

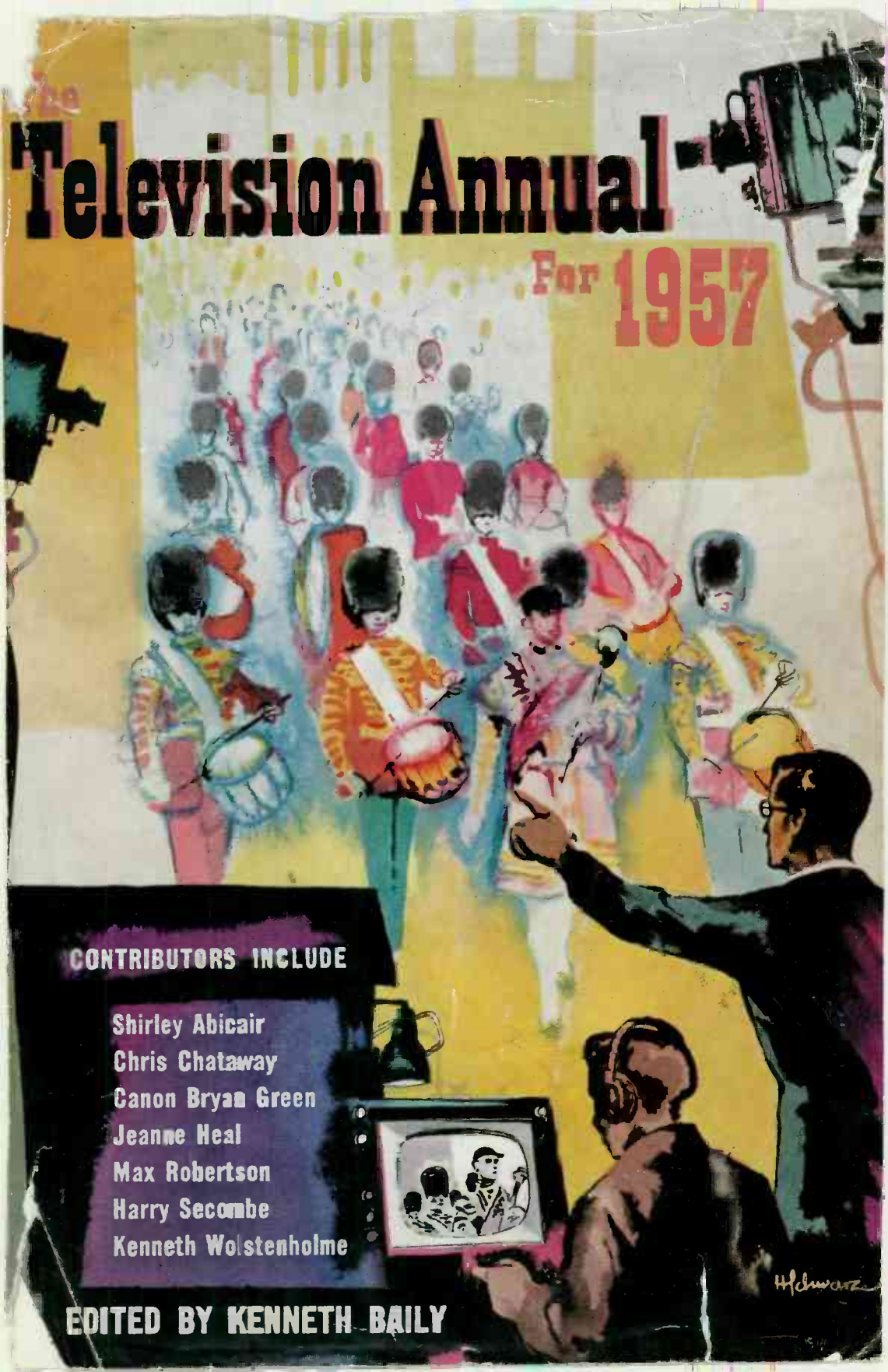
# Television Annual

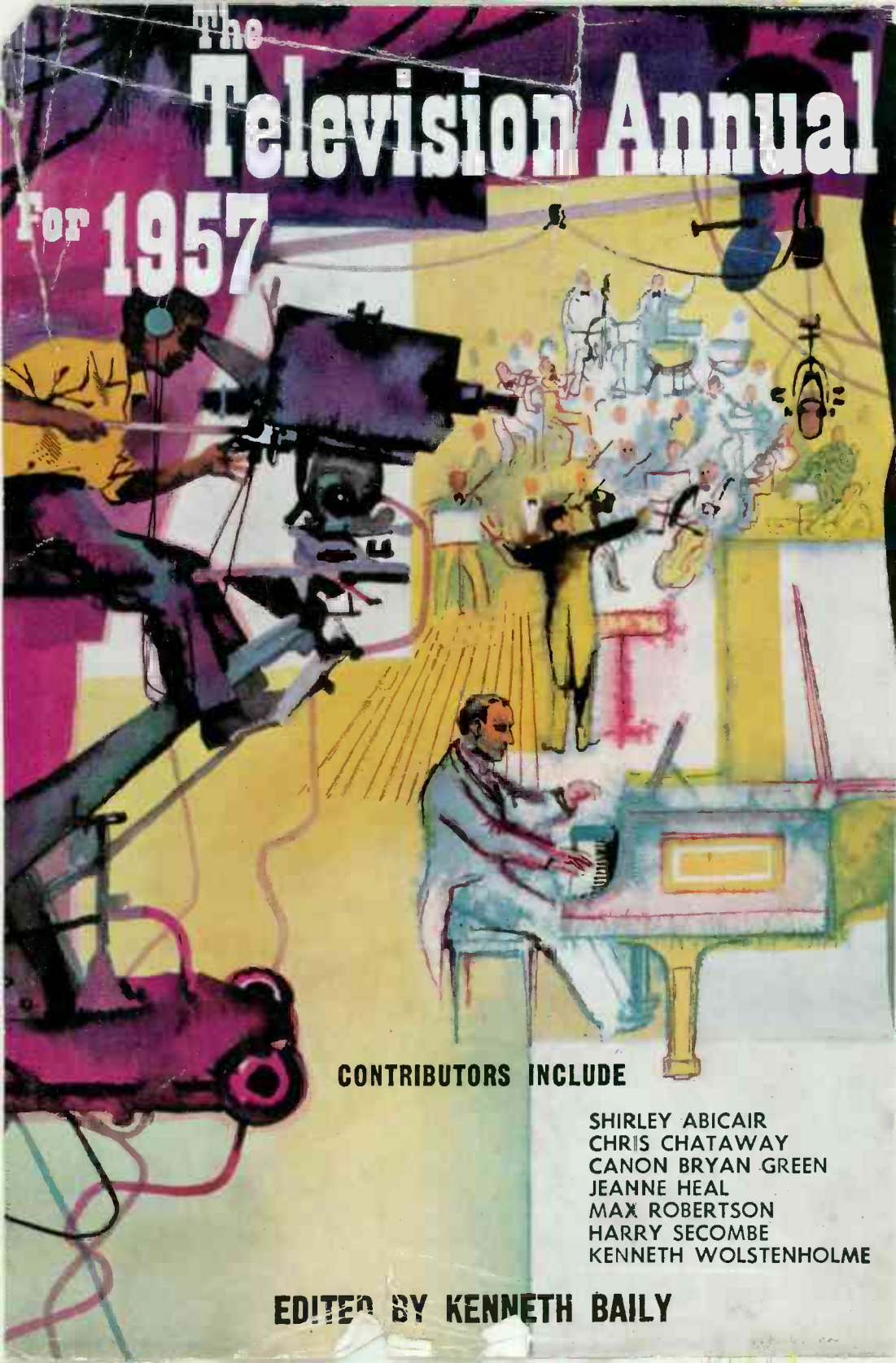
For 1957

## CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE

Shirley Abicair  
Chris Chataway  
Canon Bryan Green  
Jeanne Heal  
Max Robertson  
Harry Secombe  
Kenneth Wolstenholme

EDITED BY KENNETH BAILY





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THE

# TELEVISION

ANNUAL FOR 1957

EDITED BY KENNETH BAILY

*Contributors include*

CHRISTOPHER CHATAWAY, JEANNE HEAL,  
MAX ROBERTSON, HARRY SECOMBE, SHIRLEY ABICAIR,  
KENNETH WOLSTENHOLME, CANON BRYAN GREEN,  
CARYL DONCASTER, ERIC SYKES, DEREK BURRELL-DAVIS  
AND LLOYD WILLIAMS.

THE TELEVISION ANNUAL for 1957 appears in a year of great significance for television. For the first time, British TV licences issued have surpassed the number of sound radio licences, while commercial television has become a reality, bringing a choice of programmes to viewers as well as advertising's début on the home screen. Television is growing fast—and growing up; and this edition of the Annual reflects and explains all the newest trends in this powerful medium of entertainment and information. It is, in fact, the only authoritative yet independent annual published for the viewer.

Many brilliant personalities from the world of television, both on the BBC and on the ITV sides, have written special articles for the Annual, revealing much of what goes on in front of and behind the cameras. There is also the usual popular series of candid pen-pictures, in which the spotlight is turned on Bill Maynard, Shani Wallis, Liberace, Vera Lynn, James Arness, Joan Miller, Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Peter Scott and other famous TV stars.

The Annual, however, is not devoted solely to news of TV personalities and light entertainment. It seeks to assess the impact of television in all its forms, surveying the whole field in a concise and interesting manner. The Annual therefore contains an up-to-date review of TV progress in other countries, an article explaining how industry and commerce are developing their own private TV systems, an article outlining the technical progress of colour transmission, and news of new stations and studios for the BBC and ITA. Executives of both services, too, contribute lively articles on producing and writing for the TV screen.

The high standard of illustration of the Annual is maintained with over 160 magnificent photographs recording the big events of the TV year.

Once again the book has been edited by Kenneth Baily famous TV critic of *The People*, magazine writer and former television scriptwriter, who himself writes a pungent review of the year, and asks some pertinent questions on what will happen to independent TV.

Every viewer will welcome this wonderful souvenir of the year's television, while for those professionally concerned with this great new industry the TELEVISION ANNUAL for 1957 is indispensable.

10s. 6d. net



# THE TELEVISION

ANNUAL FOR 1957

*Every Viewer's  
Companion, with Souvenir Pictures of  
BBC and ITV Programmes and Stars*

*Edited by*  
KENNETH BAILY

*Contributors include*  
CHRISTOPHER CHATAWAY, JEANNE HEAL  
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CARYL DONCASTER, ERIC SYKES  
DEREK BURRELL-DAVIS, LLOYD WILLIAMS



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*NORMAN EVANS*

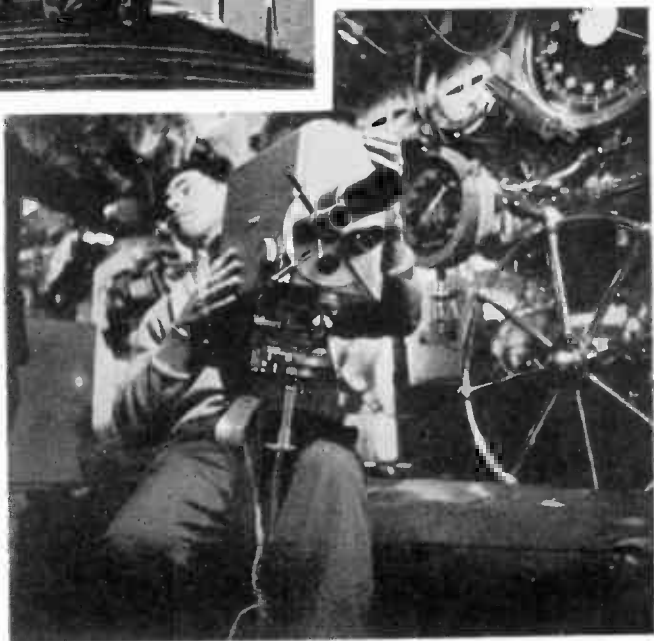


# TV SPREADS ITS WINGS



*—From  
Mountain  
Peak to  
Channel  
Depths*

*The TV cameras can go almost anywhere today. The picture above shows how the mountain railway up to the top of Snowdon looked when BBC engineers had converted it into a climbing TV station. The transmitting aerials, on the carriage roof, sent pictures to a control van lower down the slope. This was then connected to the main TV network, so that viewers could watch the progress of the train up Snowdon. On right, a miniature TV camera helped the BBC to catch the first-ever TV pictures inside a submarine below the surface in the Channel.*

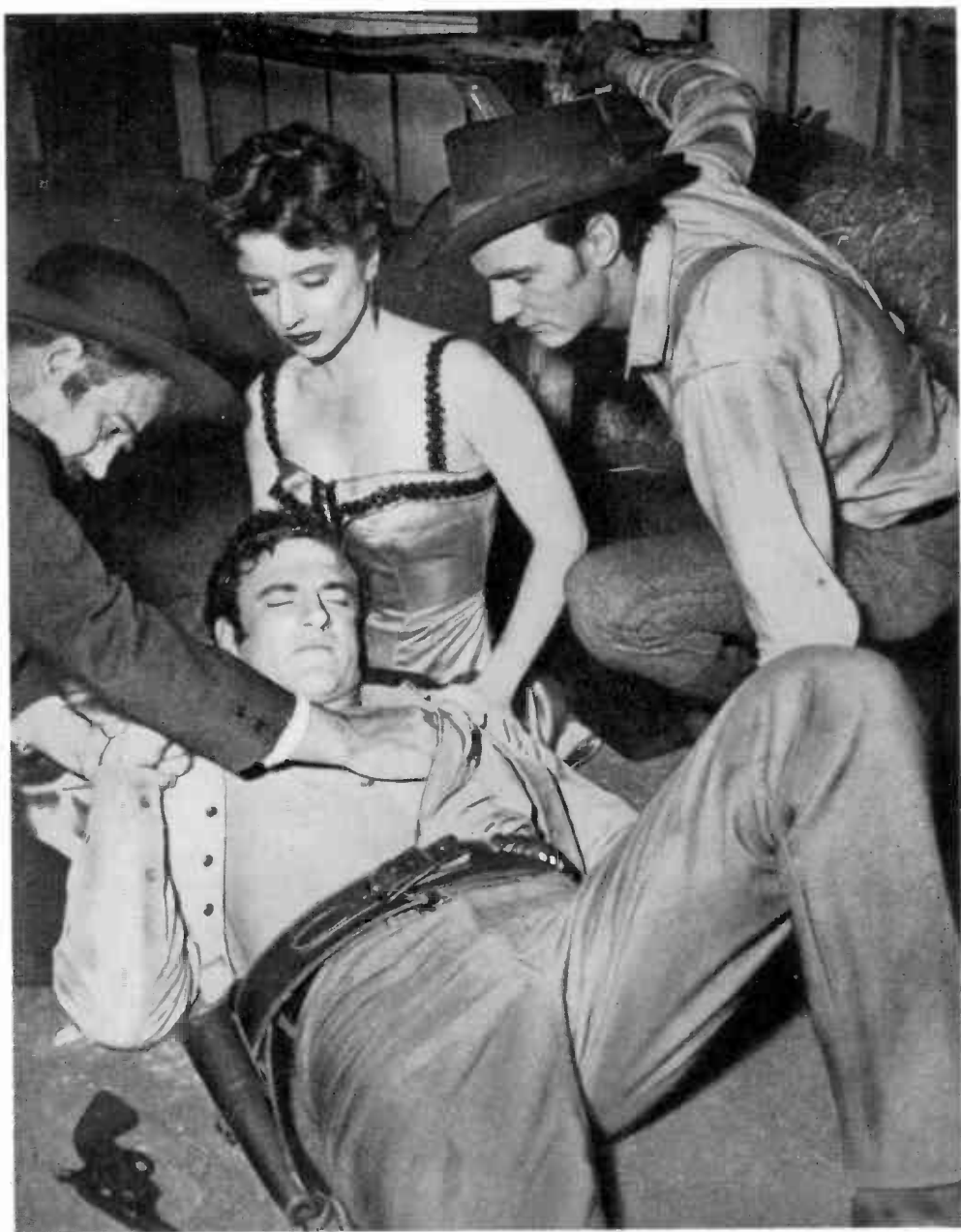


**THE TELEVISION ANNUAL**  
**FOR 1957**



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*James Arness, the popular, sheriff hero of ITV's American film series, Gun Law, in (for him) a rare "knock-out" situation. With him are the three familiar characters of Dodge City: "Doc" (Milburn Stone), "Kitty" (Amanda Blake) and "Chester" (Dennis Weaver).*

# ITV FACES THE CASH VERDICT

KENNETH BAILY'S *review*  
*of television in Britain, 1956*



COMMERCIAL television has run its first year in Britain. The second year is almost certain to provide its real test, commercially. For the first time proof will become apparent whether this new medium pays the advertisers who invest in it. And this alone is the test upon which the future of the Independent Television Authority depends.

The Authority's future well-being—indeed, its future existence—depends not merely on its ability to provide an efficient and spreading service, nor on its ability to produce a balanced diet of programmes alternative to the BBC's. It rests solely on the £.s.d. in profits from the new business of home-screen advertising.

Should there be too great or too protracted a financial loss, the ITA will have to agree to change its ethical principles, so that advertisers can hit the consumer harder and guide him or her more forcibly to the shop counters. If the Authority cannot stomach this—or more particularly Parliament, which would need to amend legislation—then alternative television in this country must become a state corporation operation; either parallel to the BBC, or handed over to it. It now seems most unlikely that the material assets of ITA—its programme contractors' studios, plants and staffs—can be abruptly discarded.

Not that the commercial TV world is not full of optimism. Its programme contractors claim a readiness to lose money while the new advertising techniques catch on; its programme producers claim constantly larger audiences for their programmes than the BBC can attract; its advertising agents claim increased sales of the goods advertised on television.

But nobody has said how much money is to be lost, or over how long a period. And nobody has produced sound reasons as to why the sale of goods so advertised shall increase, or even remain at the level reached in



*Terry Scott and Bill Maynard joined forces to make a comedy series for BBC television. In the search for satisfying TV fun, they followed in the steps of a long line of comics, including Terry-Thomas, Eric Barker, Arthur Askey and Benny Hill. They were new personalities but even so, the BBC's light entertainment seems to follow much the same pattern, year by year.*

the first year—for curiosity in a novelty must have considerably helped the effectiveness of the advertisements in the first year. As novelty wears off, will the Briton remain as subject to TV advertisements as the Yank appears to be?

Only the programme producers seem to be on a certain wicket, for whether critics, dons, teachers and clergy like it or not, it now seems clear that the ITA programmes can hold the majority audience. It even seems doubtful that this viewing majority has any of the critical faculties capable of discerning on the ITA screen deadly repetition, abysmal humour and cheapjack appeal. The educators and those with a social conscience can perhaps now be told that the British mass audience is getting the commercial television it deserves. The need to educate for citizenship beyond the age of 15 is shown as more imperative; and the prick of social conscience is surely becoming more uncomfortable.



*McDonald Hobley, popular BBC announcer, moved over to ITV and was seen perhaps 100 often in shows which were "silly-funny" rather than witty, like Yakity-Yak, above. Jack Jackson (below) however provided a new-style ITV "disc" show, produced by Peter Glover (left) with Libby Morris and Glenn Mason.*



So long as the critical standard of the mass remains low, those who earn money by selling to the mass will produce low-level TV programmes. No amount of dignified talk from the Board of the Independent Television Authority can wash that one out.

Added to this garish, Saturday-night-market audience approach by the ITA programme contractors is their lack of technical resources and of TV production know-how. A small core of those actually responsible for putting on the programmes, in the London area, learned remarkably quickly, with devotion and tenacity. But the time given them was too short for learning a job which the BBC is still learning after ten years of post-war operation. Producers and technicians drawn out of the BBC were too few to prevent dilution of ITA programme staffs by newcomers completely ignorant of television. The preponderance of the inexperienced has also allowed some smart-alec opportunists to get a good foothold in the new business.



*Music For You remains a steady favourite with a large part of the BBC's audience. Off set, during rehearsal, Joyce Grenfell talks to pianist Moura Lypany, with Mary Malcolm studying her announcements in the background. But on this occasion Stanford Robinson (standing) took the conductor's rostrum in the temporary absence of his brother Eric, whose personality has contributed to this programme's success.*

*H.R.H. Princess Margaret spent an evening seeing behind the scenes at Lime Grove. With her is Ronald Waldman, head of the BBC's Television Light Entertainment Department. The Princess met variety artists, and sat for a time in a producer's control gallery above the studio floor.*



There is, in the ITA programme companies, a minority of brave spirits who want to wrestle with TV commercialism and raise the programme standards. They preach the gospel of don't-belittle-your-public, claiming that a sizeable majority, large enough to profit the advertiser, will in fact enjoy higher-standard programmes.

This resolute cadre in the ITA fairground is doing sterling work with some of the informative programmes, some of the drama, and some of the music. It is strongest within the ranks of Associated-Rediffusion and Granada Television. But can it win through in time—if indeed it is right in its views? If the present system of advertisement presentation really shows enough profit for advertisers, the cadre may yet win through; for so long as advertisers have no say in programme content, it is at least possible for experiment and new programme ideas to find some place in the schedules.

But it seems equally likely that the present form of advertising will not in fact, show enough profit. Direct sponsorship, where commercial products are openly associated with programme content (as in America), would then be likely to follow. If this happens in the next year, the cadre will not have had time to win its battle, and under the new management is unlikely to get a second chance to fight.

The first year of commercial TV cannot be said to have made any great progress in the handling of the medium. With one slight exception, advance in programmatic ingenuity and technical achievement has all been





*The Grove Family, despite strong competition on the ITV channel, have remained a BBC attraction. Sheila Sweet (back centre) left the cast in July, 1956.*

on the side of the BBC. The single ITA exception was the new approach to comedy in *A Show Called Fred*, produced with such dexterity of script writing that it has had to be extended into the later series, *Son of Fred*.

But the alternative service has begun to shatter the cosy, closed-city attitude of the BBC. Facing competition with welcome awareness, Lime Grove has tidied itself up and is generally presenting a more attractive service than before the ITA arrived.

The opening of a new "market" for performers of all kinds, professional or amateur, has depreciated the exaggerated values set upon the original BBC TV "stars". In this new and fresher world of viewing, now open to all with two-channel sets, increasing numbers of viewers are getting along nicely with never a glimpse of Gilbert Harding, Wilfred Pickles, Eamonn Andrews, Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Lady Barnett and company. If surveys are to be believed, rare indeed are the occasions when the ITA viewer switches over to the BBC solely to see one of its TV idols.

The BBC remains convinced that personalities form the backbone of TV entertainment. It may well be right; the lack of new personalities on



One of those BBC special occasions was a lavish programme celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Viewers saw part of *The Magic Flute*. (Right) Another "occasion" was when the BBC celebrated ten years of post-war television. Dancers Boyer and Ravel, who appeared in the early days of television, took part.



the ITA side is no argument against the proposition. It took the BBC a number of years to find personalities, and learn how best to present them. Nevertheless, the day when people felt dispirited whenever they missed a regular appearance of the BBC stars does seem to have passed.

The advances on the BBC side have been especially in the outside-broadcasting sphere, including its extension through the bolder use of Eurovision.

The programme series *Saturday Night Out*, though erratic, has extended the "vision" in television by more than a telescopic lens. Care, ideas and ingenuity have paid off as much as the clever use of engineering equipment. In this series—as on a different level with the *At Home* programme—the public's vision of the life of the community, whether national or European, has been broadened; and without the inclusion of a single condescending "preach."

Inside the studios, however, Lime Grove plods its conservative way. Programmes to set formulae reappear and go on reappearing. Producers expert in electronic trick pictures cannot hide the basic shortage of programme ideas. As light entertainment and dramatic entertainment,

*Despite competition, the BBC pushed ahead with its giant master plan for television development. Building continued on the new Television Centre, which will look like the model below when it is completed.*





*In the Midlands and the North, two new commercial programme contractors started operations. At weekends in both regions, the ABC Television Company provided shows including Home Town Saturday Night, featuring McDonald Hobley. Above, he interviews a veteran at Shrewsbury. In the North, on weekdays, Granada Television launched programmes including Zoo Time, conducted by Desmond Morris (left), seen with the chimp, Congo.*



television now seems destined to use again and again ideas originally conceived during the first five or six postwar years.

Finally, in introducing another *TELEVISION ANNUAL*, the editor would like to draw attention to a few of the contributions which follow, believing that they are of some little significance in the development of this exasperating but fascinating medium.

The reader will find Canon Bryan Green touching upon the subject of religious broadcasting in television; a matter which, in our present situation, should be tackled with more energy than either the BBC or the ITA is giving to it.

Kenneth Wolstenholme provides a reasoned argument about sport and television; in this dusty arena of debate the calm of compromise seems likely to produce the most enjoyable as well as the most equitable results for both viewer and professional sportsman. Hoisting a small flag among the gaudy pennants of ITA, Miss Caryl Doncaster speaks for the minority which still believes that commercial television can educate. And, in different circumstances, the BBC's Derek Burrell-Davis and ITV's Lloyd Williams show that hard work, team-work and loyalty produce deeply satisfying rewards in television as in any other sphere.

*Look stayed at the top of the BBC's winning programmes, and the camera visited Peter Scott at his Gloucestershire home.*



# "I'VE NEVER SEEN AN EVENING'S TV!"

says JEANNE HEAL



MY TELEVISION set would pay for itself handsomely if it showed me nothing all the year round but the great sports events. Given the chance to go out and watch a Test Match, or some of the great marathons at Wimbledon, or the Olympic Games, or international horse jumping events, then of course I would go. No black-and-white picture can hope to compete with the feel, the smell, and the being part of the crowd at such an occasion, any more than those sad little shots of the Paddock at Ascot can give us the least idea of the colour and atmosphere and fashions.

But since I cannot hope to be at most of these events, I do get all of the price of a television set in thrills watching them on my screen. With one exception, I am a fan, also, of the commentators who bring us so much of the actuality of big sporting moments.

But after this very obvious first choice, what do I enjoy on television? Frankly, by no means everything. I don't think I have ever yet sat through a complete evening's viewing, even with two stations from which to choose. I think television in lumps is quite dreadful, but television by selection can be very exciting indeed.

Most of all I use my set to introduce me to the things and people I want to see, and wouldn't or couldn't go out to watch for myself. For instance, some years ago Menotti's opera *The Consul* was playing in London. I knew I ought to go and see it, but I couldn't quite persuade myself to spend the money and give up an evening to do so. Then television brought part of it to my fireside. For that I was grateful. I still didn't want to see it in the theatre, but I learned quite a lot, and moderately enjoyed watching it at home.

In the same way I nearly took myself to see the production of *Hamlet*



*Paul Scofield (Hamlet) and Michael David (Horatio) in the ITV production which Jeanne Heal enjoyed so much on the screen that she went to see it in the theatre.*

which apparently went down so very well in Moscow, but the theatre critics put me off and I didn't go. Then ninety minutes of this play were brought to me on my screen and I was thrilled. This time I enjoyed it so much that I actually went to see the play.

Next, I select my viewing to give myself a chance to meet famous people visiting this country. Are they as I imagined them? Do I like them? Often after a few minutes I know that I don't, and switch off. But I am grateful to have had those few minutes. Very occasionally, as on one disastrous programme devoted to Eartha Kitt, I still know the person's good even though, in my opinion, they are quite appallingly presented. Then the frenzy of horror at the presentation is almost fun as well!

I like television, too, when it gives me a glimpse of sections of life I would never want to go and see. Nothing would take me to watch a wrestling match, but half an hour of one on my television screen told me a great deal about it—quite sufficient for a long time—but was interesting and worthwhile. The same sort of thing, in my opinion, goes for ice shows.

What about personalities—TV personalities? I loathe all panel games,



in life and on the screen, and look in only once when a new one starts and I realize it, too, is going to be quite frightful. So it says a great deal for their charm and attraction that two of my three television pin-ups are, in spite of the programmes they so often enhance, Barbara Kelly and Gilbert Harding.

My other favourite is Terry-Thomas. I know many people throw things and break sets when he comes on, because humour is such a very personal thing. But I belong to the brigade which tries never to miss him. He's sometimes good and sometimes less good, but has never yet completely failed me. As a postscript I ought to add that I always like those little glimpses we get of Sylvia Peters and Mary Malcolm, because they're nice people, I like the way they look, and I like the things they wear.

Apart from selective viewing, there's one other use to which we sometimes put our set, and for which I am surprised television is so seldom

*Eartha Kitt, termed "the fabulous," was a TV highlight to Jeanne Heal, although she considered the programme presentation "disastrous."*



thanked. If we have been working very hard and are too tired even to read a detective novel, we use television as an "unwinder." I have met other people who surreptitiously admit they do this too.

