

# Melody Maker

3d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

EVERY THURSDAY Vol. XXI No. 609

# FOSTER TO FRONT NEW SENSATIONAL PALAIS BAND

NATION-WIDE IN ITS IMPLICATIONS IS THE BIG NEWS THAT BREAKS FROM THE ENTERPRISING MECCA AGENCY THIS WEEK, ENVISAGING AN IMPORTANT NEW ERA IN WHICH A "BIG BAND" POLICY OF SENSATIONAL DIMENSIONS IS TO BE INSTITUTED ON THE WHOLE OF THE MECCA CIRCUIT OF DANCE HALLS.

All competent observers are agreed that the war—with its pre-eminent necessity of giving the best in entertainment, and particularly dance music, to the Forces—has brought into being a new and somewhat revolutionary régime in the dance-band world.

The finest dance bands in the country have found their way into the huge, popular-priced dancing establishments, whilst in the smart restaurants of London's West End—in pre-war days the home of all that was expensive and exclusive in dance music—the once-impressive bands, with their personality leaders and battery of star musicians, have nowadays dwindled to small combinations that no longer attract the country's leading players.

As an earnest of their conviction that the future place for the big, distinguished dance orchestra is in the popular-priced dance halls—not as guests, but as resident features—Mecca are forming immediately the first of their own super dance bands, an outfit which is to be no fewer than 25 in strength, and which will be presented for a season at the firm's biggest hall, the Covent Garden Opera House, and will later be touring the circuit.



LEADER OF THIS SENSATIONAL, NEW VENTURE IS TO BE FAMOUS TRUMPET-MAESTRO TEDDY FOSTER.

Building up an excellent reputation since he started with his own band at the Casino, Birmingham, in November, 1943, Teddy has thus qualified in a practical manner for the new honours to be thrust upon him.

Not only has his 13-piece outfit at Birmingham become tremendously popular with local fans and dancers, but since his sojourn there he and his outfit have attracted a wide following all over the country through his many broadcasts, which now reach the imposing total of over thirty.

Teddy's contract at Birmingham will be terminating in about three weeks' time, after which he will enjoy a week's holiday and then throw him-

self, whole-heartedly into the new venture for Covent Garden.

The new mammoth band will include most of the members of Teddy's present thirteen-piece combination, and will be built up, altogether, to an outfit including eight brass (four trumpets, four trombones), plus five saxes, three rhythm and a choir of eight singers—four boys and four girls.

Although the primary purpose of the new super band will be to play for dancing, it will also be capable, on occasion, of putting over its own stage show and entertainment, although, from the very first, everything is to be concentrated on ensuring that it is a really first-class dancing band.

### SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

A big policy of special arrangements will be adopted. Some of Teddy's present arrangers will naturally be co-opted, including Fred Evans, Jeff Muston, and Harry Kahn, the pianist-arranger now with Teddy Foster, who previously spent ten years in the Joe Loss entourage.

Teddy Foster said to the "M.M.": "I am very happy as the privilege that is being accorded to me through the far-seeing policy of Mecca's Mr. C. L. Heimann, and I shall do everything in my power to see that this new project kicks off with a really sensational band."

There is still a great deal to be arranged, however, and in this connection Teddy would like all instrumentalists who are interested to get in touch with him immediately—whether they have previously been in communication with him or not. The same applies to dance-band singers who may be interested in the new venture. Apply to Teddy direct at the Grand Casino, Birmingham.

### Cummins Leads Murray's Rumba-ites

A BREAK that has been well earned comes the way of well-known London figure of rumba music, Jimmy Cummins, when he takes over with his own rumba outfit at Murray's Club next Monday (March 25).

Jimmy has already had experience of leadership, both at Lansdowne House and at the old Du Barry Club. He is, fronting a five-piece band at Murray's, which will be billed as Jimmy Cummins and his Rumba Music.

Playing violin, singing and also handling maracas Jimmy will be supported by Brylo Ford (bass); Billy Wastell (piano); Bill Stevens (trumpet); and Donald Griffiths (baritone and drums).

## "BRITISH HOT RECORD SOCIETY" IS FORMED

THE MOST MOMENTOUS EVENT FOR JAZZ ENTHUSIASTS WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE IN THIS COUNTRY FOR MANY YEARS IS THE INAUGURATION, IN LONDON, LAST WEEK-END, OF THE BRITISH HOT RECORD SOCIETY, WITH ALBERT MCCARTHY AS PRESIDENT, MAX JONES AS CHAIRMAN, AND JOHN ROWE AND BILL ELLIOTT (JOINT SECRETARIES).

Many months of endeavour have gone into the fruition of the scheme, which now means that jazzophiles will no longer lack proper representation in making their wishes and opinions known to the recording companies.

Not only that, but it means that they can now look forward to the regular issue—with the co-operation of the companies concerned—of classic jazz recordings, carefully selected by the Society from available masters, both old and new.

At the moment the B.H.R.S. plans to go ahead with its policy of recommending the issue of true jazz recordings to the gramophone companies, and later on it hopes to put out leaflets and personnel booklets relating to these issues.

Post-war plans are obviously more ambitious, and include the issue of special albums, booklets, and series of jazz "classics" on the Society's own label.

But already there is good news of its war-time activities.

The major recording concerns have been approached with happy results, and Walter Moody, of E.M.I., has expressed his great interest in the scheme and promised it full consideration. Unfortunately, his decision has not been received in time for this issue of the paper.

### BRUNSWICK DISC MONTHLY

Harry Sarton, of the Decca Record Company, has not only promised the Society his support, but has already given practical expression to his approval.

In conjunction with the B.H.R.S., he proposes to put out one record each month on the Brunswick label, this to be credited as the Society's selection.

This is news of first importance to enthusiasts, who will undoubtedly give it their unstinted support. Bill Elliott helped to make it possible by sportingly suggesting that his two current series—"The Golden Era" and "Supra Series"—should be brought to a close, so as to make way for the new project.

The members of the present working committee are all too well known to need introduction.

Albert McCarthy has been associated with the project for a number of years, and has persevered in his efforts to gain a hearing for record collectors, despite the fact that little progress was made between 1940 and now. He deserves the full support of all jazz lovers in order to ensure the success of this new venture.

Albert and his three colleagues are all Londoners, and this is necessary to the smooth functioning of the committee, but the Society is to have a national basis.

Invitations have been sent to various prominent jazz critics in the Provinces, asking them to assist the Society by serving on an advisory board.

Meanwhile any correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary, John Rowe, Estate House, 31, Dover Street, London, W.1.

## JAZZ JAMBOREE - ALL-TIME RECORD BROKEN

ALL previous records were shattered by the sum realised at the 1944 Jazz Jamboree.

As a result of this grand function, no less than £1,222 6s. 7d. was raised, the "M.M." has just been informed, and the Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council are to be sincerely congratulated on this excellent result.

At the April meeting of the M.U. (London Branch), the Council intends to donate £1,000 to the M.U. Sunday Samaritan Fund; and £500 to the M.U. London Branch Benevolent Fund.

The balance above £1,000 made at the 1944 Jamboree—i.e., £222 6s. 7d.—is being donated to the M.U. National Benevolent Fund.

