

# THE TRIALS OF A RECORD-CRITIC

## EDGAR JACKSON'S Record Reviews

**CHARLIE BARNET AND HIS ORCHESTRA** (Am.)

\*\*\*\*Redskin Rhumba (Dale Bennett) (Am. Bluebird OAO56486)

\*\*\*\*Charleston Alley (L. Kirkland) (Am. Bluebird OAO58772) (H.M.V. B3422-5s. 4id.)

58486.—Barnet (reads) with Kurt Bloom, Coma Humphreys, Leo White, James Lomare (reads); Bernia Privin, Bill May, Sam Skolnick, Lyman Vunk (tpts.); "Spud" Murphy, Don Rumpersburg, Bill Robertson, Ford Leary (tubs.); Bill Miller (piano); "Bos" Etri (gtr.); Bill Stephens (bass); Cliff Leeman (dms.). Recorded October 14, 1940.

58772.—As above, except Bob Burnet and George Esposito (tpts.) replace respectively Bill May and Sam Skolnick.

If reviewing records hasn't gone very far towards making me a millionaire, it has certainly provided me with plenty of entertainment.

And the entertainment hasn't come only from what I have found to say about the records. It has come at least equally from what people have said about me for saying it.

I only have to give a bad review to any old-time jazz record to become the butt for a whole host of invective.

### ROCKING THE DREAM BOAT

We had a pretty example of it the week before last in "Collectors' Corner" from those two irrepressible campaigners Rex Harris and Max Jones.

The fact that most of what they had to say should have been ruled out as what the lawyers describe as irrelevant didn't appear to worry either of them. So long as they could write something long and (to their way of thinking) profound enough to discredit anyone who dared to rock their dream boat, that was all that mattered.

Equally, if ever I should have the temerity to give a bad review to any modern swing record, it's ten pounds to a busted balloon that I shall receive at least fifty letters asking me when I propose to modernise my ideas, except that usually it's not put so politely as that.

And if ever it should so happen that I try to hold a balance between the good and not so good in either type of music, up jump both sides to

say that I don't know my own mind and that in trying to sit on two stools all I manage to do is show what a lovely flop one can go between them.

Not, I must confess, that any of it ever worries me very much. I've a nice broad back and I can take it. Life would be pretty dull if one scribbled one's dry week after week for no more than cigarette money, and criticism helps to keep one's wits sharpened as well as adding to one's amusement.

Which brings me to the point that the anything but complimentary remarks I have felt compelled to make about so many swing records I am called upon to deal with in this column have certainly not been the

result of any dislike of swing, per se. Rather have they been the result of the tasteless and exhibitionistic performances that have so often been perpetrated in the name of swing.

Up to a point this has been, I hope, constructive criticism. But I am the first to admit that while these bad examples of swing have provided good vehicles for suggesting what swings should not be, they have seldom enabled me to shoot for the even more important goal of trying to describe what it should be.

The reason is, of course, that while a bad instance of anything makes a good specimen for explaining what is wrong with it, it provides no illustration at which to point when endeavouring to describe how it could have been improved; consequently, short of writing a book on the subject, one can do little more than leave one's readers to discover this for themselves by often insufficiently directed inference.

In these two Charlie Barnet sides, however, I have found what, to my mind, is not only swing at its near enough best, but performances which prove that swing can have everything jazz ever had and then some.

Don't let the title "Redskin Rhumba" fool you.

This is no more a rhumba (and note rhumba is the correct way to spell the word) than I'm Vic Oliver trying to teach Yehudi Menuhin how to play the violin. It's just another example of the jive, at fastish tempo.

The tune...? Well, there isn't one—at any rate, not so you'd notice it.

There are not more than about four or five different chords in the whole piece, and each one keeps going for about eight bars or more at a stretch. Moreover, even these few changes are less noticeable than you'd expect, because they are so closely related and on notes which seem to be common to most of them the brass incessantly moan every other bar the same two-note background figure. The fact that the flares always commence on the fourth beat of the bar and thus give a curious counter-rhythm effect makes it all none the less intriguing.

Over this background, provided by these brass flares and the rhythm section, Charlie Barnet on his tenor and alto, and one of the trumpets improvise choruses consisting of short, ruff-like phrases.

### JIVE—NOT RHUMBA

I'd like to have said much more about these solos—the curious sort of hiccoughs which suddenly burst forth, of Barnet's grand style, of the sense of suppressed excitement one gets from the closely plunger-muted trumpet—but I fear it might give a false impression of their relative values in the general scheme of things.

For this is a record which relies for its effect not more on the frontline soloists, fine as they are, than it does on the irresistible bounce of one of the most closely integrated and driving rhythm sections I have heard for some time.

This is anything but a loud, flashy record. You'll never hear any of those shrieking brasses, with their over-light vibratos and exaggerated downward flares on the ends of notes, which so many of the presumed best American swing bands have cultivated in the mistaken belief that they spell excitement. But oh, boy, does it jump!

Equally entralling in its way is the slightly slower "Charleston Alley."

This one has something worth calling a good melody, as you'll hear from the swell trumpet solo, worthy of the one and only "Muggsy," which opens the side.