You sit there looking, preferably, at any programme of passing, ever-changing variety acts. You pay very little attention, but the pictures passing harmlessly before your eyes are pleasant or strange or amusing, and they stop you thinking about the worries which otherwise might keep you awake at night. After half an hour or so of this you can go to bed and sleep just as satisfactorily as if you had taken a sleeping pill!

Just one thing more. Perhaps, after all, the thing I like best in the whole year on my television set is the picture of Big Ben striking midnight on the eve of a new year. We like to spend New Year's Eve quietly at home, but we like, at that last moment of the year, to join the rest of the world, not hilariously, but rather solemnly. And so at the last minute we switch on

that picture of the dial which is more famous than any of our TV-made faces can ever hope to be, and we raise our glasses and say a quiet goodbye and hello at the turn of another year.



*Jeanne Heal claims to have only a few TV favourites. Among them is Barbara Kelly, seen here with her husband, Bernard Braden, in one of ITV's 'On the Town' features.*

## Bill Maynard

---



IF he is making tons of money now, at one time he was concerned only with tons of coal. Comedian Bill Maynard was a coalman in Leicester, looking pretty much then as he does in front of the TV cameras now.

Under the strain of sack-lifting his face creased in the same places, exuded the same aura of battered bewilderment.

Except for the money, life then was much the same for this natural comic who, in little more than five years, has climbed to the top simply by behaving like Bill Maynard. He says that he never tries to get a laugh: he has only to be natural and the laughs come.

Can it be that he has something of the Chaplin secret, the touch of the tragic clown? Life was not always kind. Born in 1928 at Farnham, Surrey, he moved with his family to Leicester when a very small boy. Things were hard for the Maynards and jobs scarce. No wonder he chose sad monologues for his first appearance, aged 8, at a working men's club. He then tried female impersonations, guitar-playing and tap dancing, earning money for lessons by delivering newspapers.

At 15, football claimed him as a semi-professional for Kettering Town and Leicester City, but a damaged knee put him out of the game for good. Eking out his funds by sleeping in station waiting-rooms, Bill hitch-hiked to more working men's clubs, then to a holiday camp show at Skegness. Coalman, commercial traveller, salesman, he was all these before getting a chance to tour Germany in *Piccadilly Hayride*.

Things were getting better. From Germany to the troops in Korea, then a £100-a-week season at London's Windmill Theatre. A "natural" for television, Bill was soon in *Garrison Theatre*, *Variety Parade* and *Teleclub*. Then, in *Great Scott, It's Maynard!* he began his TV association with his close friend and touring companion Terry Scott.

Married, with two children, Maynard still lives in Leicester. Apart from his family, he has few interests outside show business. "I would still work at that," he says, "even if I made a fortune. If I didn't have people laughing at me, what would be left to live for?"



## Shani Wallis

WHEN a star like Shani Wallis says she is "terribly spoilt" you can depend upon it she is unspoilt. The really spoilt ones luxuriate in praise and flattery, but Shani is not one of them. This happy, unassuming girl, daughter of a London shopkeeper, who sings as if words and melody sprang unbidden from her heart, is a born artist gratefully accepting the gifts the gods have sent her. They were evident when, four years old, she first set foot on the stage in 1937. Always craving for the bright lights, Shani was in repertory at 13 and a TV Teenage Show at 15. Radio claimed her, too, as "Vi'let Elizabeth" in the *Just William* series.

But her first springboard to fame was a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Hearing her singing at a R.A.D.A. concert, a talent scout offered her an engagement at Ciro's Club. The Shani touch appealed to the famous brothers George and Alfred Black; they sent her to a Jack Hylton audition for *Call Me Madam*. Shani was the last of 150 girls to be heard, but her singing of "Fiddle Dee Dee" won her the part. Her name means "Lucky Jewel," Shani explains, and leaves it at that.

On the first night of *Call Me Madam* her singing stopped the show. From then on it was always star-billing for Shani, in *Wish You Were Here*, *London Laughs* and, with Pat Kirkwood at the Princes Theatre, in *Wonderful Town*. In this she played a blonde American girl so convincingly that many in the audience thought she really did hail from the States. As a corrective, Shani followed this up immediately as the very English girl friend in a Frankie Howerd radio series.

Shani's brown eyes match her hair. She is only 5 ft. 4 in. tall. Her hobbies are tennis, designing dresses, riding and roller skating. She describes her pet "hates" as grubby powder puffs and matted eyebrow brushes. She has pet "likes," too: home cooking, American beer and Chinese food.

# SATURDAY NIGHT OUT



DEREK BURRELL-DAVIS,  
*Co-editor and Producer, writes about an  
adventurous BBC feature*

As I start to write these few words about *Saturday Night Out* I am looking at the clock. In 50 minutes the next edition of this series goes on the air. The programme is coming from the Midlands; last week it was Brussels, next week it will be London, the week after Paris.

Each programme is "live," never filmed. As it happens, where it happens, so it happens on your screen. We have never cheated you with film, and we never will. This is not only a firm rule in *Saturday Night Out*, but in every outside broadcast from BBC Television. (Where a bit of daylight filming, perhaps to show the precincts of an *At Home* location, is required, we always say so.) This doesn't make production any easier. It would often be simpler to insert a piece of film or pretend we were somewhere we were not. But we believe that in the long run our outside broadcast programmes will mean more to you, the viewer, if you can always believe that what you see is actually happening now.

*Saturday Night Out* is presented with a background of technical prob-

# SNO FILM-OPENING

LOCATION: Palace of Arts.

Phone Rings

Hand B/L to receiver

"Man with radio" signs Mike

Voice (urgent)

Outside Broadcasts ....

... (pause) with

shaking now

More type action sound and in script on this scene BD.

Hand matches Mike away from under

Pan up

Action Roving eye cuts left and cuts followed by MCB etc.

Downs

Stand Loris shaking.

Music Starts over

Television producers frequently create their working script by sketching the pictures they want to produce on the screen. Alongside the sketches they write brief directions for the camera and microphone teams. Derek Burrell-Davis' original script for the opening sequence of Saturday Night Out is reproduced here. (As well as production directions, it includes instructions to his secretary for making copies of the script.) Viewers will recognize the sequence, which has been used every Saturday to introduce the actual outside broadcast.

lems, challenging circumstances and excitement common to many other O.Bs. The basic difference is that it has to happen on the same night, in a different place, with a new subject, without fail every week. A TV series usually has the advantages of a formula, of using the same studio, the same band, perhaps the same artists, certainly the same producer, who presents the same type of programme each time. We exchange all these assets for one great advantage, and that is "actuality." So we run a series without a formula.

## SNO Film

P. 2.

Ext. Palace of Arts Night.

Roving eye cuts.

Low Camera position

Downward balance

(cut on music change)

Pan Rt with Tender (introduce)

Pack 100ft  
several outside.  
(PTA).

music off effects.

Cam. on roof of Roving Eye.  
Travelling fast down slinger  
road. Arriving at end  
Note: - Shoot this Cam if  
pos. Otherwise B/P?

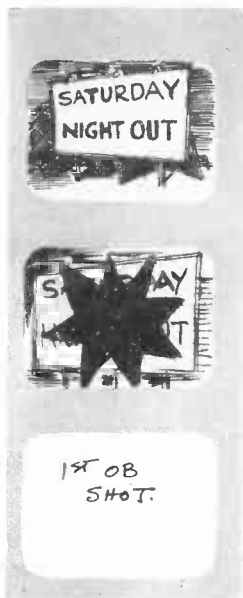
Don't  
hesitate song  
it's ok with it.

As from Roving Eye Cam.  
Approaching heading  
rapidly.

Specials lighting  
check required?

Many ok Alan  
Lambert

also I want this live  
not model



SHO Film. P. 3.

Vehicle slowing  
Music building to climax  
Brakes squeal.

No Print 5 copies  
SM. Film Log Editor  
Cassidy on # 1 file B.D.

Black star burst  
Music crescendo  
Gymbal

CUT TO QB POINT  
H. Smith-Davis  
28/7/56

Mary Please send to  
Ken Bailey with my  
compliments  
B.D. 1 May 56

To show you how we run that series, let us imagine that you yourself are going to join the TV Outside Broadcasts Department.

Naturally, your background and experience fit you for the job. You may have come from films, the theatre or sound broadcasting. Perhaps you have been a journalist and written scripts as a side line. Possibly you have been an artist or designer. You may well combine many of these professional skills and certainly you have a good visual imagination. With equal certainty you

have been successful in your previous job. You're very probably an ex-serviceman; among your colleagues you will find former members of the Navy, the marines, the gunners, the sappers and the R.A.F.

The man who will welcome you is Peter Dimmock, Head of the Department. He is likely to do this between telephone calls from Glasgow, Helsinki, Cortina and various sports promoters. Three producers are before you in the 'queue to see the Assistant Head, Berkeley Smith. You leave his office admiring the impeccable fit of his clothes, full of information and intrigued by his telephone conversations with Imlay Watts about Eurovision, Alan Bray about air-to-ground electronic signals, Jean D'Arcy of the French TV service, and (confidentially) Mrs. Smith, the lady with whom he will shortly be *At Home*.

You already know that an O.B. is a broadcast that doesn't happen in the studio. As recommended, you seek and find Alan Chivers, senior producer. In clipped, forceful words he tells you the differences in O.B. techniques. An *actuality* is the coverage of an event which cannot be adjusted or altered for television. He cites as examples the Coronation, a Cup Final, horse racing, sports events at large. A *built O.B.* could be a visit to somewhere, or a programme about places and people, including perhaps a certain amount of light entertainment and the live documentary treatment.

These are broad definitions, but you learn that in the *actuality* the producer, by clever use of his cameras, must make television sense out of an event primarily intended for some other purpose; while in a *built* programme the producer has a varying degree of influence on the subject matter. You ask for examples, and also whether producers specialize. You





*When the programme took viewers to visit the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's in London, thriller writer Eric Ambler and Valentine Dyall, the Man with the Mike, discussed the case of Dr. Crippen in the "presence" of the doctor himself.*

meet them and realize you will only know the answer after working with them, but your first impressions are contradictory. They are all highly individual and extremely critical of each other's work, but at the same time they form a close-knit and very friendly team. Each is a specialist, and you begin to understand why BBC Television sports coverage is so good. It is because the producers do more than just point cameras. They know their particular sport and have a very close understanding with the players and promoters. And their television coverage is designed to further the interests of sport, and hence the enjoyment of the viewer.

You are also intrigued to learn that the man who produces symphony concerts covers Test Matches, too; that the boxing specialist runs the *At Home* series; and that the producer who covers football also presents theatre excerpts. But don't imagine that these quaint combinations are boundary lines, too. Quite apart from their ability as specialists, they are nothing if not adaptable, and their versatility is reflected in the aplomb with which they tackle anything from a darts match to a dog show. Having met the people who run the outfit, you are keen to see them in action and perhaps curious to know a little more of the organization involved. Let's take *Saturday Night Out* as an example, because that is the programme

with which I am most closely associated at present and because this is where the "built" and "actuality" sides of Outside Broadcasts are linked very much together.

The series is planned and administered from a double office on the top floor of the Television Centre. There, miles away from the programme locations, the preparatory work is done. In one office you will find Peter Webber, co-editor of *Saturday Night Out*, who is quite likely to be immersed in sheaves of paper, carefully sifting programme suggestions, or arranging details of a forthcoming feature scheduled perhaps three months ahead. He is the Mr. Fix-It of the series, responsible for its administration and planning, and the cheerful trouble-shooter who has to cope with all the problems that arise when you make Europe your studio. And because Europe, or a sizeable chunk of it, is our studio these days, both Peter and I seem to spend an awful lot of our time in cars and aeroplanes on our way to prepare the ground for future programmes. (On the night of the programme we go out again, of course, to produce and direct

*The Saturday Night Out team in the cafe at the top of Snowdon, taking a break during preparations for the broadcast. (Left to right) Beth Williams, secretary; Meurig Jones, production assistant; Wynford Vaughan Thomas and Robert Beatty, commentators; Peter Webber, editor; Dafydd Gruffyd, producer; and David Billingham, cameraman.*



the cameras on the spot, relieved at times by other specialist or regional producers.)

But for the moment, we're back in the office. On the other side of the communicating door that leads through to Peter Webber and his secretary, Mary Keene, you'll meet myself and Bryan Cowgill, production assistant for the series, and as likely as not you will find us hard at work on a detailed script for next week's programme. The script goes first into the shorthand-notebook of my secretary, Mary David, and is then typed and duplicated.

In case you are puzzled by the appearance of a script in the world of actuality, I had better explain what appears to be a contradiction in terms. When we took you to meet the fishermen of Lowestoft, for instance, you were able to go on board a trawler out in the North Sea. To enable you to do this, engineers worked for many weeks carrying out tests to ensure that it was possible to get television signals back from the live O.B. cameras on board, and on that occasion the fishing limits had to be determined by our own technical demands. Then, too, a sequence of events had to be worked out to ensure that the 12 precious minutes allocated to the trawler during the programme would give an interesting and vivid picture of her work and the men who form her crew.

This required first a careful survey of life and work aboard a trawler, secondly a grading process in which the most interesting phases were selected for use in the programme, and thirdly a coherent and informative script to present the selected activities as dramatically as possible. Thus do we build our actuality, preserving the immediacy of "as it happens, where it happens" but presenting the material so that it does not happen haphazardly. The fact that we rarely have more than a few hours in which to run through the programme on the day of transmission underlines the need for extremely careful prior preparations and scripting. But however careful your preparations, the unexpected has a habit of happening.

You may remember that we televised *Saturday Night Out* from the Army Railway Training Centre at Longmoor. The climax of that programme was a train crash, and here again is a fine example of "built actuality." British Railways provided an old engine scheduled for the scrap yard, and the Army accepted it gratefully for use as an exercise in demolition and salvage. Television came along to utilize the exercise as a dramatic climax to its *Saturday Night Out*. You may remember how that gallant old engine refused to die. Blown off the track by an explosive charge as it thundered along the rails on its last run, the engine toppled on the edge of the embankment, but came to rest still stubbornly upright, with its whistle blowing merrily. Which just goes to prove that you can only build actuality so far!



*Derek Burrell-Davis talks to one of Digger Pugh's Aerial Girls while preparing for the broadcast from Billy Smart's Circus at Cardiff. The clowns were also making preparations!*

What happened to that railway engine was this: The Army had built up the railway track to an angle of 60 degrees, expecting to throw the old engine (driverless) down a thirty-foot embankment. But the steam pressure in the engine had to be pegged down to prevent an explosion on the fall. Otherwise, our cameraman perched out high over the "incident" might well have been injured. It turned out that the pressure was just not sufficient to throw the engine as planned.

The unexpected is always possible, and therein lies much of the zest and spice of outside broadcasting. Of course, some of the incidents we shall always remember happen during the preparations and do not reach the viewers. Commentator Bob Danvers-Walker did not hide from viewers the fact that he had suffered almost continual sea-sickness during preparations for the programme from that Lowestoft trawler. But I wonder how you would have felt had you seen the "cure" administered to Bob.

The skipper took one of those ugly sea urchins from the nets and slit it open with a knife. From an ooze of black slime he extracted a small red



*Jean Metcalfe and Robert Beatty relax at a mess party after the programme from the troopship Empire Parkeston at Harwich Quay.*

ball. He commanded Danvers-Walker to swallow this object, insisting that it was the seaman's certain cure for sea-sickness. Bob did swallow it; and it did work—or was it a coincidence?

You probably remember the Guy Fawkes Night programme in which Bob Beatty was all but overwhelmed in a crowd of people rolling burning tar-tubs through a West-Country town. In point of fact, your fears for Bob were promoted by your being unable to hear his commentary. To the viewers it appeared that his microphone had been damaged or come unhitched. What really happened was that this was the first time we had used that new kind of handy mike in a close-milling crowd; and the crowd completely muffled the mike so that we could not receive from it, a contingency our tests had not foreseen.

That same night, we started by going to the yard behind a public house in South London, where a traditional bonfire was to be lit and fireworks let off, with the local children gathered round. The enthusiasts there had in fact poured five gallons of petrol on the unlit bonfire, to make certain of giving you a good view. When it was lit, the flare-up was so violent that the

heat set off most of the fireworks nearby and sent the children scampering over the fence!

We had quite a night of it, too, when we covered a realistic Civil Defence exercise at Epsom, portraying an H-bomb incident. It was during the extreme freeze-up weather of early 1956. Water froze from hoses and hung in ice formations over the shattered houses as we rehearsed. Then, you may recall, one hardy volunteer lay spreadeagled high up on the stripped rafter of a broken-down roof. Unfortunately, I forgot to tell him to come down after we had tested our camera positions on him. You can imagine how he felt, exposed up there with the temperature below freezing point! As a matter of fact, when we eventually remembered him and got him down, we found he did not mind so much after all; for he knew that the authorities had promised a rum ration to the volunteers for every half-hour they were exposed to the cold!

Yes, the unexpected can always happen during actual transmissions of *Saturday Night Out*. We are dealing with real life, and it would be unnatural for everything to go according to plan. I think this helps viewers

*A last-minute briefing for technicians from producer Barrie Edgar aboard the Lowestoft Lady during rehearsals for the Saturday Night Out visit to the herring fleet.*



to catch some of the zest of the programme as well—indeed, it is the aim of Peter Webber, myself and the various producers up and down the country who put the feature on the air to communicate this zest and spontaneity to the viewer. In this, we have the help of expert production teams and engineering units. Our advance guard (and rearguard, too) are our ingenious and patient engineers.

Lastly, let me recall that we started this pioneering with the invaluable regular help of Robert Beatty, whose cheerful contributions as our first “man with the mike” proved to be among our greatest assets. It is a team with which I am proud to be associated, and I hope you will join us on many more exciting excursions into the adventurous world of television O.Bs.

### EDITOR'S NOTE

FOR more technically interested readers the “apparatus” of TV outside broadcasting is described below:

Each of the BBC's main and regional centres outside London (except Belfast) now has its own outside broadcasting unit, and there are three similar units in London. Each unit includes a mobile control room fully equipped for the operation of three Image Orthicon cameras and the necessary microphones. The latest cameras are fitted with variable-density light filters which, used in conjunction with the normal iris control, enable a big improvement in depth of field to be obtained.

Considerable use is made of zoom lenses in outside broadcasts; those used by the BBC give a variation in focal length of 5 to 1. The most recent types have two alternative ranges giving a variation from 4 inches to 20 inches or from 8 inches to 40 inches, by fitting the appropriate lenses.

Each unit includes tender vehicles for transporting cameras, cables and ancillary equipment; power-supply vehicles equipped with diesel-driven alternators are also available. The vision signals from the mobile control room are conveyed to the main TV network either by means of Post Office cable circuits or by BBC radio links.

In London special TV cable circuits are available in areas from which outside broadcasts frequently take place, and use is also made of ordinary telephone cables for transmission over short distances. The latter technique is frequently used also in other parts of the country. The BBC radio-link equipment is installed in suitable vehicles and operates in the super-high-frequency band on frequencies of approximately 4,500 Mc/s or 7,000 Mc/s. The 4,500-Mc/s equipment has a power of approximately 5 W and a range of up to about fifty miles can be obtained over an optical path. Several of these links can be used in tandem to cover longer distances. Extending-mast



*For the Harwich feature from the Empire Parkeston, camera and cameraman were hoisted aboard together in a special sling. Considerable preparation on the technical side is required before an O.B. of this kind can be produced.*



vehicles are available to raise the transmitting aeri-als to a height of 60 feet in a minute or two, and remote control of the aerial enables it to be turned on required bearings.

The terminal receiving point of a radio link is normally the nearest convenient point on or near to the permanent TV network. This may, for example, be a tall building in the town where a regional centre is situated, a repeater station on the Post Office network, or a BBC TV station.

A recent BBC development in the outside broadcasting field is the "Roving Eye." This is an extremely compact and mobile unit consisting of an Image Orthicon camera with all its associated equipment, mounted on a normal light commercial van which also contains transmitting equipment to carry vision and sound signals to some convenient fixed point. A range of some two miles can be obtained at present, and the camera can be used while the vehicle is on the move.

The success of the single-camera Roving Eye has led to a request for further facilities of this kind. Design work is proceeding on a second type of unit which, with only a slight increase in the length of the vehicle, will enable two cameras to be carried and operated while the van is in motion.



YOUR FRIENDS THE STARS

## *Liberace*

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AMID a cascade of chords, the cameras first pick him out in silhouette, seated at a grand piano. Then, suddenly drenched in light, he is revealed as a handsome, well-proportioned man with jet-black, wavy hair, all smiles and sparkle, in a tail suit strangely glistening and a tie like butterflies' wings. He rises, beams on an applauding audience, and thanks them from the bottom of his heart.

"Thank you, ladies—thank you! It's sure nice of all you kind folks to come." All you kind folks, yes; but the emphasis is on the ladies. It is the ladies, more than the men, whose fan support has done most to make Wladziu Valentino Liberace one of America's few music millionaires.

Until September, 1955 the name Liberace (pronounced "Libber-AH-chay") was scarcely known over here. Then one Sunday afternoon Associated TeleVision introduced the fabulous 35-year-old pianist to British viewers. The impact was that of a melodic shot-gun. Shaken, the music critics conceded that his technique was brilliant but jibbed at the "corn," the transparent showmanship. Bach and boogie, Chopin and Gershwin gushed with equal facility as his fingers danced over the keys.

What sort of man is this Liberace, seen regularly on 227 U.S. television stations and whose record albums have sold to the tune of a million? He was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1920, of an Italian father and a Polish mother. He is unmarried and lives in the foothills of the Santa Monica mountains of California, spending hour after hour in his piano-motif home practising on his concert grand.

Powerfully built, weighing about 14 stone, Liberace has been known to lift a grand piano single-handed. But to his fans he is all gentleness and light. "I like people—all of them," he says. "They have good taste and I am not ashamed to tell them so."

Adoration he reserves for his mother, the "wonderful Mom" whom he loves to have viewers meet in his programmes. With "Mom" beside the candlestick once owned by Chopin, the picture is complete.

## “JUST START A FIVE-DAY TV SERVICE”

—they said!

LLOYD WILLIAMS, *Assistant Controller of programmes, Associated - Rediffusion, tells how weekday ITV was launched*



THEY said they wanted a television service to operate five days a week, to put out 4½ hours a day; and we said we had better get on with it then, as there wasn't much time. So on January 3rd, 1955, Bill (Roland Gillett, first Controller of Programmes, Associated-Rediffusion, Ltd., now in the Jack Hylton TV Organization) and I sat down with a plain sheet of paper and started reckoning on what we would want to get on the air in the September of the year. Then we reckoned what we would want to stay on the air.

We put the word round among a few old TV chums that we were in business, and one or two of them came to see us—not many at first, only the ones who could smell adventure and the excitement of starting up a new industry.

Cecil (Cecil Lewis, then Deputy Controller of Programmes, Associated-Rediffusion, Ltd.) had joined us, and the three of us sat them down in chairs and tried to tell them about our plans. There would be a great chance for those who really wanted to work, to pit their skill against the rest, to forget security and expose their talents in fierce competition and so on. Most of them went out with their heads high and eyes shining; some we sent back to whence they came.

So, after two months, we assessed how many we were likely to get who knew about television, and who might think our way. It wasn't enough. We would have to train 200 to cover our minimum requirements. Then a High Person rang up and said, “Chum, we want seven hours a day from you—not four-and-a-half.” I said, “That makes things a little difficult”; and he rang off rather quickly.

Training, training, training. How on earth could we train people with nothing to train them with? And so we talked to a lot of people about this and it seemed as if *they* were all busy, too. Then we met George Kelsey of

Marconi's, and somehow the situation changed. Perhaps they had foreseen the problem. Perhaps they caught some of our enthusiasm. We don't know—maybe it was a combination of both, but by the beginning of May training was in full swing at a tiny studio in Kensington. Tiny, but how valuable! George made it a priority job, and his engineers fitted this little place out as their own television studios, the first in the country.

Over 2,000 people applied for 200 jobs; and came the interviewing, letter-writing, and the feeling of excitement. Four months before programmes must start we had 160 on the staff, and there came the word to move H.Q. to the former Adastral House in Kingsway. Renamed Television House, it was to be the centre of ITV, with its own studios and modern offices.

And the week before we moved in, the builders moved in, too, with steam shovels, cement mixers and several hundred pneumatic drills: an orchestra that was to provide a non-stop accompaniment to our programme planning that will live with most of us forever. When, with a shattering roar, the blade of the drill appeared through the office wall, we gathered our dust-laden plans and moved to the next office—and so on.

At Wembley, where the old film studios were being rebuilt, deadlines were going by the board, and it seemed as if we would never be able to get away on September 22nd. So to insure against lack of TV studio space at the outset, we started filming in April at Shepperton. New methods of



*In the weeks of hectic preparation before ITV programmes appeared, the Associated-Rediffusion organization in London used a small studio for training. Men and women from the theatre and film worlds, who had never worked in television, were trained in the production of short programmes. Here a training session is testing both trainee producer and aspiring artists for the new commercial service.*



*Once in its stride, ITV showed a strong liking for "glamour." Sixty-two feminine stars in Associated-Rediffusion's Jack Hylton Presents included Kitty Bluett, Eileen Joyce, Frances Day, Vera Lynn, Betty Driver, Sabrina and Belita—seen here with America's George Jessel.*

quick filming for television. New treatment of stories, new ideas. A production line of programme product to sustain our air time.

By July 30th the first part of the training scheme had been completed, and now we were to start operational advanced training at the old Granville Theatre, at Walham Green, where conversion for television had been going on for three months. The schedule for training had to be maintained,



*Associated - Rediffusion immediately tried to find new TV personalities. One of its first discoveries was actress Sheila Mathews, who as "Friday's Girl" brought popular songs and viewers' requests to the screen. A "gimmick" she used was telephoning a "requesting" viewer whilst the programme was actually on the screen.*

and everything depended on the Granville being ready. Seventy trainees were ready to move over from Kensington, eager to get into the first operational ITV studio; 70 more were ready to move into Kensington.

Then came the blow. Walham Green just wasn't ready. And there was nothing ready at Wembley. They said they wanted another 14 days, so we said we had to have it in seven days, otherwise the training scheme would collapse, and it could affect our opening date. They said it was impossible, but they would try. So we called 70 disappointed people together in the chaos of Television House and we told them the position. We felt as if we had let them down, and we told them so. Then we sent them all away on a week's leave.

We recast the schedule, and advanced training started at the Granville seven days later, but with a difference. Double shifts now: one batch from nine a.m. to four p.m., then the next from five to ten p.m. Meanwhile our Remote (outside broadcast) vans were out around London on dummy runs, setting up a complete outside-broadcast organization.

By August 29th we got into a studio at Wembley and started full-scale programme rehearsals. Only three weeks to go, before we would show ourselves to the public who would judge us side by side with a service that had been operating for 13 years.

Studio directors, lighting men, camera and sound operators, vision

mixers and floor managers came straight off the training course to plan their first shows. The first of our sets off the scenery supply line arrived and were hastily stacked in the open with a tarpaulin thrown over. Actors and orchestras, make-up and wardrobe girls, scene men and engineers, production planners moved into Wembley and elbowed indignant builders' men out.

On September 14th we called all the programme people together in Studio 1 at Wembley, and told them how we felt about it all with one week to go, and then we said that it was now largely up to them. And we came away feeling that nowhere before had we felt such confidence in the people with us.

The morning of September 22nd brought the first of the "good luck" messages that came from all over the world, and with them the realization that a lot of people we had never seen wanted us to do well, and that in the evening the eyes of the world would be on us.

At 7.10 that night we stood in the improvised Control Room in Kingsway and our service went on the air. And no one can know who wasn't there just how that felt. When we were safely launched we left the room and Bill, the engineer-in-charge (Bill Cheevers, Head of Engineering, Associated-Rediffusion, Ltd.) turned to say something to us and couldn't say it, and we couldn't see him very well, anyway, so we turned away and walked along the corridor. It seemed strange that the only noise now was the noise of our service being on the air—but it was good music to us.

*A personality who became a strong favourite with week-day commercial TV viewers in the London area was that "doggy expert" Macdonald Daly. With his wife, he provided a sure recipe for instructive entertainment in a nation of dog lovers.*





## Peter Scott

PETER SCOTT, compact and chubbily resolute, is a TV personality of the first calibre. He approaches the camera with just that coaxing hesitancy of speech which is the greatest possible compliment to his unseen audience. It indicates that he is choosing his words with care. If he did not, one feels his enthusiasm would waft away him like his beloved geese over the waters of Slimbridge.