## Roy Richards' Middle East S.O.S.

AN urgent cablegram from band leader Roy Richards, who is now very successfully touring for E.N.S.A. in the Middle East, tells us that he suddenly finds himself immediately requiring an alto sax, drummer, bass, and trombone.

All volunteers please apply to E.N.S.A. Headquarters, Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London, W.C.2.

## JOAN SMITH MARRIED

ONE of the best known and most popular behind-the-scenes figures in the dance band world is charming Joan Smith, who has been in charge of the Ambrose office for many years now, and is Ambrose's right-hand woman.

Her host of friends in the profession will, therefore, be anxious to congratulate her on the news that she was married on Wednesday (21st) at St. James' Church, Blackheath, to F. L. George Linton, a Tempest pilot in the R.A.F.

Our very best wishes to the bride and bridegroom.

SYD SIMONE, popular Hammer-smith Palais maestro, urgently requires 2nd trumpet and 1st tenor immediately. Contact Syd direct c/o the Palais.

## THE TROLLEY SONG

A FELLOW ON A FURLOUGH

## THE BOY NEXT DOOR

CUBAN LULLABY

## GONNA BUILD A BIG FENCE AROUND TEXAS

SOMEONE TO LOVE

3/3 Each. Double Nos. **SUN** MUSIC PUBLISHING CO. LTD. as above from the 23, Denmark St., London, W.C.2

## SCOTTISH NOTES

by Hugh Hinshelwood

CRITICS of Gerald's show at Glasgow Empire couldn't find that this swell band loses much in comparison with American outfits.

Arrangements here are first class, of course, "Cavalry of the Steppes" being received rapturously. Man behind most of the dot-writing is clever Wally Stott, who shares with many others the view that it is not difference of temperament that causes comparison between British and U.S. musicians, but that the latter take their profession with a greater degree of seriousness.

Band opinion is that trumpet man Freddy Clayton is destined to be tops in this country. Vocalists who pleased their radio fans were Sally Douglas, Carole Carr, Johnnie Green, Archie Lewis, and Glasgow's own Len Camber, who reminded over home-town days with Louis Freeman and Jack Chapman.

George Scott-Wood is current attraction at Green's, with vocalists Jessie Robbins and Jimmy Burgess.

As usual, there are a few Glasgow men in the line-up, among them being Jimmy Watson (trumpet), Danny McCormack (alto), Sammy Murtagh (bass), and Bert Tobias (tenor).

Green's is becoming a resident job to Bertie, who was also with Jack Jackson, Oscar Rabin, and, of course, George Elrick (and, at one time, the resident band!).

Dennistoun bandleader Lauri Blandford, who was off work recently, had another bout of flu a few days ago. However, Lauri should be all right again and ready for his wedding on April 19.

Locarno Eddie Shaw's strings line-up is not fixed at the moment, but it has been decided to use four violins, as alternative instrumentation was not easily available. Johnnie McEighan, intended lead violin, is working for E.N.S.A. just now, taking a five-piece to various Glasgow and district factories for meal-hour shows. Piano vacancy with the B.B.C. Scottish Variety Orchestra has been filled recently, first by Ruby Duncan, then by Glasgow boy Billy McGuffey, who is playing at the Cameo Ballroom with Jimmy Gilchrist just now.

Pre-war listeners to programmes from the Aberdeen studio will remember some swell piano playing by Ruby Duncan, who also teamed up with Jimmy Ross in two-piano acts featuring hot and sweet.

## U.S. HIT PARADE

HERE is the latest available list of the nine most popular tunes in America, as assessed by the weekly nation-wide ballot conducted by the American Tobacco Co., and broadcast in their "Your Hit Parade" programme over the C.B.S. network:—

1. DON'T FENCE ME IN (4-1-1-1-2-3-5)
2. THERE GOES THAT SONG AGAIN (2-2-2-3-4-7-8)
3. I DREAM OF YOU (4-4-4-5-7-8)
4. ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE (6)
5. I'M MAKING BELIEVE (3-5-5-3-4-2-3-6-7-9-0-9)
6. SWEET DREAMS, SWEETHEART (0-0-9)
7. THE TROLLEY SONG (5-3-2-2-1-1-1-1-3-6-3)
8. DON'T YOU KNOW I CARE?
9. DON'T EVER CHANGE.

Figures in parentheses indicate previous placings. 0—Not in the first nine.

## WRIGHT HITS

## I'M GONNA LOVE THAT GUY

WHEN WE'RE ALL TOGETHER AGAIN  
THE BASIC LANGUAGE OF LOVE

## JUNGLE JIVE

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## CALL SHEET

(Week commencing March 26)

Les ALLEN, Huddersfield.  
Cari BARRITEAU and Band, One-night Stands, Leeds.  
Ivy BENSON and her Girls' Band, Empire, Swansea.  
Johnnie CLAES and Claepigcons, One-night Stands, London.  
Billy COTTON and Band, Hippodrome, Brighton.  
Phil GREEN and his Dixieland Band, Empire, Chatham.  
Henry Hall and Band, B.B.C. Band of the Week.  
Leslie ("Jiver") HUTCHINSON and his All-Star Band, Palais de Danse, Hammersmith.  
Joe LOSS and Band, Empire, Glasgow.  
Vera LYNN, Hippodrome, Birmingham.  
Felix MENDELSSOHN and his Hawaiian Serenaders, One-night Stands, Scotland.  
Harry PARRY and his Radio Dance Orchestra, Garrick, Southport.  
George SCOTT-WOOD and Band, Green's Playhouse, Glasgow.  
Burton SEELEY and his Swingtime Serenaders, Empire, Woolwich.  
Billy THORBURN, Palace, Dundee.  
TROISE and his Mandolinists, Empress, Brixton.

## MIFF FERRIE ON BIG U.S.O. TOUR

ON Sunday, March 18, maestro Miff Ferrie, with his band and show, kicked off on a hectic four weeks' tour of the U.S. camps and hospitals.

As everyone in the profession knows, Miff has been a musical adviser to U.S.O. in this country ever since he himself was invalided out of the British Army over two years ago, and now, in response to many long-standing invitations, he has managed to arrange at least four clear weeks in which he can take his show up and down the country for U.S.O.

The show, which is a ninety-minute entertainment, includes the "Ferry-men," the live outfit which Miff features on Radio Rhythm Club and Decca records; Sandra and Elaine, a ravishing dancing and vocal act; and the glamorous Kay Wakefield singing her torch songs. Miff, besides playing trombone, is also compering the whole show.

Personnel of the "Ferry-men" is Hugh Macfarlane (drums), Charles Scott (bass), Wally Hanlon (guitar), Bobby Slade (piano), Harry Moreton (trumpet), Arthur Willmington (clarinet and tenor), and Miff himself (trombone).

## Whyte At Aldershot

DUNCAN WHYTE and his Band, from the London Astoria, are giving two swing concerts in Aldershot on Good Friday. Venue is the Hippodrome Theatre, and there will be both a matinee and an evening show.

In the meanwhile, Duncan has an Overseas broadcast next Saturday (24th) from the Astoria (6-6.15 p.m.). The public will be invited to remain whilst the band is on the air.