Later there is a tenor solo by Charles Barnet which for ease and style is just about as good as they come, and then, after an invigorating burst by the ensemble led by the brass, the saxes play a rhythmic chorus that is as nice an example of team work and swing phrasing as any record has produced lately.

Following this the ensemble comes in again and the side then finishes with the trumpet (note his lead-in) repeating the theme in much the same way as he opened the record before ending it with two alluring squeezed out little Charleston notes.

For easy drive, nice taste and, in fact, everything that goes to make up a palatable swing performance this is about as good a disc as anyone could want, and I advise you to get it without delay.

## JERRY DAWSON'S NORTHERN NEWS

A COUPLE of weeks ago I mentioned in this column that saxist Benny Turner, who was with Billy Bevan at Great Yarmouth for the summer season, had become engaged to a local girl, Miss Sago, during his stay there.

I now find that the reported engagement never took place, and that the whole business is something of a hoax.

I also find that some embarrassment has been caused to both parties concerned, and I hope that they will both accept my apologies for the error.

And I thought I was doing them a favour.

Had a grand day last Sunday week at the All-Britain Finals at Belle Vue, Manchester. For once in my sweet life I had little or nothing to do officially, and I was able to sit back and listen to the bands—in fact, I heard all of them with the exception of the Scottish outfit, which I just couldn't help missing.

I was able to spend quite a lot of time in between the bands' efforts, looking around the sea of faces—7,000 of 'em, in fact—that filled the King's Hall on this magnificent day for the semi-pros.

Spotted Middleton leader Glen Gray with a couple of his boys, saxist Ben Rogers, and trumpet man Frank Burgess; whilst sitting immediately behind me and thoroughly enjoying his first contest was Fred Harries, noted arranger and pianist with Charlie Windsor at the Palace Theatre, Manchester.

Just a couple of rows in front was Oldham's Tommy Smith, sitting near to Roy Tomkins, leader at the Levenshulme Palais, with his gov'nor, Oliver Ashworth.

Had a word with saxist Larry Fray, who has recently left Jim Nowell's band at Bolton Palais, and was pleasantly surprised to spot Vernon Moyers, whose swing group took second place in the All-Britain three years ago.

Vernon is currently playing at the Astoria Ballroom, Rawtenstall, with ex-McGarry trumpet Harry Haworth, but hopes to re-form his Swingtette when the lads get back home.

Another ex-McGarry-ite was around in bassist George Horrocks, whilst I was so glad to see a further couple of Manchester boys—guitarist Bert Hearn, home with a medical discharge after three years in the Middle East, and saxist Bill Garner, still on aircraft work and unable to obtain his release yet.

would have happened had the band not been called upon to play first. Rightly or wrongly, these contesting bands do hate that first spot.

The organisation, both from Lew Buckley's and from Belle Vue's angle, was well-nigh perfect, and a grand job was done on the advance publicity by Belle Vue's publicity director, D. Buckland Smith, whose first All-Britain this was.

Before leaving the contest may I add my words of praise to all the musicians taking part for the way in which they handled their sight tests? Often enough in the past it has been laid at the door of contesting semi-pros, that they were "all right on the numbers they had rehearsed."

Maybe this was the case in the dim and distant past, but I doubt if honest-to-goodness professional musicians could have done any better in the test of musicianship that these boys endured successfully on this occasion.

An interesting sidelight on the contest is contained in a letter I have received from noted Preston femme-pianist Mollie Knowles, who complains bitterly of the "Swing Concerts' No. 1 Bugbear"—namely, the brigade of hand-clappers, feet-stampers and whistlers who will practise their arts during items instead of after a band has finished a number. "From my own point of view," writes Mollie, "the greater part of the 'Squads' performance was spoiled by the noise from behind."

Perhaps we can put it down to youthful exuberance or to the terrific excitement that the "Squads" excellent performance created, but I do agree with her that to the keen student all this "hero-worship" is a little corny.

### JUST ISSUED. LAFLEUR'S

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# BRAND'S ESSENCE OF NEWS

**S**ENSATIONAL developments are taking place in the British music-publishing world these days—developments that suggest that better times are in store for the home-grown songwriter who has had to play the part of the entertainment industry's "poor relation" for far too long (writes Ray Scott).

In the latest available list of best-sellers in sheet music, which covers the music sold throughout the British Isles last week, no fewer than six of the twelve current hits are British.

Heading the list is the new Irwin Dash waltz, "I'm In Love With Two Sweethearts," which has rocketed up the ladder in a couple of weeks and is all set to be a sensational seller; and second to it is Peter Maurice's "The Gipsy," by accordion bandleader Billy Reid.

Billy is also the tunesmith responsible for "Coming Home," which is still up among the best-sellers, and "Chewing A Piece Of Straw," "Let Him Go, Let Him Tarry" and "We'll Gather Lilacs" are all British tunes high in the music-buying public's affection.

This is a gratifying state of affairs that proves that the local songwriters can turn out the goods if they are given the necessary backing, and further proof of this statement is forthcoming from America.

Across the Atlantic, two British songs are already hits, and a third one is coming up by leaps and bounds.