It is an enthusiasm for Nature so great that he must communicate it by every means available: by the painter's brush, the written and spoken word, by radio and television. He himself speaks of "the intense delight which I have derived from forty-odd years as a keen field naturalist. I want others to share it, too."

As he was born in 1909, son of Captain Scott, the famous Antarctic explorer, his "forty-odd years" of nature study began when he was only seven. After taking an arts degree at Cambridge he studied at the Royal Academy Schools in London and brings to television the visual perceptiveness of one of the world's finest bird painters.

Peter Scott is a rare bird himself—an artist and also a man of action. During the war he served in the Battle of the Atlantic, was mentioned in dispatches for rescuing the crew of a sinking armed merchant cruiser, flew on bombing raids to Kiel and took part in the famous Dieppe Raid. After D-Day he fought on land in Normandy and commanded American ships in night actions off the Channel Islands.

All this, though, was an interlude in a life dedicated to Nature at its happiest and most peaceful. In 1933 he had founded his first bird sanctuary in Lincolnshire and was already a world traveller in search of elusive breeds. His Happy Haven now is the lovely home on the edge of the Severn marches at Slimbridge, Gloucestershire, where, as director of research for the Wildfowl Trust, he studies the habits of geese, ducks and other creatures from all over the world. Then he lives with his wife Philippa. They have two children, Falcon and Dafila, and few youngsters can be growing up closer to Nature.



# SECRETS OF ROBIN HOOD

## *An ITV Success Story*

PROBABLY the biggest public favourite among commercial TV series, *The Adventures of Robin Hood* is an all-British triumph among the American imports in independent TV entertainment. Screened primarily for children, *Robin Hood* is known to have a large adult audience as well. It is open-hearted, uninhibited British fun and healthy suspense, woven around a character for whom every Englishman seems to feel a special pride.

Commercially it is the first big success of the new ITA era. For, made to run 39 weeks, it has gone into a second run of 39, and has been sold at a handsome profit to TV networks in Canada and the United States. It will almost certainly be bought by Australian television as well.

An entirely new technique in TV film-making, enabling the studio to turn out a complete 26-minute programme every 4½ days, has been used in the production of this series. This unique system, specially devised for the series, has been used not only to speed up production but also to ensure that the completed programmes exactly meet essential TV requirements.

The man responsible for this development in TV production methods is Peter Proud, a well-known art director in the British film industry who has brought to television experience of 28 years of film making. He has devised a new principle of erecting the massive and authentic scenic sets which provide the all-important background for Robin Hood's adventures.

In normal film making, the studio technicians build huge sets on which the cameras are lined-up for each sequence. To cut out delay and speed up production, Mr. Proud has done away with sets of this nature. Instead he has used stock items of scenery such as baronial fireplace, serf's hut, staircase, corridor and entrance hall. All these items have been mounted on wheels so that they can rapidly be moved into position.

"The big difference between film-making for television and for the cinema is that the massive sets used on the cinema screen are lost on the small area of the TV screen," says Peter Proud. "So by using smaller sets

we can speed the job. In fact, we can change a whole set in six minutes. Instead of taking the camera to the set we can take the set to the camera. We use these same items over and over again, but we arrange them differently. The fireplace, turned upside down, becomes a pulpit! The result is that the viewing audience will get an impression of many different corridors, rooms, archways. Actually, of course, they are seeing the same pieces of scenery each time. The secret is that we've shot them so that they look different."

Another gimmick used by Mr. Proud is a real hollow tree-trunk, 20 feet high, planted on a fake mossy bank. This trunk, mounted on wheels, is used again and again in the Robin Hood stories, but each time, by moving it around, it looks different. When Proud had to give the appearance of Sherwood Forest he built another enormous tree-trunk out of wood and plaster, giving it an overhanging branch to match its companion. Both trees, wheeled into the right position, provide a most realistic impression of a forest glade.

Filming of the outdoor sequences has been greatly assisted by the fact that the studios, at Walton-on-Thames, lie close to the historic Runnymede Meadow where King John signed the Magna Carta in 1215. This has

*Richard Greene, in his popular Robin Hood role, with two favourites of the series, Bernadette O'Farrell (Maid Marian) and Alexander Gauge (Friar Tuck).*





*The inside story of Robin Hood's production reveals that extraordinary care was taken with the fight scenes to ensure authenticity in the weapons and also their handling. Here is some typical sword-play between Richard Greene and Hugh Macdermott.*

enabled the production to use authentic backgrounds among the English countryside which have remained unchanged for centuries.

All the fight sequences and battle scenes for the series were carefully planned on paper before one blow was struck for the screen. For example, in one fight sequence, Richard Greene had a typed sheet of directions in which he was told just how to defend himself in a staff duel with one of the Sheriff of Nottingham's soldiers. Greene's blow-by-blow instructions read like this: "POL; POR (ducking) and PVH." POL meant that he should parry the attack on the left; POR meant parry on the right, and duck at the same time; PVH meant parry vertical head blow.

All the swords used in the films are copies of genuine weapons in museums. The kind of close-in man-to-man fighting in those days had to be recreated, and records of the kind of blows used then were consulted.

Among authentic medieval weapons used in the films is the massive long bow, and its shorter, more powerful version, the cross bow. (A good English Bowman could bring down a man or a deer at 120 yards.)

Viewers also see an ingenious weapon called a morgenstern, or "morning star." Richard Greene received special instruction on how to handle this. It takes the form of a short stick to which is attached a chain and a spiked iron ball. The "morning star" earned its name because soldiers with this weapon used to creep up behind their opponents in a dawn attack and make them "see stars" with the blow! Let it be added that the "morning stars" used in the TV series are made of rubber!

By the time the second series of Robin Hood films has been made, the

main cast will have been working together for two years. The actors have really become a merry band of men, together in the studio for three to four days of each week.

Alexander Gauge, who plays Friar Tuck, is a well-known English character actor who first appeared on the New York stage in 1945. He was born in a Methodist Mission station in China, and went to school in California before coming to England. He has done much Shakespearean acting, and in British films has often played sinister parts. But many consider his strong line to be comedy: he was a great hit in the London stage production of *the seven year itch*.

Rufus Cruickshank, a Scots actor, plays Little John. He is well fitted for the part as he stands 6 feet 5 inches. Thirty-nine, he has been in films, repertory theatres and BBC television, while he once worked in a Mae West stage show. He grew a red beard for his Robin Hood role.

Bernadette O'Farrell, who plays Maid Marian, is a 30-year-old Irish actress who originally worked in a solicitor's office. Sir Carol Reed gave her a small part in a film he was making in Ireland, and the Rank Organisation then offered her a contract. But she turned this down, believing she needed dramatic training, and enrolled as a student at the Liverpool Repertory Company. Later, she made a number of films.

*The dash and adventure of the Robin Hood series have made it an outstanding ITV success. Richard Green's popular appeal is now being extended on television in other lands.*





*Jill Day, a vocalist who has held her own among the rapidly swollen crop of "pop" singers, brings to television a gaiety and enjoyment welcome to viewers.*



# TRAINING AS A TELEVISION REPORTER

*by*

CHRISTOPHER CHATAWAY

DISCUSSING television topics with people at various times, I have often been asked how I come to be working in this business, anyway.

The fact is that I had always been interested in journalism—a long-standing ambition was to be a parliamentary lobby correspondent. But for a number of reasons, when I left Oxford after reading politics, among other things, I joined a business firm. As a rather infrequent television viewer, I was impressed by many of the current affairs programmes on the BBC and in particular by those of Aidan Crawley and Christopher Mayhew. This was a vivid, powerful type of reporting with not much room perhaps for subtle analysis, but capable of bringing ideas and issues to life which might otherwise appear to many remote and dry.

Television reporting, I began to realize, had one obvious but enormous advantage: you could see the central characters involved in any story. You could watch them answering under pressure, and judge for yourself what sort of people they were. Instead of reading, for instance, a correspondent's theory that the Prime Minister of some desert oil state was being bribed to foment riots, you might actually watch the Prime Minister's spontaneous reactions as the commentator questioned him about the sack-loads of cash in the back of his car.

As well as being interesting and exciting, I felt that such an interview could often approach nearer to the truth even than a newspaper. The revealing, intimate and—by and large—honest eye of the camera could in these sort of circumstances show many things in a face, which a newspaper subject to the laws of libel might find it unwise to print.

In May, 1955 I went to see Aidan Crawley who was to run the commercial TV news company. I learned that he was intending not to have

*The programmes of Christopher Mayhew, reporting and commenting on current affairs, helped to inspire Chris Chataway in his ambition to become a serious TV commentator.*



announcers reading bulletins prepared for them, but to employ “newscasters,” who would receive their raw material from the newsroom and, after

consulting with the sub-editors, would themselves be responsible for what they said, subject only to the editor’s direction. They would be quite largely responsible also for the content of the programme, and would undertake a certain amount of the interviewing.

This seemed an opportunity. My application for a test was accepted. I prepared a four-minute summary of the news of the day before, and reported to a handsome residential house on the top of Hampstead Heath. In what must once have been a pleasant drawing-room, there were lights, a TV camera, and a rather daunting array of smart, efficient-looking young ladies with boards and pencils and stop-watches.

I was told that the editor-in-chief and the director of operations and one or two other people with imposing titles were sitting in another room watching me on a TV screen. I sat in front of the camera waiting, very conscious of the unseen arbiters whom I pictured scrutinising my every feature, my every casual gesture—until one of the efficient-looking young ladies told me that they were out after all, having tea.

It was not in the end a very successful audition as I forgot my words half-way through. But after another trial I was put on a short list and was eventually one of the four newscasters appointed.

The first four or five months of ITN’s operations were probably the hardest working of my life, and certainly some of the most exciting. There was a feeling throughout the company that a wholly new style of television news could be evolved. Time was the enemy. Probably 80 per cent of the staff were new to the medium, and had to learn from scratch. Three weeks only before the opening night some kind of rehearsals were started. But

there were no cameras, no monitors, no films. The last of the equipment arrived 48 hours before the first bulletin.

The day would start with a news conference at 9 a.m. and duties rarely finished before 10 at night—often later. The content of the bulletin, the form of each news story, the type of presentation—all these things and a hundred others were discussed and argued over. I found that there was a great deal to learn. Interviewing was not so childishly simple as I had imagined from my experiences as an interviewee. I don't pretend that I can do it with great proficiency yet, but at least I have learned that it is not simple.

Even talking into a camera was not so easy when it mattered what you said, when you were dealing in facts, and when there was a strict time limit.

The new relationship between the newsroom and the newscaster did not always work without friction. Each side felt that the other was trying to influence too much the final form of a story. I rapidly discovered that my lack of previous journalistic experience was often a great handicap. It led to my making a lot of mistakes in rehearsals, and a few on the air.

And I found that—at times anyway—I enjoyed television. It is something to be in a profession where you can enjoy learning; for, though the waiting, the travelling and sometimes the frustrations can be arduous, my present continued TV “training” with the BBC is by no means drudgery.

*Chris Chataway on board one of the last Thames sailing barges. In this vessel he investigated life in lonely places for his BBC series, Away From It All.*





# CAN ITV EDUCATE?

*A Topical Question Discussed  
by CARYL DONCASTER,  
Senior Producer of Associated-  
Rediffusion, Ltd.*



OF COURSE it can educate, and does educate. And now I'd like to drop that rather awe-inspiring word because I don't think it fits very well into the context of what television aims to do for the family when it has finished school or washing up or work generally.

The pundits sometimes forget this simple fact, that viewing is not compulsory, like school or clocking in at the factory. Viewing is voluntary and experience has shown that when the screen adopts a school-mastering demeanour the set is switched off, or over. I for one am against those programmes which are based on the idea of the man behind the desk who looks at you in a benign sort of way (often at the wrong camera), and talks and talks about what he feels ought to interest you. A lot of this is done—not, I'm happy to say, by ITV; and there is one word for it—it is a bore.

When a treatment bores it does not teach. When a treatment entertains it does teach automatically, because the mind is in the best possible condition for receiving ideas. The political parties have arrived at this obvious conclusion very quickly. Today the political messages in their party broadcasts have not changed, but their presentation has. They aim to please, on the principle that the wrapper sells the goods.

In television, the cult of personality is a very important factor in the twin objects of entertainment and instruction. The man, for instance, who likes classical music will listen to it in any case. But if the conductor is as vivid a personality as Sir John Barbirolli and the presentation of the orchestra is entertaining, the chances are that converts will be made—slowly but surely. They begin by looking for the wrong reasons (just as a child begins to write by following lines) and end by listening and viewing for the right ones.



*An ITV informational series which caught the public's fancy was Meet Mr. Marvel. In this Hugh David demonstrated domestic gadgets and appliances of all kinds. Here, Miss Muriel Young is with him in the role of an enquiring housewife.*

What I like about the ITV approach is that the stress is on entertainment first. In *This Week*, for instance, we aim to give even the most serious item "presentation" value—the way it is filmed, the sound effects, the music, the bite in the questions—and we consider all this just as carefully as actual content.

The same is true of the series called *Look in on London*, which is about the people who give us a service: dustmen and firemen, charladies and fluffers. There is nothing so entertaining as the so-called ordinary man showing us the ins and outs of his so-called ordinary job. I learned a great deal, by accident, by proxy if you like, from the little film on dustmen, without the aid of a single chart, blackboard or professor. The kind of work and approach represented by the professorial attitude had been done before this film got to the screen: research, script, "presentation"—that was the order.

What so often goes wrong is that the first phase in the venture, research, looks as if it is being done on the screen. It's like the man who goes up on to a platform to make a speech and holds in his hands and works from the first rough draft of his notes. He might just as well sit down because we all know he is going to be a bore.

I know I am laying myself open to all kinds of charges in the future, but I'm prepared to say that this is not the ITV approach. All our programmes which are about events of the week or about people with problems are designed to entertain. For instance, there's the new series called *People Are Talking*, which is about the kind of problems which affect us all—income tax, gambling, drinking, sex—and all done without any schoolroom equipment. But the facts and the points of view are there just the same.

We take the not very revolutionary view that the approach to the man on the other side of the cathode-ray tube must alter according to the time of day. In the morning, when you read your newspaper, the mind is fresh; it can take a barrage of dry facts which it will absorb. At night, however, the situation is entirely different. We're all a bit tired—and yet the world keeps on turning; news and views still keep pouring in. But if they are presented "straight" the tired mind sets up a resistance.

The answer, if we aim to put over a point of view, lies in one word—presentation; and we would like to think that we are getting close to the secret of it. Can ITV educate? Answer: it already does.

*Memorable in Caryl  
Doncaster's ITV series  
on London life, Big  
City, was the story  
about a Teddy Boy  
in the Elephant and  
Castle district. Here  
a scene is being shot.*



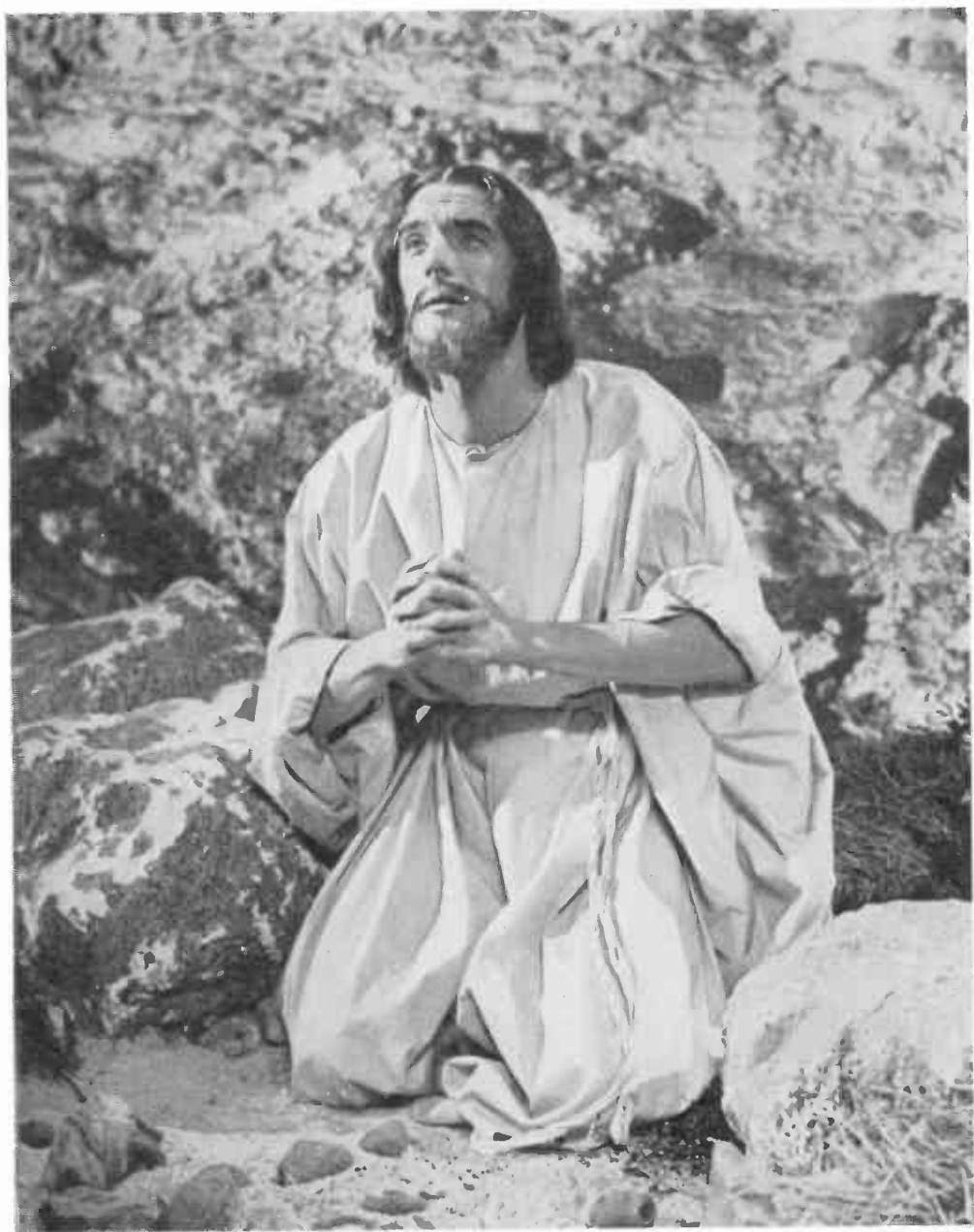
# JESUS OF NAZARETH

*A Souvenir of  
One of the Most Memorable TV  
Programmes yet Produced*

TELEVISION history was certainly made in 1956 by a series of eight programmes produced weekly by the BBC. This was the first full-life reportage of the life of Jesus Christ to be created for television. In it, for the first time, an actor appeared in the complete role of Jesus; the part was taken by Tom Fleming. Treated as an experiment, *Jesus of Nazareth* was placed in the children's programmes on Sundays. But it attracted an adult audience, whose appreciation placed it, as a BBC survey showed, next to the Coronation of 1953 in national appeal.

*Cameraman Peter Sargent, Producer Joy Harington and Assistant Producer David Goddard, filming exterior scenes from the Mount of Olives. The series was produced "live," with some film inserts.*





*Jesus prays in the wilderness. With discreet dignity, the actor Tom Fleming created a moving as well as an educative interpretation of Our Lord. This memorable series was telerecorded, and will become an annual production in BBC television programmes.*



*"Suffer the little children to come unto Me . . ." As in the picture below, filmed on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth brought to life the authentic background of the greatest story of all time.*





*Above, Pilate brings Jesus to the people. Alan Wheatley took the role of Pilate. Below, at the Crucifixion. Philip Larham played a soldier, cynical but shaken. These scenes were among some of the most powerful ever televised.*





## Sir Mortimer Wheeler

WHEN the soldierly figure with the crackling moustache strides down London's Haymarket, as he often does, *en route* for the club in Pall Mall, people are inclined to look back at him over their shoulders. And some have been known to nudge each other, exclaiming quite audibly: "Coo, that's Sir Mortimer!"

Five years ago this would not have happened. Distinguished archaeologists are usually happy to share with eminent surgeons, business executives, poets and suchlike the anonymity which would spell ruin to stars of show business. Except among a knowledgeable circle, it might have been thus with Sir Mortimer Wheeler. Instead, this sexagenarian Professor of Archaeology in London University is acclaimed by millions who couldn't tell a fossil from a Phoenician fire-iron. Such is the fame derived from a once unpromising TV panel game, *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral?*

Having in 1953 accepted the BBC's invitation to take part, under the chairmanship of Dr. Glyn Daniel, Sir Mortimer soon discovered that it was not enough simply to identify an object; what the viewer enjoyed was to watch the waves of doubt and certainty rippling across those rocky facial promontories, to see the lifting eyebrow and hear the thought processes. The innate showman revealed himself, and this mischievous yet urbane sense of fun earned for him the 1954 "Personality of the Year" award from the Guild of Television Producers and Directors.

Son of a North-country journalist, Mortimer Wheeler was born in Edinburgh in 1890. He was educated at Bradford Grammar School and took a classics degree at London University. His first step on the road to archaeological fame was an appointment with the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. In World War I he won the M.C. in France, ending up as a major; World War II found him, a brigadier, in the Western Desert. Between wars he had won distinction for brilliant exploratory work on Roman sites at Brecon, St. Albans, and Maiden Castle in Dorset. After the war he was to become Director-General of Archaeology in India.



# THE EYES OF THE WORLD

## *Television Makes Progress in 58 Countries*

TELEVISION is now established in every continent. In Europe regular programme services are operating in 14 countries: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, East Germany (the German Democratic Republic), West Germany (the German Federal Republic), Italy, Holland, Poland, the Saar, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and two Soviet states (the Ukrainian and Russian republics).

Six other European countries are at various stages of experimental service prior to establishing a regular programme service; these are Austria, Hungary, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Yugoslavia.

In the Americas 11 countries and self-governing territories are broadcasting regular programmes: Alaska, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the United States and Venezuela.

Two Asian countries, Japan and the Philippines, have regular programme services; and experimental services are being developed in Thailand and Turkey. One country in Africa, Morocco, and one Pacific territory, Hawaii, have regular programmes.

In 21 other countries television is planned or making sporadic attempts to begin service. These are Algeria, Australia, Bulgaria, the Byelo-Russian Soviet Republic, Ceylon, Chile, El Salvador, Finland, India, Ireland, Monaco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Peru, Portugal, Rumania, South Africa, Syria, Trieste, Tunisia and Uruguay. In all, 58 countries are concerned, to small or large degree, with TV broadcasting.

The spread of television in depth is less rapid. The limited transmitting range of television at present often means that stations cover but one township in a country or state. It is expensive to erect networks to carry the service to thinly populated areas. In the large land masses, the United States and Canada are exceptions to this rule; capital has been available to expand, and the method of working, especially in the U.S. with advertising,

has provided quick revenue returns. The greatest coverage per head of population has so far been achieved in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Cuba. There are important population-coverage figures, showing fairly rapid development, for Russia, France, Mexico, Brazil, Italy and Germany.

Live broadcasts of events figure in the programmes of most countries now operating a service; but nowhere, not even in the United States, is outside broadcasting so important and so staple an ingredient as in Britain. More and more film is being used by TV stations everywhere, and a great world-wide trade in films for television, with variable-language sound tracks, seems inevitable. In general, the densely populated countries seek to fill major portions of their TV broadcasting time with light entertainment and drama. The smaller and more isolated stations often have a greater proportion of informational programmes.

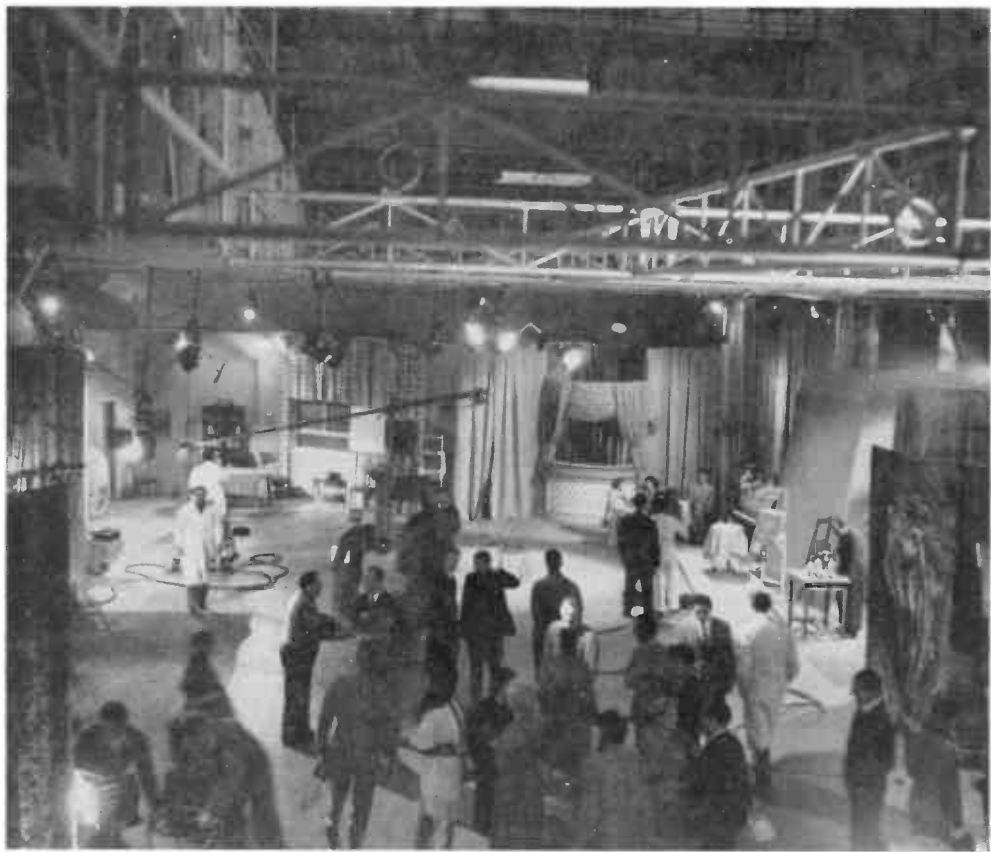
One can say that television for children has caught on from San Francisco to Moscow. In California television carries for children a "Story Without End" feature, presenting the beginning of a story which

*From a French TV show. Famous Paris cabaret singer Juliet Greco performs in a cellar night-club setting eloquent of Montmartre.*





*American television puts on a dramatised version of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn. And playing the part of "Jim," the escaped slave (left), is none other than Sugar Ray Robinson. The world champion boxer is an accomplished actor in American television.*



*Italy—and one of Milan's big TV studios. The studio has four cameras, and more than one production can be mounted in it at the same time.*

children are invited to finish for themselves. In Moscow an almost identical feature is among children's programmes.

In the United States considerable use is made by local stations (of town or state) of the "town forum" kind of programme, for discussion of local affairs. A prime example is *The Whole Town Talking*, in which the citizens of Iowa debate every kind of local controversy.

In France the carrying of information to rural communities has been developed by the "tele-clubs"—village halls or schools fitted with large TV screens, and attended by villagers too poor to buy their own sets. In Paris, programmes such as *Etat d'urgence* are specifically devised to project news, local and national affairs to these village communities.

Italian television has taken on some of the sophistication and gloss of Italian film production, and brilliant technical work is often done with

musical and dramatic productions. The light entertainment side is strangely American, with panel games well represented.

Television in Russia is directly operated by the government. It appears at present to be transmitted from Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev; though obviously other places are building, or planning to build, TV centres. Moscow began Russian TV broadcasting in December, 1945; there had been limited pre-war experiments. The picture standard is 625 lines. The U.S.S.R. states that 76 TV stations are planned.

The Moscow Television Centre begins its daily transmissions at 8 p.m. An analysis of a year's programme output from this centre showed the following ingredients: 147 dramatic and musical shows (theatre, opera and ballet); 100 musical concerts; 127 feature films; 200 news and documentary films; 32 sports programmes; and 89 political programmes. A big feature of



*Moscow viewers know Jeanne Nazarova as a producer and an announcer. Here she fixes caption cards for a production of Verdi's Othello. Opera is popular in Russian television. (Below) The celebrated Moscow Circus performing in the Russian capital's TV studios. The Circus has been televised this year in Britain.*



Russian television is the showing of the best Russian films. But the trend today is towards introducing more and more socio-political and popular scientific subjects. Russians pay an annual fee for the use of a TV receiver. There are probably one million sets in use.

Countries starting television services find varied means of financing them. The two most common methods are state-constituted, licence-supported organizations, and commercial companies. Between these two methods some services are run on the resources of private foundations; universities, state governments and municipalities are among the bodies running TV broadcasting. In Brazil, for instance, the municipality of Rio de Janeiro finances television.

