

1957 Xmas and New Year Special 1958

# The Record Mirror

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Three Shillings and Sixpence



GREAT L.P.'s

*The Tommy Steele Story*

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LAT 8051-5



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TO THE READERS · EDITOR · AND  
STAFF OF THE RECORD MIRROR—  
MY GOOD WISHES FOR PEACE  
AND HAPPINESS FOR YOU ALL

*Winifred Stowell*

Compliments  
of  
The Season

from

**DAPHNE,  
GEORGIE  
and  
GEORGE  
LACY**

"MOTHER GOOSE"  
Grand Theatre, Leeds



# Greetings



R.M. Picture

**TOMMY STEELE, LARRY PARNES AND JOHN KENNEDY**

*would like to extend Best Wishes to all their  
Friends, Acquaintances and Business Associates for a*

**Very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year**

# Contents

	PAGE
Greetings from Your Editor .....	3
First Lists of Artistes' Pantomime Engagements .....	4
Johnnie Riscoe. Busy Agent, Prince Rat .....	4
Maestro Mario .....	4
Flashback to Italy, 1945, when our troops were introduced to opera, by F. W. C. FESEL .....	5-7
How Opera was born to the Allied Forces in Italy .....	7-8
Modern Jazz for Xmas and the New Year, by TONY HALL .....	9
F., D. & H. Music Publishers 80th Birthday. Pictures and Story .....	10
Film Reviews of the Year, by PETER JONES 11, 15, 20, 27	
Variety Club of Great Britain Honours Golden Discers 12	
Fifty years of song and script writing, by WILL WISE 13-14	
Victor Feldman, Jazz Genius .....	17
A Cavalcade of Rock and Skiffle .....	18-19 & 21
ERIC SYKES tells the story of a TV Producer, Mark IV 22	
Night Club Life "I wouldn't change it for any other in the world" by BRUCE BRACE .....	23
Long Playing Parade. A Comprehensive Guide to the Season's Best L.P. Records 24, 25 & 104	
My Latest Trip to the U.S.A., by BILLY MARSH ...	26, 28
If it's Presley they want, Give 'em Presley by KENNETH WOLSTENHOLME .....	29 & 31
Joe Loss, playing what people want to hear, spans the generations, by DICK TATHAM ...	30
The Hospital Thoughts of WINIFRED ATWELL .....	32
The Lewis-Decca Story, Decca-Lewis Story, by WALLY PETERSON .....	33 & 35
"Laughing Up Your Sleeves" (Stan Freberg) .....	36
Loyalty To Lewis .....	37
Decca "Pops" Through the Years .....	39
"I'm a Pro with a Pen", says GEORGIE WOOD .....	39
The Time Machine of BENNY GREEN .....	41-2
1957 and Opera's Top Ten, by FRANK GRANVILLE BARKER .....	43 & 45
Eighty Years of Phonographic History, by J. W. A. LANGENBERG .....	44-45
Brian Rix's Seven Years at The Whitehall .....	45
Let Battle Commence, by JOHN STONE .....	47
Billy Butlin, by DICK TATHAM .....	48-9
Variety Club of Great Britain: Tent 36, by AL HUNT .....	50
Obituary: Show Business Mourns .....	52
This Year of Foreign Fare, by NIGEL HUNTER .....	53-4
Norman Newell—Top A & R Man .....	55
Pop-Pop-Pop-Pops; Recalled by DON PLAYER .....	56-7
The Big Hits of 1957 .....	57
"Laughing Up Your Sleeves" (Jose Ferrer) .....	58
The Albert Hall goes into Show Business .....	58
Conniff Clicks with his Crazy Sound .....	58
These Folks Made Jazz, by JAMES ASMAN .....	59, 61, 97, 98 & 99
This Year of Variety, by LEN EVANS 62-3, 66-75, 102-3	
Recording and Other Stars in Pantomime .....	73
Dick Tatham Re-lives 1957 .....	77, 79-82, 91
Salute to Sir Louis Sterling .....	83
Tin Pan Alley Review of the Year, by LEN CONLEY .....	84-88
Sarah Vaughan—a Profile .....	90
Strike Up The Band—Old Egypt Style! .....	94
Nixa—Another Record Success Story, by DON PLAYER .....	95
London Link with South Africa .....	101
Phillips Records During 1957 .....	105
My Most Memorable Year, by CYRIL DOWLER .....	107
The Royal Variety Performance of 1957, by ISIDORE GREEN .....	110-111
Leslie Frewin—Shadow of the Stars, by KENNETH KENT-TAYLOR .....	113
Dobell's Mecca of Jazz .....	115-116
My Friends, My Fun, My Memories, by JIMMY DURANTE .....	117
You Cannot Dim Hollywood of its Glamour, writes IVY WILSON, celebrated film columnist ...	118
Sophisticated Pixie—Otherwise Christine Nelson, by LOUIS QUINN .....	118
The Arena Circuit. Ole Olsen tells Georgie Wood of a new idea in entertainment .....	118
Corrections .....	121
My Future Film Plans, by BURT LANCASTER .....	121
Traditional Jazz Records, by JAMES ASMAN .....	121
The Fascinating H.M.V. Story, by LYDIA A. WALTON .....	122-6
RECORD MIRROR Staff Greetings .....	128

EDITED BY ISIDORE GREEN

# The Record Mirror

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THE PAPER FOR ALL MUSIC AND  
SHOW BUSINESS FANS

## Index To Our Xmas and New Year Edition Advertisers

ABERBACH (LONDON) LTD. ....	88
AGENTS AND MANAGERS' DIRECTORY .....	127
AL'S RECORDS .....	34
ANDREWS, ARCHIE (AND PETER BROUGH) .....	42
ASMAN, JAMES .....	94
ASTORIA CIGARETTES .....	17
ATWELL, WINIFRED .....	page ii of cover
AZA, LILLIAN .....	88
BAKER, KENNY .....	74
BAKERS .....	34
BARBER, CHRIS .....	99
BARRY, JOHN AND THE SEVEN .....	92
BARTRAM, GEORGE .....	60
BELINDA (LONDON) LTD. ....	88
BERNARDS .....	4
BERRY, ROY .....	8
BIG BEN MUSIC CO. ....	8
BLACK, GEORGE AND ALFRED .....	93
BLACK, STANLEY .....	106
BOYCE, DENNY, ENTERTAINMENTS .....	109
BRIGHTON AND HOVE J.P.A. ....	94
BRON ASSOCIATED PUBLISHERS LTD. ....	120
BURLINGTON MUSIC CO., LTD. ....	8
BURNS VARIETY & CINEMA AGENCY LTD. ....	93
BUTLIN'S .....	51
CAPITOL RECORDS .....	page iv of cover
CAPITOL RECORDS .....	125
CINEPHONIC MUSIC CO. ....	101
CLARK BROTHERS .....	16
CLARK, PETULA .....	112
COGAN, ALMA .....	106
COLLINS, HAROLD, & HIS ORCHESTRA .....	93
COLLINS, WILL .....	38
COLYER'S JAZZMEN, KEN .....	98
CONQUEST RECORDS .....	120
COOPERS OF CHATHAM .....	34
CORT, BOB .....	71
CROMBIE, TONY .....	8
D'AMATO, CHAPPIE .....	60
DANIELS, LEN .....	89
DASH MUSIC CO., LTD. ....	13
DELFONT, BERNARD .....	40
DELFONT, BERNARD, AGY., LTD. ....	38
(Billy Marsh — Keith Devon)	
DE VERE, MR. AND MRS. HERBERT .....	66
DIXON, REG. ....	88
DOBELL'S JAZZ SHOPS .....	99
DONEGAN, LONNIE .....	116
DOUGLAS, TORRINGTON .....	93
DOWLER, CYRIL .....	111
"DRY-ROT" CO. ....	96
(Brian Rix, Basil Lord and Leo Franklyn)	
DUNCAN, JOHNNY .....	16
DUTTON, LYN. AGENCY .....	93
EARL, ROBERT .....	112
ENGINEERING SERVICE CO. ....	34
ENVOY RECORDS .....	14
ESQUIRE RECORDS LTD. ....	98
FARMERS (LUTON) .....	34
FELD, MR. AND MRS. A. L. ....	55
FELDMANS .....	120
FESTIVAL BALLET .....	105
FIELDS, GRACIE .....	76
FOSTER, HANK, & HIS HILL BILLIES .....	112
FOX, DON .....	92
FOYLES BOOKSHOP .....	12
FRANCIS, DAY AND HUNTER .....	120
GABRIEL MUSIC CO. ....	95
GABRIEL & DIAMOND MUSIC COYS. ....	54
GLASGOW'S TWO RECORD SHOPS .....	120
GOOFERS, THE .....	71
GRAINGER, COLIN .....	101
GREEN, BERTIE .....	109
GREEN, PHIL .....	76
GRAND ORDER OF WATER RATS .....	127
GROSS, MR. AND MRS. JACK .....	107
GUIDE TO THE STARS .....	108
HAMILTON OF SOUTHEND .....	30
HAMILTON, RUSS .....	112
HEADQUARTERS & GENERAL SUPPLIES LTD. ....	80
HEDLEY WARD TRIO .....	42
HELLER, HY .....	111
HENDERSON, DICKIE .....	78
HILL, BENNY .....	89
HINDIN, PHILIP .....	111
HOLLIDAY, MICHAEL .....	92
HYAMS, JACKIE .....	58
ISOW'S RESTAURANT .....	16
JAY, JACK .....	95
JAZZSHOWS LTD. ....	109
JEANS, AUDREY .....	76
JOHNSON, TEDDY, & PEARL CARR .....	92
KAY, KATHIE .....	92
KAYE SISTERS .....	96
KEITH PROWSE MUSIC PUBLISHING CO. ....	87
LACY, GEORGE .....	page ii of cover
LA FLEUR AND CAVENDISH MUSIC COYS. ....	85
LANE, DESMOND .....	47
LAUREL, STAN .....	107
LAURIE, CY, BAND .....	98
LEADER, HARRY .....	16
LEEDS — PICKWICK .....	120
(Duchess - Blossom Music Ltd., Joy Music Ltd.)	
LIGHTFOOT, TERRY .....	98
LOSS, JOE .....	119
LOVE, GEOFF .....	120
LYTTELTON, HUMPHREY .....	31
MALCOLM & KEN .....	60
MARKS, PAULINE .....	58
MARLYN MUSIC CO. ....	86
MARNO, DOROTHY .....	60
MARSHALL, FREDY .....	106
MAYNARD, BILL .....	96
M.C.A. ....	114
McDEVITT, CHAS. & SKIFFLE GROUP .....	74
'ME AND MY SHADOW,' .....	91
MELLIN, ROBERT, LTD. ....	31
(Sherwin Music Co.)	
MELODISC .....	23
MELODY MAKER (EDINBURGH) .....	34
MERRITT AND HATCHER LTD. ....	45
M.E.T. GARAGES .....	8
MILLS MUSIC .....	40
MINAY, W., & SON .....	34
MORECAMBE AND WISE .....	103
MURRAY, CHIC & MAIDIE .....	42
MURRAY, RUBY .....	12
NEW BROWNS .....	34
NEWELL, NORMAN .....	8
NEWTON'S (SHIRLEY) .....	34
OLSEN AND JOHNSON .....	107
ORIOLE RECORDS .....	109
ORNADEL, CYRIL .....	40
and the London Palladium Orchestra	
OSBORNE, TONY .....	32
PAGE, LEONI .....	93
PARTON, TOM .....	34
PEDN OLVA HOTEL .....	12
PHILIPS RECORDS .....	121
PLAYERS CIGARETTES .....	118
PRENDERGAST, JACK .....	101
PRINCE, BILL .....	60
PURCHES, DANNY .....	90
PYE GROUP RECORDS (SALES) LTD. ....	100
PYE RECORD MAKER .....	31
RECORD CENTRE (OSWESTRY) .....	34
REGAN, JOAN .....	94
REID, BERYL .....	94
REYNOLDS, DOROTHY AND JULIAN SLADE .....	112
RHODEN, P. & SON .....	34
RISCOE, JOHNNIE & VIE .....	102
RONALDE, RONNIE .....	106
SAMUELS, AUBREY .....	114
SAVAGE, EDNA .....	23
SAVILLE, LESLIE .....	34
SCOTTISH JAZZ INFORMATION CENTRE (and G.J.C. Agency) .....	99
SECOMBE, HARRY .....	119
SEGAL, MARK .....	58
SEGAL, MARK, AND GEORGE ROBERTS .....	30
SHELTON, ANNE .....	78
SHINER, RONALD .....	96
SOLOMONS, STAN .....	93
SOMERS, MICHAEL .....	34
SOUTHERN MUSIC PUBLISHING CO. ....	88
SOUTHLANDERS, THE .....	60
SPINNING DISC LTD. ....	34
SPORTSMAN'S AID SOCIETY .....	8
SQUIRES, DOROTHY .....	38
STEELE, TOMMY .....	1
STRAND THEATRE .....	114
STRICKLANDS .....	45
SILVESTER, VICTOR .....	112
TOFF, DAVID .....	114
TRINDER, TOMMY .....	page iii of cover
TUCKER, SOPHIE .....	46
TWO I'S COFFEE BAR .....	78
URRY, LEONARD & CECIL BUCKINGHAM .....	102
VALENTINE, DICKIE .....	23
VARIETY ARTISTES' BENEVOLENT FUND .....	70
VAUDEVILLE GOLFING SOCIETY .....	120
VAUGHAN, FRANKIE .....	46
VAUGHAN, FRANKIE (Greetings to Fan Club) .....	89
WARD, DOROTHY & SHAUN GLENVILLE .....	76
WAYNE, TERRY .....	112
WEMBLEY, EMPIRE POOL .....	28
WHEELER, BERT .....	107
WHEELER, JIMMY .....	40
WHISKEY, NANCY .....	60
WHYMANTS .....	8
WILSON, KEN .....	102
WINSTON'S CLUB .....	14
WINTERS, MIKE AND BERNIE .....	63
WISDOM, NORMAN .....	103
WRIGHT, LAWRENCE, MUSIC CO. ....	4

## Happy Reading

A line to the Editor telling him what you think  
of this Xmas and New Year Edition will be  
appreciated . . . . thank you.

# Greetings Once Again



## From your Editor: ISIDORE GREEN

**A**NOTHER CHRISTMAS, ANOTHER YEAR... ANOTHER ANNUAL EDITION. Although this is only the FOURTH ANNUAL of THE RECORD MIRROR, it is the TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL I have produced since my entry into the field of publication (it would have been the thirtieth but for the war years).

I think I can justly claim that this edition of the THE RECORD MIRROR is the most elaborate, the most exciting, in fact, the GREATEST production ever attempted and achieved in the spheres of Music and Show Business.

I think I can justly claim, too, that never in the history of Music and Show Business journalism, has a publication been so heartily and spontaneously supported as this truly Mammoth Edition.

**I**N 1954 I founded and edited THE RECORD MIRROR. That year I produced a 32-page Annual... in 1955, the Annual was 48 pages; in 1956 it was 80 pages. The latter was hailed by the Music and Show Business professions as the greatest ever. This year you have in front of you an Annual Edition comprising 132 pages...

*May I repeat several statements I made in the Third Birthday Number of the RECORD MIRROR... they could not be more appropriate for this number...*

**T**HREE years' run is hardly anything to make a fuss of in the publishing trade, but we on the RECORD MIRROR feel that this has been no ordinary run. It's been one of stimulating progress following a slogging, but victorious, battle over big odds and circumstances. The RECORD MIRROR has had to make its way BY SHEER MERIT. No spectacularly costly campaigns were inaugurated to produce circulation. (In any case, costly, spectacular campaigns produce only

temporary results. The success of a newspaper is measured by the number of readers who STICK by it. That's why we are so proud of our paper... readers STICK by it).

**"WE HAD A TOUGH JOB** trying to convince the top men who run the music and entertainment industries that the RECORD MIRROR was a paper that could do them an immense amount of good. We had a tough job all round trying to put the RECORD MIRROR across. But we did both...

**"THE ENTIRE MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT PROFESSIONS** now solidly support our efforts... every major music-publishing concern, every major recording company, every major film company, every major show-business organisation, now spontaneously acclaim the RECORD MIRROR as an advertising medium of paramount importance.

**"But most important of all, READERS ARE ACCLAIMING IT AS THE FINEST PUBLICATION OF ITS KIND**

**"NO OTHER MUSICAL PAPER** in this country presents its readers with such a variety of pictures, features, news... no other has so consistently produced a TWENTY PAGE paper EVERY WEEK. We shall never be accused of sacrificing news

for advertisements. When too many advertisements were on order to fit into a 16-page paper (which we ran for 18 months or so) we increased the size to 20; on many occasions we enlarged to 24 and even 28.

**"The RECORD MIRROR,** besides covering the record industry so extensively and so comprehensively and being the only weekly to review records, from 78's to L.P.'s, in such large numbers in EVERY edition, is also making its power felt in the world of Show Business generally. The theatre, the music-hall, cabaret, radio, television, the cinema... all are now covered by one of the most talented teams of reporters in the realm of journalism.

**"THE RECORD MIRROR** has made phenomenal progress in a comparatively short time; it will continue to make progress. It is well and truly set. Its success is unstoppable. It has confounded all the pessimistic prophets. It has overwhelmed those who envied its progress and tried to check it.

**"BY SHEER MERIT...** that is my own personal explanation of the success of the RECORD MIRROR.

**"THE 'RECORD MIRROR' DOES NOTHING BUT GOOD FOR EVERYBODY IN THE WORLD OF MUSIC AND SHOW BUSINESS. THAT IS ITS FUNCTION, FIRST AND FOREMOST."**

# A Happy Christmas And A Prosperous New Year

# First List of Panto Engagements WHERE YOU'LL FIND YOUR FAVOURITE STARS THIS CHRISTMAS

**HOWARD AND WYNDHAM**  
**EDINBURGH KING'S.** Commencing December 7. Stewart Cruickshank presents **BABES IN THE WOOD**, with Jimmy Logan, Aly Wilson, Joan Mann.  
**GLASGOW ALHAMBRA.** Commencing November 23. Stewart Cruickshank presents **MOTHER GOOSE**, with Stanley Baxter, Duncan Macrae, Kenneth McKellar, Fay Lenore, The George Mitchell Singers.  
**NEWCASTLE THEATRE ROYAL.** Stewart Cruickshank presents **CINDERELLA**, with Dickie Valentine, Albert Burdon, Alistair McHarg, Joy Turpin, Diana Taylor. In association London Theatrical Productions.  
**ABERDEEN HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.** Commencing December 21. **ROBINSON CRUSOE**, with Jack Radcliffe, George Bolton, Phyllis Holden, The Eileen Ewan Dancers.

**PRINCE LITTLER PRODUCTIONS LTD.**  
**BRISTOL HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 23. **ALADDIN**, with Richard ("Mr. Pastry") Hearne, Dave O'Gorman, Gwen Cherrell, Jean Scott, Ronnie Collis, Gertrude Beaton's Teenagers, Sherman-Fisher Girls.  
**CARDIFF NEW.** Commencing December 26. **THE SLEEPING BEAUTY**, with Ethel Revnell, Peter Dulay, Jack Baskcomb, Patricia Hall, Hazel Lee, Jumpin' Jax, Sherman-Fisher Girls.  
**LEICESTER PALACE.** Commencing December 23. **JACK AND THE BEANSTALK**, with Jimmy James, Nita Croft, Bert Platt, Janet Wall, Sherman-Fisher Girls.

**WILLIAM MUTRIE LTD.**  
**AYR GAIETY.** **THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE**, with Russell Hunter, O'Duffy Brothers, Artie Mayne, Pat Patterson's Girls. (Two weeks Ayr followed by five weeks season at H.M., Carlisle.)  
**EDINBURGH PALLADIUM.** Commencing December 16. **ALADDIN**, with The Great Levante, Billy Leslie and Jimmy Neil, Dorothy Paul.

**ELKAN AND BARRY SIMONS LTD.**  
**HULL PALACE.** Commencing Boxing Day. **MOTHER GOOSE**, with Tommy Rose, Valerie Lawson, Dave Starr, Shirley Jevons, Kingston Girls.  
**PETERBOROUGH EMBASSY.** Commencing Boxing Day. **CINDERELLA**, with Terry O'Neill, Joan Danson, Bridie Devon, Chatt and Gardner, Tommy Wallis, 16 Dillonaire Dancers.  
**TORQUAY PAVILION.** Commencing Boxing Day. **ALADDIN**, with Harry Arnold, Marion Macleod, Reg Vincent, 12 De Wall Dancers.

**DON ROSS**  
**LIVERPOOL PAVILION.** Commencing December 26. Don Ross's production of **DICK WHITTINGTON**, with Dorothy Ward Shaun Glenville, Billy Danvers, Randolph Sutton, Johnny Dallas, 10 J. W. Jackson Girls, Whiteley's 10 Zio Angels.  
**WILL HAMMER ENTERPRISES LTD.**  
**CROYDON GRAND.** Commencing Boxing Day. **CINDERELLA**, with Tony Hughes, Jean Anderson, Joan Sharratt, 16 Eleanor Beams Girls.

**JAMES BRENNAN**  
**BLACKPOOL QUEEN'S.** Jack Gillam's **CINDERELLA**, with Joe Crosbie, Maureen Rose, Mary Redfern. (One week commencing December 23 and Empire, Oldham, week of December 30.)  
**HULME HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 24. Bertram Montagu's **BABES IN THE WOOD**, with Nat Mills, Mary Naylor, Vic Gordon, Peter Colville, Kodell, Joy Jackley.

**GRANADA THEATRES**  
**ROBIN HOOD**, with David Hughes, Terry Scott, Joyce Golding, The Bob Cort Skiffle Group, Grace O'Connor, Beam's Babes. (Commences Granada, Tooting, December 23, following by Granada, Sutton (30), Adelphi Slough (January 6) and Granada, Woolwich (13).)

**TOM ARNOLD**  
**BELFAST GRAND OPERA HOUSE.** Commencing December 23. **HUMPTY DUMPTY**, with Betty Junnel, Harry Pringle, Margaret Mitchell.  
**BRIGHTON SPORTS STADIUM.** Commencing December 21. **CINDERELLA ON ICE**, with Gloria Nord.  
**LEEDS GRAND.** Commencing December 23. Tom Arnold, in association with John Beaumont, presents **MOTHER GOOSE**, with George Lacy, Stan Stennett, Andrea Dancers, Barbara Simpson, Barbara Law.

**EMILE LITTLER**  
**BOURNEMOUTH, THE PAVILION.** Commencing December 21. **MOTHER GOOSE**, with Max Wall, Billy Dainty, Charles Warren and Jean, The Cox Twins, The Tiller Girls.

**GOLDERS GREEN HIPPODROME.** Commencing Boxing Day. Jack Hylton and Emile Littler present **GOODY TWO SHOES**, with Jimmy Wheeler, Tommy Fields, Desmond and Marks, The Tiller Girls.  
**MANCHESTER HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 20. **CINDERELLA**, with David Nixon, Jean Telfer, Pamela Beesley, Tiller Girls.

**PLYMOUTH PALACE.** Commencing December 26. **BABES IN THE WOOD**, with Reg Varney, Jill Manners, Billy Burden.  
**OXFORD NEW THEATRE.** Commencing December 26. Jack Hylton and Emile Littler (by arrangement with Stanley C. Dorrell) present **ALADDIN**, with Nat Jackley, Jimmy Clitheroe, Martin Lawrence, Tiller Girls.

**STREATHAM HILL THEATRE.** Commencing Boxing Day. Jack Hylton and Emile Littler present **PUSS IN BOOTS**, with Jimmy Edwards, Margaret Burton, Sonny Jenks, The John Tiller Girls.

**ASSOCIATED BRITISH CINEMAS**  
**STOCKTON GLOBE.** Three weeks commencing December 23. **CINDERELLA**, with Edna Savage, Lorraine Desmond, Bobby Dennis, Marie De Vere Dancers. (Production plays Regal, Hull, week of January 13, 1958).

**F. J. BUTTERWORTH**  
**ASTON HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 26. Jack Gillam Entertainments Ltd. present **THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE**, with Dickie Arnold, Mickie Warren, Joe Poyton, Frances Langford's Singing Scholars, Lorna Ansell's 12 Regency Girls and 10 Dancing Maids.

**NORTHAMPTON NEW.** Commencing December 26. Cyril Fletcher presents **THE SLEEPING BEAUTY** with Cyril Fletcher, Ian Francis.

**NORWICH HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 26. Cyril Dowler presents **GOLDFLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS**, with Cyril Dowler, Rhoda Rogers.

**SOUTHAMPTON GRAND.** Commencing December 23. Barry Pidcock presents **MOTHER GOOSE**, with Raymond "Tubby" Raymond, Barry Pidcock, Gerrard Sisters.

**HARRY DENNIS** (in association with W. F. Coles)  
**PORTSMOUTH EMPIRE.** Commencing Boxing Day. **GOODY TWO SHOES**, with Dan Leno, Jr., Jessie Jewel, Jan Harding, George Barnes, Brenda Horner's Girls and 10 Wonder Kiddies.

**PETER BERNARD**  
**HUDDERSFIELD THEATRE ROYAL.** **ROBINSON CRUSOE**, with Frank Formby and Gus Aubrey

**PETER HADDON**  
**WIMBLEDON THEATRE.** **CINDERELLA**, with Elsie and Doris Waters, Danny O'Dea, Jasmine Dee, and Peter Haddon.

**GWLADYS STANLEY LAINER**  
**BRADFORD ALHAMBRA.** Commencing December 24. **PUSS IN BOOTS**, with Ken Barnes, Roy Lance, Paul Wood, Bunny Reeves, Bonnie Downes, George Mitchell Quartet, the Zio Angels, the Roselli Singing Ladies.

**EDWIN HICKS**  
**COLCHESTER HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 23. **SINBAD THE SAILOR**, with Tony Dalton, Pauline Lucas, Vera Shaw, Keith Leggett, Vera Way. (Production goes to Playhouse, Bury St. Edmunds week of January 13.)

**LLANELLY REGAL.** Commencing December 24. **RED RIDING HOOD**, with Ossie Morris, Barbara Walters, etc.

**STOCKTON ON TEES HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 23. **RED RIDING HOOD**, with Peter Webster, Valerie Dene.

**WORKINGTON OPERA HOUSE.** Commencing December 23. **DICK WHITTINGTON**, with Cliff Gay, Joan Rohan, Ivy Barry, Jack Kirwan, Sandra Wells. (Production goes to Grand, Bolton, week of January 6.)

**JOHN BEAUMONT**  
**SHEFFIELD LYCEUM.** Commencing December 23. "The Sleeping Beauty," with Rosale Hilton, Billy Whittaker, Joe Black, Horace Mashford, George Mitchell Quartet.

**DERBY HIPPODROME.** Commencing December 23. **DICK WHITTINGTON**, with Syd and Max Harrison, Felix Bowness, The Maple Leaf Four, Wilson, Keppel and Betty.

For a further list of pantomimes, see page 73

## Busy Agent... And He's Just Been Elected Prince Rat



**GENIAL JOHNNIE RISCOE**, who nowadays runs his flourishing agency from an office suite in London's Wardour Street, proudly tells all and sundry that he's had 34 years in show business.

Long before the war he was in a dancing act known as the Pender Troup of Giants. One of his fellow-hoofers, then named Archie Leech, is today better known as Cary Grant.

After a while Johnnie developed a flair for making folk laugh, and this enabled him in due course to become a comic with a long list of West End successes to his credit.

As an agent, Johnnie is paying special attention to television, particularly the international side. He says: "I'm sure the exchange of artists from one nation to another is going to reach colossal proportions within coming years, though I have to keep impressing upon performers that it's no use bringing along acts of the old-fashioned music hall type. Television, as we know, has very special requirements, and I wish more young artists would study them."

"Incidentally," Johnnie adds, "I happened to start my TV career in 1932. Yes, that's the year. People don't believe me, but I win in the end—I've kept the press cuttings!"

Just after Johnnie had told us this story and on going to press came the news that he had been elected Prince Rat in the Grand Order of Water Rats for 1958. We on the RECORD MIRROR convey to Johnnie Riscoe our heartiest congratulations.

—R.M. PICTURE

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# FLASHBACK TO ITALY, 1945 . . . WHEN OUR TROOPS THERE WERE INTRODUCED TO HIGH-CLASS OPERA — AND LOVED IT . . . .

They Heard  
**GIGLI,  
GOBBI,  
SCHIPA**  
And Dozens  
Of Other  
Opera Greats

**D**URING THE LAST WAR I founded a newspaper for the troops in Italy. I had the whole-hearted support of Brigadier B. U. S. Cripps and, under his supervision and the British Military Authorities, *The Welfare News*, as the paper was called, was an immense success. One of its outstanding features was an Opera Section. This was especially popular because our troops were beginning to appreciate the real value in this form of entertainment. The San Carlo Opera House in Naples was requisitioned by the Allied Forces and some of Italy's greatest singers gave endless enjoyment to members of the British and American Forces.

On my staff of *The Welfare News* was an enthusiastic young airman by the name of F. W. C. FESEL. He was a virtual operatic encyclopedia. He knew every opera, every opera singer—in fact he lived for opera. So edifying were his articles and reviews in *The Welfare News* that I produced an Anniversary Opera Edition of this publication to celebrate the first twelve months of Opera for the Allied Forces in Italy. When Fesel and I returned to England after demobilisation, I commissioned him to write an article on Opera for the Troops in Italy for the newspaper I had founded before I went into the Army. This is reproduced here. I am sure it will stir the memories of many an ex-soldier who served with the Central Mediterranean Forces and who saw and heard the subjects of which Fesel writes here.—ISIDORE GREEN

**C**HRISTMAS morning, 1945, in Naples brought me an experience which, as an opera lover, I am not likely to forget. The San Carlo Opera House was engaged in an ambitious venture, most of the publicity for which had been carried out in Army Welfare's special newspaper, founded by Isidore Green, *The Welfare News*. The occasion was the final rehearsal for Wagner's opera "The Valkyrie".

Christmas morning is a free one in the Services and most folk stayed late in bed—to recover from Christmas Eve and to prepare for the festivities to follow. The rehearsal started at 9.30, so I was early afoot and walking down the Riviera di Chiaia, sniffing the sea air—slightly tainted with the scent of sewerage—on the Naples seafont. In the theatre all was busy. A hundred men in the orchestral pit blew, plucked, fiddled and tootled away as they tuned up in between shouts of "Auguri per Natale" or "A Merry Christmas" as the Italians say it. On the stage men were still hammering down the first act, amid grumbles, for the scenery came from Rome and did not fit easily. At length Maestro Franco Capuana called for silence and the rumbling storm of music which introduces the opening scene commenced.

The rehearsal, which lasted five hours was the final trial and culminating point of six weeks of hard work. I stayed and listened to two of the three acts, and then had to balance carefully my yearnings for Xmas dinner against the last act of the opera. Xmas dinner won and off I went.



**MADAM 'B':** TOTI DAL MONTE, one of the big favourite singers with the Allied Forces in Italy. She always shone in the celebrated "Madam Butterfly" . . . here she is in a scene from this great Puccini opera in the stirring, but always sympathetic, rôle of Cho-Cho-San.

**T**HIS rather unique way of spending Christmas morning is an experience I am scarcely likely to repeat. In Italy, however, they will be busy again this year in all the larger theatres, for the important date and day on which the opera season opens is December 26. In Britain, Boxing Day, but in Italy it is the commencement of "Carnevale" and four months of opera. For this reason no doubt, Maestro Capuana mounted the stand in front of the orchestra on December 26, 1945, clothed in full evening dress with a gleaming boiled shirt prominently displayed. The free and easy days of a two years season under the British Military Authorities were drawing to a close. Although the closure was not to take place for several months, Capuana's boiled shirt was a sign of the times. The news of "demobbing" had reached the Italians, and if normal times were a long way off, the approach of a new era had to be signalled.



W. C. FESEL, formerly of the R.A.F., the great opera expert, who wrote this article for the editor's "Opera Anniversary Edition" of the WELFARE NEWS.

## GREAT SINGERS

**T**HE "new" season thus started, if it could not gather together the resources, nor allot the time necessary to prepare performances as brilliant as those of pre-war days, did its utmost to provide variety and casts whose quality was the best the troops had heard in Naples in all the 24 months they had packed the opera house. Star followed star. Margherita Carosio, Ferruccio Tagliavini, Pia Tassinari, Tancredi Pasero, Fiorenzo Tasso, Francesco Merli, Cloe Elmo, Tito Schipa, Tito Gobbi, Raffaele de Falchi, Carlo Tagliabue, Gianna Pederzini and Beniamino Gigli, represented some of the best singers Italy had to offer; several of them had achieved international fame at Covent Garden, London, and the Metropolitan, New York.

These singers alone were sufficient to make the three months between December 26, 1945, and the end of March, 1946, the most remarkable in a long season. Di Costanzo, the Impresario, however, was concerned not only to add a quiver of first-rate singers to his equipment, but also an extraordinary series of operas in which to use them. This was all the more astonishing when one considered how little time



**CARMEN:** Scene from Act One of this powerful opera . . . the male is AUGUSTO FERRATI, his romance, RINA MARIOSA, another pair of tremendously popular singers with our troops in Italy. Incidentally, both pictures on this page were taken by a photographer serving with the R.A.F. during performances of the respective operas.

there was in which to hold rehearsals, with the theatre open every night in the week plus a matinee on Sundays. Di Costanzo, however, had a conductor as hard-working and dynamic, as he was skilled.

## 'THE MIGHTY ATOM'

**I**F ever a musician deserved the title of the "Mighty Atom" it was Franco Capuana during this period. The high praise he later received in London was no surprise to me. It came from the most critical people at Covent Garden—the orchestra. A conductor may fool the critics, but he never fools the

people he controls. The repertoire at the San Carlo, to which Di Costanzo now proceeded to add something novel, either by way of revival or new production, almost weekly, achieved a variety which was as gratifying to the music lover, as it was bewildering. New works appeared with the dazzling speed of rockets and before one had recovered from the display of new stars and brilliant, if improvised staging, something fresh was already on the way.

**A**FTER Wagner's opera "The Valkyrie," on December 26, 1945, the impact of the German master on his untutored hearers was mollified by the appearance of  
**CONT. ON NEXT PAGE**



# SAN CARLO OPERA STARS SING AT BUTLIN'S

Continued From Previous Page

Interest of those back from Italy. The plans for the visit were, however, still in the embryo stage, although the news was distinctly hopeful. The venue it was thought might be the Stoll Theatre. So matters rested until mid-July.

## SADLER'S WELLS

### NEW DIRECTOR

IN the meantime one or two interesting things were happening with our native ventures. An interesting appointment took place at Sadler's Wells, when Mr. James Robertson was appointed the new Director of opera. F/L James Robertson, as he then was, was closely connected in early 1944 with the Sunday Symphony Concerts at the San Carlo Opera House, and he conducted the orchestra at these concerts on more occasions than any other musician drawn from the forces.

I attended a number of his rehearsals. The orchestra regarded him as the best of the service conductors who appeared on the podium to direct these concerts from time to time during the course of over two years. I have a shrewd suspicion that the introduction of the Wolf-Ferrari opera, "I Quattro Rusteghi," by James Robertson into the Sadler's Wells repertoire was due to his sojourn in Italy. This delightful work, superbly produced and well suited to the modest forces of the company, was completely changed by the transfer of the locale to London, and transformation of the Italian characters into English men and women. It has made a charming and useful addition to the very restricted list of works now to be heard.

At the end of June, Benjamin Britten tempted the fates with another new opera at Glyndebourne—"The Rape of Lucretia," which was later taken on tour. Although in subject matter and style it was likely to frighten off many opera fans, "The Rape of Lucretia" revealed a less austere Britten, who seemed prepared to tickle the ears of the audience in a slightly more orthodox way than he did with "Peter Grimes." It might be wondered if Britten, despairing of operatic conditions in Britain deliberately restricted his forces to a minimum—the orchestra numbered twelve, and the "chorus" two. If so it was one way of solving an economic problem, although unlikely to appeal to the "groundling," who preferred his opera decked out in grander fashion orchestrally.

## 'THE MIRACLE' HAPPENS

AS Britten's opera toured the provinces in late July, prior to a London premiere, the visit of the San Carlo Opera Company became a certainty. Covent Garden was busy with Britain's most popular art-entertainment—ballet, but this it was announced, was to give way to a five week season of opera by the C.M.F. San Carlo Company. The miracle had really happened, and the company from Naples—which so many had hoped would come, but wondered how—was actually coming to London. In the meantime the influence of our

occupation of Italy had already stirred operatic circles in London. At the New Cambridge Theatre, Mariano Stabile and Alda Noni, backed by a British cast, admirably trained by Dino Borgioli and conducted by Alberto Erede reintroduced the delights of Donizetti's almost forgotten "Don Pasquale," sung in Italian, to the London public.

## IT ARRIVES IN LONDON

IN early September the San Carlo Opera Company arrived in London. A long list of principals supported by fifty of the chorus started rehearsals at Covent Garden with the Covent Garden Orchestra. The indefatigable Capuana was with them as leading conductor, partnered by Giuseppe Antonicelli

Franco Patané and Ugo Rapalo, well known for their work as conductors at the San Carlo, were also with the company. Among the leading singing, Margherita Carosio topped the list of sopranos. Luigi Infantino, a discovery of the impresario, Di Costanzo, was prominent among the tenors. Familiar to the men who had been in C.M.F. were Poalo Silveri, Carlo Tagliabue, Benvenuto Franci, Gustavo Gallo, Franco de Guerra, Mariano Caruso, Melchiorre Luisa, Augusto Romani and Iginio Ricco. Less well known, since they had sung at the San Carlo mainly in the closing days of the season, but nevertheless excellent artistes were Olga Fineschi, Franco Albanese, Del Monaco, Mario Binci, Lina Aimaro, and Lauria.

## 'BIS' AT COVENT GARDEN!

THE season opened brilliantly on September 5, 1946, with a gala performance of "La Traviata," and London heard the most brilliant singing for many years. Cries of "Bis" ("encore") from a multitude of British lips were heard for the first time at Covent Garden, where this word had been monopolised previously by London's Italian Colony. It was a striking indication of the Italian influences at work on our operatic manners. Some of the starched patrons of pre-war "Garden" seasons did not like it and letters taking sides in the matter began to be bandied about in *The Times*.

The offenders, although British, had their roots firmly grounded in Italian tradition, and their noisy enthusiasms and incessant demands for a repetition of their favourite numbers continued throughout the five weeks.

The operas performed were confined to the more popular works of the repertoire. This was regrettable when one considers the brilliant three months in Naples described in the first section of this article. It was understandable, however, in view of the uncertainty of the British market for grand opera, the scenery difficulties, and the fact that the orchestra unlike the artists and chorus, was not well grounded in Italian opera.

Some of the critics did not treat the company kindly, although many still wonder why. An enthusiastic public filled Covent Garden night

after night during the entire five weeks.

## OFF TO BUTLIN'S CAMP!

THERE were no signs of provincial performances until the startling announcement was made that the San Carlo Opera Company were to be transported en bloc to entertain the patrons of Butlins' Camp at Filey. The enterprising Mr. Billy Butlin completely democratised opera by offering a whole week of it plus all the delights of a seaside camp for a modest five guineas. Mr. Butlin's career as an impresario continued for a further week at Skegness where the company played however, not to a camp audience, but in the more usual theatre. The enthusiasm which greeted this excursion to the provinces makes one sorry that the San Carlo Opera Company did not visit the big provincial cities where they would have most certainly had a great success.

The Company broke in on ballet once more when they returned to Covent Garden at the beginning of November for four final performances at Britain's leading opera house with Beniamino Gigli and his daughter Rina. Gigli, in spite of his age, still possessed the voice which had brought him world-wide fame. He was a treasured memory to C.M.F. men who turned up in droves to hear him again. The house was sold out weeks ahead, but the B.B.C brought Gigli and the C.M.F. company to an audience of millions. Rina Gigli played opposite her father, a familiar enough sight in Naples, but novel to others. Bookings for Gigli concerts up and down the country were phenomenal following his broadcasts. He had undoubtedly staged a perfect come-back.

A final week at the Davis Theatre, Croydon, closed the San Carlo visit to Britain for 1946.



LILY PONS, the great American coloratura soprano, toured North African and Italian Allied bases during the war in company with her husband, ANDRE KOSTELANETZ, the celebrated composer and conductor. The "pint-sized prima-donna" sang to British troops at special performances on their behalf at the San Carlo Opera House in Naples. The above picture of Miss Pons was taken during her only appearance on British television in 1957 when she headlined the "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" show.—R.M. Picture.

# HOW OPERA WAS BORN TO THE ALLIED FORCES IN ITALY FROM THE BELLINI, CATANIA, TO THE SAN CARLO, NAPLES

FOR the first time in print, I am able to give part of the story of the birth of opera to the Allied Forces, first inaugurated by 56 Area Welfare at the Bellini Theatre, Catania. The story is one of almost insurmountable difficulties which were ultimately overcome with a tenacity which reflects great credit on all those who took part.

In September, 1943, Major T. A. Lines, DADAWS, 56 Area, and Major Davidson, of the United States Forces, examined the famous Bellini Theatre, with a view to using the building to provide entertainment for the Allied Forces in the area. The theatre was in bad shape. Above the stage was a hole 40 feet across. Bomb-blast had blown in every window. Nevertheless, they decided not only that the theatre must be used, but that it should be used for the purpose for which it had been built—the presentation of opera.

With the backing of Brig. B. U. S. Cripps, M.C., and General Beverley—51st Troop Carrier Wing, USAAF—it became possible to put the theatre into some kind of order. A tarpaulin was placed over the gap in the roof as a temporary measure and plans were made for rehearsals to commence. Before they could think of opera, however, many problems had to be solved. Artistes, scenery, costumes, music, and the multitude of other things that went with them, had to be found. The two majors set off for Palermo. Here they found a willing listener in Colonel L. Kaull, Chief of U.S. Special Service, I.B.S. With his collaboration a working arrangement was arrived at with the Massimo Theatre, Palermo. The Massimo had some scenery, and so had the Bellini. They agreed to a sort of "Lend-Lease" arrangement.

The Massimo had some precious sopranos, the Bellini had none. These would also be shared.

Palermo and Catania are a considerable distance apart, and it will be wondered how this idea of sharing sopranos and scenery was done. The war and the weather had played havoc with the roads and bridges of Sicily. It was proposed to give opera alternately in Catania and Palermo, shuttling both scenery and singers between the two towns. Apparently an insoluble problem.

It was at this point that General Beverley and 51st Troop Carrier Wing once more came to the rescue. The General placed five troop-carrier planes at the disposal of the two theatres.

## REHEARSALS BEGIN

"La Boheme" now went into rehearsal at Catania. The weather was bitter, and in the draughty theatre, artistes, chorus and orchestra walked up and down during the breaks, stamping to keep warm. The scene-painters were busy with what scenery the Bellini possessed. Their main material was brown paper.

Repairs to the stage machinery was put in hand. Help in finding what was required was given by Major Rolfe, of AMG, who was also instrumental in obtaining rations for the artistes.

Accommodation was hunted up by Captain D. G. McKenzie, of 56 Area Welfare. He also undertook the task of catering for the artistes, and managed somehow, to get a restaurant started where they could obtain their meals.

(Continued in next page, cols. 5 & 6)

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# NORMAN NEWELL

### WAR-TIME OPERA Cont. from previous page

The first arrivals from Palermo were not very happy. When they arrived at Gebbini Aerodrome, seven miles from Catania, it was found that the majority had never flown before and suffered badly from air sickness. They soon recovered, however, and flying became a regular and essential part of their alternate appearances in Catania and Palermo.

All was at length ready for the first performance of "La Boheme" on September 24, 1943. On September 23, 140 tickets had been sold. At 5 o'clock on September 24, it began to rain, and a further 300 were driven to shelter in the theatre, and so took their first sip at the delights of Puccini.

They evidently enjoyed the performance. Next day, 700 seats were sold in quick time, and thereafter the Bellini played four nights a week to full houses. (The seating capacity is 1,280).

The artistes continued to fly to schedule and were cared for on arrival in Palermo by Captain Semple, of U.S. Special Service.

The repertoire gradually increased. "The Barber of Seville," "Madam Butterfly," and other operas were added. The most ambitious ventures undertaken at the Bellini, "Turandot" and "Aida," were staged the following January and February. The success of "Aida" was greatly assisted by Colonel Robinson of the Dorsetshire Regiment—the Dorsets supplying the "extras" so necessary to make this opera a convincing spectacle. The same regiment also provided ushers for the theatre!

### LOCAL TALENT SOUGHT

Whilst flying singers back and forth between the two towns solved the problem of artistes, a search for local talent commenced. This was not done conventionally.

An Academy of Music was started in Catania by Brig. B. U. S. Cripps, M.C., the Area Commander. Auditions were held and talented singers engaged for the Bellini. Artistes discovered through the Academy include Franca Bellavia, who has since appeared at the San Carlo. Giuseppe Fontanarosa will be remembered by those who frequented the Bellini. A similar academy was successfully instituted in Palermo.

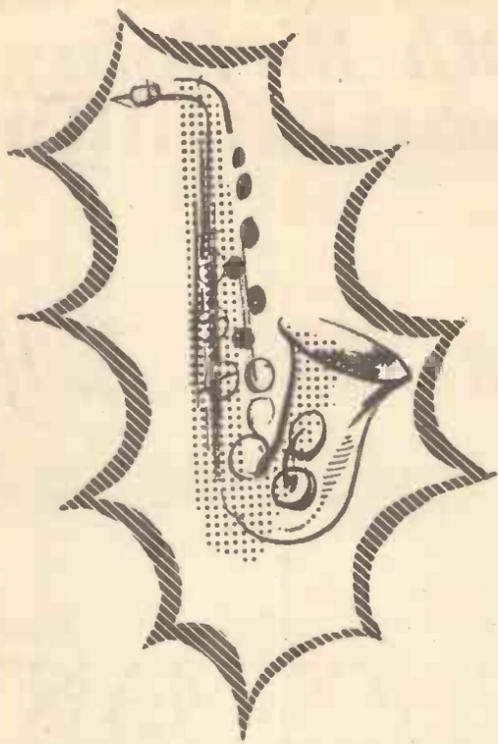
Major Lines, on whom a great deal of work entailed had fallen, was taken ill, and Major Guy de La Mare filled the breach in his absence.

### AND SO-ON TO NAPLES

Southern Italy was won for the Allies, and 56 Area moved north to Naples. Welfare took over the San Carlo, which had been opened the previous December. It was decided that the theatre should, where possible, be made the finest in Italy. Brigadier Cripps formed a controlling committee, including not only representatives of the military authority, but representatives of all those sections of Naples interested in the welfare and success of this great theatre. It became the policy that the most famous artistes available should be engaged.

There were many difficulties to overcome, not the least of which was financial. The policy was successful, however, and with the able collaboration of Comandatore di Costanzo, the Impresario, it was possible to present Gigli, Caniglia, Stignani, Toti dal Monte, Gino Becchi, Tagliabue, Guerrini, Italo Tajo, Carosio, to mention some of the most important artistes, to the troops in Naples.

Opera run by the military authorities may have seemed an unlikely undertaking, but it proved one of the greatest successes obtained in providing entertainment for the forces.



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If your friend digs the kind of jazz I try to boost in my weekly column—and he hasn't already bought them—I'd recommend one of the following to give him (or her) really lasting pleasure:

- (a) "THE JAZZ MESSENGERS" (PHILIPS BBL 7121);
- (b) "ROUND MIDNIGHT"—Miles Davis (PHILIPS BBL 7140);
- (c) "COLLECTOR'S ITEM"—Miles Davis (ESQUIRE 32-030);
- (d) "SILVER'S BLUE"—Horace Silver (PHILIPS BBL 7183).

If these don't particularly take your fancy, here are some comments on other recent releases. Maybe you'll find one that's right up your street . . .

and is capable of expressing—and arousing—much emotion with his ballads. There are eight standards, four originals. Enjoyable: but the recorded vibes sound is awful. Was it taped in Leon Kaba's garage? (★★★★).



**THOROUGHLY PROFESSIONAL**

● "SWINGIN' WITH TERRY GIBBS" (12 in. EM ARCY E1J 1263): The often extrovert vibeman, Gibbs, is back with a big band for the first time since quitting the "second"

My favourite original is Albam's "Funky Serenade." It's not dissimilar in conception (though quite different in form) to the "Blues in Two Modes" our own Victor Feldman wrote a year ago for his recording big band (TEMPO TAP 12 in.). In fact, listening to this album, I kept wondering what Victor could have done using his own writing and this personnel. I think the results would have been even better than here. And for my ears Vic's own vibes-playing has more "soul" than that of Terry.

Nevertheless, that is by the way. This is a thoroughly professional, often enjoyable, but seldom really

a visiting American coloured musician said to me: "Zoot has the blackest soul of any white musician I know."

On this Storyville label date (recorded six months after the excellent "Tonite's Jazz Today" on VOGUE LAE 12047), Zoot again used Mulligan-man Bobby Brookmeyer on valve-trombone. The rhythm section is, if possible, better than on the earlier album. Hank Jones is the epitome of tastefully swinging comping and solo piano; Bill Crow is as steady as a rock on bass; and the great Basic band veteran drummer, Jo Jones, proves why he is so highly regarded by jazzmen of every school and colour. His playing here is positively brilliant. Just listen.

This is a first rate "Let's-go-in-there-and-swing" album. Zoot is just great. Warm and loose, and perpetually cooking. Brookmeyer has more guts than usual. And the rhythm section is ideal. The tunes include four standards ("Lullaby of the Leaves," "Someone to Watch Over Me," "My Old Flame" and "Can't Get Started," which sports a nasal, "what-have-I-got-to-lose?" vocal by Zoot) and five originals.

Two by Al Cohn, one by Basic and one piece from Bobby and Zoot. As Alun Morgan's well-nigh perfect liner notes aptly point out, "Morning Fun" is the blues riff originally known to us as "Zootcase."

An album you'd have to be very critical to fault. Thoroughly enjoyable. (★★★★★)



**COLLECTOR'S PIECE**

● "LEE KONITZ COLLECTOR'S" (12 in. ESQUIRE 32-027):

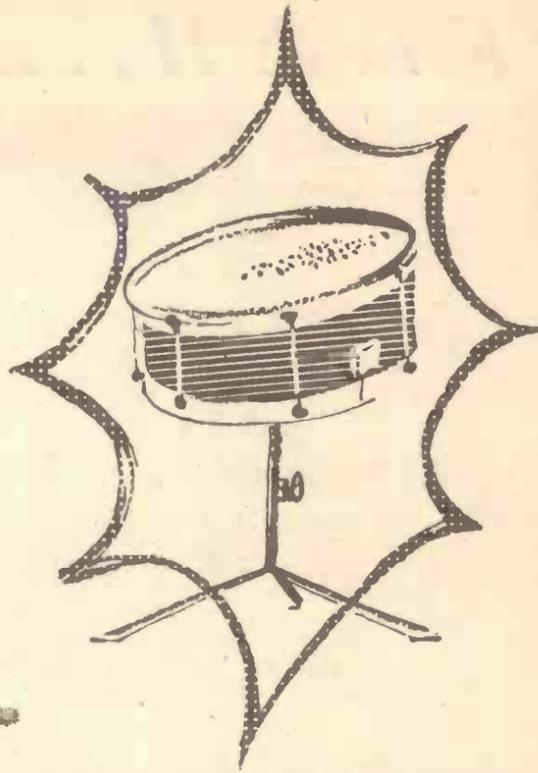
Here is a most interesting remastered (by Van Gelder) collation that should be in every collector's record library. Whatever you look at it, Lee Konitz is the only man to come forward with an original approach to the alto since Charlie Parker. Esoteric, completely "uncommercial," obviously dedicated and highly personal, Lee's sound is inseparably tied to the Lennie Tristano school of jazz conception.

On this album, Prestige (the parent company) has collected the cream of their Konitz-Tristano recordings (mostly also featuring Lee's tenor-playing disciple, Warne Marsh and guitarist Billy Baner) made in 1949 and '50.

Among the selections: "Sub - Conscious Lee," "Judy," "Marshmallow," "Fishin' Around," "Tautology," "Sound-Lee," "Ice-Cream Konitz," etc.

Much of it still sounds cold and calculating, unswinging (intentionally, one feels), and completely devoid of direct earthy emotional impact.

But, nevertheless, for its historic interest, you should have it, I feel. Alun Mor-



gan is again the annotator and tells the Konitz style story simply and dispassionately. A first-rate note. The rating is for its historical value (★★★★★).



**THIS COHESION IS AMAZING**

● STANGETZQUINTET

—Vol. 2 (COLUMBIA "CLEF" SEB 10076): When you think how Norman Granz has over-recorded trumpeter Harry Edison, seems a crime how few albums he's made lately with tenorist Getz. Especially so, since Stan is now in better health and playing with more warmth and swing than ever before in his career.

(I believe there's a new album out in the States featuring Getz, Dizzy Gillespie and another ridiculously under-recorded great jazz-player, Sonny Stitt. How about putting it out here soon, E.M.I.? Sounds the most interesting Granz date in ages.)

This EP features the 1954/5 Quintet with Bob Brookmeyer, Johnny Williams (piano), Teddy Kotick (bass) and Frank Isola (drums). Though Brookmeyer has stated that this was one of the unhappiest bands he's ever worked with, the records they made sound wonderfully warmly emphatic and convincing. The rhythm section (with Williams' comping and Kotick outstanding) works well together and swings. As for Getz and Brookmeyer, their cohesion is amazing. Almost like two people thinking and breathing as one.

Bobby's theme, "Minor Blues," has a haunting beauty that envelops you with the kind of mournfulness that makes you feel good. The reverse, "Fascinatin' Rhythm," is taken at a fastish medium tempo and is almost as good.

Getz may not have been the easiest person to get on with in those days. But, by golly, he was playing well here (★★★★★).



**SARAH SINGS . . .**

FINALLY, in this resumé of mine for the Annual of the

RECORD MIRROR a word or two about some recent vocal albums. Though the singer has been, and still is primarily associated with jazz, these LPs were designed to appeal to discerning "pop" music fans as well. . .

● "SARAH VAUGHAN SINGS GREAT SONGS FROM HIT SHOWS" — Part One (12 in. MERCURY MPL 6522): "A Tree in the Park," "Little Girl Blue," "Comes Love," "But Not For Me," "My Darling, My Darling," "Lucky in Love," "Autumn in New York," "It Never Entered My Mind," "If This Isn't Love," "The Touch of Your Hand," "Home-work," "Bewitched."

● "SARAH VAUGHAN SINGS GREAT SONGS FROM HIT SHOWS" — Part Two (12 in. MERCURY MPL 6523): "Dancing in the Dark," "September Song," "A Ship Without a Sail," "Lost in the Stars," "It's Got To Be Love," "All The Things You Are," "Poor Butterfly," "Let's Take an Old Fashioned Walk," "My Heart Stood Still," "He's Only Wonderful," "They Say It's Wonderful," "My Ship."

● "SARAH VAUGHAN SINGS GREAT SONGS FROM HIT SHOWS" — Volume One (12 in. MERCURY MPL 6525): "Isn't It a Pity?" "Of Thee I Sing," "I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise," "Someone to Watch Over Me," "Bidin' My Time," "The Man I Love," "How Long Has This Been Going On?" "My One and Only," "Lorelei," "I've Got a Crush on You," "Summertime."

If you can afford them, all three of these LPs (plus volume two of the Gershwin set, which hasn't arrived at this writing) are worthy of a place on your shelves. It's sophisticated rather than swinging Sarah. Most of the songs are taken at very slow tempo. Which is a pity. Because more contrast in treatment would perhaps have made them a better commercial proposition.

But supervisor Bob Shad, arranger-conductor Hal Mooney and Sarah herself all know exactly what they're doing. And the result is a highly polished, artistic product which does everyone proud. The tunes are cleverly chosen. Some you'll be hearing for the first time. If you're like me, you'll want to hear most of them again. Recommended.

● "GRAND STAN"—Stan

Levey Sextet (12 in. LONDON LTZ N 15100): From the BETHLEHEM catalogue comes this album by six of the more swinging West Coasters. Drummer Levey leads Conte Candoli (trumpet), Frank Rosolino (trombone), Richie Kamucha (tenor), Sonny Clark (piano) and Leroy Vinnegar (bass) into three standards and five originals (two each by Clark and Bob Cooper, one by Bill Holman). All but Leroy have a feature track. Rosolino's "Yesterdays" in no way matches up to the annotator's glowing descriptions.

Nothing much happens at all. Kamucha's "Angel Cake" is better. Warm and Lester-like; but he can do, and has done, better. "Why Do I Love You?" features fleet, swinging Sonny Clark, the best overall soloist on the date.

"Hit That Thing" is mainly a drum feature. For Levey. "Blues at Sunrise" has good, earthy Candoli, Clark and Vinnegar.

The standout track on a not particularly outstanding LP Conte blows muted, open, then muted again, showing Miles and Gillespie influences. "Grand Stan," "Gal in Calico" and "Tiny's Tune" have solo jobs for all.

This is a musicianly album and the rhythm section is looser and more swinging than we generally hear from the West Coast.

The hornmen had rather an off-day. All are capable of better things. Rosolino again underlines his limitations, Kamucha proves that he and Bill Perkins are the best of the newer white Prez-school tenors; Conte, that he has a lot of "soul" (I like him on "Tiny's," too); Clark, that he should go East (which I believe he has done). Vinnegar emphasises his important and wailing "walking" abilities, and leader Levey shows again that he's one of the swingiest, beatiest white drummers in jazz today.

Good. But it could be better, and doesn't match up to Levey's previous album, "This Time the Drum's on Me" (unreleased here) which had Dexter Gordon on tenor who inspired everyone to greater heights than on this current LP (★★★★).



**TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING**

● "BASS HIT"—Ray Brown (12 in. COLUMBIA "CLEF" 33C 9037): Ray Brown, 31 on November 13, one of the

greatest bass-players ever to appear on the jazz scene, has long deserved this LP of his own. He's heard with a big swinging ensemble conducted by my friend, Marty Paich, who also did all the excellent arrangements. Among the personnel: H. Edison, R. Linn, P. Candoli, C. Gozzo, H. Harper, J. Guiffre, B. Holman, Jack du Long (alto), H. Geller, J. Rowles, Herb Ellis, A. Stoller and Mel Lewis.

You'd naturally expect a lot of bass solos. And that's exactly what happens. But despite the musical brilliance and imaginative improvisation of Ray's playing, the punching, loosely-swinging not un-Basic-like Paich orchestra and averagely good short solo contributions by Guiffre, Geller, Edison, Rowles and Ellis, somehow this album doesn't quite come off. Maybe it would have been more successful if released as two separate EP's. Because, as a 10-in. LP, it's a bit too much of a good thing. (In America, it was a 12 in.).

One final criticism: The bass is under-recorded. A peculiar state of affairs for a session built entirely round that instrument! My rating is for musical content. But I advise you to hear the whole album before definitely deciding to buy (★★★★)



**BRILLIANT TECHNICIAN**

● "FATS SADI—MARTIAL SOLAL QUARTET" (12 in. VOGUE LAE 12043): If you're lucky enough to get to Paris this Autumn to see Miles Davis, Jay Jay Johnson or Bud Powell, lend an ear also to the handful of fine young modernists around the French capital (particularly tenorman Barney Wilen).

A few of them are to be heard on this enjoyable LP featuring pianist Martial Solal and vibesman "Fats" Sadi. Bass chores are split between Jean-Marle Ingrand and Benoit Quersin; drums between Jean-Louis Viale (the man I referred to as a "French Eric Delaney" — vide Alun Morgan's liner notes) and Christian Garros.

We haven't a pianist of Solal's calibre in this country. A brilliant technician, who also swings very hard in the Powell tradition. Sadi does not match up to our own Vic Feldman. But he plays with tremendous confidence in a sort of Terry Gibbs-ish (?) way

**MODERN JAZZ FOR XMAS AND THE NEW YEAR**

**LONG PLAYER SPECIAL**  
By  
**TONY HALL**

Herman Herd. The extremely musicianly all-star studio band has (among others) Bernie Glow, Ernie Royal, Nick Travis, Don Elliott (trumpets), Bob Brookmeyer, Urbie Green (trombones), Sam Marowitz, Hal McKusick, Frank Socolow, Al Cohn, Al Epstein (saxes), (Miss) Terry Pollard, Turk Van Lake, Herman Wright, Jerry Segal or Osie Johnson (rhythm).

The band is polished but swings. Its sound is Hermanish, with a touch of Basic. The 11 arrangements are by Ernie Wilkins (2), Brookmeyer, Cohn and Manny Albam (3 each).

Gibbs is the featured soloist throughout, sounding more inhibited and less happy-go-lucky than usual. (Possibly because there was a lot of reading to do?). As usual, he scores most tellingly on the ballads (in this instance "I Didn't Know About You," "Happiness is Just a Thing Called Joe" and "Bewitched"). Other solo contributions are by Cohn, Pollard, Brookmeyer, Elliott (mellophone). And I must mention the brilliant trumpet leads throughout.

moving LP, which should please a lot of people.

Excellent recorded sound and informal, yet informative liner notes (★★★★).



**ZOOT IS JUST GREAT HERE**

● "WHOOEEE" Zoot Sims/Bob Brookmeyer (12 in. VOGUE LAE 12053): When you come to think about it, it's odd that Lester Young has influenced more white than coloured saxophonists who are active in present-day jazz. Among those who come to mind at once are Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Herbie Steward, Phil Urso, Allen Eager, and the newer boys, Bill Perkins and Richie Kamucha. (Although Sonny Stitt and Sonny Rollins may have been influenced in their very early days, you could hardly call them Lester disciples after the advent of Bird. And certainly not today!).

Of all these white tenor-men possibly the most tremendous swinger is Zoot. As I told you once before,

# F D & H... Music Publishers' 80th Birthday



## TODAY'S CHIEFS

Today's leading lights of the great music publishing company of Francis, Day & Hunter... left to right EDDIE DAY (director); FRED DAY (governing director); J. R. THACKERAY (director) and JOHN ABBOTT (director, but now retired). The company celebrated its 80th Anniversary on Tuesday, November 19, and marked it with a great celebrity party. — R.M.

EARLY HOUSE! The very first shop opened by Francis, Day & Hunter at 142 Charing Cross Road, London, W.C., way back in 1899, when one of their first successes was "Soldiers of the Queen". Present premises of F. D. & H. are next door to their old ones—but what a difference in size!

## MEMORABLE PARTY MARKS THE OCCASION

THE celebrated publishing company of Francis, Day and Hunter, founded in 1887 and going stronger than ever in 1957, celebrated its 80th birthday on Tuesday, November 19.

The occasion was appropriately marked.

A distinguished gathering was present at a dinner given by the directors at the Pompadour Room of the Cafe Royal, London, W.

A better venue could not have been selected; this famous restaurant has a tradition and reputation of the arts as long as the firm of F., D. & H. itself.

Each of the guests was personally received by Mr. and Mrs. F. E. M. Day; other representatives of the firm included Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Day, Mr. David Day, Mr. Rae Thackeray, Mr. Bert Corrie and Mr. John Abbott.

Guests included Mr. Macqueen-Pope, the celebrated theatrical historian, Miss Anona Winn, Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Lewis (Decca) Mr. Lawrence

Wright and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hall. Mr. and Mrs. Geraldo, Mr. Norrie Paramor, Mr. George Elrick, Mr. Norman Newell (E.M.I.), Mr. Paddy Roberts, Mr. Tony Osborne, Mr. Turner Layton, Mr. Julian Slade, Miss Dorothy Reynolds, Miss Anne Shelton, Mr. David Reid, Miss Winifred Atwell, Mr. Lou Levisohn, Mr. Wally Ridley, Miss Dorothy Squires, Mr. Roger Moore, Mr. Derek Roy, Mr. Terry Hall, Mr. Jack Baverstock (Fontana), Mr. Reg Warburton (Oriole), Mr. Johnny Franz (Philips), Mr. Jack Philips (Philips), and Mr. Dickie Rowe (Decca).

MR. F. E. M. DAY proposed the toast to the Queen. Toasts to the firm were proposed by Mr. Macqueen-Pope, whose brisk and witty speech traced the history of the company

from the inception to the present day. The reply was made by Mr. John Abbott.

Mr. F. E. M. Day responded for the firm, also proposed the toast "The Visitors," to which Miss Anona Winn replied most gracefully on their behalf.

THERE followed a glittering all-star cabaret with Derek Roy in cracking form as compere. His impressions were an outstanding success, particularly those of Frankie Laine singing "A Woman in Love" and Billy Daniels "Black Magic".

Dorothy Squires was at her sentimental 'belting' best with "Our Song", soon had the guests singing with her.

Anne Shelton followed, got away to a flying start by announcing "that if you think I am going to sing anything but F., D. & H. numbers, you must be mad" . . . whereupon she went back over the years to render some of the firm's hit numbers from right way back to the present. From 1902 we had "You are my Honey-suckle", "I Wouldn't Leave My Little Wooden Hut for

You" (1906), "They Didn't Believe Me", "Swanee" (1920), "All Of Me" (1932). Then from 1940, Anne's first song for F.D. and H. was "Oh, Johnny", then from 1951's "Heartache" to Anne's 1956 number one hit, "Lay Down Your Arms," by Paddy Roberts.

Winifred Atwell was simply terrific with her interpretation of "Black and White Rag" as she was with the Lawrence Wright number "Stardust", a Francis, Day and Hunter medley and, finally "Poor People of Paris".

A perfect finale to the cabaret was the appearance of Turner Layton (remember Layton and Johnstone?).

He was not allowed to leave until he had played four numbers. His artistry is still supreme, as was heard in his renderings of "After You've Gone", "Way Down Yonder in New Orleans" (the latter in honour of Lawrie Wright) and "My Old Kentucky Home".

The F., D. & H. singers led by Bob Brown gave a spirited rendering of "Nearest and Dearest of All" by Mr. Day.

A fitting evening for a memorable occasion.



HARRY HUNTER, one of the founders of the famous Francis, Day & Hunter music publishing firm.

### HIS SONGS SOLD WELL FOR F. D. & H.



ONE of the very earliest pictures of Scotland's greatest comedian, the late Sir HARRY LAUDER. He helped to popularise numerous Francis, Day & Hunter songs on the halls.



### ONE OF THE GREAT DAYS

BERT CORRI, lively exploitation manager of Francis, Day & Hunter, proudly displays the portraits of one of the pioneers of the company—DAVID DAY, whose wonderful work, ideas and determination set a great example to all who helped to build this world-renowned music-publishing business.—R.M.

# IT WILL BE REMEMBERED AS— THE YEAR OF THE SHOW-BIZ GOLDEN BOYS

FILM  
LAND  
'57

AFTER THE  
TODD EPIC  
CAME:

BOONE  
STEELE  
VAUGHAN  
DENE  
PRESLEY  
KING COLE  
BELAFONTE

THE YEAR 1956 WAS A GOOD 'UN for finding new actors, but 1957 kicked off with one of the greatest girl finds—"Baby Doll" herself, Carroll Baker. Let's not overdo the praise. Just say she was amazing, superb, incredible. As half-child, half-woman, she dominated "Baby Doll", even over the fine performances of Eli Wallach and Karl Malden. And much-played was the recording of Kenyon Hopkins' theme music.

### WHAT A START TO THE NEW YEAR!

"High Society" just made the January issues and this was a must for all music fans. Sinatra, Crosby, Louis Armstrong, a beautiful score by Cole Porter—WHAT more could you want.

Everyone was humming the tunes, such as "Did you Evah?", "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire", "You're Sensational" and the others. The LP disc of the soundtrack just didn't stop selling.

In a year short of musicals, this one carries the most memories. It was the greatest.

One heck of a thriller was "Town On Trial", a suspense-laden piece about detective John Mills who finally had to go up and collect a killer from the top of a church spire.

It had its lighter moments, too, notably when Elizabeth "Pajama Game" Seal laid on a riotous rock 'n' roll sequence. And one disappointment — shapely Magda Miller was bumped off in the first few minutes.

**EYE BROWS** were rocketing upwards when "Garden of Eden" got its first publicity. A nudist colony story? Life in the raw? Huge crowds swarmed to see it—and were shocked. It wasn't as bad as they thought! The naked truth was that it had a lot of unintentional laughs.

Michael Balcon produced a good 'un in "Man in the Sky", story of test pilot Jack Hawkins and Elizabeth Sellers, his "I wait and pray" wife. Odd for Sir Michael to have such a strong feminine interest—but a success.

### HARMLESS ROCKIN'

The rock fans didn't need the warning "Don't Knock the Rock", but this picture hardly helped the non-believers to get any clues. Maestro Bill Haley was prime mover in an effort to persuade the fuddie-duddies that rockin' is harmless.

Alan Dale, Alan Freed, The Treniers, Little Richard, Dave Appell and the Applejacks helped out in a noisy, but entertaining piece. Songs included: "Tutti Frutti", "Rip It Up", "Hot Dog"—and the stories of hooliganism in cinemas splashed into the papers.

Some said Clark Gable was fading fast. Well, he's 55, so it could be true. But in "The King and Four Queens" he could save his energy, for he had four man-starved widows chasing him all over the ranchlands. As they included Eleanor Parker (the winner, ladies and gentlemen), Barbara Nicholls and Sara Shane, it was an enviable way for Clark to spend his old age.

Talking about wild teenagers, in "Teenage Rebel", Ginger Rogers tried to liven up her poetry-loving daughter and so turn a strange (?) kid's attention from Beethoven to Presley. A fine performance from the kid, Betty Lou Keim, and from Michael Rennie.

The old standards of battle-scehe realism took a beating in "Between Heaven and Hell", which starred the ever-improving Robert Wagner. A real shocker of a war picture.

R. Milland directed "Lisbon"—Ray Milland starred in it. Plenty of action and, understandably, plenty of Milland.

### LAST OF DEAN

Now how about "Giant", the last of James Dean's performances. It was a giant of flick and I admit to

shifting restlessly around the half-way mark. But it built up to such a fine climax that I readily forgave the boring patches.

Country-boy Dean spends his time boring for oil, found it and became the richest guy in Texas. As he aged, the crash came. His performance crashed, too, as his hair grew greyer. Also starred Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor.

"Once Upon a Time"—yep, a fairy story with a cast-load of animals as stars. It took a year to make and most of the principals outgrew their parts before it ended.

Another Western, "Three Violent People", had bad-girl Anne Baxter finally making good in the inevitable American Civil War. Nothing new here.

"Battle Hymn" was a true, and exciting, story of Colonel Dean Hess (Rock Hudson again), who was much decorated as a flying parson in World War II. A nipper named Jung 'Kyo Pyo really stole the show, but then nippers usually do.

They used to say Continental stars flopped whenever they went to Hollywood. Delightful Swiss miss Elisabeth Mueller did not. Flown to the States specially for "The Power and the Prize", she played a displaced person in London so well she landed a mighty fine contract.

### LOST HANDS DOWN

I got more guffaws out of the supposedly thrilling "Zarak" than out of most of the year's comedies. Vie Mature, as the outlawed Zarak Khan; Michael Wilding as a political officer; Anita Ekberg struggled with a feeble script—and lost hands down.

But the scenery, including the aforementioned Miss Ekberg, was excellent.

Jerome K. Jerome's great "Three Men in a Boat" made a goodish picture. Fun on a punt on the Thames with Jimmy Edwards, Laurence Harvey, David Tomlinson, with suitable decoration from the Misses Shirley Eaton, Jill Ireland and Lisa Gastoni.

Most films with Dirk Bogarde click with the public. Certainly "The Spanish Gardener" did. It was an A. J. Cronin story—so was "Zarak"—and Dirk played a gardener who befriended the son of a pompous consul.

Not a bad month — with top honours to Carroll Baker and the "High Society" gang.

## BUT DON'T FORGET LES GIRLS

IT'S BEEN A BIG YEAR FOR FILMS. Any year with Todd's fabulous "Around the World In Eighty Days" and two large helpings of Jayne Mansfield just has to be called big.

But it's been a satisfying year as well. The Method boys have turned in some exceptional dramas and there are clear signs that Hollywood, through the courage of independent producers, is going all out for quality and not mere quantity.

Musically, there have been fewer highlights than usual, but 1957 has seen the successful transfer to celluloid of pop singers like Elvis Presley, Frankie Vaughan, Pat Boone and Tommy Steele.

These names have dragged the queues back to the box-offices. Yet business generally has not been good. Cinemas all over the country have closed down and most are now finding the going tough.

The moral: the film moguls have just got to find new ideas and new faces. It has become a matter of life or death for them. This year has also seen a host of X-certificate horror shows. Artistically, they don't mean a thing—but that certificate attracts the curious in their thousands.

NOW COME BACK ON A TRIP THROUGH THE YEAR AND LET'S SEE WHAT CLICKED—AND WHAT FLOPPED.

## JAYNE TAKES

### The Honours

FEBRUARY came in with a chuckle-packed bang—"The Girl Can't Help It," a brilliant comedy taking the mickey out of rock 'n' roll. Packed with rock numbers, including a superb "Rock Around the Rock Pile" opus, allegedly the work of an ex-convict (Edmund O'Brien).

It was also packed with Jayne Mansfield, which is one of my favourite packages. She showed a lamentable, but deliberate, lack of singing ability but a cracking sense of comedy.

Among the rock stars featured

Saxon (two to watch). A competent, foot-tapping little show, with a point of interest in Sal Mineo's expert stickwork on the drums.

Debbie Reynolds, now a big-time Top Tenner, starred in "Bundle of Joy," with hubby Eddie Fisher. This was a musical remake of "Bachelor Mother," but the music was a disappointment. Among the better songs, "I Never Felt This Way Before," "Some Day Soon" and "Lullaby In Blue." The theme from "Anastasia" was well plugged and the film itself was good, well-acted drama of the hunt for the survivor of the Russian Royal family. Ingrid Bergman and old baldy boy Yul Brynner.

Dirk Bogarde again—this time in "Ill Met by Moonlight", although he took a bit of recognising as he

them—and for thirty quid. In a specially-designed "Cory" suit, Tony Curtis was a seamy-side gambler who hankered after respectability in "Mister Cory". And, in "Slander", tough-guy Steve Cochran greyed his hair as the owner-editor of a confidential magazine.

A topical wallop in the eye for the muck-writers—but it didn't mean much at the box-office.

There was also a re-make of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", with Anthony Quinn and La Lollobrigida. Not so hot—it made me pine for the great Charles Laughton version.

Very, very good was "The Wrong Man", a Hitchcock slice of suspense with Henry Fonda as a musician lumbered with an apparently inescapable hold-up charge.

### FOLIES MUSIC

"True as a Turtle" was meant to be a sort of "Genevieve" of the yachting world, but wasn't. John Gregson, June Thorburn.

Some good music turned up in "Folies Bergere," with Jeanmaire and Eddie Constantine, the American who wows 'em in Paris.

A treat for the girls was a gent named Carlo Justini in "The Passionate Stranger". Quite a naughty little film this, a comedy-romance about Carlo's affair with his employer's wife.

Another musical re-make was "The Opposite Sex" which, on its previous time round, was known simply as "The Women". Real catty dialogue was banded around between June Allyson, Dolores Gray and Ann Sheridan—and it was great to see Harry James in a sequence with June Allyson. Jeff Richards Presleyed his way through "Rock 'n' Roll Tumbleweed".

"The Great Man" took a great big satirical knock at television and starred Jose Ferrer, while "Three Brave Men" was about an American civil servant (Ernest Borgnine), wrongly accused in a Red witch-hunt.

The month belonged to Jayne Mansfield.

(Continued on page 15)

Special To The Record Mirror  
By  
PETER JONES

were Fats Domino, Little Richard, Gene Vincent, The Treniers, Eddie Fontaine, the Chuckles and Abbey Lincoln. Oh, yes... and lovely Julie London.

This one I could see over and over again.

"Kismet" went the rounds but flopped badly. This was the third version and starred Howard Keel, Ann Blyth, Dolores Gray and Vic Damone—and was surely the worst of all three. Musical highlights included "Stranger in Paradise" and "And This is my Beloved". The public stayed away.

### MINEO ON DRUMS

More rock 'n' roll outbreaks in cinemas as a result of "Rock, Pretty Baby", story of a group of musicians, notably Sal Mineo and John

hid behind a beard and moustache. True story, this, of the kidnapping of a German general, right under the noses of his guards, during the Cretan campaign.

