

Melody Maker

3d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

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LONDON M.U. TAKES ACTION IN EDINBURGH DISPUTE

"UNTIDY DISPLAYS" OUTSIDE CERTAIN EDINBURGH BALLROOMS, NOTABLY THE PALAIS, SILVER SLIPPER, NEW LOCARNO AND PLAZA, WAS THE ALLEGATION OF PROPRIETORS IN DESCRIBING PICKETS OF MUSICIANS' UNION MEMBERS ON STRIKE, WHICH RESULTED IN COMPLAINTS TO CITY POLICE LAST WEEK.

Picketing of halls by striking musicians was latest move in the nine-week-old dispute between members of the Musicians' Union in Edinburgh and the Proprietors' Association, arising out of refusal of Proprietors—except in cases of four halls—to recognise the union as a negotiating body for a charter of peace-time working conditions.

When storm blew up in April, the 12 city dance halls declined to recognise the M.U., and bandsmen downed instruments in protest. Since then, four have come into line, but non-union musicians and gramophone records still form the music in most of the remaining eight.

It was against these recalcitrants that picketing was directed last week, following visit to Edinburgh of assistant general secretary of the M.U., Hardie Ratcliffe, who had travelled from London to investigate the position at first hand.

LONDON FUND

As a result, would-be patrons of many of the halls paused in surprise when approached by young men who implored them not to dance to non-union bands and to support the striking instrumentalists.

Hardie Ratcliffe told the Melody Maker that result has been that intending dancers in a number of cases, have been prevailed upon to take their custom to union halls.

"All my members want," he said, "is what music-hall musicians achieved many years ago—recognition of their union—and you can take it from me, the boys will succeed."

The London Branch of the M.U., it is reported, have made the fine gesture of opening a fund to provide financial assistance to their Edinburgh colleagues, while many of the country's leading bands have indicated their sympathy and support.

A silver lining to the whole unfortunate affair, however, seems not unlikely to break through soon. As we go to press there are rumours of a truce, which will result in a withdrawal of the "untidy display" and the possibility of a round-table conference between M.U. officials and the proprietors within a few days.

Edinburgh's musicians and dancers certainly hope so.

Grant for Krahrmer

FAMOUS coloured sax stylist Freddy Grant has joined Carlo Krahrmer's resident outfit at the London Nuthouse Club.

Known for a long time as one of the most advanced tenor players in Town, Freddy has now reverted to alto, and is playing lead with the Krahrmer Band. He takes the place left by Manny Prince, who has now vacated his chair in the outfit.

Carlo Krahrmer recently waxed several titles for Parlophone with his Nuthouse crew, and the first two of these are being released in the July supplement. They are the famous good old pop ones, "Blue Lou" and "Zuskrat Rumble."

RED NICHOLS AND RAY NOBLE COMING HERE

NEWS OF THE GREATEST INTEREST TO SWING LOVERS AND MUSICIANS HAS JUST REACHED US FROM THE STATES. ERNEST "RED" NICHOLS, TRUMPET PLAYER AND BANDLEADER, OF "FIVE PENNIES" RECORDING FAME, IS COMING TO THIS COUNTRY.

Plans for the visit are now in hand, but at the time of writing Nichols is not sure whether he will come here as a solo act or with his new "Five Pennies."

IN ADDITION TO THIS ALREADY SENSATIONAL NEWS, THE "MELODY MAKER" LEARNS THAT RED NICHOLS WILL BE ACCOMPANIED ON THE TRIP BY THE EXTREMELY WELL-REMEMBERED BRITISH DANCE-BAND CELEBRITIES RAY NOBLE AND BILL HARTY, NEITHER OF WHOM NEEDS ANY INTRODUCTION TO OUR READERS.

Bill Harty, who for years ranked among our top-light percussionists, played drums in Ray Noble's H.M.V. recording orchestra and left with Ray for the States in 1938 to become manager of his highly successful American band. From being one of the foremost drummers, Bill rapidly took his place as one of the best managers in the business.

CERTAIN WELCOME

Ray Noble's name had come to stand for polish and efficiency, both in the orchestrating, bandleading and composing fields, when he was over here. In the States he has increased this reputation, for there the radio has given him wider scope for the exercise of his exceptional talents.

There is at present no definite information on the duration of their stay in England, but whether it is to be long or short, there can be no doubt it will be eagerly anticipated by the fans, who will be delighted to welcome the return of these two stalwarts of the profession. It would appear, at first sight, however, that their visit will be in the nature of a holiday, since they both have such heavy and lucrative commitments in the States.

Red Nichols will, of course, be remembered by all for his multifarious recording activities, which started back in the middle 'twenties and continued until the beginning of the swing era. Since then Red has been most engaged in radio work, but lately he formed a small group which has been building a big reputation on the West Coast. It is these musicians who may accompany him to England.

Red had intended paying us a visit in 1940, but the outbreak of war put a temporary stop to his plans. It is good to know that the world-famous trumpeter is still bent on carrying out his wish to play before British enthusiasts, who will undoubtedly give him a great welcome.

We understand that the visit will take place just as soon as travel restrictions can be relaxed. All our readers will join us in hoping it will be very soon.

BIG FILM-BREAK FOR CLAES

BANDLEADER - TRUMPET-PLAYER Johnny Claes is getting his first big chance in pictures on July 16, when shooting starts on the next George Formby production, to be shot by Columbia Pictures at the Ealing and Denham Studios.

Both Johnny himself and all the boys in his band will be taking definite parts in the film, in addition to their music.

Opportunity may turn out to be a big break for Johnny Claes, who, whatever his vicissitudes as a bandleader, is the sort of good-looking and highly photogenic young man who, given this big initial opportunity, may carve himself out a worthy place in film-land.

IVY'S DASH FOR AIR-SOLO

FAMOUS girl bandleader-saxist Ivy Benson gets a grand and well-deserved break on July 8, when she will have the honour of giving a solo broadcast of Eric Coates' "Saxo-Rhapsody" with the Queen's Hall Orchestra.

This means a night journey from Newcastle and another journey, the same day, back to Liverpool—but Ivy feels it will be well worth it. Ivy and her Girls are also broadcasting evening dance music programmes on July 2 and 5; also a "Break for Music" programme on July 13, and a morning dance music session on July 14.

In the meanwhile, Ivy and her Girls are getting ready for the big Continental E.N.S.A. tour which they will shortly undertake.

Pratt Joins Gibbons

EDDIE PRATT, noted saxman, who was for seven years lead alto with Joe Loss, and who has been on aircraft work in the Midland for most of the war, has now been released from the factory and is back in Town.

Next Monday (2nd), Eddie joins the reed section of Carroll Gibbons' fine accompanying Band in the Saville Theatre "Gaiety" show. He replaces saxist George Glover.

"JILL, DARLING!"

CONGRATULATIONS to young piano star Malcolm Lockyer and Mrs. Lockyer, on the recent birth of a daughter, born on June 16. Both mother and child are doing well.

If Miss Lockyer—who is to be named Jill—grows up to play piano, anything like her dad, she will be in the very top flight, for, since he blossomed out with Buddy Featherstonhaugh and his gang, Malcolm's name has become an honoured one with swing fans.

All This, and Devon, Too!

