of the larger stand permitted the use of both pianos.

But on Sunday, Ivy loses her drummer and urgently needs another girl to take her place on Monday.

Applicants should get in touch with her at the Opera House, by phone, wire or in person, without delay.

No. 150. Last meeting of the Ilford Club featured Jack Pettit in the "Dukesmen." On December 23 Wally Moffat will give the recital, and a J.S. will follow. Letters to the new secretary at 23, Whites Avenue, Newbury Park, Ilford.



R.A.F. SWINGSTERS RECORD FOR FAR-FLUNG UNITS

IMPORTANT units of the R.A.F. training overseas, smaller detachments in the remoter parts of this country, and numerous units of the Air Training Corps are soon to have their problem of musical relaxation solved for them by the Air Council.

Already responsible for the existence of numerous dance band units, both resident and on tour among the various commands, they have for some time realised the plight of these other detachments, either unable to muster their own bands or too remote to be reached by the touring units.

A set of special recordings by the R.A.F.'s own musical personnel has therefore been made, and these are being despatched to R.A.F. stations all over the world.

These records can also be bought by the public, and the profits will be given to the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund.

CARDEW SCORING FOR CHRISTMAS DAY ALL-SERVICES BANDS

FITTING finale to the Christmas Day (6.30-7.15 p.m., Forces) Navy, Army and Air Force dance band broadcast is being scored by ace-arranger Phil Cardew.

This will take the form of a special medley of numbers chosen to express the solidarity of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and will be played by all three bands taking part: the "Blue Mariners," representing the Navy; the "Blue Rockets," representing the Army; and the Dance Band of the R.A.F.

These boys, comprising some forty-odd musicians, will be playing in a studio before an audience, in order to give the requisite atmosphere to what promises to be one of the most successful of David Miller's programmes.

LESTON TO AIR-GUN

On Monday last, Ambrose Octette drummer Les Leston reported for duty in the R.A.F., and his place has been filled by young Eric Delaney.

When the curtain rang down upon the last house at the Wood Green Empire on Saturday last, Les packed away his kit, as he expects, for the last time.

He is going in as an air gunner, and, in his own words: "I am leaving my drums behind, as I don't expect to do any more playing for the duration—except playing hell with the Jerries if I get a chance."

In these circumstances he has been unable to bid farewell to any of the boys personally, but asks space here to do so.

The MELODY MAKER, on its side, echoes the wishes of the whole profession for a distinguished and happy career in the R.A.F., and a speedy return to the sticks when he has helped the world to be rid of the aggressor Powers.

No. 57. The Newcastle Club is reopening, and a meeting is contemplated early in January. All old members and those interested should write to A. Mellor, 6, Victoria Road, Newcastle.

Glasgow Gossip

by Hugh Hinshelwood

IT would take more than a world conflagration to put the stopper on the annual orgy of Glasgow students known as "Daft Friday." Held as usual in the University Union, the old peace-time spirit might be dimmed a little, but the revels carried on till 6 a.m. and breakfast-time. Music was provided from various sources, Louis Freeman supplying one attraction, while Ray Smith and his Band, "Varsity favourites," were also on the bill.

It is understood that the regular Saturday dances in the Union are being catered for by Louis Freeman for the remainder of the season.

Locarno arrangements were altered after Ivy Benson went off to her London job, Mecca bringing Dick Denny and his Band from their Edinburgh resort.

Dick has made himself a prime favourite in the Scottish capital, one of his last stunts being a nautical production called "Nelson's Blood," the promotion helping in the local war effort, and giving the boys plenty of scope for platform "fun and games."

SCOT ABROAD

Duggie McBrayne, trumpet lead at the Playhouse, had a line the other day from old friend David Crawford, well-known Glasgow sax player, who went off to fresh fields in South Africa shortly before the war. Dave is now in the South African R.A.F., and must have been renewing acquaintance with his horn, as he begs tearfully for some reeds!

Wedding bells will ring out round about New Year time for popular Bobbie Hogg, leader of the five-piece at the Locarno. Bobbie still carries on merrily at the old stance, where he has become one of the fixtures, being well on his way to setting up something like a record for the circuit.

George Kerr, who played trombone at the Playhouse for a while, has been playing recently at the popular Barrowland Ballroom, where, incidentally, the two-bands system is helping a lot to solve the difficulties in the way of bandmen getting to work at night after finishing the day job.

Billy Mitchell, once with L.M.S. Joe Orlando, is filling in at the moment at the Playhouse for drummer Neil Aitken, who is having a spell of night-shift.

Andy Fowle, well-known pianist-trumpet-arranger, is stationed near home just now, and gets occasional time off his R.A.F. duties to do a job or two. Was playing piano at the Gordon Ballroom recently.

RHYTHM CLUBS

No. 1. A large audience listened with interest to Paul Cicily's "Junk-shop" discs last Sunday. The High Wycombe Band—comprising George Oliver, Fred Griffin, Les Wilson (saxes); Jimmy Smith (piano); Maurice Goodearl (guitar); Ron Clark (drums); Norman Hill (bass)—gave a great show, and some of the boys played in the open J.S. with Jack Llewellyn (guitar); Charlie Short (bass); Norman Waring (trumpet) and others. Next week will see a complete George Shearing afternoon, for, in addition to playing some solos and leading the J.S., George will debate with Rex Harris the merits of ancient and modern jazz. In response to numerous requests, Jack Llewellyn will again be present. No meeting on Sunday, December 28, so don't miss next week, the last in 1941. 170, Regent Street (entrance in Tenison Court) at 2.30 p.m.

No. 5. To-night (Friday) N.W.3 will hear Max Jones present "Saddest Tale," and Eric Preston will play some cut-outs. Usual J.S. by the Club musicians to finish.

No. 17. Wimbledon heard Peter Tanner and piano star Frank Cordell last meeting. To-night (Friday) Ralph Blanchfield presents "Taking the Count." No meeting Boxing Day.

No. 88. Altrincham had a meeting on December 11, when John Wynn and Peter Swann gave an interesting recital on "Clarinet Contrasts."

No. 138. The old Brentford Club is restarting, and the first meeting will be held at the "Duke of York" Hotel, Great West Road, on Friday, January 4. For all details, write C. B. Warwick, 178, Uxbridge Road, Hanwell, W.7.

No. 162. High Wycombe meet next Sunday, December 21, to hear "Sway and Swing with Percy Pring—the most Ignorant Collector at Large." The usual J.S. will conclude.

No. 174. The solos of Derek Hawkins and Bernie Taylor on alto and guitar respectively were well received at Putney on December 11. Jack Mould and Maurice Fleming gave excellent recitals. No meeting on Christmas Day; next, January 1, when Bill Elliott reviews "Jazz—1941." "Duke's Head," Lower Richmond Road.

M.U. & B.B.C. AGREEMENT

(Continued from page 1)

lengths is concerned, the position remains as formerly—namely, that for a reproduction in each of the B.B.C. overseas transmissions, a fee of 6s. (for a B.B.C. contract musician) or 25 per cent. of the broadcasting fee (in the case of outside musicians) will be paid.

The sole departure from the new principle established of payment according to the number of reproductions is in the matter of purchase by the B.B.C. of complete overseas broadcasting rights—a matter which, in these times, is understandable.

In return for a specified single payment (£2 10s. for a dance musician, and from £1 9s. to £5 5s. for other types of musicians), the Corporation may broadcast a recorded programme an unlimited number of times overseas. The payments already mentioned will be made in addition if the record is used in the Home or Forces programme.