Irwin Dash's "Just A Little Fond Of You"—which, of course, was a big hit here even though several famous bandleaders refused to play it because they said it was too "corny"—is hitting the highlights in a big way in the States, and is being recorded and broadcast by the big-timers.

Lawrence Wright's "I'm Gonna Love That Guy"—written by Mr. and Mrs. Ted Heath—is already well up the U.S. "Hit Parade," and is more than holding its own with the biggest American songs. Maurice's "Coming Home" has just started over there, and is all set to complete a most successful trio.

Now, who says that British songwriters can't write hit-songs?

**A** NEW line in engagements is being specialised in nowadays by famous and long-established bandleader-tenor saxist Tommy Kinsman. Tommy is taking his band to balls and other functions all over the country that are being run by various colleges and seats of learning.

To-night (Thursday, October 25) Tommy tackles his biggest venture in this line, when the College of Chemistry—one of the three constituent bodies of the Imperial College of Science and Technology—celebrates its centenary with a tremendous "do" at the Albert Hall.

Besides nearly a thousand students, there will be many important people in industry who were once at the college. There will be speeches by H.M. the King, Lord Rayleigh, Dr. R. V. Southwell, the Rector, and Lord Palmouth; and after this quite dazzling spate of words Tommy and his Band will play for dancing until 4 a.m.

Speaking of Tommy reminds us that some of you who are new to the business may not remember the meteoric trail of success which he blazed across the face of London's dance music years ago when he played at the Cafe de Paris, the Ritz Hotel, the Trilcity Restaurant, the Princess Restaurant, Madame Tussaud's Ballroom, the Regal (Marble Arch) Ballroom, the Amateur Dancers Club, and last but very certainly not least, his well-remembered big season as M.D. at the London Ciro's Club.

In addition to all this, Tommy was often heard from Radio Luxembourg in those happy old days when that merciful broadcasting brought that spark of brightness to our listening that is so often absent now. This, of course, was not his first introduction to broadcasting; he had "aired" as early as 1924, and had innumerable broadcasts over the years.

Came the war, and Tommy found himself in A.R.P.—he once drove a furniture van "ambulance," and at the depot his mate was, believe it or

not, famous bassist Tommy Bromley. What a pair of "chinas" they must have made!

From the end of 1940 Tommy took his own band on E.N.S.A., serving in this capacity right until the end of hostilities. Now back in Town, Tommy has had several good offers, but is pretty busy with his private work, and prefers to remain "independent."

In the Merchant Navy in the last war, A.R.P. and E.N.S.A. in this one, and with this most interesting career of bandleading behind him, Tommy, at 44, can look back on a career chequered as a film story. Originally a banjoist, he came into London night-life in 1921, had his first bandleading job in '24—at the State Cafe, Liverpool—and now looks for new fields to conquer in the realms of post-war entertainment.

**S**Eeking a breath of bracing air up at Skegness, recently (writes Chris Hayes) I picked out a cafe for a cup of tea and was delighted to find Kitty Musters having a meal in there.

It was a real pleasure to meet her again by such a coincidence, for I've known Kitty ever since she won her fame with Henry Hall. We spoke about our last meeting, which brought me bitter memories of my Army career.

While stationed at Devonport I had looked in to see Kitty at the Plymouth Palace. I have never ceased to feel grateful for the warm welcome accorded me by Kitty and her ever-affable manager-husband, Ray Baker.

On that occasion I was the recipient of their sympathy, owing to the illness of my wife, but at Skegness I had to try to console Kitty, who looked very sad because her husband is at present seriously ill in a London hospital.

Ray was sturdy and fit and had toured with Kitty, attending to all her business affairs for years. Early in January they took their own show overseas for E.N.S.A. and Ray not only handled the management but also compered and acted as partner to Miss Smith the trombonist comedian.

The show was a smash hit in the B.L.A., and they stayed abroad nearly twice as long as originally contracted. It was grand fun, and would have lasted even longer—extending to India—but for Ray catching a severe chill and becoming so ill that he had to be flown back to England and put under the care of a prominent chest specialist, who at first feared he would not recover.

Expert treatment and Ray's own terrible will-power saved his life, but for six months he has remained very ill. He has had one operation and faces another as soon as he is a little stronger.

Naturally, the strain on Kitty has been intense, and she has had to cancel half her engagements to enable her to be in London and visit Ray. To carry on singing under such pressure needs some doing, and her courage is most commendable.

She had contemplated ending her career now Ray is likely to be an invalid for at least two years, but he urged her to carry on.

Personally, I've always found a delight in listening to Kitty, who has a casual and attractive way of singing and is also able to turn to a spot of acting when occasion calls for it. I'd like to see her in a West End musical, and it seems to me she would be a good capture.

I'm sure all her admirers will be won when she says that I hope Ray will soon be on the mend.

**L**AST time we wrote a few lines about Charles Chilton, ex-Radio Rhythm director, now overseas with the R.A.F., he was playing guitar with a swing group somewhere in India.