WELL-KNOWN trumpet-clarinetist Harry Owen who has been leading his own outfit at the London Cabaret Club for the past nine months, blossomed forth in a fresh role when he opened up for a season at the Pavilion Ballroom, Exmouth, Devon, on June 18.

Harry has taken a very workman-like band to Exmouth. Efficiency of the combo meets a suitable reward this Saturday (June 30), when for the first time in the history of this Exmouth resort, the Pavilion is on the air, featuring Harry Owen and his Band in "Saturday Night at the Palais."

Personnel that Harry is using at Exmouth includes Pat O'Neill (sax); Johnny Swinfin (first alto and clarinet); Benny Turner (alto and clarinet); Bill Ellis (tenor, sax, etc.); Alan Carr (bass); Bert Jackson (drums); and Harry himself leading on trumpet. Three extra players are being added for the broadcast. Popular Helen Raymond is handling the vocals for the whole season.

After the season at Exmouth, where he is making a big success and introducing several novelties, including a competition to find Devon's champion girl croonette, Harry will be returning to his London commitment at the Cabaret Club.

Don Wilson Moves

DON WILSON, until recently Expatriation Chief at the Cinephonic Music Company, is taking up similar duties at the Lawrence Wright publishing house from Monday, July 2.

Don has for some years past been recognised as one of the leading lights of the song-publishing business, and his enterprise, long experience, and "live wire" methods will be valuable assets to the Lawrence Wright concern.

AS a result of the sale of a number of pictures of the late "Fats" Waller, kindly donated by ace London agent Leslie Macdonnell, a further £175.6d. has been handed to the Merchant Navy Comforts Service.

The "M.M." still has a few of these pictures left, which will be sent to readers on request, provided they also forward a donation—send just what you can afford—which will also be forwarded to the Merchant Navy.

THE HOUSE OF HITS! CAMPBELL CONNELLY 10 DENMARK ST. LONDON W.C.2 Temple Bar 165)

PRESENTING ANOTHER No. 1 RAGE FROM U.S.A.

I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT

World-renowned leaders, DUKE ELLINGTON and HARRY JAMES were collaborators in writing this tremendous success.

Famous saxist JOHNNY HODGES also took a hand ORCHESTRATIONS READY SOON

NAME-BAND POLICY AT MORECAMBE

LAST summer the directors of the New Central Pier at Morecambe decided to try out the policy of engaging name bands for weekly appearances in the Marine Ballroom—with such conspicuous success that this season they have decided on a much more ambitious programme.

In consequence Monday, July 2, sees the opening of a season that will whet the appetites of the local fans and will send the town's thousands of holiday-makers scurrying pierwards to dance and listen to some of the country's finest exponents of modern swing.

On this day, and throughout the week, Leslie ("Jiver") Hutchinson and his All-Coloured Band, featuring the usual stars, including Bertie King, Yorke de Sousa and Dave Wilkins, will play two sessions daily, culminating in a broadcast in "Saturday Night at the Palais," on Saturday (9th).

The following week (10th), Carl BARRITEAU and his Band will be featured, followed by George ELRICK (16th) and Oscar Rabin with Harry Davis (23rd).

After a break of two weeks, comes appearances of the two finest Service bands that we have in the "Squadronairs," directed by Sgt. Jimmy Miller (August 20) and the "Skyrockets," under the baton of Sgt. Paul Fenouillet (27th).

The appearance of these two unique outfits in successive weeks, will give fans a grand opportunity of assessing their respective merits and deciding for themselves the oft-discussed question as to which is the better of these two fine bands.

All these bookings have been negotiated by H. Newton Lane.

DOUBLE "SHUFFLE" THIS YEAR!

THOSE who were unable to attend the Riverboat Shuffle on June 10, and those who went but were disappointed in the weather, will be pleased to know that a second Shuffle has been organised for Sunday, July 29, skippered by Rex Harris.

New catering arrangements have been made by organiser Geoffrey Armstrong, which will consist of a luncheon box freshly packed during the Saturday night by the staff of a first-class catering firm, whilst the amplification throughout the boat will be provided as on the last trip.

Best news of all is that George Webb and his Dixieland Band are coming again to provide the authentic atmosphere, together with the West London Rhythm Club Band. The bar, as usual, is licensed all day. Tickets at 21 inclusive should be applied for as soon as possible from Geoff Armstrong, 181, Old Oak Road, London, W.3.

GIRL trumpet notability Gracie Cole has left the Gloria Gaye Band, and is now playing with Rudy Starita and his All-Girls Band on U.S.O. A big feather in Gracie's cap is that she is due for a solo broadcast on July 13 (4 p.m. Home) in Ernest Longstaffe's "Friends to Tea" Programme. Congratulations!

NAT ALLEN ON THE STAGE

BANDLEADER Nat Allen made his Variety stage debut at the Chelsea Palace last Monday (18th). Nat had heavy competition from the weather, but his own brand of sunshine pulled in the patrons, and he played to practically full houses all the week.

Nat has made steady progress since the days when he fronted the relief band at the ill-fated Café de Paris, and to-day, under the banner of impresario Bill Elliott, he seems well on the way to success. Bookings were coming in soon after this first stage appearance, and the band is already set to make a three months' tour.

Several Sunday concerts are included in the schedule, and a high-spot of the tour will be a "Saturday Night at the Palais" broadcast on July 28 from the Brighton "Dome." Nat is looking forward to this particular airing, as, although several name bands have played at the "Dome," this will be the first occasion that one has broadcast from there.

We saw the Chelsea Palace show on Saturday last, and, although a few rough spots have yet to be ironed out, the stage presentation certainly had the G.P. beating out their approval.

Nat had succeeded in his initial task of striking the happy medium between sweet and swing; there was something to please everyone in a very mixed audience. The orchestra rode through items from "Cossack Patrol" to boogie-woogie.

Nat seems to have plenty of good material to mould; some of the boys are very versatile, including the leader himself. For example, Roy Davy, the first trumpet, switched over to vibraphone and played sweet and hot choruses on "Indiana Love Call."

Nat fronts the band, indulges in some gagging with vocalist Charlie Davis, takes over the solo spot on piano, and turns guitarist, screener, for attractive croonette Judy Allen (the name is a coincidence; she's neither Nat's mother, sister, daughter, nor wife!). Nat also plays bass.

The present personnel consists of: Eddie Rock, Kingy Stockwell, Freddie Taylor (saxes); Sammy Weston, Roy Davy (tpis.); Jimmy Robertson (tmb.); Bob Bailey (pno.); Noel Webb (dms.); Jack Leigh (bass); Charlie Davis (guitar and vocals); and Judy Allen (vocalist).

U.S. HIT PARADE

Here is the latest available list of the nine most popular songs 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. LAURA (5-7-2-4-8-6).
 2. DREAM (1-8-3-7-7).
 3. SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY (4-3-0).
 4. ALL OF MY LIFE (6-4-5-4-0-7).
 5. JUST A PRAYER AWAY (7-5-8-8-5-5).
 6. CANDY (2-2-1-1-1-4-3-4-7).
 7. I SHOULD CARE (8-9-7).
 8. MY DREAMS ARE GETTING BETTER (4-4-3-3-4-1-3-1-4-3-5-0-0-5).
 9. A FRIEND OF YOURS.
- Figures in parentheses indicate previous placings. 0—Not in the first nine.