I thought sub-titles were needed for long bits of the dialogue were in German and Greek. Surely realism gone mad.

### TIP FOR CROOKS

From Rank's came "The Secret Place", featuring a diamond robbery so ingenious that some smart crook will probably use it with success some day.

Many claim Burt Lancaster is the top Hollywood personality. I'd plump for Katherine Hepburn. We had both in the very good "Rainmaker", yarn about a trickster who kids a farming family he can produce a much-needed rainstorm for



# Memories Of Some Of Britain's Greatest Music-Hall Artistes And Troupers . . . How Many Can You Recall?

By  
**WILL WISE**

## FIFTY YEARS OF SONG AND SCRIPT-WRITING

I ONCE wrote a song entitled "I Hardly Know Where To Begin", and that's exactly how I feel about these reminiscences.

Well, a start has to be made, so I'll begin by saying that when the song writing bug first got into my system, I was aided and abetted to encourage it by the late Robb Wilton. He was a young straight actor in Liverpool at that time, and he also did a bit of scribbling. We became firm friends and remained so until his lamented passing earlier this year. Like most artistes in the old days he was always happy to help and encourage others.

Another great comedian who encouraged me in my early days was Mark Sheridan. In those days I had visions of educating the Music Hall public, and I remember submitting a song and routine of patter to Mark which I felt was far in advance of the material he was then working.

He carefully read it through and then said: "Young feller - me - lad, will you take a bit of advice from an older man?"

I said, "With pleasure." Pointing to my song he said, "This is very clever, but far too clever for the average Music Hall audience. When you are writing patter always remember that the majority of your audience live in kitchens". I never forgot that advice and it stood me in good stead in later years.

### Formby: 'Send It To Robey'

IT WAS THIS willingness on the part of star artistes to encourage youngsters that gave me my first big break.

I submitted a song to George Formby, father of the present George Formby. He said: "This isn't ME—but it would be a winner for George Robey. Send it to him and tell him that I told you to do so."

I sent it to Robey and he promptly bought it. That song was "Tempt Me Not," and Robey, being the big name he then was, it helped to enlarge my clientele. Incidentally, being very inexperienced, I didn't ask anything like what I should have done for the song.

However, after it turned out to be a big hit, Robey never forgot, and on many occasions after that, when we met, he would slip a golden sovereign into my hand as a sort of bonus. He didn't have to do it, because, after all, he paid me what I asked. But they were like that in those days. The modern "I'm all right, Jack" spirit wasn't so prevalent.

We hear a lot nowadays of artistes reaching stardom in double-quick time. This isn't exactly new, but there is a difference.

Old-time stars only appeared to achieve fame in a night, but most of them had come up the hard way, through pubs, clubs and seaside concert parties. Such a one was Nixon Gray, a comedian with a powerful singing voice.

Within a few months of being discovered at a provincial music hall, he was able to have printed a date sheet showing where he was playing for the next ten years!

These date sheets included the best in the land, and I have one by me as I write. Grey and I collaborated in most of his songs, especially the crazy type of chorus number, but I'm afraid we were a bit before our time, and the publishers and public were not then ready for zany numbers.

Amongst these songs were "Roses and Radishes - Pansies and Peas" . . . "You Must Turn a Winkle Upside Down to Stand it on its Head" . . . "Bread and Butterfly," etc.

With regard to the latter song, it was a great favourite with Lady Stoll, and whenever Nixon appeared at Shepherd's Bush Empire, or Chiswick Empire, she would always request him to sing "Bread and Butterfly."

One night during the war Tommy Handley and I were having supper in a Yorkshire hotel and Tommy re-

mind me of the aforesaid crazy songs. He said they had been a Godsend to him in his concert party days

### Shaun And Dorothy

ANOTHER CRAZY NUMBER of mine was "We Don't Want Any Today and Tomorrow We Don't Want Any As Well." Shaun Glenville first introduced this in pantomime at the Liverpool Olympia, and it was quickly taken up by other panto comics. What a great Dame Shaun was, and still is! He and his Peter Pan wife, Dorothy Ward, are still going strong, and this coming Xmas season are appearing in pantomime at Liverpool Pavilion. (How that hometown of mine keeps creeping in!). A grand, wonderful pair of troupers, Dorothy and Shaun.

In these days, when the publicity hounds favour pictures of their clients hitting the high spots in West End niteries, I feel I must tell you of an occasion when three famous comedians spent a harmless Sunday afternoon in Newcastle.

I was up there with Billy Bennett, who was appearing in Albert de Courville's "Rainbow" revue.

Principal lady was that great American artiste, Shirley Kellogg.

At the Theatre Royal pantomime the star was Little Tich. On the Sunday in question, as the snow was lying deep on the ground, we decided to stay in our hotel instead of having our usual walk.

Now believe it or not, Little Tich, Billy Bennett, Reg Bolton and myself spent that Sabbath afternoon drinking coffee and indulging in a "Spelling Bee."

Tich, a wonderful comic, but very temperamental, got annoyed several times when Billy Bennett and I floored him with odd words which he contended could not be found in any dictionary. How right he was! They were Liverpool slang words that Billy and I had remembered from our youthful days in "Scouse-land." Perhaps I should explain here how Reg Bolton came to be one of our party. He was principal comedian at the local Empire in Florrie Forde's pantomime.

Also in that pantomime was a double act—Stanford

and Allen—the Allen part of the act later becoming one of the famous Flanagan and Allen team!

Whilst on the subject of this panto. I must recall Florrie Forde, the greatest chorus singer we ever had, big in stature, but even bigger in heart. I have yet to learn that anybody ever spoke but well of Florrie. I personally treasure many memories of her kindness.

### They Were 'Natural'

RETURNING TO Billy Bennett, here was a great comedian who wasn't ashamed of his humble beginnings. One night at the London Alhambra, when he was at the height of his fame, there came to his dressing-room a couple of typical West End pro-haunters, accompanied by their girl friends. Wishing to make an impression with the girls, one of them said to Billy: "I remember you, Billy, when you were only at the bottom of the bill." Said Billy "That's nothing," then pointing to me, continued: "Bill here remembers me when I played the hind legs of a donkey in pantomime."

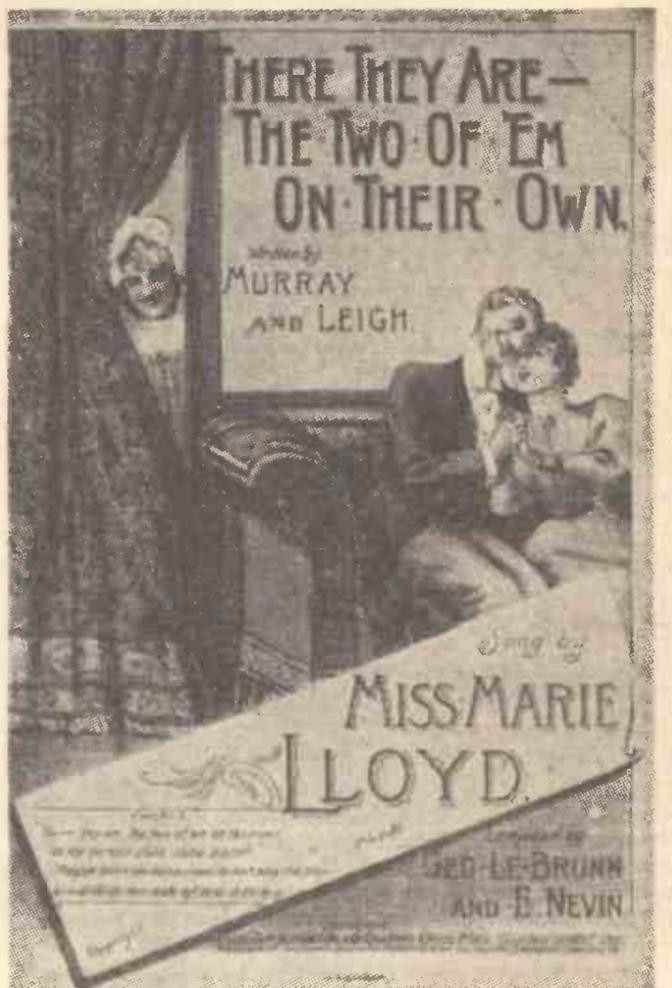
Most of the old-timers really were natural, both on and off stage.

Which brings me to Albert Whelan. Was there ever such another artiste who looked so easy and natural and at home on the stage?

And that is his natural self. He is always willing to give friendly advice to those who seek it, and for years has been a sort of Father Confessor to scores of people. Even to this day, whenever I have a problem which worries me, my wife will say: "Ring up Albert, he'll tell you what to do."

Two of Albert's most famous songs were "The Preacher and the Bear" and "The Three Trees."

This led to an amusing experience some years ago. My wife and I went to Liverpool Street station to see Albert's son, Gordon, off to Denmark, where he is a big favourite. Two of the porters handling his luggage had an argument as to whether Gordon was Albert's son or not. On being assured that he was, one of them said to the other: "There you are, I knew it. Blimey, I remember his old dad when he used to sing



Not one of the songs that Will Wise wrote, but a nostalgic reminder of a great old-time comedy number—and a great old-time music-hall artiste.

that song about the Three Bloody Bears up a Tree."

### The Lady Ratlings

WHO OF MY generation will ever forget that wonderful Cockney comic Charlie Austin, of "Parker P.C." fame? Charlie was always his

natural self whether dining at the Savoy Hotel or having a sandwich at a coffee stall.

In the year 1929, when Trigo won the Derby, Charlie had a big win and celebrated it by giving a dinner to his Brother Water Rats and their wives. It was at this dinner that the idea was born of forming a sister organisation, and the Lady Ratlings was the outcome.

Continued on next page

## Happy Christmas Listening

with

SLIM WHITMAN (LONDON)

**HUSH-A-BYE**

PAUL BEATTIE (PARLOPHONE)

**NOTHING SO STRANGE**

RONNIE CARROLL - JANICE HARPER  
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# FIFTY YEARS OF SONG AND SCRIPT WRITING — WILL WISE CONTINUES HIS REMINISCENCES

## YOU CAN DO A LOT OF THINGS AT THE SEASIDE THAT YOU CAN'T DO IN TOWN.



Another example of how the front cover of the sheet-music was illustrated in those good old days. This reproduction, and that on page 13, are published by kind permission of the publishers, Francis Day & Hunter, which firm recently celebrated its 80th birthday (see page 10).

From the start, until the outbreak of the 1939 war, I had the privilege of writing the cabaret for their Annual Dinner and Ball. And what artistes I had to work my material! One year I wrote a sketch, "The Piccadilly Flower Girls" and the cast included Sophie Tucker, Clarice Mayne, Claire Romaine, Jennie Gregson, Isobel Dillon and Millie Deane. They were a riot!

The day after the Dinner I was rung up by Jack Hylton, who asked me to get in touch with George Black. I did so; the result was that George Black bought the Piccadilly Flower Girls sketch and put it into a Palladium show. Once again I had a great cast playing this sketch, the one and only Crazy Gang! Talking about the Crazy Gang, I think I am right in saying that I wrote the material for the only gramophone record they ever made as a team.

I'll never forget it. It was called "The Crazy Gang at Sea" and was made in the Columbia Studios at St. John's Wood. The recording people did us proud with a running buffet, so you can imagine the interruptions that occurred in the making of that record! The script called for a bell to be rung to warn the passengers to get aboard ship and the Gang insisted that I should be the bell-ringer. What a time they gave me. First, I was too late on my cue to ring the bell, then I was too early, then I wasn't in tune, and so on . . . The studio staff were helpless with laughter, and to this day I don't know how on earth that record was ever completed.

Another of my happy memories is of Layton and Johnstone, those great coloured duettists. I wrote their famous version of "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More" and also several

songs in collaboration with Turner Layton. A great admirer of theirs was the then Prince of Wales, and before going on one of his goodwill tours abroad, he asked for a special advance record to be made of a new song I wrote for them called "Don't Put the Blame on Me."

### Ted's First Big Show

THE LYCEUM pantomimes and George Jackley will also linger long in my memory. Every year I wrote George's chorus song, and in the 1933-34 pantomime, our present Queen and Princess Margaret joined Jackley in singing the chorus of "Two Little Tom-Tits Were Tweeting." My collaborator in that song was Fred Shuff, the father of Jean Carson.

About the same time "ITMA" was cutting its teeth. John Sharman, that great producer of the B.B.C.'s Saturday Night "Music Hall," had an idea of producing a radio show on the lines of the Palladium Crazy Gang Shows.

I was given the job of writing it and he engaged a grand cast including Ted Ray, Binnie Hale, Dave and Joe O'Gorman, Norman Long and several other great artistes. As it was an experiment we were all nervous and I'll never forget production night.

A couple of hours before the show was due to go "on the air," Ted Ray and I went and had a coffee in a nearby Milk Bar, and then we got into Ted's car and he drove round and round Regent's Park until I almost knew every tree in the park! However, the running around soothed our nerves. I don't suppose Ted would be quite so nervy nowadays, but this was his first big radio show, apart from his

individual appearances on the air. The show was scheduled for a series, but before we could do the second a little German corporal put on a much bigger show and queered our pitch.

One of the greatest double acts of forty years ago was Jack and Evelyn. In my humble opinion Jack O'Connor was the greatest spontaneous comedian of all time. No writer could provide him with a script; he just needed an idea, then he would do the rest. He and Evelyn (his sister, by the way) were more like a couple doing an act in telepathy. Jack would carry on for three or four minutes getting yells, then when he stopped Evelyn seemed to know instinctively that it was up to her. She would say something, then off Jack would go again. Failing health cut short his career.

I wish I had the space to relate those happy times

when I was connected with such Giants of the Music Hall as Ella Shields, Georgie Wood, Julian Rose, Hetty King, Syd Walker, Harry Weldon, Will Fyffe, Sandy Powell, G. H. Elliott, Billy Danvers, Gracie Fields, Ella Retford, Talbot O'Farrell, and others too numerous to mention.

Maybe at some future time I'll get around to writing about them. Well, I hope I haven't bored you, especially with so many references to Liverpool.

I find the old Town is well represented by Ted Ray, Tommy Handley, Robb Wilton, Billy Bennett, Harry Weldon, Jack and Evelyn and Hetty King. And one last word, unless my memory is at fault, Binnie Hale was born in Liverpool.

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THIS WAS  
FILMLAND  
IN 1957

**'FUNNY FACE' A GRAND MUSICAL**

CONTINUED  
FROM PAGE  
ELEVEN

**WANTED—A  
Home Success**

**MARCH** EARLY in March, we had the long-awaited "The Good Companions." Was this the British musical to match the Americans? The answer: a firm, regretful NO.

It had its moments but didn't really click. Push this flick up against something on the "Oklahoma" lines and you'll see what I mean.

The music came from Paddy Roberts, Geoffrey Parsons and G. Alberto Rossi, but apart from the theme tune didn't raise much comment. Janette Scott and John Fraser headed the concert party crowd and did their best with a meek-and-mild yarn.

Let's face it, we're still looking for that home-grown musical success.

Freckle-faced Doris Day limited her singing to the title tune over the credits in "Julie". An acting test for popular Doris—and, boy, she can scream as well as she can sing. But what an improbable story—the climax had Doris landing a huge air-liner on directions from the ground!

**ENTER MR. MARTIN**

Enter Dean Martin, without Jerry Lewis. Dean soloed his way through "Ten Thousand Bedrooms"—a long trek well laced with songs. Musical top-spot was his duet with Anna Maria Alberghetti on "You I Love".

"Tammy", with Debbie Reynolds, made only slight impact on first time round, but the success of the title song encouraged the circuits to show it again later in the year.

The sex-kitten undulated her way through "And Woman . . . Was Created". Brigitte Bardot has this fact on her side: if the story's no good, millions will still pay just to watch her. This story was no good.

But Brigitte reminded me of a Dick Powell gag: "She walks around in a way that takes a cat years to perfect."

Another comedy hit was "Brothers in Law", a veritable riot from the Boulting Brothers who somehow managed to poke fun at the majesty of the law and yet uphold its dignity.

**DUBIOUS ADVICE**

It was about the trouble young barrister Ian Carmichael gets into before he makes the grade. For instance, he wins one case through following the advice of his prisoner client Terry-Thomas.

Not so original was a further rehash of the classic "The Barretts of Wimpole Street", with Virginia McKenna, hubby Bill Travers, Jennifer Jones and Sir John Gielgud. With a company like that, the acting was obviously good—but what a waste of time!

And, once again, Dirk Bogarde. He was a real tonic in "Doctor at Large". Remember that scene where, at an operation, the doctor giving the anaesthetic falls asleep, only to be woken up by the surgeon roaring at him: "If the patient can stay awake during the operation, surely you can!"

**SOME SAY THE DOCTOR SERIES IS WEARING THIN. I HOPE IT GOES ON AND ON.**

Strong meaty drama was "Seven Waves Away", with Tyrone Power in charge of a shipload of survivors after a shipwreck. Only half of them can stay aboard—but who has to drop over the side?

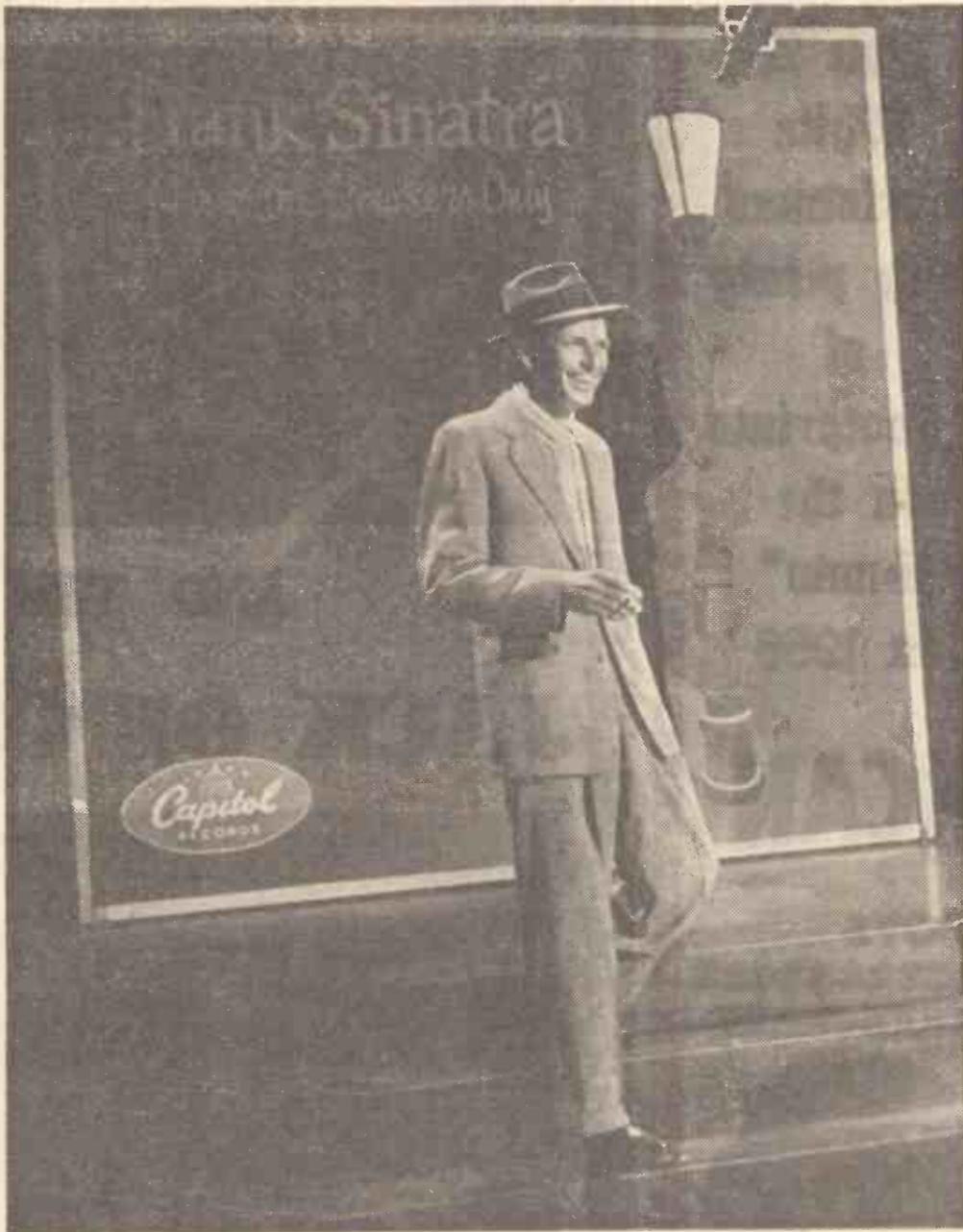
**MORE HIGHBROW**

On a more highbrow level was "Lust for Life", although the title probably dragged in more than a few unsuspecting souls. It was actually the life story of Vincent van Gogh, famous Dutch painter, with a great performance from Kirk Douglas as van Gogh and from Anthony Quinn as the artist Gauguin.

Pretty Betta St. John got her first big starring rôle here in "High Tide at Noon", story of life among fishermen in Nova Scotia.

Betta, who first came to England in the Drury Lane production of "South Pacific,"

**FABULOUS FRANK**



A unique picture, exclusive to the RECORD MIRROR (sent to us by Roy Roberts, of Hollywood, California) of the fabulous FRANK SINATRA . . . don't start rushing for the Long Player depicted here, "Music for Smokers Only"—it's not been made! Actually it's a Chesterfield cigarette stunt to sneak in a commercial on the latest Frank Sinatra show now playing from coast-to-coast in America. Frank's cinema successes this year have been quite phenomenal; "High Society", "The Pride and the Passion", "The Joker is Wild"—three smash hits indeed. And now watch for "Pal Joey", the musical in which he co-stars with Rita Hayworth. It's due in London early in the New Year, will, we are told, add still more laurels to this remarkable actor-crooner.

had plenty to do as the only woman in the island-owning family. We had a glimpse of "Pete Grant's Stores"—Betta's real-life husband is singer Peter Grant!

Box-office sure-bet John Wayne donned navy uniform to play fiercest novelist Commander "Spig" Wead in "The Wings of Eagles". John Ford directed.

More from Kirk Douglas this month. This time in a light, airy-fairy comedy "Their Secret Affair" in which he, as a stiff-upper-lip Army officer clashes with Susan Hayward, a tough magazine owner.

**SAW IT TWICE**

No tough-guy stuff from Jack Hawkins in "Fortune is a Woman". He was an insurance claim investigator who meets up with Arlene Dahl on a case.

This one I saw twice — I couldn't believe it would be so complicated the second time round. But it was.

The first of the year's strictly true-to-life drama was "A Man is Ten Feet Tall", which packed a whale of a punch, but nary a big name. A treble-X certificate fight with meat hooks highlighted great acting by Sidney Poitier and John Cassavetes.

Lovers of melodrama had a high old time with "Time Without Pity". There was ranting from Michael Redgrave, as the drunken father of a wrongly convicted murderer; more from Leo McKern as a half-crazed car magnate; and a lot more from the son.

Best-of-the-month tag to Ian Carmichael for "Brothers in Law."

★ ★ ★  
**A MONTH OF  
Mike-taking**

**APRIL** TOP musical treat for April was "Funny Face," a haunting breath of the old Astaire specials. It wasn't all tip-tappy Fred, though, for the remarkable Audrey Hepburn hit the jack-pot again.

From the murkiness of "War and Peace", little Audrey cavorted through this musical like the best of the previous Astaire partners.

But then Audrey is a fine actress, too, and she made the most of her chances as a girl chosen by a maga-

War films had plenty of screen time during the year and "Yangtze Incident" matched them all. The thrilling story of how the little Amethyst ran the gauntlet of Chinese guns was excellently directed by Michael Anderson.

It proved two things. British heroism can't be matched and, on this form, nor can British war films. Richard Todd had the lead and Akim Tamiroff (Chinese colonel) and William Hartnell's Cockney seaman were also truly great.

**TEAR JERKERS**

Big weepie was "The Day They Gave Babies Away". Story line was of a young Scottish couple who set up home in an 1856 Wisconsin village. They had six children . . . then the parents died. Tear-jerkers in chief were Glynis Johns and Cameron Mitchell as the parents and the kids were all expert tuggers of heart-strings.

I thought "Designing Woman" was in line for the "comedy of the year" title, but it was subsequently beaten down a few places. It had Greg Peck, Lauren Bacall and Dolores Gray, plus some smaller-billing fooling from Sam Levene and delved into the fashion, show biz and boxing worlds.

Another British comedy which rang the bell was "Carry On, Admiral", a celluloid version of the stage show "Off the Record", story of a young officer and his pal who have too much grog and swap duties.

To heck with the story, though, the performances of A. E. Matthews, Brian Reece and David Tomlinson were stand-outs. Femme interest from Eunice Gayson, still not-done-right-by in films, and Peggy Cummins.

Twelve men, tried and true, locked up in a jury room—that was the sole setting of "12 Angry Men". We didn't even meet the prisoner.

But the individual acting of each of the jurors, notably Henry Fonda, Lee J. Cobb and Ed Begley, was so gripping I made this one top memory of the year. Just shows how action ain't everything. . . .

**HERO AS EVER**

So Alan Ladd heroically dived at the feet of stampeding cattle to rescue his nine-year-old son. He did this in "Stampede", a Western with name value (Virginia Mayo and Edmund O'Brien)—but not much else.

More mickey-taking — this time in "The Smallest Show on Earth," which aimed its satire at the cinema industry.

Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers (their second together of the year) take over a tatty little flea-pit and make it a success because of soft-drink sales. How can you fail when you turn the heat up to bursting point as the picture's hero totters, dying of thirst, through the desert. Gem performances from Peter Sellers, Margaret Rutherford and Bernard Miles.

For marvellous scenery there was "The Lost Continent", and our old chum Marlene Dietrich gave us some glimpses of high life among the idle rich in "Monte Carlo Story".

And Randolph Scott provided—guess what?—a Western entitled "Seven Men from Now".

Top-of-the-month: Henry Fonda's "Twelve Angry Men."

**THAT MAN HOWARD**

Over the credits came the voice of David Whitfield singing "I'll Find You", written by Tolchard Evans and Richard Mullen.

Around the middle of April you couldn't turn round in London without being confronted by a dirty great picture poster of Trevor Howard. "This Man Is Wanted", they hollered. It was all a spectacular boost for "Interpol", story of a dope-ring mob, headed by Trevor, and pursued all over Europe by Victor Mature. Anita Eckberg was also pursued.

Included was a sultry night-club song from Yana, "Anyone for Love?"

Randall, legit. star of television in the States, was obviously a lad to watch.

Hefty hunk of blond beef-cake Tab Hunter, who has had great success on disc, showed up well in "The Girl He Left Behind". Tab, in real life was hailed as Hollywood's all-American boy, and was called in to poke fun at a type of all-American boy.

**TAB v. ARMY**

Natalie Wood was his girl-friend and dithery Jessie Royce Landis the mum who pampered Tab prior to his joining the Army for a couple of inescapable years. The rest: Tab versus the Army.

"The Fuzzy Pink Nightgown," featuring Jane Russell. A new Jane, both as long-haired blonde and short cropped brunette. A good gag built around the kidnapping of a movie-queen, Miss Russell was toned right down, figure-wise.

Little Jean Simmons, the lass from Golders Green, hit the jackpot in "This Could be the Night". She gave a cracker of a performance as the demure little schoolmistress who became secretary to a couple of night-club hoodlums. Cheers, too, for Julie Wilson as the torchy singer.

Thirty years ago, Charles Lindbergh made the first solo flight across the Atlantic. In May, Warners' re-enacted the scenes through a fine performance by James Stewart in "Spirit of St. Louis". Could have been monotonous, but that was avoided by showing flashbacks during the flight.

**SOPHIA ONLY FAIR**

Sophia Loren, Alan Ladd and Clifton Webb teamed up in "Boy on a Dolphin", the title of which referred to a most valuable bit of property lying at the bottom of the Greek Sea. Only fair.

This month, we welcomed Anthony Perkins, a 24-year-old refugee from New York television, who was just great in "Fear Strikes Out". This was the story (true or near enough true) of baseball star Jimmy Piersall.

Perkins had the main acting chances—notably when he went mad in a baseball game and later while recovering in a mental hospital.

Horror-note: X-cellent fare for the space fans was "Quatermass II", alias Brian Donlevy, who had to cope with a terrifying monster from outer space.

Further horror-note: Valerie Gaunt, found by a producer to have the loudest scream he'd ever heard, hollered her way through "The Curse of Frankenstein".

Christopher Lee was the horror created by a "bats-in-the-belfry" baron (Peter Cushing).

**I LIKED IT**

I liked "Joe Butterfly", mainly because of Burgess Meredith's performance as a piffing little Jap who made life both happy and hellish for the American forces on a small Pacific island.

There was a lot of yak handed out about "The Search for Bridey Murphy" during May, but I found this tale of reincarnation just one long yawn. Tough luck on stars Louis Hayward and Teresa Wright.

In the musical line there was "Let's Be Happy", an Anglo-American effort, starring Vera-Ellen, Tony Martin, Robert Fleming.

A snappy little film, with Britain's Joan Small dubbing vocally for Vera-Ellen. Story was of a gawky backwoods miss who hops over to Scotland when her ancestral grandfather leaves her a small fortune.

Not much in the music—except "Let's Be Happy", "The Man from Idaho" and "One is a Lonely Number", all by Nicholas Brodsky. "Drango" was a most unlikely Civil War story, with Jeff Chandler as a Union Major. Rubbishy, except for Ronald Howard.

(Continued on page 20)

★ ★ ★  
**TONING DOWN  
Miss Russell**

**MAY** Enter May. Enter new personality Tony Randall, who wowed 'em in "Oh Men, Oh Women." All about psychoanalysts with at least one laugh per foot.

The analyst was David Niven and among his clients were Ginger Rogers, Dan Dailey and Barbara Rush.



Here's  
Wishing  
You A  
White  
Christmas  
with plenty  
of  
"Footprints  
in the  
Snow"  
in 1958

from

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AND

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AND THE

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OF PATRONS

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and

A Happy New Year

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YOU CAN EAT TO YOUR COMPLETE SATISFACTION — YOURS AND OURS

**He Became A Drummer At  
The Age Of Six . . .**

# VICTOR FELDMAN, JAZZ GENIUS

**RECOGNISE THE YOUNG DRUMMER IN THIS PICTURE TAKEN IN 1946? GIVE YOU A CLUE: THEY CALLED HIM "KID KRUPA." AND AT THAT TIME HE WAS APPEARING AT LONDON'S PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE IN A SHOW CALLED "PICCADILLY HAYRIDE," STARRING THAT GREAT BRITISH COMEDIAN, THE LATE SID FIELD.**

**IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T GUESSED, IT'S VICTOR FELDMAN. PROBABLY THE MOST OUTSTANDING ALL-ROUND MODERN JAZZ MUSICIAN THUS FAR PRODUCED BY THIS COUNTRY, WHO IS NOW WORKING VERY SUCCESSFULLY IN AMERICA.**

Victor was born in London on April 7, 1934. He first put sticks to skins at the tender age of six. When he was seven, he made his first professional appearance: at the then famous No. 1 Rhythm Club in Leicester Square. Soon he was leading his own trio, which featured his brothers Robert (on clarinet) and Monty (on accordion). The group made many club and concert appearances and broadcasts and was often to be heard at the "fabulous" Feldman Club, 100, Oxford Street, London, W, managed by Robert and their father, the late Joe Feldman. His biggest thrill as a child prodigy (former Ambrose drummer, now comedian, Max Bacon played a leading role as his teacher; incidentally, Max is his uncle), was an appearance at the 1944 "Jazz Jamboree" with the late Major Glenn Miller and the American Band of the A.E.F.

## VIBRAPHONE

### DEBUT

**FOLLOWING THE SID FIELD** show, Victor retired to study for a while and soon after made his debut on vibraphone with the Shearing-style sextet led by pianist Ralph Sharon, now also working in America. This was followed by a spell with Roy Fox's "comeback" band.

By this time, it was obvious to all that Victor was far from being just a clever kid who played drums. Always very earnest and serious-minded, Victor continued to study theory and harmony and composition and practise not only on drums and vibes, but also piano.

A trip to India with a band led by pianist-composer Eddie Carroll covering 1952 and '53 gave Victor an ideal opportunity of gaining invaluable experience. His piano playing, especially, benefited greatly from the Indian trip. While there, Vic became fascinated with the local music he heard and returned to England with several interesting Indian drums.

Almost within hours of returning to this country in October, 1953, Victor joined the outstanding Ronnie Scott Orchestra, which contained the cream of British modernists. Fans may recall that the band featured Scott,

Pete King (tenor saxes); Derek Humble (alto sax); the RECORD MIRROR'S Benny Green (baritone sax); Jimmy Deuchar (trumpet); Ken Wray (trombone); Lennie Bush (bass); and Tony Crombie (drums). Vic played piano with the band (replacing Norman Stenfalt, who wanted to give up touring) and was featured on vibes and in special drums duets, particularly with Phil Seamen who took over when Crombie left to form his own band.

## RECORDED FOR

### HIS BOSS

**DURING THIS PERIOD,** Victor made many recordings for *ESQUIRE*, whose boss former drummer Carlo Krahmer, had been a close friend of the family for years. Both with the Ronnie Scott band and with various groups under his own name. (Many of these are still available on LP, EP and 78. I'd particularly recommend the "Ronnie Scott Jazz Club" — Volume 4 12 in. LP and some Trio sides with Bush and Crombie on piano).

After a most productive series of *ESQUIRE* dates with his "Modern Jazz Quartet" (featuring Bush, Seamen and the great pianist Tommy Pollard), Victor decided to go to America to survey the musical scene and try his luck at working there.

Before he went, he spent many hours in the recording studios. For *ESQUIRE*, he produced two particularly interesting albums: "The Multiple Talents of Victor Feldman" (20-046) and "Experiment in Time" (20-064). The first presented, through the medium of the multi-tape technique, Vic as vibes man, pianist, drummer and conga-drummer aided only by



**THIS INTRIGUING PICTURE WAS TAKEN** at a Christmas Party given by Editor ISIDORE GREEN in 1946 to celebrate his first anniversary as a civilian since his demobilisation from the Army and the first post-war Bumper Christmas Edition of the publication he ran at that time. **VICTOR FELDMAN**, a kid at the time, as you can see, came along to enthral the 300 guests with an amazing demonstration of drum-work — his brother **ROBERT** is seen playing the clarinet. Incidentally, other guests at this party included **JIMMY EDWARDS** and **HARRY SECOMBE**, both then working six shows a day at the Windmill Theatre, Piccadilly, for a mere £20 a week!

Lennie Bush. The second featured Vic on the same instruments with tenorist-arranger-composer Kenny Graham's Afro-Cubists.

Then Frank Charners of DECCA (now with RCA) negotiated a contract whereby Victor would record two 10 in. LPs and an EP for the TEMPO label. The first LP (LAP 5) featured the Quartet, the second, a Septet (LAP 6) using Jimmy Deuchar, Derek Humble, Dizzy Reece (trumpet), Pollard, Bush and Crombie.

## SOUNDED TWICE THE NUMBER

**MOST INTERESTING** of these September 1955 Tempo sessions was the Big Band EP (EXA 29), which it was this writer's privilege to supervise.

The 14-piece all-star band, which included French horn and tuba, employed a four-piece brass section which, through Feldman's skilful scoring, sounded like twice that number. A 12 in. album taken from these three records is due for immediate release on the American West Coast label, Contemporary.

Within a few months of reaching America, Victor was signed up to join the Woody Herman band on drums, and as featured vibesman.

Before he left New York on an extended tour with the band, he recorded an LP for the KEYNOTE label under his own name. The supporting rhythm section comprised Hank Jones (piano), Bill Crow (bass), with Joe Morello and Kenny Clarke alternating on drums. This LP has yet to be released.

Victor stayed with Herman throughout 1956, recording an album of commercial blues tunes with the band for Capitol. When the Herd broke up for its annual lay-off, Victor returned to England in November for a holiday. The way things worked out, Victor went back to America on January 10, 1957, badly in need of a holiday to recover from his "holiday."

Apart from several TV dates and regular appearances at the Club "M", Victor found time to record 30 "masters" for the Tempo label under the most lucrative contract ever accorded a jazzman in this country.

Again, this writer was privileged to act as Victor's A and R manager and we recorded enough

material to produce three well-balanced 12 in. LPs for Tempo.

## HIGH SPOT OF HIS VOLUMES

"Victor Feldman in London—Vol. One (The Quartet)" (TAP 8) comprised four Feldman originals, one by Crombie and two standards. The instrumentation was vibes (Victor), piano (Terry Shannon), bass (Lennie Bush or Pete Blannin) and drums (Phil Seamen). Highspot of the LP is "Wilbert's Tune" which features guest star Dizzy Reece, with Victor on piano.

"Victor Feldman in London—Vol. Two (The Big Band, Ninetet and Quintet)" (TAP 12) has been hailed as one of the best albums ever made by British musicians. (As indeed have nearly all Victor's records). Standout tracks are those by the Ninetet featuring tenorist Tubby Hayes on the larger baritone saxophone.

Due for release any day now is the third volume (TAP 19), to be called "Transatlantic Alliance". On these Feldman is heard as a sideman in three separate groups. A Quartet on piano (with Dizzy, Seamen and Canadian bassist Lloyd Thompson); a Quintet on vibes (with Deuchar, Shannon, Seamen and bassist Kenny Napper); and a Sextet on drums and piano (with Dizzy, Ronnie Scott, Tubby - baritone, Bush and Crombie).

Victor then returned to America and Woody Herman. But the strain of touring and of playing the same dated arrangements every night made him decide to pull out and settle down in Los Angeles. (This finally happened after a short spell with clarinetist Buddy de Franco's Quartet).

## HOLLYWOOD . . . AND A BUSY TIME

**SOON HE BECAME** much in demand for recording, radio, TV and film dates and he is currently one of Hollywood's busiest jazz musicians. He has an album of his own on the new MODE label and is a featured sideman on LPs by Frank Rosolino, Bob Cooper and Leroy Vinnegar, amongst others.

Just before this Christmas issue

of the RECORD MIRROR closed for press, I heard from Lester Koenig, chief of the well-known Contemporary label (released here on VOGUE), that Victor is to sign with him as an exclusive recording artiste and will be given a full-scale, long-term publicity build-up.

Under Koenig's understanding and experienced guidance, Victor Feldman should soon become a major recording property in America.

Not bad going for the young

boy who used to live next door to our Editor, Isidore Green's house in Edgware, Middlesex.

**YES, A LOT'S HAPPENED TO VICTOR FELDMAN. SINCE THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN. AND I FEEL SINCERELY THAT VICTOR'S STORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS ARE ONLY JUST BEGINNING!**

TONY HALL

For a  
*Record party*  
**ASTORIAS**

20  
for  
3/11

the  
AMERICAN  
FLAVOUR  
you'll  
favour

# A CAVALCADE OF

## 'THROUGHOUT 1957 ROCK 'N ROLL MAY HAVE HAD THE EDGE SO FAR AS BRITAIN'S LISTENING WAS CONCERNED, BUT SKIFFLE WAS A CLEAR LEADER AS REGARDS "PLAY-IT-YOURSELF"'

THERE MAY be arguments as to how, when, and where rock 'n' roll really started; but there can be no difference of opinion as to the number that set the craze into full motion. Without question it was "Rock Around the Clock." It was written about five years ago in Philadelphia by James E. Myers and Max C. Freedman.

Its success was by no means an accident. It wasn't one of those surprise hits which from time to time stagger the world of show business. On the contrary, the two men, disturbed by the low ebb popular music was experiencing deliberately sat down and (in the words of Myers) "got the idea of using the big beat, using the blues progression, repetitious jazz licks and the Texas two-four swing beat—i.e. accenting the second and fourth beats of the measure. This gave it a rocking rhythm".

The fantastic impact made by the version of this number by the Bill Haley Comets is well known. "Rock Around the Clock" was first brought to the public as background music in the film "Blackboard Jungle." Then Haley performed it in the riot-raising film in which it provided the title. Then the Haley disc started raking in prodigious sales all over the world. At a rough estimate, it has now sold between seven and eight million copies.

### Comes And Goes

"ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK" came to the top of the British Top Ten in the autumn of 1955. It stayed in the charts for many weeks. It even disappeared for a while and came back later. And Haley followed it with numerous other hits which swelled the flood of rock 'n' roll mania. "Rock-a-Beatin' Boogie," "Rip it Up," "Rockin' Through the Rye," "Saints Rock 'n' Roll," "Rip It Up" and "See You Later Alligator" are but a few.

But if Haley was the man to give the original rocket boost to the rock, the person to give it a second—equally powerful—impetus was the cyclonic Elvis Presley.

Though Presley won't be 22 till January 8, he has been a sky-high seller of rock discs for 18 months in Britain, and nearly two years in America.

He was launched on a big scale early in 1956. RCA Victor, major U.S.A. disc firm, paid £13,000 to the smaller Sun Records for his contract. His first disc, "Heartbreak Hotel," had a tremendous, quick-fire impact on the American market. In Britain, it took time

to get away. But reports reaching this country from America about Presley's dynamic controversial style suddenly started the disc moving in May, 1956.

Following it came "Blue Suede Shoes," "Hound Dog" and (from the Presley film of the same title) "Love Me Tender." These were in 1956. In 1957, such Presley efforts as "Teddy Bear," "All Shook Up," "Lovin' You" (his second film) and "Paralyzed" have piled up sales for him. What's more, his longplay discs have showed consistently in the Top Five LP section.

Today, in fact, Presley has clearly eclipsed Haley as the No. 1 rock 'n' roll personality.

### 'Lil Richard'

NEXT TO THEM in terms of record sales, is probably Little Richard. He is a pint-sized, coloured performer, with a shock of black hair, and a frantic, raucous style.

For a time, in 1957, he had three discs in the Top Twenty: "Long Tall Sally," "The Girl Can't Help It" and "She's Got It."

Mention must be made also of the vocal groups, The Platters and The Teenagers. Their styles are, of course, rather different from those of Haley and Presley; but, to say the least, they played no small part in building up public enthusiasm for a rocking, pounding rhythm.

Freddy Bell and his Bellboys enjoyed a lesser measure of success. It culminated in a tour of Britain during 1957. But (similarly to Haley) their disc sales tapered off sharply in the latter part of this year.

Two curious cases must be noted: Tommy Sands and Gene Vincent. The former has become a great favourite in America; the latter has had a fair measure of success. But, in Britain, neither has had any remarkable effect on disc sales.

### Right Time

NO QUERY AS TO BRITAIN'S No. 1 rock 'n' roller. Young Tommy Steele was launched at just the right time (November, 1956) and went at meteoric speed into a career which is too well known to need detailing here. Rock undoubtedly gave him his high-powered send-off, though Tommy has since deliberately tried to rise above the description of a mere rock 'n' roll performer.

No British group today is having a top-rank disc success on the rock kick. Perhaps the best bet is the John Barry Seven, an exceptionally competent and well-presented act.

Terry Dene, backed by Terry Kennedy's rock group, is



## THEY REALLY STARTED THE CRAZE



... BILL HALEY and his COMETS were first off in the Race for Rock 'n' Roll Honours ... they made records which sold by the million ... they were the first Golden Discers in the field ... then came the runners-up ... hundreds wanted to get into the act ... but only a few really succeeded—really struck it rich—there was gold in them thar R. 'n' R. hills—hill-billies!

enjoying satisfactory success; but, among the up-and-coming British "beat" performers, an edging away from rock 'n' roll into the slightly different C & W idiom is noticeable.

NOW TO THE SKIFFLE SCENE. Here is the curious circumstance of an American idiom of the 'twenties being resurrected in Britain without any corresponding revival in the country of its origin.

With this craze, too, we are in no doubt as to the record which triggered off the craze. It was Lonnie Donegan's "Rock Island Line", on the DECCA label.

Till then, Lonnie had been little known outside jazz clubs; but this disc sent him catapulting to fame on both sides of the Atlantic.

Switching to the NIXA label, the guitar-playing Glaswegian showed he was capable of consistent sales of Top Ten magnitude.

In 1956-7, such high-fliers as "Bring a little Water, Sylvie", "Lost John", "Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O", "Cumberland Gap" and "My Dixie Darlin'" have kept his name well in the limelight.

Donegan, moreover, proceeded to show his mettle as a stage performer — one who could draw crowds to variety theatres. He has been successful not only at provincial houses, but at the Palladium, the Prince of Wales, and the Hippodrome in the West End. Also, he scored well, in mid-1957, on a tour of America.

### Turned Down

The Chas. McDevitt skiffle group is a typical show biz case of success after a precarious start. Early in 1957, he was turned down by several major disc firms, and — in variety — made a debut which largely misfired.

But the ORIOLE label, which at the time was a comparatively minor force in the disc world, put him out on a number called "Freight Train", with Scots vocalist Nancy Whiskey. As we now know, the disc was a solid seller.

Though McDevitt's subsequent recordings (e.g. "Green Back Dollar" and "Sporting Life") fell short of the sales of "Freight Train", he has nevertheless established himself as a popular figure. His stage act, particularly, has improved rapidly.

In the autumn of this year, Nancy Whiskey left the group, being succeeded by Shirley Douglas, from Belfast. Nancy made useful headway as a solo artiste. In November last, ORIOLE issued a reminder of the McDevitt-Whiskey partnership with a longplay which, with a scorn of subtlety, was titled "The Intoxicating Miss Whiskey."

### Duncan . . .

Johnny Duncan is a 26-year-old American from Kentucky. Now resident in Britain (and married to a British girl) he has built up a popular group in this country called "The Blue" (Continued on opposite page)

# ROCK & SKIFFLE



rent-raising parties in the U.S.A., was — in 1957 — the cause of thousands of teenagers waxing enthusiastic. They brought about a boom in guitar sales, practised frantically at belabouring washboards at the right tempo, rigged up "double basses" with the aid of string, poles and painted tea-chests, and developed — as an almost *de rigueur* uniform— shirt, jeans and rubber-soled shoes.

Throughout 1957, rock 'n' roll may have had the edge so far as Britain's listening was concerned, but skiffle was a clear leader as regards "play-it-yourself."

## No Response

With the minor exception of country and western, no other "beat" music has made any challenge to the two forms we have discussed. Calypso, Hawaiian rock, flamenco and other idioms have been exploited only very tentatively; there has been little public response to warrant pushing ahead with them on a large scale.

*It is hard to predict what, if anything, will come up to challenge skiffle and rock in 1958.*

**IT IS SAFE TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT ANY NEWLY-ADOPTED MUSIC WILL NEED THREE SPECIFICATIONS: IT WILL HAVE TO BE BASED ON A PRO- NOUNCED BEAT, TO BE OF EXTREMELY SIMPLE FORM, AND TO BE SUIT- ABLE FOR INSTRU- MENTS EASY TO LEARN AND/OR EASY TO MAKE.**

**MORE R 'n' R AND SKIFFLE PICTURES PAGE 21**

Grass Boys." He has, in 1957, enjoyed a satisfactory success in clubs, in variety, and on radio and TV.

Undoubtedly, his most effective disc to date is "Last Train To San Fernando." It not only entered the Top Ten, but gained Johnny the unique distinction of being the first American to head the list of best-sellers by British artistes.

THE VIPERS (formed late in 1956 under the leadership of Walt Whyton) had a relatively prosperous first year in the business. Their records,

without entering our Top Ten, achieved a fair measure of success. On stage, they featured for many weeks on the tremendously popular skiffle show promoted by Stanley Dale. It incorporated, with shrewd assessment of what the youngsters were demanding, a national skiffle competition.

Stanley Dale's competition might have been the *main* one, but in fact skiffle contests of all shapes and sizes started springing up all over the country. The music form which, in the twenties, had been featured at



TOMMY STEELE is one of the few in the Rock 'n' Roll army who doesn't have to depend absolutely on it . . . he is VERSATILE and to prove our point, here is a RECORD MIRROR picture of the Bermondsey wonder-boy having a go at getting notes out of a TROMBONE . . . seldom do you see a picture of a rock 'n' roller without a guitar—well, here's that variety! The gentleman with the guitar is FREDDIE BELL, the American rock 'n' roller, who joined with Tommy in London and the provinces.—R.M. Picture.



ONE of the NEW RECRUITS to the guitar-laden army towards the end of 1957—good-looking TERRY WAYNE . . . Plenty of punch and pep and plenty of ambition, all agog to emulate the success of Tommy Steele. What does 1958 hold out for Terry—and the hundreds of other similar youngsters?—R.M. Pictures.



MARTY WILDE, another of the comparative newcomers to the beat world . . . see comments on Terry Wayne (left). —R.M. Pictures.

**THIS WAS FILMLAND IN 1957**

**JERRY DID WELL WITHOUT DEAN**

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE FIFTEEN**

**COMPOSER KING TOO**

**WILL BE BIG**  
Leslie Neilson, since "Ransom", has been worth keeping an eye on. He proved his worth in "Hot Summer Night", as an out-of-work journalist who figures he can get back his job if he interviews a killer who is protected by the people of a small town.

One day, Neilson is going to be **BIG**.

"The Tattered Dress" was a courtroom thriller, with Jeff Chandler as a lawyer. Much better stuff from Chandler this time... for once, a believable hero.

May's best: Tony Randall, for "Oh Men, Oh Women."

★ ★ ★

**OUR TOMMY Was the tops**

**JUNE** PLENTY of interesting films in June, but none more so than "The Tommy Steele Story"—or, as Jack Train put it: "From the cradle to the shave."

Tommy, current wonder-boy of show business, came out of this one with a lot more fans than he had before. Nobody hung the "musical to end all musicals" tag on it—and it turned out as a modest, thoroughly likeable production.

Wide-grinning Tommy wrote a lot of the 17 numbers and wisely put them all on a fabulous-selling LP. Among them, "Elevator Rock", "Butterfingers", and "Handful of Songs". Problem: how to finish the life story of a 21-year-old. Answer: pull in stars like Humphrey Lyttelton, Nancy Whiskey et al and make it a local-boy-makes-good party at the local town hall.

**GOOD FOR TOMMY STEELE. HIS HANDLERS NEVER MAKE A MISTAKE.**

Just as big a headline-stealer was "The Prince and the Showgirl", the teaming of Sir Laurence Olivier and Marilyn Monroe. Written by Terence Rattigan, it couldn't—and didn't—go wrong.

**WITTY LINES**

Marilyn, the chorus-girl, meets Larry, the Regent of Carpathia. At first, she brushes him off. Later, she falls for him and becomes an embarrassment.

Stacks of witty lines, beautifully spoken — backed by the music of Richard Addinsell.

And it was welcome back to the death cell this month for Diana Dors. Her idea was to shoot her husband (Rod Steiger), blame it on a prowler and off to the woods with her lover (Tom Tryon). Instead she went to Death Row—a slight change from the English condemned cell in "Yield to the Night".

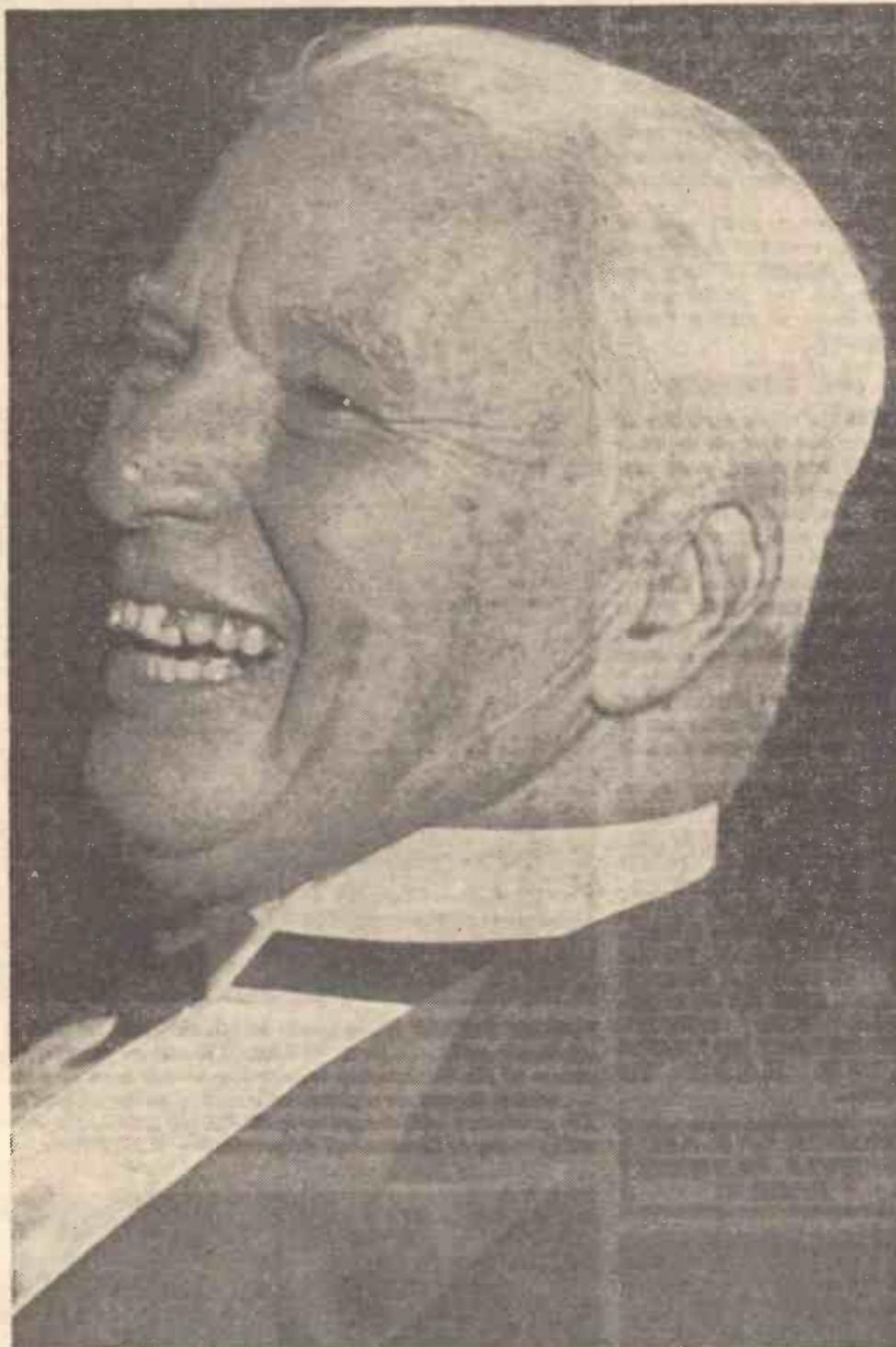
"Teahouse of the August Moon" was a stage triumph and a double triumph on film. The story is well known, and Glenn Ford (the American officer) and Marlon Brando (the rascally Oriental interpreter) made it really live.

**HISTORICAL NOTE**

Around 20 years ago, Bing Crosby and Carole Lombard starred in a musical romp called "We're Not Dressing". It was based on a James Barrie story which turned up this month, tuneless, as "The Admirable Crichton". Crichton, the perfect butler who becomes the perfect "guy" on a desert island, was flawlessly played by Kenneth More. The femme interest: Diane Cilento, Sally Ann Howes.

I remember "Fire Down Below" mainly for the title tune which hovered around on the Hit Parade for weeks. The film had the odd laugh and was set in the hold of a cargo ship. Jack Lemmon easily took top honours—and I'm not forgetting that Robert Mitchum and Rita Hayworth were in it, too.

But Mitchum clicked big, around the same part of the month, in "Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison." A bit more of the castaway touch in this one, with Marlene Dietrich and nun Deborah Kerr thrown together on a desert island. Laughs, tenderness, action—all beautifully handled by director John Huston.



**CHARLIE CHAPLIN**, at 68, still retains his genius for comedy and pathos, but in his full-length films he has developed a kind of "political complex" which really blossomed out in "A King in New York", which had its London premiere in September. But Charlie the composer—and comedian—is a more interesting character than Charlie the Politician and, if "A King in New York" will not be remembered as the best film he has made, it will be for the beautiful music he composed for it. "Mandolin Serenade" was the hit tune, was waxed by every major recording company.

This followed his triumphant composition of "Limelight" and "Smile", which will be hummed and sung for years to come. The above grand close-up of Chaplin was taken by Dezo Hoffman at the premiere of "A King in New York" at the Leicester Square Odeon, London.

**STAR CERTAINTY**

James MacArthur, son of Helen Hayes and apparently a reluctant actor, turned in one of the performances of the year in "The Young Stranger". The son of successful parents, he gets himself into trouble by slugging a cinema manager. Just a variation of the rebel without a cause theme.

**BUT WATCH YOUNG McARTHUR. IF HE KEEPS ON ACTING, HE IS A STAR CERTAINTY**

Chandler again! This time with Orson Welles in "Pay the Devil"—a Western with a conscience. Gripping—especially when Sheriff Griff meets cattle baron Welles.

June also coughed up Fess Parker in "Westward Ho, the Wagons", with Mr. "Davy Crockett" blazing an exciting trail through Injun territory.

Not so exciting, despite the fantastic story, was the "Incredible Shrinking Man," a new line in X thrillers. Hero of this one shrinks from 6ft. to

two inches and gets so his wife is afraid he'll be eaten up by the family cat!

**WELL DONE, PAL**

Step forward, producer-director-star Gene Kelly for a well-done-pal for "The Happy Road," story of two parents chasing through Switzerland to Paris after their runaway kids. Michael Redgrave was fine and Maurice Chevalier sang, over the credits, the title tune.

Deadpan Donald O'Connor had a ball in "The Buster Keaton Story", but hardly had the acting ability to put across the inner sadness of the great old Hollywood comic.

Among the other releases were "Man Afraid", with George Nader as a parson; "The River's Edge", Ray Milland in a draggy affair with Anthony Quinn; "The Steel Bayonet", a British war film stuffed with clichés; and "That Woman Opposite", a British thriller with Hollywood stars Phyllis Kirk and Dan O'Herlihy. Also the best short feature of the year: "The Bespoke

Overcoat", with David Kossoff.

Best-of-the-month: toss-up between Tommy Steele and James MacArthur's "The Young Stranger."

★ ★ ★

**SUCH A FEAST From Mr. Todd**

**JULY** FOR the picture-goer, July was most important for "Around the World in Eighty Days" thundered into the West End in a blaze of Todd-inspired publicity.

People were even saying the old Jules Verne classic book should be chucked away—the film was so much better!

The cast list contained practically everybody who is anybody and it would take a couple of columns to name 'em all.

It was a feast of colour and sound: A three-hour tour of the

world in the most lavish style and I've just got to mention the wonderful Mexican comedian Cantiflas, David Niven as Phileas Fogg, the late Robert Newton as the detective, the direction of young Englishman Michael Anderson, and the oh-so-smooth musical score of Victor Young.

Again, almost everybody it seemed got in on the theme tune and folk'll be whistling it just as long as the film runs. Which should be for ever.

**FRANKIE'S DEBUT**

But before I got my breath back from seeing the world, July pulled out some more thrill-packed celluloid.

For here came Frankie Vaughan, making a big impact in his problem-boy drama "These Dangerous Years".

The film was set among Liverpool teenagers and ex-Liverpool teenager Vaughan showed that he's a natural when it comes to acting.

The drab locale was livened up by Carole Lesley and Jackie Lane and, when Private Frankie started his personal war against the Army, he was helped by George Baker as a padre. The honours, though, to Frankie, who belted out a couple of numbers, "Cold, Cold Shower" and "Isn't This a Lovely Evening?"

**BRITAIN GOT IN ON THE ROCK 'N' ROLL KICK WITH "ROCK YOU SINNERS". IT WAS A LOW BUDGET ENTRY AND WAS HARDLY A SUCCESS.**

However, it had plenty of music for the fans and, among the vocal and instrumental artists, were the groups of Tony Cromble, Art Baxter, Rory Blackwell and Don Solloway, with singers Dickie Bennett and Joan Small.

A strangely serious Bob Hope kicked in with "Beau James", story of Mayor Jimmy Walker, a colourful character of New York's roaring twenties. Nice work from Hope and quickie appearances by Jack Benny, George Jessel and Jimmy Durante.

**HE SHOULDN'T!**

To Nat "King" Cole, the verdict must be: "You shouldn't have done it". He chose "China Gate" for his first full-length dramatic rôle and, frankly, the whole story of brutality and mawkish sentimentality left a nasty taste.

Cole sang "China Gate" in his milk-chocolate voice, but it didn't improve the general taste.

"Miracle in Soho" was a well-made little film but not exceptional. John Gregson starred and Belinda Lee started living up to her publicity.

John Steinbeck has written many better things than "The Wayward Bus", a yarn about a bus marooned in floods near the Mexican border. Joan Collins maintained her steady acting improvement as the jealous wife of the driver.

**SHE HAD REASON TO BE JEALOUS — JAYNE MANSFIELD WAS ALSO ABOARD. BUT THE FILM JUST MISSED THE BUS.**

A punchy production of "Manuela", which had Elsa Martinelli clad in only a bath towel in one scene, was about a South American waif (Elsa) smuggled aboard a tramp steamer by an evil-minded engineer. Lovely touches from Trevor Howard as the cynical skipper who falls for her elfin and undraped charms.

**THE WORLD WON**

July horror-note: "The Monster that Hattered the World". The world won, as usual.

Jack Palance, as a reformed gun-fighter, starred in "The Lonely Man". Nobody in the Wild West loves a REFORMED gunfighter. I DIDN'T THINK THIS FILM.

Tops for drama was "Sweet Smell of Success", savage and scaring. Burt Lancaster was an unscrupulous columnist who used press agent Tony Curtis to break up a romance. Wow! What acting!

Another brutal piece was "Something of Value," based on Robert C. Ruark's wordy novel. A clash between black and white in Mau Mau land, with boyhood chums Rock

Hudson (white) and Sidney Poitier (black) realising that adults can't be quite so chummy. Also good: Dana Wynter.

Another contender for the comedy of the year was "His Other Woman", a witty piece about automation—with man triumphing over machine and Katherine Hepburn triumphing over Katherine Tracy.

**JUST AS GOOD**

The same production team that turned out "Marty" also turned out the equally brilliant "The Bachelor Party". It was absorbing, realistic and it packed a lot of laughs as it took you out on a drunken binge with an eleventh-hour bachelor and his pals.

A film for the British to be proud of was "The Shiralee". Nine-year-old Dana Wilson was exceptionally good as an undisciplined child in Australian cattle country.

**MR. THOMAS STEELE WROTE AND SANG THE TITLE SONG.**

Enter a genteel, county family who take murder as regularly as Sunday lunch. The story: "How to Murder a Rich Uncle". Uncle was Charles Coburn, and Nigel Patrick, the noble lord who wants his money and decides—with great cheerfulness—to get his lordship's family to help bump off the old boy.

**YIP, A WESTERN**

Eleanor Parker showed us the three faces of Lizzie, not to be confused with the various faces of a girl named Eve. The faces: Elizabeth the drab; Lizzie the good-time gal; and Beth the all-American girl; and Lizzie to get through. A nasty session on a psychiatrist's couch was "Lizzie".

Enter Randolph Scott again in—Guess what! Yip, a Western "The Tall T." Just routine, ma'am.

And a half-hearted comedy rounded off a busy month, with Red Skelton, a natural-born sucker if ever I saw one, as "Public Pigeon No. One".

Vote for the month: Mr. Todd and his world trip, of course.

★ ★ ★

**BEN GAZZARA was the hit**

**AUG.** AUGUST produced rather more on the musical side, not all of it very successful. "Silk Stockings," which was a re-make of Garbo's "Ninotchka," featured Fred Astaire and the leggy Cyd Charisse.

A couple of new Cole Porter tunes made the total 13, most of them excellent. Among them: "Paris Loves Lovers", "Silk Stockings" (filled by Miss Charisse) and "Stereophonic Sound", the music by Andre Previn.

Astaire was a film producer and Cyd a Commie-girl who had some of the Red rubbed off her by the Parisian atmosphere.

We had a second helping of Elvis Presley for this month and the Pelvis was ably helped by Lizbeth Scott and moony Wendell Corey in "Lovin' You". Publicity girl Scott finds country boy Presley and builds him to teenage idol status.

**SEEMS TO ME PVE HEARD THAT STORY BEFORE.**

Seven major songs, notably "Teddy Bear", "Hot Dog", "Got a Lot of Living to Do" and, of course, "Lovin' You". Presley was surprisingly good.

**THEN CAME BOONE**

And Pat Boone, nearest rival of the Pelvis, turned up in relaxed style for "Bernardine". Boone headed a pleasant bunch of teenagers—and the girl in the title was just a phantasy. A sort of ideal girl.

Boone put over some lovely numbers and seems a notch to replace Crosby—if Crosby ever needs replacing.

A last attempt to kill the rock craze was "Rock All Night", a corny, trite, inept flopperoo in which somehow The Flatters became involved.

(Continued on page 27)

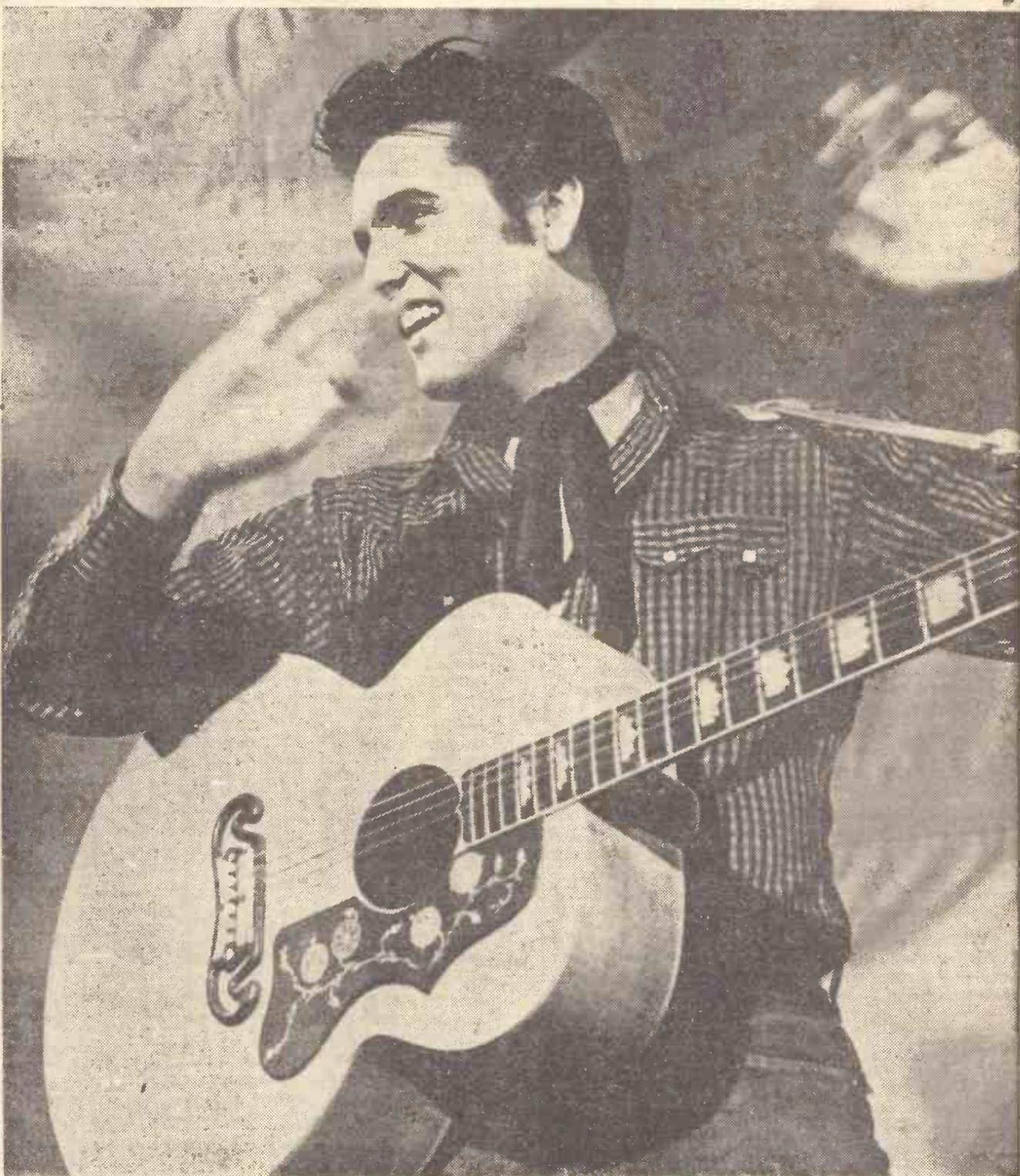
# They're On The R 'n' R And Skiffle Wagon



**BRITAIN'S No. 1 SKIFFLER** is, in the general opinion, **LONNIE DONEGAN**. He has had success after success for the NIXA label, landing several hits in the Top Ten. In the middle of 1957, he carried out a tour of America, which brought him great popularity there.

Lonnie also has a best-ever record for West End stage appearances by a skiffle group. He has been on bills at the London Palladium, the Prince of Wales, and the London Hippodrome.

"My Dixie Darlin'," "Cumberland Gap" and "Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O" are among his top-selling discs



Probably the most frantic rock 'n' rollers in the world are **ELVIS PRESLEY** (seen above in action in his film "Lovin' You") and **LITTLE RICHARD** (below). Neither has yet visited Britain in person, but there's certainly a white-hot teenage welcome ready and waiting should they do so, although reports say that Little Richard wants to give up rock 'n' roll to settle down to a quieter life and is looking for a more sedate way of making a living. (Presley—on the RCA, Little Richard on LONDON, label.)

**JOHN BARRY** (right) leads a clever, well-presented rock 'n' roll group. Below is skiffle specialist **CHAS. McDEVITT**, with **SHIRLEY DOUGLAS** from Belfast, who in September this year succeeded Nancy Whiskey as his vocalist. The McDevitt group had a number of ORIOLE disc successes in 1957, but there was no question about their best-seller—the highly popular "Freight Train."



Another youngster to boost rock 'n' roll in Britain was **TERRY DENE**, whose popularity led to his appearance in his first film, "The Golden Disc". He's also done well on the DECCA label. "White Sport Coat" was one of his biggest sellers. He is seen discussing the film script with his father.—R.M. Picture.

# ERIC SYKES

Britain's Ace Scriptwriter, Ace Television Comedian And  
Ace Producer-Director, In This Specially-Written Story For  
The RECORD MIRROR

One of Britain's most brilliant comedians—he has been hailed in the same class as Jack Benny—ERIC SYKES is just as brilliant a script-writer. He has written, produced, directed and appeared in numerous Television shows for both Channels this year, has never failed to be the 'hit of the night's programmes.' But apart from his tremendous activities—he is director of a script-writing company, too—Eric is a very hard worker for charity. One of the causes to which he gives unstinted support and time is the Spastics. He has turned out at many functions on their behalf. Last summer he played cricket for the Spastics cause on several occasions. This picture was taken after a match in Shepherd's Bush, London. Eric (left) by a fluke had scored a couple of runs—and the only time he caught the ball was when it was actually placed in his hand. With Eric are his fellow Goon, PETER SELLERS (right) and CYRIL STAPLETON, Vice-President of the Stars Organisation for Spastics.

—R.M. Picture.



☆ GRINDLEY PRATT-BOLE had an idea . . . normally a statement like that would arouse no comment, but in the case of Grindley Pratt-Bole it was different, he was a television producer, Mark IV. (see footnote).

(CLOSE UP). He leapt from his desk as the idea struck him, and reached for the phone . . . this again was an unusual thought; his secretary—she usually had to hand it to him. However, she was a competent lass, and on the precise second he woke up, had stopped the watch, sorted out his first night complimentary tickets, signed some letters in his absence, and booked a juggling act. (Perhaps I should explain that every time he had an idea she booked a juggling act, and from then on the rest was easy). Now she watched him whilst he juggled the telephone receiver up and down; after twenty minutes she took over and in less than an hour an urgent voice said "switch-board" and the wheels were set in motion. An appointment was made to see the programme planners.

☆ THIS was no ordinary idea. The fact that it had even crossed his mind frightened Pratt-Bole but then anything that crossed his mind was apt to worry him.

However, the very next month (earliest appointment) as he outlined his idea to the programme planners, his fears dropped away. He would open with the girls, then the juggler, then segue into the compere. The planners nodded sagely, one of them was new (he had just left a very good job at the bank), two of them had been there since 1930 (not in the same room but very near it) and the fourth one was asleep, or he may have been dead . . . Pratt-Bole hoped so, because he was well in line for his job. However, in millions of words he explained briefly his idea . . . it was an hour on Christmas Eve . . . an outside broadcast from Purtle Towers . . . and here was the touch of genius; the climax of the show was to take the cameras onto the battlement and film the Purtle Ghost as it made its annual appearance.

☆ THIS BOMBHELL CAUSED CONSTERNATION within the planner who had just left the bank, and his first question was "How much money would the ghost want?" Without waiting for a reply he scribbled some more figures, and it wasn't until he was scribbling half way down the table leg, he realised he had left the bank.

Pratt-Bole broke the silence. "Pardon me, sir, but am I to take it that the programme goes on?" The planner who could speak, spoke. "Yes", he said, then he paused, took off his glasses and wiped them. This was a trick he had seen on the films, and the planner thoroughly enjoyed doing it, otherwise he had no real reason to wear glasses. Pratt-Bole was impressed and made a mental note to have his eyes tested. There was a trick he could use himself when he was about to tell the jugglers to get three minutes out of their act. The planner replaced his glasses and repeated, "Yes . . . from here on the ball is in your half". Then he rose, put a dust sheet over his colleagues and with head high left the room.

(DISSOLVE INTO PRATT-BOLE'S OFFICE). His secretary (competent lass that she was) marked the calendar on the twenty-fourth of December "Operation Ghost" and rang for a plan for Purtle Towers.

When Pratt-Bole made a grand entry wiping a pair of prop glasses, she put a train ticket to Purtle in his pocket, helped him into his duffle coat, and pointed him towards Charing Cross, and from there he made his way to Purtle.

Now, a Mark I producer need only spend a few hours in a set in order to soak up the atmosphere, as it were—but, as I mentioned, Pratt-Bole was Mark IV. Therefore, he spent the next two months at Purtle Towers, drinking his way through the wine cellar and seven pubs in the village before he eventually returned to his office. As he wiped his prop glasses his secretary (competent lass that she was) placed before him the whole programme. Pratt-Bole read through it. He was a little confused, he had forgotten the reason for his visit to Purtle Towers, but like any

normal producer Mark IV, he put in the odd full stop, added a comma or two, and underlined produced and directed by Pratt-Bole. Then he passed it back to his secretary (competent lass that she was) and fell asleep.

(MONTAGE SEQUENCE OF PASSING DAYS AND—EVENTUALLY—CHRISTMAS EVE).

☆ EVERYTHING WAS A FLURRY OF EXCITEMENT. The Press had made a field day of it and Pratt-Bole's face was in all the daily newspapers . . . Pratt-Bole pointing to a script . . . Pratt-Bole with his fingers in his ears . . . Pratt-Bole with one leg on the battlements of Purtle Towers . . . Pratt-Bole making chalk marks on the floor where he expected the ghost to stand. And Pratt-Bole, reticent fellow that he was, loved every little picture of himself.

At mid-day the crowds round Purtle Towers were enormous and Pratt-Bole was seriously handicapped in his work. Out of the few hours left, four of them were spent waving to the crowd from the battlements. The crowds far down below could not see who the chap was who continually leaned perilously over the battlements to wave, but fortunately Pratt-Bole didn't know this and on one occasion he even made a little speech . . . but eventually as there was nothing to see, the crowds dispersed, and Pratt-Bole had to content himself with his work.

Ten seconds, five seconds, three, two, one, Cue music, said his secretary (competent lass that she was), and the programme was on the air. Ghostly music accompanied the crouched voice of Dick

Rimbleby, as the cameras slowly tracked round the walls of the castle.

Pratt-Bole, sitting in the control van, swelled with pride as the miles and miles of corridors unfolded before the tracking cameras. During the afternoon they had already lost one camera due to the fact that the drawbridge was up, but then what programme goes on the air without losing a camera or two? (What the hell—at four guineas a year from each viewer, they can afford it . . .)

A distant clock struck midnight and a camera timidly went in towards the entrance from which the ghost was to appear.