In Canada, TV stations were first established on special government loans, but the government was not interested in financing future operations, except in so far as it collects tax on the sale of TV sets. The Canadian TV systems therefore accept strictly limited amounts of advertising to provide revenue. Italy is using state-financed, commercial, and local-financed stations.

In the United States 35 million homes have a TV set, or 75 per cent of the population. Over 400 commercial TV stations operate. On the four major networks combined the monthly income from advertising ranges from 23 to 35 million dollars, according to season and market trends. Television is broadcast from six o'clock in the morning until midnight.

*Brussels—and a spot in Belgian television for the Italian singer Taioli. A studio hand, with Taioli's walking stick handy, provides some necessary support with the aid of a chair.*



# SECOMBE HERE!

## *The Singing Clown Ruminates on the TV Situation*

As Duke Ellington once said in the title of one of his famous jazz numbers, "Things Ain't What They Used To Be." How true is the sentiment today, particularly when applied to the entertainment business. One word sums up the reason: television.

The influence of television spreads almost by the month. Though he treated the medium with caution at first, no one today appreciates its value more than the variety artiste—especially the newcomer to show business. For TV success can easily bring success on the stage.

Some people say that television is killing the live theatre, but on the other hand it may eventually do it a lot of good. Surely, by seeing good shows on television, it is only fair to expect well-dressed and well-presented shows in the theatre. And don't forget, whatever the quality of the TV show seen in your home, it lacks that elusive atmosphere which only the theatre can provide. Both media offer wonderful scope and, used wisely, both forms of entertainment can work together and help each other.

Performing before the cameras is a much different proposition to working in front of the theatre footlights. For one thing, the atmosphere is lost. The funny thing is that you do not think of the millions who may be looking in while you are actually appearing on television. It is not until afterwards that the thought hits you; then you start wondering whether the act was well received.

You soon find out! Letters come pouring in by the hundred. The fans and armchair critics lose no time in letting you have the verdict. I am pleased to say that it has always been a favourable one in my case, although there are generally some viewers who do not approve of my style. That's





*The comedy star built by British radio and television meets the comedy star built by internationally screened films. Harry Secombe is greeted by Danny Kaye during a trip to the United States when Secombe appeared on television. A fall had given Harry a damaged arm, but he even turned this into a gag on his return home!*

not surprising: a man who is able to please everyone would be a genius.

Television has one big disadvantage for a comedian. Completely new material has to be found every time he takes part in a programme. Dancers do not find it too difficult to work out fresh routines, but the comic's task is much tougher. First-class scripts do not exactly grow on trees. No such problem arises when touring the halls. One is able to use the same act for months before the same theatre is played again. Once before the TV cameras, however, and it is finished. Just consider for a moment. An artiste can appear in a theatre, playing to packed houses twice nightly, and in a year play to only the same number of people that may watch one peak TV show!

Sound radio is also feeling the pinch because of the popularity of the small screen. The advent of ITV, of course, has helped to rub salt in the wound of "steam" radio. But it is still very much alive and kicking. There are many forms of entertainment which radio can present so much better than television. And, more important, the housewife can get on with her chores while listening to *Music While You Work* or *Mrs. Dale's Diary*. The housework usually has to take a back seat when the TV set is switched on, however.

We must not forget the blind. Sound radio is like a right arm to them. Even 3-D television would not replace it in their estimation. Take a telecast of a soccer match, for instance. There is only a bare minimum of commentary, leaving a blind person with but little idea of how the play



is progressing. They are as well-informed as the next man with sight when listening to a sound broadcast, though.

I did not really start working regularly in television until 1954. I had appeared several times before this, however, my very first TV date being in 1947 when I played the Judge in *Toad of Toad Hall* on children's television. From May to Christmas Day, 1954, I was seen on the home screen five times. *Brass For Brass*, a play in which I played a North Country lad, was the first occasion, and in my final appearance of that year was the BBC's Christmas Party.

It was my spot in *Variety Parade* in August of the same year that helped me out. I planned to end my comedy routine by climbing a rope, then change into costume for a rendering of "Nessun Dorma" from Puccini's opera *Turandot*. By the time I had come back down the rope, I was right out of breath. I crossed my fingers and started to sing the aria. But it was no use. I just hadn't the breath to do it justice. So I made history: I asked Eric Robinson to stop the orchestra while I got my breath back. I made it the second time!

That was not the only incident in that programme, I might add.

*For some years Secombe toured the music halls. Television gave him fame, and now in the London Palladium show Rocking the Town he stars with Alma Cogan, Winifred Atwell and Beryl Reid.*





*Secombe has contributed much to the "goon-esque" style of humour, here exemplified with those comical colleagues of his, Peter Sellers (left) and Spike Milligan.*

Frantic signals by the technicians caught my eye. They had noticed a heavy prop door hanging above my head—attached by only a single nail. But I was not aware of it, and merely thought they wanted to set the finale behind me. Not until the end of my aria did I find otherwise. Much to my dismay, a workman was still trying to remove the door, and the dancers were unable to take the stage.

There was no other way out, I had to fill in the time. As luck had it, an idea came in a flash. I took the role of an announcer in the same position. Beaming a friendly smile, I said: "Good night, everybody. Good night." Then I stood looking into the camera. I smiled. I frowned. I whistled. And I coughed. The audience roared—but they did not know I was forced to include the spot in my act.

My success in *Variety Parade* was followed by a BBC series of my own, *Secombe Here*. After that I appeared every Saturday in the first six ITV weekend variety programmes.

What of the future? I wish I knew. But I for one hope you will be seeing more of me on television!

# SEEKING THE TELEVISION WRITER

by DONALD WILSON

*Supervisor, BBC Television  
Script Section*

IT WOULD be impossible, within the scope of a short article, for anyone to set out a complete guide to writing for television. It would also be redundant, because several books on the subject have already appeared, most of them useful and some even based on first-hand experience. Moreover, it is a fair assumption that only a small minority of *Television Annual* readers are ambitious to write for the screen, but it may be of interest to go back to fundamentals and ask: Is there such a thing as a television writer?

At first glance the answer seems quite simple. Of course there is. Just look at the number of citizens making their living partly or wholly by writing for the medium.

It is a common saying today that television "eats up material," and so it does. The old music-hall comedian could run a successful career for years on one line of patter, with a few topical jokes thrown in according to whether he was playing Huddersfield or Glasgow, and a new song every quarter. But today the TV comic has a completely new show written for him once a week, and this uses up the entire product of two or three writers.

Now consider the output of television in this country today. The BBC and its competitors are offering between them some 3,700 hours of screen time in a year. This amounts to roughly five times the combined product of Hollywood, the British film industry and the theatre in this country! And a majority of programmes must begin with someone putting pen to paper or finger to typewriter. That someone, you would say, is clearly writing for television, but on taking a closer look he will be seen to fall into one of several quite distinct categories. These are:

THE VARIETY MAN. He writes, usually in collaboration, comedy situations, "business," and dialogue for particular comedians. His job is to



(Left) In the BBC play *Epitaph*, Trevor Howard gave a powerful performance; the actor with him is Lee Montague. (Right) Two young players being built up in BBC drama: Catherine Feller and William Lucas in *A Flea off Pepe*.

exploit the funny man's natural talents, and the fact that the end-product appears on the TV screen is irrelevant. Most of his material could be used with little alteration on the stage or on sound radio. In this case it is the producer who makes—or fails to make—television out of his work.

**THE RESEARCH WRITER.** He is not, strictly speaking, a creative writer at all. For documentaries and features he collects information, facts and figures. He makes contacts and interviews people to obtain points of view. He analyses his findings, and presents them to a producer. The result may be good or bad television, but the quality of his writing, as such, has no bearing on the result.

**THE FILM SCRIPT WRITER.** Many programmes are made wholly on film-series such as *Fabian of the Yard*, *I Married Joan*, *Robin Hood*—and to write scripts for these demands no knowledge of television technique. There is one school of thought, indeed, which holds that *all* drama for television should be pre-filmed, but this view is flatly contradicted by—

**THE PLAYWRIGHT.** It is often argued that plays written directly for the stage with all their limitations as to settings, their conventional division into “acts,” “scenes” and artificial intervals are the most effective form of TV drama. Supporters of this opinion are not only not television writers themselves, but implicitly deny the necessity for any such animal.

The work of all these categories of writers makes up a large quantity of the raw material of television today, and so we return to the question: Does

the television writer exist? I think he does, but as yet only in small numbers. He leads a precarious and troglodyte existence, threatened when he raises his head by the mastodon of the theatre on the one hand, and by the sabre-toothed tiger of Film on the other. If he escapes these he is liable to be engulfed by the Music-hall megalosaurus. He is not easy to isolate because the species is still in process of evolution, but he can be recognized by his faint reiterated love-call: "Television-is-a-new-medium."

He has read the playwrights from Shakespeare through Ibsen and Bridie to Coward, Rattigan and Anouilh, and has absorbed what they have to teach him about the theatre. He has flirted with Flaherty and drifted with Grierson. He has studied the works of Chaplin, Ford, Duvivier, Disney, Cocteau, Carol Reed, Joe Mankowicz and Herbert C. Pampel-finger and is resolved to use only what he finds good therein, and that sparingly. He has learnt the functions and scope of the television camera and identified himself with those who serve it. He is growing less obsessed by the painted flats and doors of conventional scenery, the carefully manipulated exits and entrances of the stage-play, the contrived emotional situations of the movies. And above all, he is learning about his audience—an

*Tales from Soho, a popular BBC series of thirty-minute thrillers, abounded in authentic-looking London scenes like this one with Gerard Heinz, Lucie Mannheim and Meier Tzelniker.*





*A BBC drama dealing with the problem of colour prejudice, Flame in the Forest, starred Honor Blackman (left) with John Van Eyssen, Dan Jackson, Errol John and Joyce Worsley.*

audience of two to five people sitting in a small room looking at a small screen.

In short, he is becoming a professional.

You may ask where this exotic creature is to be found, and a very pertinent question too. The answer, I believe, is that he is usually, though not always, employed in some capacity in television production, most often as a writer-adaptor, frequently as a junior or assistant producer. It is here, under the inexorable pressure of the next programme, that he begins to master his trade. If he has a genuine creative talent, here is his opportunity. By living in the workshop, like any other apprentice, he learns his craft, not only consciously, but through his very pores, as it were. This is, after all, just what the great theatrical writers have always done and this is surely what it means to be a professional.

I am constantly surprised when writers, some certainly novices, but others of standing in their own field, announce that they are anxious to



(Left) One of the BBC's most popular series was *Jane Eyre*. The film star, Stanley Baker, took the complex role of Mr. Rochester, and as Jane, Daphne Slater won warm appreciation among viewers. (Below) A scene from *Arrow to the Heart*, a war play about a deserter from the German army under death sentence, which starred Robert Harris and John Van Eyssen.



write for television and in the same breath tell me that they do not look at television, that they have no set and no wish to possess one!

A certain young writer—a small one, so I threw him back—went so far as to argue that it was positively harmful for an intending television writer to see the programmes. The answer to this, of course, is that while he will see bad work he will also see good, and if he is modest enough he will learn from both. The same young man would probably read at least one novel before setting out to beat C. S. Forester at his own game, and he is well aware that to write plays without first studying the technique is the shortest road to oblivion. Yet he believes the craft of television not worth his attention. Such a mixture of laziness and arrogance is hard to forgive!

Fortunately the majority of writers realize the need for an intense professionalism, and it is encouraging to know how many are attending courses of lectures and in other ways studying the medium.

The television writer does exist. He is still a rare bird, but as his numbers increase and his experience grows he will surely affect the quality of the programmes you see on your screen.

It would be wrong to assume that my remarks on professionalism are intended to discourage the young writer with ideas but no television

*A successful BBC Saturday-night thriller serial, My Friend Charles, gained a large following of viewers for John Arnatt, as a detective inspector, and Stephen Murray, as a doctor caught in a web of suspicion.*







*Laurence Payne (inset) has become a popular leading man in BBC drama productions. The scene above shows him as "Alouette," the French tumbler, with Jean Lodge as "Fleshly Lusts," in Our Lady's Tumbler, from the legend about an acrobat who became a monk.*



experience from submitting his work. If he has talent, it will emerge from his manuscript and he will be helped to develop it in the right direction. His work will be discussed with him, analysed, probably turned inside out and, if all goes well, will eventually reach the screen. And although, as already stated, this is not a guide to television writing, some hints on what to do and what to avoid may be useful.

Make sure first what kind of programme you wish to write for and keep within its terms of reference. In other words, study your market.

Try to control the length to within narrow limits of what the programme requires.

If your aim is drama, don't be too ambitious at first. The economical half-hour play from a new writer has more chance of acceptance than the major opus demanding large resources in cast and settings.

Know your characters and keep them consistent. Only when you can answer any questions put to you as to their appearance, temperament, habits, idiosyncrasies, upbringing, education and experience will you see them "in the round." Only then will they come to life and, so to speak, write their own dialogue.

Where possible avoid long speeches. Shakespeare and Shaw got away with it, but in general it takes at least two people to make a scene.

If a character has a costume change, make sure you give the actor time to do it.

Don't demand long or elaborate film sequences.

Unless you are trained in camera technique, avoid indications of camera movements and cutting angles. If a dramatic point is to be made visually rather than in dialogue, just state what you want the audience to see.

Don't "write down" to your audience. They are as good as you are—and probably better.

Don't worry about any particular lay-out for the script. Keep the "action" and the "dialogue" separate and see that the typing is legible.

Whatever the rejected author may believe to the contrary, nothing gives a script editor more pleasure than the discovery of a new writer of talent. So keep trying—there is plenty of room at the top.



*Mai Zetterling, as the Baroness, and Keith Michell, as Crown Prince Rudolph, in the BBC production of The Mayerling Affair, a play based on the story of Austrian court intrigues.*

## Vera Lynn



ANYBODY who can say just why Vera Lynn, of all popular singers on radio and television, touches the tenderest spots in our hearts, could also explain why a mountain daisy is lovelier than a hot-house orchid. Perhaps because this girl from London's East End, the daughter of a plumber, is—beyond all else—"natural." The wartime radio programme that placed her far above singers more romantic and alluring was called *Sincerely Yours*, and only someone utterly sincere, like Vera Lynn, could have got away with it. That she did is a matter of radio history—fighting men everywhere took her to their hearts.

The Vera Lynn of today is the same warm and sympathetic personality, but her style has moved with the times. More versatile, she has gained sparkle and vivacity from radio and TV appearances in America, and a stronger sense of fun from contact with Jimmy Edwards and Tony Hancock in *London Laughs* at the Adelphi, which ran for more than two years. Indeed, she is as different now from the Vera Lynn of the war years as the "Forces Sweetheart" was from the girl of 17 who first sang with Billy Cotton's Band in 1934.

Her first broadcast was with Joe Loss in 1935; later she sang with Charlie Kunz for eighteen months and afterwards with Ambrose. It was then she met her future husband, Harry Lewis, who was a clarinettist and saxophonist in the Ambrose Orchestra. Married in 1941, they now live a quiet suburban life in Finchley, North London, bringing up their 11-year-old daughter Virginia.

Everything that Vera Lynn sang about home during the war is reflected in her own home life, which she loves. She likes nice clothes and a little jewellery, but the gay parties that go with stardom are not really her cup of tea. After years of travelling from theatre to theatre, broadcasting, televising, recording and rising at cock-crow to get to film studios, she would far rather work in the rock garden or potter around the house, doing needlework and pursuing her favourite pastime, cooking.



## HAIL AND FAREWELL

*The BBC opens its  
new London  
transmitting station*

THE BBC's new TV transmitting station at the Crystal Palace site, in South London, replaces the original transmitting station at Alexandra

Palace with which the BBC service opened in 1936.

Alexandra Palace was the first high-definition TV station in the world. Little was known in 1936 about the range of a high-power transmitter working on a frequency of 45 Mc/s, and it was thought that the range for satisfactory reception would not exceed thirty miles. The site of the first station was therefore chosen so that the maximum number of viewers would be included within that range.

In fact, the range of thirty miles was considerably exceeded. Moreover, technical developments have made it possible to use transmitters of considerably higher power and a range of at least fifty miles became possible. This factor, and the density of population in the area to be covered, indicated that the maximum number of people would be covered by moving the station to a site south of the Thames. The site at Crystal Palace was chosen after consideration of a number of alternatives.

The station building is underground in order to comply with the requirements of the London County Council (who own the Crystal Palace grounds) that public access to this area shall not be impeded. The building has been planned so that it will be possible to extend it in the future to house further equipment which might be needed, for example, for transmissions in Bands IV and V or for the development of colour television.

The Crystal Palace is believed to be one of the most efficient TV stations

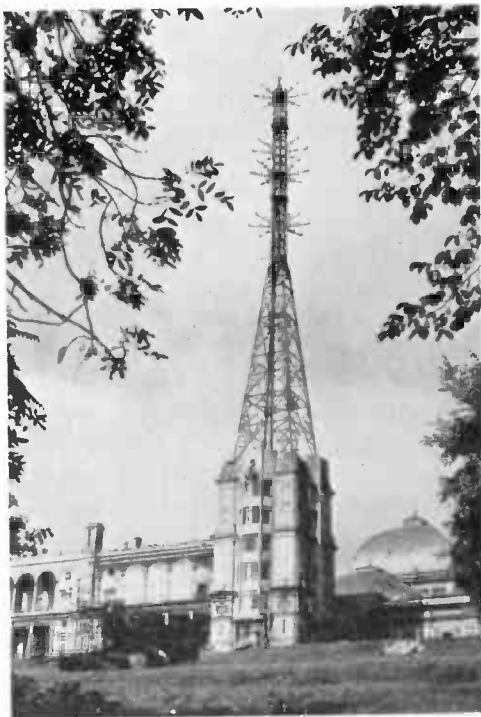
in the world. In planning the actual transmitting installation, great emphasis has been placed on reliability. The vision transmitter consists of two identical units each producing a peak-white power of 15 kW, and the sound transmitter of two identical units each producing an unmodulated carrier power of 4 kW.

Each transmitter has its own programme-input equipment for vision or sound as the case may be, and the inclusion of common lines in the chain from the programme input to the aerial is avoided wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the equipment is duplicated and provision made for an immediate change-over if a fault should develop. This arrangement permits an important saving in staff costs because if a fault should develop in a particular piece of equipment, the service is not interrupted. Immediate attention to faults is, therefore, not vital and this enables the staff on watch to be reduced to two men.

The transmitting aerials are carried on a self-supporting tower which is tapered to a height of 440 feet above ground level, and then continued as a parallel-sided structure for a further 250 feet. The aerial system consists of eight tiers of dipoles mounted partly on the support tower and partly on the parallel-sided portion above it. The tapered section of the uncompleted tower is shown in the photograph opposite.

The aerial system is divided electrically into two halves, one vision and one sound transmitter feeding power to one half of the system, while the duplicate vision and sound transmitters feed power to the other half via a separate feeder and combining unit.

Power-supply equipment has already been installed to take account of possible future requirements. It has sufficient capacity to handle the load imposed by two 50 kW vision transmitters and two 12 kW sound transmitters. Provision has been made for additional transmitters of comparable power for a second programme.



*"Ally Pally": original home of BBC television.*



HILTON HEWS *presents . . .*

**DOUGLAS**

**FAIRBANKS**

THE only way I could manage to meet Douglas Fairbanks was by going to the film studios where he makes his TV plays, at Elstree. "He's there from ten in the morning until eight at night," his secretary had told me. "You'll never find him in town."

And when I got to Elstree, in the Hertfordshire countryside, the only way I could talk to Fairbanks was by exchanging snatches of conversation with him between "takes." To explain: he was appearing before the film cameras himself, and we talked in the intervals between a dozen different shots they were taking of him.

British viewers will never see those shots on their screens. For that afternoon, Douglas Fairbanks was performing the "commercials" (the advertisements) which accompany his *Douglas Fairbanks Presents* series of plays on the *American* TV screens. The plays we see on Independent Television are also shown in the States, but over there Fairbanks has become quite a personality as introducer of the commercials on his drama half-hour.

The major part of his time, however, is spent at Elstree organizing the "factory" of TV plays he has built up by which a new play is produced almost every week. In three years, he has filmed 140 of these plays, starting the business originally as a method of exporting British-made TV films to America.

Using British artists, a British director, Harold Huth, and British staff, Fairbanks has kept many people in work, as well as increasing the prestige of a number of our actors and actresses in the States. But it has not been done without worry. The first series of plays he made did not do at all well on American television; in fact, they made a loss.

Slowly, however, the plays gained a hold on American viewers. The TV networks gave them better placing in their programme schedules, and *Douglas Fairbanks Presents* became a popular feature. When commercial TV began in Britain, Fairbanks was able to recoup his original losses by selling the series to Associated-Rediffusion. He had previously offered it to the BBC, which declined to buy.

Turning out this constant stream of plays calls for a great wealth of script material. Suitable stories are always wanted, and Fairbanks' main worry is the lack of scriptwriters with knowledge of the film technique for television.

At Elstree he goes about his many duties, including acting a few roles himself, quietly and unobtrusively. Douglas Fairbanks is a quiet man; softly spoken, gentle moving, but quick and bright of eye. They say he never misses a point.

He was born in New York, son of the great Douglas Fairbanks Senior, star of the silent films, and of Anna Beth Sully, daughter of a cotton millionaire. (It was later that his



*Douglas Fairbanks shows his versatility as an actor when appearing himself in his TV films. He is seen above as a "sporting gent" in The Thoroughbred, and (left) as a continental Count in Provincial Lady.*



*Here Fairbanks appears in the kind of romantic, Ruritanian part for which he is ideally suited—as the King in King High, one of his British-made half-hour plays for television.*

father married Mary Pickford.) Douglas Junior came to London early in life, and was schooled there. His home today is in Earls Court, and there he has entertained royalty. This is because he worked for a time as a diplomat, and during the war did great service for American-British relations. He received a knighthood, but as he remains an American citizen, he does not use the title.

He heads an export business in Los Angeles, where he also has a house. His mother lives in New York, and he calls her house "home," too. He has acted in films and produced them in Hollywood. He is a governor of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon; and he served as a commando under Mountbatten in the war.

At one time he lived the life of an art student in Paris, and is an accomplished painter and sculptor. Aged 49, he is a unique man who has won much respect for Britons among Americans, and for Americans among us. Some of his TV plays may be slight, and even at times banal. But to produce among such an enormous output so many competent dramas is an achievement; and it will surely rank as a major contribution to the establishment of commercial television in Britain.



# GETTING THE VIEWS OUT OF INTERVIEWS

by MAX ROBERTSON



DOING "human interest" outside broadcasts for television, and particularly for a programme like *Panorama*, is a fascinating job. I never know from week to week or even from day to day what are the circumstances or people I'm going to meet with in my next foray from Lime Grove.

People often ask me how the subjects are chosen and how we set about producing the programme. The original idea frequently comes from one of the *Panorama* team, be it producer, director, scriptwriter or assistant; or it filters down from the more rarefied heights of the television service as a somewhat compulsive suggestion; or it may stem from a viewer's letter, even from correspondence received by another programme.

Whatever the source of inspiration, the idea probably has its origin in the daily news, for *Panorama* sets out to be a topical programme; though the kind of story I am assigned to does not necessarily have to be the background to hot news but is often concerned with a trend, seasonal or historical, in habits and behaviour. Among those that came into this category were, for instance, "Visitors to Britain," with which we started the new *Panorama*, "Coffee Bars," "Father Christmas" and "Italians In Bedford." Other stories concern a controversy of the moment, e.g. "Smoking and Lung Cancer," "Caravans," "Polio Immunization," "Litter" and so on.

Having decided the subject, the next step is the venue. There may obviously be only one possible—the place where the particular situation arose. Or the choice may be wide and the decision dictated by a wish to go to one of the regions, partly so that the country as a whole can be represented in the programme and partly for the freshness that a change of scene and accent brings.

The team consists usually of a cameraman, his assistant, the sound operator, the director or scriptwriter and myself. Much of the success of the story will depend on how well members of the team get on with each



*Max Robertson is as much at ease as chairman of a serious studio discussion in Panorama, as when he is working among the general public with "interviewing" camera and microphone.*

other, both in general and on the particular occasion. For good interviewing demands many ingredients, among them good temper, goodwill and, not least, good luck. To lay down hard and fast rules is impossible, for there are so many intangibles present and it only needs the misfusion of these for the interview to be reluctant and limping, or even misfire altogether.

For example, if the cameraman is feeling tired and a little temperamental he may more easily consider that the director or interviewer is being fussy—or worse, telling him his own job. Conversely, the director may feel that he has got to assert himself because the cameraman is usurping some of his responsibility. The sound man, usually the most innocent of all parties, may get a sudden irritation with one or other of his colleagues or with the job, and manifest it by saying that the last "take"—perfect from everyone else's point of view—was no good for sound. The interviewer is just as fallible as his colleagues. He knows that the ultimate onus of the interview lies on him yet he may be feeling anything but ready to cope with the job.

I mention all this, not to give the impression (which would be quite

false) that our teams travel as an uncontrolled rabble, but to stress how important it is for a team to work in complete harmony, disciplining their human foibles; for the slightest jarring note struck by its members invariably affects the nervous apprehension of the interviewee.

Which brings me to the interviewee himself. He may have known his fate for days, hours or perhaps only minutes, but whatever the case he is almost invariably nervous. He may be really frightened, he may outwardly seem confident. You often find the latter with people who are used to teaching, public speaking or lecturing. Inside, however, they are probably still nervous. Not that nervousness is a bad thing: indeed, to have the right degree of it under proper control is essential or, as the actor knows, the result will be flat.

But the nerves must not be so bad that they make the interviewee catch his breath or falter or say things that he doesn't really mean. This is where the interviewer comes in. He may be feeling nervous himself, for he knows he is being watched curiously to see what he will do or say, and he must speak with perfect calm, radiating confidence, so that the victim and those around him will think, "It's all right, we're safe with him." Then they will gradually relax.

*A keen winter-sports participant himself, Max Robertson brings experience and knowledge to interviewing the 1956 British Olympic bobsleigh team for television.*



"Nerves" can spread with the speed of light, and if the interviewer shows any his goose is cooked. If an interview is unsuccessful I always blame myself, for I think that nine times out of ten it is the interviewer's fault. He has failed to give the interviewee the necessary feelings of confidence and sympathy that induce the desire to confide. He may have had odds to overcome, but that, after all, is what he is there for.

Most people, if approached properly, will talk, and I strongly hold the view that there is much of intense interest in the life or work of even the most ordinary man in the street, but a certain amount of luck as well as skill and experience must attend the prospector if he is to strike the vein of pure gold, though many a "colour" may gleam spontaneously through the alluvial wash of an interview.

Broadly speaking, there are two kinds of interviewee, the more natural person who responds best if taken unawares (or at any rate at short notice) and the one with the professional, trained mind which shies away from the impromptu, preferring to know in advance the questions to be asked so that there is time to reason the answers. Of the two the second is like the gold reef that has been proved and assayed, but the first is an unknown quantity, often disappointing but always allowing exciting hopes, sometimes realized, of striking rich.

Each presents a problem to the interviewer. The professional mind, though unlikely to surprise him (except perhaps by deliberate ambush), often demands his greatest concentration to follow its thread and, if necessary, to paraphrase its argument (or by neat question to draw a simpler explanation) if he thinks the average viewer may have missed the point. On the other hand, the more natural interviewee needs nimbleness of mind from the interviewer to seek out his strengths and sustain him in his weaknesses. Oddly enough it is the professional mind, particularly one used to public appearances in other spheres, which seems to be most confident but often betrays extreme nerves as the time for the interview draws near.

Whoever the interviewee, the onus remains on the interviewer, for whom the one golden rule is to be genuinely interested and really listen to what is being said. This sounds easy in principle but is not always in practice, for the interviewer may be concerned with several other things simultaneously, such as keeping an eye on the time, having the next question ready if there is no obvious follow-on, remembering who the next interviewee is and what has to be said about him, and so on.

In the case of *Panorama* with its filmed interviews we are governed by the fact that we cannot afford to waste masses of film. This means that the interview must usually be largely pre-set with agreed question and answer. Then, apart from film wastage, I cannot afford to be side-tracked by



*Television viewers know Max Robertson as a Sportsview personality as well as one of the BBC's Panorama team. Here he is at the last Sportsview "Personality of the Year" party.*

fascinating human glimpses, which are off the particular theme that I am trying to illustrate or follow. I find this hamstringing of what I believe to be the real art of interviewing, namely gradually coaxing good material from shy or reluctant people, very frustrating at times.