## JERRY DAWSON'S NORTHERN NEWS

FOLLOWING upon the recent tragic death of Johnny Healey, of the band at Bolton Palais was, of course, taken over by trombonist Jimmie Nowell.

Now, to add to his troubles, Jimmie suffered the loss, within a short time of his assuming leadership, of tenor-man Jack Howarth and percussionist Bobby Kevin (Kevin Gaffney), who, apart from being a grand drummer, was difficult to replace inasmuch as he was a great personal favourite with the Palais patrons.

However, Bolton being Bolton, Jimmie has successfully unearthed a 16-year-old boy by the name of Freddie Ashworth, who bids fair to emulate his predecessor's achievements.

Thus, with Jimmie leading on trombone, the band now features Larry Fray, Dick Davenport, Charlie Marsh and Maurice Allcock (saxes); Tich Wolfendale and Fred Barton (trumpets); Bill Yates (trombone); Bill Greenwood (piano); Ken Hart (bass); and Freddie Ashworth (drums).

Although Johnny Healey has been sadly missed by Bolton dancers, his pioneer work is being ably carried on in true Healey tradition by Jimmie and the rest of the boys.

\* \* \*

Have just received a hurried note from Stanley Black pianist Reg Warburton—whose home town, of course, is Bury, Lancs.—to the effect that he has resigned his position with the dance orchestra to undertake an extensive tour of the Far Eastern battle front under the aegis of E.N.S.A., as accompanist to songbird Paula Greene.

By the time this reaches print Reg and Paula will, it is probably, have arrived in India to commence their tour, air travel being provided, and as they are not with a party they will be able, one presumes, to bring music and glamour to some of the isolated outposts of the S.E.A.C.

The piano chair in the Dance Orchestra was temporarily taken over to allow Reg to get away to schedule by yet another Lancastrian who is currently working in the West End—Alfie Franks.

\* \* \*

Whilst on the subject of E.N.S.A., there is some news of still another native of Bury who is also busy entertaining the troops—currently in Scotland.

This is Jeff Rey, in peace time a semi-pro tenor-saxist who is with a swing unit which also features Les Breen (accordion); Phil Palmer (piano); Max Rose (drums); and Dot Barnes (vocalist).

Jeff asks me to pass on his good wishes to Jack Riley, leader of Bury's "New Georgians."

\* \* \*

News again from Eddie Mendoza, still working out his long-term contract with the Royal Engineers.

Eddie, expected an overseas posting a few weeks ago, but has recently been re-categorised medically and is at present at a station in Yorkshire, where, irrefragable as ever, he has organised a five-piece outfit which, in addition to himself on accordion, includes Tiny Scott (piano); Fred King (bass); and Ted Smith (guitar); Arthur Pinchbeck (drums); and Bobby Pollock (bass).

This bunch regularly play three or four dances each week, plus Sunday shows for their unit, and are also doing quite a number of gigs in the locality.

\* \* \*

Currently on war work in Hampshire, Manchester trumpet star Ian Howarth has recently formed an eight-piece outfit with Farnborough as his headquarters.

Known as the "Stardusters," the band boasts six Northerners, hailing respectively from Wigan, Manchester, Warrington, Middlesbrough, Sheffield, and Prestwich.

The complete line-up is Ian Howarth and Gordon (trumpets); Duncan Saunders and Max Bacon—no relation!—(saxes); Johnny Jessop (piano); Bill Lucas (bass); Ken Bellingbrooke (guitar); and Alex Cullen (drums).

Ian sends his regards to all his pals in and around Manchester.

\* \* \*

From the Middle East comes some news of the activities of pianist Johnnie Farley, who is touring with the E.N.S.A. Café Cabaret" company, which consists of Johnnie on piano; Archie Dwyer (flute); Teddie Wilson (Leeds), and noted Café

Anglais leader Stanley Barnett on tenors; Jack Wright, of Glasgow, on drums; sweet singer Kay Bird; Pat Powell, who sings the "hots"; and personality girl Betty Ankers.

With the addition of a snappy pair of dancers, this little company puts over a show which is very much to the liking of the boys and girls—and there are many thousands of them—who are still in the desert area.

## 1945 WESTERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP

Tuesday, March 20, at Crew

## RESULT

First: REG BARTLAM'S WINDSOR BAND, Wolverhampton.

Second: R.A.F. DANCE BAND, Chester.

Third: DOWN-BEATERS, Crew.

Full report in next week's 12-page "M.M."

## JOHNNY DENIS FILING

WELL-KNOWN novelty bandleader Johnny Denis breaks into films this current week. He is being featured in the new production, "Cabaret," in which a number of popular stage and radio stars are to appear.

To-morrow (23rd) Johnny and his Novelty Sextet appear at the De Montfort Hall, Leicester, under Arthur Kimbrell's promotion, with Beryl Davis as guest artist; and on Saturday they make their first visit to the Baths Hall Ballroom at Kidderminster.

The band has another late night dance music broadcast on Easter Monday (11.30 p.m.). Johnny also appears as guest artist in a "Workers' Playtime" broadcast on April 5, and he and his outfit play a "Music While You Work" session on April 9.

Now appearing with Johnny on Sunday concert dates is vocalist Peggy Vaness. Wife of West End guitarist Tony Lotthouse, Peggy, who recently made her radio debut in the "Monday Night at 8" series, seems on the way to a bright future.

## NEVILLE BISHOP ON CONTINENT

NOTHING could be more natural than the title of "Follow the Drum" when applied to any enterprise undertaken by famous old-time British star of percussion Neville Bishop.

Neville is nowadays leading his own E.N.S.A. party, and they have recently embarked for N.W. Europe—the first party, incidentally, to be sent out primarily to play for Canadian troops.

Formed by E.N.S.A.'s Maple Leaf Section, the party travels under the auspices of the Canadian Legion. For some little time it has been playing to Canadian troops at home, and has proved extremely popular.

Apart from Neville with the sticks, the party includes Kay Lauterer, London-born vocalist; instrumentalist Aline Carey, of Bedford; soubrette and dancer Ninette Sutoh, of Sandstead; soprano Ann Page, of London; pianist and vocalist Jean Macnaught, of Dumfries; and baritone Glyn Roberts.

Many old-timers in the profession will remember Neville Bishop just 20 years ago as the drummer and comedy vocalist with the "Concy Islanders" at the Strand Corner House in London.

Since then he has been with Jack Hylton, and in a great many stage productions, where his fine flair for showmanship and stagecraft always shined him in good stead, as it will now in what is to him the most important stage commitment of his career.

ALF ROGERS, formerly a popular N. London saxist-bandleader, has now returned on leave from the Middle East, where he has been for the past five years. He would like to hear from any of his old friends and ex-members of his "Knights of Swing." He can be reached at 123, Haddleton Road, London, N.7.

# NEW ORLEANS HAMFATS

## EDGAR JACKSON'S Record Reviews

**HARLEM HAMFATS**  
 Barefoot Boy, The (Morand) (V. by Hamiat Morand) (Am. Decca 63663).  
 Mellow Little Devil (Morand) (V. by Hamiat Morand) (Am. Decca 63662).