In a million homes people held on to each other in anticipation. And in scores of other homes, where the television sets were switched on, the viewers idly chatted as they sorted out the kids' toys for the morning. Yes, it was a moment filled with ordinary things.

☆ AFTER THE ENTRANCE of the apparition had been awaited for half an hour without result . . . the cameras once more started to pan along the battlements. Once again came the voice of the commentator. He talked about the stonework, how it had been laid, when, by whom . . . and a magnificent description of one of the gargoyles in the left hand side of your picture. Then a few more minutes silence . . . then again the crouching voice with another description of the gargoyle. But still no sign of the ghost.

By four in the morning, the gargoyle was a national celebrity, and at a quarter to five the weather report was shown and the programme was faded.

Thus ended the brilliant brainchild of Pratt-Bole . . . but really folks, how stupid can you get. As if there were such things as ghosts.

Incidentally, from that day to this, nothing has ever been seen or heard of Pratt-Bole, his camera crews, the voice of Dick Rimbleby, and all who visited the castle that night.

And perhaps you won't be seeing much of me after this.

Footnote: TV Producers. Mark I : A Rarity  
Mark II : A Novelty  
Mark III: A Mistake  
Mark IV: A Nuisance

TELLS THE STORY OF  
A TV PRODUCER  
MARK IV

I SEE ALL, HEAR ALL . . . BUT SAY NOWT

# NIGHT-CLUB LIFE . . .

I Wouldn't Change It For Any

Other In The World . . .

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN MY CONTENTION that before anyone is appointed Foreign Secretary of this country, or given any post that requires real diplomacy, he should first of all be made to work in a night club. For the man who manages a Mayfair night spot runs through the whole gamut of pathos, bathos, glamour, frustration and downright aggravation.

I've been in this zany world of dim-lights, cigar haze and the noise of popping champagne corks for many hectic, hilarious years — and I just can't ever imagine myself living any other sort of life. I've just said it can be very aggravating, but it brings with it so many unexpected delights that it grows on you until you know you just couldn't ever leave it.

It has been my good fortune to meet some of the most famous personalities of stage, screen, television, politics—even members of our Royal Family. It's occurred to me that, like Hannen Swaffer, I'll write a book one day—not called "People I Have Met" but "People Who Have Met Me."

## WHO'S NEXT? YOU NEVER CAN TELL!

WHAT VARIETY you get as a night-club owner! —and variety's the spice of life, as we all know. In the space of a fortnight I've shaken hands with Charlie Chaplin, sipped coffee with Sabrina, had a double scotch with Albert Pierrepoint! How many other celebrities I've bumped into during this same period I can't remember—but these three show that you never know in this walk of life whom you're going to meet from one hour to the next.

Great stars whose names are on everybody's lips have confided in me, told in a whisper that they're scared to death of the opening night that's looming up in front of them. And I've had customers come to me in a different kind of panic asking me to look after their ready cash and belongings as they've been "called" to the Old Bailey and expect to spend the next six months or more in an atmosphere very different from that of Winston's, the Dorchester, Seigi's restaurant or the Four Hundred.

I've entertained the most *blase* people, who seem to have spent half their lives in Continental restaurants and Mayfair night-clubs, and then welcomed into my joint some Aberdeen grocer's assistant who, at the age of 45, has decided to have his first night out in Mayfair because he's just won £75,000 on the pools.

## STARS OF TODAY WORKED FOR ME YESTERDAY

ONE OF THE PLEASANTEST ASPECTS of my work, of course, is meeting and reminiscing with famous personalities of today who, but yesterday, I knew as struggling performers who have worked for me. Names in this category that come to mind are Terry-Thomas, Tommy Cooper (whom I engaged in my cabaret for less than £20 a week a few years ago).

Then there are the band leaders who once were only too delighted to play for me at Musicians' Union minimum rates—Jack Jackson, Edmundo Ros and Eddie Calvert. I can remember Eddie when he played as ordinary trumpeter in the band at the Embassy Night club. What memories he must have every time he goes there as a top-line celebrity!

My old friend Anthony Steele once used to borrow his cab fare from me—those were the days before he was even in weekly rep. And I knew Sabrina when she was a humble photographer's model.

BY

## BRUCE BRACE

OF WINSTON'S CLUB, LONDON, W.

Reversing the proverbial penny, I see another side which is often only too heart-breaking. Almost every day I say "Hello!" to some artiste who was once at the top of the ladder but who now walks around all the fashionable haunts without being recognised. As I meet these sad, brave artistes of ten years ago, it's brought home to me more than ever how fickle the public is.

## I SEE LOTS, BUT SAY NOTHING

MEETING ALL THESE PEOPLE I have to remember either what their ambitions are or what their fame used to be. I have to remember that the little starlet of today, who's all too unsure of herself, may be the idol of the cinema fans tomorrow. I see the married couples of screen or stage fame celebrating together even though a domestic tragedy is lurking just around the corner for them. I see the budding of romance between many a couple who are always in the public eye. And I have to see all, hear all—but say nowt.

Night club life holds up a mirror to the life going on in the world:

I see all the glamour, pathos and sadness of life each night crammed into one small corner of the world's greatest city. Believe me, everyone who works in the life I've chosen for myself has to be the soul of tact. And that's why I say that future Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries should have a term of night-club managing before they take up their term of government office.

All the same, despite its headaches, I wouldn't change my night club life for any other in the world . . . it's fabulous, but fabulous.

Every night is a new adventure! You never know who you're going to meet.

Will it be a debutante or a spiv, a star or a "has-been," a millionaire or a crook? It's the anticipation that also makes it so exciting . . .

## BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY AT BRIGHTON



Even when on holiday, Bruce Brace just can't resist doing his stuff behind the bar! Last summer he spent a week-end at Brighton, heard that some of his show business friends were there for a concert at the Hippodrome organised by Isidore Green. So in he popped to the Beach Hotel, in Regency Square, met up with MAX BYGRAVES and FREDYE MARSHALL and automatically went behind the bar . . . it's second nature with him. Looking on interestedly are Mr. and Mrs. AL FELD, mine hosts of the Beach Hotel and Club. After seeing Bruce in action they made him an offer to be the Club's barman! Bruce was flattered, but declined.

R.M. Picture.

# Season's Greetings



## DICKIE VALENTINE

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

FROM ALL AT  
**MELODISC**

12 EARLHAM ST., CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS  
LONDON, W.C.2

Sincere Xmas Greetings

and  
Very  
Best  
Wishes



for  
1958

from

**EDNA SAVAGE**

# MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC . . . FOR XMAS,



## MERRY CHRISTMAS

Jackie Gleason and his Orchestra  
(12 in. CAPITOL LCT 6147)

- I'll Be Home For Christmas ● Christmas In Paris ● Jingle Bells ● White Christmas ● Santa Claus Is Comin' To Town ● Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas ● The Christmas Song ● Got My Love To Keep Me Warm ● Snowfall ● By the Fireside ● Happy Holiday ● Winter Wonderland ● Story of a Starry Night.

Novel effect here. Gleason's large-scale orchestra is augmented by an electric celeste. Resultant sound is easy on the ear. Irving Berlin's "Got My Love To Keep Me Warm," written some 20 years ago, makes a welcome appearance.



## WILD ABOUT HARRY

Harry James and his Orchestra  
(12 in. CAPITOL LCT 6146)

- Kinda Like the Blues ● Blues For Lovers Only ● Countin' ● Cotton Pickin' ● Ring For Porter ● Barn 12 ● What Am I Here For? ● Blues For Harry's Sake ● Bee Gee ● Blue On A Count

Apart from Ellington's "What Am I Here For?" all numbers are originals in which Harry James has had a composing hand. Good, swinging music, with the James trumpet (but of course!) setting the pace.



## COME TO MY PARTY

(a) Eddie Barclay and his Orchestra; (b) Jose Luchesi and his Orchestra; (c) Henri Rossoti and his Orchestra; (d) Onesime Grosbois and his Honky Tonk Band  
(FELSTED PDL 85033)

- The Surrey with a Fringe on Top (a) ● Out Of My Dreams (a) ● Oh! What a Beautiful Mornin' (a) ● People Will Say We're in Love (a) ● Yo no se porque te quiero (b) ● La feliz modistita (b) ● Java (a) ● Arrivederci Roma (b) ● C'est la vie (a) ● La fete du poisson (c) ● Baiao de auditorio (c) ● Czardas tango (a) ● C'est bon d'aimer (a) ● Et la polka (d) ● Where will the dimple be? (d)

Now this is quite an idea, this band parade! It produces variety a plenty. What's more, however much the music may change in idiom, the listenability never flags.

## LOUIS AND THE ANGELS

Louis Armstrong with Chorus and Orchestra directed by Sy Oliver.  
(BRUNSWICK LAT 8210)

- Trumpet solo and obligato by Louis Armstrong ● When Did You Leave Heaven? ● You're A Heavenly Thing ● I Married An Angel ● A Sinner Kissed An Angel ● \*Angela Mia ● Angel Child ● \*And The Angels Sing ● Fools Rush In ● I'll String Along With You ● Angel ● The Prisoner's Song ● Good-night Angel

Here's Satchmo of the surging trumpet. Wonderful how the man always seems as fresh as a nineteen-year-old.



## FRED WARING PENNSYLVANIANS

Pennsylvanians  
(12 in. CAPITOL LCT 6143)

- I Hear Music ● Dry Bones ● Still of the Night ● Way Back Home ● Ol' Man River ● Hit the Road to Dreamland ● Smoke Gets In Your Eyes ● Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor ● A Cigarette, Sweet Music and You ● Whiffenpoof Song ● Hora Staccato ● So Beats My Heart For You ● Lolly Too Dum Dey ● Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child ● You'll Never Walk Alone ● Battle Hymn of the Republic ● Sleep

Fred, with 30 years show biz experience behind him, certainly knows how to cater for what the public wants. A rich variety of numbers, in Fred's own inimitable style.



## THIS IS NAT 'KING' COLE

(Orchestra Conducted by Nelson Riddle)  
(12 in. CAPITOL LCT 6142)

- Dreams Can Tell A Lie ● I Just Found Out About Love ● Too Young To Go Steady ● Forgive My Heart ● Annabelle ● Nothing Ever Changes My Love For You ● To the Ends of the Earth ● Gonna Laugh You Out ● My Life ● Someone You Love ● Love Me As Though There Were No Tomorrow ● That's All ● Never Let Me Go

The smooth-voiced Nat gives these numbers his customary relaxed treatment. Brilliant backings from Riddle, whose fine orchestral work has enhanced the Cole vocalising on so many previous occasions.

## WAGNER DIE WALKÜRE

Act III and the Todesverkündigung from Act II

Kirsten Flagstad, Brünnhilde. Otto Edelmann, Wotan. Set Svanholm, Seigmund. Marianne Schech, Sieglinde. Oda Balsborg, Gerhilde. Ilona Steingrüber, Ortlinde. Grace Hoffmann, Waltraute. Margaret Bence, Schwertleite. Clare Watson, Helmwig. Anny Delorie, Siegrune. Frieda Roesler, Grimmerde. Hetty Plumacher, Rossweisse. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. DECCA LXT 5389-90.

In presentation box with special booklet including German libretto and literal English translation.

FOUR FEATURES are unique and outstanding in this recording. In the first place, no effort has been spared to unite with the advantages of studio recording the excitement, drama and continuity of opera in the theatre.

The performance was recorded with the artistes acting their parts on a specially enlarged stage, and each section recorded was just as long as human endurance and the magnificent co-operation and concentration of soloist, orchestra and conductor would permit.

Immediately noticeable when listening to the set is the superb quality of sound. For instance, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra re-creates Wagner's vivid orchestral colouring with a brilliance and depth of feeling which is overwhelming. . . they, and the whole cast, are recorded with staggering fidelity and realism.

In this recording it is revealed also that Georg Solti is undoubtedly one of the great Wagnerians of our time, able to fulfil with equal success the dramatic and lyric demands of the score.

Lastly this great issue is outstanding for the participation of the incomparable Kirsten Flagstad. Never has she interpreted Brünnhilde in a more inspiring fashion, and never has the unsurpassed majesty of her voice been so faithfully captured.

Here, indeed, has Wagner's true ideal of music drama been realised on records. Here is a recording of Act III of Die Walküre which makes history . . . which cannot fail to thrill opera lovers and connoisseurs of recorded sound.

## JERI GENTLY JUMPS

Jeri Southern with Orchestra conducted by Ralph Burns  
(BRUNSWICK LAT 8209)

- You Forgot Your Gloves ● My Ideal ● I've Got Five Dollars ● All Too Soon ● If I Had You ● What's My Name? ● My Old Flame ● Am I Blue? ● No Moon At All ● Romance In The Dark ● It Must Be True ● Everything But You

Miss Southern knows her vocal oats, as this longplay will demonstrate, and the Ralph Burns orchestra adds to the many laurels it has already collected.



## YOUNG IDEAS

Ray Anthony  
(12 in. CAPITOL T866)

- Moonglow ● Why Do I Love You? ● I Love You ● Nice Work If You Can Get It ● Lonely Night In Paris ● Button Up Your Overcoat ● You Turned The Tables On Me ● Just One Of Those Things ● That Old Feeling ● Coquette ● Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams ● Young Ideas

Trumpet-playing orchestra leader Ray Anthony, who visited Britain a few months ago, brings us again his fresh, entertaining fare. Good for listening—or for dancing.

## THE WILDEST

Lou Prima  
(12 in. CAPITOL T755)

- Just A Gigolo ● I Ain't Got Nobody ● For My Baby ● The Lip ● Body and Soul ● Oh! Marie ● Basin Street Blues ● Steepy Time Down South ● Jump, Jive an' Wail ● Buona Sera ● Night Train ● You Rascal You ● Las Vegas personality Prima really goes to town in his own way on this rhythm-charged assortment. You'll have fun listening. Vocalist is Keely (Mrs. Prima) Smith.



## HAWAII CALLS 'WAIKIKI!'

Presented by Webley Edwards  
(12 in. CAPITOL T772)

- On the Beach at Waikiki ● Keep Your Eyes on the Hands ● Ama Ama — Tomi Tomi ● Mapuana ● Little Brown Girl ● Ua Like No A Like ● Vana Vana ● Island of Dreams ● Kaimana Hila ● My Waikiki Girl ● How'd Ya Do ● Now Is The Hour

Webley Edwards has broadcast the "Hawaii Calls" radio show from Waikiki Beach for 21 years. For this longplay, he's chosen established favourites of both residents and visitors. Lushly done, escapist music, with an ingratiating girl vocalist named Huanani.

## CLUB DURANT

Jimmy Durante and his guests: Ethel Barrymore; Al Jolson; Sophie Tucker; Eddie Cantor; Bing Crosby; Bob Hope; Peter Lawford and Helen Traubel with Orchestra directed by Roy Baryg  
(BRUNSWICK LAT 8218)

- A Real Piano Player ● I'm As Ready As I'll Ever Be ● There's a Place in the Theatre for You ● Who Will Be With You When I'm Far Away? ● Presenting Clayton, Jackson and Durante ● Start Off Each Day with a Song ● Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home ● I Can Do Without Broadway ● Jimmy, the Well-Dressed Man ● So I Ups to Him ● Because They All Love You ● Sing Soft, Sing Sweet, Sing Gentle ● Our Voices Were Meant For Each Other ● Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet ● Waiting For the Robert E. Lee ● The Boys with the Proboskis ● The World Needs New Faces ● Start Off Each Day with a Song ● If You Knew Susie ● Wingin' with Rhythm and Blues

If you want to give the youngsters some idea of what the comparatively old 'uns can cut loose with, then this array of seasoned show biz talent will show 'em.



## A JOLLY CHRISTMAS

Frank Sinatra  
(12 in. CAPITOL LCT 6144)

- Jingle Bells ● Christmas Song ● Mistletoe and Holly ● I'll Be Home For Christmas ● First Noël ● Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ● Little Town of Bethlehem ● It Came Upon a Midnight Clear ● Silent Night

Tasteful renderings of these seasonal songs by Frankie. Besides conducting, Gordon Jenkins has contributed some lustrous arrangements. Paul Brewster Singers (25 strong) and suitable atmosphere.



## CARMEN CAVALLERO AT THE EMBERS

With Rhythm Accompaniment  
(BRUNSWICK LAT 8199)

- The Lady is a Tramp ● Don't Get Around Much Anymore ● Crazy Rhythm ● Just you, just me ● Three Little Words ● The Continental ● I Want You to be Happy ● Take the "A" Train ● Diga Diga Doo

Plenty of rhythmic exuberance here. Carmen Cavallero may not delight all the purists, but there's no mistaking the general entertainment value.

## BLACK SATIN

George Shearing  
(12 in. CAPITOL T858)

- The Folk Who Live On The Hill ● If I Should Lose You ● Starlight Souvenirs ● What Is There To Say? ● You Don't Know What Love Is ● Nothing Ever Changes My Love For You ● One Morning In May ● Moon Song ● As Long As I Live ● Let's Live Again

Typical, tasteful inventive Shearing. Contains two originals by him—the title song and "Let's Live Again." George's quintet is backed by an orchestra and strings and woodwinds.



## HONKY-TONK STREET PARADE

Joe "Fingers" Carr  
(12 in. CAPITOL T809)

- Stars and Stripes Forever ● Billboard March ● National Emblem March ● March Slav ● The Thunderer ● South Rampart Street Parade ● Entry of the Gladiators ● The March of Siamese Children ● Parade of the Wooden Soldiers ● Under The Double Eagle ● Speed King March ● American Patrol

Carr, the pianist with the racy, down-to-earth style, gives a boisterous, treatment to this longplay with the accent on marching. Could well get you going.



## I GET CHET

Chet Baker and his Combos  
(FELSTED PDL 85036)

- How about you ● Once In A While Cheketch ● Alone Together ● Chet ● Dinah ● Tasty Pudding ● Anticipated Blues ● V: Line ● Exits

Rather specialist this. Detailed exposition belongs to Tony Hall's modern jazz feature. We pass.



## MOONLIGHT COCKTAIL

Stanley Black and his Piano and Orchestra  
(DECCA LK 4199)

- The Moon Got in My Eyes ● Moonlight Cocktail ● The Moon of Manakora ● Moonlight in Vermont ● Moon Country ● How High Is The Moon? ● Moonlight Serenade ● Moonglow ● Blue Moon ● The Moon Is A Silver Dollar ● Moon For Sale ● Moonlight and Shadows ● Scintillating, restful, lyrical stuff, put over in the luxury style one expects from Stanley Black.

## \*A CHRISTMAS SING WITH BING

Bing Crosby with Chorus and Instrumental Accompaniment  
(BRUNSWICK LAT 8216)

- Happy Holiday ● Joy to the World ● Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ● White Christmas ● Adeste Fideles ● We Three Kings of Orient are ● The First Nowell ● Carol of the Bells ● What Christmas Means To Me ● Good King Wenceslas ● Jesus, Sweet Saviour ● Angels We Have Heard On High ● Away in a Manger ● Thon Descendeth from the Stars ● Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly ● God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen ● O Little Town of Bethlehem ● Silent Night, Holy Night ● Happy Holiday—Finale

## CROSBY CLASSICS, VOL. 5

Bing Crosby (Vocal)  
(BRUNSWICK LA 8732)

- Small Fry ● Laugh and Call It Love ● I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams ● Don't Let that Moon Get Away ● You're a Sweet Little Headache ● Joobalsi ● I Have Eyes ● The Funny Old Hills

## CROSBY CLASSICS, VOL. 6

Bing Crosby with John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra  
\*Assisted by the Music Mads \*\*With Connie Boswell.  
(BRUNSWICK LA 8742)

- On the Sentimental Side ● My Heart is Taking Lessons ● \*Medley ● School Days ● Sunbonnet Sue ● Jimmy Valentine ● If I Was a Millionaire ● This Is My Night to Dream ● \*\*An Apple for the Teacher ● Still the Bluebird Sings ● A Man and his Dream ● Go Fly A Kite

What a wonderful feast of the best by Bing. And, for the older folks, won't the memories come crowding when they say, for example, "I remember 'Pocketful of Dreams'. I first heard it when . . ."



## A "JAZZ AT THE FLAMINGO" SESSION

The Tony Kinsey Quintet  
(DECCA LK 4207)

- Hi-ya ● Fishin' The Blues ● The Mystery Of The "Marie Celeste" ● I'm Beginning To See The Light ● Pict's Lament ● Just Goofer
- A zestful, infectious offering for jazz lovers—except, probably, the die-hard traditionalists.

# FOR THE NEW YEAR, FOR ALL TIME

## THE TRIO ODEMIRA

● Alma Coracao E Vida ● Historia De Un Amor; ● Ti Ana Majora; ● Caminhemos; ● Lisboa Antigua; ● Malaguena; ● Nao E Tarde Neme Cedo; ● Coracao, Coracao (Columbia 33 CS 22 10in.)

A DELIGHTFUL selection of Latin ballads sung and played by three young Portuguese artists (Carlos, Ribeiro and Julio), who are leading attractions in their own land.

There's nothing brash or frenzied about this album.

Just three melodious voices and three expertly-played guitars blending in perfect harmony to produce a mellow, relaxed, exotic mixture of romantic songs.

The three boys have bongos to help them out on some tracks, but they weren't really needed. The phrasing and timing of each song are epitomes of polished precision which only true musicians can achieve.

You'll recognise some of the melodies. "Historia De Un Amor" is a certain standard for the Latin catalogues of evergreens. "Lisboa Antigua" is already familiar to us as "In Old Lisbon," "Malaguena" (not the one by Lecuona) is also known over here, and part of "Coracao, Coracao" bears close resemblance to the tune we know as "Maria Dolores."

The words are Portuguese or Spanish, but that needn't deter you. The Trio Odemira are such consummate performers that language is no barrier to appreciating their quiet skill and artistry. I like this album very much indeed; I think you will, too. N.H.

thing or two about her craft. She makes a more than useful job of these standards, with expert orchestral aid from Billy May.

## OO LA! CHA CHA

Raoul Zequeiro and his Combo (FELSTED PDL 85035)

● Como se baila ● Rollin' and Rockin' the Cha Cha Cha ● Agua pa' mi ● Decepcion ● Baila Con Pancho ● Sabrososa ● Los marcanos ● Picando de vicio ● Lupita baila mi cha cha cha ● Yuca ● Para machito y Kenton ● Solo la se yo ● Totfri mundachi ● Todos ballan ● Mambo Palace Hotel

One for Latin-American specialists to argue about, and for the general public to listen to with enjoyment if they feel like a little change of rhythm.



## YOU AND I AND THE MUSIC

Joseph Gershenson and his Orchestra (BRUNSWICK LAT 8196)

● The Night Is Young and You're So Beautiful ● I Only Have Eyes For You ● Dancing in the Dark ● You Go To My Head ● That Old Feeling ● Temptation

● All the Things You Are ● Body and Soul ● The Nearness of You ● Take Me In Your Arms ● The Way You Look Tonight ● Something To Remember You By

Someone certainly knew how to pick songs when this longplay was being planned. Lush, lyrical listening.



## UNDER WESTERN SKIES

Rex Allen (Vocal) with Victor Young and his Singing Strings (BRUNSWICK LAT 8198)

● The Trail of the Lonesome Pine ● Nothin' To Do ● The Last Round-Up ● The Last Frontier ● Rocky Mountain Lullaby ● Ole Faithful ● Twilight on the Trail ● The Railroad Corral ● I'm A Young Cowboy ● At the Rainbow's End ● Sky Boss ● Too Lee Roll Um

Sturdy vocal work by Allen, with the orchestral backing a fine example of the art of the late Victor Young.



## FRESH AND FANCY FREE

The Andrews Sisters (12 in. CAPITOL LCT 6145)

● The Song Is You ● You Do Something To Me ● Comes Love ● Nevertheless ● With Every Breath I Take ● Of Thee I Sing ● Hooray For Love ● My Romance ● Tea for Two ● I Could Write A Book ● Let There Be Love ● Younger Than Springtime

With the celebrated orchestral help of Billy May, the long-famed Sisters present a parade of quality standards they've never put on wax before.

## EZIO PINZA

Sings Verdi and Mozart Arias. (RCA RB-16040).

Verdi: Don Carlos—Ella giammai m'amo/Domiro sol nel manto mio regal. Simon Boccanegra — A tel'estremo addio/Il lacerato spirito. Ernani—Che mai vaggio/Infelice, e tu credevi. Nabucco — Vieni, o Lavita/Tu sul labbro de' Veggenti. I Vespri Siciliani—O Patria/O tu, Palermo.

Mozart: Don Giovanni—Madamina and dech vieni alla finestra and Finch'han dal vino. Le Nozze Di Figaro—Non piu andrai and Se vuol ballare. The Magic Flute—Possenti Numi and

and the showstopping song in which Leporello slyly reels off the list of conquests his master, Don Giovanni, has made over the last couple of debauched years.

This isn't just a recital—it's a re-creation of great moments in the opera house itself.



## RIGOLETTO

(RCA RB-16031/2).

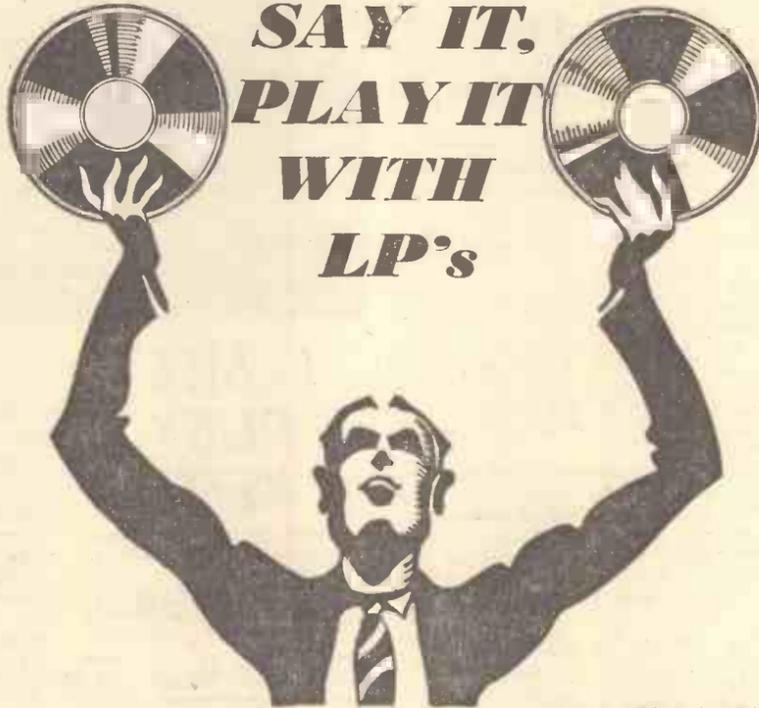
Duke of Mantua, Jussi Bjoerling (tenor); Rigoletto, Robert Merrill (baritone); Gilda, Roberta Peters (soprano); Sparafucile, Giorgio Tozzi (bass);

## VIENNA

Morning papers (Johann Strauss, Jr.); Emperor Waltz (Johann Strauss, Jr.); On the Beautiful Blue Danube (Johann Strauss Jr.); Invitation to the Dance (Weber); Village Swallows (Josef Strauss); Waltzes from "Der Rosenkavalier" (Richard Strauss). Reiner conducting The Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

A gay profusion of waltzes, with all the throbbing majesty and full-bodied lilt which the Chicago Symphony Orchestra brings them.

# SAY IT, PLAY IT WITH LP's



Qui sdegno non s'accende, with RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus; conductors: Erich Leinsdorf and Alfred Wallenstein.

Many popular disc fans, film-goers and (across the Atlantic) playgoers knew Ezio Pinza as a tuneful, romantic bass, who (for example) sang "Some Enchanted Evening" to Mary Martin on stage, and "You Belong To My Heart" to Lana Turner on screen.

Yet, of course, Pinza was an operatic bass first and foremost—probably the best since Chaliapin. For three or four decades, till his death last year, he established a world-wide reputation for singing both Mozart and Italian operas.

His singing on this disc is not far short of his formidable best, and should be heard by all admirers of fine bass performance.

This disc will bring back heart-warming memories to the older generation who heard Pinza at Covent Garden—and it will show the younger opera fans something of the superb style that distinguished the singing of thirty years ago. Pinza was an old man when he recorded this fine selection of popular arias—but what richness there is still in his warm, virile voice.

Note the lively characterisation he puts across in the arias from "Don Giovanni"—the bubbling Drinking Song, the Serenade with its exquisitely shaped melody,

Maddalena, Anna Maria Rota (contralto); Giovanna, Silvana Celli (mezzo-soprano); Count Monterone, Vittorio Tattolli (baritone); Marullo, Arturo la Porta (baritone); Borsa, Tomasso Frascati (tenor); Count Ceprano, Leonardo Monreale (bass); Countess Caprano, Lidia Grandi (soprano); Page, Santa Chissari (soprano); Usher, Andrea Mineo (baritone); with the Rome Opera House Orchestra & Chorus, conducted by Jonel Perlea.

Yes, it's another "Rigoletto"—giving you five full versions to choose from. Jussi Bjoerling is a rich-voiced, stylish Duke and he throws off a lively "La Donna è Mobile." But I've heard more gold in his tone on previous recordings.

Roberta Peters brings us an honoured Gilda with a voice of magnificent suppleness.

Robert Merrill, a stalwart of the Metropolitan Opera, New York, gives a fine study as the ill-fated Rigoletto himself.

There is a spine-chilling Sparafucile in Giorgio Tozzi and a voluptuous-sounding Maddalena in Anna Maria Rota.

Orchestral playing is lively and well-balanced, and the engineers have made a good job of the recording.

This is not the best of recent versions of "Rigoletto," but at half the price of the Italian recording on Cetra and nearly a couple of pounds less than the Callos—di Stefano-Gobbi version on Columbia, it is excellent value for money.

## BING WITH A BEAT

(RCA RD-27032).

● Let a Smile be Your Umbrella ● I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter ● Along the Way to Waikiki ● Exactly Like You ● Dream a Little Dream of Me ● Last Night on the Back Porch ● Some Sunny Day ● Whispering ● Tell Me ● Mack the Knife ● Down Among the Sheltering Palms ● Mama Loves Papa.

BING CROSBY with BOB SCOBAY'S Jazz Band.

This is definitely Mr. Crosby in a huslin' mood and very nice the effect is, too. Just the disc to put on any festive morning to clear the head in the pleasantest possible manner.



## CANADIAN SUNSET

EDDIE HEYWOOD with Rhythm Accompaniment

● With Orchestral Accompaniment. (RCA RD-27041)

● Lies\* ● I'm Saving Myself For You ● Subway Serenade ● Rendezvous For Two\* ● Blues in a Happy Mood ● Heywood's Beguine\* ● Canadian Sunset ● All About You ● Now You're Mine\* ● Rain ● Dearest Darling\* ● Time to go Home.

Eddie Heywood proves with this disc that he knows how to spin out entertainment in the quickest, slickest style. You could argue a long time about the best tracks on this LP, but our vote goes to "Rain" and "Blues in a Happy Mood."



## FAMILY SING-SONG

(RCA RD-27049)

● I Want a Girl ● Let Me Call You Sweetheart ● Home on the Range ● Till We Meet Again ● Whiffenpoof Song ● You Are My Sunshine ● There's a Long, Long Trail ● The Sidewalks of New York ● Girl of My Dreams ● Medley: Daisy Bell/Wait the Sun Shines, Nellie/The Band Played On ● Goodnight Sweetheart ● Three O'Clock in the Morning.

No argument here—you just loosen your tie, raise your glass—and SING!



## ELVIS' CHRISTMAS ALBUM

ELVIS PRESLEY with THE JORDANAIRE (RCA RD-27052).

● Santa Claus is Back in Town ● White Christmas ● Here Comes Santa Claus ● I'll Be Home for Christmas ● Blue Christmas ● Santa Brings My Baby Back ● O Little Town of Bethlehem ● Silent Night, Holy Night ● Peace in the Valley ● I Believe ● Take My Hand, Precious Lord.

This all depends so much on whether you're one who dotes on Mr. Presley, we'll just give you the tunes, and leave you to your particular choice.



## THE MUSIC OF TURANDOT

(Puccini). (LONDON HAR 2068).

The Rome Symphony Orchestra, conducted by DOMENICO SAVINO.

## THE MUSIC OF LA FORZA DEL DESTINO

(Verdi). (LONDON HAR 2069).

The Rome Symphony Orchestra, conducted by DOMENICO SAVINO

## THE MUSIC OF PAGLIACCI

THE MUSIC OF ANDREA CHENIER (Giordano). (LONDON HAR 2070).

The Rome Symphony Orchestra, conducted by DOMENICO SAVINO.

## THE MUSIC OF CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

(Mascagni). The Rome Symphony Orchestra, conducted by DOMENICO SAVINO (LONDON HAR 2067).

Excellently devised and recorded series for those wanting a parade of the very best in opera music. Musicianship of the Rome Symphony Orchestra is absolutely first-class.



## MUSIC OF THE MASTERS

ROGER WILLIAMS Piano.

(LONDON HAR 2059). ● Rustle of Spring (singing) ● Clair de Lune and The Maid With the Flaxen Hair (Debussy) ● Malaguena (Lecuona) ● Ritual Fire Dance (Falla) ● The Flight of the Bumble Bee (Rimsky-Korsakov) ● Liebestraum No. 3 and Etude de Concert in D Flat, No. 3 (Liszt) ● Etude in A Flat, Op. 25, No. 1 and Etude in C Minor, Op. 10, No. 12 (Chopin) ● Prelude in C Sharp Minor, Op. 3, No. 2 (Rachmaninov) ● Etude in F (Mozkowski).



## SONGS OF THE FABULOUS FIFTIES (Vol. 1).

ROGER WILLIAMS (piano).

(LONDON HAR 2057). ● Blue Tango ● Vaya con dios ● High Noon ● High Noon ● Too Young ● Because of You ● The Moulin Rouge Theme ● Mister Sandman ● Wish You Were Here ● Mona Lisa ● Goodnight Irene ● Secret Love ● Love is a Many-Splendored Thing.

## SONGS OF THE FABULOUS FIFTIES (Vol. 2).

ROGER WILLIAMS Piano.

(LONDON HAR 2058). ● Moon Glow ● Theme from 'Picnic' ● Unchained ● Hey There ● April in Melody ● Tennessee Waltz ● Portugal ● My Heart Cries for You ● True Love ● La vie en Rose ● Three Coins in the Fountain ● Young at Heart ● I Believe ● Autumn Leaves.

Mr. Williams is a gifted, exceedingly versatile pianist, and these three long-plays are a great credit to him. While, naturally, he has fullest scope in the masterpieces on the first record, those who prefer the simple, everyday melodies will find plenty of enchantment in his treatment of "pop" tunes of the nineteen fifties.

## FOUR FRESHMEN AND FIVE SAXES

(12 in. CAPITOL T844)

● Liza ● You've Got Me Cryin' Again ● This Can't Be Love ● The Very Thought of You ● East of the Sun ● I May Be Wrong ● There's No One But You ● Sometimes I'm Happy ● For All We Know ● Lullaby in Rhythm ● This Love of Mine ● I Get Along Without You Very Well

Third in the "Four Freshmen with Five . . ." series (first was trumpets, second trombones). These past-masters at close harmony maintain their tradition for immaculate, musicianly vocal blending. Pete Rugolo earns credit for high-class arranging and conducting.

## CRAZY IN LOVE

Trudy Richards (12 in. CAPITOL T838)

● As Long As I Live ● You Brought A New Kind of Love To Me ● A Wonderful Guy ● Let's Do It ● What Is There To Say? ● It's Love ● The Lady's In Love With You ● Do It Again ● Love Me ● All Of You ● There's Danger In Your Eyes ● Cherle ● Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man

Trudy Richards, without reaching the topmost bracket, is none the less a vocal performer who knows a

# THEY'RE EVEN MORE FABULOUS THAN EVER

## NEW YORK—LAS VEGAS—

**FAMOUS AGENT'S  
LATEST U.S.A. TOUR  
BRINGS HIM INTO  
CONTACT WITH  
MORE TOP SHOW  
BUSINESS FOLK**

### HOLLYWOOD

nels, transmitting from six in the morning around to three the next morning — nearly twenty-one hours of continuous TV.

The Ed Sullivan show is still right at the top. This personality has continually booked British artistes, I am glad to say. Some while ago I arranged for Norman Wisdom to appear on his programme. He scored a major hit.

#### Sullivan Likes Norman Wisdom

ED SULLIVAN HAS CONTINUALLY kindly asked for Norman again, but unfortunately it just has not been possible.

Watching this particular programme one Sunday, I saw to my surprise and pleasure, that brilliant ventriloquist Arthur Worsley come on screen. He acquitted himself extremely well. He localised his act by bringing in American place-names during his difficult alphabet routine at the end of his act.

I have seen many Ed Sullivan programmes and am confident there are still many British artistes that could do really well in it: Frankie Vaughan, Harry Worth, Chic Murray, etc.

There are so many big American TV shows with personalities at the head, plus the panel shows, the "Horror" films, the highly popular Westerns for Adults, the diversity is unbelievable.

#### Murder Heaped Upon Murder

ONE NIGHT (or should I say early morning?) I eventually turned into bed after the late later T.V. show; it happened to be a horror film. In the morning I was having my breakfast in the Hotel Drug Store, when two masked men entered the Hotel Barber Shop and shot dead Albert Anastasia, while he was having a shave. Apparently he has been, in his day, associated with Murder Incorporated. SO THERE YOU ARE, MURDERS ON THE T.V. DURING THE NIGHT IN NEW YORK—REAL ONES IN THE MORNING!

#### This Sure Is A Showplace

NO VISIT TO NEW YORK can surely be complete without a visit to the enormous Radio City Music Hall, aptly described as the showplace of the nation.

They are currently screening "Les Girls" coupled with a spectacular stage offering entitled "Confetti", which is really excellent. Of course, it is the famous troupe of girls—The Rockets—that gain heavy applause. However (dare I mention?) a big-screen T.V. set operates in the lounge of the Radio City Music Hall.

#### Hollywood—Hello Again!

AND SO TO HOLLYWOOD, for it is always a great pleasure, come what may in show business, to call upon Mr. and Mrs. Stan Laurel, Mrs. Zeichick (Isidore Green's sister-in-law) and Ivy Wilson the columnist.

Stan Laurel has moved from his Hollywood home to a beautiful apartment right by the sea at Malibu Beach. Incidentally—and Stan did not know it

By **BILLY MARSH** of the Bernard Delfont Organisation

—but Bob Williams (remember Bob with his wonderful dog act at the Palladium in one of the Norman Wisdom shows?) lives in the same road, only a few minutes away.

I am happy to tell all Stan and his wife Eda's friends that they are both in pretty good health and it is one of their pleasures to receive letters from their friends in England and to receive the weekly issue of the RECORD MIRROR.

Stan Laurel is very appreciative of the wonderful tribute written by Charlie Chester to the memory of his famous partner Oliver Hardy. A very nice copy of this tribute has been sent to Stan and he treasures it very much.

Whilst on the subject of tributes, I noticed an appreciation accorded to Laurel and Hardy after they had been the subjects of "This Is Your Life" in 1954 and which Bernard Delfont (who had presented several tours of Laurel and Hardy in England) took part in. I thought these words so wonderful, I wrote them down:

#### Laurel and Hardy by Leo McCurey

- "Throughout our whole United States
- "You're recognised as all-time greats
- "And far from home, on foreign shores
- "You've been goodwill ambassadors.
- "You've done more good in derby hats
- "Than high hats worn by diplomats.
- "If we had more such men of mirth
- "We might one day have peace on earth.

And still today, Laurel and Hardy films on American TV are rated in the top three programmes for the kids; they are watched and loved by the younger generation.

Ivy Wilson is truly the friend of the British performer. Just ask Norman Wisdom, Dorothy Squires, Derek Roy, David Hughes, etc. There is no nicer person in Hollywood. She is responsible for the "Hollywood Annual", the best seller published each year. Ivy knows everyone in the film industry.

It is interesting that today very few of the big film companies are making major films in Hollywood. However, I did visit Columbia Pictures and their Mr. Levy very kindly showed me around their mammoth studios. A T.V. film was being made, starring Robert Young in "Bachelor Father", a highly successful series. I was told that 350 T.V. films a year are made in the Columbia Studios alone.



### I MEET RUBY, KEITH

I was lucky enough, during my wait in New York, for a plane to take me off to Las Vegas, to meet up with my colleague KEITH DEVON and RUBY MURRAY at the Park Sheraton Hotel (writes BILLY MARSH, seen centre in picture). It was only a brief meeting—I had to board the plane in a matter of minutes, Keith and Ruby had to be in the TV studios for Ruby's rehearsal.

### Red Skelton On Colour TV

I VISITED the C.B.S. Television Studios to see a show transmitted in colour as well as the usual black and white. It was a comedy half-hour starring Red Skelton. Red was in grand form with topical material and a burlesque sketch based on a famous thriller and in this he was assisted by Peter Lorre.

It has always been a disappointment that each time I have visited California, that there has been no performance at the Hollywood Bowl. It has an enormous capacity; in fact, I can well imagine that it has the biggest seating capacity of any theatre in the world. It is set in natural surroundings and is, of course, completely in the open air.

I saw Jimmy Durante make his very first appearance in a Los Angeles theatre-restaurant when he opened a two-week engagement at Frank Sennes' Moulin Rouge. As always, he was a big success. After the show I had a chat with Jimmy who sends his best wishes to friends in England. The last time I met Jimmy was in Norman Wisdom's dressing room at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London. Jimmy, like so many stars, remembers with pride the happy weeks he had at the Palladium in variety for Mr. Val Parnell. No theatre in the world compares with the Palladium, said Jimmy.

I just did not have time to see Buster Keaton in "Merlin of the Movies" at the Hungerford Theatre, but I believe Buster is coming to England in the New Year to make a film and there's a slight possibility he might even tour here with "Merlin". He's sure a great comedian.

As I mentioned early on, three people I consider a "must" when visiting Hollywood, I have mentioned Stan Laurel and Ivy Wilson. I have left to last, but by no means least, Mrs. Harry Zeichick. She is the sister-in-law of Isidore Green, worthy editor of the RECORD MIRROR, and Mrs. Zeichick goes out of her way to make any visitor to her part of she would feel at home.

### So To Amazing Las Vegas

AND SO ON TO LAS VEGAS. That overworked word "fabulous" is the perfect description for this amazing place in the desert of Nevada. Wonderful hotels and gaming rooms' managements vie to secure the world's greatest entertainers.

Thus we find the frenetic Johnnie Ray heading the show at Wilbur Clark's "Desert Inn". Always well received at this venue, Johnnie still holds a record established two years ago. Remember the Wazzan Troupe, whirlwind acrobats? They were on the supporting programme.

At the Dunes, appearing in the room designed by Robert Nesbitt, famous producer of current London shows, was "Minsky's Follies", prominently billed as "For Adults Only" and featuring Tempest (40-23-34) Storm in daring dances.

At the El Rancho, Eartha Kitt was purring out songs with a voice that modulated from caressing tones to furious, exploding sounds. On the same show was that great storyteller Myron Cohen

I stayed at the wonderful Sahara Hotel, set amid twenty acres of velvet lawns. Stan Irwin is the director of entertainment. In his career he has been a comedian and dancer and understands just what his customers desire.

### Caused A Sensation

IT WAS STAN IRWIN who presented Marlene Dietrich in her act that caused a sensation throughout the world.

The attractions now were the celebrated dance entertainers Marge and Gower Champion, who presented a great act, and Jean Carroll, a gifted comedienne whom you will recall not so long ago at the Palladium.

I could not possibly detail in length all the shows I saw in Las Vegas. Rudy Vallee at the San Souci, "Rhythm on Ice" at the El Cortez, Carnival of Girls with theatreland's favourite Hank Henry at the Silver Slipper; Pearl Bailey and the Inkspots at

the Flamingo; the Art Mooney show at the Royal Nevada; Joaquin Garay and Ilona Adams (who was in Bernard Delfont's last Folies show at the Prince of Wales Theatre) at the Showboat.

However, mention must be made of the wonderful show presented by Monte Proser at the latest hotel on the strip, The Tropicana. At this hotel "You Gotta Be In Love" is a musical co-starring Celeste Holm and Dick Shawn (Celeste having taken over from Vivian Blaine).

Show features an original musical score of ten tunes composed by Gordon Jenkins. Celeste Holm is as lovely as she is talented and comedian Dick Shawn (remember his success at the Palladium?) comes into his own as a terrific cabaret star and his new act shows him at his very best.

### Sammy Was Sensational

AT THE SANDS HOTEL I was at the opening night of Sammy Davis, Jr. He caused a sensational hit. Believe me, Sammy Davis will repeat this success when he comes to London.

He not only sings in his own style, imitates the styles of others in fantastically-amazing impressions, but can Sammy dance!

I prophesy his dancing alone will stop the show at any place of entertainment anywhere in the world.

There are rumours Sammy will appear in London in 1958. When you see his name billed, go and book your seat.

Incidentally, the act is billed as the Will Mastin Trio starring Sammy Davis Jr., the other members being his father and uncle.

Unfortunately his father was ill during this particular engagement and could not appear.

Great musical acts entertain in the bar lounges from six o'clock in the evening to six in the morning.

It would take hours for me to tell you all about the fantastic amount of entertainment that goes on in Las Vegas—and I must stop somewhere!

(Continued on Page 28)

### Briton Goes Brooklyn

REGINALD GARDNER plays the rôle of the Britisher who is turned into a Brooklynite; NANCY WALKER is the Brooklyn flower vendor; and even ZASU PITTS deserts films to make her first appearance on record. The orchestrations of BILLY MAY are a joy to listen to.

I just could NOT resist buying "Got a Date with an Angel". This famous tune of yesteryear, recorded by Billy Williams, can easily climb the ladder of today's hits. Why doesn't some recording company get our own Bobby Howes to record it all over again, this time with the big 1957 treatment? After all, it has always been associated with him.

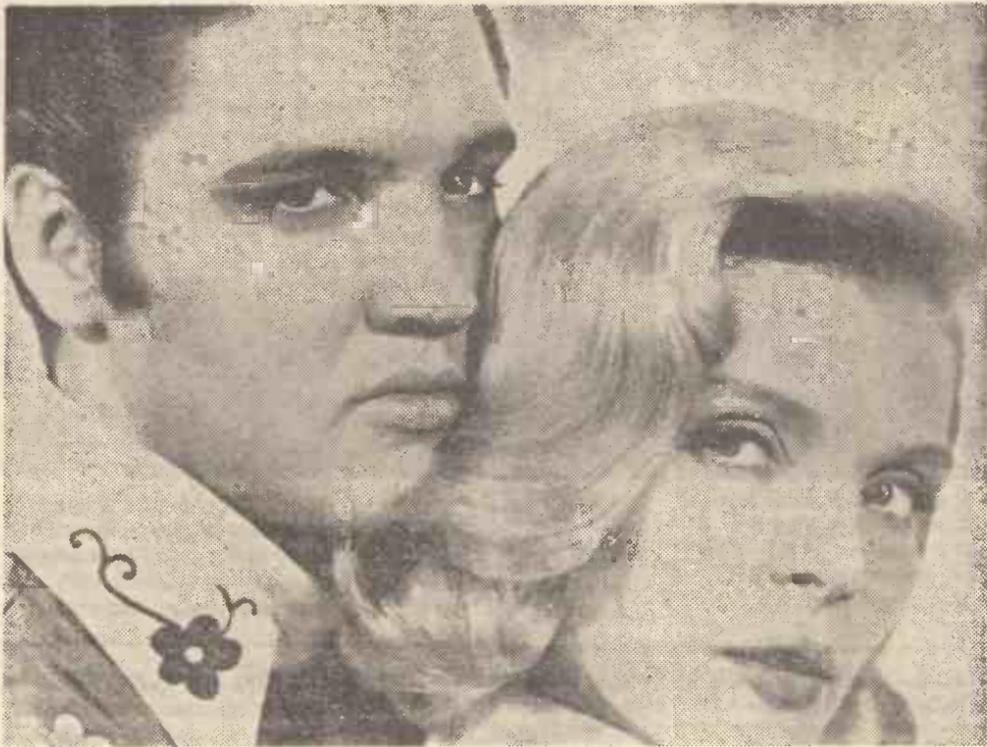
I always stay at the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York. It seems to be the favourite hotel for visiting Britishers from show business. There is a TV in every room. There are so many chan-

**THIS WAS FILMLAND IN 1957**

**OCTOBER WAS THE BIG MONTH**

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWENTY**

**ELVIS — ACTOR, TOO**



ELVIS PRESLEY showed that he could act, too, in the film he made for Paramount, "Loving You". Here he is with LIZBETH SCOTT, who co-starred with him; the film did great business... Presley's next for MGM, "Jailhouse Rock", will be released early in 1958.

Top comedy, with literally a laugh a line, was "Operation Mad Bull", with Ernie Kovacs, a leading TV personality in the States, a veritable riot.

Life in the Army was never like this, with the biggest rackets being pulled to stage a ball where enlisted men could "frat" with nurses—strictly taboo according to regulations. Jack Lemmon and Mickey Rooney only just lost top honours to Kovacs.

Back to Britain for Anna Neagle's "No Time For Tears," a weepie set in a hospital staffed by Miss Neagle, Flora Robson, Anthony Quayle, very much up-and-coming Sylvia Syms and an endearing bunch of kids.

**SPECIAL MENTION**

A special mention here among the big 'uns for "Time Lock", a modest featurette of a kid locked in a bank safe.

In the best "Shane" tradition, "Gunfight at the O.K. Corral" was just great with Burt Lancaster as Wyatt Earp and Kirk Douglas as a killer. The scenery of Tombstone, Arizona, spattered with blood, looked dandy in colour. And Frankie Laine, letting rip over the credits, sang the title number.

Another Western which earned above-average marks was "Night Passage", with James Stewart, Audie Murphy and Dan Durycia blazing it out with gusto. Believe it or not, Stewart actually sang!

Method-master Rod Steiger got better treatment from British Studios than he usually does in Hollywood for "Across the Bridge". He played a tycoon running from the law and hunted to Mexico where—in a bitter climax—his only pal was a dog. This was a Graham Greene story.

**IT HAUNTS ME!**

The performance of Heather Sears as the blind, deaf and dumb Irish orphan in "The Story of Bather Costello" still haunts me.

**IT WAS MASTERFUL.**

Drastic cutting could have helped "Love in the Afternoon", but it still had a lot of fine stuff for adults. Billy Wilder directed the story of Gary Cooper, notorious Romeo of world repute, and Audrey Hepburn, a little innocent playing a woman of the world.

The tunes we'd heard before. Notably oldies "Fascination" and "C'est Si Bon". Quite a crop of laughs.

The old colour problem cropped up in the much publicised "Island in the Sun", the beauty of which was restricted entirely to its location in the West Indies.

Harry Belafonte wrote and sang the theme—a number which has brought him immense personal success. But his acting was less successful.

What a cast for this disappointing yarn—James Mason, Joan Fontaine, Dorothy Dandridge and Joan Collins.

**BEST WESTERN**

The Western of the year was, by a whisker, "3.10 to Yuma", with Van Heflin and Glenn Ford. Weak, peace-loving Heflin agrees, for the 200 bucks he needs to save his farm from drought, to escort the villain Ford on to the 3.10 train to Yuma for trial.

A truly stupendous scene in a hotel room where the nervous farmer is tempted by the gang leader to let him go... a highlight of the whole year.

"Band of Angels" had "King" Clark Gable as an ex-slave runner, now Louisiana gentleman, who clashed in more ways than one with Yvonne de Carlo, as a half-caste.

Another partially unsuccessful British musical shot—"After the Ball". This was the story of music hall star Vesta Tilley. Pat Kirkwood put over the oldies like "Algy" and "After the Ball" well enough, but it was all on the dull side.

**IT WAS NASTY**

Very nasty, but very gripping, was "End as a Man", set in a U.S. military academy peopled entirely by Method School actors! Ben Gazzara, as a guy spreading evil wherever he goes, was surely the nastiest character of the year.

Almost everyone in the film had a kink or was just plain

rotten. What a strange outlook for the Yank army.

More Method, and nearly as much madness, in "A Face in the Crowd," director Elia Kazan's blistering crack at television heroes. Hero (?) is Lonesome Rhodes (Andy Griffith), a hill-billy singer whose country-boy personality makes him an idol.

Away from the TV cameras, he was a real stinker—a maniac who reckoned he could corrupt his millions of fans.

"Action of the Tiger" was another corny thriller with Martine Carol, Van Johnson and, best of the three, Herbert Lom.

Biographies were in short supply but James Cagney impressed as Lon Chaney, famous star of the silent film days, in "Man of a Thousand Faces." This was full of memories for the older fans.

Horror-note for the month: Forrest Tucker and Peter Cushing embarrassingly dragged into a search for "The Abominable Snowman."

**SOMBRE PIECE**

Also out this month was "The Flesh is Weak," a sombre piece that producer Raymond Stross said "they" dared him not to make.

"They" were vice gang leaders, who were shown up for the shabby, evil mob they are in this X-certificate story of the seamy side.

Best of the month: In an extra-busy four weeks, Ben Gazzara's "End As a Man."

★ ★ ★

**LAY OFF IT Mr. Chaplin**

Much bally-hood in production stages was "St. Joan," sequel to Otto Preminger's world search for an unspoiled lass to play the title rôle.

Finally, he settled for Jean Seberg, a youngster from the mid-West States.

Somehow, the film didn't click anywhere. It was a costly job, had fine acting from Seberg, Richard Widmark, etc., but the public gave it the thumbs down sign. A pity.

**A DISAPPOINTMENT**

Charles Chaplin pushed out his latest, "A King in New York". Another disappointment. Too much crusading from the embittered little chap and not enough pure comedy. And the way he used his young son Michael to mouth anti-American cracks seemed a double pity.

Chaplin, all the world knows, is a genius. Judge him as such—and the second-rate just isn't acceptable.

Now for a "golden girl"—Kim

Novak. In "Jeanne Eagles," she had to play the title role, that of an actress who fairly whizzed across Broadway during the thirties.

It all seemed a bit beyond Kim. She never looked a great actress—either as herself or as the subject portrayed. A good try, though—and we'll see much more of the lovely lass.

A Hammond Innes novel, "Campbell's Kingdom" produced another goodie for the Rank stable—and Dirk Bogarde. Busy Bogarde played a young Briton, with only six months to live, who goes to Canada to take over property left by his grandfather.

**M-M-MORE JAYNE**

Among those he meets are villainous Stanley Baker—he had a busy 1957, too—and James Robertson Justice and Michael Craig.

M-m-more of Miss Mansfield. Her sizzling performance in "Oh! For a Man" even surpassed her earlier "Girl Who Couldn't..." triumph.

Again, she took the mickey out of the bosomy film queen type. It was a second hit, too, for Tony Randall, the advertising agent who got tied up with Jayne in a publicity campaign.

Groucho Marx popped in for a brief spot at the end and Georgia Carr did a good vocal job on "You Got It Made." Another one for the memory box.

I couldn't really see how they planned to get a lot of laughs out of the last month of a girl's pregnancy, but they managed it in "Full of Life". Judy Holliday, infatigating, falls through a rotted floor at home.

Husband Richard Conte, desperately short of loot, sends for his father "Salvatore Baccaloni," a delightful old boy who dominates the home until his grandson is born.

**REMEMBER IT?**

"An Affair to Remember"—in fact, a film to remember—paired Deborah Kerr and Cary Grant, which is pretty good pairing in the parts previously played on screen by Charles Boyer and Irene Dunne.

A couple meet on an Atlantic cruise, fall hopelessly in love—but agree to wait six months before meeting on the Empire State Building. Only one turns up...

**POINT OF INTEREST TO ME IS WHETHER HORROR-MAN JACK PALANCE, WILL EVER PLAY A PART IN WHICH HE DOESN'T APPEAR SIMPLY AS JACK PALANCE.**

In the gaol-break story "House of Numbers," he plays a dual rôle—a convict hankering for freedom and the con's homely but mis-

guided brother. Looked just like two Jack Palances to me.

Yakity-yakity-yak—that's my memory of "The Seventh Sin", a melodramatic Maugham story set in Hong Kong. An aura of tragedy hung all over it, with Eleanor Parker leaving her husband for boy-friend Jean Pierre Aumont. Part of the tragedy was the sluggish, over-pompous performance of Bill Travers as the husband.

Jerry Lewis also proved the split with Dean Martin was a good thing, for he romped his way through "The Delicate Delinquent" very happily. Pathos in parts, but mainly crazy comedy of the slapstick type.

**NEEDS A BREAK**

When are they going to do right by Tony Wright? This blonde beef-cake lad is one of the hottest bets in British films, but even in "Seven Thunders", he had the worst lines, the worst opportunities.

This was a prisoner-of-war film, set in France, with Stephen Boyd and Wright the prisoners, James Robertson Justice as a mass mur-

derer, and Anna Gaylor as the girl Boyd loves. This girl Anna—YIPE! SHE'S A SMASHER.

Lorry drivers got a lot of screen space this month. "Hell Drivers" had Stanley Baker fighting out fiercely realistic scraps with Patrick McGeehan, and Peggy Cummins looking on. "The Long Haul," rather better, had Victor Mature fighting it out with Patrick Allen, Diana Dors looking on.

**HORROR-NOTE**

Horror-note: "The Vampire", no outer-space creature, but a good old-fashioned blood-sucker.

John Mills and Derek Farr were in "The Vicious Circle", a ponderous thriller which I found just went round and round in circles.

The R.A.F. played a big part in "High Flight," a flying-school story punctuated by some of the best aerial shots ever. Ray Milland was the C.O. and Kenneth Haigh his angry young pupil. Anthony Newley, a natural comic, stole the show.

Best of the month? The Mansfield-Randall teaming.

★ ★ ★  
**AND THEN—A great month**

**OCT.** TWO really big 'uns came out in October. Perhaps the better was "The Bridge on the River Kwai," beating "Pride and the Passion," Stanley Kramer's epic, on the acting strength.

"Bridge" had Jack Hawkins, Alec Guinness and William Holden. It lasted nearly three hours, thereby being too long for Royal Film honours, and gripped me tight for every minute.

It started leisurely, setting the scene in a Far Eastern jungle, at a Jap prisoner-of-war camp. The prisoners have to build a bridge, then blow it up. The climax is, for my money, the greatest in years.

**A POWER-HOUSE**

"Pride and the Passion", packing thousands of extras into the wide screen, showed how a Spanish patriot (Frank Sinatra) led a company of guerillas to the relief of a Napoleon-conquered city. Cary Grant and Sophia Loren complete a power-house triangle in this historic film occasion.

What a good month this was! The award-winning "Woman In a Dressing Gown" also appears to win fresh laurels for Yvonne Mitchell.

As realistic as the great "Marty", this was realism at working-class level. Story was of a wife who loves the love of her husband. She's



PAT BOONE made his first film, "Bernadine", this year. It did not have a West End showing, but it did very well on general release. Pat is now making another picture, this time with Shirley Jones, of "Carousel" and "Oklahoma" fame, as his leading lady.

a messy, untidy, incompetent wife—a nondescript who just can't see why her home is breaking up.

Anthony Quayle—another busy man this year—was the husband and Sylvia Syms the "other woman".

Another fine show was "Tea and Sympathy", a sensitive and moving version of Robert Anderson's much-banned stage play.

This made most of the other "mixed-up-kid" dramas look rubbishy. John Kerr, dubbed "sister-boy" by his American college mates, finds a haven of peace with his housemaster's wife (Deborah Kerr). In fact, she sacrifices her marriage for him.

**STRONG TEA, THIS**

More powerful stuff in "A Hatful of Rain", story of a former GI who becomes a drug addict. Not quite in the "Man With a Golden Arm" class, but horrifically acted and well-written. Another stage-play which made the transition successfully.

Comedy wasn't forgotten. "Lucky Jim," one of the hits of the year, had Ian Carmichael—current holder of the British comedy crown—as a hapless University lecturer who is involved in a series of hilarious episodes.

Well done, the Boulting Brothers who chalked up their hat-trick—"Private's Progress", "Brothers in Law" and "Jim".

**COLIN'S PICTURE**

Little Colin Petersen, a handful of trouble from Australia, put "The Scamp" in the five-star class. Son of a variety performer (Terence Morgan), he is taken in and looked after by Richard Attenborough and Dorothy Alison. AND ALL HELL IS LET LOOSE.

Colin's picture, all right—Dickie Attenborough gave up the fight early on.

I heard someone describing "The Little Hut". "Two men and a woman on a desert island. A lot of odd goings-on and they called the film after the girl... The Little Slut."

**NOT A BAD SUMMING-UP!** It was a weak sort of gag, not particularly well written—and only eye-catching when Ava Gardner lolled about in a chic Dior creation. The men in her busy life: Stewart Granger and David Niven.

Niven again in "My Man Godfrey," as a down-and-out picked up by socialite June Allyson and made butler to her family. This is a fate which shouldn't have happened to a down-and-out dog. The household is full of the wierdest wierdies, including Jessie Royce Landis who see pixies every morning!

**AN EYE-FULL**

A feast for the eyes: "The Bolshoi Ballet", full-length feature of a great dance spectacle.

Lady-killing commandant versus efficient sergeant on a US air base—that was the cobwebby theme of "No Sleep Till Dawn." I found it hard to keep sleep away around the half-way mark.

Despite a bath in asses' milk, Brigitte Bardot doesn't hold her own in "Nero's Weekend" in comparison with Gloria Swanson. La Swanson sizzled as Nero's mum—a lady whose son wishes her dead and doesn't mind how the object is achieved.

**"DON'T PUT VIPERS IN YOUR MOTHER'S BED", CHIDES MISS SWANSON.**

October also produced an absurd version of "Omar Khayyam," who was a poet, philosopher, mathematician and a bit of a lad with the girls. Cornel Wilde was Omar.

And "The One that Got Away" was the story of the only German pilot to escape from British imprisonment during World War II.

**SOLID SUPPORT**

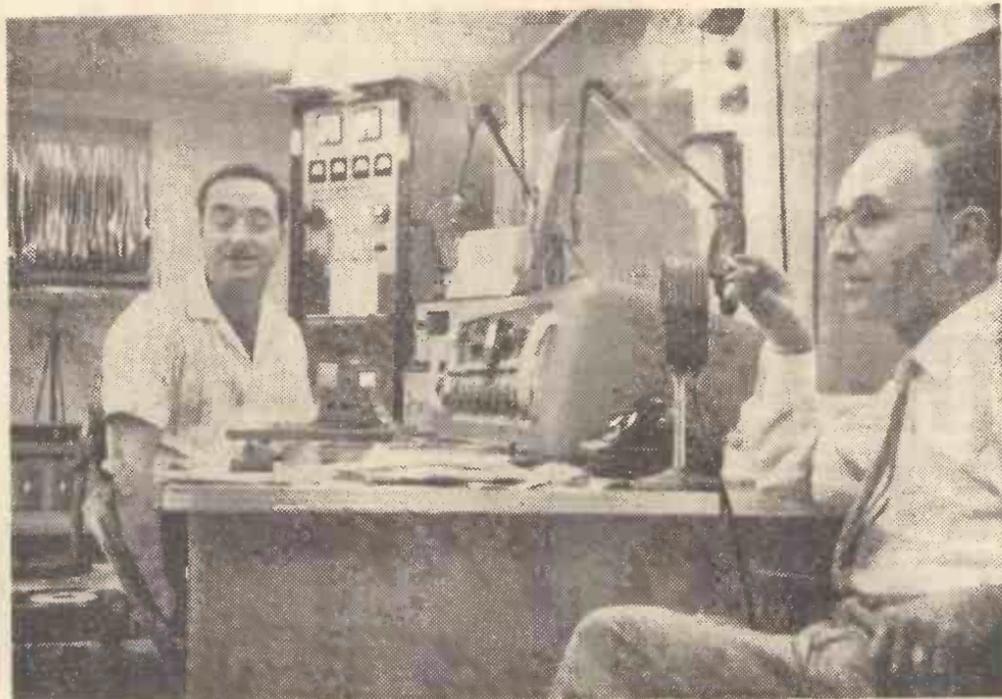
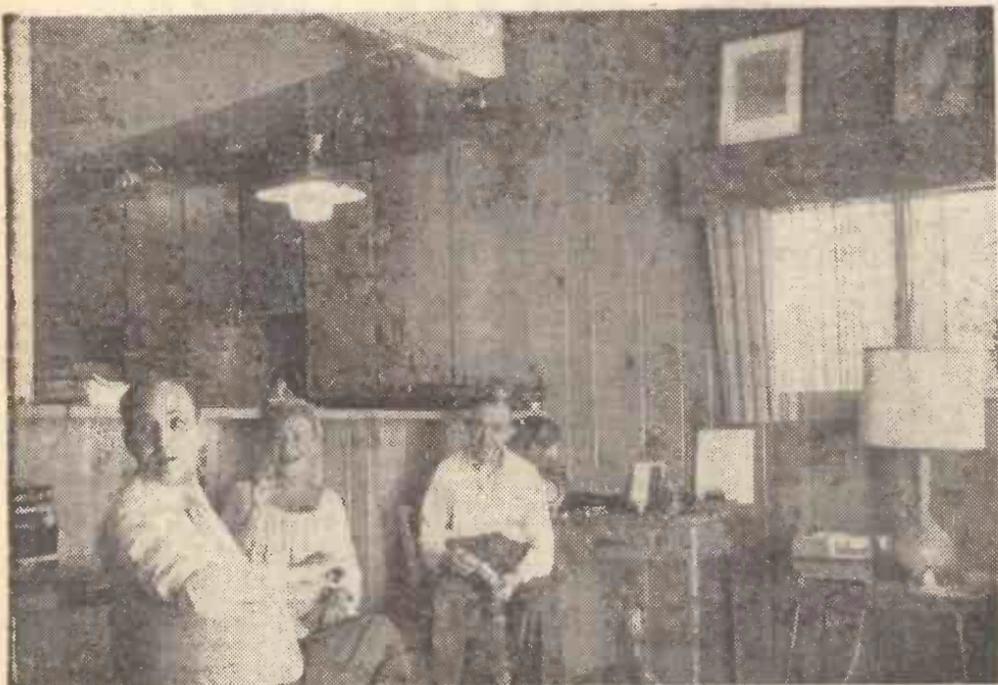
Only star was Hardy Kruger, the German favourite, but the unknowns gave solid support.

Two musical featurettes: "Harlem Rock 'n' Roll", with Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, "King" Cole, etc, and "Calypso Heat Wave", with creamy-voiced Johnny Desmond involved in the record business.

Best of the month: "Bridge on the River Kwai" as the film—and Yvonne Mitchell's brilliant "Woman In a Dressing Gown."

**Billy Marsh:**  
Cont. From P. 26

# KEEPING AN EYE ON LIKELY ACTS FOR ENGLAND



## AT HOME WITH THE LAURELS

It was grand renewing acquaintance with that great screen and stage comedian, STAN LAUREL (writes Billy Marsh). He and his wife EDA gave me a grand welcome and I spent a wonderful evening with them at their lovely home on Malibu Beach in Hollywood. Stan, however, is still badly shaken by the death of his partner Oliver Hardy.

## WITH ONE OF THE TOP D-JAY'S

Adds Billy Marsh: One of the most driving disc-jockeys I have ever met in the business is GUS GUIFFRE with whom I am seen in his Las Vegas studio. Gus is a powerful figure in the business and listeners rely a lot on what he recommends in the way of records—and what he doesn't.

## I Speak On L.V. Radio

THERE ARE SEVERAL radio stations in Las Vegas. The programme directors of two of these stations had already contacted me before I got to Las Vegas asking for recordings of certain British vocalists and orchestras. In due course, I had the

pleasure of taking part in several disc jockey programmes with Gus Guiffre of Radio KRAM and Sam Salerno of Radio KENO, and the latest recordings of Frankie Vaughan, the Beverley Sisters, Anne Shelton, Joan Regan, Winifred Atwell were featured.

Before I left California and returned to New York I had the pleasure to visit Walt Disney's Disneyland. An entirely new concept of family entertainment awaits anyone who goes to Disneyland. It is built on 60 acres

of former orange and walnut groves and is divided into four lands—Fantasy Land, Tomorrow Land, Frontier Land and Adventure Land, and more than 7,000,000 people have visited this truly magical kingdom.

So I returned to New York, once again to stay at the Park Sheraton Hotel. It seemed like being back in London again for there I met up with many personalities of British show business. My partner, Keith Devon, and his wife were in company with Ruby Murray. Keith had

brought Ruby to New York to take part in a TV show called "The Big Record" in which she was a very big success. Audrey Jeans too was there.

My friends, Joy Zandra and Manny Francois, who had been all over America, were also there and Manny took the pictures contained in this article and many more. Joy was very proudly showing all concerned in the hotel her new Polaroid camera which not only takes the picture, but develops it within one minute.

Before I close, may I say that during all this wonderful trip I was watching the shows with an eye for future artistes to be presented in Bernard Delfont presentations, and naturally was in the midst of negotiations with certain offices—and may the results next year show themselves! (On my previous trip to America I played my part in bringing back The Goofers).

The name of Bernard Delfont signifies the very best of show business entertainment, and it is because of this that he has representatives scouring the world.

The year 1958 will prove how effective these searches were! I can tell you that some most important negotiations have already been successfully completed and we should see some startling new entertainment in 1958!

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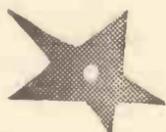
"SWING STREET"

"FAR EAST FANTASY"

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EMPIRE POOL

WEMBLEY

# WHEN YOU'RE A DISC JOCKEY ... YOU ENTERTAIN THE PUBLIC—

## NOT YOURSELF — SO ...

# IF IT'S PRESLEY THEY WANT, GIVE 'EM PRESLEY!

*"YOU'VE GOT A HOME, a record player and a lot of records, so you can play the records you like at home. But when you are on the air you play the ones the public likes."*

That is probably the finest piece of advice I have ever received since I did my first B.B.C. disc jockey show two years ago and started a career which has so far taken in a "Housewives Choice" session and a couple of series of "Just For The Record."

The advice—from an old and trusted friend—taught me a lesson.

*When you are given a disc jockey programme you are supposed to entertain the public, not yourself. If the public likes Elvis Presley and you don't, you still play Elvis Presley.*

After all, as my friend so rightly said, you can play the records you like at home.

their programmes.

*Even Isidore Green, you know, reads other newspapers and magazines!*

So please don't think the life of a disc jockey is all feet-up-on-the-mantelpiece leisure ... there isn't any room on the mantelpiece, which is stacked high with new records.

Listening ... sorting ... trying to find the hits of tomorrow ... trying to find a balanced programme so that there will be something for the rock 'n' roll fans (but you mustn't offend the anti-rock 'n' roll fans!) ... making a note of this record which doesn't fit into this week's programme but must get serious consideration for next week.

And when you have it all sorted out and are working out your script, the telephone rings. *Who is it?* Yes, right first time. It's one of the record company boys, and he's got news.

His company has just brought out "a wonderful new disc" which is going to sweep the world, and, yes, a copy of it is on the way round to your house at this very moment.

For the record business never stands still. There is always movement, always change, always interest.

So it's hard work, but it is entertaining work, fascinating work, and although we all complain when we are up to our eyes in it, just ask any of the disc jockeys to give it up and get a job in an office ... and then run!



### HOT FROM THE FACTORY!

THAT'S WHY having a disc jockey programme is not quite the simple job some people believe it is. On the contrary, to prepare a good disc show takes a tremendous amount of time. The actual half-hour or so you spend on the air represents only a tiny fraction of it.

Each day the postman staggers up to your front door with boxes of records. They are hot from the factory. They are the records which you, the members of the public who make or break an artiste, will buy or ignore in your local shop within the next few weeks.

These records are sent by the record companies and by the music publishers. The DJ's first introduction to a new record is through a hastily-despatched, one-sided review copy, which is followed by the finished article.

So when Tommy Steele makes a new disc, into my lap fall two one-sided review copies—the main side and the flip side, remember—from the DECCA boys. Then the music publishers will probably see to it that I receive a copy — two songs, two publishers, two discs.

Then when DECCA have their finished copies ready, my weary postman once again rings the front door bell and I stretch a hand over the top of the huge pile of record boxes and take delivery of ... yes, you've guessed it, the new Tommy Steele record!

Yes, it could mean five copies of the one disc, so is it any wonder that I read the recent "78s v. 45s" controversy in the RECORD MIRROR with the greatest of interest?

And is it any wonder that I made suitable uncomplimentary remarks to each letter I read which supported 78s?

**KENNETH WOLSTENHOLME, The Celebrated BBC TV Commentator, In This Especially Written Article For The RECORD MIRROR Annual, Reveals Some Intensely Interesting Sidelights Of His Career As A Disc Jockey, Introduces Many Famous Folk In The World Of Sport And Entertainment, And Hails Howard Keel As One Of The Finest Artistes He Has Ever Met.**

No, give me the 45s any time, thank you. They give my family and me a spot of room to live in our own house ... and they are less likely to be ruined when my 12-year-old daughter goes through them with a critical eye.

### NOT A RECORD IS WASTED

THESE DISCS ARE NOT WASTED, for every D.J. spends hours in solitary confinement listening to disc after disc.

It's only coffee and cigarettes which get you through such a session ... and you haven't to forget that disc show which you must listen to on the radio. For after all, it would be a poor disc jockey who didn't listen to other disc jockeys to find out what they are playing and how they are presenting

### SO WHY SHOULDN'T I LIKE MUSIC?

MANY PEOPLE, of course, have often asked me how I come to be mixed up in it. After all, sport is supposed to be my life.

When people say that to me I always feel like breaking the 78 I like least over their heads. Okay, so I write about sport, I appear on television covering sport, and I love sport. But that doesn't mean I don't like anything else.

*Why shouldn't I have an interest in music and records as well?*

I'll let you into a secret. I am one of those people who can't work if it is quiet. Perhaps it is that I love doing football commentaries surrounded by 100,000 wildly

cheering fans.

I don't know. But whenever I write an article I have my record player working overtime — and I haven't yet learned how to turn the volume down to the "low" mark.

And my taste in music is like my taste in sport ... I like the lot. I am thrilled by football, by swimming, by athletics and by almost every sport but bull fighting—I cannot understand why anyone includes that under the heading of sport.

My music? Well, I'll swing from Gigli to Garland. I can write powerful prose (most editors don't agree with that, but who cares about editors, even at Christmastime?) while the record player is giving out Bing Crosby, Dean Martin (anyone got a spare copy of "Pretty Baby" to replace mine, which is almost worn out?), ballet music, the incomparable Mantovani, the bouncy Sid Phillips, Peggy Lee (she even makes me like editors!) ... the lot, in fact.

All right, so I don't know a crotchet from a quaver, but that doesn't stop me liking music. Nor does it stop me liking all kinds of music, and I cannot help thinking that those people who only like rock 'n' roll, jazz, skiffle or some other small branch of the vast world of music are missing an awful lot. There is so much that is good around that it is silly to concentrate on just one section of music.

### ALL PART OF SHOW BUSINESS

WHAT ELSE IS THERE to like about the record industry besides the music? Well, records are part and parcel of Show Business, and Show Business is an important part of that wider world ... the Entertainments World — which also, let's face it, includes my bread and butter of sport.

So being a disc jockey and a sports commentator is, after all, a natural alliance.

That is why in "Just For The Record" I included in each programme a record chosen by a sporting celebrity. They ranged from the opera chosen by Bert Trautmann, Manchester City's goalkeeper, to the Louis Armstrong chosen by Bill Roberts, the famous swimmer. The sportsmen and women who had visited the United States nearly all asked for something they couldn't have ... "My Fair Lady." To such requests I had to reply, "Just You Wait, 'Enry 'Iggins."

And, you know, most of the Show Business stars are keen sports fans. I remember after one intermediate soccer international at Bristol having to give Charlie Chester a kick by kick report of the game. Charlie's show was playing Bristol that week, and the star is such a football fan that he was almost tempted to play truant from the theatre!

Ben Warriss is just as keen. Whenever the England team plays abroad Ben will come along. He finds out the team's itinerary, then books his own passage and hotels. It doesn't matter whether England is playing in Rome, Paris or Berlin, Ben Warriss will be there cheering on his countrymen.

When England won 3—1 in that fabulous Olympic Stadium in Berlin 18 months ago, I even called on Ben to say a few words to television viewers at half-time. And believe me, he might be a very funny man on the stage, but he is very serious when it comes to football.