Now Charles has reached Ceylon and settled down to writing and producing radio programmes once more. He is, in fact, chief producer and script-writer for Radio SEAC, Colombo, Ceylon, where he is kept busy turning out ten shows a week. These include programmes of various kinds—feature shows, drama, record programmes, and one series on a favourite Chilton

topic named "Story of London Town."

Charles has naturally taken over the helm of the station's Radio Rhythm Club, where he is assisted by record-recitalists Miko Williams and Roy Simon, both well known to English jazz collectors.

Of especial interest is the news that Charles has formed a swing group there, fitted out a studio, and hopes soon to start broadcasting live jazz shows as well. What will attract the jazz lovers' attention is the news that Charles has made contact with ex-Duke Ellington reedman Rudy Jackson, whom he hopes to feature in the outfit on sax and clarinet.

Rudy is playing fine tenor to-day, it seems, and is keen about the project, although he has, obviously, to consider earning his living on the side. Apart from this great King Oliver-Ellington stalwart, Charles has assembled a trumpet-player, drummer and bassist, and a sensational pianist, named Dill Jones, who hails from South Wales, and has sat in, with a great many musicians, some of the George Webb Dixielanders in London earlier this year. Charles will probably round off the outfit on guitar.

If all goes well the band should really spark Colombo's Rhythm Club airings.

**N**EAT, natty, wonderfully patterned and exquisitely creased are the innumerable "demobilisation" suits which make their way—with their owners inside them—of course—to the "M.M." offices, now that a great many musicians, some of them travelling in the other side of the world, are popping in to say "Hello!"

One of the most exotically striped of these creations that we have so far seen graced the agile form of London promoter Charles Cooper when he looked in the other day to announce, with a whoop of joy, that he had that day been discharged after his long service of several years in the R.A.F.

Charles was accompanied on this occasion by interesting musical figure from the R.A.F. Eddie Chick, the pianist-accordionist arranger who, before the war, ran his own band in Town—a band in which both Fred Mirfield and Carlo Krahmer had at different times played drums, and which also at times featured trumpeter Art Freeman, bassist Stan Herbert, etc.

In the A.R.P. Rescue Service early in the war, Eddie Chick later joined the R.A.F. and went overseas to Egypt with a contingent of Air Force bands, but men who included the famous Imeson Brothers, pianist and leader Frank Cordell, tenor man Jack Howard, and many more.

After another period in Cairo, Eddie Chick came home on compassionate leave, and the first person he met—you'll never believe it—was his old crony of the desert days, promoter Charles Cooper. In his expletic new suit. It just remains now to congratulate Eddie on his recent marriage to Queenie Ireland, at which the best man was—no, you'll only say this is stretching coincidence too far, so the time will tell—Eddie Chick's name.

And that brings us just about to where we came in. . . .

**C**PL. Frank Ireland brings a breath of news into these faded offices of Sergeant Roubie Austin's terrific R.A.F. Command Dance Orchestra, which has been creating a dust cloud of enthusiasm throughout 17 countries in the Middle East area.

Formerly a semi-pro, Frank, upon joining the R.A.F., formed numerous small swing units to entertain the Boys in Blue with whom he was stationed at various camps.

While in Cairo he was summoned to the Command Welfare H.Q., where he was told that there was an alto and clarinet chair vacant in the Command Dance Orchestra. Upon hearing Frank, Ronnie Austin immediately signed him up as a perma-



THE LATE NAT JAFFE

nent member of the unit, with which he has been playing for the past two years.

During this time he has toured 14 countries, made over a hundred broadcasts on Service programmes, and appeared as guest artist with famous vocalist Judy Shirley while she was in Cairo with her own featured spot.

In addition to Frank, Ronnie Austin's band comprises such sterling musicians as Reg Brett (formerly with Percival Mackey), Charles Palmer, Frank Holmes (reeds); Basil Jones (late of Maurice Winnick, Harry Roy and Art Gregory); Syd Lawrence (also at one time with Art Gregory); Syd Patterson (tpts.); Bert Quarmby (tmb.); Eddie Taylor (who appeared with Lou Preager at Green's Playhouse in Glasgow); piano and arranger; Billy Loch (dms.); Dennis Bowden (who has worked with Teddy Foster and the late Teddy Joyce) (bass); and, of course, Ronnie himself, who fronts the orch. on alto and clarinet.

A special vocal quintet is formed by Eddie Taylor, Frank Holmes, Basil Jones, Leda and Doris—two civilian girls who had their own spot on the Cairo radio.

Leda, "the most beautiful girl in the Middle East," also does a specially Egyptian dancing act with partner Doris.

The band is truly modern in style, featuring mostly American arrangements, and has rehearsed itself into such an efficient unit that while broadcasting in a half-hour tribute to the late Glenn Miller, it received favourable comparison with Miller's orchestra.

Proof of the boys' versatility is contained in the fact that on several occasions the orch. was augmented with first-class straight Service musicians, when it played classical compositions by Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Chopin, Mendelssohn and Grieg, under the baton of Sydney Jerome.

The musicians in the Command Dance Orch. hope to be demobbed together, when they intend to reform in this country and carry forward the standard of musicianship that they have so eminently raised in the Middle East.