(Brunswick, O3556-59, 41d.)  
 Herbert "Kid" Morand (vocalist), with (probably) Odell Rand (clar.); Horace Malcolm (pno.); Joe McCoy (gitar); Charles McCoy (gitar or possibly mandolin); John Lindsay (bass); Freddie Flynn (dms.). Recorded April 20, 1938.

THIS appears to be much (and possibly exactly) the same all-coloured band as accompanied Rosetta Howard in her notable records of "If You're a Viper" and "Rosetta Blues," originally released towards the end of 1938 on Vocalion S202 and reissued not so long ago in the Brunswick "Sopla Series" on O3467.

Inspirational force and leading light of the outfit is Herbert Morand.

His nickname is "Kid," and to find him now styled on the labels as "Hamfat" is none the less surprising or confusing because the "Hamfat" part of the group's title was almost certainly derived from Joe McCoy's name, who, although he only plays guitar on these sides, achieved no little fame as a race singer.

### CAN'T READ MUSIC

Morand hails from New Orleans, where he was born in 1907.

In 1929 he was brought by Johnny Dodds to Chicago, and made his recording debut with the Dodds brothers, Johnny and Baby, on American Vocalion.

In 1936 he formed the "Hamfats" with Rand, Malcolm, Lindsay (best known over here of the whole group through his 1931-2 recordings with Louis Armstrong and 1940 records with Bechet's Feetwarmers), and Pearlis "P.C." Williams on drums, and in 1937, with the addition of the McCoy brothers, they made their first records.

It is said that few, if any, of the men read music, and that such parts of their performances as were not improvised were played from some form of cue-sheets.

That they may not have been able to read no more matters than it is unsurprising.

Many of the greatest of the early New Orleans jazz men couldn't read a note, but that didn't prevent them from producing some of the finest jazz ever heard.

What is surprising is that the "Hamfats" even bothered about cue-sheets.

The music they play is essentially old-time New Orleans jazz—the sort of thing which seldom, if ever, required or arose from any pre-decided, let alone pre-noted, procedure.

The weak spot is Odell Rand's clarinet. Certainly it has what many will excuse, and even enthuse over, as the characteristically "dirty" tone. But to say the least it is anything but musical, and the style is definitely corny, even for those days.

However, this is more than sufficiently compensated for by the many more desirable aspects of the sides.

Morand's singing varies. In "Bare-

foot Boy" he is none the less authentic or attractive because he follows somewhat closely the pattern originated by Louis Armstrong and since adopted by, or at any rate noticeable in, so many vocalists of that genre.

But in "Mellow" his articulation suddenly brought to my mind, incongruous as the comparison may seem, Edmundo Ros.

But no such anomalies occur in his trumpet. His playing, not unlike



Drum-wizard Victor Feldman broadcast last week in the "Here's Wishing You Well Again" programme, and this picture, taken by Jack Marshall in the B.B.C. studio, shows young Vic being congratulated by famous radio-stage and screen-star Bebe Daniels. The admiring group looking on consists of (l. to r.): Harry Gold, Rita Williams, Lauri Bookin and resident bandleader Mantovani. The programme (which was recorded) can be heard to-night (Thursday) and to-morrow morning, both G.F.P.

## NEWS FROM THE RHYTHM CLUBS

22.—Nottingham. Club meets every Sun. at Roscoe's School of Dancing, 19, Eridiesmith Gate, 7-10. 25th: "South Rampart St. Parade."

54.—Portsmouth. Address changed to 32, Malvern Rd. (off Clarendon Rd.), Southsea. Mtgs still held every Sun., 2.30 p.m. All comms.: Sec. A. J. Poore, 22, Tredegar Rd., Southsea.

68.—Edinburgh. Ctee thanks all for continued overwhelming support. Jam Group largely responsible for prosperous state of affairs. Still room for a few more members. Sec. c/o Methven Simpson, Edinburgh.

72.—Glasgow. To-day (Thurs., 22nd) mtg. 9 p.m., Community House, Clyde St. Rct. by treasurer George Miller.

58.—Rochdale. Recent J.S. included J. Norris (gtr.), D. Butterworth (pno.); B. Lucas and J. Ellison (blue blowing); with Bunk Cohen (blues shouter). Forthcoming retis include Teddy Wilson, by Hy. Younes, and Eddie Lang, by Norman Smith.

159.—Medway (Gillingham) meets as usual next Sun. (25th) at New Pavilion, Gillingham. Thanks to tenor-star Kathleen and Art Thompson (piano) for last meeting Jam.

160.—Chesterfield meets to-day (22nd) for N. Smith's programme on Eddie Lang. Also Brains Trust will take place, comprise members of the ctee. Club meets every Thurs. Trinity Institute, Newbold Rd., 7.30 p.m. New members invited.

163.—Swansea. Sun. (25th): "Thin Man of Jazz" (Pee Wee Russell); Thurs. (29th): "Duke Ellington"; April 1: "Pools of Jazz." Club's address is 57, St. Helen's Rd., Swansea.

165.—Southall. Last mtg 19th. Members records and J.S. with Stan

Baker's Group and Club Group. Watch for grand birthday mtg attraction.

Plymouth R.C. thanks all instrumentalists for grand entertainment at mtg on Sun. (5th).

Goole R.C.—25th: "Chicago Style." Meets 7.15 p.m. Suns., R.A.O.B. Bldgs., Chapel St., Goole.

Wimlaton.—Club moved to Bisleigh Hotel, Blaydon-on-Tyne. Meets every Tues., 7 to 9 p.m.

Aylesbury.—New club, mtg once a week. Write: Sec., D. M. Scutchings, Aylesbury War Workers Club (Rhythm Sect.), Park St., Aylesbury, Bucks.

N. Midlands and Staffs R.C. (Stoke-on-Trent).—Club opens Sun., April 8, Rialto Café, Stoke. Would-be members welcome. J.S. by local bands, gramophone rct. by well-known local man—surprise star musicians' appearance.

Tommy Ladnier's at its best, has all that the best New Orleans horn men achieved—the true jazz idiom portrayed through a warm, clear tone and a broad, relaxed phrasing that is as imaginative as his execution is virtuosic.

And to add to this the rhythm section, with Lindsay's solid two-in-a-air bass, gives, at well-chosen, not too fast tempi, a beat that is as steady as it is driving.

Nevertheless, these records, which, I understand, owe their release to the efforts of James Asman, of the Jazz Appreciation Society, are not the best the "Hamfats" have made.

### TRUE JAZZ COMMITTEE

That distinction goes to those which feature Rosetta Howard and a host of tunes which savour more of the traditional airs of the coloured folk and less of American popular songs of the period.

Which raises the whole question of whether recording companies who have not the benefit of a real jazz expert on their staff are wise in allowing themselves to be too strongly influenced by the demands of individuals who, enthusiastic as they may be, are often without a first-hand knowledge of all the records an American group may have made, and consequently also which are the best.

I have often thought that the companies would be better advised to appoint a committee of true jazz devotees to select their connoisseurs' releases.

This would not only prevent them from being continually pestered by individuals who, however enthusiastic they may be, often have personal fancies and fads, but also relieve them from the odium of criticism when such fads or fancies have brought about the release of a record that has not been all that its sponsor has led the company to believe it to be.