SCOTTISH NOTES

by Hugh Hinshelwood

MRS. ELRICK's wee boy George is currently at Green's Playhouse, where he has had so many previous successful visits. With him are vocalists Joy Conway and Connie O'Neill, the latter needing no introductions to local fans, Connie being one of Glasgow's own.

George is well served by his arrangers, who certainly keep him supplied with danceable numbers which feature all the boys to advantage. Only man with local associations would appear to be bassist Ken Austin, who had a long spell at the Astoria.

Congratulations are due to sax man Leslie Ferguson, whose wife presented him the other day with a fine baby boy. Leslie will be remembered as the lad who helped to keep up the morale at one of the "Stalags" for so many weary months by his band and concert organising.

Sax man Jack Britton is fronting the band at the Albert just now, while bandleader Jack Chapman recovers from his recent operation. It is not expected that Jack (the boss) will be back on the stand until after the hall has its short vacation in July.

Plenty of entertainment is available for stay-at-homes during the Glasgow Fair week, a series of concerts in St. Andrew's Halls including: Monday, July 16, Variety with Louis Freeman and his Band and Pat McCormac, loaned by Joe Loss for the night; Tuesday, the B.B.C. Scottish Variety Orchestra; and Friday, Donald Miller's Scottish Light Orchestra. Louis Freeman mentioned that he may feature Gershwin's "Rhapsody" in his concert, with himself on solo piano.

Andy Holmes, sax and vocalist with Lauri Blandford at Dennistoun Palais, has left to join Jimmy Gilchrist at the Cameo, his place with Lauri being taken by Johnny McGinnis.

BARROWLAND NEWS

The news item in last week's "M.M." re the Barrowland booking of Buddy Featherstonhaugh and Leslie Hutchinson, a reminder that the Hutchinsons are determined to keep in the forefront in this city. Since the hall was opened there has been a record of continued successful effort by Sam Melver to give his patrons the best in dance music.

The late Teddy Joyce, Henry Hall, the Squadronals, and many other outfits have visited Barrowland, while nothing is allowed to stand in the way of the resident band as regards such things as mike equipment, uniforms, "props" for the Sunday café show, and there is, for instance, an excellent filing system for old and new music, so that any request can be supplied on demand.

The band under the direction of drummer Billy McGregor, has full brass, sax and rhythm sections, and the boys work hard in their job. Holidays-with-pay are the rule here, the big-name booking mentioned at the beginning of these notes being the method chosen this year to give the boys a fortnight's holiday instead of the previous single-day system.

The band includes a fine arranger, trombonist Bill Cooper, who had a sojourn with Lew Stone, and Bill is given carte blanche in this respect, many of his arrangements being much demanded by both dance and café patrons.

The people responsible for all the features of this model ballroom are Mrs. Margaret Melver and her son Sammy, those well-known Glasgow folks who found the name for their hall through their long connection with the open-air "barrows" market on the site of which the hall was built.

They are certainly to be congratulated on their enterprise.

68.—Edinburgh. Outing to "Uncorn," Dalkeith, Friday, July 13. Meal 2s. 6d. Meet bus at St. Andrew Square, 6 o'clock. Club closed after June 25. New session starts Sept. 3, 1945.—Medway (Gillingham). Club's own Jam group featured last Sunday. Lineup: R. Verrill (drs.); A. Greenlade (pno.); "Weed" Macdonald (bass); L. Huxley (gtr); C. Ellis (tp.); and A. Boorman (alto and clar.).

Leicester R.C.—Meeting to-day (Thursday), 7.30 p.m., 78 High St. "American Recordings," by Vic Morter, and "Louis Armstrong," by Frank Reid. Also J.S. and Record Auction.

Plymouth.—Thanks to Arthur Godner for his "Members' Jazz Choice" reel. Thanks also local musicians who have made J.S.s a success, especially Lew Hooper (tenor), R. Catton (pno.) and "Bud" Pomroy (drs.).

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing July 2)

- Carl BARRITEAU and Band. Hammersmith Palais.
- Ivy BENSON and her Girls Band. Empire, Newcastle.
- Billy COTTON and Band. Garrick, Southampton.
- Johnny DENIS and Swingtet. One-Night Stands.
- George ELRICK and Band. Green's Playhouse, Glasgow.
- Gloria GAYE and Band. Winter Gardens, Weston-super-Mare.
- Adelaide HALL. Empire, Nottingham.
- Henry HALL and Band. His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen.
- Leslie ("Jiver") HUTCHINSON and his All-Coloured Band. Winter Gardens, Morecambe.
- Jack JACKSON and Band. Hippodrome, Boscombe.
- Joe LOSS and Band. One-Night Stands, Cardiff.
- Felix MENDELSSOHN and Hawaiian Serenaders. Metropolitan, Edgware Road.
- Ronnie MUNRO and Orchestra. Empire, Wood Green.
- Harry PARRY and Orchestra. Empire, Hackney.
- Oscar RABIN and Band. One-Night Stands, Midlands.
- Monte REY. Empire, Sunderland.
- Harry ROY and Band. Hippodrome, Birmingham.
- Anne SHELTON. Empire, Chatham.
- Lew STONE and Band. Plaza Ballroom, Derby.
- Billy TERNEIT and Orchestra. Embassy, Peterborough.
- TROSE and his Mandolinists. Empire, Swansea.
- Maurice WINNICK and Orchestra. Hippodrome, Lewisham.
- Eric WINSTONE and Orchestra. Palace, Newcastle.

CONTEST FIXTURES

SCOTLAND

KIRKCALDY (Fife).—Thursday next, July 5, at the Ice Rink (8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 "All-Scotland" Championship.

This, being the only championship to be held in Scotland this season, will rank as an Area Final and the winning band will be eligible to go direct to the 1945 "All-Britain" Final.

Organiser: The Manager, The Ice Rink, Rosslyn Street, Kirkcaldy, Fife, Scotland (Phone: Dysart 5251).

LONDON AREA

Wednesday, July 11.—Palais de Danse, PENGE (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 "Palace" Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Frank J. Fivcash, 88 Allerton Road, Catford, London, S.E.6. (Phones: HITHER Green 2534; RAVENSBORNE 6084.)

Monday, July 23.—Town Hall, STOKE NEWINGTON (7 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 North-East London Championship.

Organisers: Messrs. Lyn Morgan and Charles Cooper (in association with Syd Beames), 78 West Way, Rickmansworth, Herts. (Phone: Rickmansworth 2767.)

Saturday, August 11.—Kodak Hall, WEALDSTONE (Midx) (2.30 to 6 p.m.). The 1945 London Counties Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Syd Thompson, Kodak Recreation Society, Kodak Hall, Headstone Drive, Wealdstone, Midx.

PROVINCES

BRADFORD.—To-morrow, Friday, June 29, Co-operative Hall, Southgate (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 West Yorks Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs.

LIVERPOOL.—Friday next week, July 6, at the Grafton Rooms (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 South-West Lancs Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs.

BUXTON.—Thursday, July 12, at the Pavilion Gardens (7.30 p.m. to 1 a.m.). The 1945 Peak District Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Eric George, The Music Studio, 4, Hardwick Street, Springfield Gardens, Buxton, Derby. (Phone: Buxton 1451.)

BOURNEMOUTH.—Friday, July 13, at the Town Hall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 West Hampshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Phillip Moss-Vernon, 17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: Temple Bar 0140.)