The terms and conditions outlined above come into force on January 1, 1942, and operate until three months after the war.

It is impossible to give here a complete review of the entire M.U.-B.B.C. agreement, but, from the terms quoted, it will be seen that it is eminently satisfactory to musicians generally.

UNION SUCCESS

They should be most grateful to the Union for the progressive work it has done on their behalf in establishing a basis and standard of payment which are, we believe, superior to any established by agreement anywhere abroad.

The satisfactory outcome of the negotiations is all the more praiseworthy in view of the obstacles that have had to be overcome throughout. At one period, in fact, it appeared that a complete breakdown was inevitable, as a result of which, with no agreement, musicians would have been left in the chaotic state of having no standard of fees to guide them.

It is greatly to the credit of Mr. Danbman that, despite all difficulties, and the necessity to reconcile the different points of view of the Union and the B.B.C., agreement has now been amicably reached.

THORBURN SEEKS NEW VOCALIST

BILLY THORBURN vocalist Billy George Korel having had his calling-up papers for the R.A.F., Cyril Shane, whose first-rate vocals were such a feature of the recent Eddie Carroll "Ordnachords" broadcasts, has joined Billy for the week at the Ilford Hippodrome.

Billy, meanwhile, is looking for a permanent replacement, and wants any male vocalist able to play an instrument who considers himself possessed of the right qualifications to get in touch with him at the Ilford Hippodrome this week.

Billy's former vocalist, Terry Devon, who sang with him for two years before leaving to join Art Gregory on an ENSA tour and then to free-lance (most recently with Al Collins), has just been signed up by Mr. Langdon, of the Hammersmith Palais, to sing with Harry Leader's Band.

U.S. HIT PARADE

HERE is the latest available list of the ten most popular songs on America's radio, as assessed by the weekly nation-wide ballot conducted by the American Tobacco Company, and broadcast in their "Your Hit Parade" programme over the C.B.S. network—

1. I DON'T WANT TO SET THE WORLD ON FIRE (1-1-3-2-5).
2. TO-NIGHT WE LOVE (6-9-10-10).
3. JIM (3-3-7-4-10-10).
4. YOU AND I (2-2-1-1-1-1-5-9-8-9).
5. DO YOU CARE? (5-5-5-7-6-6-6-0-0-10).
6. I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO DREAM THE REST (4-7-8-5-4-5-10-8-8).
7. SHEPHERD SERENADE.
8. TIME WAS (8-4-6-8-8-9-10).
9. YOURS (7-6-2-6-2-4-2-7-6-8).
10. 'TIL REVEILLE (9-8-4-3-3-3-2-3-3-9-2).

Figures in parentheses indicate previous ratings since we recommended this feature last October.

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The House of Hits! **CAMPBELL CONNELLY** 10 DENMARK ST. LONDON W.C.2 Temple Bar 1653



Joe Hollander took these shots of the "M.M." National Accordion Championship at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on Friday last (12th). Top: Eric Winstone and his Quartet go to town. Centre (right): The winner, Frank Clarke, of Blackburn, Lancs. (Left): B.B.C. commentator, Raymond Glendenning, introduces the 10-year-old runner-up, Leonard Rowe, of Wolverhampton, and (bottom right): John Marietto, of Greenock, who came third. (Bottom left): Donald Hollington, of Romford, who was placed fourth.

NORTHERN NEWS NOTES

by Private
JERRY DAWSON

I WAS pleasantly surprised a few days ago to receive a long and interesting letter from Manchester pianist **MERVYN FRASER**, now serving—in the R.A.F.—in South Africa.

Speaking chiefly of Durban, Mervyn describes life out there as a "Musicians' Utopia"—there being so much well-paid work about and so few musicians to undertake same. In his off-duty hours, he has managed to get in quite a number of sessions with various bands, and all in all appears to have created a very good impression there with his up-to-the-minute style.

Amongst the many musicians he has met are **MARTIN SMUTS**—brother of Pat Smuts—who plays saxophone at the Cosmo Club in Durban, and arranger **ROY MARTIN**, leading his own band in a restaurant during the daytime, and playing the swank Coconut Grove (Jo'burg) in the evenings.

Two of Roy's men are very well known in the West End, these being **IVOR DAVIES**, ex-Sydney Lipton vocalist, and **LAURIE PAGE**, who was associated for a time with Freddy Bretherton.

Just outside Jo'burg is a super-super roadhouse known as the Northcliffe, and here the leader is none other than **MISH BOWLBY**, brother of Al, who will be remembered for the splendid work he put in when touring this country as accompanist to his brother some four years ago.

Mervyn Fraser asks me to pass on his regards to all his pals in the business, and if any of them would care to drop him a line I

will be delighted to forward any letters to him.

After six months in hospital, where he has undergone a severe and painful operation, Manchester drummer-leader **BILL BOYES** is hoping to be back in harness in the near future.

He tells me that he has quite a deal of work on hand at the moment, and is most anxious to contact any musicians aged 16 to 18 years—either sex—who reside in Manchester and are open for gigs of the better class. Write to Bill at 26, North Road, Longsight, Manchester, 12.

As we are now very near to Christmas—though it be rather a strange one this year—may I take this opportunity of wishing the season's compliments to all my readers and friends, and also to those of you who from time to time have taken the trouble to drop me a line with your local news.

It is really due to these folk that I have managed to keep this column alive since the Army claimed me, so carry on the good work, fellows, and enjoy yourselves as well as circumstances will permit this Christmas.

I hope to be on seven days' leave myself, and I can assure you I will use every minute of it.

No. 173. Stratford-on-Avon has had several successful meetings lately, and they meet every Friday at Gladstone Chambers at 7 p.m.

15-YEAR-OLD WINNER AND 10-YEAR-OLD RUNNER-UP IN TERRIFIC "M.M." ACCORDION CONTEST

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE NEW AMATEUR PIANO-ACCORDION CHAMPIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN ARE A FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD PRINTER'S APPRENTICE OF BLACKBURN, LANCs. AND A TEN-YEAR-OLD CHILD OF WOLVERHAMPTON.

Their names are **Frank Clarke** and **Leonard Rowe**.

They achieved their distinction when, before such hard-baked expert and experienced judges as **Eric Winstone** and **Edgar Jackson**, and against many much older competitors, they were placed respectively first and second in the Grand Final of the **MELODY MAKER** sponsored National Amateur and Semi-pro. Piano-Accordion Championship of 1941, which took place at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, last Friday week (12th), before a gathering of just on 1,300. This was little short of the war time regulated capacity of the hall, writes **Edgar Jackson**.

BROADCAST

As most readers will know from the broadcast of the event, with its colourful description of the scene by **Raymond Glendenning**, the final took place in the evening. In the afternoon there had been a semi-final to pick the four finalists for the evening. Fifteen winners and runners-up from eleven heats previously held throughout the country had secured entry to the semi-final, and it is a revealing insight into the enthusiasm which had all along been evinced that no fewer than fourteen of them turned up, although some had to come from centres as far away as Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester. The one non-arrival was the Brighton heat winner.

At the request of the B.B.C., the final was timed to commence at 8.10 p.m., but long before that the excitement which the event and the promised broadcast had created could be felt in the hall.

It reached something near its zenith when at 8.10 p.m. **Eric Winstone** and his Quartet, who had been specially engaged for the occasion, appeared on the bandstand to have a warm up before opening the broadcast.