I commend the idea to both Harry Sarton and Wally Moody, of E.M.I.

Note.—Although its correct title is clearly apparent from the vocal chorus, "Mellow Little Devil" is given on the label as "Hello, Little Devil." I have brought the error to the attention of Brunswick, who have promised to correct it as soon as they can get the labels reprinted.

## Betty Lyons' New Job

MISS BETTY LYONS, extremely well known among West London dancers from her association of over a dozen years with the Hammersmith Palais managerial staff, comes bang into the news this week with the story of an interesting new position which she is taking up in Italy.

Miss Lyons is to be director of a big Forces club sponsored by the Jewish Hospitality Committee. Club will cater both for the entertainment and the general comfort of the Forces.

Betty Lyons will be embarking quite shortly to take up this new position, in which she will wear uniform similar to that worn by the A.F.S. She is at present busily learning Italian to fit herself for the new post.

Since leaving Hammersmith Palais about two years ago, Betty Lyons has been associated with some B.B.C. Forces Talent Competition Programmes.

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# BRAND'S ESSENCE

DANCE BAND GOSSIP

WRITING letters which you have to be flat on your back must be pretty trying work, but nevertheless we have just received a very legible letter from famous ivory man Charlie Kunz, who, as we reported recently, is undergoing treatment for spinal trouble at a hospital near London.

Says Charlie:— "Please do mention in your column the thrill I had from receiving such a large number of letters from readers of the 'M.M.' when you first announced my illness. I never thought I had so many friends who would bother to write to me like that."

"I really did get a tremendous kick out of each one, and although I couldn't answer them myself, Mrs. Kunz enjoyed doing this for me. I am now getting a good few letters from overseas, so do send my best wishes to all these boys, and God speed them back to these shores again."

"I am getting along very nicely, but cannot say just how long I shall have to remain here."

That, Charlie, was a swell letter; and for all you boys who have written him, Charlie's address is St. Vincent's Orthopaedic Hospital, Northwood Hills, Middlesex.

NO doubt famous bandleader George Erick has been praised many times in his life, but I am inclined to rate among the most tasteful of the compliments he has ever received that of an American soldier and swing fan who, hearing George put over one of his inimitable vocals, started at him, scowled and then burst out: "Gee whiz an English bandleader who CAN SING!"

Where did this happen? Security reasons prevent me telling you exactly, but it was somewhere quite close to the front line in the Western war zone; and we have a glowing account of George's singing, and of the complete show put over by the Erick entourage, from Pte. D. G. Wilson, one of the thousands of soldier-fans who found that George's recent visit to the Continent was "just what the doctor ordered" for the edification of tired troops.

Writes D. G.:— "The boys in our company were so delighted with the show that I felt I ought to write to you at once. George Erick himself was the very efficient conductor-vocalist-comper. After a start had been made with 'The A. Train' number, followed number, and if there wasn't something to please everybody in the show, then I'll dig a slit-trench blindfold."

All the Erick vocalists—George himself, with Tony and Connie O'Neil—came in for high praise.

Among the instrumentalists, Pte. Wilson was particularly impressed with Joe Elliott (alto) who played "Harlem Nocturne" and "Miff Hobson" (trumpet) who put over "The Flight Of The Bumble Bee". The whole show, anyway, reached such a terrific standard that, after hearing the last-mentioned number, "some of the boys almost expected Betty Grable to appear at any moment."

Later in the show, John McCormack's solo piano comes in for a big hand, and there is some further reference to the Erick brand of singing. Pte. Wilson remarks that George is a vocalist of the highest class whose vocal powers people seem to have forgotten just because he is a bandleader.

That he is a composer, too, is proved yet again by the finale to his E.N.S.A. show, which ended with the song, "Boys Of The United Nations," from George's own pen. To close his letter, Pte. Wilson writes: "To my mind, George Erick is the best band leader I have ever known."

Coincidentally, I had just finished writing the above when, "with a rattle and a roar," as they say in the detective stories, in burst the office boy with a further little batch of letters from the Continent also praising the Erick show.

There is no space to quote them all, but L. Cpl. K. Darley sums most of them up when he writes: "To my mind, George Erick is the best band that has ever been over on this side."

Writing the above reminds me that I also received several furlous letters

of praise a few weeks back regarding Phil Green's Continental E.N.S.A. tour, but unfortunately the writers did not give many details of the actual performances for me to quote. However, I have received from Phil himself a most interesting account of his journeyings.

Similarly, a few weeks ago, sitting by his bedside in the University College Hospital, I heard from maestro Bill Tennent some fascinating details concerning his ill-fated Continental tour which ended abruptly when he was flown back to England desperately ill.

The adventures of these various bandleaders and their boys on the Continent would make, collectively, a grand story—but, just now, there simply isn't the space.

However, directly the paper position eases a little we will see if the Editor will consent to the devoting of a page or two to the subject of our dance bands' visits to liberated Europe, which should make the most interesting musical stories of the whole war.

WE are asked by bandleader Edmundo Ros to make it absolutely clear that his real name is and always has been Edmundo Ros, and that it isn't a non-de-band or anything like that.

Reason for Edmundo's request is that in announcing Billy Duffy's leadership of the rumba band at the Millroy last week we said: "As is the usual tradition with rumba bandleaders, an appropriately sounding nomenclature has been found."

The result is that since then fans have been telephoning Edmundo and also writing to the B.B.C. asking what his real name is.

The answer is, of course, that when a little boy was born in far-off Venezuela some thirty years ago, and immediately asked his nurse for a couple of maracas and the latest rumba orchestration, he was christened Edmundo Ros—and that's the way it is to-day.

WHO can claim the honour of being the "oldest inhabitant" by which we mean the bandleader who has held down any one job for the longest time?

In Town, the distinction probably belongs to Al Collins, who has worked for the Savoy company uninterrupted since 1920 and played at the Berkeley Hotel, which it controls, since 1931.

His band now consists of Mick Lewis and Jock Scott (altos); George Pallat (tenor); Norman Payne (lpt.); Abe Walters (pno.); Maurice Smart (accordion); Alfie Crask (bass); and "Ginger" Conn (drums).

"Oldest" member is Norman Payne, who joined Al in 1923 from Elizalde's Band at the Savoy and has been with him ever since.

Next oldest is Mick Lewis, but he's quite a "youngster," having been with Al for only about three years.

Outside London, most promising candidate appears to be Joe Kaye, who, having been at the Norfolk Hotel, Brighton, since 1939, is well on the way to becoming the uncrowned king of the town.

His Norfolk band, which although he describes it as "my Billy Plonkitt outfit," can more than hold its own with any combo on the coast, comprises Les Watson (alto and clarinet); Charlie Wilson (tenor and accordion); Ted Watson (lpt.); George Murrell and Manlon Dean (pianos); Fred Taylor (bass); Leslie Low (drums); and Irene Marks (vocalist), with Joe himself as leader.

But this is not Joe's only band. He has just formed an additional outfit for the Royal Victoria Hotel, St. Leonards-on-Sea, which has recently been opened up by the same management.