(Please turn to page 5)

F. & D.'s TERRIFIC HITS!

THERE GOES THAT SONG AGAIN

AND WE'LL BE WALKING TOGETHER

I'M CONFESSIN'

AND DREAMER, DREAMER! (Waltz)

RUM AND LI-MO-NA-DA

AND THERE'S A TREE ON A FARM

Double-Sided Orchestrations as above 3/2 Each
FRANCIS, DAY & HUNTER LIMITED

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Reviewing a King Oliver re-issue,
our Critic, EDGAR JACKSON, is

CREOLE TO BE KIND!

KING OLIVER'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND
*Mabel's Dream (Ike Smith)
(Originally issued on Am.
Paramount 202021.)
*Riverside Blues (Composer un-
known; possibly traditional)
(Originally issued on Am.
Paramount 202022.)
(Brunswick 03575-5s. 4rd.)
Joe "King" Oliver (cornet), with
possibly Johnny Dodds (clar.); Louis
Armstrong (cornet); Honore Dutrey
(tmb.); Lil Armstrong (pno.); Buddy
St. Cyr (banjo); Will Johnson (bass);
Baby Dodds (dms.).

The label gives 1922 as year of re-
cording, but it is believed that
actually both sides were recorded in
March, 1923.

Note.—DeLaunay's "Discography"
states "unknown clarinet," but it is
quite likely that Johnny Dodds was
the clarinetist.

KING OLIVER'S Creole Jazz Band is
the now almost legendary combo
formed by Joe "King" Oliver in 1920
for the famous Dreamland Ballroom
in Chicago two years after he had
come to the Windy City from New
Orleans, where he had already been
acclaimed as the king of all jazz
cornettists.

When three weeks ago I reviewed
Jelly Roll Morton's 1926 piano solos
of "King Porter Stomp" and "The
Pearls," issued last month on Brun-
swick 03564. I said it was impossible
to judge records of old-time jazz by
modern standards because their appeal
lies mainly in their historical in-
terest. In the insight they give
into jazz as it was in those days, and
how the jazz celebrities of the period
played it.

IMAGINATION NEEDED

I have no intention of denying that
now, any more than I have of denying
that if they are to mean anything,
most early jazz recordings have to be
listened to with imagination—that is
to say, one should try to hear the
music not as it is reproduced, but as
it was actually played, remembering
its background and its significance as
an example of what was then a new
departure.

But the imagination of even those
who are most familiar with the subject
has its limits, and in any record issued
to-day, for which one has to pay the
not exactly negligible sum of more
than five shillings, one has the right
to expect at least a fair reproduction
of the original performance.

In these two sides one gets nothing
like it.

They are pre-electric recordings, and

anything of which the old-fashioned
acoustic system didn't rob the original
performances has been taken from
them in the dubbing from two ap-
parently far-from-good-conditioned
copies. This was necessary because
no one over here knew how to set
about obtaining the original masters
even if they are still in existence,
which is doubtful.

The results is that the reproduction
has a nasty "boxy" tone, and there
is an overall dull roar, presumably
due to the bad surface of the pressings
used for the dubbings. There is none
of the tonal brilliance or bite which
whatever else one may have to say
about them, was a feature of the early
jazz players, and everything sounds
distant and indistinct.

But I am wondering what one could
have found to say in favour of the
performances, apart from their value
as collectors' museum pieces, even if
the recording had been perfect.

It is true that Oliver and Arm-
strong show traces of the creativeness
and style for which Oliver already
was, and Louis subsequently became,
famous.

But to appreciate their inventiveness
and style one needs to hear it
exhibited through the mediums of
their virility and subtlety of interpreta-
tion, and that, as I say, is conspicu-
ously absent in these records by its com-
plete absence.

As for the rest of the players, and
consequently the effect of the band
as a whole... well, all I can say is
that they are childishly crude.

Honore Dutrey (sometimes spelt
Dutray), who somehow obtained the



Lou Preazer, accompanied by the femme vocal section of his Band, and with some of his boys in the background, looks bucked with life while waiting to embark this week on his Continental E.N.S.A. tour. With Lou—reading from l. to r., are Rita Carr, Pat Lindsay, Margaret Russell, and the femme half of the Variety act of Dean and O'Brien. Margaret Russell, who joined Lou's Band for the trip, has been detained by passport difficulties, and is following on later.

reputation of having been one of the
jazz trombonists of his day, not only
plays the most amateurish leads-in
and breaks and the tritest of obligato,
but with a tone that wouldn't
be a credit to an asthmatic fog-horn.
Most interesting performer is
Johnny Dodds, who on this occasion
plays mostly in the high register—at
least he would be the most interesting
if one could hear much of what he

plays, but as one can't, he adds little
to performances which do no more
than show how utterly corny and
(surprisingly) spiritless even what was
presumably the best jazz of its time
could be.

If this is the best the British Hot
Record Society, who (vide labels)
selected these sides, can do, the sooner
recording companies stop foisting
their choices on us the better.

JERRY DAWSON'S NORTHERN NEWS NOTES

All through the war in North Africa
and in Europe, as British troops have
entered the various countries, amongst
them has been someone who has taken
the trouble to write us with whatever
news has been going of "le Jazz hot."
It was, therefore, no surprise when,
the other day, along came a letter
from trombone man Stan Worthington,
now with the B.L.A. in the Chan-
nel Islands.

Stan is with the R.A.S.C. in Jersey,
and although he did not take his slip-
horn with him, he has managed to
pick up a trumpet, with which in-
strument he has found himself in
great demand. Detailed to play as
guest artist at the Forum Cinema, St.
Helier, he featured three "pops" to
the accompaniment of a charming
eight-piece femme string orchestra—
which went down terrifically with the
locals.

Stan tells me that the Press stories
of the reception accorded the liberat-
ing troops by the Channel Islanders

are no propaganda. Whatever he has
shown his face he has been absolutely
lionised.

Wherever he has managed to have a
blow, whether at the Chelsea Hotel,
the Plaza or at Maxims, he has literally
brought down the house—for no
reason at all (so Stan says), except
that the people are "all for" the
British soldiers.

The dance band business has been
kept alive in the Islands by local en-
thusiasts, all through the occupation.

It is some time now since the R.A.F.
Squadronals appeared at a dance in
Manchester, and during this time
their popularity has, if anything,
increased tremendously.

Great interest will therefore be
focused on the Squads' one-night
stand at the Higher Broughton
Assembly Rooms on Saturday, July 7.
This is certain to be a sell-out, and
fans would be well advised to secure
tickets in advance, which can be
obtained from the ballroom.

This date is one of a series of "one-
nighters" sponsored by H. Newton
Lane, and includes appearances at
Rochdale, Liverpool, Ashton-under-
Lyne, New Brighton, Halifax, and
Worksop. The Squads are doing
them while on leave by permission of
Wing-Com. R. P. O'Donnell, Organis-
ing Director of Music, R.A.F.

CHAPPELL'S

present

DON'T FENCE ME IN

WE'LL GATHER LILACS

SATURDAY NIGHT

ROBIN HOOD

50, NEW BOND ST., LONDON, W.1

I BELIEVE that I mentioned in this
column some weeks ago, that
Flying-Officer Hal Jones—organ-
iser of the Plaza Ballroom, Man-
chester, had taken over management
of the R.A.F. Middle East Command
Dance Orchestra, directed by Sgt.
Ronnie Austin.