### 'THE STREET OF BROKEN HEARTS'

I QUITE OFTEN have lunch in the same restaurant as Billy Cotton, and when we meet, even though I might want to talk about records and music, Billy will want to talk about sport. It's the same with "Jingle King" Johnny Johnston, for as well as churning out the jingles, being a music publisher, leading the Johnston Brothers and the Keynotes, Johnny Johnston is a rabid Arsenal fan. So, too, is Dave King, who probably hums "Memories Are Made of This" when he sees the Gunners play these days. (Sorry, you Arsenal fans, but I had to get that crack in somewhere!)

(CONT. ON PAGE 31)

# Joe Loss, Playing What People Want To Hear, Spans The Generations

Joe . . .  
Without  
The Baton—

Quite a unique picture of celebrated bandleader JOE LOSS . . . unique because it sees him relaxed for a change—without the baton which has accompanied him all these years.

—R.M. Picture.

**BRITAIN'S CURRENT CROP OF TEENAGERS** scream and squirm over skiffle and "rock". They go weak at the knees and light in the head over such as Presley, Steele and Donegan.

Yet they still find time for Joe Loss.

That's quite something. Why so? Because when the mums and dads of these youngsters were teenagers themselves, they listened to Joe Loss, too.

"So what's he like, this Loss?" an outsider might ask. "Does he draw his old-age pension? Does he steer his own bathchair, or does he use a chauffeur? Do they have to prop him up on the bandstand?"

If you wanna know, then this is Joe . . . He's still only 48 (for long, in the thirties, he was known as "the youngest bandleader in the business", and he held a useful West End residency at the Astoria, Charing Cross Road, when only 25).

In manner he's relaxed, affable, quietly-spoken and scrupulously courteous. Energetic? The bloke simply has to be; his diary is blanketed with a relentless schedule of recordings, broadcasts, TV dates, booking for the Hammersmith Palais, dance dates in enough provincial cities to fill an A.A. Guide Book.

**BUT, TEMPERAMENTALLY,** Joe doesn't make a production out of his high-octane activity. From his self-possessed, slightly casual conduct, you'd think he had

## Xmas Listening The World Over

Now for the man and his music . . .

This festive season, discs by Joe Loss and his band are boosting the merry-making of people all over Britain (and quite a few other countries besides).

They listen to Joe on a dozen or so longplays he's made, or on the hundreds of 78 records to his credit since he started turning them out as far back as 1932.

These days his main 78 output is for his "Dancing Time For Dancers" on HMV. This is rhythmically exact stuff for those who know a syncopated whisk has nothing to do with beating up eggs. Yet there are so many folk who either like the Loss sound for its own sake, or who use it for background music at parties, that the series might, with equal aptness, be called "Listening Time For Listeners" or (on New Year's Eve) "Tippling Time for Tipplers."

You hear Joe's discs, too, in the cinema, in clubs, at Espresso bars—in fact, all the time and everywhere. His recorded music is widely used for example, on liners. The rolling of the ship rules out discs, so Joe puts his tune on tape.

Ask Joe Loss why he stays flourishing year after year and he tells you: "I make it my aim all the time to make people happy. I don't try to educate them; there are universities for that. I try to keep them entertained."

## Non-Stop On Radio & TV

**HOW WELL DOES HE SUCCEED?** Well, besides his steady output of discs for HMV, and his constant



## Britain's Maestro Of 'Happy Music' Won't Knock The Rock, Nor Skiffle, (Nor Anything Else)

nothing more taxing to cope with than an occasional board meeting.

In appearance, he is as spruce as they come. Musicians as a tribe, have an endemic liking for good suits, and Joe's no odd man out.

You figure his tailor probably goes to work with a micrometer. Where he differs from many musicians, however, is in being free from sartorial loudness (e.g. when I spoke to him shortly before writing this article, he was wearing a plain light grey suit, a cream shirt, and dark brown suede shoes—a bit of a contrast from some of those multi-coloured rig-outs from Archer Street, which come at you like a cavalry charge).

"personal appearances" with his band, he shows up frequently on both TV programmes (BBC and commercial), and has many airings both on BBC radio and Radio Luxembourg.

He's not in demand for any of these things just for the good of his health. He's wanted for the simple reason that a goodly section of the general public would start creating if they couldn't listen to his music. Personally, I'd trace the Joe Loss success story to two basic factors. One: he's never tried to be clever or complex with his tunes. He aims purely and simply at bringing home the melody and the tempo to his listeners.

You don't have to sit up half the night with an ice-pack on

your head to figure his music out.

Two: he's endlessly adaptable. If and when a new craze comes into vogue, Joe doesn't do his 'nut' over it. Yet neither does he make the mistake of ignoring it. He just absorbs something of it into his repertoire.

So, in these times of skiffle and "rock", the Loss band has gaily gone to town not just with the ballads of the day, but with "Freight Train", "Rock Around the Clock", "Rip It Up", and so on.

## His Views On New Crazes

**IT'S A SAFE BET** that if Eskimo folk music became the

rage next week, Joe Loss would be on the air within a couple of days with his own special version of "Blubber Come Back To Me."

Of new crazes in music, Joe's view is ready and definite:

"I'll never be one to decry rock 'n' roll or anything else the youngsters take a fancy for. I maintain the keenest interest in what the teenagers of the moment are asking for; you keep your own outlook young that way. If there's a particular form of popular music that people want to listen to, then that's a good and sufficient reason for playing it."

So it is, I suppose, an even-money bet that around 1973, Joe Loss will be beating out his "happy music" for that year's crop of teenagers, and thinking back to 1957—a year that he played for their parents, THE year that he had an article written about him without "In the Mood" being mentioned once!

D.T.

**MARK & GEORGE  
SEGAL & ROBERTS  
THE WIMPEY BAR**  
111 Regent Rd., Great Yarmouth

WISH ALL THEIR PATRONS, INCLUDING THEIR MANY SHOW BUSINESS CUSTOMERS, ALL THE BEST FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR

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OF SOUTHEND**

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Seasonal Greetings  
and  
Sincere Good Wishes  
for the New Year  
from  
**HUMPHREY  
LYTTELTON**  
AND THE BAND



Our cartoonist's impression of whistling-yodeller, **RONNIE RONALDE** who is in for one of the busiest Christmases of his career. He is fully booked on stage, radio, TV—and on records . . . and, in his spare time, he's a disc-jockey too. Listen to him on Radio Luxembourg every Tuesday night introducing the very latest on record.

**DEE-JAYS & THEIR LISTENERS**

*Kenneth Wolstenholme: Continued From Page 29*

Yes, Sport, Records, Show Business . . . it's all one big world, a world of people, a world of excitement.

If you love people you'd love the world of entertainment, for entertainment is people. Stroll down the old Alley any day and you will never fail to meet someone in the business who wants to chat about this, that, or nothing in particular.

As a Lancashire man myself, I can always pop into the offices of Campbell-Connelly's and chat over old times with Eddie Standing, who hasn't lost his Lancashire accent despite 30 years in London. Then, there's Leslie Conn of Robbins Music ("the original con man" as he's called).

I suppose you could make enemies in the "street of broken hearts," but I must be strange. I get on fine with them all, publishers, record company representatives, everyone. What if Bob Crabbe's gigantic cigarette holders do poke you in the eye now and then? What if Paddy Fleming of PHILIPS does talk to you in an Irish brogue even the Irish can't understand? It's all good fun.

And these stars of Show Business are not quite as temperamental as they are alleged to be. They would all pull their hearts out for any charity, and some of the lads have even formed a football team to play charity matches.

It's not a bad team, either. Frankie Vaughan is no beginner at this game of football. Neither is Andrew Ray. And Ronnie Carroll was an Irish Youth international.

**I MEET MY 'DOUBLE',  
HOWARD KEEL**

**MIND YOU**, the team had a shock in its first match when player-manager Jimmy Henney, of Chappells, broke his wrist. That made him really down-in-the-mouth because he had just returned from a holiday in Venice, his wife's native city, and the Italians over there now regard John Charles as such a "god" that they would not believe Jimmy knew The King of Soccer.

Yet just before he left for Italy, Charles had lunch with Jimmy and me.

The American stars are just as friendly as our own. Ray Anthony, for instance, could not learn enough about Britain, and as an American football fan himself he pumped me incessantly about our brand of football. He went to see a match and was most impressed.

Then there is Howard Keel, who could almost claim to be unique. For let's face it: stars who are heart-throbs of women usually bore we men—because we men are jealous. But Howard Keel "sends" the women and also "sends" the men.

I remember being enthralled as I talked with him in his dressing room at the Palladium. I was anxious to meet him because so many people—including the RECORD MIRROR—say we look alike. Well, maybe we do, but put us side by side and Howard Keel dwarfs me—and I am 6ft. 1in.!

Never have I met a more sincere and unaffected artiste. He spoke easily and enthusi-

astically about stage technique, about his daily practice—yes, even Howard still has singing lessons and still practises every day!

There was no bitterness in Howard about the sensational rise to stardom so many moderns have in a business which he learned from the bottom up.

"The kids love this modern rock 'n' roll," he told me, "and they go for these new singers in a big way. And what is wrong with that? After all, these new singers are in the business, and if they are popular it is good for the business. So why should anyone worry. There's room for all of us."

That is typical of Howard Keel, a man whose records would always be in the Top Ten if I had anything to do with the Top Ten. And Howard Keel, despite the cynics, is typical of this great big world of entertainment.

So when people make rude remarks about the entertainment world and the people in it—and how uninformed so much of that criticism is!—I always give them one piece of advice.

"Go and meet Howard Keel" I suggest.

And that piece of advice is as good as the advice that set me onto my career as a disc jockey,

**"YOU'VE GOT A HOME, A RECORD PLAYER AND A LOT OF RECORDS, SO YOU CAN PLAY THE RECORDS YOU LIKE AT HOME. BUT WHEN YOU ARE ON THE AIR YOU PLAY THE ONES THE PUBLIC LIKES."**



Cats!—make it the coolest Christmas! Get with your party, dance or jazz session with the most fabulous instrument of all time! Sing or blow—play the fiddle or play the fool—and play it all back on the Pye Record Maker. Anyone can do it! Favourite music can be recorded direct from the radio. And with a special pick-up head attachment, you can play standard and long-playing records too. A 4-watt amplifier and an 8" speaker bring every recorded sound bursting into life, and the combo crowds into the room with you every time you switch on. The Pye Record Maker is the greatest—offers you the mostest—it's a gift at the price. Pye Limited are holding Record Maker parties in many areas this winter. There may be one near you! Watch out for further details in your local press or in your Pye dealer's window.



**35  
GNS**



with the Fabulous  
**RECORD MAKER**



**"SEND ME" TODAY!**

PYE LIMITED, P.O. BOX 49, CAMBRIDGE.

Please send me further details of the fabulous Record Maker. I am interested in a demonstration.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

RM

LEN EDWARDS ★ JOHNNY MATHIESON

**ROBERT MELLIN LTD**

AND

**SHERWIN MUSIC COMPANY**

A Merry Christmas to you all

PATRICIA WILLIAMS ★ TONY HATCH

AS MOST OF YOU PROBABLY KNOW, I recently had to go into hospital for an operation.

Let me say straight away that the operation itself was not too serious or complicated and, indeed, I was taken home to convalesce a couple of days after it was over. But going into hospital, no matter how simple the trouble may be, is never a very cheerful business.

The actual day I went in I spent the afternoon recording a new "party" record for Decca.

"Let's Have A Ball," it's called, and I can give you a hint that skiffle comes into it. That afternoon flew past and, as always when I am playing and working, everything else went out of my head and I thoroughly enjoyed myself.

But every time we had a break, back into my mind came the gloomy thought that I was due to leave my home that very night and sleep among strangers with the dread thought of the operating theatre in the morning.

The first thing which changed the colour of my thoughts to a brighter hue was the hospital itself. I am well acquainted with the St. David's Wing of the Royal Northern Hospital, London, because, unfortunately, my mother had to spend a lot of time there last year. She had told me not to worry and how wonderful the staff were but I could never really have believed it until I experienced it myself.

They were absolutely marvellous and I shall never forget them. I also noticed that the place had been redecorated; the beautiful pastel shades must be a tonic in themselves for any patient! But, despite it all, I was lonely, and frightened and depressed. I had the honour of another appearance at the Royal Variety Performance coming along and I dreaded not being able to make it. In common with many others I had been bitterly disappointed by the last-minute cancellation of the Performance last year. Unavoidable as we all knew it was, it took us a long time to get over the sense of loss we suffered at the time.

### Dread Thoughts Of Missing It All ...

THE AWFUL THOUGHT that I might miss this wonderful occasion for the second time running was almost more than I could bear. If this wasn't enough I was due to play a TV programme dedicated to the music of George Gershwin accompanied by Ted Heath and his orchestra, who have just completed another triumphant tour of America. This was to take place the day before the Royal Performance.

I had looked forward to this occasion for weeks. I supposed I would not be able to make this one either.

So I was in a pretty low state. There is one thing to be said for being in bed in hospital and not allowed to do very much. You get time to think. I did a lot of thinking and I'd like to put these thoughts into print.

### The 'Untouchable' Stars

FIRST OF ALL I THOUGHT about this business of being a star. A star in my field is rated on drawing power, the records sold, and, I suppose, the size of the fan club. Measured by this yardstick I realise without false modesty that I am rated as a star. And yet, in all honesty, I can say I have rarely felt like one.

A star in the old Hollywood tradition was essentially a person who remained remote from the public. The very term star implied this, something which twinkled and glittered and flashed high and unattainable, to be looked at and admired and even worshipped, but never approached, and certainly never touched! Think of Chaplin.

Millions of people knew and loved Chaplin, the wistful comedian, but how many people knew Chaplin the man? Think of Greta Garbo. It was always felt by the powers-that-be that if they were ever allowed to come too close to the stars and to find out that they were merely common clay like themselves they would cease to be stars ...

All this may be very true, but it is not for me. If being a star involved losing touch with the public in a personal way I wouldn't want to be one. What talent I possess has brought me rich rewards. I live comfortably, have a lovely home and many beautiful possessions. I have been able to make some return to my parents for their early care and training and their never-failing faith in me. But I still consider the richest reward of all in the struggle to reach the top has been the hosts of friends I have been able to make all over the world among the general public, the public who have made my success possible.

I somehow feel that this old "remote star" business is going rapidly out of fashion.

Even the Royal Family are coming closer to the people every day. The news in the papers as I write is that the presentation of debutantes, as we knew it, is to cease and the whole thing to be broadened in scope to cover a much wider section of the ordinary public.

### Absolute Perfection For TV

TO come back to the entertainment field I don't think there is any doubt left in anyone's mind that the great future lies in television. Like many others I am concentrating on perfecting a technique in this medium. The reasons are obvious.

An entertainer is now able to reach in one performance an audience of millions, but the responsibility is tremendous. You can no longer say to yourself "Well, I had an off night in Birmingham last night but I'll make up for it in Manchester tonight."

That one performance has GOT to be perfect. There is no good being remote on TV. It is essentially an intimate thing. The most successful TV performers are those who are able to project themselves through the small screen and right into the room like a guest getting up to do a turn at a party.

I sometimes feel that the production side gets carried away a bit. I think that if the performance is good, people don't want all kinds of moving things distracting them. All they want to do is to watch and listen. I remember seeing and hear-

# Hospital Thoughts

## AFTER THE OPERATION...

Winnie was back at her 'other piano' . . . this grand study was captured by RECORD MIRROR camera-man, Dezo Hoffman, during the pianist's rehearsal at the London Palladium on Monday, November

18, the night of the great Royal Variety Performance. The evening before, Winnie did a tremendous BBC Television show with Ted Heath and his Band in a special Gershwin Tribute programme..

—R.M. Picture.



### Winifred Atwell Had Plenty Of Time To Think Whilst She Was Laid Up ... And Here She Reveals What Was Uppermost In Her Mind ...

on selling in large numbers and the public, bless them, never seem to get enough.

May I close by thanking all the people who sent me letters, cards and flowers while I was in hospital? I received hundreds of letters every day after people found out where I was. My secretary is still working like mad, so if you haven't had a reply yet don't worry. I read every one and you'll get an answer eventually. The hospital authorities appealed to the public not to phone because the switchboard was jammed with calls. No doubt this was a dreadful nuisance for the hospital . . . but how heartwarming for me! Thank you all again and good luck to everyone of you.

ing Lord Beaverbrook on TV some time ago. He simply sat in a chair and spoke, and the camera never moved, except for an occasional close-up—yet the interest did not flag for a moment. It was what he had to say that mattered.

### Records That Make Or Break

ONE OR two remarks about records and I'm through.

As far as being a star is concerned it is RECORDS THAT MAKE 'EM and BREAK 'EM today. The Russians have recently amazed the world by launching a couple of artificial stars into the heavens. But the records industry has gone much further in the show business firmament. It not only launches new ones every week with the precision of a machine gun, but brings them back down to earth too with equal celerity.

It has always been my ambition in records to join the select company of people like Vera Lynn and Gracie Fields. They have become a tradition in British show business. They go on producing records year after year, always of a high quality and usually without gimmicks or high pressure publicity. Such is the love which the public have for them that their records go



## Musical Greetings To All ... TONY OSBORNE

# WALLY PETERSON RELATES THE REMARKABLE SAGA OF ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING PERSONALITIES IN THE RECORD INDUSTRY

**DECCA.** One of the best known names in the world. D-E-C-C-A. What does it mean?

It stands for quality recording, famous artistes, multi-millions of pounds. BUT WHAT DOES THE NAME MEAN? No use asking anyone... not even the fabulous company's fabulous head man.

Where the word came from, who dreamed it up, why it was bestowed upon the original Gramophone Company nobody knows.

There's no mystery, however, about the name that became and still is synonymous with the magic, if puzzling label. Edward R. ("Ted") Lewis might just as well have been christened "Decca" Lewis!

To write a brief history of the Decca Record Company is simple. All you have to do is borrow Mr. Lewis' personal scrap book, note the highlights of his own career, and start typing. Result: the Decca-Lewis or Lewis-Decca story. Same thing.

## THE PERSONAL BOOK

**NOW IF YOU ASKED MR. LEWIS** for that "personal book," he wouldn't know much about it and, indeed, if it had depended upon him, there wouldn't have been any such item in existence! Fortunately for me, Mrs. L. J. HEMSLEY, who started with the British company in 1929 in the record sales department, became Mr. Lewis' personal secretary two years later and pasted the first clipping in the book in 1934.

It was from a U.S. publication, was headed "Rebuilding a Market" and, in smaller print, "record business slumps because of radio, but Decca fights to restore it."

people know about your product."

## FRONT PAGE

**THE STORY,** told to a correspondent by Lewis, started off: "Some months ago I came to the conclusion that now was the time to enter the phonograph record business enthusiastically. It was my firm conviction that

**S** SAID Mr. Lewis: "We recently took the front page of the London DAILY MAIL to advertise just one record and our sales of that

buy control of the old-established Decca Gramophone Co. which had for years dealt profitably in instruments but made no discs.

## DECCA IN USA

**MOST OF THE NEWCOMERS TO THE GRAMOPHONE RECORD INDUSTRY** which sprang up in those palmy days found the going hard and closed down one by one. Lewis stepped into the jumble sale, bought the almost unused Duophone factory at New Malden in Surrey, British rights to the recordings of the Deutsche Gramophon German company, and all the shares in Brunswick Ltd. Plodding steadily through the slump, Decca Record Co. piled up losses, slashed its capital in February, 1933, and, by a capital reorganisation, consistently postponed dividend payments.



# Lewis-Decca Story,

# Decca-Lewis Story

there was a terrific latent market for records in this country (U.S.) and now that we have started the marketing of records, I am more than ever firmly convinced that there are great possibilities for record sales." That was 23 years ago, and it's easy to see that the Lewis enthusiasm and conviction of the ever-growing possibilities of disc sales hasn't diminished. The story went on: "We are offering in Decca records the best talent we can secure, including such names as Bing Crosby, Guy Lombardo, the Casa Loma orchestra and others... both quality and low price can be profitably combined by getting volume, and the only way to get volume is by aggressive advertising... let

record have passed the 100,000 mark. Again in England we pushed a record by the Street Singer of "Marta" and by aggressive publicity work we have sold over 150,000 pressings of that number". An accompanying photo block of popular artistes on the label was headed "Decca Scoops Music World". A piece from THE NEWS REVIEW of March, 1937, describes Lewis as "dark, energetic, and the possessor of a machine-gun-like voice" and tells how he "believed the opportunity of a lifetime had come when the boom blew Duophone Gramophone and a batch of similar companies into existence and floated in 1929 the Decca Record Co. Ltd., with a capital of over a million to

A notable achievement was the formation in August, 1934, of Decca Records Inc. in the U.S., and its subsequent successes with Bing Crosby and Grace Moore recordings. By the end of its second year it was earning profits. Then Lewis bid for and gained the record section of the Crystalate Company, thereby adding "Imperial Broadcast" and "Rex" products to the discs under Decca control. The end of an eight-year fight appeared in sight when Decca bought for cash the goodwill and matrices of the record section of Synchronophone's business.

Clippings dated Feb. 1938 reveal that "young and progressive Mr. Lewis was much exercised by the fact that despite adverse conditions in the United States, Decca's gramophone record business there was flourishing, while

here, where things are supposedly much better, sales were flagging. Setting out to analyse the reasons, he decided that football gambling was the primary cause."

## OFF TO U.S.A.

**WELL, "TED" LEWIS WILL PROBABLY SMILE** when he reads a quote from the NEWS REVIEW of that year, which credits him with "forseeing the time when the character of the nation will change from 'shopkeepers' to 'pool operators' if people continued to be more concerned with the prospect of winning quick money than with the much slower process of improving their own status."

A FINANCIAL TIMES article datelined June, 1939, read that

"among City passengers on the QUEEN MARY when she

left Southampton yesterday was Mr. E. R. Lewis... visiting the U.S. mainly in his capacity of chairman of Decca Records Inc. of the U.S. Sales of records in the States were valued at around \$100,000,000 in 1929. They fell to the nadir of \$10,000,000 in 1933. Since then business has been on the up grade and estimates of this year's sales range around \$50,000,000. (ed. note: \$300,000,000 for 1956). The American visit bids fair to become an annual feature of Mr. Lewis' activities."

The EVENING STANDARD of September 12, 1939, headline the fact that

"America Leads Revival in the Record Trade" and tells of how "the gramophone business is looking up, the troops and others want entertainment," goes on to say: "Mr. E.

R. Lewis says there is now a demand for the old portable gramophone which many thought had been supplanted for all time. The triumph of E. R. Lewis, however, is in America where Decca is the second largest producer of records. When everybody felt records would never come back Lewis went into the American market. He was largely responsible for the floatation of the original Decca Company. When it went down he didn't desert the ship or his friends and worked in amazing fashion to put the business right. Today the American company earns good profits and the British enterprise has more than turned the corner. The war may change fortunes for better or worse; the strong point, however, is the American interest. An interesting

(continued on page 35)

# Disc Dealers Greet You

NORTH LONDON'S LEADING RECORD SHOP

## Al's Records

65, CROSS ST.  
ISLINGTON, N.1.

wishes you

**A HAPPY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
A RECORD NEW YEAR**

### Greetings

FROM

## NEWTONS

THE RECORD SHOP  
237 STRATFORD ROAD  
**SHIRLEY**  
SOLIHULL . . . . . WARWICKS.

### Greetings

1902

— to —

1957

AND BEST WISHES ONCE  
AGAIN TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS,  
OLD AND NEW, FOR A HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS AND SUCCESSFUL  
NEW YEAR.

### W. MINAY & SON

474 WILBRAHAM ROAD,  
CHORLTON-C-HARDY,  
MANCHESTER

TO ALL MY HALL GREEN AND SHIRLEY  
FRIENDS A

Record Xmas and New  
Year of Health  
Wealth and Happiness  
FROM THE NEW BROWNS

Greetings to all Our Customers  
And Friends in the Trade

FROM

### LUTON'S RECORD CENTRE

IN THE

### CENTRE OF LUTON

## FARMERS

OPPOSITE THE TOWN HALL

## A Record Christmas

and New Year Greetings to all Music Lovers  
from the staff and myself

### TOM PARTON

718a, ALUM ROCK ROAD,  
WARD END, BIRMINGHAM 8

Phone EAST 1866

### Sincere Greetings

TO

THE RECORD MIRROR  
'REGULAR' and 'TOP TEN' READERS  
and  
OUR RECORDING STARS  
WITHOUT WHOM WE SHOULD NOT EXIST

From

The **RECORD** Centre  
(R. M. ROBERTS and SON)  
2 NEW STREET — OSWESTRY  
THE SHOP WITH SELF SERVICE

## THE "SPINNING DISC" LTD.

143a, FORE STREET,  
EDMONTON, N.18.

Send Season's Greetings  
and Wish a Happy New Year  
To All Their Patrons

THE  
SEASON'S GREETINGS

from

### COOPERS of CHATHAM

A. COOPER & SONS LTD., 340 HIGH ST.  
Phone CHATHAM 2413

TO OUR CUSTOMERS IN  
THE NORTH

WHO WRITE, WHO TELEPHONE  
AND WHO CALL PERSONALLY

We Wish A Record Xmas  
and A Harmonious New Year  
**LESLIE SAVILLE & THE STAFF**  
SAVILLE BROS. LTD.,  
35/37 KING STREET, SOUTH SHIELDS

Greetings from

## BAKER'S

"RECORD BROWSERIE"  
HIGH STREET, GILLINGHAM  
KENT — Phone 5472

The Most Up-to-date Record  
Department in the Medway Towns

## MICHAEL SOMERS

of

15 VIVIAN AVE., HENDON CENTRAL, N.W.4  
and  
65a CRICKLEWOOD BROADWAY, N.W.2

Wish their Customers the  
Compliments of the Season

WISHING ALL OUR CUSTOMERS AND  
FRIENDS

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

## MELODY MAKER

11 & 17 London Road

### EDINBURGH

## Greetings

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS AND  
TO THE MANY RECORD STARS  
WHO HAVE VISITED OUR STORE  
AND TO OUR DEALER FRIENDS  
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

### ENGINEERING SERVICE Co.

BOLTON . . . . . LANCS.

A Happy Xmas  
and  
A Swinging New Year

To  
N.J.F. MEMBERS  
MODERN JAZZ FANS  
OUR POSTAL SERVICE CUSTOMERS  
THE RECORD MIRROR STAFF  
TONY HALL  
in fact

P. RHODEN & SON,  
21 Higher Parr St., St. Helens. **EVERYONE—EVERYWHERE**

# BLACKOUT: BUT NOT FOR DISCS

THE 1939-45 blackout produced an unprecedented boom in the sale of records. Read below about some of the stars who made discs in that era.

feature of the American company's position may be the recent decision of the courts that broadcasting enterprises should pay royalties on records used."

## BOOM, BOOM!

AN INTERESTING SHORT paragraph clipped from a paper about the same time is headlined "Black-Out Means Boom for Records" and reveals "the Decca factory at New Malden, Surrey, is working twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to keep up with the rush."

Well, over a decade has passed since the last black-out but the New Malden factory is just as hard pressed today keeping up with the 1957 rush!



# DETERMINATION, COURAGE AND FAITH.. THE COMBINATION WHICH BROUGHT A GREAT MAN A GREAT TRIUMPH

An announcement was made in most of the important newspapers of December, 1939, asking the record buying public to help alleviate the pressure of war-time production by making their Christmas purchases as soon as possible so that the dealers could renew orders in time. The following were included in the "latest list" of stars recording for Decca: Ambrose, Andrews Sisters, Connie Boswell, Bobbie Breen, Bing Crosby, Elsie Carlisle, Deanna Durbin, Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon, Denny Dennis, Hughie Diamond, Flanagan and Allen, Ella Fitzgerald, Judy Garland, Adelaide Hall, Tommy Handley, The Ink Spots, Charlie Kunz, Vera Lynn, Frances Langford, Guy Lombardo, Grace Moore, Mills Bros., Jack Payne, The Street Singer, Lew Stone, Elsie and Doris Waters, Paul White-

## BIG NEWS

A PRESS CLIPPING from the CHICAGO TRIBUNE dated September 11, 1940, says, "Londoners Vote Dividends in an Air Raid Shelter" . . . "Decca Board acts as Nazi Planes Soar Overhead." "Decca Records Chief Blitzed" runs a headline of April, 1941, and relates how "some weeks ago Mr. Lewis' office in the City was destroyed. More recently his house was practically demolished on top of him and his wife by a very heavy bomb."

A piece from The RECORDER of that year speaks of "the success of the Decca Record business after a most unpromising start being one of the romances of the City" and further states that "the directors have many plans for this company after the war, and it promises to become increasingly important."

On August 3, 1943, the EVENING NEWS captioned a long article "Success Story" and its first paragraph stated: "The Decca Record Company announces a dividend of 66 2/3 per cent . . . a remarkable achievement for a firm that was in dire straits a few years ago." Mr. Lewis is described as feeling "he has one useful quality for the record industry . . . a 'strictly average' taste. He likes good dance music, good singing. When he hears a piece of music played for the first time he can usually tell at once whether it has possibilities for a big record sale or not. 'This business is really show business,' he says, 'that's why I like it. It's fascinating'."

## UP THEY GO

"DECCA SHARES SOARING" . . . "Demand or Decca" . . . "Shilling Shares at £2 19s. Startles Exchange" . . . thus rang headlines toward the end of 1944. Business of the company, valued at less than £100,000 before the war, became worth about £4,000,000 when its 1s. shares jumped to 59s. In his Brixton office

Edward Roberts Lewis sat back and said, "I know nothing about the shares. But I must confess it's all very exciting. Most people don't know the troubles we've been through."

"It's a Secret No Longer" proclaimed a DAILY EXPRESS story of the same month and year as it tells the world of the Decca backed invention that will afford ships and planes a mechanical navigator to pinpoint bearings at all times, whatever the weather.

A beaming Lewis is pictured by the DAILY EXPRESS in November of 1945 as he achieved a 14-year-old ambition when the 1s. shares of Decca Records reached 60s. A leap now into post-war 1948 and the headline, "Good News on Records" . . . "British Gramophone records selling at 75 cents each are breaking into the Bing Crosby preserves in America, and making a dollar fortune for this country. Half a million copies of Gracie Fields singing "Now Is the Hour" have helped to swell the earnings to £60,000 a month. And it can go higher still, says Mr. Lewis, now running the sales campaign from New York. Lewis sits up night after night listening to the disc jockeys and his big reward came recently when he heard one station play Sam

Browne's "Tree in the Meadow" eight times.

The NEWS REVIEW of December, 1948, chronicles the appearance in Britain of Nellie Lutcher and the Capitol label via Decca. Stan Kenton's "Artistry in Rhythm" had the honour of being the first Capitol disc off the British presses. Decca executives claimed that "the only unit working at higher pressure than the presses at New Malden, with their 100,000 a day output, was Lewis himself."

## JACK KAPP . . .

EARLY 1949 RELATES how "by a strange twist, most of the 12,000,000 a year Decca exports are going to the United States which has the world's biggest record industry. During the musicians' dispute there record-starved Americans heard English-style popular music with Vera Lynn and Ann Shelton, and loved them. The dispute settled, the Americans still demand the British product because they like the artists and the high quality recording."

In April of '49 Lewis paid a splendid tribute to the late Jack Kapp, his American counterpart and the man responsible for acquiring the great Crosby for the Decca

## Continuing from page 32, The Decca-Lewis Story: The Lewis-Decca Story

label. It was on the strength of Kapp's confidence in getting Bing that Lewis launched the company. Late in 1950 the press clippings sounded another new note as the word "micro-groove" crept into stories concerning Lewis and Decca. Earlier in the year Decca had introduced LPs to the market and the following quotation illustrates once again the Lewis accuracy at prognostication . . . one major organization believes "records will eventually settle down to one uniform speed. They also argue that no one has invented a pick-up or needle for long-playing records as satisfactory as those made for the standard records. To this view, Mr. Lewis retorts: "Nonsense. It will be at least ten years before all records are of uniform speed."

A Lewis tribute to the late Harry Sarton appears in April of 1951. Sarton had come to the company 19 years earlier and became A & R head.

## THE L.P.

FURTHER CLIPPINGS FOR 1951 AND INTO 1952 report the heating up of the commercial "record speeds" war with Ted Lewis "confident that the immediate future of the gramophone industry is in LP." Along with many press attestations of the "Prosperity at Brixton" comes, in 1952, the first public utterance of a theme that has since become the subject of Lewis' own short History of Decca entitled "No C.I.C."

At a party given to celebrate his 21st anniversary of joining the company, Lewis said, "Decca is a triumph of free enterprise."

This same celebration at the Savoy Hotel finds the MUSIC TRADES REVIEW recording that the Guest of the evening, "E.R.L.", was described time

and time again as "doggedly determined," "dynamic," "driving," "enterprising" and crystallized the wealth of adjectives used into the one word, "courage."

And so, at the end of 1952, as the clippings indicate, the ups and downs, ins and outs of this unique 21-year-old story had culminated in the strength that led on to the present position when four things—FFRR (Full Frequency Range Recording), the "LP", the Decca "Navigator" and Decca Radar have been triumphantly established to make Decca a name to reckon with, not only in entertainment and the cultural life of the people, but even their safety in peace or war.

## THE 45 r.p.m.

IN A MORNING PAPER of February, 1953, "Decca's Lewis Reports a Smash Hit" with profits almost doubled at £1,200,000 — against £652,000 in 1951. Decca was now producing 45 r.p.m. records exclusively for the American market helping to send its exports figure well over the £1,000,000 mark. Early '54 finds the dailies reporting "Decca Boss Hits Up Records" with profits soaring again and "Busy Decca Takes Over Another Factory" indicating the further growth of the company as it bought up space in Kingston. Midway in the same year finds the Decca chief arriving at Johannesburg and telling reporters that "The Harry Lime Theme" was the most successful tune his company ever "translated" into shellac, selling over three and a half million. Other post-war greats were "Auf Wiedersehn" and "Now Is the Hour". Mid-1955 finds Decca heading for the two million profit mark and landing a prize contract for Decca Radar from the Royal Navy.

Mrs. L. J. Hemsley's midget-sized scrap book of her boss' activities, activities that faithfully mirror the incredible rise of a major industry from the ashes of 1929, ends with the early 1956 headline, "Decca Grabs Eartha Kitt," reporting thus by inference the most recent magnitudinous Lewis-Decca bit of enterprise, contract with Radio Corporation of America to make RCA records in Britain, with Lewis & Co. getting not only Eartha, but Toscanini, Heifetz, Lanza, Belafonte (etc.) too.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

## STAR BACK- ROOM BOYS

Top A & R man FRANK LEE, a leading 'back-room Decca boy' (more about him in the 'Loyalty to Lewis' section of this story) here seen with engineer ARTHUR LILLEY (standing) in the famous West Hampstead, London, studios. Studio head is the celebrated ARTHUR HADDY, the Full Frequency Range Recording expert.

RM Picture.



# LAUGHING UP YOUR SLEEVES

IN MANY INSTANCES, THE NOTES ON THE BACK OF THE INVARIABLY HANDSOME AND LUXURIOUS COVERS—OR "SLEEVES" AS THEY ARE NOW COMMONLY CALLED—CONTAINING A LONG PLAYING RECORD PROVE ALMOST AS INTERESTING AND AS ENTERTAINING AS THE ACTUAL CONTENTS INSIDE THEM; IN FACT IT HAS BECOME QUITE AN ART—AND A PROFESSION—IN THIS AGE OF LP'S. "SLEEVE-WRITERS" ARE EARNING ALMOST AS MUCH MONEY TODAY AS SUCCESSFUL SCRIPT-WRITERS ON TV, BUT THE FORMER APPEAR TO BE MORE FERTILE IN THEIR IDEAS.

HOWEVER.

AMONG THE SMART SLEEVE-NOTES WE HAVE RECENTLY DIGESTED, ARE TWO WHICH COME FROM AMERICA, NOT WRITTEN BY PROFESSIONAL SLEEVE-WRITERS BUT BY FOLK WITH A DEVASTATING SENSE OF HUMOUR. ONE IS STAN FREBERG, THE BIGGEST MICKEY-TAKER OF THEM ALL; HE HAS WRITTEN THE NOTES FOR HIS OWN L.P. CALLED "A CHILD'S GARDEN OF FREBERG" (ON CAPITOL T777). THE OTHER IS BY DISTINGUISHED ACTOR JOSE FERRER WHO DID A SLICK PIECE ON THE SLEEVE FOR THE "SUDDENLY IT'S THE HI-LO'S" DISC ON THE AMERICAN COLUMBIA LABEL. WE REPRODUCE, WITH DUE ACKNOWLEDGMENT, THE RESPECTIVE SLEEVE MEANDERINGS OF STAN FREBERG AND JOSE FERRER . . .

★  
TO THOSE PERSONS FINGERING THIS ALBUM IN THE RECORD SHOP AND WONDERING WHETHER TO BUY BACH FUGUES INSTEAD:

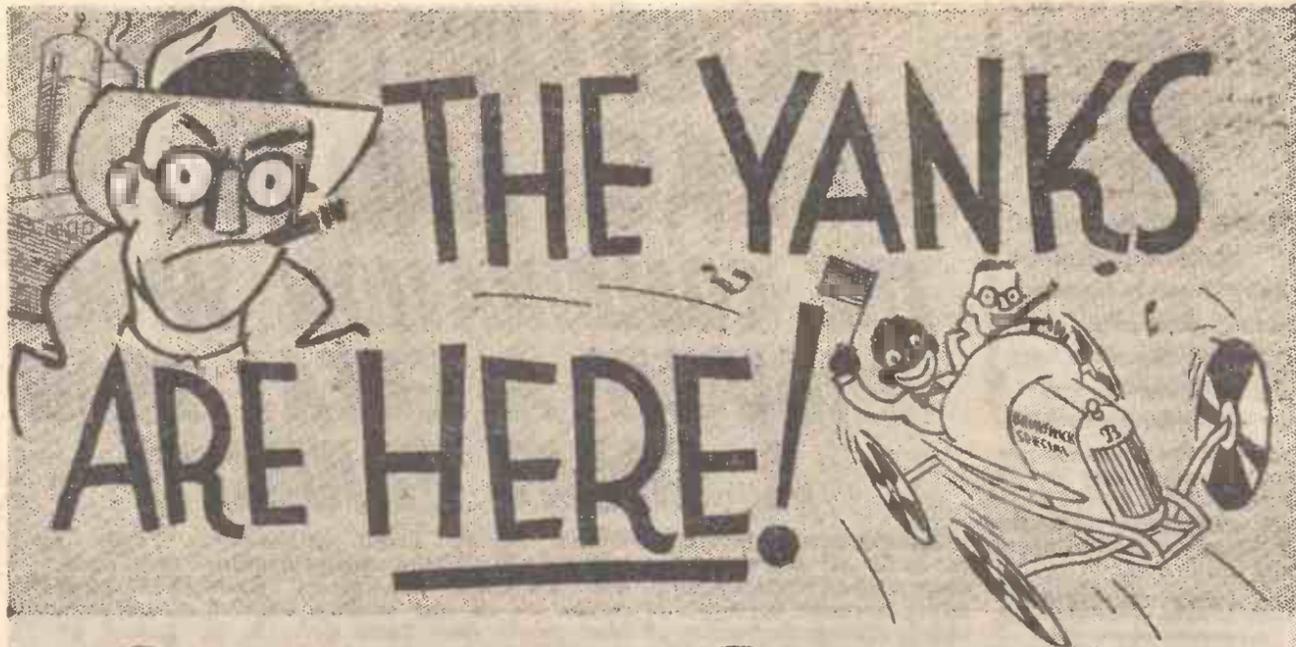
I FEEL I SHOULD reveal at the outset that this album has nothing whatsoever to do with children or gardens. (Let's lay our cards on the table is what I say.) The Capitol people have simply wadded up a whole bunch of my things, and "A Child's Garden of Freberg" seemed to me as good a name as any of the wad.

You may think the title a poor one; if so, drop me a line c/o Capitol Records, Hollywood, California. A fat lot of good it will do you, actually. It's too late to make changes, and the sooner you face up to that fact the better. You may think the title misleading. Tough. How would you like me to have called the album "Little Women," or perhaps "Jazz at the Wage Stabilization Board"? How would you have liked that? You talk about your misleading titles, boy. No, I think when all is said and done, our present title says exactly what we want it to say, which is simply, "Hey, you guys, here's a forty-minute wad of Freberg. Take it or leave it."

★  
SCARED SILLY that you would leave it, white-lipped Capitol executives pleaded with me to reconsider. "Heh-heh, this business of the album title, Freberg," they stammered, swallowing hard. "Let's play it safe, eh? Let's call it something like 'Guy Lombardo Plays Francis Scott Key.'" Commercial, yes. But is it honest? A phrase I made up several years ago and which you may have heard is "Honest is as honest does." I have tried to live by these words, man and boy. Furthermore, I go three nights a week to a rail-splitting class and tomorrow plan to walk ten miles to return a record album to a friend. A man can do no more. (Except perhaps to grow a beard and a mole. Do you think it would be effective?)

★  
THE TWELVE NUMBERS included here are supposed to be my all-time best sellers. This is 9/12 true. I managed to sneak in three numbers, Rock Around Stephen Foster, That's My Boy, and Wide-Screen Mama Blues, when no one was looking. Each was on the backside of a hit, and was therefore, to my disappointment, seldom played. I included these numbers mainly because I feel sorry for them.

If nailed down to pick my favourite of the twelve, I would probably pick The Great Pretender because in addition to coming out fairly funny it lampoons a musical trend that I



## GUY LOMBARDO

and His Royal Canadians

Too many tears—Love, you funny thing 1309  
Paradise—Lawd, you made the night too long 1309

(Brunswick 10-inch records 2/6 each.)

## ABE LYMAN

and His California Orchestra

One hour with you (Film 'One hour with you')—We will always be sweethearts (Film 'One hour with you') 25210, 1/6

## VICTOR YOUNG

and His Orchestra

The voice in the old village choir 25232, 1/6  
Paradise—Goodnight, my love 25214, 1/6  
You're the one 25216, 1/6

(Panachord Records)



## BENNIE KREUCER

and His Orchestra

Crazy people 25228, 1/6  
I'm so alone with the crowd 25232, 1/6  
Somebody loves you—Lovable 25215, 1/6

(Panachord Records)

## CASA LOMA

Orchestra

Rain on the roof—Starlight 1289  
One of us was wrong—Kiss by kiss 1288

(Brunswick 10-inch records 2/6 each.)



## ISHAM JONES

Orchestra

Shadows on the window—If it ain't love 25233, 1/6  
Let that be a lesson to you 25227, 1/6  
Keeping out of mischief now 25216, 1/6

(Panachord Records)

# —SO ARE WE!

—says Jack and Roy



## JACK HYLTON

and His Orchestra

Snuggled on your shoulder—Lovely little silhouette F2959, 1/6  
Nursery masquerade—I love a parade F3000, 1/6  
You—Lawd, you made the night too long (12 inch) K664, 2/6

(Decca Records)



## ROY FOX

and His Band

Put that sun back in the sky—The echo of a song F3015, 1/6  
It's always good-bye—What makes you so adorable F3028, 1/6  
The lullaby of the leaves—Gone for ever F3029, 1/6

# —and how—sez us!

THOSE WERE THE DAYS! Ten-inch records at one and six a time! Here's a reproduction of a DECCA advertisement in the national press—way back in 1934. Look at the names! Look at the titles! Look at the prices! and look how we then tackled Yankee competition! And then recall those happy, happy musical days! Recall the names, recall the tunes?

personally loathe. In all my records I have conscientiously tried to operate not as a record comic but as a satirist. There's a difference between pointless ridicule and earnest satire. A satirist is inherently a critic who seeks to improve society by pointing up its affectations and absurdities through the use of humor. His chief weapon is exaggeration. Satire is healthy. Al Capp of Li'l Abner fame, and a man who has influenced me a lot, once said, "The fifth freedom is the freedom to laugh at ourselves." Mr. Capp makes sense. When we stop laughing at ourselves, the decline and fall is not far off.

★  
THE DISCOVERY some seven years ago that Americans were willing to shell out hard-earned money for a recording of me having the time of my life came as a rather lovely shock from which I have never recovered. To my further amazement, people of other countries, while at times comprehending only 50 per cent. of the real satire, laugh as loudly as Americans. I recently returned from a tour of Australia, where I found people who knew every word of every record I ever made. I think of this and smile warmly to myself every time I hear some Madison Avenue boy say knowingly: "Satire isn't commercial." The good fairies must have come in the night and bought all those records.

★  
I HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED on these sides by some extraordinary talent. The other parts on St. George and the Dragonet were done by June Foray, Hy Averbach, and Daws Butler, who also wrote it with me. The man who interrupts

me on Rock Island Line is Peter Leeds. In answer to many questions, I play both parts on John and Marsha, as well as on The Great Pretender. Most of the vocal backings are by Jud Conlon, an impish choral pundit of my acquaintance. When it seemed to me that the country was being overrun with feathered vocal groups, e.g., "The Crows," "The Eagles," "The Orioles" (rankled buyers complained bitterly that after a bit these records molted), I commissioned Jud to assemble a group of amphibians called "The Toads" in an effort to get the lowest sound possible. He did and it was.

★  
THE ORCHESTRAL SUPPORT is mostly by Billy May, a talented and strapping pixie, who holds sway over my sessions in a great, flapping Hawaiian shirt. As he stands conducting the evening's bedlam, he looks a little like a porpoise at a luau. He is also the funniest arranger I know. Well, I hope you will forget about those Bach fugues now and buy this album. You may very well enjoy it. But don't take my word for it. As a fruit-fly inspector in Honolulu once said to me, "If you don't mind, buddy, I'll open 'er up and have a look myself." If I were you, that's just what I'd do. Slip the record from the cardboard sleeve and examine it carefully. If it looks as though it might be carrying fruit-fly, I wouldn't buy it.

STAN FREBERG,  
(Pasadena, California)

**HIS OLDEST—AND HIS NEWEST—EMPLOYEES ARE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR**

# Loyalty To Lewis

**THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE WORKED WITH HIM TO BUILD THE MIGHTY DECCA EMPIRE**

**T**HE PORTRAIT OF E. R. LEWIS as drawn from the information contained in his secretary Mrs L. J. Hemsley's 25-years-old scrapbook is something akin to the half-finished work on a painter's canvas. The foundation, the form, the muscles are all there but the picture won't be that of a complete human being until the externals are supplied.

That Lewis the businessman, as head of a £13,500,000 enterprise known as the Decca Record group, is a towering success is a patently visible fact. That he chose to accept a tremendous challenge at a moment when an easier path beckoned; undertook a 16 hour day; set a goal and never wavered in his pursuit of it; must have had or had to develop a degree of determination in business; all these things account for the ultimate victory in the face of day-to-day opposition from competitors.

## The Oldest Administrators

**B**UT THEY DON'T ACCOUNT FOR THE MOST ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT: LOYALTY from and HARMONY among members of the organisation responsible for a turnover of £13,500,000. Nothing in cold print gives a clue to what this element might be but I think I discovered the answer in the course of conversation with one of the key members of the organisation, Alfred H. Clements. "Clem" is head of a division of the export department, first started work with Decca Gramophone Co. in 1920! He switched to record making in 1929; thus he has been in close contact with Lewis for almost 30 years. Clem gave me a run-down on the oldest Decca administrators . . . and the list starts in 1915 with LES MARTIN, in charge of Stores; JOHN ARCHER, 1919, concerned with Selecta and accounts; CLEMENTS, 1920; ALFIE GOSS, 1920, cashier; ALBERT PITTS, 1924, Radio & TV manager; SID PITTS, 1926, factory; ROBERT C. KELLY, 1926, export; E. M. ROACH, 1926, publicity; BILL TOWNSLEY, 1926, Lewis's personal assistant; Mrs. L. J. HEMSLEY, 1929, record sales and Lewis's personal secretary from 1931. Those dates furnish the best answer to the query, "Lewis: Man or Machine?" Only an inspiring, pretty well-balanced man can account for such longevity on the part of what is, unmistakably, a team of top flight individuals. Two of the oldest associates, Clem Clements and Bob Kelly, were originally impressed by the fact that the busy and otherwise occupied Lewis took time to learn all aspects of the business before officially taking over. "He was big-name minded even then," they said, "and brought in the first name band leader in Roy Fox."

## Lee Returned To First Love

**T**HE CURRENT A. & R. top man, FRANK LEE, began his association with Decca back in 1931 when he and recording engineer Arthur Lilley, well-known to anybody who has ever cut a disc at the Hampstead Studio, ran a Decca recording studio together in Chelsea! Lee transferred his activities to Radio Luxembourg in 1935 but returned to his first love in 1951. When he's not conferring with Lewis, Lee can usually be found at the high-g geared Hampstead studios presided over by chief engineer ARTHUR C. HADDY, the man responsible for Full Frequency Range Recording. Studio's chief recorder is KENNETH WILKINSON. Lee and Lilley, in common with most of the Decca personnel when asked, "What do you personally think of Mr. Lewis?" flashed the momentarily stunned, slightly incredulous look of men who are accustomed to thinking of the boss as nothing but a "grand guy" and are surprised that everyone doesn't know it.

Every artiste who has ever worked in front of a Decca microphone knows and likes Decca's "Queen Bee," smiling EVE PLUNKETT. Eve has been with the firm since 1938 and is known as "Queen of the Sessions" since almost everything pertaining to the smooth running of a record session gets her personal attention.



## ACTION STATIONS!

One of the most active departments in the Decca organisation is the Sales Promotion Section over which enterprising S. A. BEECHER-STEVENS is in charge. Picture above shows Beecher - Stevens 'in action', supported by assistants who have to be on the qui vive just as much as he. Snap decisions, immediate changes and switches, huge publicity campaigns and all the excitement of the 'Big Drive' prevail here.

Picture on left is that of Mr. W. W. ('Bill') TOWNSLEY, personal assistant to Mr. E. R. Lewis. Mr. Townsley has been with the Decca Company for over 30 years.

—RM Pictures

"He's been very good to me personally," was all she'd say of Lewis, but there was a solid note of gratitude in the way she said it.

Frank Lee's "Girl Friday" is Joyce Bright who has been a member of the team since 1948.

## Faith In The 'Newcomer'

**S.** A. "STEVE" BEECHER-STEVENS CAME TO DECCA IN 1950, was sent straight to Australia where he launched the first LPs. Steve is a relative newcomer to the organisation but when Lewis hired him seven years ago he showed once again his great talent for choosing the right people. No one at Decca is more co-operative or garners more good-will for the company than its sales manager. "I like his down-to-earth policy," says Beecher-Stevens of his boss. "He's always willing to give an idea a good hearing and, if he likes it, will say 'go right ahead' and give it his full support all the way."

Two long-time workers in the Decca dominion are A & R men HUGH MENDEL and DICK ROWE, both directly responsible for Decca Artistes. The latest Decca group acquisition, distribution of RCA records, is in the capable hands of FRANK

CHARMERS who joined the company in 1953 after long experience in radio. Like most of his colleagues, Chalmers avows to being "completely happy in my job and more than a little fond of the gent known as 'Ted' Lewis."

An 18-year man is LESLIE BAKER, a director of the advertising firm of John Tait & Partners, who came to look after Decca advertising in 1947. Advertising assistant TONY FROUD dates from 1951. The consensus of opinion from those who should know him best, apart from his wife whose picture stands opposite his desk and of whom Lewis proudly says, "she has a very keen business mind" is that Edward Robert Lewis is a man of paradoxes.

A quiet, unassuming man with no side, but a man who can be keen in business. A man who will appreciate any joke, rag with anyone and loosen up completely over a beer with intimates, but a man who will never be rattled when the chips are down. A man who is never afraid of committing himself to something in which he believes and getting on with it. A man whose kindly deeds and magnanimous donations to charity remain untold because he wants this personal side of his life untold. And, probably most indicative, a man who has most of his old friends around him still after 30 years of show business stress and strain.

(Decca 'Pops' through the years and more pictures: P. 39)

# Bernard Delfont Agency Ltd.



## Season's Greetings

and

## Best Wishes

from

# BILLY MARSH

AND

# KEITH DEVON



MORRIS HOUSE  
1-5 JERMYN ST.  
LONDON S.W.1

# DOROTHY SQUIRES

## Compliments of

## The Season To All

DIRECTION :

WILL COLLINS AGENCY LTD.  
45/46 CHANDOS PLACE, LONDON, W.C.2.  
TEMPLE Bar 7255



# WILL COLLINS AND STAFF

WISH ALL FRIENDS IN THE BUSINESS

## A Very Happy Christmas and Prosperous 1958

### WILL COLLINS THEATRICAL & VAUDEVILLE EXCHANGE LTD.

Representatives :

CYRIL GIBBINS     ::     LESLIE BLOOM  
JACK MURRAY     ::     EVELYN TAYLOR

and Staff :

Nina Heycock - Rita Bowden - Louise Crawley  
Barbara Pitts - Valerie Chalsen - Rosalind Laskin

CHANDOS HOUSE, 45-46, CHANDOS PLACE, LONDON, W.C.2  
Phone: Temple Bar 7255-6-7   Grams: "Limelight, Lesquare, London"

# Decca 'Pops' Through The Years...

## A SCINTILLATING LINE-UP OF STARS

**I**N THE "POP" FIELD THE DECCA MASTER CATALOGUE gives pride of place to Roy Fox and his Band for turning out the first one and a big one in the 1929-30 season.

Roy's "Whispering" and "You Are My Heart's Delight" gave his aggregation the chance to become the first star band on the label with his "Peanut Vendor". George Formby's "Do-De-o-Do" and "Chinese Blues" is the second "name" to appear. It's impossible to list ALL the important waxings in a 364-page catalogue containing some of the greatest material ever recorded but here are the prominent names and, in some cases, debut tunes. The all-important Crosby came along in 1934 with the Brunswick label and, so voluminous are the files on that, it's necessary to treat it separately.

For Decca, Ambrose and His Orchestra were introduced by "La Cucaracha" and shortly afterwards the "Street Singer" made his appearance with "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes". Louis Armstrong, Bob Crosby, Jimmy Dorsey, Nat Gonella and Charlie Kunz came along in rapid succession. The fabulous "Marta" rocketed the "Street Singer" to fame during this period. First of the many Vera Lynn sides seems to have been "The Bells of St. Mary's" and "In My Little Red Book". Donald Novis, Harry Horlick, Flanagan and Allen's "Run, Rabbit, Run", Tony Martin's "Begin the Beguine", Mantovani for the first time with "La Cumpasita" and "Jealousy". Lew Stone, Frances Day and Bud Flanagan, Gracie Fields' "Biggest Aspidistra in the World" and "Ave Maria", Vera Lynn's "Yours". Donald Peers, Anne Shelton, Harry Roy, Edmundo Ros, for the first time with "Tico-Tico". Stanley Black's "Rumbah Tambah", Ted Heath for the first time with "Opus 1", Joy Nichols and Benny Lee's "Pussycat Song", Robert Farnon and His Orchestra, Lee Lawrence, Cyril Stapleton, Winifred Atwell joining Decca with "The Gypsy Samba." The Johnston Bros., Lita Roza, Jimmy Young, Dickie Valentine's "Broken Wings", Ray Ellington, David Whitfield on "Marta" and "I'll Never Forget You", Joan Regan with "Till They've All Gone Home", the first of Frank Chacksfield "Song of Canterbury", Beverley Sisters' "Humming Bird". All these artistes have helped to make, and in many instances are still making Decca the great name it is today. Fabulous hits have ridden on their performances.

### CROSBY THE GREAT

**J**UST AS MANY illustrious names decorate the vast Brunswick list; but it's impossible not to think of it in terms of one man . . . BING CROSBY. If, as admitted, there would have been no Decca without "Ted" Lewis, by the same token it's difficult to imagine Brunswick (and Decca) without the fabulous "groaner". The very first item in the Brunswick catalogue lists a recording called "The Golden Bird" with actual canaries credited with the singing. Be that as it may, the "Golden Guy" and the Brunswick Boom started some 15 items later with "Out of Nowhere". Followed in short order "Many Happy Returns of the Day", "At Your Command", "I Found a Million Dollar Baby" and "I Apologize". Duke Ellington and Red Nichols were potent contemporaries of the Great Man with the former bowing on "Mood Indigo" and Nichols listed as actually the first "human" performer via "Peg O' My Heart". The Boswell Sisters' "Roll on, Mississippi, Roll on" and "Shine On, Harvest Moon" started their long vogue and Cab Calloway came in on "Nobody's Sweetheart". The Mills Brothers' "Tiger Rag", Kate Smith "The Continental", Al Jolson with "Sonny Boy"; the roster was star-laden from the start. Ethel Waters, The Dorsey Brothers, Victor Young with "Tales From the Vienna Woods", Louis Armstrong's "Wild Man Blues", The Ink Spots, Judy Garland (noted as 13 years old) singing "Stompin' at the Savoy" and "Swing Mister Charlie", Deanna Durbin's "Il Bacio", Grace Moore with "What Shall Remain" and "Stars in My Eyes." Then the Casa Loma orchestra's "Nagasaki" and "Stompin' Around", the Andrew Sisters' "Bei Mir Bist Du Schon", Sophie Tucker's immortal "Some of These Days", Paul Whiteman, Tony Martin, Guy Lombardo, Fred Astaire, Jimmy Durante's "Inka Dinka Doo", Larry Adler with "Clair de Lune" and "Hora Stacato", Hoagy Carmichael, the original Broadway cast of "Oklahoma"; on and on goes the remarkable roster.

### STARS, STARS, STARS

**P**EGGY LEE, ELLA FITZGERALD, Dick Haymes, Danny Kaye, the New York "King and I" cast, Bill Haley and His Comets, Al Hibbler, Sammy Davis, and finally, GARY Crosby! And through it all, for 23 years and connecting 1957 to 1934, the golden thread known as "Bing". Up through the years came "Two Cigarettes in the Dark", "Let Me Call You Sweetheart", "Easy to Remember", "June in January", "I Wish I Were Aladdin", "Twilight on the Trail", "Pennies From Heaven", "Sweet Leilani", "It's the Natural Thing to Do", "Goldmine in the Sky", "Mexicali Rose", "El Rancho Grande", "Empty Saddles", "Tumbling Tumbleweeds", "Shoe Shine Boy", "Skylark", "The



### OTHER DECCA STARS...

although not on disc but who must go on 'record'. Their work is to stimulate the sales of discs still more and they have been, and still are, making a grand job of it. RM photographer DEZO HOFFMANN, on his tour of the Decca offices, captured these shots in the various departments. Top picture: ROBERT KELLY (left) and A. H. CLEMENTS, two of the oldest employees of the company; centre picture: the room from which some of the most important instructions are relayed to the numerous departments. In charge is Mr. W. W. TOWNSLEY, seen here with his live-wire secretary Miss ANNE BLAKE (right) and another most capable assistant, Miss GLORIA CLARK. Picture on left is of Mr. E. M. ROACH, one of the assistants of Mr. F. E. ATTWOOD, chief of advertising and publicity—an enormously responsible assignment.

Road to Morocco" with Bob Hope, "Pistol Packin' Mama" with the Andrews, "Swinging on a Star", "Country Style", "But Beautiful", "Whiffenpoof Song", "Adeste Fideles and Silent Night", "Far Away Places", "Let's Take the Long Way Home", "Way Back Home", "A Couple of Song and Dance Men" with Astaire, "The Last Mile Home", "Isle of Innisfree", "Sam's Song" with Gary, right to the last item in the catalogue, "Is Christmas Only a Tree?". A lifetime of memories can be conjured up by perusing the hundreds of titles recorded by Crosby.

## I'M A PRO WITH A PEN

SAYS GEORGIE WOOD

**I** WELCOME RE-CORDING ARTISTES WHO ARE BOX-OFFICE IN THE MUSIC HALLS.

Just as 30 years ago I welcomed people like Elsie and Doris Waters, The Western Brothers, Jack Hylton and his Band and so many who had been rocketed to fame by the magic of the new medium of radio. When I first played the London Coliseum in 1909 die-hards were complaining that the stars of theatre, ballet and opera would kill Variety.

The cry has gone up periodically through the ages, notably with the advent of the Tango-Teas in the 20's, Talking Pictures in the late 20's and, now, Television.

The fact remains that there are more Variety artistes employed, and I'll say that again: "employed" more now than at any time in the history of the industry. How does this come about with only one fifth of Music Halls open compared to when I first started in 1909?

Firstly, in place of a bill of 8 to 10 acts engaging a maximum of 25 artistes we have revues with that number as the minimum. Then there is the development of the Summer Shows. Look at the output of the Bernard Delfont Agency alone. Concert tours on an enormous scale, popularised by impresario Harold Fielding, have helped considerably, whilst enquiries increase for band and recording artistes.

The public interest in these matters is well served by the RECORD MIRROR. With columns I wrote through the years since 1927 for trade papers like the now defunct ENCORE and THE PERFORMER, the response I got was mostly from those directly connected with the profession. My RECORD MIRROR mailbag contains letters from two-thirds of readers who have no part of show business except as patrons. This in itself proves a terrific public interest.

Yes, dear sir or madam, should you happen to be reading this right now please accept my thanks. Without an audience the actor cannot exist, and, much as I may like to kid myself that I am a journalist, when it comes down to my proper "billing" I am just a pro with a pen.

All blessings for 1958.



A



Merry Christmas

from

CYRIL ORNADEL

and the

LONDON PALLADIUM ORCHESTRA

R. COLE

- |           |              |              |             |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| M. ASTON  | C. EISHER    | L. MADDOX    | L. SMITH    |
| D. BOWDEN | F. FREEMAN   | E. MORDUE    | D. SOUTHARD |
| E. BRYETT | B. HUDSON    | J. OLDFIELD  | E. TANN     |
| M. CYBULA | T. KELLY     | G. ORRELL    | J. RICHMOND |
| P. DODD   | B. LEWINGTON | S. PICKSTOCK | R. WRIGHT   |

BERNARD DELFONT

conveys

Season's Greetings and Best Wishes

To Everybody in Show Business



THE BERNARD DELFONT AGENCY, LTD.,  
Morris House, Jermyn Street, Piccadilly, London, W.  
Telephone: WHITEHALL 9901



Seasonal Greetings

from

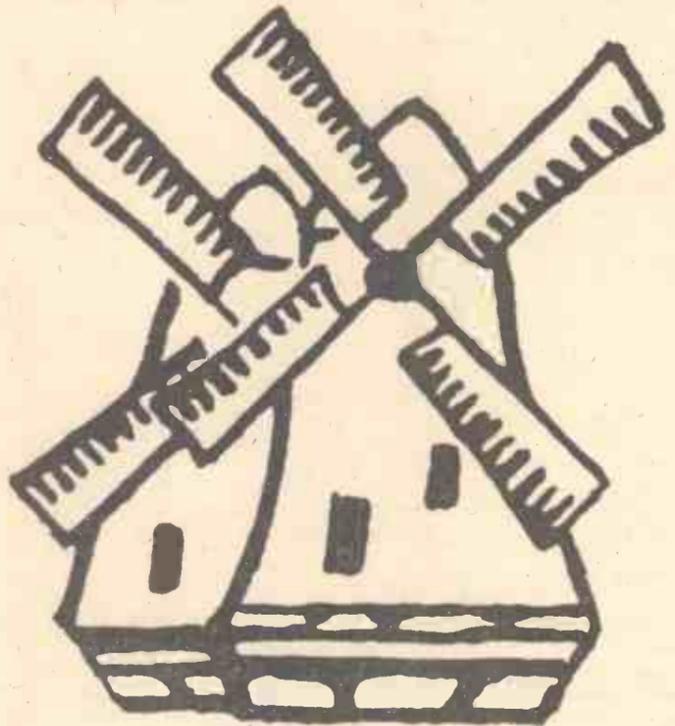


Mr and Mrs  
**JIMMY WHEELER**  
and  
FAMILY

PANTO SEASON: GOLDERS GREEN, HIPPODROME



We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



MILLS MUSIC

LONDON - NEW YORK - HOLLYWOOD - TORONTO - BRUSSELS



# • It Happened In 1958 Already . . .

**THE TIME MACHINE** LAY at the bottom of the cupboard, half-hidden by old shoes, hatboxes and back copies of THE RECORD MIRROR.

I hardly ever used the thing any more and had almost forgotten I still possessed it. Every year one or another of my friends asked me why I bothered to hang on to such an outmoded contraption, and always I offered the same excuse.

"I keep it," I said to them, "because it comes in handy every Christmas."

"In what way?" they would ask, evidently sceptical.

"Well, it is an established fact that every Christmas magazine editors always ask their contributors to write a piece based on what the next year holds in store for the entertainment business. So, to save myself all the trouble of becoming a seer, I just take out that old thing, dust it off, move forward a year and see for myself what actually did happen."

"But surely you don't mean to say that after all these years you still need a Time Machine to tell you what is going to happen in show business in the next year? You ought to know very well that what will happen in show business next year is the same as what happened in show business last year and the year before that and the year before that."

"Broadly speaking, yes," I would usually reply, "but with the machine at hand I can give actual details. It makes everything so much easier."

I **TOUGHT TO EXPLAIN** that I had built the Time Machine some years before just to prove to doubting acquaintances that the thing could be done. I had never used it, for the very good reason that not to know the future keeps hope alive and not to recall the past keeps depression away. The only satisfaction I had ever derived from the Machine was the practical proof of the possibility of its existence. It was an ingenious little affair, though I say it myself, and the most astonishing feature about it to those pre-Wellsians, who had refused to believe such a Machine could be built, was its size.

My Machine could be comfortably carried in an alto saxophone case, although why anybody in his right mind should conceivably want to carry a Time Machine about in an alto saxophone

case is quite beyond me. The Machine was built of a light alloy of copper and the transparent steel I had patented in the years before I took up experimental science seriously.

The principle of the Time Machine was elementary and was simply a matter of releasing a field of magnetic force by polarising the resistance through the generators... but I see I am boring my readers with tiresome details of no possible interest to anyone but a few old doddering pre-atomic scientists.

**ALL THAT NEEDS TO BE KNOWN** is that my Time Machine was still in working condition and was small and compact enough not to create untoward notice among strangers. My planned visit into 1958 was my first scheduled outing in Time-space for over three years, and I was even looking forward a little to the prospect of peeping ahead. I determined though, to stick to my one golden rule, which was never to bump into myself on my travels into the future. I have always preferred not to know what became of me, and in my past trips into the future, and indeed, in any future trips into the past, have always, and will always, carefully avoid myself like the plague.

What happened to me in 1958 was of no possible interest to anybody, least of all myself. All I desired to do was to check up on trends in the world of entertainment for that year and see how close to the facts my own guesses had turned out to be. As events proved, even I fell short in my appraisals of just how far things would go during the year.

The predictions I made came true, but I did not make them emphatically enough. For instance, I said that record sales would continue to rise. What I did not consider was the possibility they might rise by two thousand per cent. The same was true in almost every sphere of show business. I picked the trends accurately enough. It was the degree of rising speed which I failed to anticipate. What follows is a straight and ungarnished report of the events which I found had taken place during 1958.

**THE GENERAL CONDITION** of television in this country

had become so ridiculous by the end of 1958 that it was no longer regarded as a polite topic of conversation.

The system of commercial advertising, feverishly chasing its own tail, finally worked itself into the most terrifying impasse one could possibly imagine. Independent Television, hellbent on revenue, made the belated discovery that it wasn't independent after all, but was instead a helpless slave

independent television moguls, who said in effect that every industry had its ethics, even the entertainment industry, the B.B.C. continued to buy advertising time on the independent networks, with the result that by the end of the year, independent television economy had become so dependent on B.B.C. advertisements that on the 64,000,000 quiz programme (sixty-four million farthings, by the way), the one question calculated to

not how much you knew but how stupid you were. Within four weeks of its inception, "Mish Mush Quiz" had resolved itself into the search for the most ignorant man in the British Isles. Candidates were asked simple questions which they were expected not to answer. By the use of lie detectors in the studios, a decision was reached whereby the most ignorant man of the evening was enthroned. He continued to reign, gaining an additional ten pounds for every question he failed to answer correctly, until another contestant appeared who knew less than he did. At the end of the year—the reigning champion, with three thousand four hundred and twenty pounds to his credit, was a film producer with thirty-seven films on drug addiction to his name.

The statistical branch of London University reported at the end of the scholastic year, which occurs some time in May, that more and more students had been enrolling for special courses for Quiz Programme training. Entering for these competitions had by the end of 1958 become a flourishing profession, and already the trend was for rabid professionalism. Managers started stables of answerers whose duty it was to limber up between quizzes by digesting reference books, encyclopaedias and assorted collections of useless data. The managers took fifteen per cent. of all winnings and issued challenges to rival managers for side-stakes whose size was increasing rapidly as the year ended.

**BUT IF TV WAS FIGHTING** a losing battle with sanity, what of the recording industry? During 1958, the record business went from strength to strength.

Record after record was broken, if I may be permitted to employ such a phrase. During 1958 eleven million long-playing records were sold in the London area alone, or one to every person, including myself. Experiments with recording techniques finally produced in September, 1958, the first non-playing record. The sixteen-revs-per-minute discs had proved popular for a short while, then in April had come in the sensational eight revs-per-minute sides, which played for two days without stopping.

In August American interests had flooded the British market with the

newer, more daring, three-revs-per-minute records, specially designed for those who were going away for a long holiday (the records lasted three weeks), and in the last month of the year, perfection was finally attained with a gramophone record which did not revolve at all. It merely stayed still on the turntable while the needle went round. At seventy-eight revolutions per minute.

**THE SUPPLY OF MALE SINGING STARS** proved, unfortunately, to be inexhaustible.

Readers may recall that during 1957 the fashion became firmly established of male singing stars rather younger than used to be the custom. It was in 1957 that the teenage matinee idol came into his own. However, during the following year he went right out of it again, being superseded by his new rival **The Child Star**. In the early months of 1958 the tendency towards Youth became more noticeable. Events marched relentlessly towards the logical but insane conclusion. At the beginning of the year, one of the record companies, in an attempt to eliminate all competition once and for all, thought to itself that as the trend was for younger and younger singers, it would sponsor the youngest singer of all. A thirteen-year-old delinquent was discovered, taken out on bail, recorded, feted, publicised, made into a national hero and billed as "The Biggest Thing since Jayne Mansfield." There was only one recourse left open to rivals, and for the rest of the year remarkable developments characterised the patterns of approach in the recording industry. The kindergartens of the nation were scoured for schoolboy Sinatras and babyfaced Belafontes. The average age of the male singing star fell drastically and continued to fall, until by the end of the year every recording in the Top Twenty had been made by boys of ten years or less. A new Factory Act was introduced in the House of Commons forbidding the number of recordings to exceed sixty-four per month by vocalists under the age of seven years, and in one New York suburb a new school was built (and opened by the President) with a playpen which incorporated its own recording unit complete with microphones, tape recorders, and a built-in cage for agents, meddling sound engineers and A. and R. men.

**WHATEVER THE SANER TYPE** of reader may feel about such developments there is no doubt that they were very good for the recording industry. The standard of popular songs had by now deteriorated so much that the seven- and six-year-old child singing stars recruited from backward schools had no trouble learning the melody or reciting the lyrics. According to the Audit Bureau of Record Circulation, for every one record sold in 1957, eighteen were sold in 1958. It was even rumoured at one time during the summer that American Musicians' Union leader Caesar Petrillo, was to run for President on a Main-stream ticket.

**I AM AFRAID THAT** during the year the Art of the Cinema could do no more than reflect the developments in its sister-industries which I have already recounted. The tendency in the cinema during 1958 was for films which debunked rival forms of entertainment. For instance, the biggest comedy hit of the year was a film called "The Wearing of the Screen," which concerned the fortunes of a young man who, because of a compulsive neurosis dating back to early years, found himself mysteriously incapable of switching off his television set. It turned out that this was due to the fact that when he was young he was the only kid on the street whose mother loved his father. The banality of his plight had caused him to become an extroverted introvert with extrovert tendencies, for whom the television set symbolised adult maturity, which proves that the man really was mad. Other Hollywood attacks on television included the inter-stellar-space comedy, "I Married Cath O'Dray," and one of those unexpected B film successes made on a shoestring called "The Square Eye," which featured a scene where a seductive commercials announcer kept interrupting the "Oh, what a peasant slave am I" soliloquy from Hamlet with the blandishment "Do YOU use Channel number five?"

**BUT THE MOST PATHETIC EVIDENCE** of the impasse into which popular entertainment had worked itself by the end of 1958 was the giant production "Will Success spoil Cecil B. deMille?" *Continued on next page*

## The Time Machine



## of Benny Green

of those who bought its air-space. In its endeavour to open new accounts, independent television naturally found it out of the question to reject anybody with the money to pay. The result of this pathetic situation was that in late October, 1958, witnesses of the new ITV feature "Halve Your Money," were astounded to see before their eyes an elaborate film advertising the B.B.C. television service! Despite the complaints of the

baffle even the cleverest in the land was "Who makes more profit out of the other, the B.B.C. or A.T.V.; or vice versa?"

**THE MOST POPULAR OF THE NEW** television programmes was ATV's "Mish Mush Quiz," billed as "The Quiz show with a difference." And difference there certainly was, for "Mish Mush Quiz" was specifically designed to discover

# A Merry Christmas TO YOU ALL

Christmas Greetings  
To All  
from

# Season's Greetings To One and All



## THE HEDLEY WARD TRIO

THIS WEEK ONE NIGHT STANDS

Mon.: MELBOURNE.  
Tues.: TOKYO  
Wed.: NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.  
Thurs.: CALCUTTA.  
Fri.: DAY OFF.  
Sat.: CLEETHORPES.  
Next Week: MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL.

Direction :  
NORMAN MURRAY  
Fosters Agency Ltd.,  
Piccadilly, W.1.

**ARCHIE  
ANDREWS**  
AND HIS ASSISTANT  
**PETER BROUGH**



from  
**CHIC MURRAY & MAIDIE**  
Pantomime: 'CINDERELLA', EMPIRE, GLASGOW

Direction :  
BILLY MARSH      BERNARD DELFONT AGENCY LTD.

# The Time Machine Of Benny Green

CONTINUED FROM  
PREVIOUS PAGE

whose theme was that of a screen writer who writes a film about a TV writer who writes a film about a screen writer who writes a film about a TV writer who... The complications ran well on into 1959, so I am unable to report how the plot worked out in the end. I doubt whether it matters very much.

Serious films, the problem cinema, thrived madly on a surfeit of X certificates and lurid poster advertisements. A great deal of controversy was raised in particular by one of these posters used in the advance publicity campaign for a screen version of "Tom Brown's Schooldays." The poster depicted a blonde looking remarkably like Sabrina in certain aspects, clad in a one-piece tigerskin ensemble thrusting pouting ruby lips at a handsome young man wearing only a leopard-skin loincloth and a schoolboy's cap. Critics who saw press shows of the film were puzzled in their reports by the fact that they could see no scenes in the film which even vaguely resembled the moment depicted on the posters. However, this discrepancy was put down to the fact that the British censors must have deleted the scene from the film, and there the matter was allowed to rest.

During the year there were seen in the West End eleven major productions whose theme was drug addiction, seventeen concerning murder, sixty-four

about adolescent delinquency and violence, one hundred and forty-seven about psychiatric disorders and none at all with a feasible plot or palatable characters. Elvis Presley was presented with the Academy Award for the second year in succession for his hip-shattering performance in "Love Me — Love My Agent", a Technicolour musical in 3D with stereophonic sound, VistaVision, CinemaScope and the same old script. The award for the Best Female Actress went to Joan Crawford for her portrayal in the title role of "The Eddie Cantor Story".

**READERS WILL BY NOW** have begun to wonder when I intend mentioning the Jazz scene during 1958. The reason for the delay is clear. I was so pessimistic about the fortunes of Jazz during the year 1958 that I delayed taking in the situation at all. But I need not have worried. **Jazz is more durable than many people realise.** It has the rare ability to attain a fine old age and flourish long after people have pronounced it dead. Witnesses of the Eddie Condon British tour will know what I mean. During 1958 Traditional Jazz in this country continued to lose ground before the unstoppable advance of the Do-It-Yourself brigade, without ever once stopping to explain what tradition it was that the British traditionalist is supposed to be following.