Truly, it can be said that their music is "fit for kings" for they have played before King Farouk of Egypt, King Peter of Yugoslavia, and King George of Greece.

Cpl. Ireland sealed his achievements with the Command Band by marrying, while in Cairo, I.A.C.W. Joan Wyatt. He is now in charge of the Aircraft Apprentices' Dance Band at the R.A.F. camp at Halton, Bucks.

**The Next "Swing Shop"**

**S**TARS for the next Jack Hyllon-Sold Gross "Swing Shop" Concert, being held on Sunday, November one week late, so as not to clash with the Music Corporation's London Coliseum "Music Fare" Concert, will include famous piano ace Stanley Black, emerging from the B.B.O. for one of his all-too-rare public appearances; Jack Parnell (dms); Coleridge Goode (bass); Diok Katz (tenor); Kenny Baker (tpt.); Nat Temple (clarinet); and Bud (trombone); Derek Neville (baritone), etc. Tickets, 4s. up to 11s. 6d., from the Box Office, Adelphi Theatre, Strand, London, W.C.2.

# TRIBUTE TO A MISUNDERSTOOD MUSICIAN

by PETER TANNER

**O**N August 5 of this year jazz lost one more of its exponents, with the death of Nat Jaffe, who had been ill for some months.

Nat never appeared in the limelight; he was just one of a number of good pianists who played New York's 52nd Street night spots. Maybe he was better than most; maybe he could have done a whole lot of good things and even had his name up in lights. It doesn't matter much now.

The important thing was that Nat had very definite ideas about his work and he was faithful to his own integrity to the last, even though it cost him more lost jobs than he would have cared to mention. Somehow he never seemed to find the right set-up; one day he'd be full of enthusiasm for his job and the next he would walk out in disgust, dissatisfied with the band or with his own work in it.

**WALKER OUT!**

I first met Nat Jaffe in 1938, when he was about to walk out of Joe Marsala's band at the Hickory House. At this time Marsala was catering to the more commercial-minded of the Hickory House's clientele and the good jazz was few and far between, and the bad-long and often. Sometimes, though, things would liven up, and the band would play with a relaxed lift and swing to it, and Nat would extemporise in a lazy but essentially rhythmic manner; a delicate style which was good to listen to and good jazz.

Once or twice Nat and I went up to Harlem after the Hickory House had closed, and Nat would relax in some smoke-filled night spot avidly listening to a bunch of unknown musicians who played the blues till the sun came up.

I never once saw Nat join in on one of these sessions, though he would sit and listen to the music. Sometimes fierce arguments would be started, and I can recall on one occasion Nat insisting to Teddy Bunn that Louis Armstrong was the greatest trumpeter that jazz had so far produced.

Teddy Bunn, somewhat surprisingly, was championing Roy Eldridge, who happened to be sitting in on that particular night, and playing much better and more subdued trumpet than one would suppose possible judging from most of his recorded work.

When it comes to writing some account of Nat Jaffe's career as a musician there is very little to tell. There could follow here a list of the bands from which he walked out at

one time or another and which would include those of Charlie Barnet, Jack Teagarden and Jan Savitt.

One could recall Nat's own confession that he was the most unpopular guy in the Charlie Barnet Band, and Jack Bakes (drms.), is now back with the rest of the boys in this country. At present on furlough, they are due to return to the Continent in ten days' time, when they will be appearing at Graz, in Austria.

The accompanying photo was taken at a Sedan Leave Camp, where the boys arrived after a long journey across Greece, Italy, Austria and Germany, where they have played for the benefit of the Occupational Forces.

But things never were different. Kelly's, The Onyx, The Plantation and many others all employed him at one time or another; but not for long. Maybe it was his temperament that was the chief trouble. He was a guy like that; you had to excuse him his temperament because it was part of his musical make-up and without it he wouldn't have played as well as he did. The trouble was that bandleaders and night club managers would not accept him on this basis, and it's difficult to blame them.

Nat's early life was hard and he travelled around over most of Europe at a time when he might have been going to school. His love of music at an early age was probably inherited from his father, who was a cornet player with the band of the Imperial Russian Army, and Nat had piano instruction in Berlin from Zoon Peltz, assistant, Alexander Liebermann.

Nat came to New York in 1922 and began his jazz career, as a result of listening to bands on the air and on Irving Mills. From then on he played a succession of club dates which took him through to 1945 with occasional big band excursions.

Nat's work can be heard on very few records in the States, and even fewer over here. Just before his death, though, he did record some piano solos for Black and White and Signature records.

Early this year Nat talked about returning to classical music and he had been studying harmony and practising during most of his spare time. Somehow Nat never found a way to get into it. He was too good a musician to be wasted in the background of a big band, and yet not adaptable enough to find his right medium and use it to his best advantage. All the same, Nat Jaffe's early death is yet another loss to the more discerning of jazz lovers and to the musical world.

**VINCENT NORMAN DIES**

**HATCHETT'S**

(Continued from Page 1)

**T**HE "M.M." announces with the deepest regret the passing of Vincent Norman, in pre-war years one of the best-known and respected of provincial bandleaders, who died last week-end at his home in Beeston, Notts.