I think I have also mentioned be-
fore that it is the firm intention of
the members of this unit to "stick
together" as a band after the war is
finally cleared up.

Now from Hall comes an interesting
printed brochure headed "Band in
Blue"—title of the radio programme
which has so often featured Ronnie
and the boys over Cairo Forces Pro-
gramme—pointing out to all con-
cerned (bookings agents in particular,
I presume) the intention of the band,
presenting its post-war plans, and
enumerating reasons why the band
should be a good commercial propo-
sition for dance hall and/or theatre
managements in post-war Britain.

The interesting angle about the
whole thing is the stress that is laid—
rightly, I think—on the fact that so
many of the thousands of Servicemen
who saw and heard the band in the
Middle East (the band has played in
17 different countries) will want to
do just the same in the comfort of
their home-town or ballroom—and
they'll want to take along their
friends and relations.

A grand scheme and one that de-
serves to attain fruition

Towards the end of last month, the
"Blackpool Gazette and Herald" (I
am indebted to Ernest Hannan, of the
Blackpool Palace Theatre Orchestra,
for the cutting) carried a two-column
story and picture telling of the re-
patriation of Company Sergeant-
Major Michael John Lucas, of the
Pioneer Corps, after spending five
years in a Nazi prison camp.

The gentleman concerned (if Ser-
geant-Majors can thus be described!)
is none other than trumpet man Mick
Lucas, who was for many years with
Bonnie at Belle Vue, Manchester,
afterwards transferring to Blackpool,
where he worked in the Tower Ball-
room with Bartini and later under
"Bert's" successor, Norman Newman.
Mick was an early volunteer for
military service and was taken
prisoner at Boulogne after the fall of
France in 1940. During his imprison-
ment he kept himself fit by putting in
lots of hard work including the forma-
tion of a Hawaiian Guitar band in
Ober Silesia and the organising of a
working party of 500 men to work
down the mines in Poland.

Mick will, no doubt, be glad to hear
again from any of his old pals at his
Blackpool home in Faringdon Avenue.

WRIGHT HITS OVERNIGHT SENSATION ★ ★ ★ THE LAST WALTZ OF THE EVENING

SWEEPING AHEAD

NEW DEN BERRY ORCHESTRATION OF SWEET LORRAINE

ONE OF THE GREATEST SONGS EVER
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LAWRENCE WRIGHT
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WRIGHT HOUSE, DENMARK ST.,
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BRAND'S ESSENCE

DANCE BAND GOSSIP

OUR boys in the Forces are certainly doing a grand job of work—speaking in a musical sense for the moment—in Germany and the occupied countries. My desk is piled high with letters which relate the experiences of many well-known musicians who are, or have recently been, carrying the torch of dance music in the Continental cities, and every time I go "down the Town" I seem to be meeting chaps with really exciting tales to tell of life "over there."

Among the latter must be numbered pre-war niterie pianist Willie Solomon, who has just returned after seven months or so in Germany with a "Stars in Battledress" unit, under the leadership of sax and vocal star Eddie Lester—the same unit, more or less, of which the late Michael Flome was a member before his tragic death in an accident last year.

Also in the unit were well-known ex-Blue Rockets bassist-dancer Leo Street; drummer Dennis Neale; saxists Billy Buchanan and Jack Sheehan; accordionist Jack Dinello; Billy Hunter (trumpet), etc.

Willie Solomon tells me that these boys represented the first British dance band to play inside Germany; and he described some extremely exciting and endurable experiences which they all endured before the sounding of the "Cease Fire."

Since I saw Willie I have also met up with Eddie Lester, and he tells me he is now head of a "Stars in Battledress" show for further touring. After five or six years in the Army, Eddie is looking forward to demobilisation in the States, in order to concentrate entirely on his singing when he gets back to "civvy street."

I don't know what happens to these blokes on these Continental trips, but the travelling is certainly an inspiring effect. Willie Solomon, for instance—whom I heard playing at the Feldman Club—was punching it out far better than I have ever heard him doing before, and as Willie is being "demobbed" soon, he should be an ideal proposition for the piano stool in some lively niterie.

To an "exile" returning to London after a country holiday, the music at the Feldman Club last Sunday week was a treat, with Carlo Kraemer and his men in super form, featuring, besides Willie Solomon, that ace of swing trumpet players, Kenny Baker, with Alfie Kahn (playing terrific tenor these days), Jimmy Skidmore and Russ Allen; while among those who sat in were Vic Lewis, Jack Parnell, Ivor Daniels and the prodigious Victor Feldman.

And now, back, with a bang, to the subject first under discussion, with the spotlight on Kenny Baker, who was telling me down at the Club of the interesting experience of seeing after a country holiday, the music at the large R.A.F. Band unit in which he plays—to Norway.

In Oslo, Kenny found the liberated public fairly clamouring for swing after dull and swingless occupation under the Germans, and after their official band duties were done he, with several of his cronies in the band, used to get together to entertain the local townpeople, playing in cafes, in parks, on railway stations, even in the street—giving their services wholeheartedly, and getting such a reception that it was always a pleasure and a real thrill to play.

Among those with Kenny were Harold Beasley, the "old-timer" of piano, who was at Glencairies with Henry Hall in the "Stars in Battledress"; and that modernistic drummer Al Craig.

Now to some of the letters from overseas. The most exciting one by far is from that well-remembered trumpet ace who used to be with Edmundo Ros, young "Buzz" Trueman. You have already read in these columns, some time ago, how "Buzz" was fronting the Royal Marines Dance Band, the "Marineers," and building up a wonderful reputation both for himself and for the band.

Since the end of April "Buzz" and his lads have been over in the Continent—and the adventures they have had would, without exaggeration, provide the material for quite a thrilling book. As this isn't a book but only a badly over-crowded column, I shall

have to be content to give you just a few excerpts from the long letter "Buzz" has written.

The first experiences of the "Marineers" was when they travelled altogether 1,500 miles in a bus—playing to Royal Marine and Commando units in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. It was all a great adventure, and in Holland the boys played on an island just about three miles from another island occupied by the enemy with the landing of occasional shells punctuating the progress of their concert.

On Tuesday, May 1, the "Marineers" crossed the Rhine. Shortly afterwards came the experience which none of these boys will ever forget. This was when they gave a concert to some 1,300 Russians—men who had just been freed from slave work in Germany, a camp having been improvised for them prior to their return to Russia being arranged.

These men had no entertainment for four years, and, in spite of the fact that it was fairly pelted with rain, "Buzz" Trueman and his lads immediately volunteered to give an open-air concert for them.

The boys played for two solid hours—and in the amazing reception they received they forgot everything but the undeniable joy which these Russians took in their show.

The main enthusiasm of the Russian guests was, however, for swing. When R. Jones, the guitarist, indulged in some tap dancing, they simply wouldn't let him go; while Joe Royal, the vocalist, also had a tremendous reception.

After the concert a Russian leader addressed the audience, and amid scenes of great enthusiasm—although the rain was still pouring down—Trueman was presented with a Russian flag (one of the proudest moments of his life, he says). He and his men were then carried shoulder high to the Leader's tent to celebrate with a drink of vodka (or something).

It took nearly two hours more to say "Good-bye" to the friendly Russians, and "Buzz" was afterwards told that a letter would be sent to Marshal Stalin in praise of all that the band had done. Even the presale high-ups of his own unit sent trumpeter Trueman a letter thanking him for doing an excellent job of liaison with our Allies.