It consists of Jack Geller (piano and accordion); Jack Meerloo (bass, clarinet and violin); Ray Shearer (bass, guitar, vocalist); and David Millwood (drums).

Joe also has other jobs in the offing for which he immediately requires musicians, so if anyone wants a nice seaside job, now's the chance.

Meanwhile, if you know any leader who can beat the enviable records of Al Collins and Joe Kaye, write and tell us at once.

We're betting our next week's butter

## BERYL DAVIS'S 21st BIRTHDAY



Many celebrities of the profession were present at Bates' Club, Park Lane, last Friday (16th) to drink the health of popular songstress Beryl Davis. You only have to count the number of candles on the cake to realise that the important occasion was Beryl's 21st Birthday. Helping to make sure she cuts up in a state of great agitation from the cake O.K. are reading from l. to r.—famous A.F.N. announcer T Sergeant Keith Jamieson; Beryl herself; (behind Beryl) B.B.C.'s Arthur Brown; Bernard Rabin; fiddle notability Reg Leopold; famous B.B.C. announcer-comper Ronnie Waldman; and vocal stylist Benny Lee.

ation to a box of matches that even if there is an "older inhabitant" than Joe Kaye, there isn't an older one than the redoubtable Al Collins.

MUSIC-PUBLISHER Irwin Dash, who, as we reported last week, is a very keen philatelist, phoned us up in a state of great agitation after the appearance of the paper to tell us that, in giving us a list of the stamp collectors in the profession, he had inadvertently omitted the name of one of the leading collectors.

This is bandleader/vibra-phonist Jack Simpson, who has a terrific collection and is a very great authority.

Irwin tells me that there is friendly rivalry between the two of them because Jack goes in for Queens and Edwards, and Irwin goes in for Georgians.

Translated into English, that means that Jack Simpson collects stamps of the reign of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII, while Irwin concentrates on the periods of King George V and VI.

A BULKY envelope arrived last week for Cosmo Berry, staff arranger for Cosmo Music. When Den opened it he found inside an arrangement of "What'll I Do?" and a note from Ivy Benson's secretary.

"It particularly interested me," Den says, "because this very score was one of the first I ever did when I was just beginning the five-brass, four-saxes and four-rhythm business."

He went on to say that it contained ideas which are even modern to-day, in spite of the fact that it was written some years ago.

One of the really up-and-coming penmen in the music business, Den first came out with Tom Elliott, of the "Boys of the Easton Bounce."

"Mr. Ghost Takes the Air" and "Florida Special," and he also collaborated with Stanley Nelson in the very successful handbook "Arranging at Glance," published by Lafleur.

He is in friendly rivalry with another young arranger, Ken Essex, of Bradford Wood's, whose originals include "Lazy Lullaby" and "My Love Song," and the name of both has lately become a fixture on commercial orchestrations.

Both are in their early 20's, and their progress should be interesting.

## CONTEST FIXTURES

LONDON AREA

To-night, Thursday, March 22.—Baths Hall, Latimer Road, Wembleton (7 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 South London Championship.

Organisers: Messrs. Forrest-Day Productions, 23 Denmark Street, Charing Cross Road London, W.C.2. (Phone: TEMPLE Bar 1148 and LIBERTY 1528).

Wednesday next, March 28.—Municipal Hall, EPSOM, Surrey (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Southern Counties Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Bill Waller, 324, Brixton Road, S.W.9. (Phone: STRATHAM 4966).

15.—Regent Palais de Danse, 183, High Street, Tooting, S.W.17 (2.30 to 6 p.m.). The 1945 South-West London Dance Band Championship.

Organisers: Messrs. Ed and Bill Waller, 151, South Norwood Hill, S.E.25. (Phone: LIVINGSTONE 1587).

Wednesday, May 2.—Town Hall, Hornsey (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 North-West London Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Syd Besmes, 32, Aberdeen Road, Highbury, N.5. (Phone: MOUNTVIEW 959).

PROVINCES. PRESTON.—Tuesday next, March 27, at the Queen's Hall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 North Lanes Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 107, Broadway, Royton, Oldham, Lancs. (Phone: MAIN (Oldham) 1431).

ROCHDALE.—Friday, April 6, at the Casino Ballroom (7.30 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 Central Lanes Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 107, Broadway, Royton, Oldham, Lancs. (Phone: MAIN (Oldham) 1431).

April 8, at the King's Hall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 "Potteries" Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hincley, Leicestershire. NOTTINGHAM.—Wednesday, April 11, at the Victoria (Exhibition) Baths Hall (7-11 p.m.). The 1945 Nottinghamshire Championship.

## SMASHING SWING DISPLAY WINS LEEDS CONTEST

1945 CENTRAL YORKS CHAMPIONSHIP Tuesday, March 13, 1945 Armley Baths Ballroom, Leeds.

THAT the current contesting season has at last got fully into its stride was proved on Tuesday of last week (13th) when at the Central Yorks Championship presented by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Buckley, at the Armley Baths Ballroom, Leeds, not only did the maximum permissible number of twelve bands take part (for the third time this year), but also provided the highest standard of playing heard at any contest yet held this season.

Excellent performances were given by, among others, the Blue Gremlins of the R.C.A.F., a first-rate full sized "combo with a style at least as good as that of many of our better commercial" pro bands.

But even their ability was forced into second place by the New Style Swingette, who, with a new drummer and a brilliant new clarinetist in the person of Leslie Jarvis to replace Len Bedford (whose departure from the outfit in 1943 was probably the main cause of its failure to get further last year than the North Britain Area semi-final), gave one of the finest ever heard-out swing performances ever heard in a contest, in spite of the absence, due to illness, of their guitarist, Jimmy Dunn.

Among the attendance of over 600—somewhat short of capacity for the hall, but about double the number usually present at a Tuesday night public dance—we were delighted to see, in company with well-known Northern Instruments dealer R. M. Akroyd, East District M.U. organiser Lance L. Key.

The purpose of his visit appeared to be to convince as many as possible of the young musicians present of the benefits to be derived from joining the Union, and no one hopes more than we do that his efforts were completely successful.

JUDGES' REPORT. Adjudicators: Freddy Platt and Edgar Jackson. Winners: NEW STYLE SWINGETTE (clarinet, trumpet, piano, bass, drums). All coms.: Don Parker, 93, Clifton Street, Denaby Main, near Doncaster.

Individualist's awards for clarinet (Leslie Jarvis), trumpet (Alan Marshall), piano (George Ryder), bass (Donald Parker), drums (Derek Lightowler). Special award for best "small" band.

17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: TEMPLE Bar 1410).

Organiser: Mr. Fred Beavill (in association with Messrs. Lyn Morgan and Charlie Cooper), 78, Westway, Rickmansworth, Herts. (Phone: RICKMANSWORTH 2767).

COVENTRY.—Thursday, May 10, at Nag's Ballroom (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 Warwickshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hincley, Leicestershire. ACCRINGTON.—Friday, May 11, at the Majestic Ballroom. The 1945 East Lanes Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 107, Broadway, Royton, Oldham, Lancs. (Phone: MAIN (Oldham) 1431).