Most readers will have gained from their radio sets a good idea of how the final proceeded, of the terrific ovation which each competitor was accorded, of how the diminutive blue-satin-suited

Leonard Rowe was almost invisible behind his full-sized accordion. They will also have gained a thorough realisation of the very high standard of the performances.

What they will not know, however, is what they missed by not being present at the Opera House.

Remaining on the stand after having played out the broadcasting time, **Eric Winstone** and his Quartet, with **Roy Marsh** and **Julie Dawn**, treated the customers to a generous slice of their popular stage show. And did it go over? We'll say it did!

FILM-STARS

An equally successful attraction was the appearance in person of those two well-known British film comedians of "Hi, Gang," "**I Thank You**," "**Oh, Mr. Porter**," and "**Where's The Fire?**"—**Moore Marriott** and **Graham Moffat**.

Engaged at the Gainsborough Studios, Islington, with **Arthur Askey**, on a new flick, "**Back Room Boy**," they managed to snatch an hour off to come along to present the prizes.

They carried out this task to such effect that the guests refused to let them leave the platform, and they had to improvise a further act. We can only add that it created a riot.

To the prizes announced in previous issues of the "M.M.," quite a few had been added.

Francis Day and **Hunter**, whose generosity had already been marked by the donation of a handsome silver challenge trophy to add to the £10 presented by the Opera House management, for the winner, were so enthralled by **Young Rowe's** performance that they put up a second prize of three guineas cash for him. Not to be outdone, the **MELODY MAKER** thereupon put up a third prize of two guineas. This went to **John Marietto**, of Greenock, Scotland.

Were this the story of most other contests, this would be the end of it, but it is not the end of this one.

Last Saturday morning, **Regal-Zonophone** recorded both **Frank Clarke** and **Leonard Rowe** in the solos through which they won their renown in the Championship. The disc is due to be released in the January 1 supplement. Our representative at the

session tells us it will more than amply prove the outstanding ability of these quite phenomenal young performers.

JUDGES' OFFICIAL REPORT

Adjudicators: **Eric Winstone** and **Edgar Jackson**

In a contest of this sort, should one judge the competitors irrespective of their ages, or according to how good they are for their ages?

Rightly or wrongly, we took the former course, and refused to allow age to influence our considerations.

Frank Clarke won because he gave the best performance of the evening—a performance which was practically flawless as regards both purely academic technique and sense of interpretation.

On the same reasoning, **Leonard Rowe** had to be placed second. Although only ten years old, he played a none too easy number with astonishing confidence and accuracy, and while his performance had its imperfections, the facility, lucidity and sense of tempo and accentuation with which he tackled syncopated passages was most satisfactory. He is a credit to his teacher, who will be the first to tell him that diligent practice of the scales and exercises essential for producing a perfect technique is probably all that is necessary to build him into a veritable virtuoso.

SOLID THIRD

John Marietto, of Greenock, who came third, put up a solid, convincing performance of Monty's "**Czardas**," but, while he may claim to be an accomplished accordionist, his playing just lacked something of the brilliant sense of feeling and dynamic personality displayed by **Clarke** and **Young Rowe**.

For musical refinement and artistic interpretation, **Tollefsen's "Concert Waltz,"** as played by **Donald Hollington**, of Romford, Essex, who was fourth, came near to the work of the winner. But a suggestion of nervousness, from which he never seemed entirely to recover, made an otherwise commendable rendition seem at times a little colourless.

Of the remaining competitors who played "straight" music, it may be said that most of them failed more or less because they have not devoted sufficient attention to the scales and exercises so essential in the production of a perfect technique.

Which brings us to the few players who went in for dance music. Most of them played with commendable confidence and a very good sense of jazz. But if it were less obvious from what they did, it was very obvious from the way they often did it that they had not the musicianship of their "straight" competitors. One can only suggest that the reason is that dance accordionists are too ready erroneously to believe that their natural musical instincts can take the place of an academic knowledge of how to play the instrument.

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★
No, this is not the latest music-hall cross-talk act, though it sounded not unlike it while Jack Marshall was taking this picture of Pat Brand greeting tunesmith Michael Carr (now a Lance Corporal in the R.A.O.C.) when he dropped in the other day.

THE stage-door of the Golders Green Hippodrome this week was like the front door to home, so many of the RABIN BAND did I encounter after many weeks' touring.

First, on the stairs, was EDDIE PALMER, who introduced me to his charming young wife and told me of what was probably the most hectic marriage-day that anyone's yet had in the profession.

At 7 a.m. that morning the band had a rehearsal that lasted right up to the mid-morning broadcast. In the afternoon there was a recording session which took them well into the evening. After which there was a late-night radio session.

In the midst of this, Eddie managed to get married to Miss Joyce Madeline Rose, winner of some forty dancing competitions, holder of eight cups, and voted Rumba Queen at the Hammersmith Palais, which is where she first met Eddie.

Eddie had invited the band to the wedding, but walking down the aisle after the ceremony was not really surprised, bearing in mind the work they had to do that day, at not seeing them in church.

It was all the more staggering, therefore, when they left the church, to step into a sudden opening orchestral blast of Mendelssohn's *Wedding March*!

Yes, the band had all turned up and—bass-player and drummer included—had brought their instruments all the way to St. Thomas's, Finsbury Park, to play the bridal pair away.

A grand gesture on the part of a grand bunch of musicians.

Pursuing my way up to Oscar's dressing-room, I bumped into HARRY GOLD, whose "Jiving At Greens" is now coming over the air from Roy, Tennent, and many other bands, and then into vocalist BOB DALE.

It was the first time I'd met this fine singer in the flesh, and was interested to learn a little more about his brief but highly successful career.

Bob comes from Grimsby where, starting as a choirboy, his first interests were directed towards chemistry. But, winning an amateur contest, he was offered work with a semi-pro band and stayed very successfully with them for some time.

A friend with a microphone and complete recording equipment gave him the chance of learning microphone technique by means of a quartet comprising bass, guitars and voice, so that when the "M.M." reported that Billy Thorburn was looking for a new vocalist, Bob felt himself qualified to apply.

He joined Billy at Bradford, and thus set his foot upon the professional ladder to fame, culminating in his joining Rabin when Ken Beaumont joined Billy Tennent some six months back.

Continuing on towards the Rabin dressing-room, where Oscar had been waiting patiently since my name was announced some ten minutes before, I found him as enthusiastic as ever about his band, despite the changes that had taken place owing to call-ups since my last seeing it on the stage.

And in GEORGE FLYNN, he reckons he has the finest trom-

bone-player in the country. Arrangements these days are being done by that star-veteran of the business, ART STRAUSS, and there's no doubt that this band more than maintains a reputation that is drawing packed houses to its 46 minutes' show.

Reverting to his recent season at Green's Playhouse, Oscar told me that, during seven weeks, the band played to over 100,000 dancers!

The boys will be broadcasting during the Christmas season, playing at Grosvenor House on Boxing Night, and also revisiting their hundreds of friends at the Hammersmith Palais during this period.

It was HARRY "PA" DAVIS (not to be confused with a composer of similar name!) who told me that on January 2 you will be hearing a revival of "The Wizard Of Oz," this time with BERYL DAVIS taking the leading rôle.



Oscar Rabin and Harry Davis beam proudly over the shoulders of vocalist Beryl Davis.

And—to end this visit on the same romantic note as that on which we started—Oscar announced for publication that the wedding between vocalist DIANE to Oscar's son and manager BERNARD RABIN will take place on Boxing Day.

I'll let you have fuller details of this later on.