Back to Nijmegen that night, they found all the people in the streets singing and dancing. Getting their instruments out again, they marched round the town playing music (and these days), Jimmy Skidmore and Russ Allen; while among those who sat in were Vic Lewis, Jack Parnell, Ivor Daniels and the prodigious Victor Feldman.

Next on the list, a show was proclaimed for Allied Forces—but as over 8,000 turned up they had to give three shows in all. With half a hundred military police turned out to control the crowds. It was such hard work for the boys that "Chuck" Morgan, the drummer, collapsed over his kit after performing his "Concerto for Drums" for the fifth time that day.

"VE-Day was spent in Brussels. The "Marineers" gave a show for P.O.W.s who were waiting to fly home to Blythly—and half an hour of this show was broadcast by the B.B.C. in a programme called "Half-way Home." The following days were filled in by concerts in many towns, and then, on May 12, the boys played for five hours' dancing in the Leopold Park, Ostend—amid "Buzz" found him, presented with a colossal bouquet of flowers by the Burgomaster there.

Latest news is that the band's members now fully fledged Commandos are in Germany—perhaps by now, may have realised their ambition of being the first British band to play in Berlin. There is also a rumour that they may be broadcasting regularly—so perhaps we'll be hearing them before long—the sooner the better for us.

IMAGINE the feelings of a starved swing fan who, situated in the middle of nowhere, suddenly hears the music of one of England's finest small swing bands. The astonishment and sensation is described by Cpl. Mike



G.O.M. of Tin Pan Alley, Lawrence Wright—head of the famous music-publishing firm that bears his name, and composer, as Horatio Nicholls, of a string of smash-hits as long as your arm—made a welcome reappearance in Denmark Street this week. Lawrie was taken ill two-and-a-half years ago, and went through a very bad time, but has now recovered, and has taken the helm of his many activities again. This "Melody Maker" picture shows him back at the old desk where he has planned, over the years, some of the greatest stunts in music-publishing history, not least of them the foundation of the "M.M." in 1926. A great welcome was given to Lawrie by his host of friends in the business, and here he is seen, after the party, picking up his threads again with his General Manager, Bill Ward, and Secretary, Miss Hilda Macklin.

Hall, India Command, who writes to us as follows:

"I cannot find words to express my first feelings. To say that I was staggered, dumbfounded, and amazed would be gross understatement; but I can tentatively say that no one has ever had such a pleasant or memorable shock for there, on the small stage of the 'To C' Hall, was the R.A.F. contingent with Arthur Mounsey (tpt.), Bill Dickman (alto sax), Bobby McGee (pno.), Tiny Winters (bass), and Sid Heiger (dms.)."

Cpl. Hall who is stationed on a landing transit camp in a lonely part of India (the nearest civilisation being at Bombay, 25 miles away), included that excerpt in a letter to us describing some of the good work done by Arthur Mounsey and his grand little bunch of musical almsmen out in India.

On Tuesday evening, June 5, after a strenuous game of cricket, Mike decided to retire to the local 'To C' R.A.F. contingent at the local 'To C' Astoria, Charing Cross Road, on several occasions, and found the band in nice shape with Duncan himself playing as well as ever. The band sounds enthusiastic and promotes a good lift.

In one number, which they featured each time I was there, Duncan excelled on two blues solos. It was called "Aprillan Blues" written and specially set up for the band by a young musician named Malcolm Rayment, and was made up of two very attractive themes, one of which opened and closed after the style of a number of Ellington pieces.

An outstanding arrangement—I imagine we shall hear more of it, and of the writer, who is both an expert and a collector. Perhaps listeners will catch this tune on one of Duncan's future broadcasts?

The full line-up of the band is: Duncan on trumpet, with George Birchall, Allan Doniger (alto sax); Don Randall, Denis Hughes (tenors); George McCallum (piano-arranger); Jack Morris (bass); Stan Watson (guitar); and Cecil Winstone (drums).

SINGING-GUITARIST and lately also bandleader Burton Seeley has given up the latter side of his activities—apart from Sunday concerts—for the summer season, and opens up as a solo act next Monday (July 2) at the London Chiswick Empire.

Accompanying Burton will be "hat noted stage and radio pianist Jules Ruben. In addition to his new Variety Palais in Zurich, Switzerland's biggest night club, but, unfortunately, these he is featuring a fourteen-piece dance band. The first is next Sunday (July 1) at the Union Theatre, Luton.

on Radio Athens, the band is now on us as follows:

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NEUTRAL JAZZ

Here's the first news-bulletin from Switzerland that we've been able to publish for six years

FROM Basel comes the first news of the Swiss swing-music world we have received since the war. A long and interesting letter from two jazz enthusiasts, Armin Schmaninger and Andy Gurwiltch, gives us a swing panorama which helps to complete the rapidly growing picture of Continental musical activities during the long period of "separation."

The writers give it as their opinion that swing music has known a pronounced boom since 1939 closed. As for "the real jazz," that, too, has gathered fresh support. Two jazz magazines, entitled "Jazz" and "Jazz News," were launched despite wartime difficulties, but eventually folded—perhaps because of the nation's virtual isolation from the source of jazz. Now that the war in Europe is ended, fresh attempts will be made to publish a monthly magazine.

For the general survey of events over the last few years we can do no better than quote from the letter:

"After the events of summer 1940, we were at first completely deprived of all goods originating in England and the U.S.A. Gramophone records became very rare, since they used to be imported directly from England, but after a time the companies began to press their records here from masters they obtained very new and then. Now discs are being regularly issued, but only a few of them date later than the middle of '39."

"Artie Shaw is still the biggest favourite, closely followed by Glenn Miller and Lionel Hampton. Lunceford, with 'Blues in the Night,' his top-selling record, and Basie are highly regarded by the jazz fans, but outfits like those of Charlie Barnet and Tony Pastor are nearly unknown here.

PANASSIE'S VISIT

"Making the best of a poor situation, the companies issue and re-issue old recordings by Armstrong, Luis Russell, Ellington, Boplicity, and Ted Nicholas—and a lot more famous wax. Danish swing records, too, gave the fans a kick, for they had hardly imagined the standard of jazz playing there to be as high as it was realised by recording of Svand Asmusen's and Leo Mathison's Bands.

"In 1941 we had a visit by Hughes Panassie, who lectured upon such subjects as 'La véritable musique de Jazz' in most of the important cities. During his stay he made the first record of his life on which he plays—showing himself to be a clarinetist and an out-and-out Mezz Mezzrow style. It was Mezz, of course, who taught him the instrument and also was the first one to tell him all about jazz, when playing in 1929 at the Ermitage Moscovite in Paris.

"Anyhow, for these records Hughes was accompanied by the Swing Club's band. Titles were 'Angis Blues' and 'Beefeld/Stamp,' composed by Panassie.

"From them one must admit that Hughes has come to feel blues almost like the coloured jazzmen, but besides that his playing is several times really hot. Still, his record is not quite the same in America, we think.

"Last year, Hughes had two books published in Switzerland: 'Les Rols du Jazz' (in two parts) and 'L'histoire des visques swing.' Both are typical of Panassie's ideas and are very interesting reading.