Do the opinions that we canvass in this way really mean anything? I think they do. They may not be very significant and they may sometimes be overweighted to one side or another, because the balancing interviews happen to be bad and perhaps drastically cut, but they do show a trend of thought and public opinion.

Sometimes people, especially when nervous, say the first thing that comes into their heads and not perhaps what they had really meant to say. But I am inclined to think that what they meant to say was perhaps what they felt they *ought* to say, and their nervous first-time reaction was their real conviction.

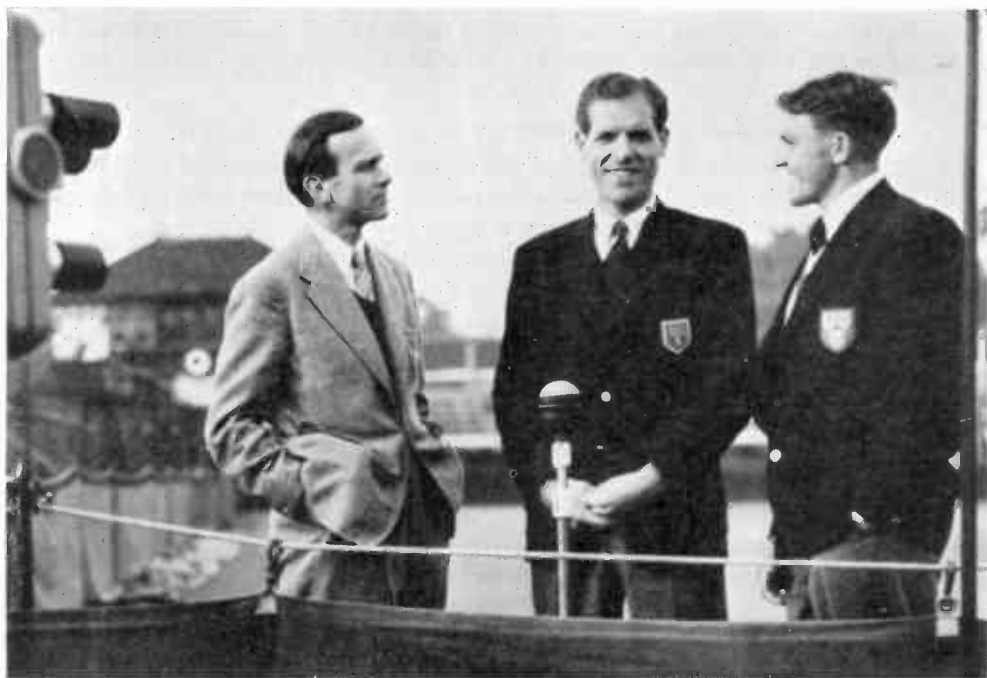
The future of these filmed rapportages lies, I feel convinced, more and

more with catching people unawares when they will say what they really think. We have managed to do it once or twice, notably in "Coffee Bars" and "Road Transport" when, although interviewees knew they were liable to be recorded (though not always certain when), many of them were unaware they were being filmed, as we had been able to conceal our camera. We got some very natural results, though of course they were not used without permission.

However, until a really small and easily portable sound camera is produced, the effort of proper concealment and camouflage is too great and the circumstances in which it can be done too few to warrant attempting the genuine *ad hoc* interview often.

Finally, I come back to the point that, except for the "be interested" precept, there is no golden formula to follow in running down the really first-class interview. It is almost as elusive as the Snark though, contrary to that creature, not to be charmed "with smiles and soap" and sometimes "caught in a commonplace way." A good interview is so much a matter of mood and moment mixed with immediate environment and behaviour. What would have been right at one instant may be utterly wrong the next. That is why trying to achieve it is sometimes exasperating but always fun.

*Tennis commentating is one of Max Robertson's specialist lines in broadcasting. He is shown interviewing players Tony Mottram and Roger Becker, between games in a Davis Cup Match.*



# TOO YOUNG AT THIRTY?

DOREEN TURNEY-DANN *says Middle-Age Monopolises TV Fame*

WHERE are the golden girls and boys of television? If you take a long look at your small screen you'll find it's getting middle-aged spread!

I'm old enough to have stopped asking policemen the way because they look far too young to know the answers—but I'm all for youth having a fling on the youngest entertainment medium of all. Yet if you line up the big names of television most of them will never see—well, let's say 30—again.

The ladies dote on Sir Mortimer Wheeler (65) and Gilbert Harding (49); even that Peter Pan of the small screen, McDonald Hobley, is edging 40. On the feminine side it would be ungallant to deal in actual years, so let's put it this way: the firmest favourites have been in the picture for quite a time. And the woman who has all the other women talking after any TV appearance, Lady Norah Docker, flatly admits she's 50.

Who could step in with the witty repartee, the high-sounding phrase or the diplomatic query in place of Muggeridge (early fifties) Dimbleby (just past 40) and John Ellison (mid-forties)? Only the bow-tie boys and picture-frock girls who croon and use television as a handy shop-window for their gramophone records solidly represent the younger set. And even they come in under the practised guidance of those "old boys" of Tin Pan Alley, Jack Payne, Jack Jackson and Billy Cotton.

Discoveries are nursed through their debut by such broadcasting veterans as Henry Hall, Vic Oliver, Eric Robinson and Kenneth Horne; and it is the exception who survives to play or sing another day.

When the BBC started a family serial it was not the children who stole the scene, but dear old Grandma. She was so popular they had to hurriedly change her age group from the 100 mark so that she could go on perpetually enlivening the Groves.



*McDonald  
Hobley*



*Vic  
Oliver*



*Malcolm  
Muggeridge*



*Eric  
Robinson*

The only person who weighed in on sheer glamour was Sabrina and she had, to say the least, unusual attributes.

No dashing young man has swept into television to give the ladies stars instead of lines before the eyes. ITV tried out a few streamlined juniors with mid-Atlantic accents, but the real impact was still made by those old loves, Leslie Mitchell, Jerry Desmonde, Robert Boothby and Godfrey Winn.

And what about those gentlemen who bear all the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in the weekly serials? Desi Arnaz and Richard Greene are creeping up on 40, Marius Goring and Roy Rogers have passed it and even the indefatigable Jack Webb is in the mid-thirties.

Now where are all the bright and beautiful young things? Just gracing the toothpaste and shampoo advertisements, as far as I can see. The BBC, frightened of scaring the taxpayers with a little dash and dazzle, put age and experience before youth and beauty nearly every time. ITV leans heavily on the established stars like Vera Lynn who sincerely admits to 38. Only the young comedians such as Benny Hill and Dave King seem to prove that youth can have its day on television—and then get swallowed up by stage and films.

Time and the all-seeing eye of the camera have proved that experience is all on television. Even the most accomplished performer gets that sinking feeling when he's left alone before an audience of millions for the first time. So, instead of spending money on long-distance lenses which can pick out the stones in a horse's hooves at 40 yards or rehearsal rooms that look like left-overs from the Festival of Britain, why not start a charm school for television starlets? Teach them not to throw their arms about as if they were learning to semaphore; not to look as if they had come face to face with Frankenstein's monster even if a technician drops a hammer; not to gabble as if they hadn't met another soul for months; not to treat the whole business as seriously as a visit to the dentist.

If you think that television and youth don't mix, let me point to the glowing exception, my own pin-up boy of the box of tricks, Christopher Chataway. *There's* dimples and dignity for you.





*Ruby Murray, an outstanding phenomenon of the quick-fame-and-fortune world of "pop" singing. The unsophisticated Irish girl was discovered in the BBC's Quite Contrary programme.*



## Joan Miller

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JOAN MILLER is not one of those stars who fear to look down from the heights. This highly-charged and appealing dramatic actress from Vancouver, so well-known to viewers of Associated-Rediffusion, with scores of West End roles to her credit as well as a multitude of radio and TV appearances, is not ashamed to recall those days at Alexandra Palace before the war when she was simply "The *Picture Page* Girl."

At a time when viewers were numbered only in thousands, Joan became a favourite as the girl at the dummy switchboard, making linking announcements in Cecil Madden's weekly TV personality parade. Incidentally, she can claim to be the only girl whose face has ever been televised across the Atlantic. It happened in 1938, by an atmospheric freak; engineers on Long Island saw on a TV screen the shadowy outline of a girl. She seemed to be at a switchboard, they said, which confirmed—after a time check—that Joan Miller it was.

In a sense this was a triumphant Transatlantic return for the girl who had begun her elocutionary career teaching telephone operators. From being leading lady in amateur dramatics, Joan headed the Vancouver cast in the Canadian Dramatic Festival at Ottawa in 1934. Her playing of the name part in *Elizabeth the Queen* won her the Bessborough Trophy for the best Canadian actress and opened the way for a dramatic career in Britain.

She braved the weather in a Shakespearean season at the Open Air Theatre, Regents Park, before Cecil Madden invited her to join *Picture Page*. This, and the occasional part in TV plays like *On the Spot* and *Once in a Lifetime*, was paving the way to the fulfilment of her real ambition—to be a classical actress.

It was in 1947 that Joan Miller married Peter Cotes, now senior drama director of Associated-Rediffusion. Before and since their marriage she has starred in many of his stage successes, including *Come Back*, *Little Sheba* and *Pick-up Girl*. Now the partnership continues in television with occasional breaks, as when, in 1956, Joan went to Trinidad to film with Rita Hayworth in *Fire Down Below*.

KENNETH WOLSTENHOLME

*referees the conflict behind*

## SPORTS VIEWING



“TELEVISION sounds the death-knell of sport.”

“Television is the greatest advertisement sport can have!”

Those are two completely opposite views, yet they are often quoted by intelligent and responsible men and women whose love of sport is unquestioned. Such divergence of opinion gives some idea of the enormity of the task facing those who have to decide the future of televised sport—the promoters, and the representatives of the BBC and ITA television organizations.

I am thankful I do not have to make the decision, for this is obviously no simple problem; there is no easy solution lying just around the corner. But there is a glimmer of hope, inasmuch as the statements quoted above are extremes; and we in Britain are not famous for reaching a solution through the medium of extremes.

Take the first statement, about television being deadly to sport. There is ample evidence to suggest that this is by no means true. Not so long ago, for instance, people in this country regarded show jumping as the sport of snobs, indulged in only by the country gentry. There was supposed to be nothing in it for the ordinary man and woman.

Television has dispelled such ideas. Today, show jumping is one of our most popular sports, and I have heard violent arguments in pubs as to the respective merits of Dawn Palethorpe and Pat Smythe, arguments just as heated as those concerning the merits of Stanley Matthews and Tom Finney. People from all walks of life, from all income groups, sit enthralled as the big competitions are televised; indeed, the jumpers themselves could learn something from watching how we viewers rise in our seats as the horses approach the jumps!

More important still from the promoters' point of view, attendance

figures at show-jumping contests now regularly reach "House Full" size.

The same applies to athletics. Before the war you had no difficulty in getting in to see the A.A.A. Championships, and the officials were only too glad to see some spectators. Today I get inundated with requests from viewers who want tickets for the big athletic meetings! They have seen the sport on television. Now they want to see it in the flesh.

It may be claimed, with some justification, that both show jumping and athletics were minor sports which needed publicity, and that this cannot be said about football, cricket, tennis and the other established sports. However, the television cameras did not keep people away from the summer Test matches against Australia. The chances of obtaining a ticket for Wimbledon are just as remote as ever, despite extensive and brilliant BBC television coverage.

And long before the date of the F.A. Cup Final, Sir Stanley Rous stated that the Football Association alone had received more than 700,000 applications for the 100,000 tickets, although it had been announced that the whole game would be televised, and that the BBC picture would even be transmitted by the three commercial networks.

So it can hardly be claimed that big sport is being killed by television. It is, however, equally wrong to jump to the opposite view that the new



*Miss Pat Smythe on Tosca. Only a few years ago, horse jumping was a "minority attraction". Televising the horse shows has made them a national spectacle, and filled the arenas with spectators.*



*Dr. Roger Bannister has been engaged by the BBC to assist with TV commentaries at the great athletic meetings. Here, in the commentator's box at White City, he works on the British Games.*

medium can do no possible harm to sport. There are obvious dangers in the indiscriminate televising of sporting events.

The public leaves no doubt that it demands more and more sporting events on television, claiming the right, for instance, to see Football League games each Saturday afternoon. But is the public justified in claiming such a right? Does the buying of a television set and a licence give us the right to sit back and demand that everything be brought to us in our homes?

Would it not be more correct to say that those of us who enjoy watching sporting events on television have a duty to support those sports by paying our money at the turnstiles? If we do not recognize that duty, then at least we may be running the risk of killing the sport, which would leave the fireside fan with no sport to watch!

To me it has always been incredible that anyone should think a £3 licence fee entitles him to indiscriminate televising of sport, and to TV programmes of his own personal choice all hours of every day. It is as well to remember that the BBC Television Service takes only £2 of the licence



*Commercial television made an attempt to provide TV excitement by promoting water polo matches. Associated-Rediffusion put up a trophy for a series of games as part of its Cavalcade of Sport programmes.*

fee and has to pay 15 per cent to the Government, leaving just 34s. a year—that is just eightpence a week for each set. And it is generally accepted that there are four viewers to each set.

When one considers those figures and realizes that we pay roughly the price of one cigarette per person per week for our TV services, it begins to appear that our television entertainment is perhaps too cheap.

So let us not be led into any extremes. Let us modify our demands and realize, as those who are charged with organizing sport on television have realized, that extremist views are dangerous.

One thing we must never forget—that only sport of a really high standard is acceptable to the viewer, and no doubt the promoter feels the same way. Events must be worthy of television. Immeasurable harm can be done by televising a bad game of football, a poor athletics meeting, or a dull cricket match. Show jumping and athletics have leapt to popularity because the meetings shown on television have been good meetings, with a high standard of performance.

We must also concede the point that if people could sit at home on a Saturday afternoon and watch a soccer game between, say, Manchester United and Birmingham City, they would not be so keen, especially if the weather was bad, on leaving their homes and going to watch a local Third Division match.

Therefore, one could not reasonably object if the Football League

demanding that no more than the last thirty or forty-five minutes of a League game be televised on a Saturday afternoon, with the viewers not told which game was going on the air.

Equally, though, it could be claimed unreasonable for, say, a mid-week game to be banned from the screens simply because another match was being played at the same time; for the good done by television would easily outweigh the harm done by a possible reduced gate at the non-televised game.

I remember one very interesting match that was banned from the screens because a Third Division game was being played at the same time. Yet only 3,000 people bothered to watch the Third Division match! A game that could attract only 3,000 people was allowed to ruin the enjoyment and entertainment of millions. This, it seems to me, was the result of extremist fears.

For the really big events, such as the Cup Final, the solution is fairly simple. All other football on that day is stopped, so nobody's gate can be ruined. The old British solution of compromise can thus ensure that such sporting events, which are really national occasions, are not lost to tele-

*M. Ellis throwing the hammer in the 1956 British Games at the White City. Athletics have attracted a considerably larger audience since TV cameras started covering the meetings. This greater public interest has in turn increased the keenness of competitors.*



vision. That same method of compromise might well solve the whole problem of television and sport. Viewers will get their sport, but will have to realize their duty towards the sport which entertains them, and television itself can help sport considerably.

Take, for instance, that newest and most exciting development, Eurovision. Sporting events held abroad can now be brought into our own homes, and through this medium Britain can lose that isolationist attitude which in the past has done more harm to our sport than all the television in the world.

For too long we remained blissfully ignorant of the rise of the Continentals, especially in football, and when crushing defeat struck in match after match it was all the more difficult to bear. But Eurovision can ensure that such a head-in-the-sand attitude will never exist again. In recent years we have seen the brilliance of the Hungarians, the Brazilians, the Uruguayans and others. We have seen the perfection of the World Cup contests.

Now we can keep in touch with European football by watching the big international matches—Italy v. Germany, Germany v. France and the like

*For the first time, the 1956 F.A. Cup Final was covered by both ITV and BBC. Viewers saw Birmingham's goalkeeper Gil Merrick dive to the ball at the feet of Manchester City's inside right, Hayes.*





*A unique sporting entertainment is caught by television when the lively Harlem Globetrotters visit London to play basketball. A game of amusing antics as well as skill, it can always be relied upon to make a viewing high-light.*

—and in the near future we might even see some of the league games from Europe.

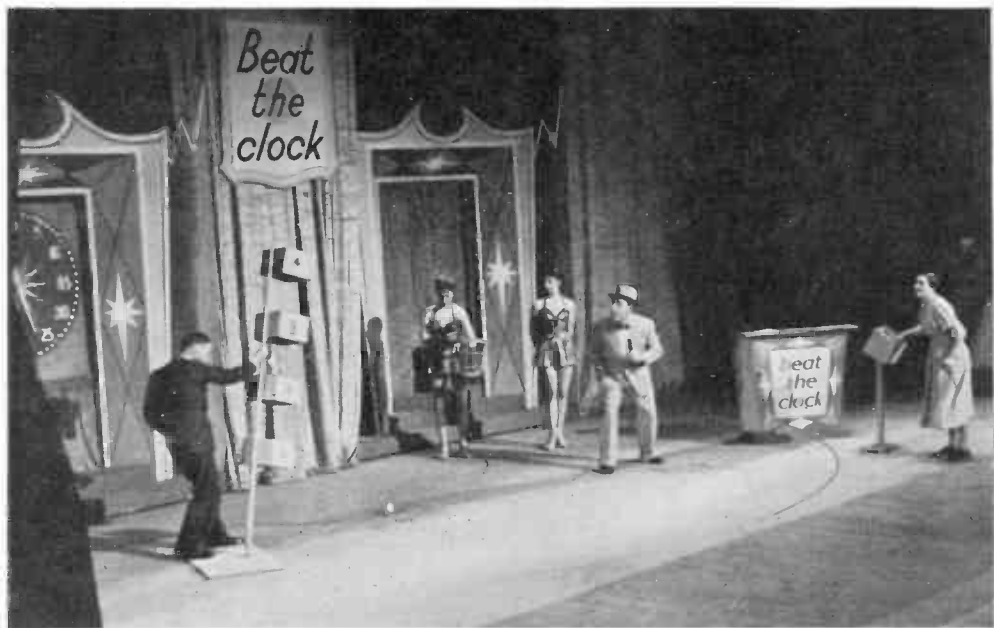
It would do us good to sit back on Sunday afternoons (when the Continental matches are played) and watch such games as Milano v. Fiorentina; F.C.

Austria v. F.C. Wacker; Rheims v. Racing Club. Similarly, it would do sports fans across the Channel good to sit back on Saturdays (when they have no football themselves) and see the best of our Football League fare.

We could then compare the general standards instead of only the standards of the national teams. We could learn more and more from each other. Clubs, both big and small, could use TV sessions for coaching purposes. Spectators would be introduced to a different kind of football and would learn to appreciate the true art of the game more than they do at present. And this might contribute to their keenness to pay at the turnstiles to see a match.

In short, television would provide first-class entertainment for its viewers, and at the same time render a valuable service to sport. That, surely, is what everyone wants.





## IT'S THE MONEY THEY'RE AFTER!

THE first year of commercial television in Britain has established the cash-prize quiz programme. For the few able to take part in these contests, there is the likelihood of leaving the studio wealthier. For the millions of viewers, there is the excitement of seeing ordinary people go through hoops in order to gain what everybody wants—money.



If you can catch tennis balls in boxes on a pole (above), you can get on your way to winning hundreds of pounds. Mr. and Mrs. Haynes, of Birmingham, (left) won £1,300 in this *Beat the Clock* show, compered by Tommy

Trinder. The test of knowledge on specific subjects has also become a popular way to TV fortune. That erudite history student, Plantagenet Somerset Fry, was the first big money winner to catch the nation's attention. He is shown with compere Nicholas Parsons.



A mere handful of pound notes, say a dozen, is the lure in another quiz show, *Guess My Secret (below)*, which has launched Ben Lyon as a genial and admirable quiz-master. The team with him on the occasion pictured are Johnny Morland, Catherine Boyle, Dick Bentley and Andree Melly.





CANON BRYAN GREEN

*writes on the importance of*

## **“IS THIS YOUR PROBLEM?”**

IT WAS perhaps inevitable that there should be some difference of opinion as to the wisdom of the BBC in broadcasting *Is This Your Problem?* on television. A programme which discusses people's most personal problems, perhaps with the person concerned on the screen, is audacious; but it is only foolhardy if it exploits worry and suffering to gain sentimental and emotional results in its viewing audience. If it instructs, and spreads human knowledge among the viewers, then it seems to me that the programme performs a wholly good service.

I do not consider that the way the BBC has handled *Is This Your Problem?* has made it morbid; nor has it been the grosser kind of “entertainment” which is obtained by peeping through private keyholes. Although it has been able to engross the interest of viewers, at the same time it has been instructive.

Lots of people are glad to have help in their private affairs, if they can get it anonymously. Of millions who viewed *Is This Your Problem?* many were in fact seeking guidance for themselves, in the anonymity of their own homes. I would even count the programme a blessing had it done no more than release the shyness and inhibitions which sometimes submerge a problem present in a family. I have no doubt that the programme did do this in some instances, as well as advise those whose actual cases were dealt with.

Many people do not know how to go about obtaining advice. Some just do not like parsons and won't confide in them; plenty fear psychiatrists; many, I am afraid, do not trust their friends. For such, broadcasting, with its intimate entry into the home, seems to me an ideal medium for giving help. And television seems to be the very best form of broadcasting, because you can see your panel of advisers.



*Edgar Lustgarten and Edana Romney, who devised *Is This Your Problem?* and appeared in it, are respectively a journalist trained in law and a well-known actress.*

I know that many absolutely sincere men and women perform public service by broadcasting on sound radio. But on television anybody's sincerity can be seen immediately—and the reverse spotted as quickly. This was of prime importance to *Is This Your Problem?* because unless it had integrity it would have failed to the length of doing incalculable harm.

Nobody, least of all the BBC, wanted to give the idea that the panel was infallible; we were not there to be made a row of tin gods. This is not the age of magic oracles, and ultimately people must solve their own problems. The shades of personality are infinite, and innate obstinacy, stubbornness or laziness can obstruct the solution of a problem in one person, while in another the identical trouble can be resolved. We did not succeed in helping all who came to us, for this as well as other reasons. And I am quite sure that sometimes we were not quite aware of the true nature of the problem brought, and failed to help all we should.

The BBC discovered that about half of the cases dealt with were in fact fully and happily resolved as a result of the panel's advice, coupled with the private talks we always had with the people afterwards. Many were put in touch with the right people to help them in their own districts.

I am, of course, concerned here only with the general impact on viewers of this programme, not with any criticisms that may have been made on details of its actual presentation. Some people have said that it tended to arouse morbid fears in viewers. It is true that some persons—nobody can

possibly say how many—may have imagined themselves suffering worries and troubles akin to those shown. This is a psychopathic condition willed on themselves by people wishing to be dramatic and wanting to gain attention for themselves. But I am convinced that any harm done in this limited way—if at all—was easily outweighed by the good service rendered by the programme.

We have got to be realistic about these things. Whatever is broadcast can be taken wrongly by somebody. Books on sex can do harm; no parson can possibly deny this. But I'm quite certain, from experience of people for thirty years, that such books do a vast amount of good. Unless such risks are taken, the good of the majority is thwarted for the sake of minorities.

I hope that *Is This Your Problem?* will not be regarded as an isolated experiment. It bears an important relation to the development of TV broadcasting in a field vital to our future wellbeing. I agree with the Rev. George Reindorp, who has said elsewhere that he would like to see TV religious programmes dealing with people's everyday problems. This, of course, would be an extension of present religious broadcasting, which, within its limits, is admirable.

But the televising of church services, epilogues and religious talks is not enough. It is a good and necessary backbone for television's religious work, but this sphere of BBC activity urgently needs a few lively arms and legs eager to move forward in new realms of expression.

*"Televising church services is not enough," says Canon Green, appealing for an experimental outlook in religious programmes. This is a TV camera rehearsal in King's College Chapel, Cambridge.*



*Something of the impact of religious belief came out of Richard Dimbleby's At Home talk at Lambeth Palace with the Archbishop of Canterbury. The position of Princess Margaret was discussed on that occasion.*



The visual possibilities of religious broadcasting have not yet been seized on by the BBC Television Service, whose programmes are still too much like the ordinary radio religious features performed in front of the cameras. I am quite sure that the BBC has not got beyond this elementary stage in TV religious programmes simply because the men and women concerned have neither the time nor the money available to extend their operations.

Religious broadcasting in television needs more staff, and not all parsons. It requires expert producers, scriptwriters and scenic designers, film technicians and recording experts, and, for all I know, special electronic wizards as well. All these should be working in it, for the clergy's responsibility must be the material of the programme, and not the method of presentation.

At a time when all churches are experiencing a distinguishable revival in religion, is it too much to ask our State broadcasting organization to back the newest power in religious guidance—television itself, no less—by giving it a staff and a budget worthy of the campaign?

If this were done, I am sure that television could not only assist people, whether religious seekers or not, in coping with life's setbacks; but it could also vivify the Christian teaching and especially the example of modern men and women living successfully by that teaching, in ways worthy of the present challenge to each one of us.



## Stephen Murray

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FEW actors have revealed more about themselves in a chance remark than did Stephen Murray when BBC TV producer Alan Bromly asked him to play Dr. Howard Latimer in the Francis Durbridge serial, *My Friend Charles*.

"Splendid," he said. "For once to be a normal, cheerful man!"

Listeners and viewers need not ask why this distinguished actor is so often cast as the skeleton at the feast, the misunderstood man, the man with the chip on his shoulder. The reason is that the mantle of gloom fits Stephen Murray superbly well—he has played Hamlet in sound radio and Macbeth in television.

"Hamlet? I would much rather be the clown," he says, thereby reversing the popular conception of every comic actor's private tragedy. "I never give up hope of escaping from heavy Third Programme parts and getting the chance to frisk in light comedy."

Apart from the Durbridge serial, television has offered him little on the light side. In *Montserrat* he was inevitably Izquierdo the Colonel, heavy-jowled representative of Imperial Spain imposing mental torture on the young Montserrat. And in Robert Ardrey's *Thunder Rock* it was the withdrawn and tormented lighthouse-keeper Charleston, haunted by his visions, that Stephen Murray projected with terrifying intensity.

Seen as himself, Stephen Murray looks younger than his years—he was born in Lincolnshire in 1912—and not long ago was paid the sort of compliment every actor prays for. "Excuse me," said a taxi-driver. "You remind me of Stephen Murray on TV; d'you happen to be his son?"

A silver medallist of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Murray made his first stage appearance in *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, in April, 1933. His migration to London followed in a few months; by November he was starring in *Cabbages and Kings* at the Ambassadors Theatre, and from then on could be accounted a member of that select circle of actors who are always busy.

He is married to former actress Joan Butterfield and they live in Hampstead, London, with their 13-year-old daughter Amanda.



# YANKEE DOODLE TV DANDY

*Some American Imports for British Viewers*

by MICHAEL ACKWORTH

ETHEL and Lucy gaze at the gown for sale in the department store. The saleswoman has moved away to fetch another model. Says Ethel to Lucy, "You didn't ask the price."

"You don't ask the price in a place like this," Lucy replies. Ethel asks, "You don't?" "Of course not," says Lucy, "you wait until they turn their backs and then you sneak a look at the price tag."

This kind of repartee, from the American TV series, *I Love Lucy*, is now recognizable to thousands of people in Britain. The style of the conversation—question and answer, and every answer a gag—echoes in the minds of ITV viewers about as familiarly as the local church bells. Such dialogue, moreover, is the staple script ingredient not only of *I Love Lucy*, but also of *I Married Joan* and of *The Burns and Allen Show*—both BBC imports from the U.S. In fact, either Joan or Gracie could have uttered the lines of Lucy in the conversation quoted, and the betting is Joan and Gracie would have got the same audience laughter, neither more nor less, that Lucy did when she originally spoke them.

The script, Lucy, is almost an exact copy of Gracie, and Joan is a mirror-reflection of both. Only the situations differ, and were it possible (let alone endurable) to see all the programmes in each series, we would certainly find Lucy involved in situations identical to some of Gracie's, and Joan caught in identical circumstances too. The sole individual flavour in these three American imports comes from the varied personalities and different performance style of the three actresses playing the zany wives.

And the addicts and critics can argue about that until some TV station invents a new kind of domestic-comedy series about a widower, or a Turk with fifty wives!

The affinity between the three series comes from the intense competition



*I Love Lucy. Lucille Ball (right) is obviously on the brink of one of those situations which American scriptwriters make to measure for her. Desi Arnaz and Vivian Vance are with her in this scene.*

of American television. Let one network, backed by one advertiser, put up a successful new series; then the other networks will try to better it, not by producing something original, but by devising the identical kind of show—only, they hope, a better variant of the original. The philosophy is: If people flock to view Gracie Allen, they'll flock to view any similar dizzy-wife character. And apparently in the States there are sufficient viewers watching all three of these domestic series, weekly, to keep the programmes paying propositions for the advertisers sponsoring them.