GILLINGHAM (Kent).—Friday, April 20, at the New Pavilion Ballroom, Canterbury Street (7.30 to midnight). The 1945 North Kent Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Claude Giddins, The New Pavilion, 28, Canterbury Street, Gillingham, Kent. (Phone: GILLINGHAM 524).

HULL.—Monday, April 23, at the Fulford Ballroom (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 East Yorks Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 107, Broadway, Royton, Oldham, Lancs. (Phone: MAIN (Oldham) 1431).



## U.S. JIVE JOTTINGS

JO STAFFORD, attractive girl singer who is taking second and third places in the swing polls, rose to fame with Tommy Dorsey's band at the time when Frank Sinatra was also in the T. D. Fold.

Jo, who opened last month at La Martinique, says she will never forget the occasion when Sinatra "went to bat for her one evening." It seems she was being bawled out by a ringleader, and Frankie, ducking the guy's tone, descended on the heckler, grabbed him by the collar and forcibly ejected him.

Jo was previously a member of the Stafford Sisters vocal act and of the famous Pied Pipers. Her show at La Martinique marks her debut as a "solo," but meanwhile she is being heard on the Chesterfield programme as featured vocalist with Ted Steele's Orchestra.

Duke Ellington, whose recent successes in "Down Beat" and "Metronome" polls have been confirmed by "Esquire" magazine granting him its award as leader of the best band of the year, is due to hit Chicago this month—specifically the Windy City's Civic Opera House. The Ellington organisation is to put on another large-scale concert there, and the band is pretty certain to win the plaudits of the public and music critics alike.

All the newspapers and dance-music mags. gave wide publicity to "Esquire's" concert and radio airing featuring winners of that magazine's "Jazz Band Poll," although opinions as to the show's merits varied considerably.

The Negro "Chicago Defender" at any rate, went all in plugging the event as a "fine display of democracy" when musicians and their music were presented on the basis of ability and with no thought of race, creed or colour.

Although complete listings of the results are not on hand, the following musicians all won places: Louis Armstrong, on a vote combination for singing and trumpet playing; Jay Higginbotham; Johnny Hodges; Sid Laiff; Harry Campbell; Benny Goodman; Billie Holiday and Willie Smith. Coleman Hawkins took an award, but was unable to make the concert; in time.

Hal McIntyre's Orchestra, although only three years old, is becoming recognised as one of the U.S.A.'s top bands, and it was chosen recently to play for the President's Birthday Ball at the Statler Hotel in Washington.

Another honour which came its way was the "Band-leader of the Month" award given by "Seventeen"—the magazine with a nation-wide circulation among teen-age girls.

Latest news concerning the late Rod Glass is that Blue Note intend issuing an album of records featuring his clarinet playing. It will contain eight sides cut early last year with a band led by pianist Art Hodes and including Max Kaminsky, Ray Coniff, Danny Alvin, Jack Bland and two bassists—Sid Jacobs and Bob Haggart.

And from Hodes' paper, "The Jazz Record," comes this sick list: "Miff Mole" is in hospital again. Eddie Condon is changing doctors every other week. Joe Grauso (drummer) is in and out of Nick's taking a much-needed rest. Sidney Bechet has foot trouble—gout."

Reviewers over there are beginning to make a fuss about another new outfit, which plays at Joe's De Lux Club in Chicago. Headed by Dallas Bartley on bass, the group comprises George Denlee (alto sax); Josh Jackson (tenor sax); Bill Martin (trumpet); Gideon Honora (piano); and Earl Phillips on drums.

about 100 did so.

## M.U. BOOMING IN THE NORTH

THE co-operative Hall in Bradford was well attended by local dance band musicians who came along to hear Joe Lass and his Band, and speakers gathered together by the Musicians' Union last Saturday (17th).

After a welcome to the band, speakers and audience by Harry Pollard, President of the Bradford Branch, M.U., Joe and his Band opened out with a 20-minute programme.

Then followed the introduction of Joe to the audience, and he spoke very well on the need for unity amongst dance band musicians and supplied many illustrations of the work of the M.U.

R. M. Akroyd, the well-known Leeds Instrument Dealer, added considerable weight to the proceedings in a short, but effective, speech in which he asked those members of the audience who were unorganised musicians to stand up—about 150 did so. Major Akroyd also spoke on the unfair manner in which musicians were treated by the imposition of Purchase Tax on instruments and accessories.

Lance L. Key gave a short history of his recent work as an M.U. Organiser. He showed that in the theatres in his area increased wages amounting to approximately £600 per year had been obtained in 12 months. Mr. Key stressed this illustration as one that could be successfully applied to the dance business if unity were accomplished.

Albert Wallis, Vice-President of the Bradford Trades Council, made a fine speech in which he gave an assurance to unorganised dance musicians that if they took the advice of previous speakers and himself, that an official "Fair List" of M.U. Bands would be published which would carry along with it the complete backing of all trade unions in Bradford, and that the Co-operative Movement and the municipality would be approached by the Federated Union of Bradford with a view to the engagement of only M.U. labour at M.U. prices. After the speech, Lance Key again took the platform to ask those who had been interested enough in the proceedings and who were willing to join the Musicians' Union to stand up—and

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# COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

IT is with the utmost regret we have to report this week that F. O. Don Biggar is missing in action.

Don has been a frequent visitor to the Corner, and he is well known to most collectors for his writing in the different mags. and booklets. He plays a fair piano himself, and always manifests tremendous interest in records of piano jazz. In London on his last leave we met him at Feldman's Club, enthusing over the music of George Webb's Dixielanders.

Now comes sad news. We know all his friends share our anxiety and hope that he is safe and will presently be back in Nottingham jazz circles again. James Asman, at whose Newark club Don gave a recital on March 6, promises us news as soon as any comes through.

## CORRECTIONS AND COMMENTS

Gene Williams, of Decca Records, Inc., and "Jazz Information," makes the following comments on past Corners.

Re issue January 6, wherein Cliff Jones praised the clarinetting of Balls Ball on Jelly Roll's "High Society," and referred to Oliver's playing, and where we raised the question of Armstrong or Oliver for solo honours on "Chimes Blues," Gene writes:—

"Brother Cliff J. to the contrary, Mr. Ball is not a good clarinet player. Oliver's stuff doesn't date at all. I've thought Joe Oliver played the Chimes solo for about 15 years now. But, regardless of whether he or Louis played it, you can hear Oliver on all the Oliver records. Just a matter of listening carefully and properly."

It will be realised that Williams is not including the King's Victor records in that assertion. Continuing:—

"December 9 issue: Louie's 12th Street was recorded as '12th Street Blues,' not Rag, like the Henderson. December 16: There aren't any Decca Bunk Johnsons. Only World Broadcasting System transcriptions. Re Norman Evans and the Ellington mat. numbers: the W suffixes don't mean the recordings were made in New York. They only indicate that this particular master number is a Vocalion-series number. Mr. Evans fails to understand that E4511-13W means that three masters of 'Song of the Cotton Field' were cut, namely, E4511W, E4512W, E4513W."

## "ESQUIRE'S" RADIO HOOK-UP

Elsewhere in this issue the results of "Esquire" magazine's second annual jazz poll are given. From them it will be clear to readers that the presence of such critics as Williams, Russell, C. E. Smith and A. Rankin on the panel of experts was not sufficient to weigh results in the direction of worthwhile jazz music.