Although Chris Barber continued to be a draw all over the country and also in Newcastle, it was as a racing driver rather than as a trombonist. He won the Grand Prix at Le Mans and bought his tenth motor car in the same week in August, 1958, that Stirling Moss started taking guitar and singing lessons.

Of the skiffers, they went from strength to strength like a plague of yodelling locusts, and during the year succeeded not only in dominating the playing of music, but the manufacture of the musical instruments too.

Huge mass-producing banjo factories sprang up along the Great West Road, and the secretary of the Fretted Instruments Manufacturers' Guild became a power in the land. One interesting by-product of the Skiffle State was the device adopted by several jazz musicians with pretensions to integrity. Knocking skiffle by day, they strummed it out by night, sitting in the back row of the serried ranks of plunkers and scrapers, contriving to have their cake and eat it. Segovia was still reported to be holding out against an offer from Chas. McDevitt in December, 1958.

**THE ANGLO-AMERICAN BAND EXCHANGE** continued gaily on its insane way, although by the end of the year it was becoming increasingly apparent that the only thing that was really

being exchanged was currency and not music. In March, 1957, the Cy Laurie Four went to the United States in exchange for the Benny Goodman Quartet. In September Terry Dene went over for Duke Ellington, a month later Pete Murray went over in exchange for Billy Graham, and the year ended on a note of grand climax when Harold Davison went over in exchange for Joe Glaser. Everybody was very happy about the whole business and made lots and lots of money.

### THE MODERN JAZZ

**SCENE** in this country drew in its horns even further, or, to put it another way, less and less musicians were working. By the end of the year there were only two groups left working regularly and each one was comprised of members of the other group. As the year ended it was rumoured that the two groups would be combining. Variations of "I Got Rhythm" were recorded under seventy-three different titles, all with an accredited composer, but nobody was there to be found who could offer any explanation for the demise of modern jazz. Humphrey Lyttelton described himself in "Woman's Hour" as a "Traditionalist - Mainstreamer with tendencies towards the Basie small groups", and continued to play "Jazz Me Blues" in the manner of Louis Armstrong.

Stan Kenton made a short announcement on the future of Stan Kenton, consisting of three thousand words, seven hundred of which were "dichotomy." The national polls to discover the nation's top instrumentalists hit the modernists hard. In the poll to discover the all-time Guitar Giant the modernist hero Charlie Christian was thrust into second place behind Tommy Steele, while Bert Weedon was not even placed at all. Winifred Atwell won the piano award in front of Art Tatum, and the title of Best Band in the World resulted in a triple tie between Laurence Welk, Ted Heath and Bill Haley. On being questioned about his voting choice, one denizen from Six-Five Special was heard to say, "Duke who?"

### THE TOURING BAND

**BUSINESS** in Great Britain finally collapsed entirely, and the era of the One-Night Stand finally passed from the national scene altogether. Indeed, one of the most tragic sights I saw during my trip into the future was of a phantom coach flitting through the night, filled with tired and complaining musicians, in whom the touring habit was so deeply ingrained that they were actually unable to stop. For months on end they fulfilled self-imposed coach calls, travelling endlessly up and down the A1, looking for long-since

vanished hotels and ballrooms, either unaware that the touring game was played out or incapable of facing the dreadful truth.

History will record that the year 1958 saw the true end of the system whereby a band or orchestra from London visits a provincial town and sells itself for no better reason than that it has come from London. Times had moved on, and it was to the variety halls that the younger generation flocked when it wanted live entertainment.

But there was one bright spark in an otherwise gloomy scene for professional musicians. Although they found themselves increasingly unemployed in 1958, and like everybody else victims of the rising cost of living, they were saved from extreme penury by an economic accident which nobody had thought of.

**Thousands of saxophonists and trumpeters and trombonists had been jettisoning unwanted instruments during the nineteen-fifties and the metal melted down and recast into membership badges for fan clubs.** But the few intrepid men who hung grimly on to their instruments during the crisis found in 1958 that their loyalty to a lost cause was after all to be rewarded. Saxophones and trumpets in particular attained a steadily increasing rarity value and by October, 1958 when the first big musical relics sale was held at Christie's the financial future was assured for every musi-

cian who still possessed a genuine instrument.

### IN CHRISTMAS WEEK

1958 a tenor saxophone was sold by private auction in the north of England for eleven thousand pounds, and indications were that in 1959, with real music and real instruments becoming scarcer still, the value of old-fashioned instruments would continue to rise.

Just one last remark.

When, after reviewing the year 1958, I turned back and adjusted my Time Machine to the present, I wondered whether it might not be worth while taking just a glimpse at the years after 1958, to see whether there were any hopes of conditions improving or deteriorating.

It would have been a simple matter for me to have swept forward and witnessed, say, the Jazz Jamboree for 1961, to find out whether anybody had yet plucked up the courage to play some Jazz on the show. It then occurred to me that every man must have something to live for and that it is the hope of the unknowable future which keeps a man going. So I turned back and wrote my copy out instead. The Time Machine went back into the cupboard, under the old shoes, hatboxes and back copies of the RECORD MIRROR. I doubt if I shall use the thing again till next Christmas. (There will be a next Christmas by the way.)

## AS THEY SAY IN SIAM, OPERA-GOING IS A PUZZLEMENT.

You dress up to the nines, you take a taxi to the middle of a vegetable market—if you live in London, that is—and you watch a plump tenor wooing an even plumper soprano who eventually dies of consumption though her lungs are obviously in terrific form. And during the intervals, which are usually long enough to show a second-feature film, you've got to be at least 90 years of age, with the sort of memory that wins 64,000 dollar questions, if you want to be in the swim with the rest of the audience. "Ah," you have to be able to say, "but she isn't as good as Gloriosa was in 1887."

OF course, if the opera bug has ever bitten you as it's bitten me, you just don't notice this zany side of opera-going. You don't even HEAR the ribald comments of the locals at Lewes when you change from train to coach at four o'clock on a sweltering summer's afternoon on your way to Glyndebourne to hear Mozart sung in a language you don't understand. (Odd that nobody ever takes the mickey this way out of people who struggle through Mayfair with washboards under their arms.) You're so crazy about Verdi and Maria Callas you go on believing that a "square" is just a four-sided geometrical figure with all its sides and angles equal. You may not even have heard of the RECORD MIRROR.

## YOU CAN ALSO REMAIN SANE

NOWADAYS, HOWEVER, it's just possible to be an opera lover—and sane. All because someone, who probably wasn't the least bit musical but just an engineering type, invented little discs you put on a spinning table. You see, it's all as simple as that! And what do you hear? Opera, of course. Some people use these gramophone things to play other types of music, but if you're opera mad you don't even know about them.

Every year they come churning out — operas — just like the rats that followed the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Tumbling over one another in a riot of throbbing Italian arias and duets and ensembles. No need to dress up. No need to wade through that vegetable market. No need to swot up musical history to show off to the rest of the audience. You just sit at home, relax and enjoy.

And what of 1957? What has it brought the opera fanatic to listen to at home by the fireside? So much that I've been able to gorge myself with Verdi, Puccini, Mozart to my heart's content. And right now, faced with the problem of selecting what I think are the Operatic Top Ten, I hardly know where to start.

First of all, I must reluctantly push to one side two recordings I'd hoped would be top-drawer but which bitterly disappointed me. Toscanini's "Aida" looked like being a wow; it turned out to be an orchestral feast but a vocal cold supper. A shame, because the dynamic Toscanini should be the conductor of all conductors to make "Aida" blaze with melody and drama.

My other rejection slip goes to "The Art of Caruso," a set of three discs presenting the now legendary Italian tenor in 32 arias and 14 songs. I guess Caruso lived just too soon for the gramophone to do him justice. On these recordings there's too little variety in his tone: he seems to sing full out all the time.

What must take first place in my Top Ten is the H.M.V. "La Bohème" conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham (HMV ALP 1409-10). This brings all the excitement of the opera house tingling into the home. And this is an opera that can easily be killed stone dead by bad performance. The story is such an obvious tear-jerker. Rodolfo can so easily sound

# 1957 AND OPERA'S TOP TEN

like a weak-kneed poet with a chip on his shoulder; Mimi can sink into a soft-centred tart; and the fool-in of the Bohemians can be as embarrassing as the sight of a Tory cabinet tucking into candy-floss.

Beecham, who seems determined never to grow old, infuses this performance with the radiant glow of youth. Every scene is given its maximum lyrical and dramatic effect, and the whole musical performance is eloquent, dazzling. And what perfectly chosen principals!

## SUPERB AND THRILLING

VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES, who thrilled me in this rôle at Covent Garden a few years ago, portrays Mimi with exquisite tone and feeling. Her singing of "They Call Me Mimi" and her "Farewell" have all the melting tenderness you could wish for, and she has such style that these almost too familiar arias sound fresh as the day Puccini put all his musical soul into them.

Jussi Bjorling, stalwart of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, is as rich and smooth in tone as ever. His singing of "Your Tiny Hand Is Frozen" would win him any girl, and his masterly style lets him give all his attention to portraying the character of Rodolfo.

The Musetta, Lucine Amara, really does sing, whereas

As compiled by  
**Frank Granville  
Barker**

I've so often heard Musettas in the opera house who just gurgled and shrieked their way through the part. And what gaiety there is in her Waltz Song! Robert Merrill makes an ideal Marcello for her, his warm-toned baritone blending to perfection. And finally, Giorgio Tozzi sings the well-known bass "Coat Song" with a restraint that makes the scene doubly effective.

Talking of basses brings me to my next choice—Fernando Corena's "Operatic Arias for Bass" (Decca LXT 5307). I always used to feel sorry for the poor bass. The pampered tenor is usually given all the lush, romantic melodies, while the baritone can enjoy swaggering along as Figaro in "The Barber of Seville" or chilling everyone's spine as the magnificently villainous Scarpia in "Tosca." But the bass is usually the poor relation, left to growl in the background.

I changed my tune a bit when I heard Fernando Corena sing the title-rôle in Verdi's "Falstaff" at the Edinburgh Festival a couple of years back, for his richly comic performance of Shakespeare's fat old knight, which would have been a credit to any Stratford company, won him terrific applause.

Born in Geneva of a Turkish father and an Italian mother, Corena is just the right man to sing Rossini—who wrote an opera called "Turk in Italy"!

The first side of his LP presents him in three of Rossini's most brilliant arias. The characters are those endearingly fussy old men of the Italian *commedia dell'arte* who are inevitably put on the spot by the younger folk. My favourites are the two arias sung by Don Magnifico, the father of the Ugly Sisters in Rossini's version of the Cinderella story, "La Cenerentola." In all these arias Corena shows the most wonderful sense of character. You can see him puffing about the stage, full of his own importance, and when he tells you what a sly old scoundrel he is you can almost see him winking.

These patter-songs tear along at a tremendous rate, but Corena takes them easily in his stride. No tongue-twister to music could beat him, and his tone is as smooth as velvet. He is equally at home, on the other side of this disc, in a selection of French arias. These are less witty than the Italian ones, but all have easy, lilting tunes. The final Offenbach aria, in which an elderly general boasts of his conquests on and off the battlefield, is a gem.

## FULL-BLOODED BRILLIANCE

EVER BEEN TO CHICAGO? I haven't, and until a couple of months ago I'd never really wanted to. But after hearing "An Evening at the Lyric Opera of Chicago" (Decca LXT 5326) I'm ready for an evening out in the City of Gangsters any time! For full-blooded singing in the Italian grand manner this disc takes some beating. Three soloists, Renata Tebaldi (soprano), Giulietta Simionato (mezzo) and Ettore Bastianini (baritone), give us a feast of high-powered vocal fireworks.

I don't think I've ever heard Tebaldi in better voice or more stylish than she is here in Margherita's great aria from Boito's "Mefistofele." This has one of those soaring melodies that nearly takes your breath away.

But not Tebaldi's! She's in excellent form, too, in her duet with Simionato from Ponchielli's "La Gioconda"—one of those "Anything you can do I can do better" affairs. The two women, fighting over the same man, each tries to bring ever richer tone and more thrilling high notes to cap the other—and both succeed! Their clean phrasing and perfect sense of pitch make their performance really dynamic.

Simionato makes a positive orgy of "Softly Awakes My Heart" from "Samson and Delilah." Certainly this well-known aria sounds excitingly fresh here, and this Delilah would have won Samson in a matter of seconds. Bastianini makes Gérard's aria in "Andrea Chénier" a thrilling affair, brilliantly characterised and sung with radiant tone. The singers have other arias, too, all superbly sung—but these were the highlights for my taste.

As a change from melodramatic Italian opera, I found the Beecham recording of Mozart's "The Seraglio" (Columbia 33 CX 1462-3) quite irresistible. A youthful work by Mozart, this story of the efforts of two young men to rescue their European girl friends from a harem has some of the most exquisite music you could hope to hear. And what's so important, Beecham brings to this recording the jewelled style and poise that Mozart's music needs—but doesn't always get.

Concluded On Page 45

By J. W. A. LANGENBERG, Managing-Director of Philips Phonographische Industrie, Baarn, the Netherlands

THE following article by the Editor of Philips Music Herald focuses attention on the early history of the gramophone record.

There is a great deal of truth in his assertion that all those employed in the gramophone record industry are fascinated by this history and every new detail coming to light is invariably seized upon with a kind of reverent admiration.

During the past eighty years the gramophone and the gramophone record have been gradually transformed from the fertile product of the brain of a genius into an inalienable and essential part of the daily lives of the greater part of humanity. Especially when one is closely connected with the weal and woe of a vast international concern in this field, one discovers every day anew to what extent the gramophone record, both as a medium of relaxation and culture spans the whole world.

I purposely mentioned the former category first, as all interested industries will confirm the fact that "popular music" is the main pillar on which the recording industry rests. One cannot shut one's eyes to the fact that the hundreds of thousands of "popular" gramophone records sold all over the world every week, especially now that the long playing record has created countless new qualitative and programmatic possibilities, have—strange though it may seem—provided a great stimulus to the evolution of "serious" music in recorded form. Popular music sales enable the industries concerned to find ways and means of perfecting their classical catalogues more rapidly. The quality of the long playing record of today is awakening a desire among an ever-increasing number of people to extend their musical horizons and gradually build up, in addition to their record collections devoted to music in a lighter vein, record libraries embracing the purely classical repertoire first and foremost.

We record manufacturers are commercial entrepreneurs and our policy is dictated by the laws of industry and commerce. Despite this there are invariably moments during our work when we savour the pleasure of realising that our labours are not bounded by commercial considerations alone. It sometimes staggers us completely when we realise with what incredible speed the significance of the gramophone record, as an enlightening and congenial medium for countless aspects of modern society, is assuming meteoric proportions. We are deeply grateful.

Our gratitude, in turn, should go out to those who took the initiative in this field: the pioneers in countries all over the world . . . inventors whose endeavours were scorned and ridiculed in the beginning.

**RECORD - LOVERS** — whose ranks have now swelled to millions, a vast number of whom are organised in tens of thousands of record clubs for collectors and genre specialists scattered all over the face of Mother Earth—have every reason to commemorate this year with gratitude. It now

seems certain that the first type of "phonograph" made its terrestrial debut in 1877, so that today's modern gramophone, although outwardly having little in common with its illustrious predecessor, can proudly look

## A REASON FOR GRATITUDE

back on a history of eighty years.

To whom does this honour fall?

Well, most people will immediately have the name Edison on the tip of their tongues, thinking of the "talking machine" of that brilliant American inventor, who actually demonstrated

# EIGHTY YEARS OF PHONOGRAPHIC HISTORY

Michel de Bry, Secretary of the "Academie du Disque Français"—which the famous author Colette played such a prominent role in establishing—and also the proud possessor of a unique collection of phonographic curios, recently told us something about the plans for a commemorative exhibition in Paris, which opened in October this year.

are also to be found in that country. In this connection one's thoughts immediately go out to Hayes, the seat of Electrical Musical Industries, the name of which is indelibly associated with such labels as Columbia and His Master's Voice, and where a certain Miss Mary Walton, who has already served for forty years on the staff of this concern maintains a vigilant watch over priceless historical archives and a select little museum. Miss Walton is a valuable source of

known fact, for example, that one of the great popes, His Holiness Leo the 13th, granted permission to an Italian engineer in the 1880's to record his voice on a cylinder, although this met with considerable criticism from other high-placed ecclesiastical authorities. When this pope died, the same engineer tried to give a public performance of these cylinders, on payment. The police, however, intervened, the man was deported and the cylinders confiscated,

tion must likewise be made of the recently founded British Institute of Sound, headed by Patrick Saul, with which the B.B.C. closely co-operates; then there is the Discothèque Nationale in Paris, the affairs of which are in the capable hands of M. Descolonges.

University centres in America are also extremely active, witness the founding of various institutes concentrating exclusively on the science of sound, such as that in New York. Nor must we forget the Thomas Alva Edison Museum in Orange, New Jersey. Thomas' first cylinder machine, in the commercial possibilities of which he, according to historians, did not believe, can be seen there, together with other striking mementos of his work in the field of acoustics. Edison's first phonograph originally formed part (until 1928) of the extremely interesting collection in the Science Museum, South Kensington, London, where many other historical and remarkable phonographic curios are on display. There is also a true-to-life replica, for instance, of Edison's first machine.

ANOTHER item of great interest is an early model (1899) of Parson's Auxetophone Reproducer which, although not one of the predecessors of modern recording equipment but a play-back apparatus, i.e. a kind of primitive gramophone, nevertheless represented quite an improvement in those days. One can also examine an early Berliner gramophone at one's leisure; Berliner, who was radically opposed to the cylinder phonograph, finally succeeded in establishing the superiority of his approach to sound reproduction, even though he had to wait several years for recognition.

A small country like the Netherlands has now become the centre of a great international gramophone record industry, even though it is a mere six years old: Philips Phonographische Industrie. It goes without saying, of course, that the electronic industry in the Netherlands, in particular the Philips concern—a very much older establishment indeed, as it was founded as far back as the 1890's—with all its research and production in the electro-acoustical field, has made a valuable contribution to the development of apparatus (Philips began six years ago with gramophone records, but has been manufacturing radio equipment, gramophones, etc., for several decades now) for the phonographic industry, while it also has a great deal of valuable historical data and experience at its disposal.

It is probably the long-playing record and its far-reaching effects on musical culture, industry and commerce throughout the whole world, which has suddenly made all kinds of people in various countries aware of the cultural significance of the phonographic industry.

THE single group most fascinated by this history today is in all probability that comprising those engaged in the manufacture and distribution of gramophones and gramophone records. The history of human civilization bears evidence for many centuries now—we only need to think back to the civilizations of bygone days—in which the sages and alchemists of yore sought to find ways and means of perpetuating sound. This desire was dictated by various

(Continued on next page)



## SENSATION!

Creating an even greater sensation than the Red Bleep has in modern times was that caused by the "phonograph" in the late 80's. When the first "horn" gramophone was exhibited—and played—in public, bewilderment was the reaction. Here was something in the nature of a miracle! TIME MARCHES ON!

an apparatus of this kind for the first time to a surprised audience as far back as 1877.

The systematic preservation of data regarding the numerous developments in the phonographic industry, however, is a more recent innovation. There are other nations, too, which likewise lay a claim to the predicate "discoverer" of the gramophone, at least in its weird, unsymmetrical embryonic form. Take an ingenious country, like France, for example, which regards its great son Charles Cros, who presented his "talking machine" for the first time that same year, 1877, actually a few months before Edison, as the inventor.

ONE of the great experts on the history of the phonographic industry in France,

This Academy, the Presidium of which numbers such distinguished artists as Jean Cocteau, and Darius Milhaud among its members, is not alone in this field. There is also an "Academie Charles Cros," an institute which is as venerable as it is aristocratic and even its name pays lasting homage to this great French pioneer, who was also an author.

A COUNTRY like England certainly cannot be forgotten when it comes to the important role various countries have played in the history of the gramophone and gramophone record. Apart from the fact that British physicists made an important contribution to the scientific research which inevitably preceded sound registration and reproduction, the seats of a number of long established gramophone record industries

historical data, as informative as she is charming, information which she is only too willing to pass on to others. We learnt that she is busily engaged in writing a book about the history of the gramophone record, as reflected, for example, in the history of the British Columbia Company

Germany, too, can lay claim to all kinds of notable achievements in this field. Even if we only consider the fact that Emile Berliner, the German-American inventor of the flat disc revolving on a turntable (1888), which inaugurated the era of the large scale copying of "master records", endeavoured to establish an industry specialising in the mechanical reproduction of sound together with his brother (who had remained behind in Germany).

THE historically-minded research worker likewise cannot omit Italy. It is a little

only to reappear again several years later in the hands of one of the Italian's former assistants. They now number among the precious curios in the collection of Michel de Bry.

The early history of recording therefore is still shrouded here and there in heavy mist. Interest, however, is steadily mounting, both in commercial circles as well as among private collectors. More and more books, for instance, are being published on this subject.

SMALL private museums and departments of large recognized museums are being expanded and improved. Imposing historical acoustics archives are being created thanks to the co-operation of broadcasting companies, industries and universities. Important work has also been done in this field, for example, by the University of Hamburg. Men-

# OPERA'S TOP TEN

Continued from Page 43

"The Seraglio" brings us the first great comic character ever created for the opera stage—Osmin, the bloodthirsty overseer at the Pasha's palace. Osmin is a bit of an amorist, too, and he opens the opera with the catchy "When a Maiden Takes Your Fancy," sung here with delicious fruitiness by Gottlob Frick. Lois Marshall seems to find no difficulty with the delicately ornate arias for Constanze—test pieces for any prima donna. And she has a far richer, more satisfying voice than one usually hears in this coloratura rôle.

## PURITY, WARMTH, PASSION

LEOPOLD SIMONEAU, a fine tenor who has delighted me many times at Glyndebourne, is in excellent voice as Belmonte, the romantic lead. He has a pure tone, but there is plenty of warmth and passion in it. He handles the flowing melodies enchantingly. His servant Pedrillo is sung with equal refinement by Gerhard Unger, who makes a magical moment of the famous "Serenade," in which Beecham conducts the orchestra with such crispness that I felt I was hearing this properly done for the first time. It's Beecham's genius, in fact, that really makes this performance so completely satisfying.

Not a stylist to compare with the singers just mentioned, but a singer who gives me a great deal of pleasure, is young Flaviano Labo. This up-and-coming Italian tenor was introduced to me in "Flaviano Labo: Operatic Recital" (Decca LW 5271). He sings the most popular arias from "Tosca," "Turandot," "Fedora" and "La Gioconda," and in all of them he displays a warm, sunny voice, strong and youthful, with a goodish sense of style. I must confess I have heard most of these arias sung better by Gigli or Tagliavini, but there's a freshness and charm about Labo's voice that gives me quite a kick.

Even more impressive newcomer is soprano Anita Cerquetti, who may well make Callas, Tebaldi and Milanov look to their laurels in the near future.

Her "Operatic Recital" (Decca LXT 5289) brings us eight Italian arias, all formidable test pieces. They range from "Casta Diva," generally held up as the finest example of delicately-spun *bel canto* melody, to the dramatic "O Patria Mia" from "Aida" and the scintillating Bolero from Verdi's "I Vespri Siciliani." Cerquetti rises to every occasion, showing a gilt-edged voice of remarkable suppleness and range. I'm certainly looking forward to hearing her in the opera house.

For sheer technique in coloratura singing, that pretty American Roberta Peters' "Famous Operatic Arias" (R.C.A. RB 16108) left me quite dazed. Here is that rare type of voice that has a bell-like purity and seems to be capable of sailing gaily over any difficulties the composer puts in the way of his singers. Her sheer agility and breath control are miraculous as she skims through "Caro Nome" from "The Barber of Seville" or the Mad Scene

from "Lucia di Lammermoor." The voice is not rich or dramatically very expressive, but the tone is ravishingly sweet.

Cerquetti . . . Peters . . . Hey! What about Callas? Well, I've only had time to play half her complete recording of "The Masked Ball" by Verdi, but this goes into my Operatic Top Ten all right. There's not the variety of tone we expect from La Callas, usually the most expressive of all sopranos, but in this latest of her recordings (Columbia 33CX 1472-4) she gives us some magnificent singing. And partnering her once again are the warmly lyrical tenor Giuseppe di Stefano and that rich-toned, superbly dramatic baritone Tito Gobbi. I always find "The Masked Ball" one of Verdi's most glowing scores, full of glorious melodies, strong situations, and exhilarating orchestral writing. And here every ounce of colour is brought out.

After leaving Toscanini's "Aida" out of the running, I'm glad to be able to rope in his "Verdi and Toscanini: Vol. 2" (HMV ALP 1453), for this disc brings us a shattering performance of the last act of "Rigoletto," with Milanov as Gilda, Leonard Warren as Rigoletto and Jan Peerce as the Duke. This is Verdi conducting at its most electrifying, and this disc makes a permanent reminder of the art of Toscanini. There are a couple of fill-ups which I don't care for very much, but the record is worth having for this never-to-be forgotten conducting of colourful Verdi at its best.

## HEROIC MUSIC AND SINGING

ONE MORE TO GO . . . and still so many to choose from! At the risk of boring those who hate Wagner and find "The Ring" too much of an endurance test. I'm plumping for Deutsche Gramophon's best disc of excerpts from this marathon music-drama. The closing scenes from "Siegfried" and "Götterdämmerung" (DGM 19045) bring two of the most splendid moments in "The Ring." Astrid Varnay and Wolfgang Windgassen sing the duet for Siegfried and Brünhilde following her awakening from her 20 years sleep inside the ring of magic fire, and Miss Varnay brings us the last aria of all, when Brünhilde lights Siegfried's funeral pyre and, superbly defiant of fate and death itself, rides into the flames. This is heroic music which demands heroic singing. Varnay and Windgassen soar magnificently through all the crashing climaxes in a riot of eloquent singing. I find myself thrilled beyond measure by their performances.

THERE THEY ARE, MY TOP TEN FOR 1957. It's a personal choice of course, but I'm sure any of your friends who suffer from operatic fever would welcome any of these recordings as Christmas gifts. One word of warning, though. Don't fold the discs to pop them into stockings. It doesn't do either of them very much good.



## 80 YEARS OF PHONOGRAPHIC HISTORY:

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

considerations, not the least of which was the recording of important contemporary events and providing historians of future generations with audible evidence of the standard of living prevailing at the time.

Despite all their efforts, however, no effective device of this kind had been evolved by the beginning of the 19th century. One cannot help being impressed by the fact that in 1807, when Napoleon was at the height of his glory, a British experimenter succeeded in visualising sound tracks in material (lamp-black) for the first time. Many pages could be filled with the stories of scientific and technological discoveries preceding the advent of Edison's (and Cros') first "talking machine." A connoisseur like Michel de Bry possesses several books dating from the Middle Ages, written by learned monks who occupied themselves with the characteristic properties of sound and human audition and who made suggestions, even including detailed diagrams, for sound amplification on a large scale.

It is an extensive and fascinating subject, which we can only review extremely summarily. There is every justification for doing so in this commemorative year, especially as this, at times humorous, history has had such enormous consequences and repercussions. In the United States alone some 200,000,000 gramophone records leave the presses annually.

LET us pay silent homage to all those known and unknown pioneers, to each his due. In this connection we cannot help thinking rather wistfully of the many anecdotes surrounding Edison's first machine: the story, for instance, of the amazement with which Edison's collaborator, John Kruesi, greeted the working drawings from which

he was to construct one of these machines for the recording of the human voice and whose first reaction was to reject the proposal, as he began to entertain serious doubts about Edison's sanity.

Then again, there's that amusing anecdote about a certain French professor by the name of Bouillard, who was present at one of Edison's demonstrations in Paris, and who sprang up irately from his chair with the words: "Fraud that you are! Do you think you can deceive us with the aid of a ventriloquist?"

A  
**Happy Christmas**  
TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS  
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THESE are anecdotes, but all probably containing more than a grain of truth. In any case Professor Bouillard had never heard of Charles Cros in 1879, but then, without detracting from Edison's achievements in any way, a prophet is never honoured in his own country!

As printers of this popular periodical we take this opportunity to congratulate the publishers and staff of

# THE RECORD MIRROR

on making a valuable contribution to the journalism of Recorded Music and Show Business



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ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1957, BRIAN RIX entered his eighth year as actor-manager at the Whitehall Theatre, London, S.W.

## BRIAN'S 7 YEARS AT WHITEHALL

Brian, who was born in Cottingham, Yorkshire, and is the youngest son of a Hull ship-owner, took over this theatre for his production of "Reluctant Heroes" on September 12, 1950. This play, which he discovered while running a repertory company at Bridlington, ran for 1,610 performances. Now "Dry Rot" seems all set to beat this figure.

Brian began his stage career at the age of 17, when he joined Donald Wolfitt's Company. He played "Sebastian" in "Twelfth Night" at the St. James's Theatre, spent two years with the White Rose Players in Harrogate. Then came the war, during which he spent a time down the mines at Doncaster and three years in the R.A.F. After demob he went into theatrical management, ran four repertory companies which were most successful socially, but failed financially. Finally came the move to London and the beginning of a theatre policy that has paid rich dividends.

At the Whitehall Brian Rix has established a farce company in the tradition of the Ben Travers-Tom Walls-Ralph Lynn days at the Aldwych Theatre. In addition to his regular production he puts a play on B.B.C. Television on a Sunday about every three months from the Whitehall. For these he employs as far as possible the same actors and actresses as appear in his current play, thus keeping his team together.

"Dry Rot" is written by John Chapman, who was engaged as Brian Rix's understudy in "Reluctant Heroes" and put the play together during his long waits in his dressing room. Brian plays the part of "Fred Phipps," the bookmaker's runner. Other leading parts are played by Basil Lord as "Flash Harry" and Leo Franklyn as "Alfred Tubbe." The play is directed by Wallace Douglas, husband of the late Anne Crawford.

# Thank You



FOR  
A WONDERFUL YEAR

To All : A Merry Christmas  
A Happy 1958

## FRANKIE VAUGHAN

Seasonal Greetings

To My Friends The World Over



May 1958 Be  
The Best Year Ever  
For Show Business



*Sophie Tucker*

**RIP VAN WINKLE** WOKE UP. Robinson Crusoe returned to civilisation. I know just how they felt.

For six months this year, in a thriller serial, I was a tiny acting cog in the vast TV machine. All that time I had as much idea of what life is like at your end of the cathode ray tube as a goldfish in a bowl.

Now I can take a breath. Now I'm on the outside looking in, and the first thing I can tell you is this—you ain't seen nothing yet!

Unless you call the subdued birth pangs of commercial TV something.

After the heavenly quins—AR and ATV in London, ABC in Birmingham, Granada in Manchester and STV in Glasgow—ITV is swelling the family with Welsh TV, South of England TV, and the Newcastle area North-East TV.

There you have some idea of the forces that are massing against poor old auntie BBC.



**TAKE OFF YOUR HATS, MEN.** It's winter in Lime Grove and BBC-TV as the leading service is entering the evening of her life.

Undoubtedly she will never give the bucket a final kick. As an esoteric entertainment for the select few who still cling to a solitary H-shaped aerial on their roofs, Auntie BBC will linger.

But the picture's dimming. And, incandescently, the commercial boys are moving in.

Are you one of those who think commercial TV stinks? You may well be right, but it's beside the point.

TV is big business now. And the difference between BBC-TV and ITV is the difference between the amateur and the professional.

What is an amateur? Basically, somebody who performs in front of his more tolerant friends. If his friends don't watch, he may be offended but he survives—because he has an everyday job to subsidise him. You, the licence holders, are the BBC's everyday job.

To a professional, life is less complex. No audience, no eats. The professional makes sure he has an audience. If his audience wants piffle, he gives 'em piffle. Sometimes even skiffle. He doesn't give 'em Bartok performed by back-

ward boys from Borneo. Or is that what Skiffle is? As a famous, occasionally cultural-conscious impresario remarked recently: "You gotta make up your mind which trade you want—Woolworth's or Fortnum and Mason's!"



**NOW, AND FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS,** it will be quantity and not quality on your home screens.

You may deplore this. I hope you do. But the fact remains that a large section of the population is prepared to glue itself and its glazed eyes to whatever flickers across the screen.

On BBC, licence money pays for it. You pay for it. On ITV, advertising pays for it. You don't pay for it. It's for free.

And let's be realistic. Who wants to pay for something when they can get it for nothing? I don't. Do you?

Me, I like the BBC. It has a quaint charm, like looking at dusty old slides of Mafeking through Grandma's splintered stereoscope.

Let's face facts. The OBSERVER is a good newspaper, but eight million people prefer the NEWS OF THE WORLD. And I, for one, don't subscribe to the theory that eight million people are wrong.

The heat is on. The cold war is over. And anybody who thinks the battle to win the viewer isn't war is very definitely off his nut.

And whoever won a war with three generals, four colonels and five majors to every angry young private?

BBC is bulging with top brass. Heads don't often roll in Lime Grove. People can flop in their jobs there as frequently as Lord Hailsham takes a dip in the briny during a Tory Conference, but their weekly pay packets are secure.

Yes, they do occasionally get the order of the boot. But they don't get kicked out. They get kicked up. The bright boys, the talented tots who get in their superiors' receding hairs—there's only one way to deal with them. Shift them upstairs. Let 'em in on the planning orgies. That'll keep 'em quiet.

Not so very long ago, a leading producer had his programme faded out 20 minutes before it ended. A politician's speech had overrun. That happens often enough. But in this instance the producer had been told he would not be faded out.

He was hopping mad, and complained to the appropriate department. They told him he was mistaken, that his programme was screened in full. They referred him to the regional departments, suggesting that for technical reasons his programme had been faded out in one region only. He followed it up and watched with fascination as the buck was passed up and down the country. But nowhere could he find anyone to admit the truth. He came out of the incident wondering if he'd lost his mind.

# ITV VERSUS BBC

## LET BATTLE COMMENCE



BY JOHN STONE

**THAT** was of course just a slight technical hitch, but it serves to illustrate the rarified atmosphere at the top. Some of those boys' heads are so far up in the clouds that they have to duck every time a Red Moon whizzes by.

And all the time, ITV is warming up for the Big Fight. In the next year or two commercial TV will reach as many people as the BBC. To survive, ITV will fight tooth and nail to capture the BBC's audience. More viewers, higher viewing ratings, means more advertising revenue for ITV. And advertising revenue is the sole reason for ITV's existence. BBC was created to serve you. ITV serves itself.

And because I like TV, because I have faith in a future for TV, I say Let Battle Commence. There's just a chance that both sides will fight so hard that eventually the viewer may benefit.

Of course, an alternative is for BBC to turn commercial. If they did it quickly, on the basis of current viewing figures, they'd sweep the board.

But as this is unlikely, let's see if the BBC could have a secret weapon being assembled in those gaunt skeleton buildings at White City's TV Centre.

As I write this work goes on apace. Those producers who do not have caravan offices in the car park, are being turned out of their internal offices while redecorations are carried out.

In the higher echelons, planners are planning. Designers are cogitating on how best to clutter up the small studios with vast sets. Down below, the technicians are taking the cameras to pieces and re-assembling them. It is, of

course, a hive of industry. Walk down White City's endless corridors and study the name plates on the doors. Producers and their assistants, designers, planners, programme engineers, heads of departments, etc. But nowhere do you see a name plate with the simple title—writer.

And, in the final analysis, the writer is the single most important person in TV. Naturally, the image doesn't reach you without hard technical work, but that work is wasted without material and the writer is the only person who can supply good material.



**I**N TV there are two kinds of writers. The dramatic writers like Ted Willis, Ian McCormick, Nigel Kneale and Berkeley Mather. Men who have the flair and who understand the medium.

The other kind is the speaking writer—to be exact, the speaker who writes, who paints a picture with his own words. He can be a sports or a political commentator, he can be an ordinary man talking about his ordinary job. It doesn't matter. The subject of his script is himself or something he understands or has witnessed himself. In that TV comes to life.

And in that, BBC could have a secret weapon. Slow up the building programme. Take that money we're all giving you, and lavish it on the writers. Foster them. Encourage them. Molly-coddle them, but get them and their work on to the screen.

**I'LL BE** ceremonially drummed out of Equity for saying this, but the first wage demands to be considered should be for writers, WRITERS and again, WRITERS.

Technicians can be trained, actors abound, but a writer who knows the medium or a speaker who can write his script as he goes along, he's worth his weight in licence money.

Surest sign of this is the way the Press is moving into television. Latest to put in a bid for the North-East (Newcastle) area TV contract is that august journal, the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

Fascinating, isn't it? Even the GUARDIAN wants to jump on the band wagon. Is it because of possible profit, or is it perhaps that in TV some papers are seeing the writing on the wall?

It could be just that—the fading out of newspapers as we know them. More and more people turn to TV for news coverage and commentary. Can you blame them? Daily papers are beginning to look like women's magazines. Either that, or they're boosting flagging circulations on the strength of mental defectives and vice in Stepney.

This may not be the space age yet, but it's certainly the TV age. And I don't join the prophets of woe who condemn it out of hand.

As an individual viewer, my taste doesn't run to variety, so I won't comment on that aspect of TV. But what does excite me about TV as it is

now and as I expect it to develop in the future is that it is the new journalism—visual journalism.

For those who have eyes to watch, and ears to hear there is tip-top quality ahead in TV. If you watch everything, like a jaundiced critic, you must expect to see something inferior.

But for everything that is bad, there is always a man of the calibre of Robin Day. There are producers like Peter Hunt, who in "This Week", typifies the new kind of visual journalism.

And it is unsponsored TV that gives us such quality viewing. In the long run, it is advertising that pays the salaries of men like these. But their work is not coloured by the colour of the advertisers' opinions. Which is more than you can say for some sections of the Press.

These are trends which I feel. Disagree with me, if you like.

But there's one thing I hope you won't dispute...

TV presents the finest opportunity we've ever had for drawing people closer together, for all of us to think about something we rarely consider—what makes the other man tick.

That is the importance of TV, in which it transcends mere entertainment.

And that's why I say, let battle commence.

**GET IN THERE, MEN. MIX IT. AND MAY THE BEST CHANNEL WIN.**

**WISHING YOU ALL**

**A Happy Christmas**

**ESPECIALLY THE EDITOR AND STAFF OF**

**THE RECORD MIRROR, WITH THANKS**

**FOR ALL PAST HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT**

DESMOND LANE

**He's Not Only The Holiday-Camp King... He's A Big Power In Show Business, Has Discovered Top Stars... Russ Hamilton Is Just One Example**

**SPORTSMAN, TOO...** and a cricket-lover... Here's B.B. with DENIS COMPTON congratulating him after another century had been scored. The one and only TOMMY TRINDER makes up the happy trio.

**NO POLITICIAN...** but in his life B.B. has met many. Among them at a Dinner in aid of a charity organisation was EARL ATTLEE, with whom he is here seen—this is one of Billy's favourite pictures.



A lover of good music and good musicians... Billy meets MANTOVANI at a show business function.



Glamour... Billy comes across plenty of that, too, during his career as a showman—here he is with AVA GARDNER at a party during one of her visits to Britain.



AT A VARIETY CLUB Luncheon... with MAX BYGRAVES and BOBBY HOWES. Incidentally, Billy has done—and is doing—some wonderful work for the Variety Club, has entertained thousands of underprivileged children at his camps.

**W. E. ("BILLY") BUTLIN IS THE MAN WHO, OVER THE LAST 21 YEARS, HAS BUILT IN BRITAIN A CHAIN OF MINOR KINGDOMS OF HIS OWN; AND, IN THE PROCESS, ESTABLISHED HIMSELF AS A NATIONAL FIGURE. EVERYONE HAS HEARD OF HIM; EVERYONE KNOWS WHAT HE DOES; AND MOST PEOPLE KNOW WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE.**

Since 1936, despite the six-year hold-up of the war, he has established major holiday camps at Ayr (Scotland), Skegness (Lincolnshire), Pwllheli (North Wales), Clacton (Essex), Filey (Yorkshire) and Mosney (Southern Ireland).



**THIS PRODIGIOUS SUCCESS STEMS NO DOUBT FROM THE BUTLIN GENIUS FOR ORGANISATION.**

Yet that alone would never have made possible such formidable growth. What, in fact, made the drive to establish holiday camps in Britain so spontaneously popular was the abounding boredom, and the nagging restrictions, of that Victorian form of holiday making—the boarding house.

The general public, in large numbers, were irked by rules

**DICK TATHAM writes of**  
**BILLY**  
**BUTLIN**

and regulations of coastal landladies. The younger folk far from relished the compulsion to be conventional when they wished to be irresponsible. The family "Mums and Dads" went on holiday plagued with the thought of what to do with the kids if (in the normal practice of a British summer) it came on to rain.

When Billy Butlin opened up at Skegness in 1936, he put into effect his conception of the ideal holiday for the average person. He sought to combine spaciousness with a standard of private chalet accommodation that gave every comfort.

Also, he sought from the start to lay on, free of charge, entertainment of the highest class.

**HOW SHREWDLY HE HAD GAUGED THE WISHES OF THE PUBLIC IS SHOWN BY THE FACT THAT, BEFORE THE END OF THE FIRST SEASON, THE CAMP WAS EXTENDED TO CATER FOR 2,000 VISITORS INSTEAD OF THE 1,000 PROVIDED FOR AT THE START.**

From then on, things developed at gratifying speed.

**AT A GRAND ORDER OF WATER RATS' FUNCTION...** with CHARLIE CHESTER and JIMMY DURANTE... Billy Butlin has also done some wonderful things on behalf of this great charity organisation of the variety profession.



**CLACTON WAS OPENED IN 1938, AND FILEY WAS STARTED IN 1939.**

All three camps were requisitioned during the war; but they had re-opened by 1946. Then, in 1947, Ayr and Pwllheli were established, and the Butlin holiday population reached the half-million mark every summer.

In 1953, a fresh venture was added: the Butlin-style holiday hotel. It was a time when many hotels run on conventional lines were finding things difficult. But when Billy Butlin opened up at Blackpool, Brighton and Cliftonville, Kent, immediate prosperity sprang up as a result of his methods of giving visitors the very best in accommodation and entertainment.

**INEVITABLY, THROUGH HIS BOOKING OF TOPLINE ARTISTES, HIS GIVING OF CHANCES TO "UNKNOWN" WITH TALENT, AND HIS SEDULOUS SUPPORT OF VARIETY INSTITUTIONS, HE HAS BECOME AN ACCEPTED PERSONALITY IN SHOW BUSINESS CIRCLES.**

As a long-time member of the Variety Club of Great Britain he is seen frequently at their famous luncheons and other functions, and has supported the charitable efforts of the entertainment world in ardent and generous fashion.



**ANNUALLY, AT THE BUTLIN CAMPS, SOME THIRTY ORCHESTRAS PLAY FOR MODERN AND OLD-TIME DANCING. ONE HAS ONLY TO MENTION THE NAMES OF ERIC WINSTONE, JOE DANIELS, HARRY LEADER, TEDDY FOSTER AND HARRY DAVIDSON TO SHOW THE HIGH STANDARD MAINTAINED.**

Butlin's, moreover, is a regular source of new show business talent. A national competition is launched first of all through weekly heats at the various camps, and builds up eventually to

CONTINUED ON OPPOSITE PAGE



A FEW OF THE STARS REGULARLY APPEARING ON THE DECCA LISTS



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ROY FOX



HENRY HALL



ARTHUR LALLY

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EDYTHE BAKER



GRETA KELLER



In the section headed 'LOYALTY TO LEWIS' in the DECCA story on page 37, you will read about many of the folk who have helped Mr. E. R. Lewis to make this great recording company what it is today. It is impossible to publish anywhere the number of pictures required to make the army of Lewis 'Loyalists' complete . . . but here are another three of them. Picture on the left shows HUGH MENDEL, one of the most important A & R men in the firm and FRANK CHALMERS (with spectacles), now one of the driving figures behind the RCA label which Decca acquired early this year.

Pictured on right: pipe-smoking DICK ROWE, another A & R 'power' in the Decca Empire. He's seen here after a recording session with MAX BYGRAVES.

**THOSE WERE THE DAYS!**

Here's something you're sure to look at again and again . . . quite historic, in fact. It's a reproduction of an advertisement that appeared in dozens of national newspapers in the good old days of 1932 . . . just look at those faces . . . those artistes . . . those PRICES! DECCA has gone a long, long way since those pioneering recording days. (Read the DECCA-LEWIS, LEWIS-DECCA story which begins on page 33.)

### King Of The Holiday Camps

## BILLY BUTLIN

—Cont. from opposite page

Grand Final in London (which this year was at the Royal Albert Hall).

Last year, for example, eighteen artistes from this source appeared on television, and the "big names" to have been given their chance at Butlin's include Frankie Howerd, Benny Hill, Terry Scott and Bill Maynard.



**EASILY THE GREATEST SUCCESS TO COME FROM BUTLIN'S THIS PAST YEAR IS REDCOAT RON HULME — NOW KNOWN TO MILLIONS AS RUSS HAMILTON.**

Throughout his disc triumphs, notably his "We Will Make Love," and his stage appearances, he has had the keenest personal encouragement from Billy Butlin himself.

There is even a newspaper—"Butlin News"—to which writers of the calibre of Nancy Spain and Gilbert Harding have contributed.

In one article, Gilbert—probably Britain's leading opponent of bureaucracy and petty restrictions—wrote pungently against those who thought you got regimented at Butlin's. He mentioned hundreds of cases within his own knowledge of people who, in fact, had enjoyed their stay at a holiday camp, and had just gone their own way as they wished. This, he stressed, included many of the older age groups.

AS BILLY BUTLIN LOOKS FORWARD TO 1958, THE SALIENT IDEA IN HIS MIND IS SIMPLY TO INCREASE WHEREVER POSSIBLE THE COMFORT AND ENJOYMENT OF VISITORS TO HIS CAMPS. ALL IN ALL, WHEN YOU SURVEY THE WHOLE SCENE OF HIS ACTIVITIES, YOU HAVE TO HAND IT TO BILLY BUTLIN—THE CANADIAN WHO, AS A LAD, CAME TO BRITAIN SHORTLY AFTER THE FIRST WAR WITH ONLY A FIVER IN HIS POCKET.

**Greetings  
And Thanks  
To All In Show Business  
from  
Neville Marten  
Advertisement Manager  
THE RECORD MIRROR**



# The World's Greatest Organisation, Guided By The World's Greatest

## Showmen, Has Already Raised £14,000,000 For The World's Greatest

### Cause . . . The Under-Privileged Children

By

AL HUNT

#### AND GIVING GREAT ASSISTANCE TO THE GREAT WORK IS—

IT MUST HAVE BEEN SAID A MILLION TIMES that "Variety Is The Spice Of Life", but for my money Variety IS life to many hundreds of thousands of youngsters who have felt the warm hand of that mighty charity organization, "Variety Club".

Here in Britain we have its representative echelon in Tent No. 36. This organization operates across the world, has no fewer than 12,000 members who work on an absolutely voluntary basis. During 29 years this organization has distributed the staggering total of £14,000,000 for the welfare of millions of young people, children and babies in many lands.

Many RECORD MIRROR readers are probably unaware of the men who people this organization so let's tell you about them, although this paper has been proud to carry news about it over the past few years.

They are, in the main, folk engaged in the industry of Show Business. They come from every sector of its broad canvas; motion pictures, live theatre, TV, Radio and Records. To tell you fully of its work would take up more than each and every page of this entire annual.

#### HOW IT ALL BEGAN

WAY BACK IN 1927 eleven showmen in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, leased a hotel room in order that they could enjoy a friendly discussion together after work and because they were all in Show Business they named their group, "The Variety Club." Other showmen followed suit in becoming members and just over a year later, in November, 1928, they held their first banquet. Some indication as to how this idea began to snowball can best be judged by the fact that they booked a small room to hold just 35 guests for the banquet. When twice that number applied a bigger room was sought after but all that was available was a banquet hall with accommodation for 1,100. Being showmen at heart they booked it and used the vast space at their disposal for the staging of a circus. They erected a "Big Top" tent, booked a full circus programme and a press cartoonist drew for the menu cover a sketch of a traditional circus "Barker" and also depicted a circus tent which ever since have been hallmarks of Variety. The club in Pittsburgh, by reason of the "Big Top" atmosphere at its inception, was called Tent No. 1 and members were given the rosy sounding circus names of "Big Boss", "Dough Guy", "Barker", "Property Master" and "The Crew" etc.

#### DESTINY

SITTING with Variety's International Big Boss, John H. Harris, in his Pittsburgh office a couple of months ago, I heard the story of how destiny played its hand in the shaping of the important ideals for which Variety now stands. It was Christmas Eve, 1929. A baby girl was found in the

Sheridan Theatre, Pittsburgh. Attached to the unfortunate infant was a note which said, simply: "Please take care of my baby. Her name is Catherine. I can no longer take care of her. I have always heard of the goodness of show business people and I pray to God you will look after her." The note was signed: "A Heartbroken Mother." The baby was taken to



At the Variety Club of Great Britain's Xmas Luncheon held at the Savoy Hotel, London, W., on December 11, in 1956, the identity of the Chief Barker for 1957 was made known. He was MIKE FRANKOVICH, managing director of Columbia Films. The news, when announced to the big assembly, was received with tremendous applause. Among the pleasant duties that befell the retiring Chief Barker, NAT COHEN, was the handing over of a cheque for £2,632 to MRS. ISAAC WOLFSON, who, in turn, will pass this on to the British Council for the National Welfare of Spastics. The cheque was part of the proceeds from the recent Variety Club's gala premiere of "Guys and Dolls" at the Empire, Leicester Square. Picture shows (right) C. J. LATTA (European International representative of the Variety Club of Great Britain); then MIKE FRANKOVICH; NAT COHEN and MRS. ISAAC WOLFSON. Mike has done a wonderful year's work. Who will be the Chief Barker of Tent 36 for 1958? At the time of going to press the result of the Election had not been announced. —RM Picture.

John Harris, the theatre owner, but the mother was never traced. Four days later Variety met and decided to act as Godfather to the foundling.

She was named Catherine Variety Sheridan and was maintained in a home under the watchful eyes of her Variety guardians and their wives who took it in turn to have her in their care for short spells.

#### A SECRET

WHEN THE CHILD WAS FIVE YEARS OLD THE "BARKERS" decided it would be in its best interests for the little girl to have a permanent home away from Pittsburgh and she was given into the care of a couple selected from 300 applicants. The whereabouts and identity of Catherine (her name was changed) is a secret known only to the two "Barkers" who arranged for her adoption and who have kept a close watch on her progress throughout the years.

It was this adoption that set a definite pattern for Variety; to help underprivileged children regardless of their colour, creed or religion. The growth of Variety Club in its 30 years has been tremendous. There are now 46 tents, covering America, Canada, England, Ireland and Mexico. Each and every tent is pledged to help the young.

The London Tent was formed in 1949 by 13 American showmen working in this country. It now comprises 500 members and attracts an average of eight new recruits every month.

As stated, its members comprise celebrities from radio, TV, films, the stage, recording companies, executives, producers, impresarios, theatrical managers, musicians and Fleet Street scribes. Among its London members are a big music publisher, a holiday camp king, an M.P., the country's leading fight promoter and distinguished members of H.M.'s Forces.

H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and Earl Mountbatten of Burma are life

members. All have one aim in mind. Simply — TO HELP YOUTH.

#### SUPER AID

SINCE ITS INCEPTION the Variety Club of Great Britain has helped over 300 National, local and private charities covering orphanages, hospitals, training schools, adoption societies and convalescent centres. Further, they have given valued assistance to institutions engaged in research work on poliomyelitis, rheumatism and similar scourges to which the young are particularly prone and centres which train spastic, deaf, dumb, blind, mentally retarded and otherwise handicapped youngsters have already felt the helping hand of Variety.

Unfortunately, we have had to capsule into a few brief paragraphs the activities of this grand organisation because no matter how big this edition, space does not permit us to tell fully of its wonderful work. The strange thing about it all is that the people who make it possible are men of Show

Business. Behind their desks and in their everyday jobs you will hear them talking prodigiously about the particular product they have to sell. But one thing they never beat the drum about is the good work they do so regularly and so conscientiously behind the scenes for Variety. They don't have to . . . it speaks for itself.

If you want to see the goodness of their hearts reflected in the faces of youngsters I commend a trip sometime to the Sunshine Home for Blind Babies in Wales, towards which establishment this esteemed organisation has contributed no less than £11,800.

There are also hundreds of boys and girls who might never have seen a sandy beach or the seaside had it not been for a fund administered by Variety with the help of the Children's Country Holiday Fund.

#### HEART-TUG

IF YOU WANT A REAL GENUINE TUG at the heartstrings pay a visit to the St. Agnes Orphanage in Thames Ditton and see the youngsters there all in the throes of becoming British Citizens of the future.

It was in 1956 that this Orphanage fell into serious financial difficulties — at least until Tent 36 came to the rescue.

Variety took care of St. Agnes' mortgage worries and formed a special committee to look after its affairs to see that it did not want for clothing, food, fuel, and other essential necessities to hamper the upbringing of these young, parentless, children.

Are these youngsters grateful? Just take one look at their little faces. The answer is all too apparent.

Chief Barker of the 1957 Crew of Variety Club is as typical an American as you'll find. He is Columbia Pictures, London chief, Mike Frankovitch.

TO HIM AND ALL WHO WORK WITH HIM THE RECORD MIRROR DOFFS ITS CAP TO SALUTE THE GOOD WORK THEY HAVE DONE, ARE DOING AND WILL YET DO IN THEIR UNSTINTING AID TO THE YOUTH OF BRITAIN.

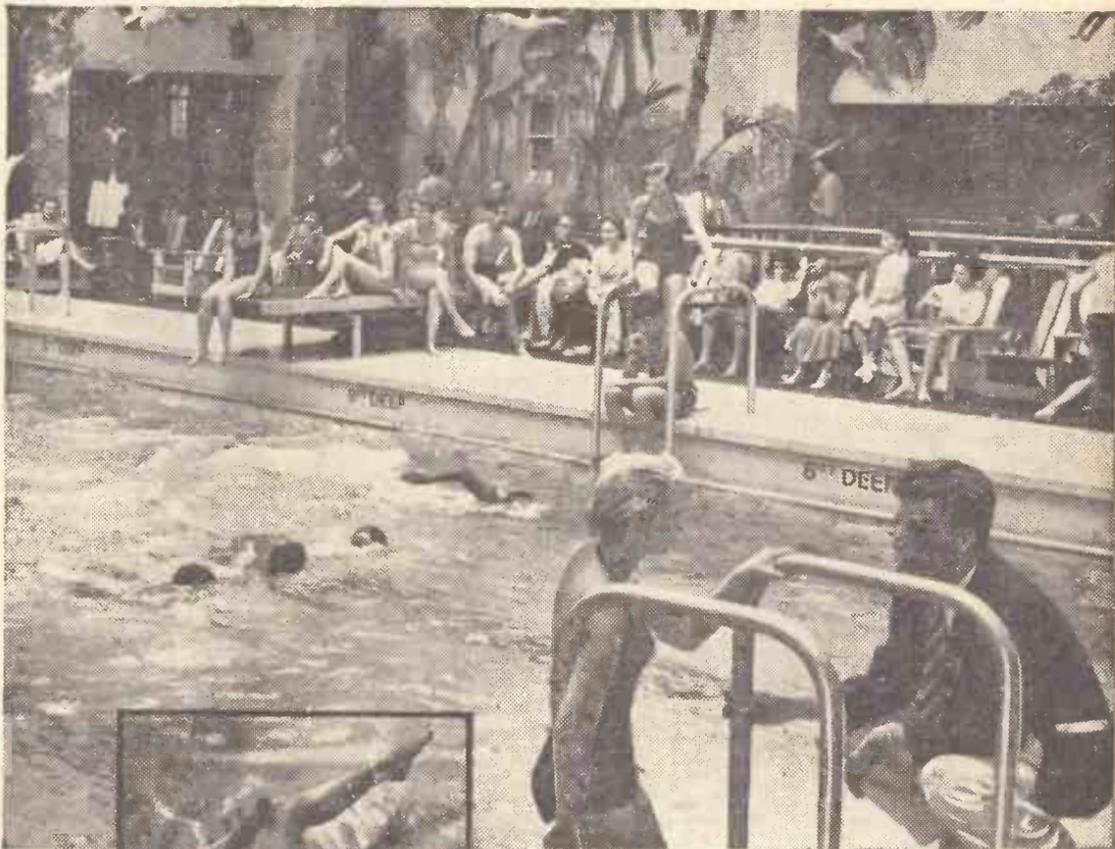
They are carrying out a noble and wonderful work which we are happy to bring to the notice of our many readers. In signing off may I add that if the planners of our modern world only do half as well as Mike and his happy band . . . what a wonderful world the youngsters will have to look forward to.

# THE VARIETY CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN : Tent 36



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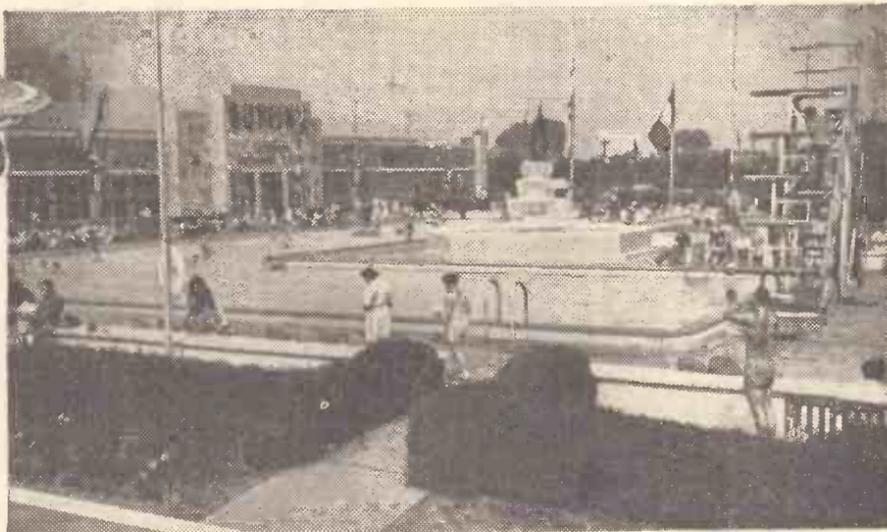


These delightful chalets are your holiday home at Butlin's —and the lawns are ideal for relaxation in the sun.

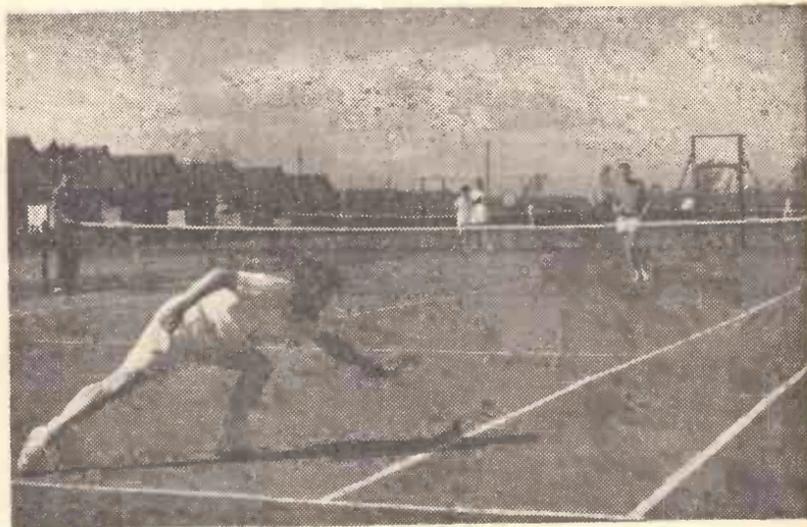
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Miss Jean Numele, the Butlin Holiday Princess, 1957.



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*Butlin's* WISH YOU ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

TRAVEL BY RAIL



# SHOW BUSINESS MOURNS

**THE following Show Business personalities passed away from November, 1956, onwards :**

- 1956**
- NOV.**
1. Bertie Rich (Rich and Galvin, dancers).
  2. John Duffy (Circus proprietor) 55.
  5. Rae Robertson (pianist) 63.
  10. Jack Clifford (American musical comedy dancer) 76.
  10. Victor Young (American composer and violinist) 56.
  18. Mrs. Jean Young (wife of comedian Dan Young).
  19. Stetson (Hat Juggler) 60.
  26. Scott Sanders (Character comedian) 72.
  26. Tommy Dorsey (Bandleader, trombonist) 51.
  26. Mrs. Martha Holcroft (old time sharp-shooter) 98.
  26. Dave Poole (ventriloquist).
  27. Frederick Allen (baritone singer, BBC announcer).
  27. Miss K. E. Broadhead, J.P. (daughter of the late Ald. W. H. Broadhead, J.P.).

- DEC.**
9. Paula Marshall (singer, Mrs. David Nixon) 29.
  15. Reginald Bromhead (Gaumont British founder) 73.
  19. Johnny Best (Boxing promoter; Stadium, Liverpool) 70.
  21. Johnson Clark (Ventriloquist) 70.
  23. Tom E. Wills (Comedian) 76.
  25. Mrs. George Western (Rene Palmer) 56.
  25. Sam Stern (Comedian) 73.
  28. Edward James Britten (of "Hollywood Marionettes") 46.
  30. Ruth Draper (American character impressioniste and diseuse) 67.

- 1957**
- JAN.**
2. Valerie Hudson (former Windmill Theatre girl).
  5. Gertie Gitana (of "Nellie Dean" fame) 68.
  7. Al White (American comedian and dancer).
  19. Harry Marlow (Organising secretary of the VABF and I) 73.
  19. Charles Hutchins (concert party proprietor) 68.
  21. Harry Gordon (Scots comedian, "The Laird O'Inversnecky") 63.
  28. Fred Lotinga (youngest of the Six Brothers Luck) 79.
  30. Joe Hayman (Hebrew comedy artiste) 83.



**HARRY MARLOW**, secretary of the Variety Artists' Benevolent Fund, died in January at the age of 73. He was Hon. Organiser of 27 Royal Variety Performances, his first in 1921 featuring such stars as Ella Retford, Milton Hayes, Gwen Farrar and G. S. Melvin. Some people were of the opinion that the cancellation of the 1956 Royal Variety Show (because of the international crisis at the time) was such a bitter blow that it hastened his death.

- FEB.**
1. Max Bilton (Comedy patter artiste) 72.
  2. Ernie Wilson (father of Jimmy Wheeler, and member of Wheeler and Wilson, comedy double) 73.
  3. Elsie Clancy (Sisters Clancy) 72.
  4. Sir Arthur Elvin (Wembley Stadium and Empire Pool chief) 57.
  8. Mabel Constanduros (Radio and variety artiste and author) 76.
  13. Tom Jenkins (BBC violinist-conductor) 46.
  19. Gussie de Monte (old time artiste).
  23. Nellie Sheffield (Actress and soubrette) 84.
  24. Fred Overbury (acrobat) 66.
  24. Gene Buck (American composer) 71.
  25. Ley On (Chinese restaurateur and film actor).
  28. Basil Thomas (playwright and scriptwriter) 45.
  - Will Dalton (Variety agent) 79.

- MARCH**
1. Stanley May (Agent and personal manager) 70.
  6. Bill Johnson (American singer and musical comedy actor) 39.
  6. Montague Ewing (Author and composer) 67.
  7. James Bonar Colleano Sr. (Acrobat and comedian).
  7. Sidney Jay (Film agent and former music hall juggler) 67.
  7. Harold Gautier (Dog act trainer) 57.
  14. Josh Billings (American jazz musician) 54.
  20. Troise (Orchestral conductor; Troise and his Mandoliers) 64.
  31. Gene Lockhart (sketch actor, songwriter and film artiste) in Santa Monica, Calif. 65.

- APRIL**
2. Mark Lester (Comedian) 81.
  3. Ned Sparks (film actor) in California. 73.
  8. Ida Krone (oldest member of the Circus Krone Family) 80.
  14. Elena Colombo (mother of the Gimma Boys) 51.
  14. Patrick Victor (Shadowgraphist, son of Edward Victor) 40.
  29. Belle Baker (American vaudeville star) 58.

## To The Memory of Fred Russell, O.B.E.



*When Music Hall is but a Monument of Memory...  
And great names are but echoes of their years...  
There is one we shall recall, as the Greatest of them all...  
One Man, for whom so many now shed tears.  
Tears, born of Love... conceived of Sorrow... and shed in Gratitude.  
Dear Uncle Fred... God grant you Peace  
You did not live in vain,  
The Fellowship you leave behind, will evermore remain...  
Your Epitaph...  
As Journalist you won your spurs and then went on to show  
That Artistry supreme was yours... with "LITTLE COSTER JOE"...  
In all your Five and Ninety years none finer has there been,  
Cherished by your fellow men, and Honoured by their Queen.  
We Pray the Hand of Comfort will reach out to those who grieve  
... and those... who miss your wisdom and your worth...  
We know that you will meet as many Friends where you have gone...  
To Love you... as the Friends you leave... on Earth.  
When ABSENT RATS are called to mind  
In silence we shall stand  
And then within a Prayer we shall repeat  
Dear Father of Variety... Preceptor, Past King Rat  
You will be here... with us... when e'er we meet.  
By CHARLIE CHESTER.*

- MAY**
1. Robb Wilton (Comedian) 76.
  1. Phil Bransby (Comedian) 73.
  9. Ezio Pinza (American musical comedy and film star; singer) 64.
  12. Mervyn McPherson (Press officer for M.G.M. for 30 years).
  18. Donald McKay (Scots comedian) 67.
  19. Lollie Holt (one time producer and owner of The Musical Hussars) in South Africa.
  20. Harry D. Kerr (American songwriter and founder member of ASCAP) in Hollywood. 77.
  20. Robert ("Buddy") Clarke (American vaudeville artiste) 61.
  24. Mamie Clancy (of the old time team Sisters Clancy) 76.
  25. Charlie Carr (of the Three Scamps).
  25. Helen Hayden (Irish vocalist and musician) 77.
  27. Julia Neilson Terry (actress) 88.
  31. Tom E. Finglass (Negro delineator) 77.
  31. Frank Collins (stage director for Sir C. B. Cochran) 76.

- JUNE**
1. Will Hammer (W. Hinds) (Theatre proprietor, impresario and agent) 70.
  12. Billy Russell (proprietor, Hippodrome Yarmouth) 51.
  12. Peggy Hopkins Joyce (late star of "Ziegfeld Follies") 69.
  12. Jimmy Dorsey (American bandleader).
  16. Gypsy Petulengro ("King of the Gypsies") 90.
  17. Harold Wilkinson (Character actor) 74.
  17. Esme Percy (actor) 69.
  22. Terry James (T. J. Hunt, musical director and manager) 28.

- JULY**
7. Frank Randle (Comedian) 56.
  7. Ernie Gerrard (Comedian) 59.
  13. Joe Arthur (Old time pantomimist) 78.
  15. William Hall (Hall, Norman and Ladd) 46.
  21. John Rorke (Comedian, character actor and singer) 65.
  22. Robert Moreton (Comedian of "Bumper Fun Book" fame) 35.
  28. Jack Waller (Actor, composer, producer and manager) 72.
  29. Harry Elliott (last of the Elliott Savonas, musical act) 77.
  30. Arthur White (Character comedian) 75.

- AUG.**
5. May Lauraine (old time music hall artiste) 77.
  7. Oliver Hardy (Laurel and Hardy, stage and film comedians) 65.
  8. Florence Isabel Sanger (Mrs. Lord George Sanger) 66.
  24. Kate Hare (mother of Herbert and Doris Hare) 83.
  24. Albert Sammons (Violinist) 71.

- SEPT.**
1. Martha Craston (mother of Vic and Joe Crastonian and Lulu Adams) 87.
  1. Helen Hays (Britain's oldest working actress) 83.
  7. Fred White (Fred Barnforth; one time straight man to Charlie Clapham) 75.
  11. Llewellyn Johns (Director, Stoll Theatres Corporation) 79.
  19. Ted Shine (Edward Robert Stebbings, of the Rusty and Shine comedy act) 68.
  23. Ronald Simpson (stage and radio actor) 60.
  26. Nat Younkman (Czardas orchestra proprietor and leader) 65.
  27. Mark Daly (Character comedy actor) 70.
  29. Jane Carr (Comedy actress) 48.
  29. Fred Cliffe (songwriter, "When I'm Cleaning Windows" and "Leaning on a Lamppost" for George Formby) 72.

One of the greatest tragedies and losses to show business everywhere was the death of 39-year-old **BILL JOHNSON** (picture right), the most lovable American ever to perform in this country. He was the hero of two long - running London Coliseum musicals, the fabulous "Annie Get Your Gun" and "Kiss Me Kate."



He was made a member of the Grand Order of Water Rats, gave his services free to many British charity organisations. He was so fond of London and London was so fond of him that he made his theme song "Maybe It's Because I'm a Londoner".

- OCT.**
14. Fred Russell (Ventriloquist, affectionately known as "The Grand Old Man of Variety") 95
  15. Frederick G. Gibson (Musical Director, Grand, Croydon).
  17. Eric Maturin (Actor) 74.
  17. Charles William Chinery (known as Charles Conway, of Conway and Cordwell, and of the Concord Variety Agency. Uncle of The Beverley Sisters).
  18. Harry Collins (father of Bobbie Collins, "The Page of Variety").
  20. Jack Buchanan (Actor, dancer, producer and manager), 66.
  21. Ennis Parkes (Mrs. Jack Hylton) (Bandleader: The Metronomes).
  29. Louis B. Mayer (of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) in America. 72.
  - Harry Coady (known as "Fiddello," musical comedian and trick violinist) 73.
  - Ernest Barwise (Violinist) 67.
  - Abe Lyman (Bandleader) in America 59.

**Seen Any Pictures You Like In This Issue?**

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# NIGEL HUNTER RECALLS SOME OF THE 1957 HIGHLIGHTS IN THE LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC WORLD



**SALUDOS, AMIGOS!**

**C**HRISTMAS is here again, and the additional space afforded by THE RECORD MIRROR's mammoth Yuletide edition enables 'Foreign Fare' to conduct an appraisal of 1957.

Generally speaking, it's been a good year for Latin American and allied forms of music. Progress was slow but steady, as must be expected when there is no lavish ballyhoo or high-powered publicity campaigns to catch the public's fancy.

Main talking point of the year was the calypso, of course. Back in the spring the rumours and reports started seeping through from the States about this sunny West Indian music. It was going to be big, would supplant rock 'n' roll, and elevate some calypsonians into world-wide fame and popularity.

These forecasts were only partly fulfilled. The calypso came—and went. It ended rock 'n' roll's virtual monopoly of the Hit Parade, but didn't supersede it by any means. The only calypsonian to make the grade permanently was Harry Belafonte; in fact, many people opined that it was a Belafonte craze rather than a calypso one.

Reasons for the calypso's damp squib performance were obvious. Like the mambo fad of not so long ago, it wasn't handled with sufficient perception and imagination. With a few notable exceptions, the task of putting it across to the public was unloaded on the shoulders of pop vocalists who couldn't be expected to cope with it adequately.

## "AN ILL WIND . . ."

**I**NSUFFICIENT ATTENTION was paid to the original article, and an over-cautious Tin Pan Alley tried to compromise by combining calypso with rock 'n' roll elements.

The compromise failed to please rock 'n' roll fans because of the calypso flavour, and also failed to satisfy the non-rock 'n' roll audience because of the retention of the old two-beat rock rhythm. Result—a very short-lived calypso "craze".

Nevertheless, it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good. The calypso vogue enabled first-class artistes like Lord Kitchener, Frank Holder and

George Browne to make themselves known to a much wider audience. This exposure has been mutually beneficial. The public now know what genuine calypso can sound like and that there are performers competent in putting it across. The artistes themselves have gained a considerable amount of popularity and therefore much more attention from bookers and impresarios who formerly didn't want to know about them.

Now let's take time out to survey some of the calypso discs issued by the companies to suit the fashion.

Although few calypso numbers reached the Top Ten, a great deal of material was released (some of it authentic) which is extremely interesting

and valuable to those who like West Indian music.

Harry Belafonte can be heard at his best in "Harry Belafonte Calypso" (H.M.V. 7 EG 8211). This EP includes his famous "Banana Boat Song", is infinitely better in my opinion than his more recent excursions into international folk song. At the time of writing a 10-inch RCA album of Caribbean numbers is forecast, and I know I'll be safe in recommending it. Belafonte singing calypso is supreme; Belafonte singing other kinds of folk song is just another singer.

Lord Kitchener is well on form in his 10-inch MELODISC album "King of Calypso, Vol. 2" (MLP 510). Two EPs with similar titles from NIXA are equally interesting.

They were recorded under the supervision of Denis Preston, who has done a great deal for the more genuine type of calypso. "Kings of Calypso, Vol. 1" (NEP 24009) features "The Mighty Terror" (Fitzgerald Henry), and Vol. 2 (NEP 24038) stars Lord Invader (Rupert Grant).

## AND HERE'S A FINE TEAM

**F**RANK HOLDER, also under the Preston banner, can be heard on a DECCA EP "Frank Holder Sings Calypso" (DFE 6410). He's backed by Kenny Graham and his Orchestra, and it's quite the most successful team in Britain for this kind of music. If Frank and Kenny and a few more like them had been given the task of establishing calypso over here, the craze would still



A fine action shot of DON MARINO BARRETO and his CUBAN ORCHESTRA. This group pioneered Latin American music in Britain during the 1930's. At one time it had a young, unknown music student from Venezuela in its ranks. His name was EDMUNDO ROS.

mond's 12-inch CORAL album (LVA 9059). Johnny is about the only pop vocalist who has distinguished himself in the calypso idiom, and deserves much credit for his fine performances in this album. He was the star of "Calypso Heatwave", a Hollywood musical which was centred on the craze.

Also in the film appeared Maya Angelou, practically the only girl to reach stardom via

their excellent Cuban Rhythm Band.

Their strict tempo recordings for MELODISC are proving their worth by dint of combining strict tempo with authentic arrangement and presentation. One of their best releases this year was a mambo "Bernie's Tune" and a baiao "Delicado" on MELODISC 1427.

Don Carlos and Santiago, with their respective groups swapped West End berths

Cielo" (PARLOPHONE DP 520). All four are sophisticated items, with a string section added to the usual Cavez combination, and aimed primarily at the Italian market. They are extremely pleasant listening, but the Cavez group is another which could make immensely important contributions to Latin-American music on record if given a better chance. (Roberto Inglez, incidentally, is domiciled in South America, where he and his records are fantastically popular).

Esteban ("Mr. Latin-America") can look back on 1957 with justifiable pride. An important five-year contract with M.C.A. (one of the biggest artistes' agencies in the world), a string of impressive foreign engagements, and a top-selling album on the new DONEGALL label ("Fiesta Tropical," DON 1000)—all these were achieved by the charming Uruguayan who has adopted London as his permanent base of operations. The year 1958 promises to be even bigger for Esteban. I expect great things from this talented, hard-working artiste.

Dorita and Pepe, our two Latin-American folk song experts, also built up a record of solid achievement this year, culminating in a recording contract with VOGUE. The Vogue chiefs were extremely sceptical when first approached with an offer of two British-born Latin-American folk singers and guitarists. Just three short minutes of listening to a tape altered their minds completely, however, and they've really gone to town with the first album. It's called "Amor" (VA 160123), is a collection of Latin-American love songs, and provides conclusive proof that you don't have to be born "south of the border" to sound authentic and musicianly.

Dorita and Pepe are two charming artistes who have never compromised with quality and authenticity for the

(Continued on next page)

# THIS YEAR OF FOREIGN FARE

be going strong.

A good George Browne sampler is "Banana Boat Song" and "Farewell To Jamaica" on MELODISC 1404, and there's more typical Browne calypso singing on a PARLOPHONE EP (GEP 8594). Sir Lancelot contributed "Chinese Cricket Match" and "Marianne" on POLYDOR BM 6076. In a slightly more commercial vein, Mona Baptiste sings "Pepita" and "Amatin" on POLYDOR BM 6079 in her usual accomplished manner. I was genuinely sorry when the POLYDOR label ceased functioning in this country in the autumn. It had some excellent material at its disposal as far as "Foreign Fare" is concerned, and I hope it will be re-activated sometime in 1958.

Now for some collective examples of calypso virtuosity. "Caribbean Calypso" (PARLOPHONE CPMD 13) is a 10-inch album, and "The Calypso Carnival" (PHILIPS BBL 7170) is a 12-inch LP. Both are first-rate selections of the real thing performed with typical West Indian verve and skill by artistes who were born into the calypso tradition.