Springing into prominence some 14 years ago whilst resident at the Old Birmingham Palais de Danse, Vincent's band worked in several spots in London and the South before finally settling at the Greyfriars Hall, Nottingham.

From here the Norman band was frequently heard in broadcasts on the Midlands Regional wavelenght.

On the expiration of his contract he decided to leave the business and to settle down locally, taking over as licensee at the Green Dragon Hotel, Mansfield.

Coming back to the entertainment business during the war, he secured the management of the Majestic Cinema, Beeston, and at the time of his death was acting on the entertainment staff at the important N.A.A.F.I. Club in Nottingham.

Vincent Norman, who was 43, left a widow and three children, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy in their sad bereavement.

position of the band, is scheduled for a few weeks ahead.

In the meanwhile, George Shearing and his Quartet, who have built up an extremely enviable reputation during their sojourn at Hatchett's, will shortly be leaving and a new "relief" quartette will take their place.

This will be led by violinist Laurence Rossi, and will include in its personnel noted drummer-vocalist Dave Fullerton.

Bobby McGhee, just demobilised piano star of Arthur Mounsey's famous R.A.F. five, has taken over the piano chair in Hatchett's main band. He takes the place of Billy Munn, now leading his own bunch over at the Orchid Room.

12—Greenford. Next mtg (26th) is club's fourth anniversary—an All-Jam Nite. Drummer Bob Saunders recently called up; tenor man Johnny Birch was at last mtg on leave. Meets 7.30, Co-op. Hall, Greenford.

South Dublin. 54th meeting, Tuesday (30th), Study Session 12. "Fats Waller" and his Rhythm "Surprise Packet." Great Unrecorded—Cliff Jackson.



# ARTHUR YOUNG NOVACHORDING IN NEW SHOW

**F**AMOUS pianist-novachordist-arranger-composer Arthur Young, very busy with the radio since he was discharged from his Army "Stars in Battledress" work, blossoms forth in a fresh role this current week at Sheffield, in the new show, "What's In A Name."

Besides having carried out the arranging for the production, the famous Old Hyllonian, is being specially featured on novachord in the show, and his sterling ability to "swing it" on this difficult instrument, on which he was a pioneer, should bring fans knocking to the show.

In addition to Arthur Young, the show has also found a good niche for talented young pianist Colin Beaton. With Harry Parry a short while ago Colin now finds himself playing next to Arthur Young, in a position where his stylish propensities can be given full scope.

Next week the show is at Blackpool, after which it will appear at Stockport and New Brighton respectively before coming to London.

**Rowe Reopens Record Shop**

**J**OHNNY ROWE, well-known record collector and dealer, has new premises in South Kensington and is opening The Tempo Record Shop this Saturday morning (27th) at 10 a.m.

As announced in this paper a few months back, John had to transfer his business from Dover Street when the offices were requisitioned.

His partner in the Tempo Record enterprise is Buddy Cawte, popular tenor saxman with Freddy Mirfield's Band.

The shop will be handling new catalogue stuff as well as a good selection of second-hand and rare records, and items of interest to collectors such as jazz books and magazines. The Tempo Record Shop will open between 10-5 every day except Sunday, and half-day on Thursday.

The address is 42, Thurloe Street, S. Kensington, S.W.7, and the premises below S. Ken. Station, which is served by Met., District and Piccadilly lines.

# U.S. Jive Jottings

**W**HEN the Glenn Miller ork reached U.S. shores it was rumoured that the musicians aimed to keep together as a unit in civvy life, but that one or two key men might leave the fold. One of the latter was said to be piano wizard Mel Powell, who had his own ideas for the future.

Now it is learned that Mel's intention is to retire altogether from the jazz scene to study formal composition! Friends wonder whether the poll-winner can stay away from the swing field in which he has won such acclaim: if he does so, he will have retired at the record age of 22.

Mel himself states that he is going to New Haven, where he will study under one of the world's foremost composers, Hindemith, just as soon as he (Powell) receives his Army discharge. This year the concert is back at New York's Town Hall, taking place the first Saturday of each month at 5.30 p.m.

Now that he is out of the Army, it is expected Bud Freeman will be back on the platform for a lot of the sessions.

Hal McIntyre, still overseas on a USO tour, is hitting the top with his audiences—and there have been plenty of them, according to manager George Moffett, who claims this record for the band in the European theatre: Days in Germany... 63; Number of performances... 105; Number of troops played to... 300,000! The band often worked three shows daily, jumping some 50 miles between dates.

Perhaps Mac's flashiest highspot was his date at the Olympia Theatre in Paris, from where his music was carried to thousands of listeners by the A.F.M.

Before embarking for Europe, McIntyre made several discs for his fans to remember until his return, also three pictures for Columbia, namely, "A Band Is Born," "Song of Texas," and "Eddie Was a Lady."

Tenor star and bandleader Tony Pastor may be deserting jazz, if the titles of his latest waxings are anything to go by. For Victor he has recently made a couple of novelty tunes which sound far from righteous: "Jose Gonzales" and "Please No Squeeze Da Banana." Do people really buy this alleged comedy stuff?