"1941 also saw the arrival of Willie Lewis and his Negro orchestra, who had been in Holland by the war. Among the excellent musicians with the band were Louis Bacon (trumpet), Tommy Benford (drums) and Juno Cole (bass). There had twelve records while in the country, of which the best was 'Bacon's Blues.'

"As 1942 as France was not completely occupied, French orchestras came here pretty often; they included Ray Ventura, Fred Adison, and Bouillon. Just about now the last-named should have been reappearing with Josephine Baker at the Corso Palais in Zurich, Switzerland's biggest night club, but, unfortunately, these he is featuring a fourteen-piece dance band. The first is next Sunday (July 1) at the Union Theatre, Luton.



A recent action photo of U.S.A.F. "Fighter Comets," who, at the "Swing Celebrity" Concert at London's Winter Garden Theatre this Sunday (1st) and in company with the already famous American "828 Convalescent Centre Band," will cross swords with such great stars of the English swing world as Victor Feldman, Lauderie Caton and Buddy Featherstonhaugh.

U.S. Jive Jottings

ONE result of the war's ending in Europe has been the revoking of the midnight curfew in the States. This ban was having a poor effect on some of the nation's niteries, but to-day they are jumping as they used to do. It is reported that in New York the termination of the curfew produced immediate consequences, the big hotels once more offering late night dancing and 52nd Street reverting to its well-known nocturnal customs.

Lionel Hampton's ork, at the Zanzibar, previously restricted to floor shows and an occasional number, broke loose with long sessions, and Benny Goodman, whose bunch is at the exclusive 100 Club, now plays two hours or more of big and small group music.

Tenorman and bandleader Charlie Barnet, who has always been known as a man to try anything, last year shook the world of music with his mixed brass team, including three coloured trumpeters. Now Charlie strikes out in a new direction by incorporating a girl musician in his band for the first time. Her name, Frances Shirley, and she formerly played with Ada Leonard.

Speaking of mixed outfits reminds me that blues-singer Huddle Ledbetter was recently prevented from recording with three white musicians—namely, Ellis Horne, Squire Girsbach, and Paul Lingle—all ex-Lu Walters men. Reason is because San Francisco has only one union branch, Local 6, which is 100 per cent. white, and as a result of this Negro musicians are not allowed to play on the same sessions as white.

In this case, both the secretary and vice-president of Local 6 did their best to overcome the stalemate by telephoning A.F.M. boss Casar Petrillo, asking him to O.K. the Lead Belly date. But the reply was a determined negative.

Hal McIntyre again has a new male vocalist on the bandstand—his third change in as many months. The singer is Frankie Lester, who formerly charmed the fans gathered around Tommy Dorsey's aggregation.

It's no secret that MacIntyre has made most of his replacements in order to meet the requirements of the medical board for the band's forthcoming overseas jaunt. Frankie is the latest addition, replacing Johnnie Allen, who failed to pass the U.S.O. physical. All the present members now have official okay's and signed contracts, and they are fulfilling one-nighters throughout New England until their embarkation.

Following the news of Sinatra's lecturing stunt comes the report that the Voice is to star in a short film for R.K.O., the theme of which is racial and religious tolerance. Picture is to be called "The House I Live In"—also the name of a ballad which Josh White, among others, has put on wax. Directed by Mervyn Le Roy and produced by Frank Ross, the film will devote all proceeds to a charity leading in juvenile activity.

Jo Stafford, of Pied Pipers fame and winner of more than one contest, is the first girl singer in four years to break the cycle of male vocalists attaining vast popularity. She is at present appearing on the stage of the New York Paramount Theatre, where she is drawing capacity houses. Besides her prolific recording activities, Jo has been appearing regularly as featured singer with the Ford show on Station WEAF, and indications are that she will be given the permanent singing spot on the programme.

Entertainers were never averse to a little self-advertisement, and from the days of Pin Top Smith and Papa Charlie Jackson, it has been the thing to boost yourself on a vocal record when the chance occurs. Louis Armstrong, too, has worked in some good publicity matter on many a disc.

But to-day the King Sisters surpass all previous efforts in this direction by getting home a cleverly concealed business plug.

In their new record, "Yah-ta-ta, Yah-ta-ta," there is a repeated novelty spot in which the speed of recording is moved down from 78 r.p.m. to 33 revs. Played at the normal 78, the passage gives the effect of meaningless gibberish. But if it is played at 33 you can hear the girls singing: "Do you know that the King Sisters have a fine dress shop in San Francisco Valley where all the latest models may be obtained?" etc. etc. Isn't that?

CONTEST FIXTURES

(Continued from page 2)

BRISTOL—Monday, July 16, at the Victoria Rooms (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 Gloucestershire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. GREWE.—Tuesday, July 17, at the Town Hall (8 p.m. to 1 a.m.). The 1945 Shropshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Edgar Harrison, 23, Queen Street, Crewe, Cheshire. (Phone: Crewe 2358.) SHEFFIELD.—Wednesday, July 18, at the City Hall. The 1945 South Yorks Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. LOUGHBOROUGH.—Wednesday, July 25, at the Town Hall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 East Midlands Championship. Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leics. (Phone: Hinckley 563.)

NORWICH.—Friday, July 27, at the Lido Ballroom. Revised times: 8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Norfolk Championship. Organiser: Mr. Len Marshall, "Arcadia," Hallam Grove, Lincoln. (Phone: Lincoln 8362.)

CAMBRIDGE.—Wednesday, August 1, at the Guildhall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Cambridgeshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Harry R. G. Bradford, 12, Stourbridge Grove, Cambridge.

SOUTHAMPTON.—Friday, August 3, at the Guildhall (8.00 p.m.). The 1945 Hampshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Philip Moss-Vernon, 17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: Temple Bar 9140.)

NEW BRIGHTON.—Friday, August 10, at the Tower Ballroom (7 to 11.45 p.m.). The 1945 Warrick Championship. Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. WESTON-SUPER-MARE.—Tuesday, August 14, at the Pavilion (8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Somersetshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Philip Moss-Vernon, 17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: Temple Bar 9140.)

LINGOLN.—Friday, August 17, at the Drill Hall (8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Lincolnshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Len Marshall, "Arcadia," Hallam Grove, Lincoln. (Phone: Lincoln 8362.)

SWING BAND CHAMPIONSHIP (Open to all bands which have not won a "M.M." Swing Band Contest this year). Saturday, July 21.—Porchester Hall, Bayswater, London, W.2. (2.30 to 5 p.m.). The 1945 Metropolitan Swing Band Championship. Organiser: Mr. Syd Thompson, 18, Ranmore Gardens, Marlborough Hill, Harrow, Middlesex.

Rules and Entry Forms for all the above now available from their respective organisers.

FRED MIRFIELD and his popular band can be heard this Saturday (June 30) when they play at a special dance at Seymour Hall, Seymour Place, Marylebone, London, the whole being organised and emceed by popular Billy Raymond. Hep-cats are invited to get there early, as the dance is sure to be a sell-out.

COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

MAX'S MONTHLY RECOMMENDATION

"Maple Leaf Rag" "Sweetie Dear" by Sidney Bechet and his New Orleans Feetwarmers. H.M.V. B9403. Released April, 1945.

WITH the issue of these two titles, H.M.V. makes available all but one of the sides from the classic Feetwarmers' session. The remaining title—"I Pound a New Baby"—should have been on the back of "Shag" (B1944); instead, it was released separately on B4991, and was long ago deleted from the lists.