Friday midday of last week found me comfortably ensconced in the Studio Film Laboratories' Preview Theatre in Dean Street, to witness some of the sound and action "rushes" of the forthcoming Piccadilly Films production, "Escape to Justice."

This, as you already know, features JOHNNY CLAES and his Claepigeons in a number of sequences, and Johnny also plays (excellently, as I soon realised) the part of one of the Fifth Columnists about whose activities the story is concerned.

I can announce, on the basis of what I saw, that this will be a film well worth keeping a look-out for—and not only because Johnny has lined up a first-rate team of boys, whose playing records with astonishing clarity of tone on the sound-track I heard.

C. PATTINSON KNIGHT, the producer, is a young man with ideas, and his foresight in choosing this band—so far little known to film audiences—has been amply justified.

Furthermore, DORIS MANN, who sat with us in the audience, introduces a number about which I am sworn to secrecy, but which I can confidently predict your whistling on the way home through the black-out after seeing the show.

Johnny, incidentally, can probably boast of touring the most absent-minded collection of boys in the business.

On a recent Sunday concert they arrived to find that half the orchestrations were missing. They'd carefully transferred them from one train to another at Crewe, and they'd been put out at the wrong station.

In the rush between trains, another of the boys, having had

by
**PAT
BRAND**

occasion to take some things out of his suitcase, left his evening shoes on the seat.

And when Norman Stenfalt came proudly to produce his sandwiches—brown and white, thinly sliced and expertly cut—he found he'd forgotten to put the meat inside them!

So many of you write asking where the boys have gone since joining up that, taking a batch of letters at random, I've compiled a miniature guide in which some of you at least will, I hope, discover the name of a friend.

Let's start with SYD PETTITT. For two years, as you know, he led his own band at the Twickenham Palais, and was also secretary of the No. 163 Rhythm Club. Now he's forsaken drumsticks for a rifle, and is in an R.A.O.C. training battalion somewhere in Wales, feeling rather strange, longing to hear from his old pals, and looking forward to a week's leave in January.

Next we come to six boys who have formed a neat little swing group under the name of "The Dance Band of the 10th R.N.F." In civvy life they were all well known in Manchester, and were called up together in May this year.

They are G. Smith (alto and clarinet); H. Lee (trumpet); E. Harvey (accordion); H. Holt (piano); C. Jones (drums, vibres, xylophone); and H. Pawsey (bass), who is also a first-rate eccentric dancer.

They've done numerous shows around the district, as well as working for Jos. Q. Atkinson, who, they tell me, seems to command the best work in their area.

Then there's TED SMITH. At the outbreak of war Ted was playing drums in John Stein's Orchestra at the Pomme d'Or Hotel in Jersey. He then returned to England, and played with his Swing Trio till he was called up.

Now, after fifteen months in the 10th Battalion, Beds and Herts Regt., he's once again in the old game with a trio comprising L/Cpl. A. Rudd on piano, and Bram Crossman, brother of Joe, on trumpet and accordion.

He'd be very glad to hear from any of the boys he played with in Jersey before the war.

You'll recall swing violinist HERBERT STOKES, of whom I last wrote when he decided to make music his career after we'd discovered his abilities through a "Youth Takes a Bow" audition.

No sooner did the first offer of work arrive than he received his calling-up papers for the R.A.F., and now, after five months as an AC2, has completed his course as a radio operator.

So far he's been able only to jam solo to himself, but two or three other boys in the camp are only waiting to get hold of instruments in order to join him in a swing group.

After fourteen years with various leading Bristol bands, tenor, accordion, piano and clarinet player L. SEYMOUR joined No. 1 Company of the 5th Command Signals, and for some time was kept busy in the unit band. Now Driver Seymour has been "promoted" to the 5th Command Signals Band, and is occupied with troop dances, concerts, and so forth, in and around his Scottish barracks.

With him is ex-Billy Merrin pianist A. Stirrup, whose solo renderings of both classical and dance music are a tremendous asset to the programmes.

BILL ELLIOTT & SINCLAIR TRAILL present **COLLECTORS' CORNER**

THANKS a lot, Albert McCarthy, of Winchester, for a real Collectors' Corner letter. You've given us so much swell information we don't know where to start. In response to our "Wingy" Carpenter query, you think it should be Charles Carpenter, and the rest of the boys were E. J. Allen (piano), Bob Warren (drums), Jimmy Shirley (guitar).

This little group plays in Greenwich Village, and on records features vocals by Mae Hopkins. Apart from the discs under their own name, they accompany the blues singer Creole George Guesnon on the following sides—

"Good-bye, Good Luck to You" (Iberville and Franklin). American Decca 7740.
"Black Woman Blues" (Mississippi Town). American Decca 7792.
The "Iberville and Franklin" side is interesting for the lyrics, as it's about "Lala 25 Club" in Storyville, where Armstrong, Oliver, Zue Robertson, and other stars played.

Friend Albert presses for the issue of Armstrong's "Gully Low Blues," and suggests as a backing either "Keyhole Blues," "Put 'Em Down Blues," or "I'm Not Rough," the first named for preference, as it's grand Louis and the rarest of the Hot Sevens.

"MARGIE" BACKING

Last item from the McCarthy camp concerns two sides made by Leo Reisman on H.M.V. Titles are "What is This Thing Called Love?" and "Puttin' On the Ritz." Bubba Miley plays on both these, chorus on each, and a nice obligato to the vocal on the first title.

We didn't receive your first letter, S. F. Spice, of Stroud Green. Will you let us have the Harry James personnel you require, and they shall receive our immediate attention? Glad you obtained the Clarence Williams "Mandy." Afraid you misunderstood us when we asked for the number of the Columbia re-issue. We meant American Columbia. It was issued over here originally on Parlophone 5670, and in the States on Okeh 4260.

Nice junk-shop find, old scout, Ted Lewis' "Yellow Dog Blues" (Sobbin' Blues) and Jelly Roll's "Black Bottom" (The Chant)—tanner the two. Where is your favourite pitch, or is that a secret?

Glad you like the Corner. Joe Thornton, of Salford, but do please appreciate that we have to cater for everybody. Asking the personnel of "Lay Your Racket" may seem amateurish to you, but a lot of youngsters just starting a collection deem it very important. We can't issue any more Jelly Roll Mortons at the moment, but we have several on our waiting list.

Glad to hear from you, Arthur Parker, of Liverpool, and glad you like life in the R.A.F. Yes, we certainly remember your swell articles in the "M.M." a few months back. So you want "Louisiana" by Bix reissued, do you? Well, you may be lucky, as we have to find a backing for the now famous "Margie," and that title has crossed our minds more than once.

That's a good suggestion of yours about the four sides made by Jimmy McPartland's Squirrels. We have had the American pressings for some time, and should like to see them out over here. We'll approach Brunswick about this, so watch Plattermaton for further details.

Afraid the dubbing of the old Bucktown Fives and King Olivers is not possible at the moment.

Well, Mr. Wainscoat, of Sheffield, when you write, you sure do write. Takes us a day to read your letter. Still, it's very interesting, and we like hearing from you. We were very interested in the Johnny Dods Chicago Footwarmers you mention—"Get 'Em Again Blues" ("Brush Stomp" with Dods (clarinet), Nat Dominique (cornet), Roy Palmer (trombone), Jimmy Blythe (piano), Bill Johnson (bass), and Jimmy Bertrand (washboard). That was originally issued in the States on Okeh 8599 and reissued last year on American Columbia 35681.