And from comments so far received it appears that the three-part concert broadcast over a national hook-up failed in its intentions of putting over American jazz to a wide public.

The airing covered an hour and a

half of music from New York, Los Angeles and New Orleans.

The last-named city should have supplied the right stuff, especially as their part of the show was sponsored by the recently established Jazz Foundation, but two leading critics agree that the programme was a let-down.

One, whose name we'd like to give, but won't, says:—

"The second Esky concert was as horrible as the first. Bunk Johnson appeared from N.O. playing with a bad band (Louis, Higgy, Bechet, James P. Johnson, Barbarin and a bass), and so crowded for time that he could only play very briefly, and so was not heard by the public. But one of these days it will be different!"

And the New York "Herald-Tribune" devoted two columns to the concert, written by West-Coast critic Rudy Blesh, who was responsible for that authoritative series of lectures entitled "This Is Jazz" (which appeared in book form last year in the States).

Blesh had some penetrating observations to make. Tackling the alleged aims of the sponsors first, he wrote:—

"The programme was announced as an exposition of jazz and swing unhampered by commercial restrictions. . . . The southern end of the programme was sponsored by the Jazz Foundation of America, whose announced aims are to foster jazz in those of its aspects which are most valuable culturally, and were based on an original, improvised polyphony too seldom heard nowadays."

\* \* \*

Describing the half-hour show from the New Orleans Municipal Auditorium, he continued:—

"It opened with a well-disguised number by a white band playing over-fast ostensible Dixieland style. The performance quickly degenerated into wildly applauded riffs led by a screaming trumpet. Next, the veteran N.O. guitarist, Mary Osbourne, of North Dakota and Fifty-second Street, entertained on the traditional electric guitar."

"Louis Armstrong, a real N.O. player and a great one, teaming with a properly instrumented but inferior band, played 'Perdido St.' in fine, simple, blues style, and his inimitable singing was followed by an episode of J. C. Higginbotham's braying trombone. Armstrong later offered his famous number, 'Confessin', playing hot and musically in a fine creative form which gives the lie to critics who have proclaimed that he is through."

Blesh then told how the Foundation had achieved a minor objective by getting the name of North Saratoga Street changed to its original title of Basin Street. Let us hope Spencer Williams has learned of this belated honour. But immediately after, this had been announced, said Blesh, the Georgia player, Higginbotham, added to the confusion with a solo.

"This was a cross between sentimental ballad and phony

grand opera, executed on a most coloratura trombone. Not even an echo could be heard of the lusty tailgate trombone which still plays in the jazzy New Orleans parade bands.

"As finale to this part of the programme, the great veteran, Bunk Johnson . . . was presented. Appearing momentarily with Louis and a bad band in Basin Street, this perennially great player was lost and inaudible in the noise of inappropriate swing. Thus ended thirty minutes which presented only a travesty of the original and still vital jazz which was to have been presented."

Of the Los Angeles show, Blesh wrote:—

"America's No. 1 Swing Band on 'Esquire's' poll, that of Duke Ellington, played a puerile moronic riff tune, composed—if that is the word—by one of 'Esquire's' jazz critics. . . . A final three-way hook-up presented a trite Ellington tune dished out in successive choruses by the Duke in a turgid turmoil, by Armstrong in a clipped, imaginative, masterful variation, and by a fumbling piece of Goodman embryonic scientific triumph, this hook-up. If not a musical one."

## A SERIOUS ART

The writer's summing-up is of an importance that excuses further quotation:—

"Even though the 'Esquire' board seem not to know it, besides swing—a music of questionable value—there is a serious art called New Orleans Jazz. This music is worthy of the talents of the great players who, disdaining swing, have devoted their lives to it. It has loomed for years as the only original contribution America has made to musical history. . . . A half-hour of this sort of music, coming appropriately from N.O., would scarcely have interfered with the tripe served up from Los Angeles and New York. But perhaps the prospect of the comparison involved dismayed the experts who have their money down on that slick-packaged, modern, commercial, saleable commodity, swing."

"It is to be hoped the Jazz Foundation will make its influence felt and 'Esquire' will see the light, so that by next year a really worthwhile concert will result."

The significance of such informed criticism gracing the pages of a paper with the "Herald-Tribune's" circulation is self-evident.

Rudy Blesh has done a lot of good work in the jazz field, and when his book is completed it will be sought by everyone whose taste lies in the direction of pure jazz as opposed to the vitiated kind so often heard via the sound track and radio networks.

## SWAP AND BUY

R. Rogers, 47, Kilmorie Rd., Forest Hill, S.E.23, is being called up and wishes to sell some discs ranging from Louis' Hot Five's to Perry's. Wants a copy of "Way Down Yonder," by Spirits of Rhythm, and others by this outfit, to store away for better days.

Drop a line to G. J. W. Burch at 2, Carlton Terr., St. Budeaux, Plymouth, Devon. If you have Spike Jones's "Der Fuehrer's Face" or T. Dorsey's "Comin' Through the Rye" for sale, State prices.

Special plea for L. Plummer, now in "K" Block, Southern Hospital, Dartford, Kent, who hasn't seen the "M.M." since November 9, and misses it badly. He will return them if you mention it in your covering letter.

Norman Rogers, 17, Bryn Leulog St., Poby Cryn, Hengoed, Glam., has for swap or sale: O. D. J. B.'s "Jazz Me"; "Tiger"; Goodman's "Night and Day"; "Shake Down the Stars"; Red Nelson's "Streamline"; "Cryin'"; Jimmy Miller's "Blue Lou"; "Anchors Aweigh." Wants: Any Miller Victor Bluebird discs, also on H.M.V. BD5546, 5585 and Regal-Zono MR3091, 3137 and 3198. State prices.

Jack Levinson, co-head bloke, of the new Swansea Rhythm Club, is in desperate need of a 1938, or (better still) 1940 "Hot Discog." He will buy, but has "Young Man With a Horn" for sale or swap, and also Bechet's "Shag," Carter's "Synthetic Love" and Teddy Hill's "China Boy." Hope he gets it, and good luck, Swansea. Write him at 12, Sketty Park Drive, Sketty, Swansea.

W. C. Day, "Cairo," Farm Rd., Rainham, Essex, will swap these: Ammons' "B.W. Stomp," Basie's "One o'Clock," Shaw's "Nightmare," Friars' Soc's "Copenhagen," L. Russell's "Ol' Man River" for these: Parlo, R2753, H.M.V. B9307, 9236, 9259, 9137 on a one-for-one basis.

# BARITONE SAX. SALE

- B 24 Hawkes, S.P., H.P. ... £17.10
- B 25 Boosey, S.P., first-class £27.10
- B 27 Selmer, gold lacq., grand job £55
- B 29 Selmer, Adolph sax., S.P., latest ... .. £45
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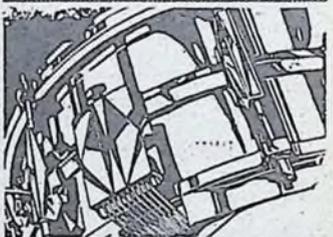
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