We could now do with its reinstatement very well. From what I recall of the record, it comes near to matching "Maple Leaf" for brilliance.

Despite a preponderance of soprano saxophone-playing on most of the sides, this session rates a high place in jazz history. There were never better examples of Bechet's prodigious ability as a performer on that instrument which he attempts to use as a clarinet in solos, although its thick tone prevents it fulfilling a correct clarinet role in New Orleans ensemble.

Since he takes the lead almost throughout, playing lengthy solo passages, and other times simply usurping the trumpeter's conventional role in group improvisation, it is as lead instrumentalist that we must judge Bechet here.

The records are primarily vehicles for displaying Sidney's astonishing mastery of his instrument and gift for thematic variation (but nearly every side boasts a good jazz ensemble, too). Bechet is not the man to "shoot off" a hot chorus based soundly on the chords, but bearing little or no relation to the tune; rather does he extemporise an alternative melody intimately connected with the original, but made more austere in one place and embellished in another.

And in doing this he displays an unfailing imagination coupled with sureness of tone and timing which may perhaps be likened to Armstrong's!

Enough has been written, much of it nonsense about Sidney's tone and vibrato. There is no question of sloppiness or musical immaturity there. He is manifestly an accomplished musician who directs his technical resources towards certain specific ends.

In a desire to express himself fully he employs those characteristic growls, or often the device which results in half-choked notes comparable to those produced by Rex Stuart with valves semi-depressed, or perhaps (on clarinet particularly) he favours the broadest tone and Dodds-like vibrato.

In every case he achieves the desired result—and his execution sounds easy and confident. Those who cannot respond favourably to Bechet's mannerisms are obviously committing no sin, although they may be deprived of a great deal of the enjoyment which falls to Sidney's numerous admirers.

But when they deery his efforts on grounds of "poor tone" and the like, they are guilty of prejudice and critical inconsistency unless indeed

they have rejected all true jazz for that reason.

Bechet, and Dodds, and Louis, and Ory, and others fashioned tones which were as satisfactory in the jazz sense as they were unique in the histories of their different instruments.

This session, I have already suggested, was Sidney's day out. But there are other good things on the records. The band worked as a band, despite its departure from traditional jazz "voicing" and balance; it had good instrumentation, and it used some pretty nice tunes.

At least two of the players were outstanding jazzmen, while Teddy Nixon and Hank Duncan emerge from the session with modest honours.

The record in question has special appeal for me because "Maple Leaf" is one of my favourite pieces and, I think, one of the best tunes in jazz. To this business of tunes I am constantly referring, for it seems to me that given competent musicians familiar with the style, a suitable instrumentation (for jazz purposes), and good tunes, you're almost certain to get fine jazz.

You have all those things on "Maple Leaf," plus Bechet's virtuosity—and the result here is jazz of extraordinary fierceness and buoyancy.

"Pops" blows lustily through most of the record, leading or soloing in all but two choruses. All this is done on soprano, and, as he is bent on keeping the lead, Tommy Ladnier retires discreetly to a subordinate position. This probably saves the performance from chaos.

As it is, we have been blessed with a record of rare power and variety. Despite Bechet's constant predominance, there is nothing "samey" about each successive chorus, for the band tears happily through the four themes of the Joplin rag with "Pops" finding new and apt phrases for all of them.

Its routine is like this: Intro. on drums, two choruses on theme No. 1; two choruses (still ensemble) on theme 2, followed by two more—solo piano. This is the strain most often chosen for piano spots, it seems.

I remember it going to the pianist on Lu Watters' disc and on that of the N.O.R.K.; Hines plays it, too, but then he plays other choruses also, and in such a way that it is hard to sort things out.

After four of No. 2, the band returns to the first strain for just one chorus, and thence on to theme 3 in a new key (A flat). This is the one marked "Trio" on the piano part. They play it through twice and return to the tonic key for the fourth and concluding theme.

This is material for a real stomp ending, and the whole band plays out the side in fine spirit, winding up (the traditional ragtime way) abruptly, with the drummer taking the last note on a cymbal. Bechet's invention never flags for a moment. The whole thing sounds well rehearsed, and the musicians undoubtedly enjoy themselves.

As on some of the other sides, Wilson Myers shouts encouragement to Hank

Duncan during piano solos which—unfortunately—are under-recorded. Duncan appears to be a talented player; he makes a good job of his solo, despite the tear-away tempo at which the piece is taken and the unsatisfactory drumming of Morris Moreland, whose accent falls between rather than on the beat.

In places, though, Moreland is better. During the first theme, the phrase beginning at the ninth measure, he gives a strong, equal emphasis to the five crotchets which is most effective. On the whole, the record has a pronounced drive.

It is certainly the outstanding version of "Maple Leaf" available, even although the tempo chosen is wrong for the number, and its release is a jazz event.

About the backing I can't be unreservedly enthusiastic. But I will say it is immeasurably better than the average jam-session record, which in some ways resembles. To begin with, there is "Pops" back on clarinet, Tommy leading the ensemble (what there is of it), and Tommy playing wonderful solo trumpet.

On the debit side are the final too-numerous riff choruses, paucity of ensemble passages and lack of variety about the thing as a whole—compared with "Maple Leaf Rag." And the trombonist contributes less than a fair share to the opening improvisations.

But with that said, the rest is pure enjoyment. "Sweetie Dear"—

another 16-bar piece—turns out to be a bright, marching kind of tune, not unlike Morley's "That'll Never Do," that is well suited to New Orleans treatment. And what we get in the first two choruses is good enough to make anyone wish the band had devoted more time to polyphony and less to riffs.

Ladnier creates a bouncing lead which well recalls the tone of his orchestra's "Weary Blues." Bechet plays clarinet in a band, and I guess the trombone plays too, but not as well as we'd have liked.

Then the solo stuff starts, and it is pretty good. Ladnier bursts out in the manner of his Henderson records. Duncan's "Hein snafus" supported by cries of "Do it!" and "Pops" takes a magnificent chorus which is followed by Ladnier much in the style of his previous effort, but still exciting.

After that, it's all rlfing in a quiet, pleasing vein, with plenty of breaks in which Hank Duncan can show off his left hand. There's nothing wrong with it really—a riff chorus on a melody can be very effective, as witness "Georgie Swing"—but you are inclined to feel that swing is here when you get to this part of the disc.

If only the first choruses had also been in such choruses—how happy this record would have been!

As a postscript I quote Ernest Borneman's comment, from his series of "Record Changer" articles which are presently to be published here in booklet form:

In 1932, nearly half a century after none there comes one of the most memorable sessions of all New Orleans jazz—Bechet's N.O. Feetwarmers with Ladnier and Nixon—proof of the logic of three-part counterpoint, with Bechet and Ladnier sweeping Nixon's undistinguished trombone into a perfectly integrated trio.

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14805616 Pte. Pike, P. K.O.Y.L.L. O Coy., 66 Platoon, 6th I.T.C., Berwick-on-Tweed, Northumberland has had his "H.D." and other books stolen. He appeals to readers with spare copy of "H.D." "Down Beat", etc. to get in touch with him, stating terms.

And now a Forces appeal: Gdsm. E. Coleman writes that he and friends have formed a small but good discussion group in B.L.A. which has come to the end of its stock of books, mags., etc.

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