KANSAS CITY ALBUM

Agree with all you say about Dominique, as we have just discovered an old Okeh master of "Ballin' the Jack" by the same bunch. We will try to get that issued in due course. For your Yancey dope A. J. W., see our reply to Mr. Bracegirdle in Plattermaton. The Kansas City Album is over here, and from what we have heard, Decca won't keep you waiting very long.

Sorry we spelt your name wrong, M. Horwich, of Southport, and thanks for the dope about the Clarence Williams "Mandy." See our reply to S. F. Spice above, and add the Amer-Col. reissue number as 35957. Glad you liked "Really the Blues," and you'll probably get another from the same stable some time in 1942.

You seem to run on the same tracks as the other collectors—all you want to know about Dods is contained in the paragraph above this one. The record featuring Bing Crosby and Joe Sullivan is "Moonburn" (Brunswick 02144 if you want it).

PERSONNEL STREET.—Here you are, John Riggall, of Cirencester, one personnel and two queries. "If We Never Meet Again" (Midnight at the Onyx) (Hudson-Delange Ork) was James O'Connell, Wilbert Selloff, Ed Koyler (bass); George Bohn, Hugh Hibbert, Pete Brendel, Ted Duane (saxes); Mark Hyams (piano); Cliff Raush (guitar); Ed O'Hara (drums); Ed. Goldberg (bass). Re your Freddy Toster disc (if you get what we mean) we don't consider it jazz, so you go without your personnel. If you want a jazz fan in Cirencester, try Jeff Aldam, 7, Gosditch Street

Delta Four in "Farewell Blues," P. D. Lord of Staines, was Joe Marsala (clarinet), Roy Eldridge (trumpet), Carmen Mastren (guitar), Sid Weiss (drums), Elizalde's "Dixie," "Tiger Rag," "Arkansas," "Sugar Step," "Darktown Strutters," "Somebody Stole My Gal"—all had the same line-up, namely, Fred Elizalde (piano), Adrian Rollini (bass sax), Chelsea Quealey (trumpet), Bobby Davis (alto and clarinet), Len Fillis (banjo and guitar), Ronnie Gubertini (drums). Read all about the Jam Session discs in the "M.M." and write to Johnny Claes, c/o this office, for your other query.

Frank Hardy, of Wolverhampton, wants Bud Freeman's Windy City Five playing "The Buzzard" ("Tillie's Downtown Now"). Here you are, Frank, it's Bud Freeman (tenor), Bunny Berigan (trumpet), Claude Thornhill (piano), Eddie Condon (guitar), Graham Monchur (bass), Cosy Cole (drums). Your suggestion about getting American Jam Sessions on wax is a good one, but we regret not possible.

Yes, F. German, of Stockport, Glenn Miller has made some good records, but not lately. "Solo Hop" ("In a Little Spanish Town") was issued over here on Columbia FBI150, and consisted of Charles Spivak, Bunny Berigan (trumpets), Glenn Miller (trombone), Johnny Muenzenberger, Eddie Miller (saxes), Nick Pisani, Fredo Prospero, Dan D'Andrea (violins), Claude Thornhill (piano), Delmar Kaplan (bass), Ray Bauduc (drums). If you want some good Miller, try a few of the Nichols discs.

PLATTERMATON.—Some more of that junk-shop news. You'll find the Fletcher Henderson band on Guardsman or Coliseum. Titles are "Just Hot," "Down South Blues," "Pistol Mac River Blues," "Old Black Joe's Blues." Also on Guardsman label is a couple by the Gotton Pickers—namely, "Prince of Walls" and "I Had a Sweet Mama."

On the Regal label, besides a lot of Ted Lewis' hardly worthy of mention, another Original Memphis Five is "Since Ma is Playing Ma's Song," and an Indiana Five "So This is Your Old Lady."

One title on Winner, "Broken Hearted Blues," O.M.F. again.

On Columbia (mostly as by Denza Dance Band), the following titles by California Ramblers: "I'd Climb the Highest Mountain," "No Foolin'," "You've Gotta Know How to Love," "Me Too." On the same label, under Hannan Dance Band, "King Porter Stomp" is to be found. This record is actually by Lanin's Red Heads, and includes, in addition to some of the above-mentioned C. Ramblers, some good solo work from the old Nichols tribe.

Indebted to Percy Pring for some of the above information. Shall be glad to hear if any of you pawnshop hounds can add to this list.

CATALOGUE DELETIONS

K. Gillespie, of Wembley Park.—Thanks for good wishes. Ken, Sorry, but all the Mugsy Spanier Ragtime Band waxings have now been issued. We are going to get issued some more Bechet, but we have rather a lot on our plate at the moment. After all, you have got "Really the Blues" to digest.

Same Bechet remarks to you, Mr. Bracegirdle, of Derby (do you wear both braces and a girdle, you old pessimist, you?). As regards Yancey's "Five O'Clock Blues," we have managed to dig a better one—namely, "Yancey's Bugle Call" and this is on our debutante list. Yes, you're going to get that Chicago Rhythm Kings, you and a thousand others; but you'll have to wait until 1942 for it.

Deletions from Catalogue.—We have just received the rather sad news that Columbia are intending to cut a number of their best jazz records. Have also heard that H.M.V. intend pruning as well. We will try to give you advance news of these every week, so you can rush out and buy them, borrowing the necessary 3s. 8d. from your main-law.

Here is the first batch, all Columbia, to be deleted in about three weeks' time:

"Until the Real Thing" ("I See a Mugging," Andy Kirk and Ork. DB5004.

"Tap Room Swing" ("Swing Low," Rollini and Orchestra. DB5006.

"Tormented" ("Take it Easy," Isham Jones Juniors. DB5008.

"Overhand" ("Isabelle," Mary Lou Williams. DB5013.

"Tappin' the Barrel" ("Riffin' the Scotch," Goodman's Orchestra. DB5014.

"Motel Swing" ("Lotta Sax Appeal," Andy Kirk and Clouds of Joy. DB5015.

"Why Couldn't it Be?" ("Love Me or Leave Me," Goodman's Orchestra. DB5016.

"Corny Rhythm" ("Mary's Special," Mary Lou Williams. DB5018.

"Minor Mania" ("Just a Mood," Claude Hopkins Ork/Willie Lewis and Benny Carter. DB5019.

SWOP AND BUY DEPT.—Barry Lowe, 16, Kirkstall Road, Hillside, Southport, will exchange with anyone "Bald Headed Mama" (Billy Banks' Chicago R.K.) and "Bill" (Adrian Rollini's Orchestra) for "Moonson," by Artie Shaw, on Vocalion S140 or any of the following Shaw's: "Shoot the Likker," "Fe Fi Fo Fum," "Free Wheeling."

Would anybody like a copy of "Come On and Stomp" ("After You've Gone," by Johnny Dods' Black Bottom Stompers, on Brunswick? If so, write Joe Thornton, 12, Oxford Road, Pendleton, Salford 6. He'll be pleased to sell same to you.

Any reasonable price will be paid by D. Slocombe, "St. Deny's," 13, Merlin Crescent, Edgware, for a good copy of "Roll Along Prairie Moon" ("Algiers Stomp" (Henry Allen). (And so say all of us.)

"ONE HORSE NAP.—Something for the Moderns—"Barefoot Blues" ("Rock it for Me" (Jimmy Lunceford and Orchestra on Parlophone R2788).