Before leaving the calypso, I must mention Johnny Des-

the calypso. She can be heard in "Miss Calypso" (LONDON HA-U 2062), and she's sensational.

## EDMUNDO ROS IS TOPS

**N**OW LET'S take a look at our "local Latins", as they've become known. Edmundo Ros went from strength to strength. His West End club is a leading attraction for all foreign visitors, and he and his Orchestra are among the busiest units in show business.

They played another highly successful summer season at Monte Carlo's famous Sporting Club, and they're regular stars of TV and radio in this country. Sales of Edmundo's records continue to rise in leaps and bounds, especially in the States, and the reason is obvious if you lend an ear to "Rhythms Of The South" (DECCA LK 4175) and "Calypso Man" (DECCA LK 4202). He's got exactly the right formula for people unfamiliar with Latin American music. He's as much a part of permanent musical entertainment as Victor Silvester and Ted Heath.

The Hermanoz Deniz (Frank, Joe and Laurie) continue freelance operations with

during the year. The Don is now located at Bertie Green's Astor Club, in London, W. and Santiago's warm Spanish personality enhances the atmosphere of the Colony Restaurant. Both bands did a fair number of broadcasts, but were sorely neglected from a disc point of view. Neither Santy nor the Don had a single record released throughout the year.

I believe H.M.V. have some Carlos sides "in the can," but there are no signs of these being issued at the time of writing. Both these musicians lead first-class groups with a high degree of authenticity, and I hope that someone somewhere in the record business will realise this in 1958.

## POPULAR CAVEZ

**F**RANCISCO CAVEZ consolidated his popularity with Savoy Hotel patrons and management, and I reckon he'll at least equal the long residency record set by his predecessor, Roberto Inglez. There were only two records from Frank during the year. They were "Casablanca" and "Malanoche" (PARLOPHONE DP 519) and "Amami Se Vuoi" and "Il Cantico Del

# Magnificent Music From Abroad

sake of quick popularity. Their high standards are now beginning to pay well-deserved dividends.

## STANLEY'S BLACK MAGIC

**STANLEY BLACK** is a musician of many parts. Not least of these is his flair for music in the Latin idiom. Last Christmas I raved about his album "Cuban Moonlight" (DECCA LK 4115). This Christmas I would remind you of its successor "Tropical Moonlight" (DECCA LK 4176). The formula is the same: piano, bass, guitar and four percussion.

The tunes have a slightly more commercial slant, but the performance is exactly as before. Crisp, polished, rhythmic and attractive—Black magic at its best.

The *cha cha cha* has proved to be the most popular Latin dance of the year. This slow, rocking variant of the mambo is ideal for those who like to dance, and there's no shortage of records featuring the rhythm. One of the best was made by a well-known London arranger and conductor who cloaked his identity beneath the pseudonym of "Nino Rico."

Using a contingent from the Francisco Cavez band augmented by some leading sessioners, he recorded a 10-inch album for ORIOLE (MG 10016) which is unprecedented in this country for zest and drive. This set of *cha cha chas* and two mambos reflects great credit on British musicianship in Latin music, and pours scorn on those who seek to belittle our own boys' efforts.

## BERNARD: TANGO KING

**BEFORE LEAVING** our "local Latins," I must mention the quiet yet highly successful king of the tango, Bernard Monshin. He's been specialising in the dance rhythm of the Argentine for many years now, and has attained such a remarkable degree of proficiency that visiting Argentinians aver

they have no one to beat him. One solitary EP (NIXA NEP 24035) is available at present; I hope 1958 will see several more to back up the spectacular successes in listening figures which his B.B.C. broadcasts obtain.

Two items by British band-leaders not usually associated with Latin music must also be included. That veteran of quality dance music, Bert Ambrose,

student brothers to you last April. Ricky and Johnny Vaughan are their names, and I'm pleased to report progress from them, too. They're long-standing favourites at Chelsea's La Rascasse dining club, they played a very successful late summer season in Paris, and they've appeared to good effect on the B.B.C.'s "Guitar Club" programme.

They're finding time to con-

Paraguayan artistes have Europe at their feet with their splendid singing and playing. They made two appearances in this country on B.B.C. TV which were unqualified triumphs, and they were the only top-line Latin-American artistes to visit us this year amid a welter of transatlantic rock 'n' rollers and jazzmen. They can be heard to magnificent effect in their 12-inch PHILIPS album "Famous Latin-American Songs" (BBL 7162).

That other European-based Paraguayan folk team, the Guaranis, also added to their fame with a 10-inch FELSTED album entitled "Argentina Y Paraguay" (SDL 86047). An interesting and significant fact reported to me by Felsted's Canadian-born manager, Terry McEwen, was that, out of all the FELSTED EPs available in this country, one by the Guaranis had achieved highest sales over a given period.

Yma Sumac made a welcome return to the world of records via a CAPITOL EP "Legend of The Jivaro" (EAP 1-770).

It was a result of a hazardous expedition undertaken by Yma and her ex-husband Moises Vivanco to the remote jungle home of the savage Jivaro headhunters. Vivanco's masterly recreation of the wild, primitive music, coupled with Yma's astounding vocal range, has produced a unique EP of blood-tingling brilliance.

Os Centauros, a Mexican team, contributed two genuine numbers from their homeland in the shape of a ranchero called "La Cama De Piedra" and a corrido entitled "La Escondida" on H.M.V. 45-JO 480. The Trio Guadalajara from Spain were heard on a pleasant EP (PARLOPHONE CGEP 31), and a Portuguese threesome, the Trio Odemira, won my whole-hearted approval with their 10-inch COLUMBIA LP 33 CS 22.

High in the instrumental stakes came that fine guitarist, Laurindo Almeida, with his 12-inch CAPITOL album "Guitar Music of Latin-America" (P 8321). From Mexico came an

interesting and unusual EP selection of classical Mexican waltzes played by pianist Miguel Garcia Mora on H.M.V. 7 EGC 12. From Spain Ramon de Herrera showed us his paces in the EP "Flamenco Guitar" (FELSTED ESD 3040).

## THE KNOCK-OUT!

**AND NOW TO THE BIG,** internationally-known bands which aren't quite part of the "local Latin" brigade. Xavier Cugat paid his respects with typical EP selections entitled "The King of Rumba" on PHILIPS BBE 12046 and BBE 12055 and with a MERCURY album "Music For Latin Lovers" (MPT 7530).

Tito Puente disappointed me with his album "Let's Cha Cha Cha With Puente" (RCA RD-27002). It sounded jaded and restricted for the most part, and utterly unlike the Puente of not so long ago. I hope we'll hear him to much better advantage in 1958.

Armando Orefiche, graduate of the Lecuona Cuban Boys, registered a solid impact with his scintillating FELSTED album of colourful Cuban music called "Captivating Cuba" (PDL 85028). Don Marino Barreto, Junior (presumably a son of the pioneer bandleader) did not come up to expectations in his Vox album "Cubana" (VX 820). The music was poorly arranged and raggedly performed, and a pale echo of what the name Barreto stands for in the annals of Latin American music in Europe.

Franco was his inimitable self in "La Macarena" and "Andalusia" on COLUMBIA DC 720. His little band packs a delightfully crisp Latin punch, but I just can't dig that crazy fiddler!

Last but not least comes El Rey himself—Perez Prado. His RCA album "Latin Satin" (RD-27048) is a complete knock-out. It's a set of Latin standards arranged and played with all the cheeky, puckish humour for which Prado is

noted. The vulgar blaring "Cherry Pink" trumpet soloist (Billy Regis again?), the growling, gutty trombone, the fiery brass ensemble work, the rocking rhythm, the characteristic Prado grunts—they're all to be heard in this 12-inch LP. Purists may turn up their noses at such naughty impudence, but I loved every minute of it.

## RECORDS OF THE YEAR

**Homegrown:** "Nino Rico Plays Cha Cha Cha" (ORIOLE MG 10016).

**General:** "Latin Satin" by Perez Prado (RCA RD-27046).

Both choices for the reasons already stated.

Now let me end with three earnest hopes.

1. TO MR. VAL PARNELL. How about a Latin "Saturday Spectacular" on ITV once in a while? It could be built around some of our own Latin talent; you'd be surprised at just how spectacular it could be.

2. TO EMI. How about releasing some of our "local Latins" on a home series as well as on the overseas lists? You'd be surprised how well they would fare if the public could get their discs without the uncertain rigmarole of making special orders.

3. TO MR. HAROLD DAVISON. How about fixing a Latin American band exchange? I've enjoyed the jazzmen you've brought over here, but the process could be extended in scope. Prado and Cugat could each bring a whole show as well as a first-rate band.

A very Merry Christmas to all readers, artistes, record companies, El Hombre Verde and Mrs. Green, all my colleagues and all the poor printers who have to set up my articles.

Adios until the New Year which I hope will be Happy, Peaceful, Prosperous and chock-full of tropical magic in Music For You All.



Wishes  
Readers  
and  
Artistes  
**A Merry  
Christmas**

recorded a set of Laurie Johnson arrangements under the title "Latin-America After Dark" (M.G.M. CC 2). It combines all the usual Ambrosian polish and precision with a toe-teasing Latin vitality. Johnny Gregory conducts a large orchestra in a selection of Jose Norman arrangements called "In A Latin Mood" on H.M.V. CLPC 20. Lush, exotic melody spiced with gentle rhythm is the keynote, and the result is mood music with a welcome difference.

You may recall that I introduced two singing Colombian

artists to you last April. Ricky and Johnny Vaughan are their names, and I'm pleased to report progress from them, too. They're long-standing favourites at Chelsea's La Rascasse dining club, they played a very successful late summer season in Paris, and they've appeared to good effect on the B.B.C.'s "Guitar Club" programme.

## ALBERTO'S TRIO

**NOW LET'S TAKE A PEEP** at the folkier artistes and records of 1957. First and foremost, of course, come Luis Alberto del Parana and his Trio Los Paraguayos. These four superb

artists to you last April. Ricky and Johnny Vaughan are their names, and I'm pleased to report progress from them, too. They're long-standing favourites at Chelsea's La Rascasse dining club, they played a very successful late summer season in Paris, and they've appeared to good effect on the B.B.C.'s "Guitar Club" programme.

Our First Anniversary was  
'A Happy Anniversary'  
Make Your Xmas a happy one this year with the new novelty number—  
'The Rumty-Tumty Melody'

Recorded by THE MAN with a different sound

**EDDIE CALVERT**

(ON COLUMBIA)

By the way have an extra drink for us this year

**THE GABRIEL AND DIAMOND MUSIC COYS.**

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YOU'LL  
SOON  
BE  
SEEING  
HARRY  
AS  
'DAVY'

Operatic "goon" HARRY SECOMBE may soon be known as "Hollywood Harry." His first film, "DAVY," will not be released until January, but when it was privately shown he received terrific praise for his performance and M.G.M. are thinking of inviting him to Hollywood. Harry plays a music-hall artiste who is offered the chance to go into opera and is torn between loyalty to himself and loyalty to his family of fellow-artistes (Ron Randell, George Relph, Susan Shaw and Bill Owen).



Page 55 Of The Record Mirror Xmas And New Year Edition Tells The Story Of

**NORMAN NEWELL** was born in the East End of London. From his earliest days his one ambition in life was to enter show-business.

However, as the family were too poor to take such risks, Norman began his money-making career working for eleven shillings and threepence per week at the local bus garage (the nearest he has ever come to being a conductor). Most of his spare time was taken up at night school, queuing for the gallery to see London shows, reading movie magazines, wishing always that he could see Hollywood but realising, at the time, that he might as well chase the Bleep.

From 14 years of age until 20 he saved for entry to R.A.D.A., imagining himself as a Laurence Olivier or perhaps a Boris Karloff. But dreaming was fun. Just as he'd saved enough money, war broke out (the 1939 one) and he was drafted into the Royal Artillery. No glamorous war record ensued as he was told to bash it out on a typewriting post instead of in a tank.

Fortunately for his safety he had learnt to play the violin in childhood days and this stood him in good stead for the Army Dance Band—quite the worst noise ever heard by long-suffering troops, but, musicians being at a premium and no Musicians Union to control the sessions, it meant getting out of many guard duties, and this, Army or ex-Army men will appreciate, Norman was not loathe to do.



**HE MEETS BILL WADDINGTON**

**AFTER FIVE** and a half years in the Army—being transported overseas as far as Woolwich—Norman was posted to India but upon being medically examined was found unfit for such a hot climate and posted instead to Sutton in Surrey. There he met a comedian named **Bill Waddington**. To Norman Newell—starved for some show business connection—Bill Waddington was a very big star. He knew everybody in Show Business and this was enough to make Norman talk to him incessantly, asking all about the wonderful life known as Show Business.

It happened that Bill said "Can you write lyrics?" "I've never tried," said Norman, "but I used to write poetry." "Have a go at this," said Bill and played a tune on the guitar that Norman promptly set to lyrics.

Bill was impressed. "I'll get you a job in Show Business," he said. That's how it happened. Norman found himself at the end of the war selling sheet music at the Cinephonic Music Company, in London's Charing Cross Road. A small start, but at least a foot on the rung of the ladder.

After a while, Norman tired of selling other people's compositions and wrote a song. It was awful, but Sid Colman gave him £10 in advance—which was tremendous encouragement to the ambitious Newell who—suitably encouraged—wrote more and produced a hit ballad called "My Lovely World and You."

This led to the second stage of his career when Charles Forsythe—of the famous American comedy act—Forsythe, Scamora and Farrell, believed in Norman enough to capitalise a music company for him where he wrote "I'm Happy Right Here" (Max Bygraves' first signature tune), "Nice To Know You Care" (now Vic Damone's signature tune) and "Our Love Story". About this time he met Noel Gay and wrote the lyrics for "My Thanks To You". Over-confident and slightly conceited by this success, Norman left Unit Music and decided to concentrate completely on writing as a career, but, unfortunately fell flat on his back.



**AND SO-ON TO COLUMBIA**

**ONE DAY**, completely depressed, Norman visited a friend at the B.B.C. named Pat Osborne. Telling her of his troubles she asked if he'd like to work at recording. Unable to believe this good fortune Norman grabbed the opportunity and became assistant to the Artistes Manager of Columbia Records. Whilst thus employed he discovered and successfully promoted **Ronnie Ronalde, Tony Brent, The Beverley Sisters, Johnny Brandon, Teddy Johnson, Norrie Paramor, Ray Martin, David Hughes, Eddie Calvert, Norman Wisdom, Gary Miller and Les Compagnons de la Chanson**. During this period with COLUMBIA he recorded many big names including **Allan Jones, Dorothy Dandridge, Mary Martin, Dolores Gray, Yvonne de Carlo, Frankie Howerd, Joyce Grenfell**.

Whilst with E.M.I. he also visited the U.S.A. and realised his life's ambition when he accompanied **Mitch Miller** to Hollywood, where he stayed at the Beverly Hills Hotel, was entertained by such wonderful people as **Doris Day, Johnny Ray, Guy Mitchell, Harry James and Rosemary Clooney**. During this period of his career Norman wrote the successful **Melba Waltz with Mischa Spoliansky**. One of his most embarrassing moments was having to demonstrate the song to the Metropolitan Opera star—**Patrice Munsel**. Norman has a voice that would never get on record in a million years!

Shortly after Norman returned from his first visit to the U.S.A., Columbia Records, U.S.A., left E.M.I. and amalgamated with PHILIPS. Norman departed with them. He did so for two reasons—his salary was doubled and he felt he owed a certain loyalty to his first employer who was also joining PHILIPS.

**NORMAN NEWELL**

**Song-Writer, Discoverer**

**of Stars, Ace Lyricist - and**

**TOP A AND R MAN**



**SUCCESSES-HEARTACHES TOO**

**FROM THE WORD "GO"** Philips was a great success and Norman can still remember beginning it all in an empty office in Shaftesbury Avenue. It was worry, heartache and trouble and really not worth the extra money but, nevertheless, an experience Norman will never regret. During this period he made the fabulously successful **Winifred Atwell** records, including her million seller, "Let's Have a Party." He discovered a young boy named **Tommy Lennon** and changed his name to **Glen Mason**, he put **Muriel Smith** in the Hit Parade with "Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me," discovered and promoted **Wally Stott** and recorded **Noel Coward, Marlene Dietrich, Rosemary Clooney, Johnny Ray, Valerie Hobson, etc. etc.** But, although enjoying a great deal of success there were managerial differences and, unable to work in an unhappy atmosphere, Norman left PHILIPS and began song-writing again.

He wrote the lyrics to **Leroy Anderson's** famous "Belle of the Ball" and the words to **Philip Green's** music for the **Dennis Lotis** film "The Extra Day." But it was a depressing time—Norman missed the recording life he'd been used to; he also missed the publishers' lunches—for they were no longer asking



One of Norman Newell's favourite pictures (naturally!) . . . **DORIS DAY** is the lady who's reciprocating his kiss.

him. All except two publishers — **Sid Colman** and **Teddy Holmes**. Holmes came to the rescue (so far as Norman's career was concerned) by asking him to write the book and lyrics for the next **Empress Hall Ice Show**. This eventually turned out to be "Wildfire"—which is notable as being the only flop in which **Frankie Vaughan** appeared. However, it brought about a hit song "That's How a Love Song Was Born" and this enabled Norman to pay for a trip to America to sound out the chances of a song-writing career there.

It was a risk but Norman was pretty confident, as he'd been pretty friendly with **Marlene Dietrich** and she'd promised to help him in every possible way. **Marlene** even took him to **Monto Carlo** with her, as her guest, so Norman was sure she would help him. Alas, she didn't even answer his telephone calls! Things looked pretty hopeless but at this time Norman met another visiting Englishman in New York—**Michael Carr**.

These two characters walking down Broadway must have looked like a double act. Six feet two Norman with five foot one **Michael!**

Luck was with them, however, for they were commissioned to write a new musical called "The Hot Rock," based on the theft of the Stone of Scone from Westminster Abbey (yes, it took an American to think of this idea!). The show was completed in three months, delivered to the producer on New Year's Eve 1956. A wonderful reason to paint Times Square a little red! Soon after, Norman left for Hollywood for the second time—but now he was travelling by car.

Norman saw and studied the American way of life in many States, wrote lyrics in many motels. Hollywood this visit was vastly different but just as exciting.



**MAGAZINE DREAMS COME TRUE**

**HIS FRIENDS** **Noel Coward, Dorothy Squires** and **Roger Moore** were there, so life was pretty hectic, but happy. Norman was thrilled to meet and get to know **Rock Hudson, Tab Hunter, Jeffrey Hunter, Humphrey Bogart, Robert Wagner, etc.**, and go to many Hollywood parties that, as a youngster, he had read about in the movie magazines.

At an audition for the Hot Rock show Norman was spotted by a talent scout for a big Hollywood agency and there and then he signed a contract for lyric writing.

Due to a family promise not to stay more than six months in the States, Norman returned to England on April 1, 1956, travelling back with **Lita Roza** and annoying all the rest of the passengers by talking all night about the thrill of returning home.

Norman then joined the staff of the World Record Club where he renewed his recording interests. He intended to stay only for a few months, then go back to the States. His career with World Record Club (and later CONQUEST records) will always be noted for his recording of **Sabrina** and a wonderful vocal group named **The Four Grads**. It was during this period that Norman teamed up again with **Geoff Love** who has been responsible for so many of the fabulous backings associated with Norman's discs.

Just before Christmas 1956, Norman was approached by E.M.I. to return. Flattered, and completely unable to resist the challenge to enter the recording arena again, Norman gave up all immediate thoughts of returning to the U.S.A., agreed to return to E.M.I. where he is now a free-lance recording manager, issuing discs on H.M.V., COLUMBIA and PARLOPHONE.



**AND HIS GREAT AMBITION, NOW-**

**SINCE RETURNING** to E.M.I. Norman has promoted the **King Bros.** into the position of top vocal group in England and put **Gracie Fields** into the best sellers list again with "Around the World."

His other signings have included **Dorothy Squires, Dennis Lotis, Terry Wayne, The Five Dallas Boys, Ian Carmichael, Laurie London, Fredye Marshall, Des O'Connor, Tony Osborne, etc., etc.**, and he has recorded **Judy Garland, Julian Slade and Eric Coates**.

Last year he was proud when he won the **Ivor Novello Award** for his lyrics to the successful song "By the Fountains of Rome."

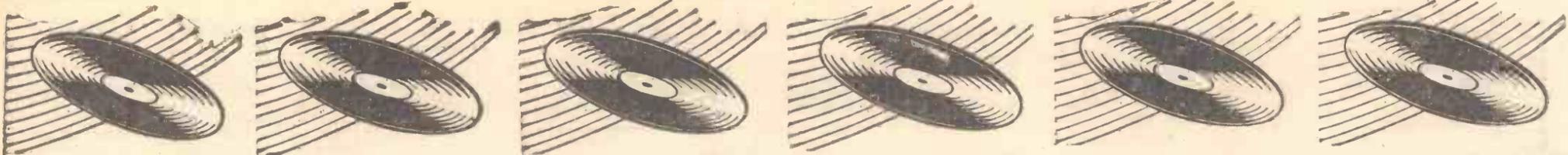
**NORMAN'S GREATEST AMBITION IS TO WRITE A GREAT BRITISH MUSICAL — HE IS QUITE DETERMINED TO DO THIS ONE DAY.**

He considers his greatest mistakes have been (a) becoming a Recording Manager in the first place ("I should have concentrated on writing!"), (b) turning **Dickie Valentine** down and (c) not learning to play the guitar because, "With my awful voice I could make a fortune on records!"

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# A WONDERFUL DISC YEAR

## DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT AND LISTENING TO IN JANUARY?

Time's a deceptive thing in the world of pop discs—yesterday can seem a year ago, and last year can seem to be only as far back as last week.

I've been looking back through my 1957 notes and it's really amazing how many hits the year has bred. We've come to take for granted the rapid rise of a popular hit, but, even so, the number of songs which made a big impression is little short of astounding.

As we came into 1957 Guy Mitchell was coming back into the big time. For Guy it's been a wonderful year—and it was a wonderful New Year for him with "Singing The Blues." Now that recording went to the top for Guy and stayed there for weeks and weeks. There was a newcomer who did well out of the number, too. A boy whose name we were just beginning to know—TOMMY STEELE!

"Is Tommy here to stay?" they were asking. Well "Singing The Blues" hasn't exactly been Tommy's theme phrase since!

## "SINGING THE BLUES"

It was a Philips release for Guy Mitchell—and it came during a terrific Top Ten period for the label. They'd already had Doris Day's "Whatever Will Be Will Be," Anne Shelton's "Lay Down Your Arms"—and they had another Mitchell winner in "Knee Deep In The Blues." It was a Philips disc which followed Mitchell into the top spot during January. And again it was a revival of fortunes.

This time for Johnnie Ray—he made the No. 1 position with his "Just Walkin' In The Rain."

As the year really got going—one thing became very apparent: there was NOT going to be any sales slide now that the peak December burst was finished.

Sales kept climbing higher and higher.

What were the customers to buy?

They queued for Frankie Vaughan's "The Green Door"—and made a packet for the Boys Clubs of this country. They queued for another Vaughan, too: Malcolm, who found himself with a sensational "sleeper" in "St. Therese of the Roses." Banned by the BBC, this side gradually worked its way into the hearts of the public—and it went almost to the No. 1 slot.

## HALEY THERE

BILL HALEY was still the rock 'n' roll fans' best friend—as "Rip It Up" proved for Brunswick.

Brunswick indeed had much to be grateful about where Haley was concerned. At one

period this label was almost monopolising the Top Twenty with different sides by the same artiste.

Fats Domino came into the reckoning with his rocking revival of "Blueberry Hill"—and he set a pattern for digging into the past. The year probably brought more royalties to composers who'd forgotten they'd ever written the tunes that suddenly swept into popularity!

The teenagers went in a big way for quite a host of hits that were out-of-date before these youngsters were born!

Frankie Laine did nicely in the early part of the year with his stirring "Moonlight Gambler" and the fans began to echo the words of Jimmy Young when he sang "More."

Mitchell Torok, too, found himself with a British public for "When Mexico Gave Up The Rhumba"—such a following, in fact, that he came

London label this was really a burster.

It brought a new lease of career to the young film star and set many another screen favourite wondering about this disc game. Sal Mineo and Tony Perkins have followed Tab successfully along the golden groove.

Sometimes it was the films which went looking for the record stars. They signed up Presley and they collected Pat Boone. Boone has become one of the steadiest best-sellers of them all and 1957 has certainly cemented his position in the pop world.

"Friendly Persuasion," "Don't Forbid Me," "Love Letters in the Sand" ("oldie" again) and "Remember You're Mine" have been Boone's to London this year.

The Platters did well this year and so did Little Richard. This dynamic rock star wasn't really moving over here until the customers caught sight of him on film.

year starting with "Cumberland Gap" which went into the No. 1 spot in just two weeks flat. "Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O"—"Puttin' On the Style"/"Gamblin' Man," and "My Dixie Darling" have made it a fantastic twelve months for Lonnie.

There's no doubt at all that the top three British stars of the year have been Tommy Steele, Lonnie Donegan and Frankie Vaughan. For consistent hit status there's been no one to touch this trio. All three have featured on screen too.

## FILM LINK

FILMS — YES, films have been very closely tied with the pop world. In fact the link seems to get closer and closer as the months go by.

Just cast your eyes over a few of the numbers from films which have been very solid sellers in the disc market this year:—

"True Love" (Bing and

with a handsome year—Oriole leaped to the forefront with "Freight Train" by Nancy Whiskey and the Chas. McDevitt Group—and with Russ Hamilton's "We Will Make Love." Russ went on to collect the Golden Disc award for this his very first record.

A good year, as you've probably noticed, for first records. Tab Hunter, Sal Mineo, Paul Anka and the Everly Brothers all made debut impact.

## "WONDERFUL"

WHAT ELSE DO YOU RECALL? Andy Williams with "Butterfly" fighting off Charlie Gracie's challenge? Then Gracie's sweep through to favour with "Fabulous" and "Wanderin' Eyes"?

And the sudden recognition that Miss Peggy Lee could be commercial if she was given the chance. Peggy's "Mr. Wonderful" was a wonderful winner for the star and it happened at a time when the word "wonderful" seemed to be the lucky charm for titles... but whatever became of "Wonderful, Wonderful"? Here was one of the finest ballads of the year that somehow never got the hit status it deserved in these islands.

There were other good numbers too, of course, that never came off as we expected them to. "Fire Down Below" seemed to have all the hallmarks of a smash hit, and did very nice business but not the top of the tree stuff it deserved. The Hi-Lo's with their single "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries" was a disc that never climbed the heights it was made for.

But that's the way of the pop disc game and it's one of the reasons why I always type with crossed fingers whenever I'm predicting Top Twenty success for a record in the review columns of the RECORD MIRROR. We've been lucky with something like 80 per cent. of our TOP TWENTY TIPS but there have been wrong bets like Eve Boswell's "Rock Bobbin Boats" and Tommy Sands' "Hep Dee Hootie." And sometimes you've got to wait a long time before the TOP TWENTY TIP comes off—Steele's "Shiralee," for instance, took months to come true.

## BALLADS

THE YEAR, IN GENERAL, has seen the absorption of the rock beat into ordinary ballads—one of the factors which has helped the "straight" song to return to favour. It has also seen Calypso fail to justify the forecasts made by many who said it was due to be the natural successor to rock 'n' roll. Harry Belafonte succeeded, but not with true calypso. He has sung commercial songs slanted after the idiom—and proved what the

CONT. ON OPPOSITE PAGE

# POP! POP!! POP!!!

## 3 IN TOP TEN!

THEN you couldn't see him for dust. He became one of the select crew to land THREE in the TOP TEN at the same time... "She's Got It," "Long Tall Sally" and "The Girl Can't Help It."

"Jenny, Jenny" was another good seller for Little Richard. The Teenagers came up with "I'm Not A Juvenile Delinquent"; then their star waned—and now, since Frankie Lymon's departure, seems to have set.

But you can't say that about home-grown Lonnie Donegan. The man who set the skiffle craze rolling, Nixa's guitar-singer has had a tremendous

Grace on Capitol); "Friendly Persuasion" (Boone on London); "Butterfingers," "Handful of Songs" and "Water Water" (Steele on Decca); "Island in the Sun" (Belafonte on RCA); "Around the World" (almost everybody on everything); "Shiralee" (Steele on Decca); "Man on Fire" (Frankie Vaughan on Philips); "Tammy" (Debbie Reynolds on Coral); "Party"—and plenty more (Presley on HMV and RCA); "Let Me Be Loved" (Tommy Sands on Capitol); "The Girl Can't Help It" (Little Richard on London).

That's by no means a complete list.

Nor was it only the major labels who found themselves

over to appear in person.

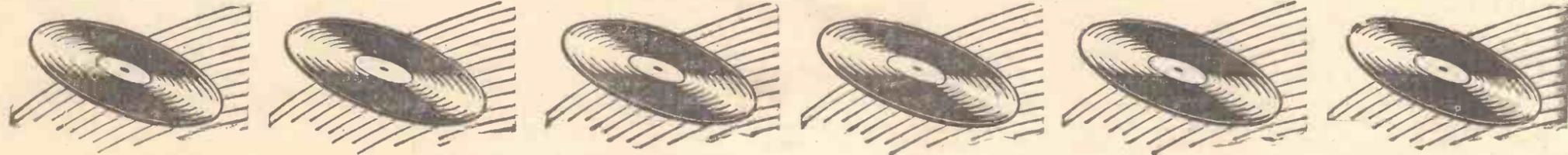
Unfortunately—like Haley's trip—Torok's tour probably had a boomerang effect. Certainly he hasn't been such a power over here since.

## PRESLEY TOPS!

PRESLEY: OF COURSE, you couldn't keep Elvis out of things even at the start of 1957. He was riding high then with his discs of "Hound Dog"/"Don't Be Cruel," "Love Me Tender" and "Blue Moon" (another "oldie" in new dress).

Then, in February, Tab Hunter rocketed to the top with his very first record—"Young Love." For the

Recalled  
By  
**DON PLAYER**



calypso boosters forgot: that real West Indian material has been around with us for too long to be accepted as a new rage.

A good year for British pop folk. At times almost half the Top Twenty has been made up of British discs. This would have seemed impossible not so long ago, but more and more of our home-grown stars are now outselling their American rivals in competition on the same songs.

The King Brothers, for example, took "A White Sports Coat" away from under the nose of its American composer-singer Marty Robbins, and they held back Tennessee Ernie and Tony Bennett on "In The Middle of an Island."

It has been an exciting year, with the standard of pop discs

particularly from fewer split sales.

What about those sales figures this year?

Well, in this country we will have purchased more than seventy million records during 1957—an increase of about ten million on 1956. And the graph looks as if it will continue to rise.

The pop business is big business—it's an entertainment medium which is bringing happiness to millions and that's the real accolade.

### I DISAGREE

I DO NOT AGREE with those who declare that rock and skiffle have dragged the musical quality down to rock-bottom. There have been some diabolical records, I

# POPS!

Continued from opposite page

rising all the time. This is particularly noticeable in the musical backings—our batoneers are not just there for the ride nowadays. More and more the musical directors are proving as much a power on the record—from a sales viewpoint—as the singers themselves.

### TOO MANY?

IF there's a criticism to be made of the industry during this period—then I'd say that it lay in the release of too many discs. More than 3,000 new record titles will have been issued in the United Kingdom during 1957. It's not, I'm afraid, just an indication of the rising popularity of the medium. It's an indication also that the companies are doing too much "doubling-up" on numbers. Time and again the major groups are putting out two and three versions of the same songs on different labels under the same management. London, Coral, Brunswick and RCA will all be heard covering a number for Decca group with the Decca label itself on the song as well.

At E.M.I. the same habit persists with HMV, Columbia and Parlophone. Frequently, I'm sure, the very quantity of disc versions cancel each other out and sometimes rob a song's hit chances. Too often it looks like a case of the left label not knowing what the right label is doing until it is too late.

Competition is the very life-blood of the business and it's an extremely healthy thing between the different companies, but it does appear to be incongruous when it is carried to lengths within the rival groups themselves.

If this point could be overcome I think it would improve pop appeal and send sales figures even higher. A top-selling artiste would benefit

admit, but there are always those who scrape the dregs in a mistaken effort to please the lowest common denominator.

Rock—and skiffle to an even greater extent—have succeeded not just in selling records. They have made people eager to make music for themselves—they have given teenagers the feeling that they can now actively share in the game.

And for every bad recording which is made there are two and three which go to prove that the level is slowly and subtly rising.

Personally, I'm looking forward to 1958. It may be free of the false frenzies engendered by the onslaught of rock 'n' roll, calypso and skiffle. It may prove that these factors have been absorbed and that the better points of each will fuse to make the overall sound a more comprehensive and more enjoyable entity.

### GENUINE . . .

WE, AS LISTENERS, are fortunate in that the disc business for all its faults still relies basically on true performers and fine creative artistes.

And we can count ourselves lucky that for every gimmick-sponsoring, get-rich-quick operator there are scores of ingenious musicians who know that to be commercial does not mean that you have to drag your standards in the mud.

The men who are making the boom a solid thing are the men who lack the snobbery to feel that they are prostituting their talents by catering for the mass audience. They are the men who are seizing every chance to experiment with sound and to lift the general level with their own ability and their own capacity for improvement.

THE MEN TO WHOM I TAKE OFF MY TRILBY.



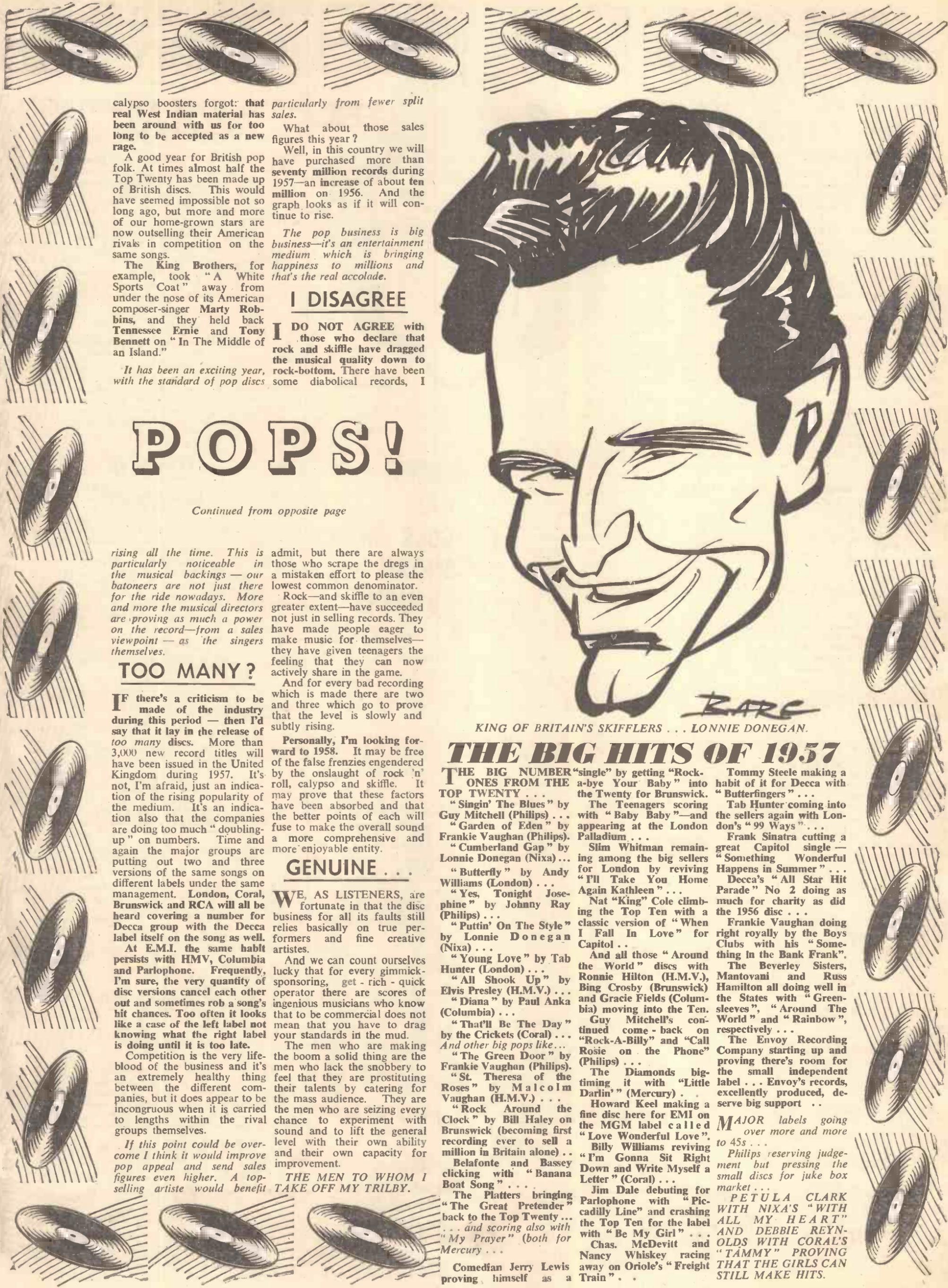
KING OF BRITAIN'S SKIFFLERS . . . LONNIE DONEGAN.

## THE BIG HITS OF 1957

THE BIG NUMBER "single" by getting "Rock-ONES FROM THE a-bye Your Baby" into TOP TWENTY . . . The Twenty for Brunswick. "Singin' The Blues" by The Teenagers scoring with "Baby Baby"—and Guy Mitchell (Phillips) . . . appearing at the London "Garden of Eden" by Frankie Vaughan (Phillips). Palladium . . . "Cumberland Gap" by Slim Whitman remaining Lonnie Donegan (Nixa) . . . among the big sellers for London by reviving "Butterfly" by Andy Williams (London) . . . "I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen" . . . "Yes, Tonight Josephine" by Johnny Ray Nat "King" Cole climbing the Top Ten with a classic version of "When I Fall In Love" for (Phillips) . . . Capitol . . . "Puttin' On The Style" by Guy Mitchell's continued come-back on "Rock-A-Billy" and "Call I Fall In Love" for (Phillips) . . . And all those "Around the World" discs with Ronnie Hilton (H.M.V.), Bing Crosby (Brunswick) and Gracie Fields (Columbia) moving into the Ten. The Diamonds big-timing it with "Little Rosie on the Phone" (Mercury) . . . "That'll Be The Day" by Howard Keel making a fine disc here for EMI on the MGM label called "The Green Door" by Bill Haley on Brunswick (becoming first recording ever to sell a million in Britain alone) . . . Belafonte and Bassey clicking with "Banana Boat Song" . . . The Platters bringing "St. Theresa of the Roses" by Malcolm Vaughan (H.M.V.) . . . back to the Top Twenty . . . and scoring also with "Rock Around the Clock" by Bill Haley on Brunswick (becoming first recording ever to sell a million in Britain alone) . . . Belafonte and Bassey clicking with "Banana Boat Song" . . . The Platters bringing "The Great Pretender" back to the Top Twenty . . . and scoring also with "My Prayer" (both for Mercury) . . . Comedian Jerry Lewis proving himself as a

Tommy Steele making a habit of it for Decca with "Butterfingers" . . . Tab Hunter coming into the sellers again with London's "99 Ways" . . . Frank Sinatra cutting a great Capitol single—"Something Wonderful Happens in Summer" . . . Decca's "All Star Hit Parade" No 2 doing as much for charity as did the 1956 disc . . . Frankie Vaughan doing right royally by the Boys Clubs with his "Something in the Bank Frank". The Beverley Sisters, Mantovani and Russ Hamilton all doing well in the States with "Greensleeves", "Around The World" and "Rainbow", respectively . . . The Envoy Recording Company starting up and proving there's room for the small independent label . . . Envoy's records, excellently produced, deserve big support . . .

MAJOR labels going over more and more to 45s . . . Phillips reserving judgement but pressing the small discs for juke box market . . . PETULA CLARK WITH NIXA'S "WITH ALL MY HEART" AND DEBBIE REYNOLDS WITH CORAL'S "TAMMY" PROVING THAT THE GIRLS CAN STILL MAKE HITS.



**'LAUGHING UP YOUR SLEEVES'**  
**HERE'S A CORKER**  
**FROM JOSÉ FERRER**  
**ON THE HI-LOs**

CONTINUING THE FEATURE FROM PAGE 36

**T**HIS is the Hi-Lo's first album for Columbia Records and as a former recording artist the brevity of whose career is unparalleled in platter history I have been asked to sort of welcome the boys into their new home by writing the notes for this album.

Being green at this sort of thing, I recently wandered into a music store to read a vast number of notes on other record albums. I discovered that for the most part, these notes seemed to fall into a few very well-defined categories.

We have, for instance, the historical approach: "On September 23rd, 1951, Dwight D. Eisenhower, soon to become but not yet the thirty-fourth President of the United States, shot a birdie three on the seventeenth hole on the historical old golf course at St. Swithin's. It was not until two years, seven months and sixteen days later a new group called the Hi-Lo's etc. . ."

**T**HEN there is the sort of essay that tries to establish an aesthetic evaluation of the artiste in philosophical terms: "Jubilant and serene in the soaring fervency of their affirmation, their voices proclaim man's essential faith in the universe and in his own destiny."

Still another method relies on a detailed analysis of the musical selections contained on the record: "The opening theme is stated briskly but without condescension. A petulant motif provides a mettlesome reply and briefly we are embroiled in the querulous *Va-et-vien* so wittily developed. Presently, however, wiser heads prevail and soon a quasi-elegiac aura bathes the erstwhile adversaries in a mood of contemplation bordering on the complacent."

**I** MYSELF lean towards that aspect of the "story behind the story" school which stresses the human side, featuring the "They're just like people" theory. This method has many features to recommend it: for one thing the notes can be written without ever having to listen to the record.

Let me describe the Hi-Lo's to you. In appearance they are boyish, eager and sunny and might as well have called themselves "The Four Hair Cuts," "The Four Sophomores," "The Four Pigskins," or even "The Four Zippers." They affect the Brooks Brothers Ivy League type of dress without really understanding it.

**G**ENE PUERLING, although he is the leader and arranger, is not the least bit pompous. Quite the contrary: his is an eager handshake and a ready smile. He masks his essentially serious view of life behind a pair of shrewdly twinkling eyes and a humorously twitching mouth which is continually pulling on a fine old briar. He is a LO, vocally and in physique.

**B**OB MORSE, the sort-of-straight singer of the bunch, has a characteristically smooth mellow song delivery. In his spare time he is given to deadpan antics, guaranteed to bring a smile to the dourest phiz. He is at heart an actor, and on the Rosemary Clooney TV show it is Morsey who always steps forward when volunteers are sought to wear some outlandish costume for a comical effect. He is a HI physically and a LO vocally.

**C**LARK BURROUGHS is the personality-boy of this sterling aggregation. His is the banshee-like quaver that often leads a complicated musical phrase into a satisfying resolution. Despite his youthful appearance he is married and has a child for whom he is often mistaken both physically (LO) and vocally (HI).

**B**OB STRASEN rounds out the personnel of the foursome. What is there to say about Strass, as he is often called, but that he always has been and always will be "just Strass." He is physically HI and vocally LO. Strass and Clark are interchangeably known as "The LO-est HI" and "The HI-est LO," depending on just what you mean.

**M**ORE serious considerations such as the freshness of the Hi-Lo's musical attitude, their unvaryingly true pitch in every complicated arrangement, their never-failing clarity in the delivery of lyrics, the fact that they have been stylistic trail-breakers—these and a thousand other items belong to another more definitive and, I have little reason to hope, subsequent essay. For the nonce suffice it to say that this album is called *Suddenly it's the Hi Lo's* and it includes twelve fine numbers.

José Ferrer

**NEAT WHISKEY**



**NANCY WHISKEY** . . . blossomed out on her own, topped bills as a solo skiffle songstress after making a Top Ten Hit with 'Freight Train' with Charles McDevitt on the ORIOLE label.

**F**OR THE FIRST TIME in the history of the Royal Albert Hall, London, the Corporation of this famous building has decided to go into business with 33 years old **VICTOR HOCHHAUSER**. First joint presentation will be the Soviet Cossack Company in February.

Lord Pender, Chairman of the Council (which includes such personalities as Sir Ernest Bullock), has taken this unprecedented step as an experiment in management, despite the fact that the Hall is fully booked for the next 18 months. If the experiment is a success, it will doubt-

**Experiment With Cossack Co. In February**

less lead to many other engagements in management.

The Royal Albert Hall was first opened in Queen Victoria's reign with certain public subscriptions entitling the holders to rights of certain boxes and seats, but has never since received any form of subsidy from the government or anyone else. As the Albert Hall is controlled by Act of Parliament, long negotiations were involved.

The Council of the Corporation were so interested in Victor Hochhauser's suggestions made after many discussions with the present Hall manager, **Christopher Hopper**, that they felt he was a sufficiently substantial client (after many years' associations in concert presentations) and the Deed of Partnership was finally settled and registered at Bush House.

**THRILLING DANCERS**

**F**IRST attraction to be presented under this combined management will be possibly the world's most spectacular dancers, the thrilling Soviet Cossack Company of 100 dancers from the Ukraine.

Earlier this year Victor Hochhauser swept up the board in Moscow of the most important entertainment to be found in Russia, and this thrilling company of both men and women will be the first of his many forthcoming seasons. The company is described by the Russians as being the most dynamic of all their companies, and as London has already been thrilled by the Moiseyev and the Soviet Army Ensemble (both described as less exciting in comparison), it is certainly in for a great treat.

It will also be a unique season in that it will be the first time that

**ALBERT HALL GOES INTO SHOW BUSINESS**

such a theatrical company will be allowed to dance in their costumes and make-up on Sundays (matinee and evening show).

The Albert Hall Charter is such that, unlike London theatres and other concert halls, they are permitted to do this without restrictions.

Presenting such a large company of fiery dancers will produce many problems for the Albert Hall. Mr. Hochhauser and Mr. Hopper will leave for Moscow in the near future to discuss problems of presentation.

**MARK SEGAL**



**Wishes All In Show Business And His Colleagues On The SPORTSMAN'S AID SOCIETY All The Best For Christmas & The New Year**

**CONNIFF CLICKS WITH HIS CRAZY SOUND**

**BACKGROUND GIMMICKS HELP TO BOOST DISC SALES**

**H**AVE YOU HEARD the new "Conniff-Sound"? Of course you have . . . it was behind Johnnie Ray, when Johnnie sang "Walking in the Rain" . . . it formed an exciting background for Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues" . . . it gave such terrific punch to Frankie Laine's version of "Moonlight Gambler," not to mention a whole string of other hits.

The "Conniff-Sound" . . . it's bound to attract the attention of every disc-lover. It is as original as the invention of the phonograph itself. It strikes you like an aggressive cobra. It inspires every singing star who happens to be in front of Conniff and his orchestra.

And here's the way this amazing "Conniff-Sound" came into existence and how it works.

He's done it by scraping two sandpaper blocks together. He has had two thumbles running over a washboard and fingers tapping a watermelon. And one day he created yet another peculiarly attractive sound; in a way we thought only Chaplin could think of. He put two dozen shoes in the hands of a group of performers—yes, the HANDS! Then he carted a piece of sidewalk into the recording studio and put it on a table. And finally he told the performers to dance on the sidewalk, on the table, with the shoes around their hands.

"Boy", he yelled fervently, "THIS IS IT!"

**'I HAD TO BE HUNGRY'**

Where does he come from, this amazing creator of new sounds? Why did it take this highly talented musician so many years to become famous?

In the NEW YORK POST Robert Williams has recently provided the answers to these questions.

"Conniff", Williams writes, "is probably the hottest arranger in the record-business, because of the way he backs up the stuff with his stuff."

"But only a few years ago he was hungry in Hollywood . . . with a wife and three kids, a suburban home papered with foreclosure notices and maybe 50 or 75 cents in the till on a given day. The only 'sound' he heard then was from bill collectors, ringing the doorbell. Well, things didn't look too good for a Boston boy, who took his trombone and made it big with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Artie Shaw and Harry James—and did the arrangements too. Conniff stuck with James for seven or eight years, until rock-and-roll started to move. He could not 'dig' rock-and-roll with a steam shovel and so James dumped him."

Williams then quotes Conniff himself: "I had to be hungry. I had to be broke to wonder what people like to hear. I bought every hit record and studied them and I found similarities. I think I know . . ."

**HE MEETS MITCH MILLER**

He accepted all kinds of jobs to keep alive, but when he got tired of digging suburban cellars he sold what he still owned of his house, bundled his wife and three boys into the car and headed east.

In New York, they could use his trombone in an NBC house band. And that's how he ran into Mitch Miller, the bearded wizard of the recording industry, who immediately realized Conniff's talents and consequently put him on the pay-roll.

What a fabulous success-story it has been ever since! He backed up "Band of Gold", the Don Cherry disc, and it sold a million. The above mentioned Mitchell record sold 3,000,000. Then there are things Ray did for Johnnie Ray and Frankie Laine, Marty Robbins, the Four Voices, Something Smith, Helene Dixon and many others.

So far, the "Conniff-sound" has resulted in a house in Port Washington and a portable suitcase organ that he can take aboard his cabin cruiser out on the water, to dream up new sounds whenever he feels like it. He has done an album of his own: "S Wonderful" and he's fallen in love with The Bop, a West Coast dance creation, which is a cross between the Susie-Q and the Charleston.

Yes, we'll hear a lot more of the sound of Ray Conniff, who is 41, looks like Donald O'Connor and thinks it's time for the ballad to come back, as well as time for a great new girl singer to come along!

**JACKIE HYAMS wishes, as one sportsman to another, everything that represents Good Luck. May 1958 be the Best Ever!**

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James Asman's Brilliant Pen Pictures Of Some Of The World's Greatest Musicians



JAMES ASMAN is no mean artist either... he has drawn these sketches of (above) FATS WALLER and BESSIE SMITH (on cols. 5 and 6, this page), two of the famous subjects of this article.

featuring Red Allen, and under Chris Kelly, Kid Ory and Kld Rena. The depression late in 1929 hit him very hard and he worked as a labourer to maintain his family. He played very spasmodically, usually in parades and small out-of-the-way dance halls in the Negro Quarter until 1942 when Gene Williams, Bill Russell and other jazz musicologists unearthed Bunk Johnson and, incidentally, discovered Lewis in a search for a suitable band to back the elderly trumpeter. Lewis's work, and that of the majority of the original group chosen to play with Bunk, was soon to make an impression independent of Johnson, whose work was always less folksy and more sophisticated.

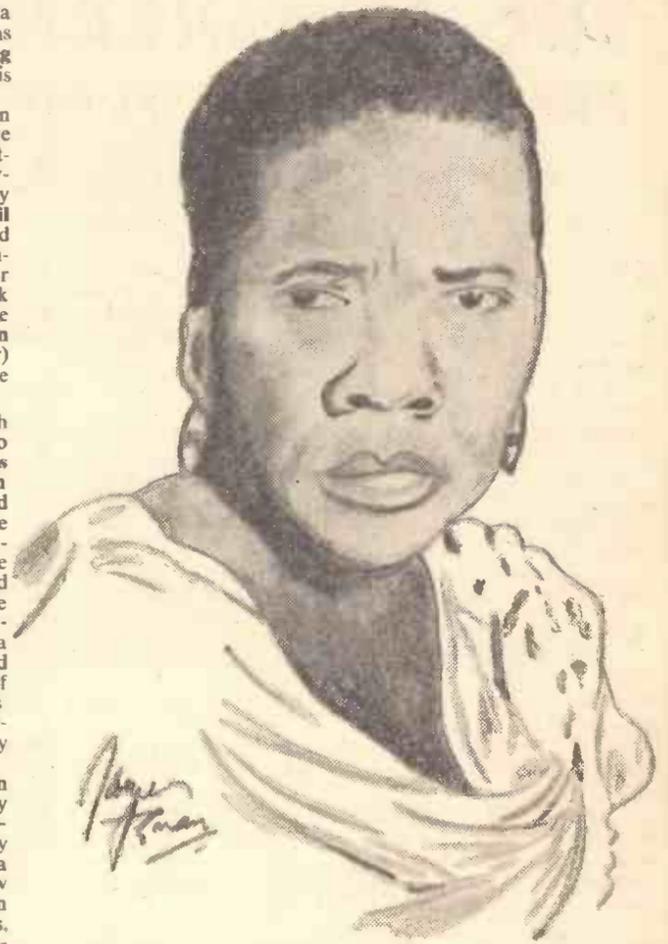
Bill Russell, expecting to record Bunk in New Orleans in 1943, found that the trumpeter was on a trip to San Francisco for a lecture date with Rudi Blesh and recorded the band with Kid Howard in his place. Howard, an earthier and more direct lead, prompted the band to play more easily in its own style and as a result of this "surprise session" Lewis was able, after quarrelling with Bunk over musical policy, to launch a new career. His work, incredibly sweet and near-Elizabethan in its delicate sound patterns, has caused widespread interest, especially in Britain where the Revivalist movement rested very obviously upon his work and recordings. He visited Britain early in 1957, but ill health has, unfortunately, curtailed his more recent activities.

coal carts and worked at a number of menial occupations until, in 1922, the great King Oliver sent for him to join his band in Chicago.

From then on Louis grew in artistic stature, joining the early Fletcher Henderson outfit in 1924 in New York, playing in turn with groups led by Ollie Powers, his wife Lil Hardin and Erskine Tate and building an incredible technique. His meteoric career continued with a spate of work under Carroll Dickerson at the Sunset Cafe (where American agent Joe Glaser was manager) and by the autumn of 1927 he was fronting his own group.

His superb recordings with a specially selected studio group named the Hot Fives and Hot Sevens ensured an international reputation and by the end of the 'twenties he was regarded, not without considerable foundation, as the greatest jazzman the world had ever seen—and heard. The Luis Russell band accompanied him in '29/30 on a series of tours and this sparked off a continual succession of big band shows with Louis playing high, wide and handsome and singing his gravelly vocals.

In the 'forties he dabbled in commercial novelties, comedy routines and vocals, culminating in a resounding victory in the first Esquire Poll and a major part in the film "New Orleans." He carried on with smaller "jam" units, visiting France in 1948, forming the first of the celebrated All Stars with Teagarden in 1947 and revisiting Britain in



New Jersey on August 21, 1904, freelanced for a time with men like Sonny Greer and June Clark. He was stranded in Kansas City on an unsuccessful theatre circuit tour and joined Walter Page's Blue Devils, together with Jimmy Rushing. He also gravitated to the famous Bennie Moten band, taking over the leadership when Moten died in '35. American critic John Hammond, junior, heard his ten-piece outfit in the summer of that year and invited it to Chicago and, later, to New York.

The Basie history from then on is internationally known for he began recording for American Decca and, through his pioneer work, became the basis for the Negro "progressive" movement which has produced so many unique stars in the so-called "Mainstream" style today. From out of the ranks of the Basie aggregations came soloists of the calibre of Lester Young, Herschel Evans, Buck Clayton, Dicky Wells, Harry Edison, Joe Newman, Don Byas, Buddy Tate, Lucky Thompson, Paul Gonsalves, Emmett Berry, Vic Dickenson and Jay Jay Johnson. Basie, as a pianist, is both economical and inventive. As a leader he has inspired the most powerful Negro jazz unit of all time, sponsoring the growth of new styles in Negro music and resurrecting the work of men who might have been forgotten.

The band originally toured Europe in 1954 and starred in a series of fine jazz concerts in England earlier this year, returning briefly again in the autumn... always to ecstatic audiences.

**JOHNNY DODDS**  
(CLARINETIST)

JOHNNY DODDS, together with his talented brother Warren "Baby" Dodds, was a native of New Orleans. He was born there on April 12, 1892, died in August, 1940 of a cerebral haemorrhage.

A self-taught musician who played his first engagement with the Kid Ory band in 1911, Johnny left Ory seven years

later and went on tour with Billy Mack. He worked for a time with Mutt Carey and made his first trip to Chicago. He travelled in the migration to Chicago and began work with the famous King Oliver Creole Jazz Band, staying for four important years.

He made many classic jazz recordings with Louis Armstrong. Jelly Roll Morton, Oliver and Lil Armstrong during the '20s, leading his own small group in the late '20s at Kelly Stables in Chicago until, with the depression, he virtually ceased work between 1930 and '38 and, in desperation, became a taxi driver. He returned both to jazz and to New York in January, 1938, to take part in a specially arranged New Orleans session for American Decca, recorded again in Chicago shortly before his death and never knew the revival which was stirring. His manner as a man was modest and his clarinet style liquid and intensely emotional. Many regard him as the greatest jazz clarinetist of all time.

**JOE 'KING' OLIVER**  
(CORNETIST)

KING OLIVER, as a bandleader, who migrated not so long after the break-up of Storeyville and sought a greater fame in the North, is often regarded as the granddaddy of New Orleans music.

He was born in Savannah, in Georgia, on May 11, 1885, commenced playing cornet at the turn of the century in Crescent City. From the great formative era between 1908 and 1918 he blew, in the streets and in the halls, with such veteran outfits as the Eagle, Onward Brass Band, the Magnolia, Olympia and Kid Ory bands.

When the American State Department closed Storeyville in 1917 after an outbreak of disease amongst the sailors visiting the port and the vice belt, Oliver headed a mass migration to Chicago. He took over Lawrence Dewey's Band

CONTINUED ON PAGE 61

THESE FOLK MADE JAZZ

**LOUIS**

**ARMSTRONG**  
(TRUMPETER AND VOCALIST)

BORN DANIEL LOUIS ARMSTRONG on July 4, 1900, Louis received his nickname "Satchmo" in 1932 when he first visited England on a theatre tour. A colloquial shortening of the earlier "Satchelmouth" it remained with him over the years.

He skipped along in the "second line" at New Orleans Negro parades and sang as a boy in a vocal quartet busking the streets. During a New Year's Eve celebration he fired his father's gun and was committed to the Waif's Home for Boys in Crescent City where he was taught to play a trumpet. Afterwards he drove

1956. His trumpet work is unique, voicing the spirit of jazz as no other has ever done. His hoarse and peculiar singing style, which began with accidental "scat" vocals early in his career, has beat, imagination and humour. He has performed, not only as a truly great jazz horn player and singer, but as a film star, popular recording artiste and comedian all with amazing success.

**COUNT BASIE**

(PIANIST)

WILLIAM BASIE studied music with his mother, was a childhood prodigy on the keyboard and learnt his jazz technique from a variety of masters including Fats Waller—who initiated him to the organ.

He was born in Red Bank,

26, 1903. His family was intensely musical — his father was a trumpeter and his mother both a singer and a pianist.

A brother also sang, whilst an uncle, who performed regularly in a sporting house, taught him to play the piano. It was as a pianist that Rushing began his professional career, with Walter Page's Blue Devils between 1927/8. There, too, he began his more famous work as a vocalist, influenced by such great coloured artistes as Bessie Smith and Ethel Waters. A year later Jimmy was with the pioneer Bennie Moten group, naturally gravitating to Count Basie after Moten's tragic death in 1935. His work with the early Basie band brought recognition to him, particularly in this country, and he stayed with the Count until '50, when he took his own septet on the roads and into the theatre circuits. Since that time Rushing has been working as a freelance singer, in cabaret and in concerts.

His films include the comedy "Funzapoppin" with Olsen and Johnson. His forthright "shouting" Blues were always able to cope with the powerhouse dynamics of the Basie group and this swinging, intense style has long become a trademark for this special kind of Negro vocalist.

**GEORGE LEWIS**

(CLARINETIST)

GEORGE LEWIS will always be associated in the most direct way with native New Orleans music. He was born July 13, 1900 in the heart of Crescent City and began learning a fife when he was a boy.

He was 16 when he started teaching himself the clarinet and shortly afterwards joined the Black Eagle band. From then on Lewis worked with most of the legendary Negro street and marching bands, with Buddy Petit's Black and Tan Band, the Earl Humphrey outfit, his own early group

**JACK TEAGARDEN**

(TROMBONIST AND VOCALIST)

JOHN WELDON TEAGARDEN was born in the town of Vernon in the State of Texas on the 20th of August, 1905. He first began learning the trombone when he was only seven and is a self taught musician.

He played in Peck Kelly's band between 1921 and '22, led his own outfit in Kansas City, worked with groups under the leadership of Doc Ross, Willard Robinson and several others and arrived in New York in 1927 where he began recording under Sam Lanin, Roger Wolfe Kahn and other popular studio bands of that time. His first solo rôle came in Red Nichols' "After You've Gone," made early in 1930. He was with the Ben Pollack aggregation from 1928 until 1933, during which time he recorded prolifically with numerous groups.

From 1934 until 1938 he played in the large Paul Whiteman band and launched his own big group in 1939 which proved to be a financial failure, although many great white jazzmen were featured. In 1947 he gave up the arduous work of band leading to join the first Louis Armstrong All Stars. A few years later he reluctantly broke with his idol, Satchmo, to begin a new career as the leader of his own jazz band and visited Britain in the Autumn of 1957. He appeared in several films, particularly with his old friend Bing Crosby. Noted for a lazy style of "blue" singing and a melodic, facile trombone line.

**JIMMY RUSHING**

(NEGRO BLUES SINGER)

CHRISTENED JAMES ANDREW RUSHING, Jimmy was born in Oklahoma City on August

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# Chappie D'Amato

Continuing James Asman's Pen Pictures of the World's Greatest Musicians



born in New Iberia on December 27, 1879, and studied with Professor Wallace Crutchley from 1887. His work as a pioneer of Crescent City jazz then reads like the Blue Book with a spate, under Adam Oliver in 1895, several years with the legendary Buddy Bolden from 1896 and touring work with Holecamp's Georgia Smart Set, a minstrel show, until he visited New York in 1903.

in 1920 and brought such eminent New Orleansians to his banner as Kid Ory and Johnny Dodds. Louis joined him in 1922.

In the early '20s the Oliver band reigned supreme, acting as a major influence on both white and Negro jazz activity, spreading Negro Dixieland music northwards with enormous success.

Later, in 1926 and '7 he fronted a more sophisticated and larger unit called alternatively his Savannah or his Dixie Syncopators.

His recordings for a multitude of labels were all classic in content and represent the best in native New Orleans music of the period. In 1928 he moved to New York where misfortune began to destroy his health. Luis Russell took over the remnants of his band and Oliver suffered one disastrous road tour after another. He began to lose his teeth, always a major catastrophe to a trumpeter, and, on the last of the recordings attributed to him allotted the horn part to other musicians. Ruined in both health and fortune by the bad luck which pursued him, Oliver eventually returned home to his sister in Savannah in the early thirties where he died in complete obscurity in April, 1938. Nevertheless his work, both as a bandleader and as a cornetist, will live on for ever. He played with a fierce vibrato and used his mutes with tremendous effect. His stabbing, lively lead perfectly balanced the genius of men like Dodds and Ory. He carried the traditional free-blowing lead of a Negro marching band to the sophisticated environment of the great industrial North.

**BUNK JOHNSON**

(CORNETIST AND TRUMPETER)

**WILLIAM GEARY "BUNK" JOHNSON** inspired the embryonic Louis Armstrong during the time he played with the Eagles between 1911 and the outbreak of the First World War.

That early influence gave Bunk his second chance at eternal fame, if not concrete fortune. Louis mentioned Bunk and his work in glowing terms in latter-day writing and unwittingly began a new jazz movement. Bill Russell wrote to the New Iberia post office in Louisiana, managed to contact the ageing jazzman in 1938. In 1942 several American critics combined to bring him back to musical life. Bunk was one of the richest finds in the wholesale search for New Orleans veterans which began in 1940 with the Delta recordings of Kid Rena. He was



He worked with a theatre band in Dallas, gravitated to the West Coast in 1905. Then came his three year stint with the Eagles after which he travelled variously with minstrel shows or in honky tonks and country fairs. By 1930 he was with the Black Eagles Band of Crowley in Louisiana but his leader died, his trumpet was destroyed and Bunk, like Oliver, lost his precious teeth. He retired out of the music field, working in his native New Iberia in the rice fields, hauling sugar cane and teaching on occasion.

With his rediscovery by Russell and others, Bunk managed to astonish the jazz world with a series of recordings in the early 'forties, together with a band of fellow veterans headed by clarinetist George Lewis. Towards the end of his life Bunk grew increasingly discontented with the Lewis musicians, and, whilst playing a return date at the Stuyvesant Casino in New York, discharged his usual band for a bunch of musicians more to his taste. Under the guidance of Harold Drob he managed to record a session on his 68th birthday which was later referred to as his "Last Testament" and consisted of a repertoire of rags and more professional tunes played with a group of Negro musicians working in and around New York. A blizzard was raging and Bunk, born in the warmer South, returned there to escape the freezing cold and harsh winds. He died, after all the fuss was over, in near obscurity in the summer of 1949. His work was extremely sensitive, facile and musical. It represented the way an old-time professionally trained Negro jazzman might go, and was an almost exact opposite to the rough, vital work of men like Oliver, Bolden and Carey.

**KID ORY**

(TROMBONIST)

**EDWARD "KID" ORY** is a talented veteran who can play a large variety of other instruments. He was born on Christmas day, 1886 and, as a stripling, organised a "spasm" band with home-made instruments.

With the cash he gained playing with this group Ory bought his first trombone. He studied with various teachers around La Place (where he was born) and New Orleans (where he later worked) and sat in with the Bolden band. In 1911 he brought his first jazz band to New Orleans which, in turn, featured the trumpet work of Mutt Carey, King Oliver and Louis Armstrong. Men of the calibre of Johnny Dodds, Jimmy Noone, Sidney Bechet and George Lewis played clarinet for him. He moved to California in 1919 where he continued to study composition and music and there led his own band until 1924 when a call from Oliver took him to Chicago.

He worked with Oliver until 1927, with Dave Peyton that same year and with such lesser known Negro outfits as Clarence Black, the Chicago Vagabonds and Leon Rene's Lucky Day Orchestra. During this time he joined many eminent jazzmen on classic recording dates, particularly Louis and the Hot 5 and 7, Lil's New Orleans Wanderers and Bootblacks, Ma Rainey, Clarence Williams, Tiny Par-

ham, and Luis Russell. He returned to the West Coast in 1929 and left the music profession at the onset of the depression.

Between 1930 and '39 he ran a successful chicken farm with his brother, making a fairly quiet comeback in 1940 with Barney Bigard's band on bass. He worked with Bunk in 1943 and featured in a series of jazz broadcasts arranged by Orson Welles the following year. These brought him fame and during them Jimmie Noone, the veteran N.O. clarinetist, died.

Ory continued using many of his old sidemen, including Ed Garland and Mutt Carey. He was featured with Louis in the film "New Orleans" and began recording a series of excellent jazz sessions in the Negro Dixieland manner. He employs a rough, circus-styled tailgate which is a direct link with the old days of street marching jazz and circus and minstrel shows.

**EDDIE CONDON**

(GUITAR)

**ALTHOUGH THE VISIT CONDON** and the Mob paid to Britain a few months ago must have brought the name of this volatile Chicago-styled jazzman more to the public eye than ever before, in fact

York, gracing various small groups and acting as often as not as organiser or agent. He also played at odd times with larger units led by Bobby Hackett and Artie Shaw, and achieved greater importance as a promoter of jazz concerts in 1939. From this beginning Condon ran his own club in Greenwich Village, had his own television programme and wrote a book called "We Called It Music". Of later years he has rather neglected his guitar playing for promotion and compering, but has been known for many years for his perky personality and forceful rhythm section work.

Has now boosted a reputation as a wit and a drinker which is used rather as a publicity stunt.

**BIX BEIDERBECKE**

(CORNET AND PIANO)

**A LEGEND HAS GROWN UP** around this white Dixieland musician which is due in greater part to his early death in August 1931. Leon Bismarck Beiderbecke was born in Davenport, Iowa, on the 10 March, 1903, of German stock.

He was influenced as a teenager by the pioneer jazz he heard on the records of that

classical composers as Debussy. In 12 short years, limited though his output was, he managed to make a stronger impression upon the future course of jazz than any other white artist. In the last year of his life, dogged by ill-health brought on by over-drinking and under-feeding, Bix had left Whiteman and was freelancing around New York. He got up from a sick bed to play and contracted pneumonia. He was buried in his home town of Davenport.



**BIG BILL BROONZY**

(GUITARIST AND BLUES SINGER)

**THE TALL LOVABLE BIG BILL BROONZY** has, in the last few years, made more friends in Britain than any other visiting American jazzman. He was born in the Deep South, in Scott, Mississippi, on June 23, 1893.

He was raised on a farm in Arkansas and became a Negro entertainer as a comparative youngster. He left this for a time, principally at the behest of his family, to become a preacher for four years. He became disgusted with the graft practised by many coloured churches and set firmly on his career as a Negro balladeer. He accompanied Cripple Clarence Lofton on guitar on his first records for Paramount in 1926, and also Bumble Bee Slim. By the late 'thirties he was known as a Blues singer in his own right and as the major influence in the circle of recording Blues artists who catered for the Negro market. His earlier records became collectors' items in Britain for none of them had been reissued here. His fame was considerable and in 1938 John Hammond junior invited him to play at a jazz concert at Carnegie Hall, to which venue he returned in the following year.

In the late '40s he worked obscurely as a janitor for the Iowa State College, occasionally visiting Chicago for sessions. He gained a renewed fame as a Negro folk artist when he visited Europe in 1951 and the NFJO booked him for a tour of Britain. Since then he has recorded prolifically on French and English labels and, today, undoubtedly possesses a large fan following in this country. He ran his own tavern in Chicago between 36 Street and Cottage Grove, bought his daughter a record store and runs his own farm at Pine Bluff, Arkansas. His facile, Mississippi mode of singing the Blues is well suited to the vibrant, native styled guitar he plays and he is perhaps the most important representative of Negro Deep South folk song living today.

**BUCK CLAYTON**

(TRUMPETER)

**WILBUR "BUCK" CLAYTON** was born in Parsons, Kansas, on November 12, 1911. His father was a musician in local religious circles and taught him to play both piano and trumpet as a child.

He was 19 when he led the church choir on trumpet. He left to go to California when he was 21 and, in 1933, led his own 14-piece band which was later taken over by Teddy Weatherford. With it he did a two-year stint in Shanghai, arriving back to New York and the Count Basie band in 1936, replacing Hot Lips Page. He served in the U.S. Army during the war and came back to civilian life to join the Norman Granz organisation as a starred soloist.

He visited France several

times during the 'fifties and now works with his own jam group, recording prolifically, particularly for European markets where the "mainstream" style is extremely popular. He is also known as an arranger, particularly for the Basie band. His style possesses its own kind of vibrato, a fine open tone and an individual use of mutes.

**RUBY BRAFF**

(TRUMPETER)

**BRAFF IS A SELF- TAUGHT WHITE trumpeter**, who has achieved a phenomenal reputation, particularly in this country, for his work with various "mainstream" recording units, such as those led by Clayton, Vic Dickenson and Mel Powell.

He was born in Boston on March 16, 1927, has played with a varied number of white and Negro jazz stars who visited the Storeville Club in Boston.

Is an extremely talented and versatile trumpeter with a clear, imaginative tone. Recently he was reported out of work in the States where the jam session mode he prefers is by no means as popular as it is here.

Most famous for his fine lead in the Vanguard Vic Dickenson albums.

**DUKE ELLINGTON**

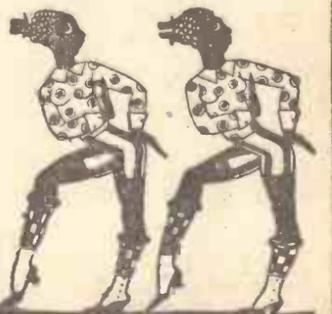
(PIANIST)

**EDWARD KENNEDY ELLINGTON** was born in Washington 29/4/1899, the son of a moderately wealthy Negro family. His father worked as a butler and later as a blue print maker and Ellington studied piano legitimately from 1906.

His studies continued at the Armstrong High School when he started hearing the ragtime pianists of the time.

He also began work as a sign painter and showed considerable talent as an artist, but his freelance gigging with local bands caused him to forego the chance to accept a scholarship to the Pratt Institute of Fine Arts. By the end of the First World War he had married and was running a band which included Sonny Greer, the drummer, Elmer Snowden banjo, Arthur Whetsel trumpet and Otto Hardwick doubling on bass and saxophone. He unsuccessfully visited New York in 1922, where he was joined by Wilbur Sweatman, but Fats Waller

CONT. ON PAGE 97



THESE FOLK MADE JAZZ

he can be regarded as one of the motivating factors in the Windy City era.

Albert Edwin Condon was born in Goodland, Indiana, November 16, 1904, and taught himself to play the banjo and guitar as a youngster. He worked in a near-professional capacity when he was 15, moving to Chicago in the Gay Twenties, loosely known as the Jazz Age.

He was one of a famous group of Chicagoans along with Bud Freeman, Gene Krupa, Frankie Teschemacher, Jimmy MacPartland, Red McKenzie and Joe Sullivan. With McKenzie he made his first records under the name of the McKenzie-Condon Chicagoans, white classics of jazz which materially helped to formulate the so-called "Chicago Style" of Dixieland derivation. One year later, in 1928, Condon went to New York and worked with Red Nichols. He also joined McKenzie there in a semi-"spasm" group they called the Mound City Blue Blowers. He continued to work in New

time, particularly of the white music of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, and taught himself to play both piano and cornet. He was the star of the early Wolverines when he was 20 and made his first recordings with them. He played with a "pop" band led by Charlie Straight as a full time job and spent his leisure hours listening to white and Negro hot music in Chicago, principally that of Oliver, Louis and Jimmy Noone. In 1926 he joined Frankie Trumbauer's band at the Arcadia Ballroom, worked with the Jean Goldkette orchestra and finally joined the Paul Whiteman musical circus.

During all this time his exceptional talents attracted the attention of contemporary musicians, mainly from the white school, and he recorded with his own studio jazz group and other combinations under the leadership of Trumbauer and others. His beautiful solo work, sweet clean tone and swinging attack has been copied by many later stars.

His piano work, less prolific, is strongly influenced by such

**I**S the music-hall finished? Is Variety dead? The pessimists say yes... The optimists say no... A thousand times no. The passing year of 1957 gave alternating cause for hope and despair... Up and down went the Variety thermometer. Music-halls closed, but Cinemas went over to Variety. Things looked black, things looked bright, it was a year of fluctuation. But the spirit of the music-hall could not die. There was still a beating of the heart. In the following review of Variety in 1957 our diarist records the week-by-week progress (or otherwise) of the music-hall artiste. Sum up for yourself what the next year has in store for Variety.

## Reviewed by LEN EVANS

**F**OR A NUMBER OF YEARS THE SPORT OF CONSIGNING THE VARIETY STAGE into the cupboard reserved for Entertainment Outmoded and Things Unwanted has been a pretty popular form of sport among some.

The year 1957 seems to have differed but little in that respect, for that same group of people who have been so busily engaged as gravediggers for the Variety profession have not let up in their activities. But in the main the supposed corpse has again proved to be a remarkably lively one. It has been rather like pushing in a balloon; the more pressure is applied in one place the more it bulges out at another.

It would, of course, be idle to suggest that the business has not come in for perhaps its more than rightful share of knocks and shocks.

Certain theatres that have been looked upon as mainstays of the business have closed with almost dramatic suddenness; others have followed a rather too prevalent pattern and have been converted into television studios—where, strangely enough, they still cater for variety (but through the medium of the miniature screen)—while towards the end of the year there have been signs that another school of thought is bent upon putting ideas into practical form by the presentation of variety in a new form, or, should we say, comparatively new to this country?... that of the restaurant cabaret type of programme, a policy that necessitates the temporary closure of the theatre.

But it has been noticeable that whenever a variety theatre in almost any part of the country has come to the end of its run as a live theatre its closure has received the widest possible publicity, whereas should any theatre re-open and commence a new lease of life as a variety house, the fact receives but scant attention on the part of any section of the press other than the local newspapers. To the variety fan (*and there are still very many more ardent admirers of the Variety stage than some would have us believe*) this savours a little of unfairness to find that the re-opening of a local theatre rates so little news worth on the part of many influential papers.