But only for a time, it seems. *I Married Joan* was doing all right in America until the great *Disneyland* series started on a competing network at the same time. *Joan* was then given the slow clap by programme men and advertisers as being "too close to the pattern of other similar shows."

In Britain, *I Love Lucy*, on the independent channel, quickly won an enquiring and delighted audience. As it was networked to the expanding ITV areas, first Midlands, then North, *Lucy* intrigued and won more converts. But in the South, where she has been on view longest, there is now developing a strong cleavage of opinion between viewers of *Lucy*, and those of Gracie. Some say that Lucille Ball, as *Lucy*, is the actress with by far the widest range and deepest subtleties; but that George Burns does more for the Gracie shows than Desi Arnaz ever does for *Lucy*'s.

Certainly, on BBC, Burns and Allen have scored a considerable success. They were introduced on British screens during their sixth year on Ameri-

can TV. It is in fact 24 years since George Burns and Gracie Allen first invaded American radio with, to quote an American hand-out, "Gracie's whacky-isms and George's pained acceptance of her nitwitty treatment of people and things."

Burns and Allen were a well-known American vaudeville act who had toured the vaudeville theatres. For ten years they used the gag-and-tell-'em-stories formula on the radio. They then decided to act the married couple, though in fact they had been married sixteen years. In this way their radio series became a domestic comedy, with situations which, their publicity boys said, were frequently based on episodes in the Burns private household.

This series became visual when they transferred to television in 1950, first working from studios in New York, but soon moving to Hollywood where they now produce all their series. Oddly enough, it was in Britain years before the war that Burns and Allen made their radio debut—with the BBC.

Gracie Allen was born in San Francisco, one of four daughters of a song-and-dance act then engaged in that city. By the time Gracie was three she could talk, and was taken on the stage. Not until after schooldays, at 14, however, did she go in for the stage, starting as a dancer with her three sisters. She tired of the stage and went to a business college to learn secretarial work. While there, a girl friend persuaded Gracie to see a vaudeville act in which a male comic was supported by a "straight" girl assistant. The assistant was leaving the act, and Gracie went backstage to see the man comic; she got the job. The man, of course, was George Burns.

Burns had also been in show business since childhood. Born Nathan



*I Married Joan. Joan Davis and Jim Backus are the stars of the American domestic series with which the BBC has replied to ITV's importation of the more famous "Lucy". The difference is largely in the star's personality.*



*The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show. Another BBC import from America, which has scored a success with British audiences. The BBC has a warm spot towards it, for George and Gracie originally broadcast on British radio.*

Birnbaum of New York, he organized a group of child singers known as the Peewee Quartet. He became a trick roller-skater, a dancing teacher, and a comic. When Gracie joined him, George carried on being the funny part of the act. Soon he found that Gracie got more laughs than he did, and switched the act, making Gracie the comic.

After three years going round the vaudeville theatres, he married her, in 1926. They have a 12-roomed home in Beverly Hills, with a swimming pool. They have two adopted children, Sandra Jean, now 22, and Ronald John, 21.

A quite different American import is *Dragnet*. This crime-detection series is known in America as a "documentary." It was indeed the first TV series outside comedy to become a richly paying property to a sponsor. The American term "documentary" is perhaps applied here a little more loosely than at the BBC, where it labels programmes which are not only "real life," but also have social significance.

True enough, *Dragnet* draws its story material out of the real-life records of the Los Angeles Police Department. But there the documentation normally ends; the bulk of the stories have little social significance.

*Dragnet* first hit American viewers in 1952, after running three years in radio form. Hand in hand with the programme's appeal, and therefore its success, has flourished the popularity of Jack Webb, the producer, director and star of the series. In twelve years Webb has zoomed from a stagestruck clothing salesman to a multi-million-dollar institution.

His series has gathered more awards than any other programme of its type, and has been commended by civic leaders, safety officials and the general public. His publicists claim that more than 40,000,000 Americans follow *Dragnet* weekly, on radio and television. Say the publicists: "A panoramic view of Webb's early life would suggest a career in delinquency instead of one devoted to creating entertainment which defends law enforcement." Jack Webb has only a vague and confused memory of his father. He was

*Dragnet. The poker-faced Jack Webb is one of the phenomena of American television. A downtown Los Angeles boy, surrounded by misfortune, his acting in this crime series has made him a fortune.*



an only child, in a broken family. His mother and grand-mother shared his raising, on Poor Law grants. They lived in a run-down, third-floor rear one-room flat in downtown Los Angeles.

"Lurking in every doorway and corner of this neighbourhood were the scars of delinquency," asserts the *Dragnet* publicity bureau. It adds: "Jack Webb still carries eye-witness memories of open bootlegging, shakedown rackets, hi-jacking, the 1933 California earthquake, and a childhood plagued by ill health."

An itinerant musician taught Webb a love of music, and after a period as a salesman, it was musical interest which took him into radio. He did most jobs, though, from announcing to script-writing. Jack Webb is 37. His first marriage, by which he has two young daughters, failed. He lives with his second wife, and the family, in Hollywood.

A breakdown of the *Dragnet* series being shown by ITV in Britain reveals that homicide has been found the most promising story field; there are more programmes based on this crime than on any other. Robbery comes in second favourite, followed by juvenile crime—possibly because

*Liberace. Here he is, the much adored and much pilloried showman, away from the candelabra and sentimental violins. And to Sue Roberts he's just a boss, like any other secretary's employer.*





*The Life of Riley. Once started on the American import trend, the BBC went on and added this feature to its output. Original because it centres on the husband rather than the wife, it has made William Bendix popular in Britain.*

of its emotional pull on women. At other times, but not too frequently, Webb concerns himself with fraud, hit-and-run, forgery, and narcotic cases.

The other bizarre strand of American television which the introduction of ITV has woven into British viewing is *Liberace*. Considering the limited area in which ITV functioned for its first six months, it is astonishing how *Liberace* became a headline name, and practically a household word, throughout the nation even before the Midlands and the North spread his screen picture wider afield.

It is plain that this candleabra-lit pianist-vocaliser divides the viewers into strongly defined camps of adorers and denigrators. The British press has mainly denigrated, mildly enough but scoring humour in the doing. Editors and TV columnists receive protests from *Liberace* fans whenever a word is printed which is unfavourable to him. The "for" and "against" camps seem almost cleanly divided without over-lap between women and men respectively. And it is claimed that younger women, while not expressing opposition, do not wax as adoring as middle-aged and older women.

America's magazine *Life* hit off the *Liberace* TV sideshow succinctly

a year or two ago, this way: "To many people Liberace is funny when he sits down to the piano—but he doesn't mean to be. Possessed of a flashy, flailing technique and gobs of showmanship, he plays classics with schmaltz and races through the Minute Waltz in 37 seconds. Music critics laugh, or groan, but Wladziu Valentino Liberace, who started playing at 14 in a saloon, is at 35 the biggest solo attraction in U.S. concert halls, a TV star, and one of the biggest sellers of record albums."

Reporting halls filled with sighing and applauding women, *Life* added, "One less affected at a recent concert in Milwaukee was his old piano teacher who recalled that Liberace once inspired her to toss a folder of music at him. 'I hit him, too,' she said." This magazine headlined its investigation into Liberace, "Hamming it up in Concert Hall." The *Pittsburgh Press* headlined a Liberace local visit, "He's Silly and Sissy to Bobbysoxers, But Mums Send him 27,000 Valentines."

The first broadcast of the Liberace feature on American television was in 1953, in Denver. It is now networked through 180 American cities.

Ever astute in extending his goodwill, Liberace was the first of the American TV stars to come to Britain especially to meet personally his newly won legion of viewers. It is perhaps surprising that some of the others have not capitalised their new audience in the same way. But, on the other hand, perhaps it is not so surprising—because the hard truth is that the British run of these American series is regarded as small beer in the United States.

*Lassie. Different to the normal run of cowboy series imported from the States, the stories of "the Wonder Dog" have won affection from ITV's viewing children. Proud master of Lassie is Tom Rettig.*





## Eamonn Andrews



How few people can be relied on always to be "equal to the occasion!" Eamonn Andrews owes much to this priceless faculty. Where did he get it?

Partly, no doubt, from a give-and-take career which has thrown him in contact with fellow-humans of every type in every contingency. But surely, too, it came from the fairies that danced at his birth on December 19, 1922, in Dublin, in that same Synge Street in which Bernard Shaw was born.

At 17, before he left school, he was already a public figure as Juvenile Boxing Champion of All Ireland. And already his thoughts were quick and dexterous as his punches. While landing a £1-a-week job as an insurance clerk, he was persuading Radio Eireann to take him on as boxing commentator. After his first broadcast, in 1939, he was soon turning his lively tongue to other sports as well. By 1945 he could forget fire insurance and make radio his living.

To talking he now added writing, with a radio column in an Irish newspaper. He wrote news and made it, too: disc-jockeying, scripting radio shows, turning out short stories and interviewing celebrities at the microphone.

By 1949 the voice with the brogue had echoed across the Irish Channel, soon to be followed by its owner for a stage tour with the Joe Loss Band Show in a "Double or Nothing" quiz. This was timely. The BBC was looking for a quiz-master as successor to the famous Stewart Macpherson in *Ignorance is Bliss*. Against fierce competition, the tall, husky Irishman got the job, and in February, 1950, British listeners heard him for the first time.

In 1951 Eamonn married charming, dark-haired Miss Grania Burke from Dublin. One day they hope to have a house of their own with a garden. But just now they live in a flat in Lancaster Gate. Eamonn, though he has so much of it, is not fond of "night life." He prefers sitting at home in his slippers, talking to a few friends. Can one blame him?



## PLAYS FROM THE ITV PRODUCTION-LINE

THE coming of commercial television, with four production companies making programmes, has increased the voracious appetite of television for plays. In fact, there can now be said to be a mass-production line for TV drama operating in this country. Every week of the year, ITV studios are producing plays, either live or on film.



*The veteran comedy star Jack Buchanan (above) appeared in an Associated-Rediffusion production of *Castle in the Air*. With him are Valerie White and William Kendall. The scene on the left is from an interesting series of ITV revivals of the old Victorian melodramas. "Farewell, until eternity!" cries Helen Shingler in this moment of *East Lynne*, with Peter Williams.*

The Last Reunion was an ITV play about a war-time bomber crew given a suicidal mission. It provided all the tenseness of restrained RAF heroics with (left to right) Geoffrey Chater, Michael Gough, Barry Keegan, Basil Appleby, Duncan Macintyre.



The popular TV actor Patrick Barr starred with the BBC's television drama discovery Jeannette Sterke (right) in the ITV play Flight One-Zero-One, with (left) Marne Maitland and George Coulouris.

Ron Randell, provocative "gay-boy" of What's My Line? memories, turned up as a straight actor in ITV's play about a philanderer, Dead or Alive. Patricia Driscoll was the woman in the case.



*Jean Kent and Clifford Evans (Michael Craig behind) in the Associated-Rediffusion production of A Call on the Widow, a thriller adapted from the film The Woman in Question. The play was notable for Miss Kent's performance and the long-sustained passages between her and Mr. Evans.*



*Boris Karloff (right) in Colonel March of Scotland Yard, a filmed series which has helped to meet the great demand for TV plays on ITV. In this scene "Col. March" uses hypnotism to gain a clue.*

*An outstanding star of ITV drama, Joan Miller. Miss Miller is remembered for her acting in such plays as The Haven and The Woman in a Dressing Gown. She was away from ITV for a while, filming with Rita Hayworth and Robert Mitchum.*





*One of the earliest ITV plays was *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which was mounted with splendour and given those top stars of the British theatre, Margaret Leighton, John Gielgud and Edith Evans.*

*A Boy About the Place was a play giving Paul Carpenter (left) a straight dramatic part. One of Associated - Television's "Television Playhouse" series, it also starred the popular actress Greta Gynt, with George Rose (centre).*



*Considerable controversy—and praise—was aroused by Associated - Rediffusion's original TV play *One*. In the genre of the BBC's memorable 1984, this futuristic-psychological drama had Raymond Francis, Mary Jones, and (background) Kenneth Hyde, Kenneth Griffith and Donald Pleasance.*



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## YOUR FRIENDS THE STARS

# Richard Greene

ON a night in 1937, one of those fabulous beings, a film talent scout, was in the audience at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, watching a touring company doing *French Without Tears*. He was struck by the stage presence and easy assurance of one young actor in particular, Richard Greene by name—then only 19 and earning £8 a week. That night Greene was started on a trail that led straight to Hollywood and thence by chequered courses to the wild hunting grounds of TV's Sherwood Forest.

The future Robin Hood of TV so impressed the talent scout that he arranged for Greene to be flown to California for a film test which won him a star part in his first picture—the romantic lead opposite Loretta Young in *Four Men and a Prayer*. Directly the film was complete, Greene joined Sonja Henie as her leading man in *My Lucky Star*. The two pictures established the good-looking Plymouth-born actor as a world star.

He stayed on in America to make several more pictures, but in 1940 threw up his Hollywood career to return to Britain and join the Forces. He served in the Royal Armoured Corps and was a lieutenant in the 27th Lancers when discharged on medical grounds in 1944. A year later he had his first London stage part in *The Desert Rats*.

Since then Richard Greene has performed a sort of human shuttle service across the Atlantic, making films in England and America. *The Adventures of Robin Hood* in ITV are the first filmed programmes he has made for television, though he has starred in America in a number of "live" TV productions, including *Coriolanus* and *Berkeley Square*.

By a close study of the medieval lore of the 12th century, Richard Greene has made himself the embodiment of the historical Robin Hood and the immortal hero of Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe." He has learnt how to wield the long sword and cross-bow and such ancient weapons as the quarterstaff and morgenstern. Above all, at Nettlefold Studios he has learnt, with his company of "outlaws," how to complete a 26-minute programme every 4½ days—a modern feat to match the deeds of Sherwood!

ERIC SYKES, *Scriptwriter of Many Popular TV Comedy Shows, Expounds His Views on*

## THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION

ON Wednesday the phone rang and, without wishing to boast of my agility, out of 24 writers I was the first to reach it. Assuming a different voice in case it was the bank, I said "Yes?" And before the hungry gaze of eight pairs of eyes (some of them had gone back to sleep) I accepted the job of writing an article for this illustrious Annual. I have refrained from mentioning the name of this illustrious Annual in case they do not publish the article. After all, why should I give them a plug if they don't play ball with me? What a vicious circle it is!

Nevertheless, I have been asked to write about the future of television and, being paid by the word, I find I have rather a lot to say on this subject. However, in order to give the article as wide a range as possible, I decided to call in some experts. Of these, Mr. Spike Milligan\*, when asked to give his views on television, deliberated for a moment. He carefully lit a fresh rock bun, then gazed thoughtfully at the wreaths of black smoke. His voice carried the weight of experience as he murmured: "Where can you get those shirts that you iron but don't have to wash?" This motion was strongly seconded by Mr. Ray Galton\*\*, who is also an expert.

Mr. Alan Simpson\*\*\*, who is another expert, called for a show of hands, two new writers were assigned to it, and during next year you may see a television show called *Hands*. All this business was dispatched within the space of three minutes, which will give you some idea of how we got where we are. Incidentally, we hope to be moving soon—it all depends on the neighbour's petition.

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\* A writer of scripts.

\*\* Another writer of scripts.

\*\*\* And another.

It was at this point in the discussion that Mr. Frankie Howerd walked in. This was unusual because it was still morning. He unslung his golf bag and, selecting a driver, he carefully teed up on a corner of the desk, and before anyone could applaud, made a magnificent drive. The ball, too quick for the eye, sped straight and true, catching the secretary behind the left ear. It was all done so magnificently, we could hardly contain our admiration.

The secretary has been a wonderful typist ever since, but even now there is some controversy over the shot. Mr. Spike Milligan, who is an expert, claims that he needn't have used the driver, and that a brassie would have had a better effect. Mr. Ray Galton, another expert, stated flatly that he should never have used a wood at all, but the shot called for a spoon, or even a knife and fork. Mr. Alan Simpson, an expert in these matters, called for a show of hands, and another two new writers were put to work on it.

With the knowledge that I was covering ground rapidly, I called on Mr. Harry Secombe, Mr. Peter Sellers and Mr. Tony Hancock, and on the future of television Mr. Harry Secombe expounded his theory. It was masterly, he chose his words carefully, and one got the feeling he had given the matter deep thought.

After 25 minutes he concluded his speech and we all took our hats off. I wish you could have been there.

Secondly, Mr. Peter Sellers elaborated on the theme, and Mr. Tony Hancock joined in. Mr. Spike Milligan, who is an expert, unobtrusively moved to the organ and gradually the music swelled to a great crescendo. All praise to the future of television! Mr. Max Bygraves rapidly took the collection.

So there you have the opinion of the experts. On these people rests the future of television, and into their capable hands we commit it. Incidentally, the BBC turned down the show called *Hands* on the grounds that they were already negotiating for a show called *Feet*. This does not worry us unduly as it is being written by the same writers who created a television show called *Legs*, and are at this moment hibernating in our Vacant Writers File.

It only remains for me now to sum up, and a difficult assignment it is, especially as I happen to be playing tennis at the moment. However, the general feeling seems to be that all people who work in television in this present day are pioneers, except Jim Groin, and he very wisely left in 1860; but I think it is as well to remember his last words which were, "There's no traffic on this road."

The driver says he had no time to pull up. And on this note I resume the third set.





*Adrienne Corri, favourite actress who has played in both BBC and ITV plays, recalled here in the dramatic role she took opposite Alistair Sim in ITV's The Anatomist.*

# THE INDEPENDENT TV NETWORK

## *How the Post Office is Helping to Build up the ITA Service*

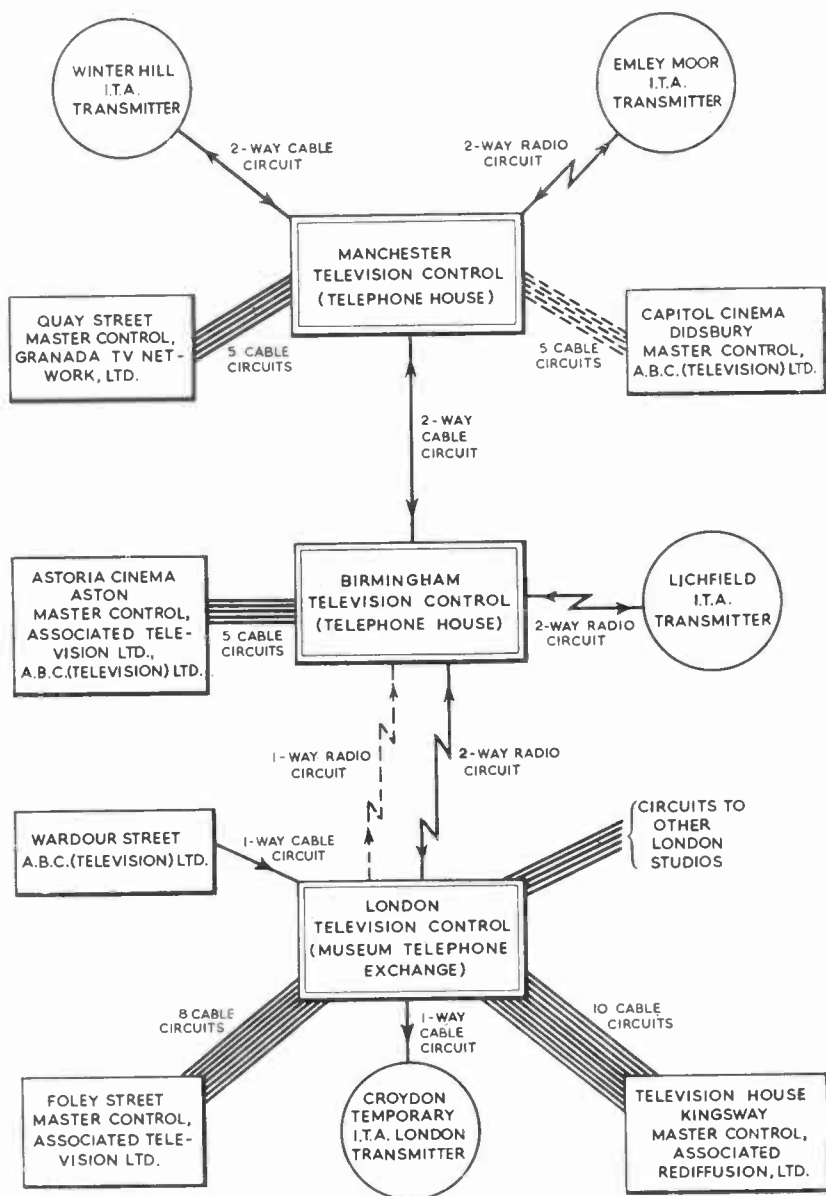
AN elaborate network of vision and sound circuits has been set up by the Post Office to enable the ITA to operate its independent television service. This network is routed through the main Post Office repeater stations, and links the ITA transmitters at London, Lichfield and Winter Hill (Lancashire) to the various contractors.

Vision and sound circuits in the London network radiate from the Post Office Television Control at the Museum Telephone Exchange near Tottenham Court Road. Television House in Kingsway, which accommodates the master control of Associated-Rediffusion Ltd. and also Independent Television News, is linked by two balanced cables to Museum, yielding ten vision circuits.

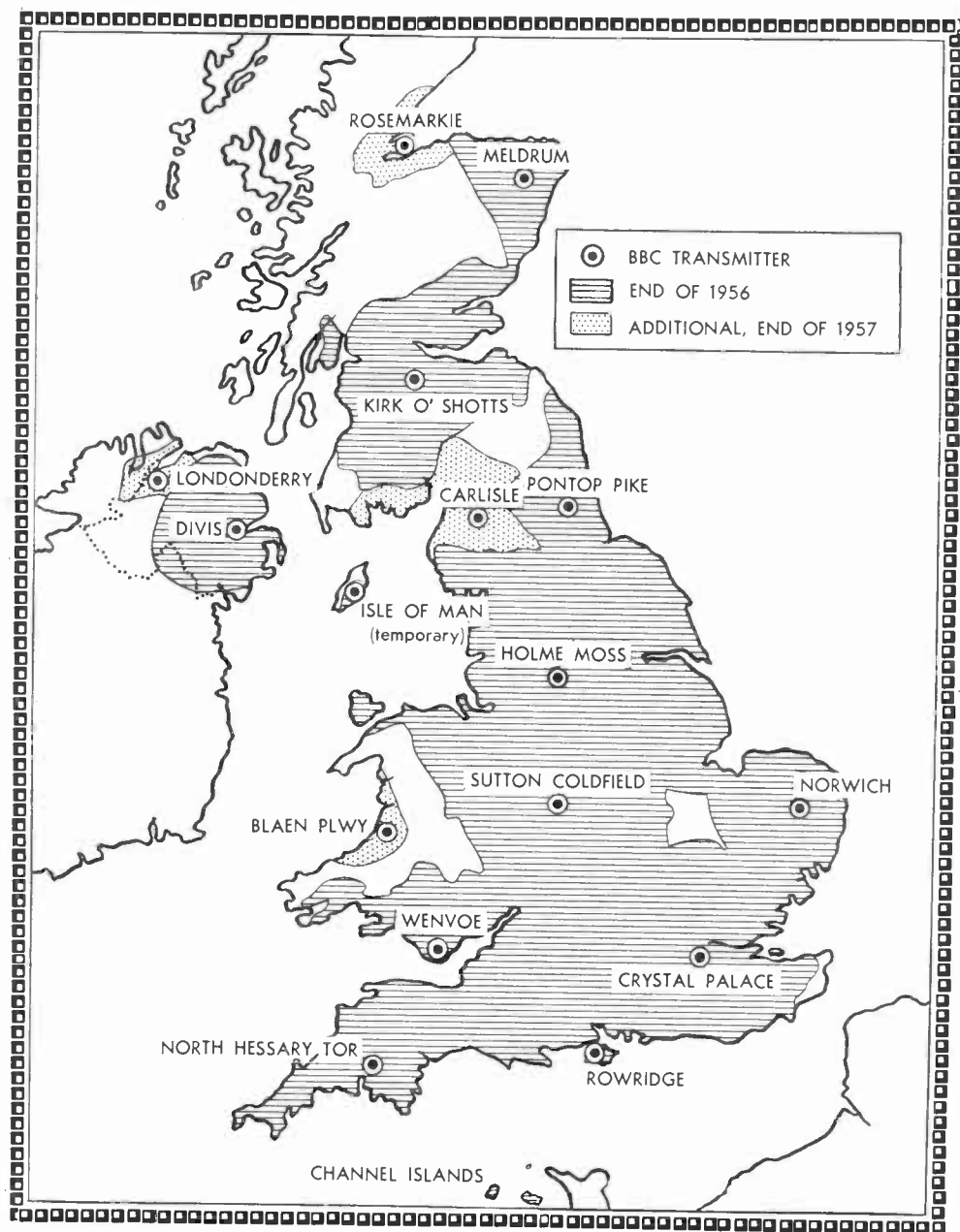
The master control of Associated TeleVision Ltd., at Foley Street, is linked by two coaxial cables to Museum Exchange, yielding eight vision circuits. Further vision circuits link Museum Exchange to the London ITA transmitter and to a number of London studios and theatres, some as far distant as Wembley. Vision circuits have also been provided to sites on high ground at Kensington and Highgate, which serve as radio reception points for the longer-distance outside broadcasts.

The extension of the independent television service to Birmingham necessitated the provision of vision and sound circuits from London to the Post Office Television Control at Telephone House, Birmingham. This in turn was extended to the new transmitter at Lichfield, and to the master control of the two programme companies at the Astoria Cinema, Aston. The London-Birmingham vision link consists of a two-way radio circuit, and is being reinforced by the addition of a second vision circuit working in the north-going direction. The second circuit will cover the distance in four hops, using three intermediate relay stations. The vision link to the Lichfield transmitter also provides a two-way circuit.

The extension of the new network to Lancashire involved the provision by the Post Office of a two-way vision link between Telephone House, Birmingham and Telephone House, Manchester. The signals are amplified at approximately six-mile intervals between Birmingham and Manchester.



The two Manchester programme contractors, Granada Television Network Ltd. on weekdays, and Associated British Cinemas (Television) Ltd. at weekends, have established independent master controls at Quay Street and the Capitol Cinema, Didsbury, respectively. Each master control is linked to Telephone House by vision and sound circuits.



*This map shows the areas that will be covered by BBC television by the end of 1957. At the present time, 97 per cent of the population of the United Kingdom are served by the BBC transmitters. By the end of 1957, according to present plans, more than 98 per cent will be served.*



*These are the areas (including the so-called "fringe" areas) which have been covered by ITA transmitters up to the autumn of 1956. The new Scottish station is planned to start operating during 1957, with its transmitter located in the Kirk O' Shotts area.*

# INDUSTRY'S NEWEST TOOL IS TELEVISION

*At Work in Factory, Laboratory and Office*

*by* NEIL HEPBURN

It is just four years since the first industrial television system in Britain began operation at a leading banking house in London. At that time it was considered a daring innovation, and—though its use had been reported in the United States—its application seemed neither unduly wide in scope nor profitable in prospect.

In theory, television could initiate great savings in the factors of production, but theories must be demonstrated by working, and it seemed likely that the conservatism of British industry would balk at the installation of a virtually untried and wholly unusual means of easing the acute labour shortage. That the Americans were using it was no argument in favour of its adoption in Britain. It was well known that the structure of American industry was in no way traditional. It was younger, more easily adaptable, more open to innovation than was British industry. Great organizations could afford to fail in experiments and go back to their original methods. The smaller units of British industry could not.

Yet, in the four years since its inception, the field of application of television in British industry has grown beyond anything which could originally have been hoped. Equipment has been developed which makes the original installation seem by comparison if not crude, at least out-dated.

This programme has not been made without its difficulties. In few cases has the initiative for an installation come from the eventual user: ignorance of the applications, conservatism, outright scepticism have had to be overcome. Today, however, television has become a tool of industry which, if not yet a commonplace, is no longer looked upon as something exotic, a mere gadget, a wasteful "gimmick." It has become respectable; indeed, desirable and in many cases indispensable.

*Operated from a helicopter hovering over busy roads, television can help to control traffic congestion. In this case the transmission must be broadcast from an airborne transmitter instead of carried by a cable circuit to the monitor screen.*

It may be noted here that British industry probably stands to benefit far more from the introduction of television than does (say) American industry. It may revolutionize a factory run at present on Victorian principles, whereas its use in an already largely automatic factory may not be so profitable.