This is one of Lunceford's greatest, recorded in 1940 and issued over here last April. "Barefoot" has a swell vocal by Willie Smith, who discourses in lyrical fashion about grandpa's feet and the bunions thereon. Add some Joe Thomas tenor, a brass team that phrases like angels, and you have half a platter of the best.

For the odd half, take "Rock it for Me," with an appealing vocal by Joe Thomas, plus some more of that gutty tenor, whilst that brass team in the first chorus kicks harder than a U.S.A. army mule.

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FROM time to time I make sincere, heart-felt appeals in this column: but the trouble is that I never quite rightly know to whom I should address them.

For instance, this week I want to appeal to songwriters and to those who compose instrumental music which is played by dance bands.

It should be easy enough, of course—until you realise that songwriters can't read, and composers won't. Or perhaps it is *vice versa*; I forget.

Anyway, as a steady and more or less faithful listener to dance

music as recorded and broadcast, I have come to the conclusion that both songwriters and composers have got themselves into a rut even deeper than the one which swing bandleaders are in.

My thoughts on the subject were prompted by hearing a young man sing "I Don't Want To Set The World On Fire." His diction was clear enough for me to hear the words; clear enough, indeed, for me to wonder since when it is that the word "fire" has acquired a second syllable.

According to what came out of my loud-speaker last Sunday

morning "fire" is to be pronounced "fi-er."

Perhaps the crooner in question will defend his curious neologism by pointing out that the word "fire" (or "fi-er") is set to two notes of music, and must, therefore, call for two syllables.

And that brings me to my point. What is the convention in modern songwriting that demands each syllable of the lyric to be set to a single note?

Why is it, for example, that the three opening syllables of "Tea For Two" are given no more than one note each?

Mind you, I know that "Tea For Two" is an immensely successful instance of a good tune wedded to a good lyric; but I wonder why it is that composers are so reluctant to spread words around a bit.

It isn't that the idiot public cannot sing more than one word per note; otherwise the idiot public would have considerable difficulty in coping with the penultimate bar of the National Anthem. Which—in case you have forgotten—runs something like this: "Go-ho-ho save the King"; or even: "Go-ho-ho-ho Save the King."

EIGHT-BAR RULE

And never mind the National Anthem. What about "Rule, Britannia," with its "ne-e-e-e ever shall be slaves"? Or perhaps you sing "never, never, never . . ." No matter; some sing one, and some another. The fact remains that the idiot public is perfectly capable of singing either, and will not think twice of singing quite a handful of notes to one syllable when it comes to "Onward, Christian So-ho-ho-holders."

But in the case of the common-or-garden popular song, one-word one-note has been an almost unbreakable rule for many years. Indeed, it was not until the advent of the famous Bing Crosby cadence that anybody suggested the rule could ever be broken at all.

The Bing Crosby cadence, however, had nothing to do with songwriters. It was purely a personal embellishment; the pity was that other less successful singers copied Bing's mannerism and made a mess of everything.

This reluctance to spread words over several notes, how-

ever, is the least of the chains which bind modern, popular songwriters. Far worse is the inability to get away from the 32-bars scheme.

Does the songwriter fear that unless a phrase is repeated at least twice after the first eight bars the public will not remember the tune? Your modern songwriter will probably insist that this is the case; that a hit song must inevitably be constructed in the form A-A-B-A (each letter representing eight bars of melody).

EXCEPTIONS

All right, then. There is a tune which will outlive most of the conventional 32-bar songs of to-day. It is called "A Bicycle Made For Two." It is 32 bars long, but it is not until the words "You'll look sweet, upon the seat . . ." that a single bar is repeated. With the exception of those four bars, the composer invented a new tune for each phrase of the song.

And there is another popular tune (also a waltz) which doesn't repeat a single melodic phrase in the course of 32 exquisite bars. This is Lehar's "Gold And Silver" waltz. Every eight bars the composer throws away a phrase which would serve the rest of us for a whole number.

There are repetitions of pattern in this waltz, certainly; but there is no phrase which an arranger can put down in his score as "take in bars 1-8." Indeed, "Gold And Silver" must be an arrangers' nightmare; the whole thing has to be written out in full.

Now I come to think of it, perhaps the arrangers are responsible for the stereotyped tunes of to-day. If everybody wrote tunes which were really 32 bars in length, and not two sets of eight bars, with a middle and the first eight repeated, arrangers would never get home to their starving wives and children at all.

And you and I know that arrangers are very human, if rather melancholy characters to look at.

Even so, I feel something ought to be done about modern songwriting. One shouldn't have to leave all the innovations to Cole Porter.

B.B.C. GOES PURE Recent Radio by "DETECTOR"

B.B.C. producers are in a panic. It's the result of the Oliver Wakefield incident in "Music Hall" not long ago.

Wakefield, you may remember, cracked a blue one. Usual Sunday lunch-time recording of this Saturday evening programme was consequently cancelled. Questions were asked in Parliament. John Sharman was transferred to other duties.

In spite of the excitement, the whole thing was in itself a minor incident. But it is producing the most ridiculous sequel.

Because of the obvious difficulties in laying down hard-and-fast rules to cover every possible situation, the responsibility for ensuring that entertainment programmes shall not jump the bounds of good taste is laid on the producers.

BLUE PENCIL

Never quite knowing where the line must be drawn to ensure that no priggish descendant of the Victorian Mrs. Grundy shall have the chance of making an outcry about something which

**NEXT WEEK'S "M.M."
WILL BE ON SALE
ON TUESDAY (23rd)**

most of us would accept as a perfectly harmless bit of fun, producers are taking no risks.

Comedians' material is being scrutinised through a microscope, scripts are gone through with the finest of combs. No matter that artists tear their hair as they wait that there is nothing left of their acts. The producer knows he is the one who will have to take the rap, and he's out to see it doesn't happen.

The climax caused by this absurd state of affairs was reached last Sunday week when, in "Hi, Gang!" they altered the last line of the song "Why Don't We Do This More Often?" from "Just what we're doing to-night" to "Just what we're doing to-day"—after the number, in its original form, had

CALL SHEET

Week Commencing December 22

Ivy **BENSON** and Band,
Opera House, Covent Garden.
George **ELRICK** and Band,
Hippodrome, Coventry.
Morton **FRASER**,
Empire, Wood Green.
"GARRISON THEATRE,"
Empire, New Cross.
Henry **HALL** and Band,
Broadcasting.
HATCHETT'S Swingette,
London Hippodrome.
HENDERSON TWINS,
Empire, Nottingham.
"HUTCH,"
Empire, Leeds.
Celia **LIPTON**,
London Hippodrome.
Joe **LOSS** and Band,
Green's Playhouse, Glasgow.
Ronnie **MUNRO** and Band,
Empire, Glasgow.
Oscar **RABIN** and Band,
Broadcasting.
Hal **SWAIN** and Swing Sisters,
Empire, Leeds.

been broadcast dozens of times by dance bands!

At present rate of procedure it should be about three weeks before we are all reduced to hearing nothing but hymns and sermons over the air.

Readers will, of course, have noticed that for the last two weeks the Sunday morning Bob Hope programmes have been replaced by swing records.

This does not mean that the Bob Hope half-hours are finished. The first series has been used up, but a second is said to be on the way from America and in due course will be broadcast in the usual 12.30 Sunday morning spot.

Prior to this, however, we are to have a new series of Jack Benny programmes, which is also on the way from America and will be scheduled for Sunday mornings as soon as the recordings arrive.