### BIG SHOWS: LITTLE SPACE

**N**OR can it be said that the Variety stage benefited a great deal from national press coverage during the summer season of 1957—a season that resulted in not a few house records being broken in many parts of the country. Here again it was left to the local papers to look after the fortunes of star-studded shows that for the most part played to such fine business throughout their respective runs that it all pointed to one very definite conclusion—that given the right type of variety programme, moulded in the modern pattern, with speed and colour, the public liking for this entertainment will neither wane nor change. A little wider publicity developing this particular theme would have done the entire business a power of good, while it would not have been amiss to point out the reviving interest in Variety being shown by the major cinema circuits—an interest that prompts the more enthusiastic and optimistic of us to hope for an ever widening field of employment of variety folk in the world of cinema. Maybe it is too much to hope for a revival of cine-variety in anything like the proportions it enjoyed in the twenties. Yet the interest is definitely there by the cinema managements who have found the policy of staging full variety at various cinemas on an average of once in six weeks a most satisfying box office experience.

### MONEY-SPINNING REVUES

**T**HROUGHOUT THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS the probing of business possibilities—the trying out of the variety policy in cinemas that had spent their entire histories on the presentation of films—proved most successful and more and more cinemas of high grade and large seating capacity came to be used as variety theatres with increasing frequency. Here again a little more press publicity in the right direction would have given the variety stage that much-needed fillip. However much the cinema angle helped to prove the continued popularity of the variety form of entertainment, there was also another too-overlooked facet of show business that assisted in proving the point. That has been the success of the touring shows playing over the major variety tours of the country and staying for more than the usual week in each town. Without exception these shows have been real money spinners, the stars have enhanced their reputations, the management has glowed with pleasure at the box office returns and the variety business has received a very beneficial shot in the arm.

**WE STILL MAINTAIN A FIRM FAITH IN VARIETY AS AN ENTERTAINMENT FORM AND ALTHOUGH IT HAS BEEN A YEAR OF CONSIDERABLE FLUCTUATION FOR MANY THERE ARE**

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

THIS  
YEAR  
OF  
VARIETY

# PANTOMIMES PACK 'EM IN

LEN  
EVANS  
REVIEW  
CONTD.

INDELIBLE SIGNS THAT IT STILL POSSESSES THE AFFECTIONS OF MANY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

To redevelop Variety in a style that will appeal equally to the young as well as to the middle-aged (to say nothing of a goodly number of variety-goers who have passed beyond the middle age) is the first task. With that formula successfully perfected and achieved there is no reason at all why the music halls of this country cannot, in spite of all other forms of competition, bring back and maintain the Variety Stage as the first form of light entertainment.

We have been associated with the variety profession and have seen the many changes that have taken place in its modes and methods over the span of a good many years. And even though it has taken the knocks so much at times that it has frequently been given up almost for lost, it has always possessed an outstanding and indestructible asset—adaptability. That's why we cannot give up our faith in Variety; we know that the Editor of this paper will always be ready to champion it.

Now let us help in reviving memories of things that happened in light entertainment during the course of the year 1957.

**THE YEAR OPENED** with the world of pantomime in full swing in every part of the country—something of a jolt to those gloomy prophets who had predicted a slump in popularity in Festive Fare—and youngsters and oldsters were again revelling in the colour and gaiety provided by the many examples of finely produced, warm-hearted fun and romance.

True, the West-end of London had but two such productions, but what magnificent presentations they were!

At the London Palladium, Val Parnell pulled a master-stroke by staging "Aladdin" with that popular little, pint-sized comic Norman Wisdom in the title rôle. This bold experiment was more than justified by the artistic and clever way in which the little man enacted the rôle; business assumed astronomical proportions throughout the run. Supporting artistes were brilliant both in names and ability with **Sonnie Hale**, as the astigmatic dame, and **Valentine Dyall** as the deep-voiced villain, and **Stephanie Voss** and **Tom Gill** providing the love interest. Devised and staged by **Robert Nesbitt**, with the production by **Robert Nesbitt** and **Charles Henry**, the standard of the entire show reached a new high, with the imaginative sets, designed and painted by **Edward Delany**, breathtaking in their beauty and brilliance.

At the Palace, Shaftesbury Avenue, **Emile Littler** staged "Dick Whittington," starring **George Formby** as the lovable and gormless "Idle Jack," thus giving that superlative comedian an opportunity to return to the scene of his former triumphs four years previously when he set London talking with his great performance as "Percy Piggott" in Mr. Littler's musical "Zip Goes a Million."

**Ernest Arnley** made his mark in the Palace pantomime in the rôle of "Sarah, the Cook," and **Beryl Stevens** made an impressive principal boy. **Emile Littler** produced and the costumes designed by **Doris Zinkeisen** were both striking and attractive, a remark that might also be made of the music and lyrics of **Hastings Mann**.

## THE BEVS IN 'CINDERELLA'

Throughout the provinces the realms of panto were being invaded by artistes who had never before played in this particular style of presentation, but without exception they came through with flying colours.

## JANUARY

Their name value meant increased business at the box office. While at the Empire, Liverpool, **Tom Arnold's** "Cinderella" starring the **Beverley Sisters** got neatly round the problem by dividing one of the principal rôles in two to allow the Sisters to assume equal importance in their rôles. A notable absentee from panto this season was comedian **Frankie Howard**, who went on a provincial tour—and in very successful vein, too—in the starring rôle of the revival of the old farce, "Tons of Money," written way back in the early twenties by the late **Will Evans**, a famous music-hall sketch comedian.

The London suburbs had their quota of pantomime at **Finsbury Park Empire** and **Jack Hylton** staging sterling shows at **Golders Green**, **Streatham** and **Chiswick Empire**, while in the provinces **Prince Littler**, **S. H. Newsome**, **Emile Littler**, **E. J. Hinge**, **Frank G. Maddox**, **Francis Laidler** Productions (with **Gwladys Stanley Laidler** at the helm), **Tom Arnold**, **Will Hammer** (alas! now no longer with us) and **Howard and Wyndham**, were all staging Christmas fare at major theatres throughout the land, and a large number of other managements and artistes added to the large list so widely spread and so thoroughly enjoyed.

There were, of course, some unfortunates, happily very few in number, who failed to get under way, notably the ill-fated venture at the **New Cross Empire** where, after two years darkness, the house was to stage "Dick Whittington." This lasted but eight performances and the house again went dark.

**Prince Littler** and **Bernard Delfont** both had every reason to feel more than pleased and proud at the beginning of the year, the former being made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in the New Year's Honours; the latter happy in the fact that, on top of his other very many activities his floor show at the **Pigalle** in **Piccadilly**, "Pink Champagne," had notched up a year's run. The show was then withdrawn, followed by a three weeks season of international cabaret, and on January 24 a new resident presentation, "Champagne Punch," took the floor, produced by **Robert Nesbitt**, and including such artistes as the comic **John** and **Rene Arnaut**, coloured singer **Irene Day**, making a successful London debut, dancers **Clise King** and **Stefan Mowran**, **Senor Carlos** with his balloons, new young singer **Peter Elliott** and dancer **Aleta Morrison**. **Woolf Phillips** and his orchestra were again in residence.

Mr. Delfont's "Folies Bergere" show in South Africa also gave him reason for considerable satisfaction for it had proved a smash hit on its opening on December 20 at His Majesty's Theatre, Johannesburg. He had travelled out for the opening and then flew

back to conduct rehearsals for his Christmas show at the **Prince of Wales Theatre** in **Coventry Street**.

This was "The Billy Cotton and Archie Andrews Christmas Show," which, with **Bill** and the **Band**, **Peter Brough**, **Ronald Chesney**, **Ossie Noble**, **Les Rayner** and **Betty**, and that superlative chimp offering, **Marquis and Family** presented by **Gene Detroy** (of the numerous asides), provided entertainment full of laughs and gusto.

## ANOTHER CLOSE-DOWN

ALTHOUGH NOT ALTOGETHER unexpected the announcement that the **Brixton Empress** was to close on January 12 came as something of a shock to variety fans who had for so long patronised this south west London stronghold of variety and revue. It was long famed, too, for the number of pros. who used to frequent the theatre and it was left to **Max Miller** to have the unenviable task of being the last music-hall star to head a bill there.

At the **London Hippodrome** comedian **Dave King** was still blithely heading **George** and **Alfred Black's** "Dave King Show," with **Shami Wallis** lending excellent support, together with the **Andrea Dancers**, **Howard Jones** and **Reggie Arnold**, **Los Gatos**, and **Jimmy Lee**, and playing to fine business twice nightly.

Up north the **Empire, York**, the former variety and revue stronghold, was rumoured to be re-opening under **F. J. Butterworth** as a dance hall (a report that proved premature), and down south **Vivian Van Damm** of "Revueville" fame was getting worried about the frequent excursions of **Cupid** into the **Windmill Theatre**. No fewer than five girls announced their engagements at the same time, which became something of a headache for the owner of that band-box theatre!

On January 19 a signal honour was paid by the **BBC** to **Horace Percival**, who, after a long career on the halls and in musical comedy, became a big name on radio. To celebrate his long and

successful association with them the **BBC** devoted a 30 minutes' programme; "The First Fifty Years Are the Hardest," on the **Light Programme** of the **BBC** to this 67-year-old artiste.

On January 21 the **Bernard Delfont-Val Parnell** variety season was resumed at the **Prince of Wales Theatre** following the conclusion of the successful Christmas show (which had broken the continuity of the season started the previous September) and **Winifred Atwell**, the brilliant pianist from **Trinidad**, just back from a triumphant tour of **Australia**, started the ball rolling with a two-weeks' season.

At the **Empire, Portsmouth**, on Sunday, January 27, **W. F. Coles** inaugurated a new policy of running a series of Sunday concerts at that theatre, the first attraction being **Lonnie Donegan** and his **Skiffle Group**, and on the afternoon of the same day the annual **Clowns' Service of Tribute** to the famous clown **Joseph Grimaldi**, was held at **St. James' Church**, **Pentonville Road**, **London, N.1.** **The Rev. C. E. Williams**, chaplain of the **International Circus Clown Club**, conducted the service.

It was this month that **Jack Jacobsen** and **Norman Payne** (a combination that was to be broken later on in the year) of **MCA**, announced that they had been appointed sole booking representatives for the **Essoldo** chain of theatres.

Organised by **Edward Graves**, the 20th Annual **Circus Reunion** was held at the **Park Lane Hotel**, **Piccadilly**, on Sunday, January 20.

On January 15, **Shirley Bassey**, the young **Cardiff-born** coloured singer, product of small touring revues, discovered by **Michael Sullivan**, and given her first big chance by **Jack Hylton** in resident revue at the **Adelphi Theatre**, **Strand**, flew from **London** to **New York** en route for **Las Vegas**, where she played a cabaret season with such terrific impact that the patrons even stopped gambling to listen to her! The **BBC** Television Department started a series of six fortnightly programmes in search of fresh talent for **Variety**. Seen from the **Manchester studios** under the title "It's Up To You," the judges were changed from time

to time and included such notabilities as **Harold Fielding**, **Leslie Macdonnell**, **Dick Hurran**, **Alfred Marks** and **Issy Bonn**. **Barney Colehan** produced.

## MICHAEL TAKES OVER

**GRACIE FIELDS**, beloved star of the music-halls, celebrated her 59th birthday on January 9, and on January 11 the well-known band world personality, **Henry Hall**, had to break a hitherto unbroken run of 879 performances with his popular air feature, "Henry Hall's Guest Night." This spanned 22 years and the cause of his absence was a bout of common or garden 'flu. His son, **Michael Hall**, took over the baton on this occasion.

The **BBC** Television second **Festival of British Popular Songs** commenced January 22, the contest on this occasion being spread over four weeks as against the six months of the first **Festival**. Selection committee was headed by **Ronald Waldman** as chairman.

Pros. in **Manchester** had a good night out on January 25, when the **Annual Pantomime and Variety Ball** in aid of the **Variety Artistes' Benevolent Fund**, was held at the **Midland Hotel**. But although the evening was a success, a very popular figure was sadly missed. That of **HARRY MARLOW**, the indefatigable organising secretary of the **Fund**, who after being ill at his home for a month, had been taken to **Brompton Hospital**, where he passed away on January 19. He was 74.

**Christine Norden**, who played principal boy in **Bertram Montague's** "Cinderella" at the **Prince's Theatre**, **Shaftesbury Avenue**, during the 1951/2 season, paid a brief visit to **London** to see her mother, arriving here January 10, and around this time a couple of humorous incidents gained publicity. One was that **Benn Warriss** and **Jimmy Jewel** making a comedy entrance in **Prince Littler's** "Jack and the Beanstalk" at the **Hippodrome**, **Bristol**, found the steering of their old French taxi to be defective and careered on stage out of control mowing down almost everything in sight, but happily causing no damage to themselves or any members of cast or staff! And **Tommy Trinder**, in resident revue, **Jack Hylton's** "United Notions" at the **Adelphi** had to call a halt to the response to his appeal for old Christmas cards for distribution to children in various hospitals and institutions.

When he called "enough" he had received the equivalent of about 25 full postal vans! **Ventriloquist Arthur Worsley**, who positively revels in long distances, travelled 9,000 miles during an extended week-end in order to make his fifth appearance on the **Ed Sullivan** "Toast of the Town" TV show in **New York**, and play a convention in **Indianapolis**.

At the **Chelsea Palace** on January 28, a change of policy was introduced in the form of a resident production entitled "The **Chelsea Revue**," staged by **Granada Theatres** and **Richard Stone**. With a change of programme each week the show had **Terry Scott** as comedian-in-chief, with **Hugh Lloyd** and **Baker** and **Douglas** among the supporting artistes. But it didn't click.

**Ida Barr**, the old-time music-hall comedienne, celebrated her 75th birthday on January 17, and on the 21st, trumpet virtuoso **Eddie Calvert** was presented by his wife with an 8½ lbs. baby boy, **Gilbert Edward Jack**. "The Man with the Golden Trumpet" was told the news just before he went before the TV cameras in an "Off the Record" programme.

Towards the end of the month **Bob** and **Maurice Kennedy** relinquished their lease of the **Plaza**,

**West Bromwich**, in order to concentrate their attention upon the **Dudley Hippodrome**. The **Plaza** ceased to operate as a live theatre on February 2, after a run of eight years operating in this medium.

The news came from America that **Carl Brisson**, one time dancer on the music-halls of this country, in company with his sister **Tilly**, in the act **Les Brissons**, was lying seriously ill after being operated on in **Jamaica**.

## FEBRUARY

THE **Bertram Mills Circus** at **Olympia** came to the end of a successful season on February 2. The **Tom Arnold** circus season at **Harringay Arena**, where the programme had been again put together skilfully by **Clem Butson**, had closed earlier than usual at the end of the previous month.

Following the conclusion of his resident pantomime at the **Grand Theatre**, **Croydon**, **Will Hammer** reintroduced a policy of variety at that theatre on February 4 when **Billy Cotton** and his **Band** headlined the initial bill. The same day found the **Windmill Theatre**, **London**, celebrating the **Silver Jubilee** of "Revueville," the **BBC** Light Programme devoting an hour to artistes who had appeared at this little theatre of "We Never Closed" fame.

The **Hit Parade Ball**, the seventh to be held by the **Trade Music Guild**, was held at the **Empire Rooms**, **Tottenham Court Road**, on February 8.

American pop singer **Guy Mitchell** flew into town on February 8 and two days later was starred on **Val Parnell's** "Sunday Night at the **London Palladium**" on **ATV**. His two weeks' stay did not embrace any variety work proper but included a number of one-night stands. This was the first visit of this popular young artiste since **November, 1955**.

The 1956/7 circus season at **Belle Vue**, **Manchester**, came to an end on February 16, more than 150,000 people paying admission money. The lucky 150,000th visitor was given "The **Freedom of Belle Vue**" for the rest of the year.

## STAR CASUALTIES

The early part of the month produced one or two rather important casualties. **George Formby**, hit of the **Palace** pantomime, had to withdraw owing to laryngitis and went home to **St. Annes** on February 10; **Tommy Fields** took over **Formby's** part for the remainder of the run. And **Max Wall** who was starring in "The **Pajama Game**" at the **London Coliseum** had to come out of the show for a spell to undergo a thorough check-up in a **London nursing home**. His place in the **American musical** was taken by **George Moon**.

High-class variety continued its successful way at the **Prince of Wales Theatre**, singing star **Yana** heading the second bill and adding a great deal of personal glamour to the offering. Next in as headliner was **Mitchell Torok**, a gangling guitar-toting cowboy character, specialising in "country and western" songs, who saw the month out. But **Mitchell** did not set the house alight and the box-office did not work overtime. **Dickie Henderson** was at this time adding to his laurels as a slick comper of considerable versatility and the bills staged were noteworthy for their varied offerings.

CONT. ON PAGE 66

**LULU**  
with her assistants

**MIKE & BERNIE WINTERS**



wish all their  
friends, two-  
and four-  
legged,  
a  
**CRAZY**  
**XMAS**  
and a  
**SOLID**  
**NEW YEAR**

Currently: **Empire Theatre, Glasgow**

**CHARITY CHAMPION**

**THESE PICTURES TOLD**

*Some of the outstanding highlights of Music and Showbusiness captured*



No star has done more for charity than ANNE SHELTON . . . She is forever responding to the call of charity. Here's a picture we took of this fine artiste before she left for the Royal Albert Hall, London, for an all-star concert which took place during March on behalf of one of the most worthy of all causes—the Spastics. Anne has rightly been named "The Champion of Charity."



**Hearty Anglo-American Relationships**



AMERICAN STARS sparkled on British stages this year, made immediate friends with their 'British cousins.' Enthusiastic meetings and greetings such as depicted here were quite common during the year, cemented Anglo-American Show Business relationship. Above JUDY GARLAND and TOMMY STEELE are sure glad to meet; (picture on left) JAYNE MANSFIELD, during her London Palladium TV appearance in October, made quite a fuss of our DICKIE HENDERSON, who as comper, introduced her to millions of viewers and also involved her in a sizzling cross-talk routine.



**VARIETY CLUB REVELS**

It was a night of smiles all the way at the Variety Club of Great Britain's Annual Dinner and Ball at the Dorchester Hotel, London, W., in February. The stars sparkled with good humour; the Variety Club "do" was one of the most scintillating of the season, raised thousands more for children's charities. Here's a happy picture of some of the happy guests. Left to right: Film star FORREST TUCKER; Chief Barker MIKE FRANKOVICH; film star GEORGE RAFT and former Chief Barker JIMMY CARRERAS.

# LANY A STORY IN 1957

## 'ONE-MAN' MARVEL

by Record Mirror cameramen Douglas John, Dezo Hoffmann and Team

### HAPPY RETURNS'

In April RUBY MURRAY celebrated her 22nd birthday; the appropriate cake and the appropriate kiss were presented to the charming Irish songstress, the cake by the cake-king HARRY BOURNE, the kiss by the comedy king NORMAN WISDOM. It was a very, very happy birthday, augured well for Ruby's future—so well, in fact, that later in the year she was married . . .

Very welcome visitors to London were husband and wife team EDDIE FISHER and DEBBIE REYNOLDS—his return to the London Palladium in June was a confirmation of his previous hit there. Eddie has made many top-selling records, but Debbie really challenged him this year. She recorded "Tammy"—it became an instantaneous hit, sold over a million copies in America and entered high in our Top Ten lists.



IN APRIL a show-business phenomenon arrived in this country. He was VICTOR BORGE, the Danish pianist and comedian whose one-man show at the Palace Theatre, London, was one of the highlights of the year's entertainment. Victor packed the Palace to capacity for seven weeks. Fee he received for the season was fabulous, but he receives even more in one night on American television! Picture above was taken when Mr. Borge visited the office of the RECORD MIRROR.



MOST AMAZING PARTY ever staged anywhere in the world was that 'thrown' by the amazing producer of the wonderful 'Ar ound the World in 80 Days,' biggest money-maker ever in the history of the cinema (mind you, it deserves to be). Party took place at the Festival Gardens, London, was attended by 2,000 guests, was estimated to have cost anything between £40,000 to £75,000. One of the attractions was a 'hot-dog stand' . . . principal customer was Mike Todd—'best thing in the party, these dogs,' he told our photographer who snapped him eating one

### THE 'TOPS'

TWO OF BRITAIN'S GRANDEST TROUPERS... GRACIE FIELDS and O M M Y TRINDER—snapped back-stage during a Sunday Night at the Palladium TV show. Both still retain their wonderful form.



HAPPY SURPRISE OF 1957 . . . the wedding of songstress JOAN REGAN to London Palladium box-office manager, HARRY CLAFF (son of the well-known comedian, 'The White Knight'). Marriage took place in July. Our picture shows (left to right): the newly-weds; KEITH DEVON, Joan's manager and 'discoverer,' and Mrs. Devon.

THIS YEAR OF VARIETY

# 'CHELSEA REVUE' DOESN'T CLICK

LEN EVANS REVIEW CONTD.

(CONT. FROM PAGE 63)

Marie Louise Fossett, of the Quart Sisters, trapeze and aerial gymnasts, a member of a famous circus family, was married to clown Whimsical Walker during the first week of the month. (Both bride and groom had played the circus season at Belle Vue, Manchester).

A sombre note crept in so far as South Wales entertainment was concerned, for on February 16 at the conclusion of S. H. Newsome's "Jack and the Beanstalk" pantomime the Empire, Swansea, ended its career as a theatre and 12 days later the premises were taken over by a commercial firm for reconstruction. (The Empire was opened on December 10, 1900, when Ada Reeve topped a variety bill).

During the first week of February the Grand Order of Lady Ratlings elected their new officers for the year. Vie Riscoe was "crowned" Queen Ratling (her second year as Queen; her first was in 1955); Joan Hurley, First Princess; Dorita Chester, Second Princess; Meg Warriss, First Guard; Florence Shephard, Regalia Ratling; Pat Morrell, Asst. Reg. Ratling; Josie Bradley, Musical Ratling; Ruby Hunnex, Second Guard; Lillian St Claire, Third Guard; Sunny Rogers, Door Guard; Gladys Trevor and Joy Ganjou, Collecting Ratlings.

In the House of Commons on February 7 the Home Secretary (Mr. R. A. Butler) announced that no move was to be made to ban smoking in theatres, cinemas and public transport.

When Ghana was given its independence within the framework of the British Commonwealth, Issy Bonn, for Langham Productions, was quickly off the mark in arranging for the presentation in Accra of what was to be the first variety show from these shores to play in the new independent country. The artistes and props left this country by air on February 19, but the venture proved anything but a success, particularly from a financial point of view. Mr. Bonn made great efforts on behalf of the company in arranging their return to this country, but the newspapers were quick to play up the affair from a far too sensational angle.

## BILL HALEY ARRIVES

The American rock 'n' roll expert, Bill Haley hit London well and truly on February 6, when he opened a season at the vast Dominion Theatre in Tottenham Court Road, thus being the first live theatre topliner to play this theatre in years. For, although opened as a musical comedy theatre, the greater part of the Dominion's life has been bound up in films. Later in the year a marked change of policy was to be introduced.

Haley went on to play other dates in this country and Ireland, but before he left London his tour had been lengthened by 12 days.

Bandleader Nat Temple and his wife Freda became parents for the fourth time on February 15. New arrival was their fourth daughter.

Some of the north country pantomimes were coming to the end of their runs by the second week of February, sometimes more in accord with managerial policy rather than to any diminution in business—it's a strange idea taking off a show which continues to do excellently at the box office. It was also during the second week in this month that the big capacity Globe, Stockton on Tees, again staged a full variety bill headed by Max Bygraves, with the Kaye Sisters, Kendor Brothers, Stan White and "Miss Fortune", Betty Richman and John Jackson; result was positively bulging business all week.

In the third week of this month, Granadas switched their Chelsea Palace revue over to the Metropolitan, Edgware Road, in order to try out the reactions of a west London audience to this type of show. Variety bill booked in at the Met crossed over to Chelsea Palace, but as some of the bills were already out for both theatres some measure of confusion occurred among patrons.



## WHICH ONE HAS THE TONI?

... we'd say it was a dead-heat—both look immaculately moustachioed with handlebars that could steer any cyclist to the ends of the earth. This unique picture, taken by our DOUGLAS JOHN, shows the irresistible Monsewer EDDIE GRAY (left) with his brother, DANNY, who do a furiously funny juggling double in the furiously funny new Crazy Gang show, "These Foolish Kings" at the Victoria Palace, London, S.W., which is still going strong after a year's run and which still stars those glorious comics Bud Flanagan, Charlie Naughton, Jimmy Gold, Jimmy Nervo and Teddy Knox. Both, by the way, were born on June 10—but not in the same year. Eddie juggled his way into the light in 1899, Danny followed six years later.—R.M. Picture.

## WEDDING BELLS

Lawrette Wright, daughter of Lawrence Wright and actress Betty Warren, was married at Holy Trinity, Brompton, on February 23 to Captain Peter Williams of the Royal Marines.

February 25 was the wedding day of bandleader Eric Winstone and model Myrtle Shepherd, the ceremony being at Caxton Hall, Westminster.

Down in Bognor Regis, in Sussex, Cicely Courtneidge, Jack Hulbert, Enid Trevor and Claude Hulbert became co-directors in a new launderette company. (Enid Trevor was the manageress of the new venture).

During the third week in the month popular singer David Whitfield became the proud father of a second son, 8 lbs. Shane, born in Hull. The other son of the Whitfields is four-year-old Lance.

A surprise visit to the Victoria Palace to see the Crazy Gang in Jack Hylton's "These Foolish Kings" was made by The Queen Mother with Princess Margaret and a party of friends on February 12. The party arrived for the second house, sat in the front row of the dress circle. Nothing was "vetted" in the show, to the great delight of all.

It was during February that a radical re-assessment of television fees was demanded by Actors' Equity which declared that "present BBC television fees are closer to pre-war standards than to 1957 needs."

It proposed that "all transmission fees should be TREBLED." Equity and the Variety Artists' Federation had for some time past been in discussion on the question of artistes' fees, but no definite agreement as to the course of action had been arrived at between the two bodies.

Last day of the month saw The Vaudeville Golfing Society appoint for the first time in its history two Captains. They were popular Bob and Alf Pearson ("My Brother and I"), VGS stalwarts for many years. The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the Blue Post in Rupert Street, London, W., and Leslie Saroni (who had been Captain for the preceding year) was elected Acting President. Vice-Presidents were Bud Flanagan, Johnnie Riscoe, Len Barry, Jack Hodges, Ben Warriss and George Doonan. Vice-Captain, Sydney Jerome. Treasurer, L. M. Clarke-Lens. Secretary, Alex Rose. Assistant Secretary, Reg Elmsore. Committee: Issy Bonn, Dickie Henderson, Jack Lewis, Kenneth Mosley, Wally Petersen, Arthur Haynes, Max Seymour, Donald Peers, Sid Buckman, Ray

Allen, Herbert Hare, Albert Stevenson, George Buck, Fred Ferrari, Jimmy Lee and Hal Swain.

in V.P.'s "Startime" at Wood Green Television Theatre four days later.

Tommy Trinder seemed to be making a habit of receiving awards, for on March 10 he was recipient of the Musical Directors' Association "Oscar," an award that took the form of a silver baton and the right to conduct any band or orchestra in connection with the association (of which Sydney Lipton is Chairman) at any time or place.

First week in the month brought news of the continued ill health of Doreen Stephens, for so long the popular feminine vocalist with Billy Cotton and his Band. She had collapsed two months before whilst appearing at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, London, in the Billy Cotton-Archie Andrews Christmas Party. After undergoing a series of operations, she went to Bourne-mouth to convalesce.

Just after the Chelsea revue completed its run comedian Terry Scott entered St. Andrew's Hospital, Dollis Hill, to undergo two operations on his nose. The ops. were necessitated through injuries received in a car crash; Terry had been working against medical advice.

## GOLD DISC FOR BILL HALEY

At the Savoy Hotel on Monday March 4, Billy Haley, who with his Comets had played to such remarkable business at the Dominion, Tottenham Court Road, was presented with a Decca Gold Disc to celebrate the millionth sale of his "Rock Around the Clock" disc in this country. Mr. E. R. Lewis, managing director of The Decca Record Co., made the presentation.

Julie Wilson, for long one of London's favourite Americans, showed that distance is no object when one really wants to be at an event. She flew in on March 1 to attend the "Whuppity Scoorie" party at the Savoy Hotel, the following evening; next day she flew back to the States.

March 2 saw the end of the American musical "The Pajama Game" at the London Coliseum, and comedian Max Wall was already planning a new road show with which he opened at the Hippodrome, Brighton, on March 18. The accent was on rock 'n' roll.

Acts began to reappear at the Royal Ballroom, Boscombe, which F. J. Butterworth had previously operated as the Hippodrome, Boscombe. This former stronghold of variety and revue had been turned into a ballroom but the stage had been retained—perhaps just in case. Eddie Calvert, the trumpet virtuoso, was the first attraction to play the house in its new guise.

## NOW CHELSEA CLOSES DOORS

The Chelsea Palace closed its doors for the last time as a live variety theatre on March 16 and the house was to be converted into a television studio for the Granada network. This 1,650 seater, for long one of the most popular of the Syndicate Halls, was opened in 1900, had played almost every type of light live entertainment.

March 16 heralded the arrival of a 7 lbs. 13 ozs. baby son to popular singer Dickie Valentine and his wife. This was their second child and was christened Richard. Nine days later Dickie notched another big personal triumph when he starred for a week at the Café-de-Paris.

Illness suddenly struck Yana, the singing star, who after playing in "The Dave King Show"

## MARCH

THE THEATRE BAR of the Metropolitan Music Hall, Edgware Road, seemed to wear a different look from this month onwards, "Maude," the famous barmaid in the stall bar, had resigned from that post after more than 50 years dispensing drinks and repartee to appreciative patrons.

Jo, Jac and Joni, the wordless British clowns, left London on March 8 for New York en route for a long engagement in Las Vegas where they opened on March 28. They later toured in America, but this was to be their last run as a team, for when they returned to England at the end of September the members had parted company, two forming a new act, "Swan and Vesta," the third inaugurating a new version of Jo-Jac-Joni.

First week in the month saw the variety policy at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London, hitting a new high with the presentation there of an all-Continental bill, "Paris Music Hall." The whole programme was one of the finest of its type and included Henri Salvador as billtopper, Irene Hilda, The Blue Stars of France. Compagnie Les Marottes, Dany Rey, Les Bingsters, Woodrow (the British juggler who is so big a favourite in Paris), Lucienne, Bob and Astor, and the Ghezzi Brothers. This show opened March 4.

## TRINDER HONOURED

The following day comedian Tommy Trinder was the guest of honour at a luncheon held at the Savoy Hotel by the Variety Club of Great Britain. Tommy had been nominated by the Variety Club as the "Show Business Personality of 1956" and after the luncheon was handed the award, an inscribed and mounted silver heart. A telerecording of the ceremony was seen on BBC television the following evening.

On March 14 the members of the Grand Order of Lady Ratlings staged another hour-long programme on Channel 9 for Jack Hylton. The impresario had so much liked their showing on TV that when his "United Nations" revue came off at the Adelphi Theatre, Strand, after a run of only 10 weeks, he gave the members of the Ratlings a chance to show their paces on the stage and played a short season of "The Lady Ratlings on Parade" at that theatre. Marjorie Ristori did a sterling job in producing this show at short notice, was also responsible for the production of the Ratlings TV shows.

After successful seasons in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban the members of Bernard Delfont's "Folies Bergere" company embarked for home on the "BRAEMAR CASTLE" on March 6, arrived at Southampton on March 27.

Gary Crosby, son of a famous dad, and member of the US Armed Forces in Germany, spent his leave in this country (and in the offices of the RECORD MIRROR), made countless friends through his appearances on Val Parnell variety shows on ATV, starring in "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" on March 3, and

Mr. and Mrs. **HERBERT DE VERE** And Their Dance Teams Wish All Their Friends At Home And Overseas A Real Prosperous 1958

FARADAY HOUSE, 8-10 CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, W.C.2. Tele.: TEMple Bar 9016

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

THIS  
YEAR  
OF  
VARIETY

# "V.C." HONOURS DISC STARS

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another successful appearance in ice pantomime—this time "Cinderella," at the Empire Pool, Wembley, where she has starred both on ice and roller skates.

## BILL KERR AS 'THE DEVIL'

When the American musical "Damn Yankees" opened at the London Coliseum on March 28 two variety artistes were prominent in the cast. Bill ("I'm only here for four minutes") Kerr, played the part of the Devil in modern guise, and Donald Stewart (who had for long appeared in a popular double act on the halls with vivacious Renee Houston) was the baseball coach. Donald also had the hit number of the show "You've got to have heart." Belita, ballet and ice skating star, was the lead, but somehow the show didn't click.

Mid March found a surprise visitor to Collins's Music Hall on Islington Green in the person of Sir Laurence Olivier who had chosen the Lew Lake music hall as the place to gather tips for his forthcoming performance as the music-hall star in "The Entertainer." Sir Laurence did the job thoroughly. spent his time both sides of the footlights.

Joan Regan, the popular singer, was grievously hurt in a car crash during the afternoon of March 26 when her car ran out of control, overturned and was badly damaged. Joan was taken to the Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, Kent, suffering from two broken ribs, a broken kneecap, cuts on hands and a leg and back injuries. She was allowed to leave hospital at the end of the first week in March, only on the understanding she remained in bed at her Sidcup home. This she did and also had her portrait painted in oils by Lorraine, the well-known variety cartoonist.

## 'MR. PASTRY'

## 'DOWN UNDER'

From "down under" came news of the successful opening at the Tivoli, Sydney, of David N. Martin's "Olympic Follies," which had completed an outstanding stay at the Tivoli, Melbourne, where it proved a great attraction during the period of the Olympic Games, and after the Games ended. Richard ("Mr. Pastry") Hearne, and the sensational dance team Darvas and Julia continued their successful run with the show.

Comedian Johnny Lockwood began his Australian season in memorable style with David N. Martin's "Tonight at Eight" at His Majesty's Theatre, Perth, Western Australia.

March also found Bob Ganjou, of the famous dance act The Ganjou Brothers and Juanita, ("Romance in Porcelain") launch his new dance act "The Dior Dancers" which he was to take to America later in the year.

Freddie Sales, the heavyweight comedian, having successfully completed a year's run with the touring version of "Can-Can," was again on tour, this time with an Arthur Fox revue. Later Freddie was to be resident comedian-compere for the summer season at Butlin's Holiday Camp, Clacton-on-Sea. Here he was faced with the herculean task of providing fresh material for a weekly series of commercial television shows!

THE HEAVYWEIGHT COLOURED SINGER, JUNE RICHMOND, WHO HAD NOT BEEN SEEN HERE SINCE SHE TOPLINED IN VARIETY AT THE LONDON CASINO FOR BERNARD DELFONT, RETURNED TO TOWN TO APPEAR IN THE BENNY

## WONDERFUL 'WINDMILL' 25 YEARS OF REALLY NON-STOP SIX-SHOWS-A-DAY ENTERTAINMENT



One of the happiest of celebration parties to augur well for the New Year of 1957 was that thrown by VIVIAN VAN DAMM (above), the beloved impresario of the 'Windmill' Theatre in London's Piccadilly. Twenty-five years of non-stop variety, day in, night out, bombs, V1s and V2s, and every conceivable inconvenience, but 'the show went on'. And present at the Trocadero, London, to join in the celebrations were some of the greatest stars in today's British show business. Many came to give a 'turn'—for example, JIMMY EDWARDS and HARRY SECOMBE (below) . . . they started off at the Windmill in 1946 at £20 a week, doing six shows a day. Watching Harry very proudly was his wife. With her is Mrs. Isidore Green, wife of R.M.'s Editor. (See bottom picture).—R.M. Pictures.



## HILL SHOW ON BBC TV ON MARCH 30.

March 30 marked the end, not only of pantomime staged at the Theatre Royal, Leeds, but also the end of the theatre itself. Nearly 80 years old, the Theatre Royal was to go to make room for the expansion of an adjoining stores. Mrs. Gwladys Stanley Laidler, M.B.E., had kept up the theatre tradition of her husband, the late Francis Laidler, and her "Queen of Hearts" pantomime was the last show there, with a three months' run to its credit.

## APRIL

THE LONDON PALLADIUM'S terrific pantomime, "Aladdin," having come to the end of its run, Variety returned to the Argyll street house during the first week of the month. The initial bill was headed by THE TEENAGERS, with FRANKIE LYMON, a lively 14-year-old, with a great supporting bill including GEORGE and BERT BERNARD, HOLGER and DOLORES, PATRICE HELENE and JOHN HOWARD, CANFIELD SMITH, GAUTIER'S DOGS, the HASSANI TROUPE, ELEANOR GUNTER, ROGER PRICE (a new "doodling" entertainer from America), and the GEORGE CARDEN DANCERS.

April 3 found singer Alma Cogan off to New York on her first visit there to appear on the famous Ed Sullivan "Toast of the Town" TV programme, four days later. She had played for ATV the previous Saturday night when Jimmy Jewel and Ben Warriss wished her the best of luck on behalf of themselves and the viewing public.

The month began with theatre owner Will Hammer (William Hinds) getting a great deal of publicity for his continued progress as a road racing cyclist—few knew that in his day he had established a number of road racing records and was still a member of the Bath Road Club—and a number of challenges from various music hall cyclists resulted. His love of cycling was to cause his death, for on May 29 he fell from his machine and sustained a broken neck, dying in the Guildford County Hospital on June 1 at the age of 70.

On medical advice Frankie Howard relinquished his engagement with the Bernard Delfont-Val Parnell revue "Plaisirs de Paris," which opened at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Coventry Street, on April 20.

Instead Dickie Henderson and George and Bert Bernard together with Sabrina, Maggy Sarragne, Noelle Adam, Lee Sharon, and Miss Glamour, as well as the Three Monarchs and Les Mathurins constituted the revised line up of artistes.

Once-a-month Dave King had to absent himself from the cast of "The Dave King Show" at the London Hippodrome in order to star for BBC TV. His place was being taken pretty regularly and successfully by comedienne Hylda Baker ("She Knows Y'Know"), sometimes with vent Arthur Worsley.

April 6 had Terry Scott out of hospital after his facial operations and deputising for Dave King at the London Hippodrome whilst that comic was fulfilling his TV monthly engagement with the BBC.

Having completed his stay in pantomime at the Palladium Norman Wisdom slipped off

for a couple of weeks' holiday at an undisclosed destination before starting work on his fifth film for the Rank organisation at Pinewood Studios. This was "Just My Luck."

## DISC STARS HONOURED

FIVE TOP RECORDING STARS — VERA LYNN, EDDIE CALVERT, WINIFRED ATWELL, DAVID WHITFIELD AND MANTOVANI — WERE GUESTS OF HONOUR AT THE VARIETY CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN LUNCHEON HELD AT THE SAVOY HOTEL ON APRIL 9. THE AFFAIR WAS KNOWN AS "THE GOLDEN DISC LUNCHEON," FOR EACH GUEST HAD PRODUCED A RECORD SELLING MORE THAN A MILLION COPIES. DISC JOCKEY GEORGE ELRICK INTRODUCED THE FAMOUS QUINTET.

A dance was held at the Locarno Ballroom, Sheffield, on April 2 in aid of the Variety Artistes' Benevolent Fund. It was organised by C. J. Isherwood, manager of the Locarno (a Mecca dance hall), in co-operation with John Spitzer, manager of the Empire, Sheffield, and Don Barrett, manager of the Lyceum Theatre.

It was a considerable surprise to most variety folk to learn that Bert Vasco, the popular manager of the Metropolitan Music Hall, Edgware Road, had retired from the post on April 6, thus severing a long and happy association with the Syndicate Halls. He had been at the Brixton Empress for many years crossing to the "Met" when Billy Mathew went into Head Office. Later the genial Bert was appointed relief manager for the London district of Essoldo cinemas.

Singer Eve Boswell and her husband Trevor, went to New York on April 15, had a good look round lasting about a month, and on April 7 Tessie O'Shea returned from a flying visit to the States. The Beverley Sisters were proving as popular as ever on their latest visit to America, scoring as guest artistes on TV programmes and prolonging their visit until May.

## SUMMER SHOWS

This month began to show the pattern of the various summer presentations at places like Blackpool and Great Yarmouth. Blackpool kicked off with the world's greatest one-ring circus, The Tower, on April 18 with a great international programme and (need we add?) again with Charlie Cairoli with Paul, the resident funsters.

Jimmy Russell, well-known old-time comedian of Fred Karno "Mumming Birds" fame, on April 18, severed his last connection with West End Hostelrys when he gave up the Scotch Stores in Cranbourn Street. For 35 years Jimmy was mine host in the West-end and at one time had no fewer than four under his control at the same time, namely "The Scotch Stores," "The Bedford Head" in Maiden Lane, "The Lemon Tree" close to the London Coliseum stage door and "The Green Man" in Bedford Street, Strand. He now lives in comfortable retirement in Bognor Regis.

The 50th Annual General Meeting of the Variety Artistes' Benevolent Fund was held at 18, Charing Cross Road, on April 4. President, Mr. Prince Littler, announced that Arthur Scott (one time of the variety double Scott and Foster) had been appointed organising secretary of the organisation in succession to the late Harry Marlow.

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

REVUEVILLE  
NON STOP

WINDMILL  
26<sup>TH</sup> YEAR  
OPEN DAILY FROM 12 NOON TO 10-35 CONTINUOUS REVUE

WE NEVER CLOSED

REVUEVILLE

on BBC TV on March 9 had to be rushed off to a London nursing home where she underwent an operation for appendicitis the following day.

Albert Saveen, the ventriloquist of "Daisy May" fame, was wed on March 17 to Edwina Lee at the Church of the English Martyrs, Streatham.

ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPERT BILL HALEY AND HIS COMETS FLEW HOME TO NEW YORK ON THE NIGHT OF MARCH 11, BUT NO FANS SAW HIM OFF! THIS WAS IN STARTLING CONTRAST FROM HIS RIOTOUS ARRIVAL AT WATERLOO STATION FOUR WEEKS EARLIER.

The following night agent Billy Marsh set off on a whirlwind talent seeking trip to America. He was on the lookout for material for the Bernard Delfont organisation and a tour of about two weeks took him to New York, Chicago, Hollywood, Las Vegas and Miami.

Middle of this month found more than the usual number of star artistes travelling abroad to give troop entertainments for Combined Services Entertainments (CSE), among them being Jimmy Edwards (off to Germany), Jimmy Wheeler and Jack Stanford and company (to Cyprus), and Harry Secombe, Eric Sykes (to Nairobi and Aden).

The Willesden Hippodrome, in North London, once a stronghold of the old London Theatres of Varieties tour, and with a capacity (including standees) of 3,500, the largest music hall in the south of England when it was opened in September 1907, was to be demolished to make way for a block of government offices. The house had been blitzed beyond hope of repair in 1941.

Gloria Nord, the skating star from America, flew home to California on March 19 after yet

THIS  
YEAR  
OF  
VARIETY

# THE GREAT 'SOPH' COMES BACK

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REVIEW  
CONTD.

The Chelsea Palace had a respite from darkness when Jack Hylton took a short lease of the house for his play "The Country Wife," which had to end its run at the Adelphi Theatre, Strand. The change-over took place on April 15, but renewed hopes that the theatre would be saved for live entertainment proved premature.

Singer Lizbeth Webb was hurt in a car crash on April 3, and on that day popular Frankie Vaughan was discharged from the London Clinic where he had been rushed after a fishbone had lodged in his throat. The same evening he was with film star Forrest Tucker in the BBC TV feature "Roof Top" whilst in the following week he topped a Bernard Delfont variety bill at the Empire, Glasgow.

The second week in April found Victor Borge, that superlative Danish-American entertainer at the piano, starting a triumphant season at the Palace, Shaftesbury Avenue. Only prior commitments prevented him extending his season beyond a total of seven weeks. Seven months would not have been too much for this genial clown at the keyboard.

On April 14, the Vaudeville Golfing Society held their annual Ladies Night at the Park Lane Hotel, a completely enjoyable affair with a cabaret arranged by Len Barry and compered by Dickie Henderson.

THE FOLLOWING NIGHT JOHNNIE RAY BEGAN YET ANOTHER LONDON SEASON AT THE LONDON PALLADIUM AND, AS ALWAYS, GOT THE AUDIENCE IN A COMPLETE TIZZY, SO MUCH THAT SOME OVER EXCITABLE YOUNGSTERS DIDN'T WAIT FOR THE NATIONAL ANTHEM TO END FIRST HOUSE ON MONDAY BUT DASHED DOWN THE AISLES TO SHOWER HIM WITH FLOWERS.

April 12 saw Issy Bonn starting off for Accra in a chartered Viking aircraft to bring home members of the unlucky company which had taken part in the Independence Celebrations.

The third week in the month brought news that the Eastbourne Corporation had acquired the Royal Hippodrome, Eastbourne, on a five years' lease. Earlier in the year they had bought the Devonshire Park Theatre for £33,750 and the Hippodrome looked like being saved for the town's lighter stage entertainments. Bernard Delfont later staged a resident summer show there with Graham Stark heading the cast, but when that season ended the house again went dark.

SHIRLEY BASSEY GOT BACK HOME FROM HER AMERICAN TRIUMPHS ON APRIL 19 AND LONNIE DONEGAN OF SKIFFLE FAME RETURNED FROM A 13,000 MILES TOUR OF THE STATES ON APRIL 22.

More doleful news came this month that the New Cross Empire, once a Moss Empire theatre, was to be demolished to make way for a garage and petrol station.

Companies for CSE remained active and Jack Anthony headed an outfit leaving London for the Middle East on April 17. The following day another company headed by another Scots comedian Jack Radcliffe flew off for a month in Cyprus, while on April 29 a company including David Hughes and comedian Denny Willis went off to Germany for a five weeks' stint.

ON APRIL 29 THE ONE AND ONLY AGELESS SOPHIE TUCKER, "THE LAST OF THE RED HOT MOMMAS," BEGAN A STARRING ENGAGEMENT AT THE VAST DOMINION THEATRE IN TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD. THIS FOLLOWED A MONTH'S STAY AT THE CAFE DE PARIS. BOTH ENGAGEMENTS

## Phenomenon Of 1957



Our cartoonist's impression of TOMMY STEELE... the phenomenal youngster from Bermondsey who—and to hell with the critics who sneer at teenage talent—revolutionised British music-hall business in 1957. He did what no other British, American or Continental artiste did—packed every London and provincial variety theatre in which he appeared, gave employment and hope to scores of other artistes. Now Tommy hasn't faded away like other overnight wonders. He's as big an attraction as ever. He'll pack 'em in throughout 1958 and the years to follow. The boy has talent, personality. He's big box-office business and, gosh! how British Show Business could do with a few more Tommy Steeles! In November, a double distinction was earned by Tommy. He was presented to the Queen at the Royal Film Performance on November 4, and two weeks later appeared at the Royal Variety Show at the London Palladium.

### WERE TREMENDOUS PERSONAL TRIUMPHS FOR THIS WONDERFUL WOMAN.

At the end of the month Jock Jacobsen and Norman Payne, in charge of the British variety division of MCA (with which they began in 1952) went their separate ways, Norman remaining with the firm and Jock starting off in agency on his own account.

In its annual report presented at the Annual General Meeting on April 29, the Council of the British Actor's Equity Association made reference to the unsuccessful project for an amalgamation with the Variety Artistes' Federation. The proposed amalgamation was rejected—by the V.A.F. at their Annual General Meeting held in September 1956.

The Grand Order of Water Rats and Grand Order of Lady Ratlings held their 27th Rats' Revels on April 28, this time at the Strand Theatre. Once again a long star-studded programme

was presented in smooth way by Marjorie Ristori, who positively revels in this sort of thing (the pun is unintended). Sophie Tucker, a Ratling, was one of the sensational hits of the show.

April 29 saw a change in musical directorship at the London Palladium, Cyril Orndel taking over the baton from Eric Rogers, who resigned to devote more time to other orchestral work.

Dickie Henderson was an absentee from the new Prince of Wales revue. He was unfortunate enough to contract mumps, first introduced to the Henderson family by five-year-old Matthew. John and Rene Arnaut, then in their fourth month in Bernard Delfont's "Champagne Punch" at the Pigalle and magician David Nixon deputised for him from April 24 on.

Another theatre casualty on April 27, this time the Prince of Wales Theatre, Cardiff.

The 52nd Annual Banquet of the Magic Circle was held at the Park Lane Hotel on May 4, when Tommy Cooper and Edwin Styles acted as compères, and lady magician June Merlin put on a fine show. Three days later June was flying out to America to televise and attend the International Congress of the Society of American Magicians at Hartford, Connecticut.

More troop tours arranged by CSE. David Whitfield went out to Germany for two weeks and, on May 3, Stan Steunett, Vera Day, Jill Manners, Lou Campara and Liz Lennon left for a two-weeks' stay in Cyprus.

The Grand, Luton, the last living theatre in that town, closed its doors on May 4.

Peter Brough, together with Archie Andrews and Ronald Chesney, flew from London Airport on May 6 en route for Sydney, where they were to appear on radio for the Australian Broadcasting Commission and stage appearances for David N. Martin.

The GOWR staged another of those crazy football matches, this time at the Stamford Bridge ground of the Chelsea Football Club. The match was between Sporting Personalities and Famous Fools and many well-knowns took part. Result was a nice piece of frenzied fooling for the crowd and a nice financial assist for GOWR charities and the Lakeside Manor Boys' Club.

The Beverley Sisters were due off again for yet another visit to America where they were engaged for TV and recording sessions.

News came from Australia that Joe Adams, well known in variety as "The Human Billiards Table," had decided to settle down there.

Second week in the month revealed Bernard Delfont's summer plans in detail. It was a formidable list and included "firsts" at Eastbourne, Great Yarmouth (both in association with Richard Stone) and at Blackpool, where he was to put on a show at the North Pier after a long spell of Lawrence Wright's "On With the Show" summer productions.

The American zany entertainer, Leo de Lyon, created something of a London Palladium record for having played a couple of weeks there with the Platters and being held over for a further fortnight on the Frankie Laine bill. This was the second time this artiste had been retained at this theatre.

A newcomer to the West End cabaret scene opened in London at Quaglino's on May 13. He was Sheldon Allman, an American comedian and singer, who later on played on television where he broadened his appeal and showed rare versatility. His new style facial gagging was a great hit.

On May 16, Sophie Tucker (and her pianist Ted Shapiro, who has accompanied her for over 30 years) returned to America at the end of her 21st visit to Great Britain since her debut here in 1922.

Billy Marsh and Keith Devon paid a flying visit to the Continent. Starting May 13 they visited Frankfurt, Vienna, Stuttgart, Hamburg and Berlin, were back in London five days later. May 10 saw Max Bygraves, his wife Blossom and their three children arrive back at London Airport after a three weeks' stay in France and Spain, with Max opening at Manchester the following Monday.

Leon Cortez, who had been playing very successfully in Australian theatres, was to be seen around the West End once more prior to going into touring production.

Singer Jill Day sprang a surprise on May 14 when she married her musical director, alto-sax player, Douglas Robinson, at Paddington Register Office.

During the first week in the month David Nixon went off to America for a five weeks' holiday—his first visit to the States—and his place in the Prince of Wales revue, where he had been depping for Dickie Henderson, was taken by Harry Worth. Dickie resumed work on May 25 after convalescing in Juan Les Pins.

It was announced that owing to the shortage of Number One attractions The Hippodrome, Dudley; would cease to operate as a twice-

nightly theatre during the summer from May 18 onwards. Wrestling bouts were to be staged instead with variety to return later in the year.

S. H. Newsome had arranged for his annual "Birthday Show" to begin a six weeks' season on October 28, and his "Cinderella" pantomime to commence at the Coventry Theatre, December 24.

Impresario Bernard Delfont and night club owner Al Burnett touched down at London Airport on May 11 after a flight back from New York. The former had seen eight shows in four days, while the latter had gone over to discuss plans for a proposed 40 weeks' tour of the States and South America by the Pigalle, Piccadilly, night club floor show company sometime in 1958.

### TOMMY STEELE

#### AT DOMINION

The Annual Concert of the Variety Artistes' Ladies' Guild, and the Gracie Fields' Home was held at the Princes Theatre, and the following evening more rock 'n' roll came to the Dominion, Tottenham Court Road, this time as featured by Tommy Steele and his Steelmen and Freddie Bell and his Bellboys. This was the first time a British-American package show had been staged in London; Harold Fielding thus broke new ground.

The Royal Hippodrome, Preston—a town that once boasted four live theatres—came to the end of its run on May 25.

The oldest living music-hall performer was found this month to be Mrs. Louise Lord, an in-patient at Hackney Hospital, London. She had been known as Louise Duncan, of The Sisters Duncan, duettists and dancers. Louise had just celebrated her 103rd birthday.

It was arranged that concert parties should give open-air shows in London Parks from May 27 until August 24. The list showed a big development in entertainment to be presented in parks under the aegis of the London County Council Parks Department.

Popular scriptwriter Bob Monkhouse and his wife suffered a sad loss on May 14 when Mrs. Monkhouse gave birth prematurely to a 2 lb. baby girl. They have two other children, both boys.

Edward Cranston, the well-known variety agent, celebrated his 88th birthday on May 25. He has been connected with show business for 69 years.

Closed since the first week in January the New Cross Empire had a short burst of show activity. For the week of May 20 pianist Sandy Strickland tried to break the world's record of 132 hours' continuous piano playing, and customers were allowed into the theatre at all hours of the day and night. Bernard Woolley hit upon another winner for Strickland broke his own record.

After four weeks in America, singer Eve Boswell returned by air on May 18, opened at the London Palladium on May 27 on a strong bill headed by American singer Howard Keel, who again put on a completely different routine from that he presented on his last visit.

The County Theatre, Hereford, formerly the Palladium, closed as a live theatre in mid-May. It was announced that the future policy would be films with occasional stage shows.

### RETURN OF TALLULAH

Tallulah Bankhead returned to London after a lengthy absence, opened a four weeks' season at the Café de Paris on May 28. Three days later the well-known American vocalist Mindy Carson arrived in this country for the first time to play variety and TV.

End of the month registered yet another closure. This time Jack Isow's cafeteria, just off Berwick Street, a popular rendezvous of many pros. But his restaurant is going strong.

May 23 was the date upon which the famous comedian Charles

### MAY

MAY 5 WAS A RED LETTER DAY in the history of the living stage. On that day the Entertainment Tax was lifted from the back of all live entertainments—a much needed shot in the arm. This legacy from the first World War had for long been a terribly heavy burden and more than one variety theatre fell by the wayside as the result of its overlong continuance. Had it been lifted a year or two before, the closure of so many halls might not have been chronicled in this diary.

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

THIS  
YEAR  
OF  
VARIETY

# MAX STARS AT THE PALLADIUM

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Chaplin became a parent once again at the age of 68. His wife Oona gave birth to a 6 lb. 14 ozs. daughter in a Lausanne clinic. This was their sixth child.

**BANDLEADER TED HEATH FLEW OFF FROM LONDON FOR A THREE WEEKS' COMPLETE REST IN BARCELONA FOLLOWING A BREAKDOWN THROUGH OVERWORK. HE TOOK WITH HIM HIS THREE CHILDREN, HIS WIFE MOIRA HAVING FLOWN OUT THE DAY BEFORE. THE HEATHS NEVER TRAVEL ON THE SAME PLANE.**

Those interested in stage material learned this month that **Ole Olsen**, of the American team **Olsen and Johnson**, claims to have the world's biggest library of humour. Containing more than 3,000 books, including some copies of the original **Joe Miller** jest books, the collection was valued at \$250,000. Ole was planning to let fellow-comics and script-writers look them over at so much per hour!

**P. L. Mannoek's** short story "The Tragic Twilight of Dan Leno," written during this month for the *London Evening News* series of "The World's Strangest Stories" was regarded by that paper as being among the best entries for the £2,250 competition. But unfortunately Pat didn't win.

American striptease artiste **Lee Sharon** caused something of a stir on May 23 when she suddenly announced the fact that she would be leaving the **Val Parnell-Bernard Delfont** revue at the **Prince of Wales Theatre** around June 2. It was suggested that Lee—one of the five leading ladies in the show—might be infanticiding, but she and her husband **Jimmy Lee** would say nothing beyond the fact that she would be leaving for their home in America for personal reasons.

Impressionist **Janet Brown** and her husband **Peter Butterworth**, the TV children's comedian, had too exciting a time at the end of their first holiday together for seven years spent on the island of Majorca. For the flying boat in which they were to fly back home struck a submerged reef on take-off. Passengers climbed out on to the wings of the aircraft and Peter distinguished himself by going into the lower deck of the flying boat and helping out fellow passengers.

## 'FOL-DE-ROLS' RETURNS

Light fare came to **Golders Green Hippodrome** and **Streatham Hill Theatre** this month when **Greatrex Newman's** pre-war concert party show "Fol-de-Rols" played two weeks at each house with **Kathleen West** and **Jack Tripp** making an excellent comedy partnership.

Last week in this month brought news that the **Royal Variety Performance** would take place at the **London Palladium** on Monday, November 18.

It also brought the depressing news that the **Theatre Royal, Leicester**, was to close its doors the following week. The month had already seen the closure of the **Theatre Royal, Barnsley**, and a week before that the **Pigalle** (formerly the **Shakespeare's Theatre**), **Liverpool**, also went dark. The last-named had operated as a club theatre for 18 months.

**Poppewell's 28th Gaiety Whirl** at the **New Gaiety, Ayr**—under the personal supervision of **Eric Poppewell**, assisted by brother **Leslie** and sister **Winnie**—opened finely on May 27, **Jack Milroy** heading the cast for the fourth season.

Last day of the "Merry Month of May" brought a pleasant surprise to **Frankie Vaughan**, then headlining a phenomenally successful variety bill at the **Granada, Shrewsbury**. **Herbert Wilcox** and **Anna Neagle** allowed agent **Billy Marsh** to take up to the theatre a complete print of Frankie's first starring film "These Dangerous Years" and when the last show of the day was completed, Frankie and the members of the bill were given a private screening of the film, which was destined to bring even more fame and fortune to the very likeable Frankie.



**SOPHIE TUCKER**, the most glamorous 'momma' of them all, is a *Ratling*—and so when the *Lady Rattlings* and the *Water Rats* held their 'Rats Revels' at the *Sirand Theatre, London, W.*, in April this year, she was one of the star turns. She was as rapturously received by her fellow-artistes as she was by the packed audience. Our cameraman was there, of course, and we published two full pages of pictures in our weekly edition. Here are a couple from this great occasion; top picture: Sophie with the *Television Toppers*—she looked young and glamorous enough to be one of them!—and the other picture shows her with *VIE RISCOE* (standing) and the popular singer, *YANA* —R.M. Pictures

AS  
GLAMOROUS  
AS THE  
BEST  
OF 'EM

again when they launched at the **London Palladium** the 1957 resident revue "We're having a Ball." In this **Max Bygraves** made a triumphant return to the West-end theatre, and was admirably supported by **Joan Regan** (now happily almost fully recovered from her bad car crash), with **The Kaye Sisters**, **Carsony** with his **Twin Brothers**, **Page and Bray**, the **Clark Brothers**, and an American offering of instrumentalism gone crazy by **The Goofers** in close attendance. The **Goofers** caused one of the biggest sensations ever in London with their amazingly clever fooling. **Robert Nesbitt** again excelled in devising and producing this show.

June 10 and **David Whitfield** was guest star in **Howard and Wyndham's** "Five Past Eight" revue playing a resident season at the **Theatre Royal, Newcastle**, where Scots comedian **Jack Radcliffe** and **Billy Whittaker** and **Mimi Law** were at the head of comedy affairs. **Jack Hylton** brought his musical "Kismet" back to London after a long spell in the provinces and staged it at the **Prince's Theatre** on June 7. The show concluded a run of 678 performances at the **Stoll, Kingsway**, in December 1956. **Teddy Johnson** and **Pearl Carr**, the popular husband and wife vocal team, went off to America on June 14 on a six weeks' business and pleasure trip, during which they were to boost their gramophone discs.

For the first time in its history the **Moscow State Variety Theatre** paid a visit to London. The company played four weeks here commencing at the **Streatham Hill Theatre** on June 24 and after two weeks crossing over to the **Golders Green**.

## VARIETY IN AT THE 'HIP'

"The **Dave King Show**" closed at the **London Hippodrome** on June 15 after a seven and a half months successful run, and after the house remained dark for a week, **Variety** took over for a short spell. **Lonnie Donegan** with his skiffle group, **Alma Cogan**, **Canfield Smith**, **Estelle Sloan**, **Vic Hyde**, **George Holmes**, **Des O'Connor**, **Evers and Toni**, and **Alan Kemble** and **Christine** comprised the bill which remained in for a month.

Thanks to the organisation and generosity of **Companion Rat Billy Butlin**, another very happy golfing party, composed of members of the **Variety Club of Great Britain** and the **Grand Order of Water Rats**, were able to enjoy a fine week end of golf at **Clacton-on-Sea**. Guests were looked after at the **Holiday Camp** and it has to be recorded that the **Rats** lost a strenuously fought series of matches by 15½ to 12½. This was the third meeting of the organisations and the **Variety Club** team thus won the £500 prize and the **Cup**; it immediately donated its prize money to their **Fund for Underprivileged Children**.

**Richard Hearne** returned home early this month after a nine months' stay in **David N. Martin's** "Olympic Follies," an engagement scheduled for twelve weeks. Little spare time for **Dick**, for he at once received an offer for a series on **ITV**. Whilst down under he had bought some property in **Melbourne**.

**Dickie Henderson's** run of ill luck continued, for after getting over mumps, he had his **Ford Zephyr** car stolen from outside the **Prince of Wales Theatre**; during the first week in the month he was walking around with five stitches in a finger. He had been opening a bottle of tonic water whilst entertaining some friends in his dressing room, when the bottle 'exploded' in his hand and **Dickie** had to be rushed off to **Charing Cross Hospital** between houses!

**Welsh comic Stan Stennett** began his season at the **Hippodrome, Blackpool** on June 28, and on the same day **Tom Arnold** launched a summer show at the **Royal Victoria Pavilion, Ramsgate**. This was entitled "This'll Make You Laugh," had **Nat Jackley**, **Marianne Lincoln**, **Milton Woodward** and **Millicent Cooper** in the line-up.

**Babs, Teddy and Joy**—**The Beverley Sisters**, flew into **London** on June 4 at the termination of yet another successful visit to America.

This time they stayed five weeks and played night clubs and on colour TV.

Latest casualty in theatres was the **Regent, Rotherham**, which closed on June 15, having been purchased by the **F. W. Woolworth** organisation for—well, what do you think?

"**Summer Fiesta**" began its resident summer season at the **New Royal, Bournemouth**, on June 10, with **Edmund Hockridge**, **Albert Saveen** and **Joe Black** among its stars. (**Will Hammer**, who had planned the show, had died as the result of a cycling accident on the first day of the month.)

On June 15 **Lord Aberdare** opened a swimming pool at **Nash Court, near Ludlow, Shropshire**, the pool being a **Memorial** to the late **Tommy Handley**, beloved star of "ITMA" radio fame and, before that, star of **Eric Blore's** gem of parodies "The Dis-Orderly Room," with which he toured the halls for many years after the first World War.

**Cardew** ("The Cad") **Robinson** this month bought five £1 **Premium Bonds**, won £100 on the first draw! **Leslie Hutchinson**, better known as "Hutch," returned home from a long stay in cabaret in India, resumed engagements in West End cabaret.

## BLACKPOOL GETS TV BOOST

The month of June also saw the start of a number of TV boosts for the **Blackpool** shows.

**Gracie Fields**, who had been in this country with her husband, **Boris Alperovici** since May 5 (she had appeared in the Sunday night concert in aid of the **VALG** at the **Prince's Theatre**) returned home to **Capri** on June 11. She had intended to come for a week-end but stayed for six weeks. On June 14 singer **Rosemary Clooney** and her film actor husband, **Jose Ferrer**, left this country by air for their California home. Apart from **TV Rosemary** had been holidaying whilst hubby was filming.

**Jimmy Edwards**, honorary chairman of the **Variety Artists' Federation**, flew back from his troop entertainments tour on June 9, and a few hours later was playing polo in **Windsor Great Park** in a team captained by **Prince Philip**.

June was to find **Shirley Bassey** a complete international star, for she successfully headed a variety bill at the **China Theatre, Stockholm**, where she stayed for a month.

**Mid-June** found talk of the return to the stage on the part of that clever little comic **Frank E. Franks**, who had left the business several years before after a bad crash with a big revue. He and his wife, **Jean Boyne**, had not been idle, though, and a return to variety and TV was talked of, but never materialised.

Two dozen old folks from **Brinsworth**, together with officials of the **VABF**, were the guests of **Clarkson Rose** and **Olive Fox** at the **Pier Pavilion, Worthing**, on June 15. "Clarkie" was presenting his famous "Twinkle" at **Worthing** for a short season and saw to it the old folk had a rip-roaring day out.

The **Birthday Honours List** published this month prompted cause for congratulations. **William Henry Ralph Reader**, better known as **Ralph Reader** of "Gang Show" fame, already an **MBE**, was awarded the **CBE**, and **Leslie A. Macdonnell**, President of the **Agents' Association**, was awarded an **OBE** in recognition of his services for **CSE**.

**Belita**, the ice, swimming and ballet star, had to withdraw from the cast of "Damn Yankees" at the **London Coliseum** on June 22 in order to undergo an operation. Her place was taken by young **Elizabeth Seal**, who had made so big a name for herself in the previous show at the **Coliseum**, "The **Pajama Game**."

The month of June was not too good for impresario **Jack Hylton**. He had to go twice into the **University College Hospital** following pneumonia.

That volatile character, **Guy Mitchell**, bounded back into town mid-June and took over the hour-long **Val Parnell** "Saturday spectacular" on **ATV**, obviously enjoying

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

## JUNE

THIS MONTH saw the resident summer seasons at the various seaside resorts getting really into stride. Some shows north of the border and in the north country had already been produced. This was to be a

month of development and it became noticeable that the cast lists of this year's attractions were more powerful in name value than ever before.

**Bernard Delfont** opened his "Showtime" starring **Ruby Murray**, **Tommy Cooper**, **Ken Platt**, **The Jones Boys** and the **Morton Fraser Harmonica Gang**, at the **North Pier, Blackpool**, on June 7, with **Ernest Maxin** producing. With **Richard Stone** he launched the same day "Light up the Town" at the **Wellington Pier**

**Pavilion, Great Yarmouth**, with **Benny Hill** starring, supported by **Bob and Marion Konyot**, **Roger Carne** and "Canasta," the **Peter Crawford Trio**, **Fred Ferrari**, and **Rey and Ronjy**. **Bill Robertson** produced this one.

**Harry Secombe**, who had starred in "Rocking the Town" when it played its successfully long season at the **London Palladium**, opened on June 10 in the touring version of the same revue and went on to play two-weeks' stands at all **Moss Empires**. And on June 17 the **Val Parnell-Bernard Delfont** combination hit the jack-pot once

**THIS YEAR OF VARIETY**

# BLACKPOOL BEGINS BOOMING

**LEN EVANS REVIEW CONTD.**

ing himself as much as the viewers enjoyed watching him. He then played a week's variety at the Manchester Palace and on July 9 entered the London Clinic for a cartilage operation.

Bandleader Ray Ellington and his wife, Ann, became proud parents of a 7½ lbs. son on June 22. Dad was playing Glasgow when his son arrived, flew down on Sunday to see him, flying up to Edinburgh the following day.

Cicely Courtneidge celebrated her 50th year in show business and was honoured by BBC radio on June 29 in a specially-recorded version of "Variety Playhouse." And hubby Jack Hulbert, having reached the age of 65, reluctantly had to resign as Commandant at Scotland Yard!

Jack had been in the police force for 17 years—joining in 1940 as a "special"—and he didn't want to give up. Meanwhile brother Claude Hulbert is still a member of "C" Division.

**DOROTHY SQUIRES RETURNED TO THIS COUNTRY ON JUNE 20 AFTER A VERY SUCCESSFUL MONTH'S ENGAGEMENT IN CABARET AT THE MOULIN ROUGE, LAS VEGAS.**

The hour-long Sunday night London Palladium Variety show on ATV moved to the North on June 30 and took the form of a series of programmes from the the Winter Gardens Pavilion, Blackpool, under the direction of George and Alfred Black. The series ran throughout the summer months after which Val Parnell's "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" was resumed, with Dickie Henderson as the new compere, followed by Bob Monkhouse.

**JULY**

**THE HEAT WAVE** that had swept the country throughout the month of June now showed signs of letting up. Resident shows throughout the United Kingdom found some benefit. Even though a large number of productions had been playing to Standing Room Only business almost from their initial performance, the artistes had been appearing under considerable strains sustained was the spell of hot weather, but by this time things were settling down.

As always around this time of the year the eyes of Show Business focussed upon Blackpool, that north-west coast resort that blossoms every summer season into the greatest showplace not only in this country, but in the whole world. In common with other big show centres such as Douglas and Great Yarmouth, Blackpool again showed a remarkable number of recording stars whose names were among the heaviest-displayed in the various shows, artistes who in many instances having been fledged via the gramophone disc were not only developing their talents on the living stage but proving in indisputable fashion the magnetism of their names in terms of box office.

**AN OUTLINE OF THE PRINCIPAL SHOWS STAGED IN BLACKPOOL DURING THE SUMMER PROVED THAT THE 1957 SEASON PROVIDED SOME OF THE STRONGEST LINE-UPS IN POST-WAR YEARS AND A FEW CASTS LISTS WILL PROBABLY DO MUCH TO ASSIST IN BRINGING BACK TO NOT A FEW HAPPY DAYS (AND NIGHTS) SPENT THERE THIS SUMMER.**

**'G. AND A. BLACKPOOL'**

George and Alfred Black were staging three shows for the Blackpool Tower Co. Ltd, which prompted

the local wags to suggest that the town should be rechristened George and Alfred Blackpool! At the Palace they had the Hylda Baker Show, where, apart from the popular pint-sized comedienne, outstanding hits were made by those two popular recording artistes The Tanner Sisters (Frances and Stella). Sonny Roy and a group of George Mitchell Singers were also prominent and the fine cast also included Odette Crystal, Impero Brothers, Janet Gray, Martin Granger and his Puppets. The Bolianna Ivanko Quartet and a Joan Davis troupe of girls.

The afternoons at the Palace were well occupied for our young rock 'n' roll star Tommy Steele brought his Steelmen to the theatre every afternoon during the season and played to terrific business. With him were The Kentones, Desmond Lane, the John Barry Seven, and up and coming comedian Reg Thompson. Tommy was having a hectic time around this time, especially when he was doubling this stay in Blackpool with evening shows at places like Morecambe and Southport, but he seemed to thrive on hard work.

At the Winter Gardens Pavilion the Blacks had "Startime", with Bob Monkhouse as the effervescent comedy dispenser. Those two disc favourites Ken Morris and Joan Savage, as well as Karen Greer, of the phenomenal vocal range, made individual successes. A fine line-up was completed by the Three Romanos, the Three Merkeys, dancers Elaine and Rodolphe and a dance troupe.

Jimmy Jewel and Ben Warriss starred in the Black opus at the Opera House where "The Big Show of 1957" held sway, while another star of considerable lustre was glamorous Yana, whose singing and looks were both delightful. Here also the cast list was imposing and full of talent, the acts including dancers Holger and Dolores, Latona, Graham and Chadel, Dorothy Dampier, Herbert Hare, Audrey Mann, Nirska, a George Mitchell Singing Group, and a Tiller Toupe 20 strong.

Bernard Delfont had made an auspicious debut with his "Show-time" staged at the North Pier. Here Ruby Murray captivated tremendous audiences, and other fine vocal contributions came from the Four Jones Boys and The Voices of Vernons. Comedy came from Tommy Cooper, Ken Platt and the Morton Fraser Harmonica Gang, and other attractive acts were those of Patricia and Nell Delrina.

**TRIO FOR GEO. BRENNAN**

James Brennan was also running three shows in Blackpool, his "Nap Hand" being at the Queen's Theatre (formerly known as Feldman's Theatre) and including that ever popular and dominant singer Anne Shelton, with Vic Oliver looking after the comedy end of things, and ventriloquist Terry Hall, presenting "Lenny, the Lion"; Bob Hammond and his Cockatoos, Jimmy Clithero, The Musical Elliotts, Vanda Vale, Peggy Thompson, Betty Foe, David Ludman, Bert Lindon and the large girl chorus presenting themselves. And there was a Jimmy Currie presentation, "Waterfalls of Scotland", to make things even more impressive! At both the Rainbow Theatre on the South Pier and the Regal Theatre on the same pier, Brennan was presenting in association with Johnnie McGregor and Pete Davis (who for four years previously had been two of the most successful money spinners with resident shows in Eastbourne) different productions. The Rainbow had "The Rainbow Follies" with Peter Martin, George Ree, Benny Garcia and Kathleen Stanley, and at the Regal they had "Rockin' the Pier", with Denny Willis (an Eastbourne favourite), Wilson Keppel and Betty, Eileen Keegan and Billie Wyner among the artistes on view.

The Central Pier had Morecambe and Wise in "Let's Have Fun", with Joan Turner and the fine vocal trio Three Deuces giving great support; The Grand had Wilfred and Mabel

Pickles appearing together in a new comedy, "Ride A Cock Horse"; and at the Hippodrome Ken Dodd, was a prominent figure in addition to his teeth. Derby Road Baths had Albert Burdon to supply the stage comedy in a big aquatic show, which was also outstanding for the resonant, robust singing of Robert Earl, undoubtedly one of England's finest vocalists; and at Squire's Gate, Terry Wilson and Tony Heaton were the star figures, while the finest planned permanent circus in the world, The Tower, was again a great attraction.

But it was not only in resident shows that the influence and popularity of recording stars continued to dominate the scene, for almost every big variety house in this country had bills topped by artistes who were big disc recording favourites, and it was also noteworthy that whenever the major cinema circuits decided upon a periodic fling with Variety, the programme was invariably headed by a singer.

**THE NEW PATTERN OF THE VARIETY PRESENTATION HAD BY THIS YEAR BEEN ACCEPTED AND THROUGH-OUT THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF THE COUNTRY THE SINGING STARS REMAINED THE BOX-OFFICE MAGNETS AND THE MOST POTENT FORCE IN LIGHT ENTERTAINMENTS.**

**'KISMET' NOT FATED FOR HIT**

ONE of the London shows that didn't stand up to the

heat wave mentioned in the opening paragraph was Jack Hylton's "Kismet" at the Prince's Theatre, for his decision to bring this show back to town did not meet with the success it deserved and the colourful and tuneful musical was taken off after only two and a half weeks.

Early this month Mrs. Gwladys Stanley Francis Laddler, M.B.E., announced her engagement to marry Mr. Frank Woodhead, a prominent industrialist, whom she met on the last night of her "Queen of Hearts" pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Leeds, in March. (The wedding took place at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on July 25).

After a lengthy spell as a featured vocalist with the popular Ray Ellington Quartet, Marion Ryan began a career as a single act, opening in first-rate style at the Theatre Royal, Hanley, on July 1.

FIRST day of the month also saw the premiere at the Hippodrome, Brighton, of yet another Bernard Delfont hit show. This was "The Big Show", which played an outstanding resident summer season at the popular South Coast resort, and starred the popular pianist, Winifred Atwell. David Nixon, Aileen Cochran, Reg Varney, Raf and Julian Jover, Eleanor Gunter, Malta's Dogs, and a big chorus made individual hits in a great presentation.

In order to go on tour in a Paul Raymond revue, Canfield Smith, the American ventriloquist, came

out of the London Hippodrome programme at the end of June and his place was taken by pantomimist Eddie Vitch.

**THE STARS FALL ILL**

Renamed the Shepherds Bush Television Theatre, the old Shepherds Bush Empire was re-opened in its new guise as a completely equipped BBC-TV studio on July 2, the Henry Hall Show being the first feature televised.

Two of Variety's foremost comedians were on the sick list during the first week in the month, Harry Secombe being stricken by a sudden attack of laryngitis which caused him to take a short rest from his successful run with Bernard Delfont's "Rocking the Town". His place at the Empire, Edinburgh, was taken during his week-long lay-off was taken on the Monday by Chic Murray, the bumping, explanatory comic, assisted by Maide, and for the rest of the week by Issy Bonn. Benny Hill, comedy star of the Wellington Pier, Great Yarmouth, resident production, was stricken more seriously. On July 5 he suffered a sudden attack of appendicitis, was rushed from nearby Bradwell to the Great Yarmouth General Hospital, where an operation was performed the following day. His place in "Light Up The Town" was taken on the Friday night by Derek Roy, and the following day Arthur ("Oscar") Haynes stepped into the breach. The following week Derek Roy returned to Yarmouth to hold the fort until Benny was fit enough to resume.