When Crosby's four kiddies appeared on a recent Sinatra Old Gold show it was explained that Bing Bigred Sinatra was entitled to have them, as he'd taken Bing's bread and butter. However, after a close scrutiny of "The Voice" one of Bing's chillun remarked: "Aw, Pop must be all wrong—this guy looks like he never had any bread and butter!"

Record collectors who remember Don Albert's "Deep Blue Melody" and other Vocalion discs will be interested to learn that the maestro is still going strong in Texas.

Don is a Creole from New Orleans whose name is known throughout the Southwest, and he is said to have the finest swing outfit in the Alamo. To-day he owns "Don's Key Hole"—which is reported to be the brightest nightspot west of Chicago—and supervises the music and cabaret there with conspicuous success.

It is rumoured around Los Angeles that all is not well in the Louis Armstrong ménage, there being a rift between Louis and his ex-chorine wife, Lucille Wilson. Lucille is the trumpet king's fourth matrimonial venture.

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# COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

WHEN we published the Lemon Jefferson listing, it was stated that there may be more than one Okeh recording by him, although "Black Snake Moan" (8455) was the only known item. Billy Neill, the Glasgow collector, was asked to check his files, and we have just heard from Billy, who reports that 8455 is the only one he has noted.

He writes: "A neat title 'Boar Hog Blues' (suggested by Elliott Goldman), it is possible that this is a mistake, as 'Boe Hog Blues' is on Okeh 8563 by Texas Alexander, and that is the nearest title I can trace in my Okeh Catalogue.

"It's possible he made others for Okeh, though, as this section of my book is not complete. Also, others may come from that session and remain unissued, but I regret I can supply no details."

We are glad to have this information, which, at any rate, narrows down the field for further inquiry. Then, from Jack Wood, of Sheffield, who seems tireless in his Jefferson researches, comes a note that he has now received Lemon's "How Long Blues" (Para. 12685), which is backed by Tampa Red's "Through Train Blues."

Says he: "The Jefferson features piano and guitar accompaniment—the guitar being nothing out of the ordinary, is probably Jefferson's work, but the terrific piano playing is the high spot of the side. I'd like to know who is responsible.

"On the Tampa Red there is no piano, accompaniment being provided by tuba and guitar. The latter is really outstanding, and Red's singing is also fine. Most of the two sides are 20544 and 20788."

Thanks again. The guitarist is presumably Tampa Red himself, who backs up one or two vocalists on other Paramounts we have.

## "CANDY AND COCO"

Once again, in the matter of "Candy and Coco," local collectors have proved their ability for digging out information on the most obscure subjects. We thought the possibilities of this topic had been exhausted, but were pleasantly surprised to hear from G. F. Gray Clarke, who writes one of his rare and welcome letters, about the pair. We have no hesitation in giving the letter in its entirety, for it is both amusing and informative. Thus Gray Clarke:—

Unfortunately I only see the MELODY MAKER these days in the form of collections of a couple of months' issues, so by the time I come to put my two cents into any discussion it is usually as cold as a chorus girl's heart. However, I will risk a slight contribution to the "Candy and Coco" affair.

The first appearance of this duo must have been on Gene Austin's last Victors, quite fifteen years ago, when a few titles appeared with a piano guitar and bass accompaniment instead of the usual overlaid Shilkret background. From this point onwards "Gene Austin with Candy and Coco" became quite a familiar announcement on American Radio programmes. I have an old American "Radio Mirror" in which the trio is mentioned and alleged to record for

Vocallon. From the same period I have some "Perfect" envelopes bearing Austin's likeness, and suggesting that the team appeared on this label. As both these brands, and Melotone, Brunswick and anything else not specifically Victor were controlled by the American Record Corporation, it seems likely that such records might have been duplicated on several labels.

It is quite true that the team appeared in a number of film shorts; though I should put them not later than 1933 as to date of origin. These are fixed as Hollywood products by the presence of Harry James. I suppose, though New York was the home of musical shorts at the time. The combination was certainly in Hollywood about a year later, because the Candy and Coco part of it then joined the Ted Flo Rito outfit. As usual, there was a howl about broken contracts; inevitably, Mr. Austin announced his intention of suing Mr. Flo Rito; as always, nothing appeared to have happened apart from the preliminary shouting. Advertisements in "Esquire" and elsewhere showed Mr. Flo Rito at a Hollywood club with band, the Florettes, Muzzy Marcellino, Candy and Coco, and probably the old kitchen sink as well.

About this time I contrived to identify the "Candy" part of the duo as bass-playing, vari-voiced Johnny Candido, and subsequently watched with interest for film appearances of his certain "froggy" face. He appeared in most of the movies which Flo Rito made for Warners about this time, including "Broadway Gondoller," in which he sang "You Can Be Kissed" as a duet between his two voices—a growling bass and a coy soprano, and very funny, too. I remember him, with Flo Rito in at least two of the Astaire-Rogers efforts, one being, I think, "Shall We Dance?" He also cropped up in various shorts, some times doing his speciality, at others just a face in a (probably) non-playing studio band. "Coco" eluded me as a personally, notwithstanding quite extensive inquiries.