Pending this arrival, the time will continue to be filled with swing record recitals. Benny Goodman discs are down for next Sunday (21st), Glenn Miller's for December 28, and John Kirby's for January 4.

One of the most successful of the more recent programmes on the air has been Vera Lynn's Sunday evening "Sincerely Yours," with Fred Hartley and his Music.

This seems to have reached the hearts of even the most hard-baked anti-sentimentalists, and there is no denying that Vera put it over with a suave polish that marks her as a really great artiste.

Last Sunday saw the last of the present series of these programmes, because so many of Vera's bookings are now out of town. But a new series may be expected as soon as she can arrange a sufficiently long run of town dates.

"Happidrome" has for long been one of the best Variety hours on the air, but it suffered a black spot recently when the accompaniments ruined Afrique's turn.

For his impressions of Maurice Chevalier singing "Louise" and Jack Smith whispering "My Blue Heaven," Afrique had to struggle against harmonies which were anything but those written by the composer and would not have been a credit to a first-year schoolboy trying to work out the chords for himself.

David Miller has another of his famous small swing band broadcasts booked for Friday, January 2 next, at 2.30 p.m.

The band, under the name of "The Five Jacks," will consist of, says Miller, "Woodknocker Jack Simpson, ivory-ironer Jack Penn, bull-fiddist Jack Collier, clary-caperer Jack Miranda, and song-stylist Jack Cooper."

Collier threatens to include among his contributions a "straight" bass solo.

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***Tea For Two—Parts I and II (Youmans) (H.M.V. OEA9445 and 6).

(H.M.V. B9249—3s. 8d.)

***Honeysuckle Rose (Razaf. Waller) (H.M.V. 2EA 9449).

***I've Found A New Baby (Palmer, Williams) (H.M.V. 2EA9701).

(12-in. H.M.V. C3269—4s. 10d.)

All recorded November 16, 1941.

THIS week we get down, as far as space permits, to the detailed consideration of these records, made, I need hardly remind you, at the recent "M.M."—H.M.V. experiment at a public Jam Session.

I hope you not only read, but remember, the behind-the-scenes story of this session which I tried to give last week, because it explains some of the difficulties which caused the recording to be somewhat below the standard which H.M.V. usually succeed in achieving.

I have already pointed out that the lower register (meaning mainly bass and bass drums) is not only much too heavy, but also pretty muzzy. I must now add that the middle register is not always too clear, either. The general ensemble effect is there, but when you come to listen carefully in an endeavour to analyse exactly what is happening behind the solos, you begin to realise that the reproduction is often anything but as distinct as it might be.

BURMAN BOUQUET

Quite the best recorded of all the numbers is "St. Louis Blues." But "St. Louis" is not only the best recorded number, it is also the best performance.

For both these facts Maurice Burman is the one who can claim the largest bouquet.

His commendable restraint in both what he does and the volume with which he does it has not only made the recording engineers' task much easier, it has also helped to inspire the relaxation, and the musical finish which comes only when a band feels really relaxed, without in

any way lessening that essential urge which is the spirit of jazz.

Swing as they undoubtedly do, if only the other drummers had taken a leaf out of Maurice's book, instead of being not only so noisy but also (as in Fierstone's case) often too busy, the other records might have been better.

But let's get back to "St. Louis Blues."

You realise immediately that it has, at any rate, started off right. The tempo sounds easy and natural, and there is definitely the right atmosphere in the way the rhythm and the trombone take up on Frank Weir's clarinet opening to proceed with the first all-in jam chorus.

Until we come to the last all-ins, the rest of the record is a sequence of solos.

JAZZ LANGUAGE

I seem to remember "Detector" saying the other week something about our boys thinking too much of the jazz and too little of the music. If he meant by this that the British jazz musicians are so concerned with aping the jazz dialect that they forget the necessity of having something worth while to say in it, let alone finding out how to say it poetically, I am inclined to agree with him.

At least, I was until I heard this disc. Now I am not quite so certain.

In this record we get in turn solos by Frank Weir, Leslie Hutcheson's trumpet, Billy Munn's piano, Len Newberry's tenor, Woolfe Phillips' trombone, and Jean Sasson's guitar.

Munn's piano is rather overshadowed by the too loud guitar; the background riffs to Newberry's tenor sound rather uncertain. Phillips' trombone is not always too sure. But none of this prevents one from realising that all the boys have not only acquired more than an inkling of the jazz language, but have something to say that is worth hearing for what it is and for the way they say it.

If Frank Weir and Woolfe Phillips are the outstanding personalities in this respect, that says nothing against Hutcheson's tasteful, unexaggerated trumpet. I also liked Sasson's guitar style, and not only because his solo is the one spot in all the records

where we get a chance to appreciate something of Jaap Sajat's terrific bass technique, which was one of the features of the session. This Dutch boy plays with real feeling.

And if anything more need be said of this number, it is that the backgrounds to the solos are at once the best conceived and most musicianly executed of them all. The quick way in which the whole band gets together in taking up a riff or, as the case may be, a rhythm is as satisfying as is the unanimity with which it is carried out.

The less satisfactory reproduction makes it difficult to speak so well of the rhythm section and backgrounds in "Tea For Two." Nevertheless, there are plenty of good points about this disc.



"CORN" Reviews Commercial Discs and Advises On—XMAS RECORD GIFTS

DECCA are so busy trying to cope with the rush of orders for records already issued that they have cancelled their normal mid-month supplement for December.

This is due partly to shortage of staff resulting from the war, but also in no small measure to the greatly increased demand for records which the trade has been experiencing for some months now.

This latest growth in the popularity of the gramophone is a healthy sign which, it is to be hoped, the Government will find no cause to check. Even those of us who have not to add to it the depression of being separated from those we love most are putting in long hours of hard work, and, to keep up the effort, it is essential that we give our nerves regular respites in the form of complete changes of mental environment as well as physical rest.

IDEAL GIFTS

What more completely provides both these conditions than the entertainment of the gramophone in the peace of our homes, whether they be our real homes or merely temporary war time places of residence?

For this reason alone, gramophone records would this year make more ideal Christmas presents than ever, but their suitability as gifts becomes even more obvious when one remembers that they are among the few things one can still buy in unrestricted quantities, without coupons, at a price no greater (except for the purchase tax) than pre-war days, and in most cases without having to tramp from shop to shop to find them in stock.

Quite a few readers have written asking me to save them the time of wading through dozens of records in over-busy shops and give a list of a dozen discs which would make acceptable Christmas offerings.

It's not quite so easy as it sounds, because people's tastes differ, but here are some "popular" recordings I have thought outstanding, either for performance or for tune, or both.

"POP" CHOICES

Freddy Martin and his Orchestra give the best performance of "Why Don't We Do This More Often?"; and not only because of Eddie Stone's vocal and the cute, original way the side ends. Coupling is an attractively melodious rendering of the lovely melody "Flamingo" (Regal-Zonophone MR3559).

Geraldo and his Orchestra's famous broadcast version of "Why Don't We Do This?" with Jackie Hunter and Dorothy Carless, is also available, on Parlophone F1874. Coupling is a non-vocal but thoroughly delightful performance of another sweet melody, "Blue Champagne."

Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra have, however, the best record of "Blue Champagne." It features Bob Eberly, who sings also on the coupling, "It's Funny

The way the various instruments fit together, like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, as the lead changes from one to the other at the start of the first all-in jam chorus, is worthy of an American band, even though Kenny Baker does slip up rather noticeably round about the fifteenth bar.