Although the system goes popularly under the name of Industrial Television, this should not be taken to imply that its applications are restricted to industry. On the contrary, industry has lagged somewhat behind commerce, education, defence, traffic control and dozens of other fields in which miniature, closed-circuit television—to give it a more generally descriptive name—has proved its worth.

As has been mentioned, the first use of industrial television in this country was in commerce, at a banking house. The aim was to remove the bulk of routine work from the overcrowded and expensive London headquarters to less costly and larger provincial premises, and yet to retain instant visual check on documents when necessary. By TV link-up, the London staff could scan figures on records kept in the provincial branch. It was necessary only for the provincial staff to place the document in question under the lens of the camera. Great savings in space and money were effected, and efficiency was actually enhanced.



The success of the installation led to trials and experiments by the manufacturers lasting 18 months. Other prospective applications were examined and, in several cases, demonstrated. It was shown that personnel in nuclear laboratories could be protected from dangerous, remotely-handled substances by watching the operation on a TV monitor screen instead of through glass. A crane-driver's difficulties in loading the deep hold of a ship were overcome by fitting a TV camera to the boom of his crane. At a scientific exhibition, where the necessity for adequate lighting excluded the use of a projecting microscope, a television system attached to a normal microscope allowed large groups of people to see slide-mounted exhibits at the same time.

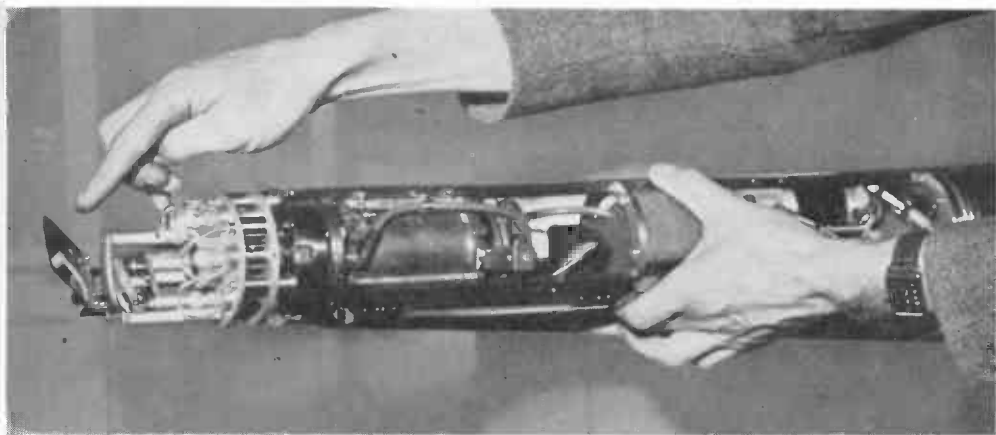
The result of the trials was the development of a new camera which is now standard. For those accustomed to the size and shape of the standard studio camera, it is something of a shock to find this camera no bigger than a shoe-box. For the potential user who has heard of the considerable expense involved in the operation of a studio camera, measured in pounds per hour, it is a pleasant surprise to find that the miniature camera operates at a fraction of that figure: a few shillings an hour. Its initial cost, too, is low: less than one-fifth of that of a studio installation. It can be operated

from the household electricity supply; with only three controls and a focus, it can be managed by anyone with the skill to use his own radio set. Together with its generator and control unit (the whole assembly is fitted into a box the size of a portable radio) it weighs only 30 pounds.



*TV helps aircraft research. The Aircraft Research Association's new trans-sonic wind tunnel has an inner porous wall which does not admit the usual glass observation window. A miniature TV camera, surrounded by special lighting, fits over one of the perforations in the inner wall and gives a clear picture of the model under test.*





*This Pye miniature TV camera has been specially designed for safe looking inside the reactor in atomic power stations. The rotatable mirror, remotely controlled, allows all-round viewing, and illumination is given by the four small bulbs.*

The transmission of the image from the camera to the monitor screen is in no sense a broadcast, although provision may be made for radio-frequency transmission if necessary for a particular application. As has been implied by the description "closed circuit," the signal is normally carried by cable. The image is received on a 14-inch monitor screen which gives a picture clear enough to allow the system's use in the most delicate and intricate operations. The camera itself, by virtue of its small size, can be insinuated into positions which would not accommodate a human observer: fitted with a dust-, spray- or flame-proof cover, it can be used in conditions which a man would find intolerable. Its heart is the miniature pick-up tube, cheap, easily fitted and a great deal more robust than a full-size studio tube.

Education was one of the first fields in which the possibilities of the miniature television system were explored. In the new National College of Rubber Technology, much space and time was saved by putting all the complicated machinery in the basement, and watching it—with a class of up to 180 students—in the large lecture rooms upstairs.

In much the same way, nearly a hundred surgeons have been able to watch operations being performed at the Hospital for Sick Children. Anyone familiar with the restrictions of an operating theatre, where good views of the operation are confined to the surgeon and his assistant, will realize the advance achieved in the teaching of students by this method.

Dangerous work is an obvious field for the installation of television, and in particular, nuclear physics has proved both rewarding and challenging. Who would have thought when the first atomic pile was built that, in the near future, its operators would watch what was happening inside it?

Yet a camera has been developed which does just this. Long, thin (it is only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter), supplying its own illumination, it is remotely controlled. More conventional dangers, have also been minimized by television. One installation is in a Scottish factory manufacturing chemicals and explosives. In one operation at least, in which explosives are compressed, remote control is essential, and prior to the use of television, a system of mirrors reflected the process back to the operator, who sat some distance away. Distance, vibration and distortion made this system unsatisfactory. Its replacement by television has proved entirely satisfactory.

A recent industrial use is to make certain of the alignment of railway lines in a steelworks. A trolley containing billets is to be pushed into a furnace by a ram. It is moved up sideways on its rails until it is exactly opposite the furnace door, and under the TV eye its rails can be aligned precisely with those leading into the furnace.

One British company alone has supplied industrial television to 69 firms and organizations in 17 countries. This, and other equipments supplied by other sources, are being used in education; sales promotion; industrial relations, by means of management and labour links in factories; remote control systems; underwater searches and observation; security measures; air-to-ground observation; and the transmission of documents between centres of commerce.

So much for the present uses of industrial television. Its future prospects seem assured in all the fields which it has so far conquered. New developments in these fields are unlikely to be revolutionary, though printed-circuit and transistor techniques may reduce the size of the equipment still further. Where the major development may be looked for is in the use of colour television and, perhaps less important, three-dimensional television. Both of these have already been demonstrated.

To deal with the less important aspect first: in some processes, particularly in remote-handling operations such as have become necessary in the nuclear physics laboratories, two dimensions are not enough. Closing one eye and attempting to touch precisely a small object at arm's length will demonstrate the difficulty of working in two dimensions. One needs both eyes—3D—to pinpoint an object in space. Industrial television can be easily adapted to three dimensions by using two cameras, polaroid filters and glasses. Further advances may, however, be expected in this field.

Colour television, already well on its way in the entertainment world, is not lagging behind in industrial, commercial and educational fields. It will be clear, on reflection, that much of our education is dependent to a greater or lesser extent on the demonstrative use of colour. Maps in geography lessons are coloured to distinguish political areas or topographical features. Chemical analysis, in one of its branches, leans very

heavily on the formation of coloured precipitates, the colouring of a flame, the colour of the dry substance. Biology, both animal and plant, would be lost without colour to distinguish one specimen, one tissue from another.

One of the great problems of education today is the acute shortage of first-class teachers; another is the lack of school space. Television, while it cannot be held out as the answer to all problems, may considerably alleviate the position by enabling a great number of children to be taught by one man. Colour will be essential.

Further prospects are opened up in medicine and surgery. At present one may watch an operation on a TV screen and gain almost as much as the man at the surgeon's elbow. Almost, but not quite as much: in medicine, too, identification depends to quite a large extent on colour. At a small distance, how would one distinguish between a vein and an artery if not by colour?

*An E.M.I. closed-circuit TV installation at Guy's Hospital in London gives students and medical staff, watching in another part of the hospital, a close-up view of operations without inconvenience to the surgeon or discomfort to the patient. The camera is mounted above the operating table, together with lighting equipment and a mirror arranged to provide a perfect view of the surgeon's work.*



In other sciences, colour is all-important. In astronomy, for instance, atmospheric vibration has long defeated the capture, in photograph or sketch, of superficial detail on planets. Great detail has been observed for periods too short to be recorded by photographic plates, and manifestly beyond the power of any artist to draw in the time available. Monochrome television has already advanced the knowledge of surface detail of the planets: a television image can be recorded on a photographic plate in a much shorter time than can the planet itself. However, colour must play an important part in our knowledge of the planets, and colour television will greatly advance the astronomer's stock of data.

Advertising today depends, except in the press, almost entirely on colour, and merchandising displays in monochrome television (as opposed to advertisements on commercial television) have not had the success which had been hoped for them. Almost everything one buys has colour; in fact, much thought and effort have gone into the colour-displays on packaging. Television in advertising can be a great selling force: in shop windows, in exhibitions, in public places, a TV screen can carry a message, and, if in colour, so much the more powerful.

Once again, however, the most fruitful application of colour television must be in industry. In nuclear reactions, the identification of colour changes at certain points in the process of is prime importance. The measurement of furnace temperatures is accomplished by checking the colour of the flame against a scale—at present with the maximum speed in order to save the operator from the discomfort caused by the furnace's heat. Colour television would allow a continuous and leisured check on the temperature.

In the manufacture of certain special glass, one of the processes requires instant colour reference and a clear view of the glass, previously difficult because of adverse conditions.

In the development of jet engines, the combustion process must be observed. Photographic film may be damaged by the intense heat generated and no human observer can approach close enough to check on the run. Colour television has already been used in this connexion.

To sum up: it is evident that television in many fields is establishing itself as a useful tool. New applications are constantly being found, and monochrome television can be expected to evolve much on its present lines. Its prospects are excellent. However, the greatest advance of the next few years can be expected in colour television: its perfection, its popularization and its reduction in price to a level at which even the smallest industry can afford to install it.

In the coming age of automation, television may be expected to play a leading part.

# BURIED TREASURE

*How BBC Television Cameras*

*Recreate the Past*

by BILL EVANS

BURIED TREASURE is a phrase conjuring up visions of pirates with secret plans and chests spilling with gold nuggets. But the BBC television series of that name stands for something quite different. To quote 36-year-old producer Paul Johnstone: "We try to make archaeology interesting, even entertaining, to a mass audience."

And if the six-times-a-year series with the romantic title offers no gold pieces, it's certainly filled with gems from the past.

"We've found in several countries that no one has troubled to make a film record of the national treasures," said Mr. Johnstone. "In Denmark this oversight came to our rescue, for when we asked permission to film the Tollund Man remains the Danes were at first apprehensive. They reckoned the heat from our lights would do the remains no good—but they gave in when we offered to give our film records to the Danish National Museum and the Danish Television Service.

"We also found the Italians hadn't filmed Pompeii, and that the National Museum of Naples hadn't shown pictures of modern Pompeii alongside their pictures of ancient times."

Thanks to South African-born Mr. Johnstone's enterprising series we were not in the same position when CBS of America wanted material about Stonehenge for its *Adventure* series. "When they knew we had already filmed Stonehenge they said it would be ridiculous for them to do it too, and asked for two telerecordings of *Buried Treasure* in exchange for material from *Adventure*." Canada, Australia, Holland and Italy have also asked Lime Grove for parts of the series.

Now three years old, and born from that archaeological picnic *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral?* the series takes a whole subject, using people whose *AVM?* experience has put them at ease before the camera. Among them

are those old hands of television, Sir Mortimer Wheeler and Dr. Glyn Daniel—and when they are in a *Buried Treasure* programme finding the material is great fun.

“They bring their cars along and Mrs. Daniel, who’s an expert at drawing maps, does our map-reading. She also buys picnic lunches which are most enjoyable. Sir Mortimer is easy to work with, because having been a soldier he understands all about ‘running a show.’ He knows a production unit must be run properly, and though he may make suggestions as we go along, never interferes. He’s a good companion on a plane journey, too—the air hostesses pay special attention to him, which is very useful if you’re the next passenger.”

*Buried Treasure* has its anxious moments, not all due to technical reasons. “We were filming in Jericho at the time Glubb Pasha was dismissed, and Sir Mortimer and Lady Wheeler were with me,” Paul Johnstone related. “The Arabs, highly elated, were singing and dancing, and some refugees nearby had been celebrating all night. They objected to us filming, and a crowd arrived with large stones. I think they just wanted any excuse for a ‘party,’ and for about a quarter of an hour there was an ugly situation while we reasoned with them. And that very morning I had a letter from London telling me that Woodrow Wyatt and the *Panorama* team had been attacked in Algeria!

“Another thing happened in Jericho: the camera spring broke. It

*Dr. Glyn Daniel and Sir Mortimer Wheeler have become probably the most widely-known archaeologists living, as a result of their frequent TV appearances. Here they are on an archaeological site in Brittany.*





*When Up-to-Date presented the Battle of Hastings, members of the Surrey Walking Club acted as guinea-pigs in an attempt to solve the mystery of how Harold's men could have marched from Yorkshire to London in ten days—and then on to Hastings.*

meant at least two days to fly a new one from Lime Grove, so Eddie Best, our assistant cameraman, stripped the camera and took the spring to a local blacksmith who spoke no English. In spite of the difficulties he did a good welding job and we were able to carry on with the same camera."

The *Buried Treasure* unit varies in size between three and maybe seven people. At minimum it consists of the producer, a cameraman and an assistant, but sometimes there's an accompanying expert or two who may also bring their wives. "Being a small unit, everyone has to give a hand. In Pompeii, for instance, we all helped to carry the camera, and in Malta, when the cameraman contracted food poisoning, the assistant took over and I took the assistant's place."

Apart from making valuable film records of national showpieces, the series has produced some lifelike scale models which have been handed to museums on permanent loan. These include a model of Maiden Castle, now in Dorchester Museum, and one of Stonehenge now in Salisbury Museum.

That Stonehenge expedition gave Paul Johnstone and his team special pride. "We wanted to make it more than just TV, setting out to do some real archaeology and making the programme positive. There's always been a controversy as to how the stones got there, so we made a copy of one of

the smaller ones weighing  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tons, and schoolboys volunteered to move it. We used a raft and a wooden sledge knotted with rope—the sort of thing that must have been used originally—and we found with rollers under the sledge the stone moved more easily than anyone imagined.”

Though he pointed out that the real stones came from the Prescelly Mountains in Pembrokeshire, 180 miles away, and the large ones, a much more difficult proposition, were brought twenty miles.

About half the series is filmed in the British Isles and the rest abroad. This year it has taken viewers to Jericho, Pompeii and Carnac. Next year Paul Johnstone hopes to explore the Zimbabwe ruins in Africa and take us on a trip to see the Viking Ships in Scandinavia. His counterpart in Australian television wants to make a joint film with *Buried Treasure* on Carnutum, where Roman soldiers were once stationed.

In June, 1956 Paul Johnstone added a new kind of peep at history to his duties when he started *Up-to-Date*, with the idea of doing with history what *Buried Treasure* had achieved in the field of archaeology.

“I am more of an historian than an archaeologist,” said the man who, as a wartime sailor, was present at the sinking of the German battleship *Bismarck*. “But the trouble with history is that it nearly all comes from written sources, which is not nearly so good for TV as things you can see, as in archaeology. If you don’t dramatize it is very difficult to make it interesting to viewers, and I don’t like doing that because the language can’t then be right.

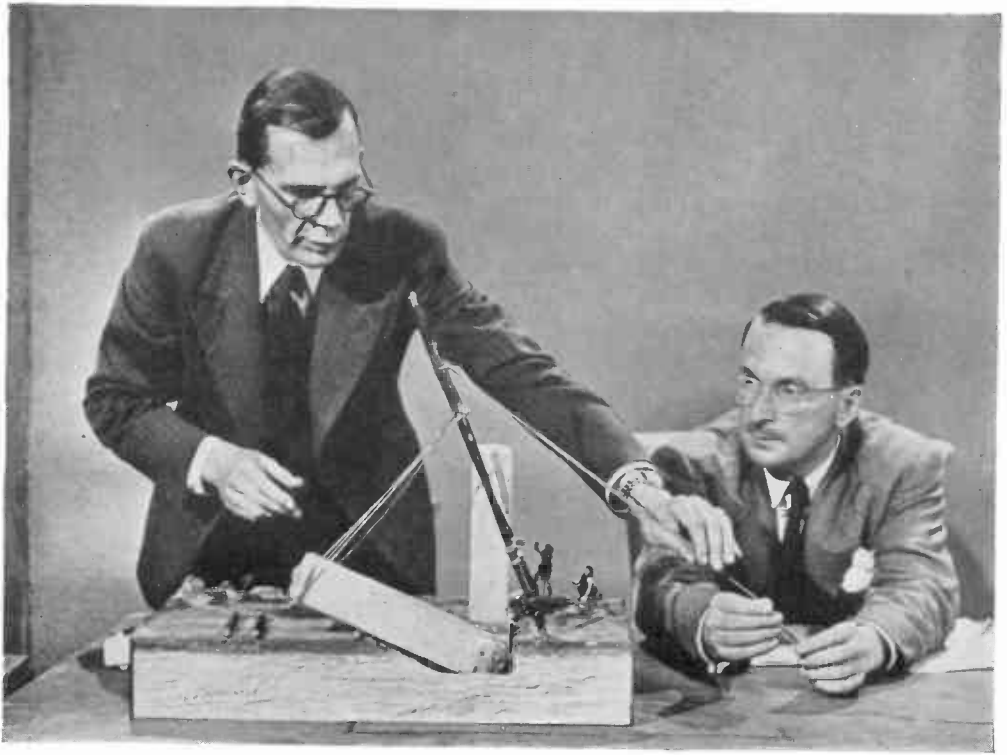
“We have to choose subjects that don’t need a ‘cast of thousands,’ for apart from expenses screens would be too small to do justice to them. What is wanted is a detective element, where there is some story or theme on which can be built up some evidence.” In this respect *Up-to-Date*’s reconstruction of the Battle of Hastings, the first in the series, was typical, and the second one, depicting Hannibal’s crossing of the Alps, took up the argument as to where he crossed.

History has its script problems for Paul Johnstone and assistant Nancy Thomas. “You cannot just say to an historian ‘Write a script on Hannibal.’ It must be a real television script in visual terms, which the average authority is incapable of writing. And not every historian is prepared to work for television like archaeologists are now that *Animal*, *Vegetable*, *Mineral*? and *Buried Treasure* are established.

“So when we come across a subject with visual possibilities we first have to find the people who will write it, and who then hand it back to us for TV treatment.”

As in *Buried Treasure* a film unit is kept busy making records of places in the past which have a bearing on history. This means travelling often hundreds of miles, but when *Up-to-Date* covered the Great Plague the trip





*With a working model Glyn Daniel demonstrated how the massive stones were probably raised into position at Stonehenge, in one of the earlier Buried Treasure programmes.*

was a short one. The cameras merely had to search among the old buildings of the City of London to find some of the best material in the series.

On the other hand, things are often used to bring reality to the programmes. For instance, a tailor's dummy played an important part in *Up-to-Date's* Battle of Hastings.

"When we re-staged the famous march along the Fosse Way we dressed the dummy in the authentic armour of a Saxon soldier and used it for target practice. I wanted to see how it would stand up to the battle. We were surprised to find the arrows had no difficulty in piercing the chain-mail covering, though they just bounced off the sturdy shields. That rather suggests the soldiers were safe so long as they presented a wall of shields, but that once it was broken they were in serious trouble."

Though the programme was shown in June, an experimental walk along twenty miles of the Fosse Way—between Bath and Cirencester—was carried out in March, because climatic conditions then more nearly resembled October, 1066 than they would have done in June.



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## YOUR FRIENDS THE STARS

# Peter Dimmock

"THEY'RE OFF!" The distant shapes of the horses are held in the screen against their flying background. The tense voice of the commentator races softly in company. The horses reach the turn, and the commentator's voice rises, the note of urgency more insistent. Comes the run-in on the "straight". "It's a terrific race—" and the commentator's tone mounts to almost supersonic frenzy, as if the leading horse were taking a header through the grandstand.

Every race began to sound like that when Peter Dimmock became commentator. The "Dimmock touch," faithfully copied today, had viewers on their toes every time, whether for a humble selling plate or the Gold Cup at Ascot. And the enthusiasm was genuine, for Peter Dimmock is a man of infinite zest. In some ways it was a sad day when, in 1954, he exchanged the commentator's box for the administrative desk as Head of BBC Television Outside Broadcasts.

Luckily for viewers, the zest never flags before or behind the camera. It was this same zeal that first brought *Sportview* to the screen when sport was low in programme planners' estimation. Dimmock, fighting for a half-hour spot, was allotted Thursday, then the night of the Sunday play repeat, when most viewers were supposed to be at the pictures. Now *Sportview* stands among the highest in BBC audience-reaction figures.

Peter Harold Dimmock, born in 1920, has lived his life like a steeplechase. R.A.F. pilot and flying instructor during the war, he switched from air speeds to ground speeds immediately afterwards as racecourse correspondent of the Press Association. A year later, in 1946, he joined BBC Television as producer-commentator, specializing first in sport, but soon taking on every form of O.B. from stage shows to public ceremonials. He organized the first cross-Channel television from Calais, was in charge of TV arrangements at the funeral of King George VI and for Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation Service in Westminster Abbey.

He and his wife live in a Kensington flat within easy sports-car dash of Lime Grove. His hobbies: ski-ing, fishing, and refereeing ice hockey.

# SHIRLEY ABICAIR

WRITES STRAIGHT FROM HER HEART

*Viewers have seen a change come over Shirley Abicair in her TV song programme during the past year. Miss Abicair explains . . .*

"How do you feel? Happy?"

"Smooth as a bowl of cream!"

"To quote a vaudeville act I know: 'When you're overworked and underweight and it doesn't hurt—you're doin' fine!'"

A taxi skittered towards us through the rain, but we walked up Jermyn Street: I wanted to walk. We had been to the premiere of *Smiley*. At the celebration afterwards, everybody felt too good for post-mortems or "nice" compliments. But for a long time I had a mental picture of *Smiley's* author, Moore Raymond, red-faced and perspiring, concealing his embarrassment by taking photographs of everybody, and an excited Anthony Kimmins distributing warm handshakes at the door.

*Smiley* was the first premiere I ever went to. I didn't even go to the premiere of my own film, because I hadn't really felt a part of it; I felt I'd done nothing in it that was worth hiring a car, getting into evening dress and smiling toothily in a West-End foyer for photographers. But *Smiley* was different. It was a beautiful film and although I had only sung the theme song under the opening titles and under the credits at the end, I felt I was part of it. I felt I had contributed everything I could to it.

*Smiley* was beautiful, and I believed in it; and when I sang "Smiley" under the titles, I gave it all the beauty I could.

When I say that I wasn't part of my other film I wasn't really part of show business then. I had never felt that I belonged to the business. It was only this year that I realized that I do belong, when I started using material I really believed in; material that was original and, above all, entertaining—material on the very highest level of quality. I felt I had something to say that was worth while, and I had a great urge to say it—or in my case, sing it. Performing became a wonderful, gratifying experience.

" . . . . . but it wasn't *always* that way, Arch"

(*Mehitabel. Book I. Ch. 3*)

Eight or nine months before that *Smiley* premiere, if you'd taken a quick dekko into Associated-Rediffusion any day of the week, you'd have

got a good sixpennorth of me, stuck up a shaky ladder mewing "Blue Skies."

That show did me a favour. I know now that the script was about as monotonous as if it had been tape-recorded by a parrot. The dialogue was written first and then the songs were selected to fit a bunch of non-existent situations. I know now that, though everybody else was terribly enthusiastic, that was why I had a long face from start to finish. I couldn't find a line worth saying. When it was finally suggested that I sing "Yip-I-Addy-I-Ay" . . . that did it! I jumped off the merry-go-round there and then.

In order to be a good performer, you must have good material to perform. You have to believe in it—just as Rosalyn Tureck believes when she plays Bach's 48 preludes, or as Mr. Pastry believes when he clutches his black velvet pants and clowns Shakespeare.

" . . . O! The Queens I have been and the swell feeds I have ate."

(*Mehitabel. Book II. Ch. 2*)

Then came my first *solo* series for Associated-Rediffusion. I knew it would be the most important series I had done. And I wouldn't have climbed that stepladder again to yowl "Blue Skies" for a diamond collar with a silver bell.

On that solo series, it would have been easy to stick to my convictions only some of the time, because nobody there believed in what I believed in . . . except one person who knew what I was trying to say through my songs: a writer, Bill Lovelock. *He* saw what I had to say before I did. Between us, we had collected some of the most beautiful folksongs in the world. Every song I sang became worth singing, and everything I said became worth saying. Songs like "Green Willow," "10,000 Miles," "Turtle Dove." I knew all that I wanted to say . . . and, by jumping jehosophats, I was going to say it, and go on saying it. Why, I was prepared to go over to the Left Bank in Paris and sing in a little bistro for nothing, so long as I could sing what I wanted.

We stood alone for three of those solo ITV shows before the letters began to pour in. Hundreds of letters, from children, from adults, all kinds of people. Then Bernard Levin in an article in the *Manchester Guardian* marched us to glory with all flags flying. And at last, the doubters fell into line with the viewers.

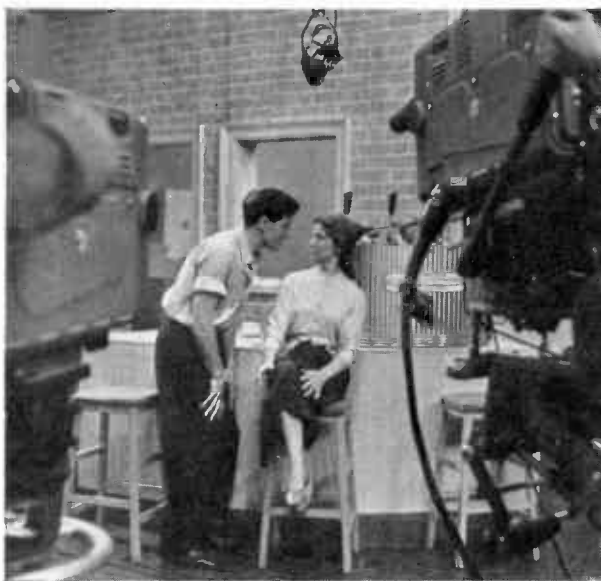
I was happy, because for the first time since I had been in show business I felt as if I'd reached a level of honesty *and* entertainment that was worth the years of groping. What I had to do now was to hold on to it, develop it, and say it in everything I did.

" . . . . . Out in the jungle where cats are cats  
Arch, a lady's got to stick to her guns."

(*Mehitabel. Book II. Ch. 9*)



*Shirley Abicair, the girl who came from Australia with a zither and stayed to become a TV favourite. She writes here the frank and amusing story of her own search for her "line."*



*With Dennis Quilley, in a coffee-bar setting. Shirley Abicair started in commercial television with a song - and - story series. Later she switched to presenting folksongs and their popular derivations.*

So we went to work on my next record, searching until we found a popular song which belonged with our folksongs like "Gypsy Davey" and "Sugar-

babe." We settled on "Willie Can" and recorded it with George Martin at Parlophone. George Martin, too, had got the message, and his warm, silent understanding and musicianship was right with us when I recorded "Smiley" and "Little Boy Fishin'" which followed in the summer.

We gave all these songs the same treatment and thought as we'd given our folksongs. I was putting that message of truth and quality into everything I did in show business; when you do that, you love what you're doing and you polish it and shine it up and gloat over it. Performing becomes a wonderful fulfilment in itself, especially when you feel your audience smiling and understanding and wanting it.

That's why I was so pleased for Moore Raymond, after the *Smiley* premiere, and for Anthony Kimmins and Muir Mathieson. *Smiley* marked the beginning of a new summer, with a holiday in sight, and behind us, my new BBC TV series that followed my solo ITV show. With that BBC series, which was a Friday night show, I won thousands of supporters who wrote every week, all showing that they knew and understood and loved the beautiful folksongs I was singing and the stories I was telling. But the big struggle was no longer necessary, for the BBC were right behind us in our ideas, and so was our producer, Graeme Muir.

And at my first premiere, the premiere of *Smiley*, I was having a little *private* celebration, because what we had brought off on television and on records could come over and hold its own on a huge stereoscopic coloured screen before a cinema audience, as well as from a tiny studio in Lime Grove.