Candido disappeared from the screen when the public finally awoke from its apathy and blew a royal raspberry in the direction of musicals. My own interest in films, never a very healthy growth, expired shortly before the war broke out, so I am, quite without value as a witness to anything which might have been seen at a later date. But as recently as two years ago I dropped into a cinema to kill two hours between trains and saw a very bad musical, in which Gene Austin appeared in a cabaret scene, being announced by the M.C. as "with Candy and Coco." But no sight of Mr. Candido's cheerfully ugly face delighted me, and a shadowy bass and guitar simply strummed almost inaudibly in the background. I can't even supply the name of the film, as I came in after it started, and left, in considerable agony, half-way through the main attraction. "A Yank in the R.A.P." being completely overwhelmed by the spectacle of a Lockheed-Hudson trying to look like a Spitfire.

Finally, there is a red label Brunswick of "You Can Be Kissed," in

which Candido does a complete chorus, though, of course, it is without point unless you have seen him do it in the film. It may be that intensive search through Flo Rito's other recordings of the same period (I am not volunteering!) might produce other gems.

## SESSION NEWS.

Once more Stanley Dance comes through with the latest news of Blue Note's recording activity, as follows: There have recently been three very interesting Blue Note recording sessions.

Date No. 1 featured Sammy Benskin on piano with "Specs" Powell on drums and Billy Taylor on bass. This trio turned out four 10-in. sides: "The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise," "Rosetta," "Wiphant Winnie," and an original entitled "Cherry," and an original entitled "Wiphant Winnie." Benskin has been playing with Benny Morton's group, and is regarded as one of the most promising of the younger pianists.

Date No. 2 is particularly interesting. For a long time the Blue Note folk have looked for a singer who could really sing the blues authentically.

Pigmeat "Alamo" Markham, who has been one of the most famous coloured comedians in Harlem for the past twenty-one years, they are sure they have found one. They saw him over a year ago in a Harlem night club, and at the end of his comedy routine he sang a few blues choruses, which made a great impression. He left for California, after that engagement and has only just returned to New York, where he recorded for Blue Note on two 10-in. and two 12-in. sides.

Accompanying him is Oliver Mesheux, a practically unknown trumpeter, who has a beautiful tone and plays in the real blues tradition, and the great Sandy Williams on trombone.

The rhythm section consists of Vivian Smith, a girl, on piano, Israel Crosby on bass, Jimmy Shirley on guitar, and Tommy Benford, of Jelly Roll Morton fame on drums. The four blues recorded were "How Long Blues," "Blues Before Sunrise," "See See Rider," and "You've Been a Good Old Wagon."

Date No. 3 featured Omer Simeon, with Oliver Mesheux, Art Hodes, Al Lucas on bass and Fred Moore on drums. Simeon happened to be in New York with the Lunceford band. Although he plays as well as ever, he is little featured with Lunceford, his records will be all the more welcome.

The selections were "Beale Street Blues," "Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None of My Jelly Roll," an original blues by Hodes and an original of Simeon's.

These look like noteworthy recordings, the Markham session demonstrating that the Blue Note concern is still prepared to experiment with novel set-ups. With recollections of their eminently successful Josh White Trio record we can believe that these sides will be something worth hearing.

The tunes selected are first-rate ("Blues Before Sunrise" being no doubt the lovely Leroy Carr number), and the musicians sound like an interesting bunch. Markham's name is well known to us through the entertainment columns of such papers as the "Pittsburgh Courier" and "Chicago Defender." Perhaps he'll turn out to be a sensation like Estelle "Mama" Yancey.

## SWAP AND BUY

Ies Phythian, 12, Larkhill View, West Derby, Liverpool, 13, wants "Louise" by Whitman Rhythm Boys. First-class condition. G. G. Hall, 135, Beechwood Ave., Coventry, will buy discs by Herman, Barnet, Goodman at reasonable prices.

F. Mitchell, 70, Quentin Rd., Lewisham, S.E.13, has jazz books and discs for sale. Send s.a.s. G. Neale, 10, Caldecote Rd., Leicester, offers Duke's "Tiger" and 28 odd "M.M.s." for sale.

For sale, brand new 1943 edition of "Hot Disco" and fairly worn copy of "21 Years of Swing Music." Highest offer secures. B. Hodgson, 21, Wedmore Rd., Greenford, Middx. C. Wells, c/o "M.M." is anxious to contact any jazz enthusiasts in vicinity of Malvern, Worcs.

V. Morter, 22, Henley Rd., Leicester, offers brand new copy of "Jazzmen" and 1943 "Hot Disco." Best cash offers.

S.a.e. to S. Hinton, 21, Hillside Rd., Erdington, Birmingham, 23, who has discs for disposal.

Wanted, Harry James' "Sweet and Lovely." Urgent. Any price. Dorothy South, X-Ray Dept., Ancoats Hospital, Manchester.

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JOE GREENWOOD, just demobbed, would like to contact his old friends and customers.—Please write 151, Melrose Ave., Cricklewood, London, N.W.2.

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