Of the soloists, Carl Barriteau is easily the best. No matter whether you judge him on what he plays, the way he plays it, or both, he shows up as the greatest clarinetist we have.

In his contribution, Kenny Baker has to contend with a background which at times gets near to sounding more like a dog fight. But it doesn't seem to have worried him much. Even his wild outbursts of high notes sound good, because they have a

To Everyone But Me" (Brunswick 03249).

Bon Bon and his Buddies' record is, to my mind, the best of the many available of the current hit, "I Don't Want To Set The World On Fire." Backing is "Sweet Mama, Papa's Getting Mad"—a song which, at any rate as featured here, seems less satirical than its title suggests. Eddie Durham's guitar is a high-spot in both numbers (Brunswick 03258).

RHUMBAS

Xavier Cugat and his Orchestra's "Tony's Wife" and "La Cucaracha" (Parlophone R2821), and "Intermezzo" and "Babalú" (Parlophone R2811) are grand entertainment, and not only for those who like rumba bands.

Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra (H.M.V. DB5719) and Bobby Byrne's Orchestra (Brunswick 03265) share honours for the best records of "I Guess I'll Have To Dream The Rest." Couplings are, respectively, "Do I Worry" and "It's You Again." All four sides have good vocal refrains.

Harry Roy and his Band are at their best in "You Started Something," in which Harry and Marjorie Kingsley get plenty of the right spirit for this point duet (Regal-Zonophone MR3547).

Coupling is "Sand In My Shoes." But I much prefer—Connie Boswell's (Brunswick 03239) and the R.A.F. Dance Orchestra's (Decca F7967) versions of this song. Backings are, respectively, "Sweethearts Or Strangers" and "I'll Never Let A Day Pass By."

—AND FINALLY

Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra seem to have the best records of "Yours" (Brunswick 03239), with a swing number, "Bar Babble", and "My Sister And I" (Brunswick 03210), with "Marie Elena". You can always rely on Jimmy D.'s records for good vocals, as well as swell arrangements and performances. Another grand Dorsey disc presents "Green Eyes" (gripping vocal by Helen O'Connell) and "Rosita" (Brunswick 03200).

Mary Martin is delightful in most elegantly accompanied revivals of those two Cole Porter favourites "Let's Do It" and "I Get A Kick Out Of You" (Brunswick 03229).

Ambrose and his Orchestra are at their best in "Moonlight In Mexico" and Eric Winstone's bright instrumental opus "Oasis" (Decca F7936).

LETTER

I THINK I can solve Mr. Jackson's personnel mysteries in Billie Holiday's "I'll Get By" and "I Cried For You." Yes, there is a clarinet in the first title, and it sounds very much like Lester Young, who plays tenor in the last few bars of all-in. Right?

On the reverse, Harry Carney is playing clarinet in the "organ" background to Hodges' first chorus, and it's unmistakably his baritone in the last chorus. Eureka!

M. S. HEISER.

Hendon, N.W.4.

THE BOYS

9447/8—Frank Weir (clart.) leading Len Newberry (tenor); Leslie Hutcheson (tpt.); Woolfe Phillips (trmb.); Billy Munn (piano); Jean Sasson (gtar.); Jaap Sajat (bass); Maurice Burman (drums).

9445/6—Carl Barriteau (clart.) leading Buddy Featherstonhaugh (tenor); Kenny Baker (tpt.); Lad Busby (trmb.); Dick Katz (piano); Frank Deniz (gtar.); Tom Bromley (bass); George Fierstone (drums).

9449 and 9701—Harry Parry (clart.) leading Aubrey Franks (tenor); Dave Wilkins (tpt.); Woolfe Phillips (trmb.); Art Thompson (piano); Joe Deniz (gtar.); Charlie Short (bass); Bobby Midgley (drums).

definite place in a scheme which is as well conceived as it is capably put into practice.

Both Katz's piano solo and Lad Busby's trombone choruses tend to get lost at times in the rhythm, and, in the case of Busby, the seemingly rather messy riffing going on behind. But we get back to better things when Buddy Featherstonhaugh takes over.

EXHILARATION

No one can accuse Buddy of understatement or of being afraid to give full play to his love of the fantastic. But, far-fetched as some of his ideas are, he always manages to make you feel that here is a man who understands what jazz is all about.

Whatever else there may be to be said for or against "Honeysuckle Rose" and "New Baby," one thing stands out. This rhythm section has a most invigorating drive. In spite of the recording, and the fact that it tends to let its excitement get the better of it in one or two spots in the fast "New Baby," there is no denying the fact that it swings.

Inspired by this exhilarating support, most of the soloists give good accounts of themselves. David Wilkins is at the top of his form, and there is plenty of spirit and abandon in Harry Parry's clarinet.

For all his good tone, Woolfe Phillips doesn't seem too sure of himself in "Honeysuckle Rose," but makes up for it in "New Baby," in which the best of all his solos in these records is to be found.

JUSTIFICATION

Aubrey Franks does little in "Honeysuckle Rose" to distract one's attention from a rather hard, coarse tone, but gets near enough in "New Baby" to what he can do at his best to enable one to realise that his reputation for being one of our best swing tenors is not unjustified. Thompson's piano is also good, and no one can fairly say that the ensembles with which both titles end do not maintain the real spirit of real jazz.

Within the limits of my ability I have tried fairly to present the good and the weaker points of these records, but out of both one uncontradictable fact arises:

THIS EXPERIMENT HAS CERTAINLY JUSTIFIED ITSELF. IT HAS PROVED THAT BRITISH JAZZ CAN BE VERY, VERY MUCH BETTER THAN MOST OF EVEN THE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN CLOSEST TOUCH WITH IT BELIEVED POSSIBLE.

I only hope we shall have an opportunity to do another session like this, when the experience we have gathered from this one will enable us to provide conditions under which our jazz men will be able to show themselves to even better advantage.

No. 151. Newbury had a successful meeting last Sunday, when Vernon Thornes presented "Modern Duke" and Bob Jackson and Band presented the J.S. Next week will feature Ernest Love in "A Portrait of Charles Delaunay." The club's magazine will be on sale.

No. 175. Streatham meets at the "White Lion," December 23, to hear Cyril Browne present "Piano in Jazz," followed by a J.S. New members should contact Alan Black at 60, Wharfedale Gardens, Thornton Heath.

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TENOR and clarinet; good gigs wanted; free Xmas and New Year; own transport.—POWER, PRO. 6740.

TRUMPET, young, experienced, read and busk.—S. GOLD, 29, Jeymer Avenue, Willesden, N.W.2.

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DRUMMER, good, vacant dates, good kit; W.C. pref'd.—CLEM, Q.S. 76, Southampton Row, W.C.1.

TRUMPET, S.P., vacant including Christmas and New Year's Eve; reader.—MORTIMER, 95, Balls Pond Road, London, N.1.

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WEST End drummer now free for gigs or perm.; exempt.—WHI. 9400 (Ext. 903).

ALTO, tenor, baritone sax dblg. clar. desires gigs or perm.; exempt; own transport; London only.—BURNE, 11, Chatsworth Rd., W.4. CHI. 5829.

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JIM WEEKES, tenor sax; local preferred.—48, Pollard Houses, Northdown Street, King's Cross, N.1.

EXP. ALTO clar. seeks Xmas engagement or gigs; reader.—G. HILL, 72, Southfield Ave., N. Watford, Herts.

SAX, either alto or tenor; West End pro.; now exempt; evngs. and gigs only.—11, Salmon St., N.W.9. COL. 6441.

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