# SCENERY UNLIMITED

## *The Mammoth Job of the BBC's Design Department*

THE television scenic designers work with imagination, care and devotion; and they regard it as a compliment if you, the viewer, take no more than a glance at all they do. Whatever the programme, that glance will establish in your mind the scene and the atmosphere. If the scenery, the settings, the backings distract your eyes from the action for more than that moment, then there is something wrong with them. Yet into that one quick glance must go all the detail which will assure authenticity.

It is for this reason that viewers talk about performances of actors, or about good or poor stories, rather than of scenic sets. What the performance takes place in and against is taken mostly for granted. And rightly so, say the designers.

It is plain, then, that few people can have any idea at all of the mammoth task of producing TV scenery. In the BBC alone one week of programmes, as typical in content as most, provided 24 hours of viewing time in which scenic setting was essential. There were no fewer than 17 programmes requiring entirely new scenery—sets to be designed specifically for the occasion. But even this did not finish the task. For there were 23 more programmes and programme items using standing sets—scenery unchanging in series programmes, and kept from week to week.

It takes about 40 designers and design assistants working full-time to turn out this kind of output. They work at the Television Centre, which is a quarter of a mile from Lime Grove Studios. It is a large, modern building, the first part of a gigantic Television Centre which is being built up in stages. Here are the scenery and property stores, workrooms, carpenters' shops and large painting galleries of the Design Department.

In the designers' offices men and women work at drawing boards, creating scenic sets to meet the requirements of producers and scripts. And



*A never-ending stream of work passes through the carpenters' shop in the scenery-building department of the BBC's Television Centre.*

overall, as well, they must meet the very special requirements of television. Here the factors influencing their work are the size of the TV screen, the depth of focus of the camera lenses, the possibilities and limitations of studio lighting and studio space, and the fact that the TV picture is a black and white one.

Although television is seen in the home in black and white, the scenery in the studios is frequently a riot of colour. There was a period in the early days of the BBC service when all scenery was painted in shades of grey and black, it being suggested that colour was wasted. But colour quickly returned; for the psychological reason that it produces atmosphere for the actors, and also because certain colours do in fact contribute different qualities even in the black and white picture.

Designers do not merely sit down and make up the design of scenery for a play. Frequently the job requires research. Books in the Television Centre library are consulted to gain authentic details, especially as to the period of internal and external architecture and of furnishings. Many plays have a scenic arrangement planned for their stage production; this may be used, but the special requirements of television will mean changes.

Draftsmen work from the designers' designs, converting them into working drawings from which the required scenery can be made. Of all



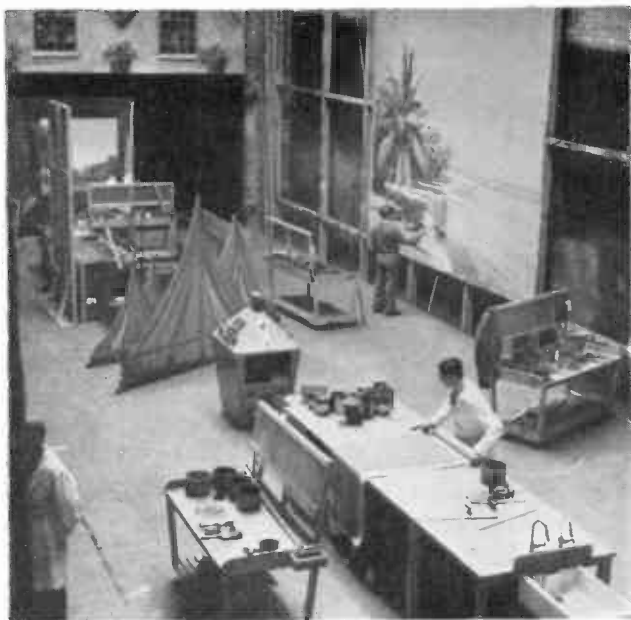
drawings 25 copies are made. These go to "works planners," who apportion the various processes now required in making the scenery. The job is usually broken down between machinists, setters-out and carpenters. Materials are cut to shape, set out to design, carpentered to stand as solid fixtures. The machining and carpenters' shop has sufficient floor space to give a medium-size town a decent department store!

The scenery made, the painters and wallpaperers take over and decorate it, as it stands, set up in the shop exactly as it will be set up in the studio. Walking around the shop, one gains the impression of a number of unfinished houses, living apartments, shops, offices, ballrooms, stairways and balconies, all being completed in a kind of unrelated nightmare.

Nearby is a long room in which backcloths are painted. It is 60 feet high, and the cloths are stretched along its walls. An electronic control panel, operated at the centre of the room, raises and lowers the canvasses; as they descend they seem to disappear down a gap between the floor of the room and its walls! Once paint is applied to a large canvas hung here, the canvas can shrink as much as one foot in six. Since weather conditions, especially temperatures, can also affect this, the room has a thermostatic temperature control.

There are three subsidiary sections to the Design Department. Each is working all the time, playing an important part in the fitting out and presentation of TV productions. A Graphic Arts section is a new and largely experimental section where design and photography amalgamate to provide captions, mural decorations and what might be called visual

*The BBC's television scenic artists work in one of the largest and most modern studios in the world at the great new Television Centre near Lime Grove. Push-button operation slides the canvasses (right) up and down.*



properties. A good deal of experiment in type-design goes on here—a field which some say should be of prime importance in television with its small screen.

But most of the caption staff are still working in the Caption Department where captions, lettering, maps, charts, decorations and so on are designed and painted on cards for positioning before the cameras.

The third subsidiary section is devoted to pioneer work with fibreglass. This strange and almost magical substance is now used by the BBC to make those realistic-looking brick walls, columns, pillars, plaster decorations, chimneypieces and the like which finish off so many scenic sets. In rubber moulds, fibreglass can be shaped into a facsimile of practically anything a producer can ask for. Its great advantages are that it is light for transporting, and it is persistently durable. Pieces of delicate-looking decoration for scenic touches, made in this substance, can be wilfully thrown against walls and kicked without damage!

Adjacent to the design sections is the Property Store. Here in rows of long racks and shelves, stretching the length of three railway coaches, are packed high to the ceiling all types and sizes of every category of article needed to “dress” a set in the studio. The fabulous collection ranges from complete rooms of furniture, through hardware, soft furnishings and gimcracks to surgical instruments, gramophones and goldfish.

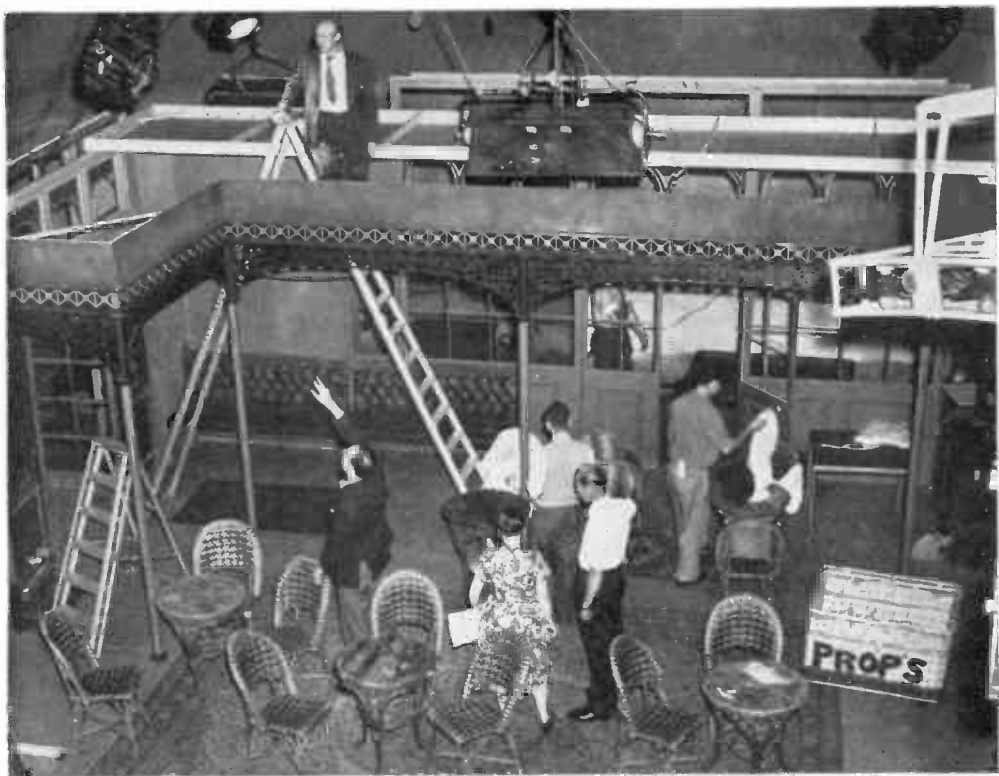
Even with all this in store, “props” still have to be hired on occasion. In fact, £20,000 a year is being spent on hiring—yet this only accounts for seven per cent of the total properties used in a year’s television.

Alongside is the great scenery store, where are kept most of the scenic sets which have been made in the ten years of the BBC television service since the war. From this is drawn 85 per cent of the newly-assembled and re-adapted scenery going into TV programmes. The creation of entirely new scenery is kept to the proportion of 15 per cent, for economy reasons.

### *RICHARD LEVIN, BBC Head of Scenic Design, adds a more technical note on TV design:*

THERE are two distinct categories of television design and these in turn are dependent upon two equally definable approaches to production.

With the first approach the camera is used *objectively*, to record and transmit actual events as they occur. Typical items include talks and most ballet, opera and variety. These programmes require a largely two-dimensional or graphic form of scenery, a comparatively static background related in part to a long theatrical tradition. The design, though occasion-



*Scenery and properties reach the Lime Grove studio, after being made and collected together at the Television Centre. The scenic designer is supervising their arrangement.*

ally representational, is more open to development as simple interior-decoration and as original graphic art. For the most part the designer is working with flat surfaces and can therefore apply virtually all forms of illustrative and abstract art to his purpose. His decorative approach, of course, varies to suit many different types of programme: obviously a more vigorous application is required in a variety show, for instance, than in a talk, which demands more passive, restrained backgrounds.

Talks, women's features, panel games, interviews and similar "actuality" programmes present rather a special problem. The designer must provide a comparatively subdued background which at the same time reflects the taste and aesthetic standards of the service. Contemporary design in its most progressive forms can be applied with great success to this type of transmission.

The second approach to TV production is where the camera is used *subjectively*, to *interpret* fictional events in a dramatic form. Under this heading are included drama, some music, and the more progressive light



*The simple, contemporary design of scenic set used by the BBC for In Town To-night. Talks programmes receive similar treatment in their settings.*

entertainment programmes. Here a more three-dimensional solution has to be found—a more cinematic form, exploiting both movement and depth. The designer has to create his effects in terms of a constantly moving and variable visual frame. This fluidity of camera movement calls for a fundamentally different conception of design, the only related medium being that of the cinema. The scenery in this form is but a part of the designer's creative contribution, most of his work being concerned with the ever-moving composition of the picture.

Directly a new script has been agreed and a date fixed for its production, the producer and designer concerned arrange an initial planning meeting. At this early stage discussion is generally concerned with the number of sets, their period and style, their possible lay-out in the studio and approximate size in relation to each other. The producer explains the varying emphasis he requires on each particular set-up and careful note is taken of any script requirement which may condition size and practical detailing of individual sets. Here the discussion centres around the number of performers involved in different scenes, their points of entry and exit and the number and position of special features to be incorporated in the design, e.g. doors, windows, fireplaces and stairs.

The designer then prepares rough, scaled drawings of the proposed set-ups and relates them to a quarter-inch floor plan of the studio concerned.

This studio plan forms the basis for all the detailed pre-planning of camera-work, sound coverage and lighting effect. It provides the producer and the whole production unit with the means to relate performers to a multiplicity of lenses, camera angles and tracks. The designer also produces his first visuals at this time—quick sketches intended to serve merely as a springboard to further discussion.

The producer and designer must also discuss special scenic effects. It may be decided, for instance, that in order to save space or reduce costs, optical back projection could be used to project a photographic plate behind a built foreground scene. On the other hand, an electronic effect may be required in which one shot is partially superimposed or overlaid upon another.

At this point the other key members of the production unit are called in: lighting supervisor, senior engineer and studio manager. As the whole mood or atmosphere of a scene, carefully built up by dialogue, action and composition, could easily be ruined by unsympathetic lighting, the designer and the lighting engineer must work in very close co-operation throughout the production. As soon as the general light-level or lighting

*In this case "the full treatment" was given by the scenic designers to a set for a dramatic play. No detail was left out in this set for Dark Sonnet.*



“key” has been decided upon, the direction of the main source of illumination and the tonal range of contrasts in the set must be agreed. On occasion both lighting and set construction have to be carefully matched to pre-shot film inserts.

Sound coverage, whether by boom or concealed microphone, must be reasonably constant over the entire acting area and this is to a certain extent a limiting factor when large and realistic settings are required. The designer often has to make provision for removing or “floating” parts of his set during the actual transmission, in order that camera or microphone can gain access to difficult or remote areas. As multi-camera techniques are very much the rule, even the smallest set-up has to be planned for elaborate microphone and camera movement.

Eventually, in the studios, the sets are erected some two or three days prior to transmission. While riggers and electricians are lighting the various scenes, the designer adds final dressing to his sets. Carpets are positioned; floors painted; gas, water and electricity are laid on as necessary, and a host of small but important details are attended to.

The studio camera rehearsal provides the designer with his first opportunity for measuring the unified effect of sets, camera movement and lighting. When lit, certain properties or parts of the set may well be found

to produce an undesired effect—any one of a thousand and minor alterations may be required at this time, either by the designer, lighting engineer or producer.



*A large warehouse is packed with “props” for BBC TV productions. Here property men are selecting items for a play production. Their stock ranges from suites of furniture to inkpots.*

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## YOUR FRIENDS THE STARS

# James Arness

JAMES ARNESS, as Marshal Matt Dillon of Dodge City in ITV's *Gun Law*, is "different." The viewer spots this immediately. Arness differs from the average American film sheriff as a lion from a wolf. Set among the credulous, excitable, trigger-happy citizens of a raw Western outpost, he stalks around in unhurried strength, eyes a-twinkle, calm amid panic. His advantages for the part are great. James Arness is 6 ft. 6 in. tall and weighs 16 stone, factors which told against him in his earlier film career because he tended to dwarf the stars.

His path to the TV screen has been as tortuous as the trails he pursues in *Gun Law*. Arness had appeared in secondary roles in a score of films when director John Ford introduced him to John Wayne. Wayne, not only a famous Western star but a producer with his own company, was seeking an actor to play opposite him in *Big Jim McLain*. Impressed by Arness's talent and physique, he signed him on a long-term contract. Then, just when Arness was heading a series of Wayne productions, along came Charles Marquis Warren.

After tremendous success as producer-director of a radio series called *Gunsmoke*, Warren was fighting against time trying to find an actor to play Marshal Dillon in a TV version. His first choice was Arness, who, however, had his existing film contract. Warren auditioned some 30 other possible actors without success, then approached Arness again. John Wayne, by now a staunch admirer of Arness as man and actor, obligingly tore up their contract and, as a further token of friendship, personally introduced Arness to American viewers in the premiere of *Gunsmoke*.

Associated-Rediffusion has brought this thrilling series to British screens under the title *Gun Law* and made Marshal Matt Dillon a household name. The stories revolve around this guardian of justice whose unenviable job, in a restless period of American history, was to uphold the semblance of law when the six-shooter was the only real authority.

Arness spends most of his spare time with his wife and three children. And he reads and builds up his extensive library of Western lore.





# COLOUR TV IS ON THE WAY

## *A Technical Note on Recent BBC Developments*

THE BBC has installed experimental colour TV equipment at its Alexandra Palace station, for a series of experimental tests of colour transmission systems. The test transmissions, which take place outside normal programme hours and have no entertainment value, are in no sense a public service, and do not indicate that the start of such a service is imminent. The BBC has no definite plans for the introduction of a colour TV service; there are many problems to be solved before this can be contemplated.

The tests started in October, 1955. At the present time, a particular type of signal based on the American N.T.S.C. standard is being radiated. It is important to understand how it has come about that this system is the first to be tested.

In December, 1953, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission approved for public service in the U.S.A. the colour TV standards recommended by the National Television Systems Committee (N.T.S.C.). The principal features of the N.T.S.C. signal which need concern us here are:

- 1) The colour signal is transmitted in the same frequency channel and by the same transmitters which carry the established monochrome service.

- 2) It is claimed that the system is "compatible"; i.e., that existing monochrome receivers can produce a monochrome version of the colour picture which is as good as if the picture had originated from a normal monochrome camera.

- 3) It is further claimed that the standards are such as to allow for considerable future development in the quality of the colour picture, in the same way as the original specification for the monochrome TV service has allowed a continuous development in quality over the course of the years.

In this country, the BBC has operated since 1936 (excepting the war years) a well-established and successful monochrome service employing 405 lines, 50 frames per second interlaced. The advent of the N.T.S.C. colour system naturally aroused interest in the question as to whether this





*Vanessa Lee, peeress of romantic song and musical comedy melodies. She pleases many viewers by devoting her beautiful voice to romantic light music in these days of "rock 'n' roll" and jive.*

system would show the same advantages here when modified to suit British TV standards. Since the scanning and transmission standards of the U.S.A. and this country differ in important ways, there was no *a priori* reason to answer this question affirmatively, and work was therefore started on the problem in the BBC Research Laboratories and in certain industrial organizations.

Work in the laboratories has now reached the stage where practical transmission equipment is available. With the agreement of the G.P.O. and the co-operation of the radio industry, the investigation is being extended to a wider field. The results of these investigations will be at the disposal of the Television Advisory Committee which has been asked by the Postmaster-General to report on the whole field of colour television.

The equipment at Alexandra Palace generates a modified N.T.S.C. type of colour signal, and its purpose is, first, to explore the degree of compatibility of the system by making observations on some thousands of black-and-white receivers; secondly, to see whether the system is capable of producing a consistently good quality colour picture.

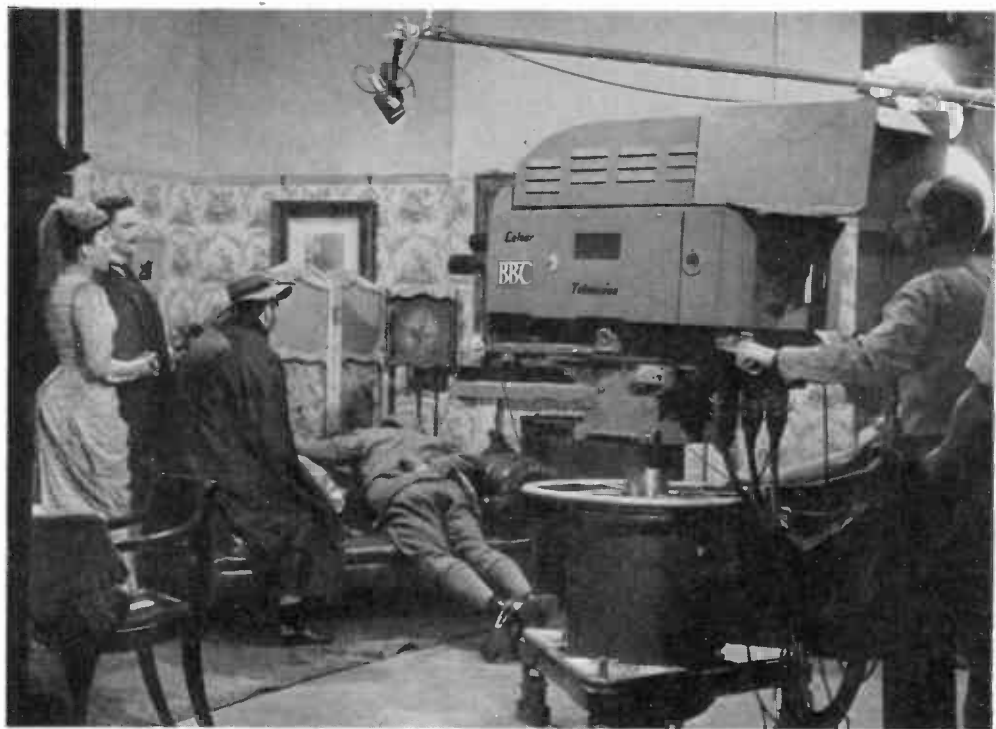
The tests in connexion with the first question are already proceeding and it is hoped to provide a statistical answer in due course. Naturally, since colour pictures are being transmitted, some experience and knowledge is being obtained on the second point, but no wide-scale observations are taking place because sufficient colour receivers are not yet available.

The following is a brief description of the N.T.S.C. signal which is the basis of the equipment at Alexandra Palace. Because of the physical make-up of the human eye, the sensation produced by practically all colours encountered in real life can be reproduced by the additive mixture of red, green and blue lights. Therefore, it is a common feature of all colour TV systems with any pretensions to accurate colour reproduction, that the receiver employs coloured lights of red, green and blue, whose intensities are controlled by three separate signals from the transmitter. The N.T.S.C. signal transmits these three signals as: (a) a luminance (brightness) component, and (b) a chrominance (colour) component, having two separate parts. The luminance component is the same as that which would be produced by a panchromatic monochrome TV camera looking at the same scene, and this signal therefore produces a normal monochrome representation of the coloured scene on a monochrome receiver.

The chrominance component consists of two colour-difference signals, which, in the simplest terms, may be said to convey the hue and degree of saturation of the colour information. In the colour receiver, these three signals representing brightness, hue and saturation are combined to produce the required intensity from each of the red, green and blue lights. The fact that a monochrome receiver and a colour receiver can each produce its



*Mary O'Hara, a gentle, almost waif-like harpist from Ireland, became a new kind of feminine attraction in the BBC's lavish glamour series, **Quite Contrary and More Contrary.***



*A TV play viewers never saw. Performed in full colour in the Alexandra Palace experimental colour studio, it was part of the BBC's regular colour tests.*

own variation of the scene from the same signal simultaneously gives the N.T.S.C. system its valuable feature of "compatibility."

It would be possible to transmit the chrominance signal quite independently of the luminance signal and in this case the compatibility would be virtually perfect. However, the second unique feature of the N.T.S.C. signal is that the two components have been combined in such a way that they occupy the same total bandwidth as that used by the equivalent monochrome signal. Due to the manner in which the human eye perceives colour, the separation of luminance and chrominance enables the bandwidth of the chrominance signal to be reduced to about one-third of that of the luminance.

The actual mechanism by which this band sharing takes place employs a colour sub-carrier (in the British version 2.66 Mc/s) which is simultaneously modulated in amplitude and phase by the two-colour difference signals, the carrier itself being suppressed so that the chrominance signal exists only when colour is present in the scene being transmitted. The colour sub-carrier is an odd multiple of half the line-scanning frequency,



*The Tanner Sisters, a singing act whose verve gives punch as well as glamour to their TV appearances. Real-life sisters, they motor 20,000 miles a year between engagements.*

and in these circumstances the visibility of the best pattern produced between it and the scanning lines is a minimum.

This ingenious combination of band saving, band sharing, suppressed-carrier modulation and "frequency interleaving" is claimed in America to produce an adequately compatible signal. Whether or not such is the case in the British version applied to typical domestic receivers in this country is the chief matter under investigation at the present time.

The main items of equipment installed at Alexandra Palace are: colour slide and film scanner (designed by BBC); colour camera; signal coding equipment; colour picture monitors; and colour test equipment (all designed and made by Marconi's).

Here are some details of the colour camera. Coloured light entering the lens of the camera is split into three colour-separation images by a colour analyzer. Three Image Orthicon camera tubes of a type developed specifically for colour work produce three colour-separation signals in electrical form. Each of the tubes is supplied with the necessary scanning waveforms and electrode potentials just as in the case of the single-tube monochrome camera. It will be realized that the output of each tube is a separate picture of which not only the transfer-characteristic between light input and voltage output must be maintained in a precise manner for the three signals, but the geometry of the three pictures must be the same within very close limits, so that any particular detail of the picture occurs at the same point in the scanning cycle of all three.

The signals from the tubes are amplified in the camera and transmitted to the control room over three identical cables. In the control room, each signal is gamma corrected and equalized in a manner very similar to that used in monochrome equipments employing the same type of camera tube, and finally emerges as a colour separation signal.

Finally, in the Alexandra Palace equipment there are two colour-picture monitors. One employs three separate tubes, the phosphors of which emit respectively red, blue and green light. The application of the colour-separation signals to the grids of these tubes produces three colour-separation images which are combined optically by dichromic mirrors to produce a direct-viewed colour picture. This method brings with it the attendant difficulty of superimposing the three separate images accurately, just as in the colour cameras. However, up to the present, this method produces the best pictures and its complication is worthwhile in a monitor intended for technical purposes.

The other monitor uses a 15-inch R.C.A. shadow-mask tri-colour tube. Since the monitor incorporates its own de-coder, the input signal is of the N.T.S.C. type and the unit is therefore used for general checking and monitoring of the transmitted signal.

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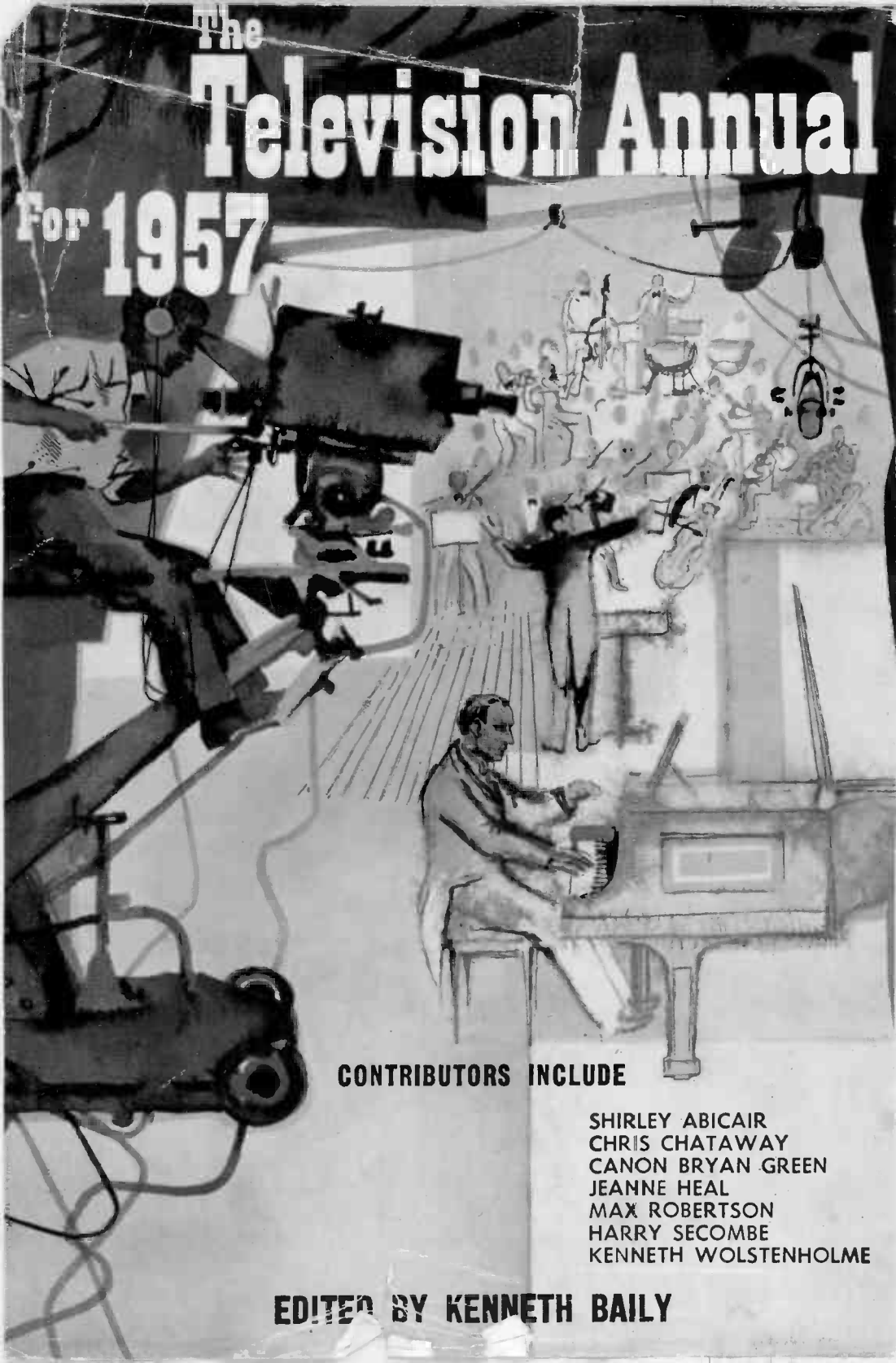
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