The American comedian Red Skelton, who topped the bill at the London Palladium for a month several years back, came to Europe again, this time on a very different mission. His nine-year-old son Richard was said to be slowly dying from an incurable blood disease and Red decided to show the boy round the world to let him see as many of the sights as possible. The Skelton family left their home in Hollywood during the first week in July and after visiting other European countries paid a brief visit to this country before returning home to America on August 4.

Singer Gary Miller and his wife Joy were overtaken by cruel misfortune on July 11, for on that day Joy was taken suddenly ill, had to be taken to King's College Hospital, London, where an emergency operation was performed. The operation meant the loss of the child so eagerly awaited by the Millers.

Members of the cast of "Damn Yankees" at the London Coliseum and members of the United States Air Force Band stationed here met in a baseball match at Chessington Zoo on July 7, when the airmen were victors by 7 runs to 5. Bill Kerr developed cartilage trouble during the match, had to miss the Monday evening show at the Coliseum as a result.

Eddie Parker, the young recording and stage singer, came out of the sanatorium early this month. He had been away since November 1956 and although he was much better, it was expected to be a long time before he would be able to resume his professional career.

Dennis Gray Stoll, the 45-year-old author-composer, son of the late Sir Oswald Stoll, of Stoll Theatres fame, again came into prominence via his "Four English Dances" and a new novel, both of which were given air time on BBC radio.

DONALD PEERS, WHO HAD MADE SO BIG A NAME FOR HIMSELF DURING HIS LONG AND HAPPY STAY IN AUSTRALIA, WAS AGAIN PROVING TO BE A BIG RADIO FAVORITE HERE AND ON JULY 21 BEGAN A FURTHER SEVEN PROGRAMMES OF HIS OWN BBC RADIO SERIES "PEERS PARADE".

Tom Arnold's ice circus opened at the Sports Stadium, West Street, Brighton, on July 5, with a finely varied international programme, including many artistes who have proven themselves favourites with music hall audiences. Laurence Green produced.

ON JULY 9 THE LICENSING JUSTICES AT WESTMINSTER CITY HALL GRANTED AN APPLICATION MADE ON BEHALF OF MR. VAL PARNELL FOR PERMISSION TO CONVERT THE LONDON HIPPODROME INTO A THEATRE RESTAURANT AT A COST OF £150,000.

News came this month that the Pigalle, Liverpool, which closed on May 11, after losing out as a theatre club, would be re-opened later in the year as a legit theatre. Sam Wannamaker, the American actor, was behind the idea of reviving what was once a popular variety and revue theatre.

During the second week in July comedian Freddie Sales and his wife Renee became the proud parents of a 7lb. 12oz. baby daughter. This was their third child; the others are Philip, aged 7, and Ross, aged 5. Their much-wanted daughter was christened Sharon.

Jessie Matthews, who apart from being a famed musical-comedy star has topped in variety on many bills, returned to this country on July 9 after a successful 20 months touring in South Africa and Australia.

After a long spell of mixed fare including an eight-act variety bill the New York Palace on July 11 reverted to a straight film policy once again. The last British act to play the one-time Mecca of variety folk was that of Syd and Paul Kaye, who played there two weeks before the end of the live policy.

**AT LAST . . . A RE-OPENING**

In the midst of closures it was nice to welcome a re-opening. This was the Royalty Theatre, Chester, which in completely new guise, opened its doors once more on July 8. W. MacQueen Pope, the theatre historian, performed the opening ceremony at the Royalty, upon which £30,000 had been spent during its five months' face-lifting. The new theatre was of ultra modern design with all the old interior pillars dispensed with, and had Jack Wood as general manager.

Anita Martell, of juggling fame, returned to this country after a three years' stay in America, and started a new venture in personal publicity services.

**NORMAN REMEMBERS**

When SANDY POWELL notched up his 1,000 performance in the resident "Startime" at the Pier Pavilion, Eastbourne (where he was this year playing his eighth season) on July 20 he was joined as guest artiste by NORMAN WISDOM. In the winter of 1946 when Norman, fresh out of the Army, was seeking a break in show business Sandy met him in Charing Cross Road and gave him a lot of very valuable advice. Norman never forgot that and when the chance came to repay his friend in need he jumped at the chance.

A comedian who had never played on the stage in this country although he was born in South Shields continued to make a big name for himself on television for the Granada group. He was Alan Young, who learned his business in America and was so big a hit that his series was quickly extended from six to thirteen.

The well-known pianist Bill McGuffie and his wife, Jacqueline, became the parents of an 8½lb. son on July 13. The new arrival was born at the Mowl Street, Brixton, home of the McGuffies. They already have two daughters. Loraine, 3, and Kathryn, 6.

First day of the month Val Parnell tried out a new idea at the Empire, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, putting Ralph Reader's production "Wonderful Time of 1957" in for a five weeks' season, to be followed by two weeks at the Empire, Sunderland. Cast of this highly popular show were Tommy Fields, Betty Jewel, Jimmy Gay, Jack Stanford, The Barry Sisters, BH and Bill. **CONT. ON NEXT PAGE**

**Seasonable Greetings to All**




from  
**THE PRESIDENT COMMITTEE AND ORGANISING SECRETARY OF**

**THE VARIETY ARTISTES BENEVOLENT FUND**

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**LEN EVANS CONTINUES  
THE VARIETY REVIEW OF 1957**

**SHIRLEY BASSEY  
TOPS 'HIP' BILL**

Wendy Todd, Alan Mills, Sheila Armstrong, The Betty Fox Dancing Teenagers and an Eric Rogers Group.

A four weeks' season of twice-nightly variety went into the Astoria Cinema, Brighton (an ABC house) on July 22, and this month saw the return to this country of the well-known singer and siffleur **Ronnie Ronalde**. A big favourite in America, Ronnie played yet another season at Radio City, New York, where he had been playing five shows a day.

After a spell in variety here he was to begin a new assignment—a disc jockey for Radio Luxembourg—for a minimum period of seven months with an option of two years.

**AMERICAN SINGER MEL TORME FLEW HERE ON JULY 20 FOR AN EIGHT WEEKS' SPELL OF VARIETY AND TV APPEARANCES. THIS WAS HIS SECOND TOUR IN THE COUNTRY AND HE PROVED AS POPULAR AS EVER RIGHT FROM HIS OPENING AT THE CHISWICK EMPIRE ON JULY 22.**

The Theatre Royal, Brighton, celebrated its 150th birthday on Sunday, July 21, when a cocktail party was given to celebrate the event. One of the speakers was the comedian **Clarkson Rose**, who was said to have played the Theatre Royal more times than any other living artiste.

**T. C. Gwilliam** announced that the Theatre Royal, Exeter, which had been playing almost all kinds of entertainment, from legit to variety and panto, had been transformed into a theatre club.

**PANTOMIME  
PLANS**

Although the year was only just half-way through, panto plans began to emerge and among other snippets came news that this Christmas, singer **Ruby Murray** would make her debut in pantomime in the title rôle of "Cinderella" at the Empire, Liverpool. **Jimmy Jewel** and **Ben Warriss** would also be in the same production. **Audrey Jeans**, who throughout the summer was very popular with **Bernard Delfont's** "Light Up The Town" at the King's Theatre, Southsea, where **David Whitfield** was starring, was to be principal boy in "Jack And The Beanstalk" at the Hippodrome, Birmingham. Comedy for this show was being entrusted to **Reg Dixon** and **Beryl Reid**. **Aileen Stanley**, playing in the summer show at the Hippodrome, Brighton, was to be seen in "Aladdin" at Nottingham.

**Bertha Willmott**, the popular chorus singer, now a publican in the Northampton area, underwent a very serious operation during the

second week in the month, but recovered well.

**THE SIX WEEKS' VARIETY SEASON THAT IMPRESARIO HAROLD FIELDING HAD INTRODUCED AT THE CAPITOL CINEMA, ABERDEEN, DURING THE LAST WEEK IN JUNE WAS JUSTIFYING ITSELF AND BUSINESS CONTINUED TO BE EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD.**

July 15 saw the inauguration of a new summer policy of variety at the **Pier Pavilion, Colwyn Bay**, for which agent **Johnnie Riscoe** had lined up a series of strong bills. The season lasted for eight weeks. **Captain A. Prince Cox**, who was presenting his **International Circus** at the Pavilion, Rhyl, for a resident season had the misfortune to be badly clawed above his right ear by a lioness. The accident happened during the first week in the month, but for the rest of the season **Prince Cox** didn't walk quite so close to the cages.

The 50th annual general meeting of the **Variety Artistes' Ladies' Guild** was held on July 17, when **Anona Winn** was in the chair.

**George and Bert Bernard** (to say nothing of **George Pierce**) who had been among the stars of the resident revue at the **Prince of Wales Theatre**, had to withdraw from the show (mid-July) to fulfil prior engagements on the Continent. They came back later.

**SEASON  
EXTENDED**

The variety season at the **London Hippodrome** was extended this month and, starting on the 22nd, **Shirley Bassey** headlined there for a two weeks' season.

**WHAT WAS TO HAVE BEEN A WELL-KEPT SECRET BURST OUT IN A BLAZE OF UNEXPECTED PUBLICITY ON JULY 27 WHEN THE CHARMING SINGER JOAN REGAN WAS MARRIED TO HARRY CLAFF, BOX-OFFICE MANAGER OF THE LONDON PALLADIUM.**

The ceremony took place at **St. Lawrence's Roman Catholic Church, Sidcup, Kent**. **Harry Claff** is, of course, the only son of the late **Harry Claff**, whose variety presentation, "The White Knight", was so big a feature in variety years ago.

**Pint-sized comedian Davy Kaye**, who had given up the idea of routing and touring his own revue productions in favour of a resident job, had every reason to be pleased with his decision. At the end of July he had fulfilled a two years' stay at the **Embassy Club** as resident compere-comedian.

**Marie Kendall** of "Just Like the **CONT. ON NEXT PAGE**

**GREETINGS**



**BOB CORT**

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THIS YEAR OF VARIETY

# DELFONT 'LIGHTS UP THE TOWN'

LEN EVANS REVIEW CONTD.

Ivy" fame, the Grand Old Lady of the Music Halls, was 84 on July 27.

Yet another visit here on the part of singer Johnnie Ray, who arrived by air on July 24, and was to play TV and US army camps here and on the Continent during his five weeks' stay. He returned home on August 27. Agent Alan Russell, honorary secretary of the Agents' Association, underwent an operation at Hill End Hospital, St. Albans, on July 24 and was out and about again two weeks later.

The last day of the month and widower George Western, the piano-playing half of Kenneth and George Western, was wed to Mrs. Kathleen Clough, a non-professional.

Ceremony was at Caxton Hall, Westminster, and Kenneth, his cousin, was best man.

The last of the scheduled Delfont resident summer shows had opened earlier this month: "Light Up The Town" at the King's, Southsea, on July 8 (produced by Charles Henry) and a show of the same title at the Hippodrome, Eastbourne, on July 6. This was produced by Bill Robertson and presented in conjunction with Richard Stone.

## AUGUST

**THIS MONTH SAW** the last variety bill at the London Hippodrome before the house closed its doors to undergo almost complete interior reconstruction into a theatre cabaret. The American singer Charlie Gracie toplined there for two weeks from August 5, and the old Hippodrome went dark on August 17.

The final programme provided something of a sensation when singer Dorothy Squires walked out of the show after a dispute about her billing. Her place was taken by the coloured singer Freyde Marshall, of "Jazz Train" fame.

It was a bad start of the month, too, for those who had pinned such faith in variety at the Grand, Croydon. On August 10 it went dark.

Last bill in was headed by Cardew Robinson, and the house was reopened on September 2 with a policy of repertory, while it had been arranged that Will Hammer Enterprises would play pantomime there as usual this Christmas.

The production was to be Mildred Challenger's "Cinderella" which had played the New Royal, Bournemouth, for the 1956/7 season. Some of the cast had already been engaged.

Film actress Shirley Eaton, who in February had made her variety debut with a dressy act at the Prince of Wales Theatre, was married to Colin Crowe, a non-professional, at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Kenton, Middlesex, on August 5.

On August 12 Bob Swash of the Reeves and Lamport office was released by them to join Jack Hylton Television Productions as Casting Director.

He was taking over the autumn schedule of Jack Hylton programmes being presented for Associated Rediffusion. The same day Bryan Michie took over his new post as programme manager for the new Independent Television programme company "Television Wales and West," having been released by Hylton with whom he had been for the past 19 years.

**IT WAS ON AUGUST 3 THAT** THE PLUSH CAFE DE PARIS IN COVENTRY STREET CLOSED ITS DOORS FOR A SPELL AND, ACCORDING TO THE MANAGEMENT, GONE FOR EVER WERE THE DAYS OF ENGAGING CABARET TALENT AT ASTRONOMICAL SALARIES. IT OPENED SIX WEEKS LATER ON MUCH MORE ORDINARY LINES IN ENTERTAINMENT IDEAS AND WITHOUT THE PREVIOUS GLAMOUR.

Early in the month A. C. Astor, the well-known ventriloquist and theatre owner, was elected President



BARC

### GRACIE'S STILL GREAT!

Our cartoonist's impression of Britain's one and only GRACIE FIELDS. Although she did not make many music-hall appearances, her show business activities were still many and varied. And Gracie, despite her "middle fifties," managed to get her recording of "Around the World" in our Top Ten. Don't be surprised if Gracie is big Show Biz news again in 1958!

of the Independent Theatres Association in succession to the late Will Hammer.

It was announced during the first week in the month that an agreement to build a new theatre in the city had been signed by Moss Empires Ltd. and the Birmingham Corporation.

### AND YET ANOTHER (!)

The middle of the month marked the end of another variety stronghold, this time the Palace Theatre, Huddersfield, one of the Macnaughten houses. The Palace opened on Easter Monday, 1955, after being closed since June, 1954. The house was built in 1937 replacing the original Palace burned down in 1936.

Bransby Williams, that old music-hall artiste of infinite versatility, celebrated his 87th birthday on August 14 and the previous day Oscar Luck, the last surviving member of that famous band of music-hall performers The Six Brothers Luck, celebrated his 90th birthday!

Last seen in London as the principal girl in "Aladdin" pantomime at the London Palladium little Stephanie Voss showed her mettle when she became one of the principals in the George and Alfred Black and H. M. Tennent Ltd. comedy with music "Meet me by Moonlight", staged at the Aldwych Theatre, London, during the first week in August after a preliminary try-out in the provinces.

During the second week of August the Brighton Corporation announced that permission had been granted for the Grand Theatre, Brighton, to be converted into a furniture factory. Thus passed away yet another variety theatre that had made its name for many years among theatre-goers in this south-coast resort. Closed also was the New Lindsey Theatre, which was marked for demolition in connection

with the new widening of Notting Hill Gate, in London. The New Lindsey, with a capacity of 200, was first opened in 1946 and, during its run, had played a large number of intimate revues as well as legit fare. (It is still hoped to start a theatre club in the area to replace the theatre.)

**THE FOLLOWING WEEK CAME NEWS THAT THE BRITANNIA PIER, GREAT YARMOUTH, WAS TO HAVE A NEW THEATRE TO REPLACE THE SERIES OF THEATRES THAT WERE ALL DESTROYED BY FIRE—IN 1909, 1914 AND AGAIN IN 1954. THE NEW THEATRE IS TO HAVE A CAPACITY OF 1,500, BUILT ON MODERN LINES AND WILL COST £100,000. IT IS EXPECTED TO BE READY FOR THE 1958 SUMMER SEASON.**

Popular singer Ruby Murray, one of the stars of Bernard Delfont's "Showtime" at the North Pier, Blackpool, sprang a surprise on August 13 when she suddenly announced her engagement to Bernard Burgess, one of the vocal act The Jones Boys, also playing in the same show. They had first met during rehearsals of the show. Both sprang a second surprise on August 23 when, during lunch time, they were quietly wed at the Whitegate Drive Baptist Church, Blackpool. Jack Radley of the Jones Boys was best man.

Following her Blackpool season Ruby was to go to America for a series of TV engagements that had been arranged for her by Keith Devon of the Bernard Delfont organisation.

### UNLUCKY SID

Leon Leonidoff who came to Europe some weeks before to look for talent for presentation at the Radio City Music Hall, New York, announced that he had booked Sid

Millward and his Nitwits. He had seen the British comedy novelty band playing at the Lido Restaurant in Paris, and at once wanted them for America. The New York season would also mean a belated return to America by Wally Stewart of the Nitwits, for he first came here from America in 1935 as a member of the male dance double Vale and Stewart—and had remained here ever since.

Alas! the American project did not mature. The popular Sid Millward collapsed during a performance at the Lido and for weeks now he has been lying ill with heart trouble. Wally Stewart has taken over . . . at the time of going to press, Sid is still unable to continue his activities.

The second week in August was unlucky for two girl singers, Alma Cogan and Joan Regan, the former being stricken with laryngitis, the latter with a septic throat. Alma couldn't open at the Gaumont, Cheltenham, on the 13th and blonde Penny Nicholls, with Billy Merrin, deputised for her, although Joan Regan was luckier. After a week-end rest she was able to resume on the Monday with the London Palladium resident show.

The Radio Show opened at Earls Court on August 28 and continued until September 7. Jack Benny starred on the opening night in the 75 minutes long programme presented.

It was being suggested about the middle of the month that Billy Russell was a hot tip for the part of "Doolittle" in "My Fair Lady" on Broadway when the New York company was to open at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in April, 1958. Later, other names came into the arena, one being that of Leon Cortez, although the choice for this plum part seemed anyone's guess.

At the same time news came from New York that Frankie Lyman who had been the leading member of the coloured vocal group The Teenagers when they began the 1957

variety season at the London Palladium weeks of April 1 and 8, had parted company with the act. The Teenagers were looking for a new lead voice to replace him.

Members of the Grand Order of Lady Rattlings went down to Brinsworth on August 13 to give their annual show to the old music-hall folks being looked after by the Variety Artists' Benevolent Fund. The Rattlings turned up in force and a completely enjoyable cabaret entertainment was staged.

It was announced that the London Hippodrome would be operated in its new guise by a recently formed company Theatre Restaurants Ltd., the directors of which are Bernard Delfont, Robert Nesbitt and Charles Forte.

**THE VAL PARNELL - BERNARD DELFONT LONDON PALLADIUM REVUE "WE'RE HAVING A BALL" NOTCHED UP ITS FIRST HUNDRED PERFORMANCES ON AUGUST 19.**

Singer Mel Torme suffered a slight heart attack on August 19 during his first performance at the Palace, Manchester, but after medical attention insisted upon playing the second house; he did not miss a performance throughout the week.

Norman Evans, one of the principal comedians of the George and Alfred Black-Harold Fielding resident revue at the Pavilion, Bournemouth, was taken suddenly ill and had to undergo an operation in a Bournemouth nursing home on August 26. He was unable to resume in the show and after convalescence went abroad for a rest. Leo de Lyon went into the show.

Elizabeth and Collins, the novelty juggling and wire artistes, who had left these shores two weeks before, made a successful debut in America on August 26, when they appeared on Ed Sullivan's fabulous television show "Toast of the Town". The act had been booked in America for a run of six months.

**THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF AUGUST CRICKET MATCHES IN AID OF VARIOUS CHARITIES, LOCAL AND NATIONAL, AS WELL AS THEIR OWN, WERE BEING STAGED IN ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY AND STARS NAMES ABOUNDED IN THE TEAMS. ONE WONDERED WERE THEY GOT THEIR ENERGY AFTER THE RIGOURS OF SUMMER PRODUCTION.**

### SCOTTISH TV DEBUT

On August 31 Television spread out just that much more when Scottish Television Ltd. made its first transmission with a one hour show from the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, now Scottish TV's studio. The production was entitled "This is Scotland" and had as principals Jimmy Logan, Stanley Baxter, Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Moira Shearer, Jack Buchanan, Kenneth McKellar, and Gerardo and his Orchestra. James Robertson Justice was compere and Rai Purdy produced.

## SEPTEMBER

**THE MONTH OPENED** with the news that the Bernard Delfont resident show "Light Up The Town" which was playing the last weeks of a very successful season at the King's, Southsea, would, at the conclusion of its stay there, play a series of two weeks stands with the same cast. Dates lined up were Manchester Palace (September 16), Liverpool Empire (September 30) and Bristol Hippodrome (October 14). David Whitfield, the youthful King Brothers, Audrey Jeans, Harry Worth, Billy Dainty, The Sensational

Skylons, Betsy Ross and the George Mitchell Singers remained together for the variety run.

There was a report from Belfast that the picture was brighter for Variety. Twice nightly variety was back at the Empire while the Opera House, having just ended a summer film season, was to bring back a twice nightly variety season that would be retained until pantomime takes over at Christmas.

The Cafe de Paris in London's Piccadilly, re-opened on September 12 on lines more popular than its former Ritzy atmosphere and so began a new career in which high-priced entertainers found no place.

### ANOTHER HALL 'EXIT'

After having been closed for more than a year the Southend Hippodrome, once one of the biggest music halls in Essex (with a capacity of 1,750), and operated of later years as a cinema on the Gaumont Chain, being renamed the Gaumont Palace, was sold to become a supermarket. The house was opened in November 1909.

Christopher Stone, who compered the first gramophone programme on BBC radio on July 7, 1927, and thus became the world's first Disc Jockey, was accorded a special programme on the Light Programme of the BBC on September 19.

Tribute was to mark his 75th birthday.

Ivy Benson, famed for the All Ladies' Band, was wed on September 6 to Master-Sergeant Brantley Calloway of the United States Air Force.

Ceremony took place at Douglas, Isle of Man. Later a reception was held at the Villa Marina where Ivy was presenting her band for the summer season. Bride and groom first met two years ago at the Chiswick Empire where Ivy was auditioning for an engagement at the Upper Heyford base of the USAF where Calloway was entertainments manager.

PETER ELLIOTT, featured singer in Bernard Delfont's "Champagne Punch" at the Pigalle night club in Piccadilly, joined the ever growing list of recording artistes on September 4, when he cut his first disc for PARLOPHONE. He had been contracted by artistes and recording manager NORMAN NEWELL and one of the numbers recorded was "All At Once You Love Her"—a hit number from the Broadway musical "Pipedream".

It was confirmed during the first week in September that the New Cross Empire had been purchased with a view to being demolished to make way for a new garage and petrol station. Oliver Cutts, owner of a chain of garages, was the purchaser and he proposed to stage a special music hall bill as a tribute to the business before the old Empire (opened in 1899) finally came down.

Popular pianist Winifred Atwell proposed to take a short rest at the conclusion of her resident season in the Bernard Delfont production at the Hippodrome, Brighton, before resuming engagements. She was also considering offers for a return visit to Australia and also for American night spots and TV. Looked like a busy time for Winnie after that short period of relaxation. Later, she announced her postponement of the return trip "down under." She may now go later in 1958.

It was announced that blonde and beautiful ice star Gloria Nord would be returning to this country once more this Christmas, this time, however, going to the Sportsdrome in Brighton to play in "Cinderella on Ice." Gloria, of course, starred for the first time as an ice skater at the Sportsdrome for Mr. Arnold back in 1952 in his "Ice Circus," although her subsequent ice career was more closely bound with the ice presentation at the Empire Pool, Wembley.

Trumpet virtuoso Eddie Calvert took his first plunge into West End management this month and on the 10th launched Walter Greenwood's

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

THIS  
YEAR  
OF  
VARIETY

# HIP'S LAST NIGHT AS THEATRE

LEN  
EVANS  
REVIEW  
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raughty north country comedy, "Saturday Night at the Crown," at the Garrick Theatre. With that grand low comedy actress Thora Hird as the central character the piece got away to intense enthusiasm on the part of the audience, a mixed reception by the press, but it all added up to a fine twice-nightly success. Eddie had liked the show when he saw it in Blackpool, took a chance and looked like being amply rewarded. He has been . . .

Jean Carson, famous daughter of old time comedian Fred Shuff, and sister of comedian Billy Baxter, flew into London from her California home on September 10, after two years in America during which time she has become one of the foremost TV attractions in the "Hey Jeannie" series.

Comedienne Beryl Reid underwent a minor operation early this month but luckily was fit enough in time to begin rehearsals for a new TV series for ITV, entitled "The Most Likely Girl." In these Noele Gordon co-starred and the first of the series was seen on September 13.

On September 16 veteran band-leader Harry Roy ended a long stay at the Lyceum, London, opened at the Locarno, Leeds. And from the other side of the Atlantic came news that Paul Whiteman had just celebrated his 50th year in show business as a musician, and his fortieth as a band leader.

The same day found that popular coloured singer and recording artiste Billy Eckstine beginning yet another variety tour here. He opened at Glasgow Empire on September 16, made a great start to this, his fourth, tour of the United Kingdom.

## TOMMY T FOR S. AFRICA

Members of the George and Alfred Black company of "You Lucky People" left this country on September 19 on board R.M.S. "Cape Town Castle" en route for South Africa, where they opened at Her Majesty's Theatre, Johannesburg, on October 10. Star of the show who sailed out was, of course, Tommy Trinder, who had been especially released by Jack Jay from the record-breaking season at the Windmill Theatre, Great Yarmouth, in order that he could make the sea voyage. Tommy's success at Great Yarmouth was one of the highlights of the year's summer shows. It was his second engagement for Jack Jay who positively adores the comedian, says that he's not only a great comedian, a great house-packer, but a great guy, too. Others who were out with him were Odette Crystal, Lentini Brothers, Lucienne, Bob and Astor, Shirley Burniston and Harry Moreny. The scenic effects, including Jimmy Currie's "Mighty Waters of Pamu," had been sent out earlier.

The chorus of girl and boy dancers as well as male singers and showladies were all being recruited in South Africa, and Joan Davis the dance director and Denver Thornton, the stage manager, were already out there holding auditions. Alfred Black supervised the entire production and flew out on September 24, while the last members of the cast to show up were the popular Tanner Sisters (Frances and Stella) who had been still busy in resident production at the Palace, Blackpool, and flew out to South Africa on October 5. News followed later that the show was a terrific triumph. Tommy, as usual, was in tremendous form, clinched the show's success.

During the second week in the month came news that Cyril Orndel, now musical director at the London Palladium, had been chosen M.D. for the American musical "My Fair Lady" when it comes to the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in April of next year—a plum assignment. Mr. Orndel became M.D. at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London, seven years ago and has since led the pit orchestra for such shows as "Pal Joey" (Prince's), "Kismet" (Stoll, Kingsway) and "Call Me Madam" (London Coliseum).

September 12 was a joyous date



FIRM  
FRENCH  
FAVOURITES

TWO BIG HITS from France made the brief variety season at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London, W., this year, worth while. They were IRENE HILDA, saucy, spicy songstress, and HENRI SALVADORE, master mimic and mirthmaker. Picture above was taken backstage during their P.O.W. season.

—RM Picture.

## Mrs. Isidore Green

again extends Happy Greetings for a Happy Christmas and Happy New Year to the many Happy friends she has made in Show Business. As ever, she and THE RECORD MIRROR will be Happy to co-operate with one and all throughout the coming year—and after.

for Billy "Uke" Scott, for on that day his wife presented him with a baby daughter at the Kingsbury Hospital, London, N.W.9. Mrs. Scott was formerly Anne Stirling ballerina in Emile Littler's "Song of Norway." Now the Scott family numbers six, for in addition to the new arrival, Jacqueline Frances, there are Susanna, Michael and Anne Therese.

An equally important date to that versatile singer, Dickie Valentine, was September 20, for that was the date he set out on his first trip to America where a hefty line-up of television and night club engagements had been arranged for him. But whatever his plans, he had to be back in good time to rehearse for his forthcoming season in pan-

tomime at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle. The night before he went Dickie was paid signal honour by ATV, who used his life story as part of their tribute to Show Business.

September 20 was also the date upon which singer Billy McCormack left Southampton for Australia, but in this case the singer intended to settle down out there. Billy had played a long season in one of the Jack Hylton Crazy Shows at the Victoria Palace and in George and Alfred Black productions, but somehow felt he wasn't getting the best breaks in England.

Mid-September brought news of fresh appointments by Jack Hylton in connection with his television interests. Hugh Charles, general

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

## RECORDING

And Other Stars In  
Pantomime

Where You'll Find Them

LONDON PALLADIUM. Val Parnell presents his ninth Pantomime ROBINSON CRUSOE, with Arthur Askey as Mrs. Crusoe, David Whitfield as Robinson Crusoe, Tommy Cooper as Will Atkins and Patricia Stark as Polly. Twice daily at 2.30 and 7.30 p.m.

PRINCE OF WALES, Coventry St., London. Continuation of run of PLEASURES OF PARIS, with Dickie Henderson. Twice nightly at 6.15 and 8.50 p.m.

FINSBURY PARK EMPIRE, London N. CINDERELLA, starring Dave King as Buttons. Twice daily at 2.30 and 7.30 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME. Tom Arnold presents JACK AND THE BEANSTALK. Pantomime with Reg Dixon, Beryl Reid, Audrey Jeans, Freddie Frinton. 2.30 and 7.15 p.m.

BRIGHTON HIPPODROME. JACK AND THE BEANSTALK. Pat Kirkwood, Brian Reece, Bert Brownbill, etc. Twice daily 2.30 and 7 p.m.

EDINBURGH EMPIRE. Tom Arnold (in conjunction with Holiday on Ice Ltd.), presents SLEEPING BEAUTY ON ICE.

GLASGOW EMPIRE. Tom Arnold presents CINDERELLA, with Alec Finlay, Chic Murray & Maidie, Mike and Bernie Winters, Margo Henderson, Betty Shaw, Ford & Sheen, Desmond Lane.

HANLEY THEATRE ROYAL. Emile Littler presents JACK AND JILL. With Charlie Chester, Erica Yorke, Sid Plummer, Patricia Mortimer.

LEEDS EMPIRE. Emile Littler presents DICK WHITTINGTON, with Lauri Lupino Lane, George Truzzi, Beryl Stevens, Ernest Aruley, Two Pirates, Jeanne Craig.

LIVERPOOL EMPIRE. Tom Arnold presents BABES IN THE WOOD with Jimmy Jewel and Ben Warriss, Ruby Murray, Lynnette Rae etc.

MANCHESTER PALACE. Tom Arnold presents ALADDIN with Norman Evans, Eve Boswell and Ken Dodd.

MORECAMBE WINTER GARDENS. Bert Loman presents CINDERELLA, with Jimmy Rhyder, Helen Hurst, Ann Harriman, Ewart Wheeler, Stan Waite and Dickie Martyn.

NEWCASTLE EMPIRE. Tom Arnold presents OLD KING COLE, starring Vic Oliver, with Harry Shiels, Jean Waugh, Barbara Hayden.

NOTTINGHAM THEATRE ROYAL. Tom Arnold presents ALADDIN with Jack Storey, Aileen Cochrane, Fisher Morgan.

SHEFFIELD EMPIRE. Emile Littler presents LITTLE MISS MUFFET, with Charlie Cairoli, Henry Lytton, Norman Caley, Sylvia Norman, Prudence Potter.

SUNDERLAND EMPIRE. CINDERELLA, with Billy Stutt, Julie Dey, Margaret Heath, Mack & Kirk, George Meaton, Doreen Lavender, Chas. Ellis & Vicky Raymond.

ROYAL, GLOUCESTER, Will Collins presents, commencing December 26 for 3 weeks, Lita Roza as "Aladdin"; Davy Kaye as Wishee Washee and Alma Warren (Lita's sister) as the Princess.

Following this, 2 weeks at the RIALTO, YORK.

CHISWICK EMPIRE (London, W.4): Lonnie Donegan in "Aladdin".

Vic Templar and Della Sweetman present CINDERELLA ON ICE for 3½ weeks commencing December 26 at the COUNTY THEATRE, BEDFORD.

SLEEPING BEAUTY ON ICE (for 4 weeks, commencing December 26), EMPIRE, CHATHAM.

Will Collins presents at the GRAND, SWANSEA, for a season commencing December 26, CINDERELLA with Des O'Connor as Buttons.

GRANADA, SHREWSBURY (for 2½ weeks) Al Read's CHRISTMAS PARTY.

ROYAL COURT THEATRE, LIVERPOOL. Howard and Wyndham present GOLDLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS, with Tommy Steele. (Opens Christmas Eve).

LEN EVANS Continues His VARIETY REVIEW OF 1957

THE PRO'S PAPER SHUTS DOWN

manager of the organisation, announced that Richard Bird is functioning as executive producer and supervising script arrangements. Tommy Hayes is now permanently at Hylton House, Savile Row, as his deputy, and John Russell was extending his function as production manager to take in all production requirements of the "Jack Hylton Presents" TV shows. Josephine Clinch was costume director and Vic Sullivan in charge of the music department. Frank Brown continued with press and public relations and the board of directors remained Jack Hylton, Sir Alexander H. Maxwell, K.C.M.G., John Baxter and Hugh Charles.

SONGS AND PATTEN BY LEADING ARTISTES OF THE VARIETY STAGE, THE MOST POPULAR SONGS ON THE CONCERT PLATFORM, OR THE FINEST OPERATIC SELECTIONS BY ALL THE GREATEST ARTISTES. THEN FOLLOWED A LIST OF FAMOUS MUSIC-HALL ARTISTES OF THAT ERA WHO WERE ALL CURRENT GRAMOPHONE RECORD FAVOURITES. COULD ANYTHING HAVE BEEN MORE PROPHECIC?

September 21 and singer Eve Boswell was back, bright and gay, from a couple of weeks' stint on the Continent and was at once immersed in TV and variety. A headlining engagement for four weeks at the Berns Salonger, Stockholm, was to be the reason for her next trip abroad.

News was burst in mid-September that Joy Nichols, last seen in London as one of the leads in "The Pajama Game" at the London Coliseum, had been in America for six weeks past and was negotiating the lead in a new Broadway musical.

After being associated with show business for more than four decades Jack Tomkinson, manager of the Aston Hippodrome, left to become curator of the Birmingham Civic Centre.

The Palace, Reading, celebrated its 50th birthday on September 30 when managing director R. J. Langley staged a fine bill to mark the occasion. Max Miller, "Hutch" and Penny Nicholls with Billy Merrin were the bright stars of the show. Various guest artistes appeared each night of the week.

END OF THE 'PERFORMER'

SEPTEMBER 26 was the date upon which the final issue of THE PERFORMER was published. Founded 51 years before by Fred Russell, the paper was the official organ of the Variety Artistes' Federation, and throughout its history had been closely geared to the interests of the music-hall fraternity which it served loyally.

On September 28 A. C. Astor, the well-known ventriloquist, and now a manager, celebrated his 21 years' ownership of Her Majesty's Theatre, Carlisle. In December he was due to return to America once again for a two months' tour with Ken Murray, of "Blackouts" fame (he still has a show of this name and presents it for seasons in Las Vegas) and is now an associate producer of the National Broadcasting Company of America.

That same closeness was in part the cause of its demise and it was ironical that in its last issue it should carry birthday greetings to the man who brought it into being, Fred Russell, O.B.E., the Grand Old Man of Variety, who on September 29 celebrated his 95th birthday. For on October 14 Fred Russell himself died. How much he had been affected by the passing of his brain child we shall never know, but it might have had something to do with the end of this Grand Old Gentleman.

THE TILLER SCHOOLS OF DANCE NOTCHED UP A NOTABLE "FIRST" IN THEIR LONG AND DISTINGUISHED CAREER, WHEN ON SEPTEMBER 28 A TILLER TROUPE OF TWELVE GIRLS FLEW TO DUSSELDORF FOR A SINGLE APPEARANCE ON GERMAN TV. THIS WAS THE FIRST OCCASION A TILLER TROUPE HAD FLOWN TO A TV ENGAGEMENT.

Examination of the reproduction of the first issue of THE PERFORMER (March 29, 1906—price 1d.) on the front cover of the final issue of that weekly is of more than passing interest, for few, if any, in 1906 could have realised that the first front cover advertisers were greater prophets than they could have ever imagined themselves to be, and in effect heralded what was to change the entire outlook and format of the light entertainments business half-a-century later—the Gramophone. For it was The Gramophone, subtitled "THE INSTRUMENT THAT MELBA SINGS FOR," that was advertised.

On September 20 impresario Tom Arnold received a cable from the Moscow State Circus agreeing to let him have two speciality acts from that organisation for presentation in this year's circus at the vast Harringay arena. The circus was scheduled to open on December 21 and the acts from Russia were to be the Milaiewa Troupe (balancing on two unsupported ladders), and the Manyon Galevitch Chumakov Troupe (a perch act framed on very novel lines). The Moscow State Circus played at Harringay in its entirety in May, 1956, but this was to be the first time individual acts were to be allowed permission to appear here in a British circus.

The text of the advert. was "REPRODUCES THE HUMAN VOICE WITH THE GREATEST FIDELITY. BY MEANS OF THE GRAMOPHONE YOU CAN HEAR ALL THE LATEST

Towards the end of the month there were indications that Lew Lake would have to part with Collins's Music Hall on Islington Green, the old music-hall being wanted by a firm of flour makers, whose premises adjoin the theatre. But John Collins, one of the famous Midlands family of showmen, stepped in quickly, bought the theatre and proposed to run it as a music-hall in which the audience could eat and drink whilst watching

the show. Lew Lake was to remain as manager of the new venture.

September 22 was an occasion in the household of Malcolm Vaughan, the singing star half of the variety double Vaughan and Earle. For his wife Gay gave birth to a 6 lbs. baby

boy in Nuffield House of Guy's Hospital, London. The new arrival stay embracing variety and TV—their first child—was to be christened Daryl.

That popular American couple Larry Parks and Betty Garrett—who last played here in 1955—returned

here this month for a five weeks' stay embracing variety and TV. They opened at the Empire, Sheffield, on September 30.

And late in the month David Land, of the Dagenham Girl Pipers, was once again laying his

plans for far ahead. He had just signed up one band of Pipers to be a star attraction for at least a year with Wilkie's Circus in South Africa. This new engagement would bring the total number of countries played by the Pipers to 40.

THE PURCHASER OF THIS PAPER IS INSURED FOR £100 UNDER CONDITIONS SET FORTH ON NEXT PAGE

THE PERFORMER



THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE VARIETY ARTISTES FEDERATION THE MUSIC HALL ARTISTES RAILWAY ASSOCIATION THE ENGLISH SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ARTISTES LODGE & VARIOUS MUSIC HALL SOCIETIES



Vol. I, No. 1 THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 1906 ONE PENNY

The GRAMOPHONE

THE INSTRUMENT MELBA SINGS FOR

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- GEORGE ROBEY. GEORGE MOZART. EUGENE STRATTON. ERNEST SHAND. ALBERT WHELAN. ALF GIBSON. GUS ELEN. MALCOLM SCOTT. VESTA VICTORIA. JULIE MACKAY.

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THE GRAMOPHONE AND TYPEWRITER, LTD., 21 City Road, LONDON, E.C.

THE MUSIC-HALL PROFESSION lost its one and only 'trade' paper. THE PERFORMER, after 51 years of uninterrupted publication, was forced to close down. It was a bad omen for the business but bad omens are what Show Business continually comes up against and continually overcomes. The front page of the first number of THE PERFORMER is quite historic, not only from the point of view of its reproduction in the RECORD MIRROR but because of that remarkable advertisement of the gramophone—and the artistes who were recording way back in the early 1900's. Len Evans comments on it in the adjoining columns.



Advertisement for KENNY FROM BAKER featuring a man playing a trumpet and the text 'A Happy New Year'.

Advertisement for SEASON'S GREETINGS from THE CHAS. McDEVITT SKIFFLE GROUP and SHIRLEY DOUGLAS, featuring a group photo and contact information.

**LEN EVANS  
VARIETY  
ROUND-UP  
OF 1957**

# Why There's No Panto For Joan This Year

**OCTOBER**

**EXCEPT FOR TWO OR THREE REAL DIE-HARDS** the early part of this month saw the end of the many resident summer seasons, and for the great majority the runs had been more than gratifying from almost every angle. Last closures at Blackpool were: **Grand (Wilfred Pickles) Oct. 5; Opera House (Jimmy Jewel and Ben Warriss, and Yana) Oct. 12; Tower Circus, Oct. 19.**

Now thoughts were turning once more to Christmas fare and the festive season line-ups were being completed. For, despite the recurrence of the annual suggestion that Pantomime was on the way out, a number of prominent managements didn't seem to share the same idea, were once more going ahead with Christmas plans.

It was announced that this Christmas the London Palladium would stage "Robinson Crusoe" and that, as last year, the casting would again break away from the traditional in that the title rôle would be played by a man. And who better for the part than David Whitfield, not only a popular singer, but an artiste ever developing his stage craft? It was also announced that the comedy element would centre around Arthur Askey and Tommy Cooper, a contrast in sizes and styles.

Part of Queen of the Island would be entrusted to Patricia Stark.

Jimmy Edwards was to go into "Puss in Boots" at the Streatham Hill Theatre and Jimmy Wheeler was to provide the main comedy in "Goody Two Shoes" at the Golders Green Hippodrome.

## JOAN OUT, AND WHY

There was, however, to be an important change in the line-up of one of the major provincial pantos, that at the Hippodrome, Dudley. For charming singer Joan Regan, wife of Harry Claff, announced that she was infanticipating in the Spring and would not be able to fulfil her Christmas engagement. However, she remained at the Palladium as one of the principals in "We're Having a Ball," carried on until it came to the end of its run on December 14.

On October 4 the Variety Artistes' Federation held their 51st Annual General Meeting at the Bedford Street headquarters of the Concert Artistes' Association.

The following day the International Brotherhood of Ventriloquists held their third annual convention.

Fresh from his long season at the Hippodrome, Blackpool, comedian Stan Stennett was off again for C.S.E., this time for the Far East. With him in the party, which left London by air on October 7, were comedian Wally Dunn (a successful season at Clacton for Wally), Lizbeth Lennon, Lou Campara and Shirley Gordon. The Company were away for five weeks, after which Stan began to think of panto at the Empire, Leeds.

The Annual Ball of the Grand Order of Lady Ratlings was held at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, London, on October 13. Once again the Ratlings' cabaret was a big and successful feature in a happy evening.

The next day saw the opening of the 10th Annual Festival of Magic—presented by the Magic Circle of London—at the Scala Theatre, London. Almost everyone who is anyone in magic attended during the course of the week to see a well varied programme that also included some non-magic acts, such as Suna and Johnny Lamonte and Phil Darban and Wendy, and a troupe of dancers. Harold Taylor compered and burly, happy Sydney Jerome efficiently looked after the musical side. The same day also saw a variety policy started at the Ritz Cinema, Huddersfield, with Al Read as the principal attraction. Agent Will Collins was hopeful that the venture would be a hit, as this would mean a continuance of the stage policy at the Ritz which had never before staged shows.

Bob Ganjou took his Dior Dancers off to America on October 10, and a long string of engagements arranged by George Ganjou would keep them busy in the States until next year.

## DICKIE DEPUTISES

**AN UNEXPECTED BREAK IN THE COMPERE POLICY FOR VAL PARNELL'S "SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE LONDON PALLADIUM" ON OCTOBER 20, WHEN INSTEAD OF BOB MONKHOUSE APPEARING BEFORE THE TV CAMERAS VIEWERS SAW DICKIE HENDERSON. THE EXPLANATION WAS THAT BOB HAD MADE THE REHEARSAL OKAY—BUT WITH ASIAN 'FLU AND A TEMPERATURE OF 100° AS WELL. WHEREUPON V.P. TOLD B.M. TO GET TO BED AND SENT FOR DICKIE TO TAKE OVER. AT THIS TIME SINGER JOAN REGAN WAS ALSO DOWN WITH A BOUT OF 'FLU AND SHIRLEY BASSEY APPEARED IN HER STEAD.**

Funeral of the late Fred Russell was at Golders Green on October 18, when the chief mourners were his widow, Mrs. Lillian Parnell, and his sons Val Parnell, Russ Carr and Arthur Parnell.

Many stars of the variety stage of today and yesteryear were present to pay their last respects.

October 18 was the date on which Ted Heath and his Band flew off for their third tour of America and their second there this year. Just before they went Ted and the boys took part in an "Off The Record" programme on BBC-TV. They were due back on November 10.

**FOLLOWING DAY THE B.B.C. PAID TRIBUTE TO YOUNG TOMMY STEELE, THE SINGER WHO MADE A MOST PHENOMENAL RISE TO FAME, BY TELE-VISING HIS LIFE STORY IN AN HOUR-LONG SHOW, "THE GOLDEN YEAR," TO MARK HIS FIRST TWELVE MONTHS IN SHOW BUSINESS.**

## JUDY RETURNS

At the Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, there occurred one of those fabulous First Nights that artistes dream about but rarely experience. It was the occasion of the return to London of that great troupier JUDY GARLAND, who was opening a month's season at this 2,800-seater—her return here after an absence of five years when she electrified audiences at the London Palladium. Hers was a triumphant return and the Rank organisation had certainly gone to considerable lengths to transform the theatre from the front of the house appearance to the back stage dressing rooms.

Indeed, it was said that some £60,000 had been spent to this end, with the star's dressing room entirely rebuilt. But as advance bookings topped £30,000 before she even arrived in London, the outlay seemed well worth while. Yes, October 14 was a date for Judy Garland fans to long remember.



## KING COLE STILL REIGNS

Singer Lee Lawrence went off to New York early in the month, and in America Adelaide Hall had opened successfully in a new musical "Jamaica," starring Lena Horne and Ricardo Montalban.

The show was due to arrive at the Imperial Theatre, New York, on October 31. A visitor here about the same time was well-known agent Eddie Elkort, vice-president of General Artists' Corporation, who was on the look-out for talent for presentation in the States.

The Hippodrome, Dudley, had reverted to live shows during the last week in September, when Carroll Levis staged his latest Discoveries, and the first week in October was again playing touring revue.

Anton Hersteb, former Editor and founder of the Danish entertainments journal "Echo" celebrated his 85th birthday on October 2.

There was a double wedding of note in more ways than one on October 5, when the Mackell Twins, those talented young singers and dancers, were married at St. Mary's Church, Wimbledon. June Mackell was wed to Trevor Piper and Pat Mackell was wed to Danny Purches, the gipsy singer. It was an all-white wedding that was really newsworthy.

From Hollywood, where he was filming in "Gigi," came news that Maurice Chevalier was planning a series of farewell appearances in the various capitals of the world. In these he would go one better than the one-man shows he has so successfully presented. This time he proposed to appear with pre-

recorded accompaniments only. Also from America came news that Richard Aldrich was planning a new Broadway musical based on the life story of his wife, the late Gertrude Lawrence.

## THE END OF THE 'ALEX'

Towards the latter part of October it was announced that the Alexandra Theatre, Stoke Newington, London, N., now derelict, was to be demolished and in its place would rise a block of 28 flats. The old Alex was for long a favourite house in this particular quarter of London and played almost every type of entertainment, variety, panto, drama, even Yiddish theatre. But its popularity waned and almost everything, including boxing and wrestling, was tried out but without success and the house went dark and went gradually into decay.

It began its career on December 27, 1897, with "Dick Whittington" pantomime.

## ASTOUNDING DISC SALES

ABOUT THE SAME TIME WERE REVEALED THE ASTRO-NOMICAL FIGURES REACHED

**BY GRAMOPHONE SALES THIS YEAR, FURTHER PROOF THAT THE DISC INDUSTRY HAD STILL NOT YET HIT ITS PEAK AND THAT IT LARGELY DICTATED THE TASTES IN LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT. FOR DURING THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF THE YEAR THE SALES OF DISCS REACHED AN ASTOUNDING TOTAL OF 7,300,000 MORE THAN DURING THE SAME PERIOD OF 1956—WITH THE RUSH PERIOD JUST ABOUT TO BEGIN. LITTLE WONDER THAT GRAMOPHONE CHIEFS LOOKED FORWARD TO A TOTAL SALE OF 75,000,000 RECORDS FOR 1957, AND TO HIT A JACK-POT OF £20,000,000 THIS YEAR. DISCS HAVE DOUBLED IN SALES SINCE 1954.**

Scarborough seems to be taking a more than passing interest in flesh and blood shows this month and after the closure of the Aberdeen Cinema planned to reopen with live entertainment as the Gaiety Theatre next summer. Came news that Will Catlin would close his Futurist Cinema early in the New Year and convert it into a live theatre for the 1958 summer season.

Which seems to prove that someone doesn't think the living stage is a thing of the past. It became clear, however, that the untimely death of Will Hammer might mean some drastic changes in the scheme

of entertainments further down the coast.

**EARLY IN THE MONTH CYRIL ORNADEL PAID A TEN-DAY FLYING VISIT TO NEW YORK IN CONNECTION WITH HIS MUSICAL DIRECTORSHIP OF "MY FAIR LADY." HE WAS GRANTED LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY THE LONDON PALLADIUM MANAGEMENT.**

Jill Day, who used to sing with Gerardo and his Orchestra, joined the cast of "The Lovebirds" at the Adelphi Theatre, Strand, on October 14 in succession to Dora Bryan, who was expecting a baby. Mean-time Anne Sellers, the wife of Goon comic Peter Sellers, presented him with their second child. The baby, to be named Sarah, weighed 7 lbs. 3 ozs. and made her first appearance at the London Clinic. The Sellers' other child is a boy, three-year-old Michael.

Owing to previous commitments on the Continent, Carsony and his Twin Brothers had to leave the cast of the London Palladium resident revue on October 12. They were succeeded by the smart gymnastic act The Gimma Boys.

October 9 was the date for another CSE party to leave this country by air for Cyprus. They were Chic Murray and Maidie, Joan Mann, Billy "Uke" Scott, Ken Wilson and Bert Whitham who were due back home during the first week in November.

Peter Bernard, a well known music hall singer in the days before yesterday, as well as a character comedian, was still staging rep at the Theatre Royal, Huddersfield, and there were hopes that the Grand Opera House, Harrogate, might return to live plays. It had been sold to Frederick Napper, a retired local builder and estate agent, who evinced an interest in the stage and planned to end the theatre's two years' darkness.

Irish comedians were in the news. Jimmy O'Dea, playing the Theatre Royal, Dublin, for two weeks (October 17 and 24) and due to cross over to the Gaiety, Dublin, for panto, had just signed up for a new TV series for ITV, but would be unlikely to start until after the run of the panto. And Jack Cruise, who was to wind up his latest tour at the Royal, Dublin, in November, was to be seen in the last of the 1958 series of Grand Order of Water Rats programmes seen on BBC TV on November 3.

Jack Hylton had joined the board of directors of TWW, the recently formed TV company to look after the needs of Wales and the West country, and the company were located in new offices in London. And "Professor" Jimmy Edwards, hon. chairman of the Variety Artistes' Federation, was elected Chairman of the Sunday Freedom Association.

## WHITFIELD AGAIN

**NO NEED TO STRESS THE APPEAL AND POPULARITY OF DAVID WHITFIELD AROUND THIS TIME FOR IT WAS ANNOUNCED MID-MONTH THAT HE HAD BEEN RE-ENGAGED BY GEORGE AND ALFRED BLACK FOR ONE OF THEIR BLACKPOOL SHOWS FOR THE 1958 SUMMER SEASON.**

**B**EST WISHES of everyone connected with show business were extended to Bing Crosby on October 24, for it was on that day that the "Old Groaner" was suddenly married to actress Kathy Grant. The ceremony took place in St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church in Las Vegas and none of his four sons by his former marriage to Dixie Lee—who died in 1952—was present. Which shows how quickly everything was done.

Terry Dene, the 18-year-old rock 'n' roll expert, collapsed at his parents' London home on October 27. Laryngitis was said to be the cause.

**DETAILS WERE ANNOUNCED OF THE 20TH BIRTHDAY SHOW TO BE STAGED AT THE COVENTRY THEATRE. AMONG THE**

CONT. ON PAGE 102

# Festive Greetings



To All  
Friends  
Everywhere

*Lillian*

Personal Representative of

LILLIAN AZA,  
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# Christmas and New Year Greetings From



# PHIL GREEN

# DOROTHY WARD

AND  
**SHAUN  
GLENVILLE**

Send  
Greetings  
To Friends  
Everywhere



PANTOMIME SEASON: LIVERPOOL

# Xmas Greetings To All My Friends From



# AUDREY JEANS

PRINCIPAL BOY DECCA RECORDING STAR  
(Fifth Season)

TOM ARNOLD'S PANTOMIME  
"JACK AND THE BEANSTALK"  
HIPPODROME, BIRMINGHAM.

Direction:  
KEITH DEVON  
Bernard Delfont Agency  
MORRIS HOUSE  
1-5 JERMYN STREET, LONDON, W.

# DICK TATHAM RE-LIVES 1957

## THE YEAR BEGINS— AND ENDS—WITH (To Quote Our Diarist)

*“A Vast Cross-Section Of  
Beat-Hungry Kids Unashamedly  
Devoted To The Cult Of Clamour”*

### WOULD THE NOISE ABATE?

That was the question many Show business observers were asking at the start of 1957.

They are still asking it, for despite variations of fortune throughout the past year, rock 'n' roll and other forms of hectic uproar are still with us.

Maybe new names have been adopted; maybe experiments have been made with such adaptations as rock-a-billy; but—no doubt about it—the end of 1957 finds Britain with a vast cross-section of beat-hungry kids, unashamedly devoted to the cult of clamour.

Let's run the rule over some of the changes. Obviously, of course, one starts with the pyrotechnical Mr. Presley, the performer whose hips seem to have been plugged into an electrical point.

He started the year well enough. Then, in the early summer, came a period of comparative eclipse. Then, just as many observers were reckoning he'd burned himself out, back he came with renewed explosiveness—both in the disc and film worlds.

A different story was that of Mr. William Haley.

### Haley Out . . . Little Richard In

He came to Britain with his Comets in the Spring of 1957 with the twin reputations of having made a riot-raising film, "Rock Around the Clock," and having landed records in the Top Twenty with the consistency of a darts champion scoring hits in the Treble Twenty.

Yet, as we shall discuss later, the Haley visit was followed by a flop in his British record sales, leaving folk wondering how, and why, and by whom the master switch of his success had been pulled over to "off."

But as much as Haley went out of the sales charts, so did a pint-sized, raucous-voiced character named Little Richard come into them. Intermittently throughout 1957 came rumours either that he was dead, or else that the rocker had gone clean off his. Just as fervently, however, a new disc by this hollerin' beat-merchant would come along to assure us he hadn't switched to the harp.

### Vincent Fades

One American rock 'n' roller who, judging by his British sales, faded right out in the past year, was Gene Vincent.

Despite having been launched soon after Presley, despite having the resources of the big Capitol label behind him (they issued a longplay and several "singles"), it was for him a case of "Blue Jean Flop".

Chief among American vocal groups making with the big beat were The Platters, even though their British sales petered out a bit towards the end of the year.

They reached their high through a disc on which "My Prayer"—a lyrical ballad of 1939—was re-jigged with a pounding rhythm and top notes delivered with a stentorian shout.

### Tommy Prospers

In Britain, too, the fortunes of the clamour boys varied considerably.

Young Tommy Steele, lessening his accent on rock 'n' roll, prospered exceedingly. New boy Terry Dene was promoted with comparative success. Art Baxter, complaining

to the press about managerial troubles, had little of the limelight.

Tony Crombie, who had in 1956 switched attentions from jazz to rock, proceeded in 1957 to turn from rock to a less primitive type of sound he christened "Sweet Beat".

Naturally enough, folk were guessing all through the year about what beat would follow rock 'n' roll. An effort was made to sell "commercial" calypso to the masses.

An early success was chalked up with Harry Belafonte's "Banana Boat Song"; but calypso slipped on one of the skins and never quite got up.

A Hawaiian rhythm, flamenco and one or two Latin American idioms were among the "also-rans" in this race, but in Britain there was no doubt about the winners.

### Skiffle Scores

First was the fantastic emergence of skiffle. For some reason or other, an American folk music of the 1920's was reborn in British form in 1957, and found countless followers.

As we shall see in detail later, Lonnie Donegan, Chas. McDevitt, Johnny Duncan, The Vipers and others proved the disc-selling examples which prompted groups of youngsters all over the country to go around in shirts and jeans, bashing at guitars and whacking at washboards with infinite enthusiasm.

Throughout all this, admirers of the more romantic type of music summed up their wishes in the phrase, "The return of the ballad". They were not entirely disappointed.

Veteran vocalist Nat Cole, in the summer of 1957, put a calypso on one side of a Capitol disc, and on the other side a 20-year-old ballad, "When I Fall In Love".

### Boone Booms

Latter proved a clear winner; so, in September, did an even older song, "Love Letters In the Sand," conveyed by a crooner many were coming to regard as Bing Crosby's natural successor—Pat Boone.

Also, on longplay records, the tuneful ballads of yesterday were being liberally revived—pre-eminently by Frank Sinatra and to a lesser extent by Mr. Crosby himself, the above-mentioned Nat Cole, the much-esteemed Ella Fitzgerald and by such others as Doris Day, Dick Haymes, Patti Page, Tony Martin and Sarah Vaughan.

Yet, in summing up the

trend towards "better pop music, the orchestra must be ranked well up with the singers.

In America (via such as Nelson Riddle, Dick Jacobs, Hugo Winterhalter, Gordon Jenkins and others) and in Britain (through, for example, Mantovani, Cyril Stapleton, Stanley Black, Frank Chacksfield and Tony

Osborne) the big, multi-coloured orchestras prospered exceedingly and deservedly—either through recordings of their own, or else through their skilled backings of pop vocalists.

Now let us see in detail how these and other developments in show business unfolded themselves during 1957. . .



### NO DOUBT ABOUT IT— rock 'n' roll was around in

force at the start of 1957. Bill Haley, then pretty well the High Priest of the cult of clamour, had three sides at the time in the Top Twenty: "Rip It Up," "Rockin' Through the Rye" and "Rock Around the Clock" (which was surpassing its title by rockin' around the calendar).

Mr. Presley, too, had carved himself a niche through his power to bewitch with a twitch suggestive of the itch. He also had three discs showing: "Hound Dog," "Love Me Tender," "Blue Moon." They endorsed the fact that he had, the previous year, risen to fame by singing with the frenzy of a soap-box orator, yet without particular addiction to diction.

In 19th position, with "Friendly Persuasion," was America's Pat Boone, who, as it happened, was in Britain at the time. His visit proved successful, not because his voice was in any way sensational, but through a mixture of handsomeness, personal charm and vocal sincerity.

Those who wondered at this 21-year-old being an international bill-topper at an age when a British counterpart would have been advised to "go round the provinces a few years for experience" should have recognised this sort of thing is normal with Americans. "When they're young and good-looking, that's the time to push 'em."

Backstage reports said Boone's affairs were so expertly and thoroughly handled, he went on stage



with no outside worries at all. All he had to do was to go on and sing!

FLYING high was the Philips label. It had the first three in the Top Ten: Guy Mitchell, delighting his faithfuls by returning to disc fame with "Singing the Blues"—a nagging lament with enough simple melody to endear it to the public; Johnnie Ray, with one of his biggest hits for some time—"Just Walkin' in the Rain," and Frankie Vaughan likewise enjoying a long-delayed winner in "Green Door."

This last disc was a fine example of success by a "sleeper"—the side thought by the record company to have the less potential and therefore given far less publicity than its twin.

Sharing fourth rung were two British performers of very distinct types: tenor Malcolm Vaughan was gathering loads of sales for "St. Theresa of the Roses," and a certain Tommy Steele (of whom you may have heard) was challenging Mitchell on "Singin' the Blues."

Stagewise, the domestic scene was almost entirely peopled by British artistes (Boone apart, the American "invaders" weren't due yet). Norman Wisdom was topping in the London Palladium panto—notable for its resplendent colour, and for the prodigious amount of work the little comic got through. Dave King was in his own, long-running show at the London Hippodrome,

(CONT. ON PAGE 79)



# But Not All Names Made Noise...

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 A Happy Christmas  
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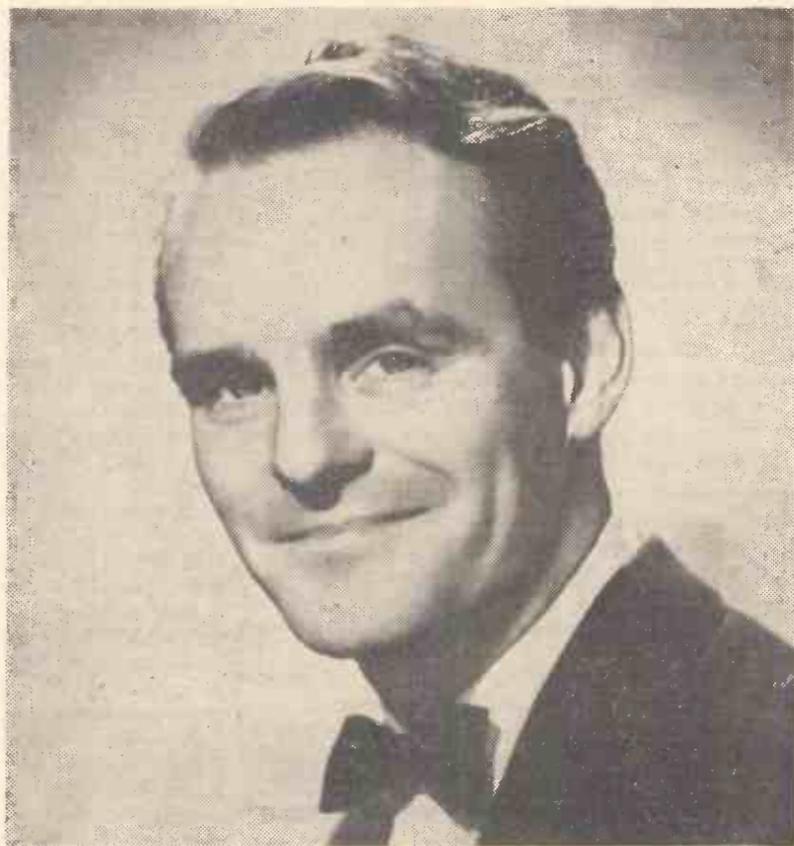
A Merry Christmas  
 and  
 A Happy New Year

TO  
 ALL  
 MY  
 FRIENDS  
 AND  
 FANS  
 GOD BLESS  
 YOU



**ANNE SHELTON**

A  
 Merry Christmas



**DICKIE HENDERSON**  
 CURRENTLY: PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE, LONDON



and, at the nearby Prince of Wales, the boisterous Billy Cotton band headed a variety bill.

Some 17 years previously, the world of popular song had conured up a sweet, sentimental ballad—"My Prayer." Being melodious, and equally suitable for dance band crooners, or the more substantial performers of the Palm Court genre, it had been big.

Now, early in 1957, it came back. American vocal team, The Platters (four boys, one girl) had waxed it on the Mercury label—a version of such driving virility and emphatic beat they might well have recorded a steam-hammer in the background for rhythmic effect.

As the year opened, it was tenth in the British charts.

Three places above it was a disc in a far different mould: "True Love"—duet by "Princess" Grace Kelly and Mr. Crosby.

Young Mr. Steele had an early success. Within a week, his "Singing the Blues" jumped second to Guy Mitchell; then, a week later, took first position from him.

Frankie Vaughan didn't waste time, either. While his "Green Door" was still keeping a large section of the population in dreadful suspense over the "secret" it was keeping, he came slap-bang into the lists with a new money-spinner, "Garden of Eden." (Rival on the number, NIXA'S Gary Miller).

"High Society" film (Kelly, Crosby, Sinatra, Satchmo) was breaking records at London's Empire Cinema. Gertie Gltana ("great" of the British music hall) died at 69. Beverley Sisters recorded their own version of the traditional "Greensleeves" for the American market. It sold 300,000 in three weeks out there.



Show business felt mighty sad and so did millions of fans, when Humphrey Bogart died (January 15). Though suffering from cancer for a long time "Bogie" had played down the seriousness of his illness. As best he could, he had carried through his philosophy of "Have fun, and what the hell!" right to the end.

Gracie Fields, given an American TV "Oscar" for her "straight" lead in "The Old Lady Shows Her

## FEBRUARY

INTO LONDON, to stay at Claridges with actor-director José Ferrer came smooth-voiced Rosemary Clooney, his wife. (Folk who know her call her "Rosie"—except ace conductor Nelson Riddle who, having a daughter of the same name, gives her the full "Rosemary" treatment).

Miss Clooney's visit was for advance negotiations re the showing on British home-screens of her TV films starring her, the said Mr. Riddle, and an explosive vocal group, who had had their first British Press notices in the RECORD MIRROR—The Hi-Lo's.

Clooney quote (re Elvis Presley): "I met him on a film set a week or so ago. I was really surprised. He's a likeable, quietly-spoken, exceedingly well-mannered lad. Meeting him was a pleasant, sociable experience. Mind you, I can't say the same for getting out of the place. I had to fight my way through teenagers lining the walls about twenty feet deep..."

Opened at the Pigalle, in the West End: cabaret show by that super-colossal producer, Robert Nesbitt. Opened at the Carlton, Haymarket: film "The Girl Can't Help It." Opened wide at the film: lots of eyes at the jutting superstructure of a certain Jayne Mansfield.

Opened at the Fortune, in the West End: a two-man show. In a

bathchair, ex-polio victim Michael Flanders; at the piano, bespectacled partner Donald Swann.

This exceedingly witty twosome proceeded to pack that theatre for Medals," celebrated her 59th birthday in New York. "La Plume de Ma Tante" chalked up its 500th at the Garrick, in the West End.

"Boy Friend" (at Wyndham's Theatre) attained its fourth birthday. Shirley Bassey, coloured singer from Cardiff, flew out to Las Vegas. Into the Top Twenty came "Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O," tune with an inane title but a big commercial future. It came from nowhere to No. 12, via a NIXA disc by Lonnie Donegan. As the skiffle experts' "Showcase" was showing in the long-plays' Top Five, one could safely adopt the Scot's proverb and say "Many a skiffle makes a muckle."

You could say for sure that 1957 was to be another year of booming record sales. Before the first month was out, most of the major firms were in trouble over how to keep pace with all the orders. Headaches over disc deliveries became an occupational malady.

many months to come, and to make a longplay of their performance for the PARLOPHONE label.

Mind you, their appeal is hardly for those whose sense of humour is geared only for the Crazy Gang. It is shrewd, subtle.

Thus, when Flanders and Swann performed some weeks later at a charity show in London, and started to "guy" today's popular songs, most of the audience remained quite unsmiling at:

"When you're feeling sad and blue,  
"And you don't know what to do,  
"And you've got a lot of troubles on your mind,  
"If you face them with a smile  
"It will make your life worth while" etc.

Italian opera singers came to London: (1) Luigi Infantino,



humorously dubbed "Italy's answer to Harry Secombe", (2) Tito Gobbi. Infantino came for concerts. So did Gobbi. But the latter came also for a TV appearance on Eric Robinson's "Music For You."

Robinson introduced him with special care. Reason is this (and it's a joke Eric tells against himself): on a previous occasion, discussing the fact that Gobbi had started out as a legal eagle, Robinson (bearing in mind the baritone's rich success in opera) had commented "I suppose you don't do much soliciting these days."

Gobbi, to his credit, had rescued Robinson from embarrassment by quipping, "Now you see why I have such trouble with my English."



In the West End, the Windmill Theatre, of "We Never Closed" fame, celebrated its 25th birthday. Special performance included many of the big names given their chance there over the years. Celebrations afterwards at the Trocadero were televised by the B.B.C.

Conductor-vocal coach Reg Warburton parted company (amicably) with the person he had worked with so long—David Whitfield—and set up an office to advise and represent singers.

Growing craze for skiffle led to groups led by Bob Cort and Walt Whyton appearing in West End variety at the Prince of Wales.

Customer reaction seem sharply divided between (1) the Ecstatic, which meant staying to give frantic applause (2) the Alcoholic, which meant taking refuge in the bar.

Mixed reception, too, for glamour crooner Yana, who topped the bill. But everyone liked the down-to-earth comic patter of veteran Jimmy Wheeler.

CAPITOL released "This Is Sinatra," another longplay off the prolific production line of Frankie, Nelson Riddle and orchestra.



THEY ALWAYS TELL YOU IN SHOW BUSINESS HOW HARD IT IS TO PREDICT PUBLIC TASTE. THIS WAS BORNE OUT BY THE VISIT TO BRITAIN OF AMERICA'S BIG BOY OF ROCK 'N' ROLL, BILL HALEY.

MAN WITH THE KISS CURL

LANDED WITH A LIST OF FILM AND DISC SUCCESSES AS LONG AS A DRUMSTICK. FOR HIS OPENING WEST END PERFORMANCES, AT THE DOMINION, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, IT WAS ABOUT AS DIFFICULT TO BUY A TICKET AS TO GET A VISA INTO TIBET.

Teenagers disported themselves in unrestrained style. More sober folk suggested that if Haley were all that good, then surely it would have been an idea for his fans to ease off with the noise, so that everyone could hear what he was playing.

Few artists have had more publicity. Some papers could hardly have devoted more column inches had Mr. Haley been a visitor from outer space.

Yet packed though his London performances proved, his provincial concerts at times had rows of seats as vacant as the expression on a jiver's face.

Strangest of all—and in complete contrast to normal reactions—the Haley tour seemed to trigger off a decline in his British record sales. Seemed the boat had started to rock.

In the Top Ten, the main feature of late January and early February had been the tussle between Britain's Tommy Steele (DECCA) and America's Guy Mitchell (PHILIPS) on "Singing the Blues." Each had a spell at no. 1.

Mitchell arrived in Britain, but though the personal impact of his concerts helped to take his version above that of the boy from Bermuda, he still had to give way to new competition.

Dynamic Frankie Vaughan (PHILIPS) hit the top spot with "Garden of Eden," but his stay there was cut short by a truly remarkable disc debut.

Someone in the States had the bright idea of putting film actor Tab Hunter on record. They chose a highly commercial number "Young Love," and (on the LONDON label) it wasted little time reaching the peak.



SO THOROUGH WAS ITS IMPACT THAT, IN ONE WEEK, IT WAS—WITH A SINGLE EXCEPTION—AT THE TOP OF EVERY DEALER'S RETURN TO THE RECORD MIRROR.

Result: much delight to the movie fans; much (understandable) mortification on the part of experienced singers.

Tom Jenkins, popular leader of the B.B.C.'s "Palm Court Orchestra" died at 46. U.S.A. cowboy Tex Ritter arrived for variety. News arrived from the States that the controversial Mr. Sinatra had



"ROSEMARY CLOONEY came to London again—negotiated the showing of her TV films here, talked about Presley."

—R.M. Picture

done an LP with string quartet backing.

Fans screamed so loud when Tommy Steele performed at a London Coliseum charity show on February 17, that the non-fan holders of stall and dress circle seats started trickling out of the theatre.

Guitar-twanging American, Mitchell Torok, arrived for variety—starting at the Prince of Wales, in

the West End. General view seemed that Mr. T. was hardly sensational. In the view of many, the hit of the bill was Britain's debonair, energetic comedian, Dickie Henderson.

RONNIE CARROLL and LITA ROZA were among those topping the bill at the Grand Theatre, Croydon, where a gallant attempt was being made to revive variety.

## MARCH



as compulsive a performer in person as she sounded on disc.

Around this time an attempt had started in America to launch a commercial form of calypso to take over from rock 'n' roll. It didn't. Harry Belafonte got rich sales on the kick with "Banana Boat Song"; so, in a smaller way, did Britain's Shirley Bassey. Yet, for some people, the best result of the calypso drive was an indirect one: the take-off of Belafonte by U.S.A. musical satirist, Stan Freberg.



COLOURED SINGER PEARL BAILEY arrived from America with husband Lou Bellson, a jazz drummer. Miss Bailey performed creditably in cabaret at the Café de Paris, in the West End, and created press headlines galore through an offbeat TV appearance. Rumours that her erratic behaviour on it was due to alcohol were decisively negated; fact was Miss Bailey was performing while ill.

Film of "Kismet" reached the West End. Elizabeth Lerner, soprano in the British stage version of the show, was asked by the Press what she thought of the film. Said she: "Interesting." Not all commentators were so charitable.



THERE CAME TO BRITAIN THE FIRST LONGPLAYS BY THE U.S.A. VOCAL GROUP, THE HI-LO'S.

These had their first press over here in the RECORD MIRROR some months earlier. "The Hi-Lo's Under Glass" was released on the London label, followed soon after by "Suddenly It's The Hi-Lo's" on Philips.

Many of the British listening public were due to agree they rated the title of the world's best vocal group.

Another five-star import on disc proved to be Roberta Sherwood, distinguished for having been discovered in Miami when in her forties. Reports from the States confirmed that Miss Sherwood was

Let's now take a look at the Top Ten leaders at the start of March. Tab Hunter's "Young Love" was firmly in the lead, followed by the easy-voiced Pat Boone on "Don't Forbid Me." Guy Mitchell's "Knee Deep In The Blues" was next, followed by Lonnie Donegan's "Don't You Rock Me, Daddy-O" and Frankie Vaughan's "Garden of Eden."

Top comic Max Wall left "The Pajama Game," West End musical, to tour in the provinces with a rock 'n' roll bill. Venture paid off handsomely.

Private Gary Crosby, 23-year-old son of Bing, took a trip to Britain from his U.S. Army base in Germany. He made a TV appearance in the Palladium Sunday show. Verdict on him (as a singer) so-so; (as a person) extremely likeable.

Britain's Stanley Holloway started enjoying an odd sort of disc success in the States. Through his stage work in "My Fair Lady" on Broadway, people started asking for his records, and EMI promptly issued his Lancashire dialect monologues and his old English music hall favourites. Stan had done these years previously.

It was around this time that the Oriole label, which hitherto had been a comparatively minor one so far as "pop" discs were concerned, made a couple of moves destined to bring it into the big time.

(Continued on next page)

# THE TATHAM DIARY

Continued from previous page

They issued (1) "Freight Train" by skiffle ace Chas. McDevitt and vocalist Nancy Whiskey, (2) "We Will Make Love," written and sung by Butlin redcoat Ron Hulme, who had assumed the professional name of Russ Hamilton.

Both discs took time to get moving, but the wait was to prove worth while.

Irene Hilda and Henri Salvador came to the Prince of Wales in "Paris Music Hall" . . . The Platters, The Teenagers and Slim Whitman were among American visitors. . . SHOCK TO THE SHOW WORLD WHEN MUSICAL COMEDY BARITONE BILL JOHNSON DIED SUDDENLY.

Jazz band leader Ted Heath brought his band into top spot of a variety bill at the Prince of Wales, and in support was Lita Roza, one-time vocalist with him. Ted pleasantly surprised many people by the way he adapted his programme to the medium, and put forth general entertainment as distinct from specialised jazz.

Red-headed vocalist Shelley Moore took on a tough TV test. She was given a title — and 30 minutes in which to write a song around it. She made it.

Orchestra leader/A. & R. man Ray Martin left to settle in America, where he would still be working for the EMI concern.

Reports came from the States that Britain's Dorothy Squires was knocking 'em for a loop in Las Vegas cabaret.



VARIETY-GOERS IN BRITAIN WERE NOT IN THE LEAST SURPRISED. WELL KNOWN TO THEM WERE THE CROWD-PLEASING CAPABILITIES OF THIS BLONDE EXPLODER OF VOCAL DYNAMITE. . . WHAT-EVER DOT'S SHORTCOMINGS MIGHT HAVE BEEN IN TERMS OF TECHNICAL SINGING, FEW HAD ANYTHING ON HER AS REGARDS KNOWING HOW TO SELL A SONG TO AN AUDIENCE.

Also in town (Palace Theatre, for six weeks) America's piano-playing humorist Victor Borge. Most people approved very much.

"Damn Yankees" opened at the London Coliseum. It was a Broadway musical, with a baseball setting, and the critics weren't all that kind, saying that the British wouldn't be interested in baseball and that therefore the show had, so to speak, two strikes on it from the start.

# A GOLDEN DISC FOR R 'n' R ACE BILL HALEY



A RECORD ACHIEVEMENT was celebrated at the Savoy Hotel, London, W. in March this year. The first disc to sell over a million copies in Great Britain was "Rock Around the Clock", made by Bill Haley and his Comets on the BRUNSWICK label. To mark this outstanding event in the history of the record industry, Mr. E. R. LEWIS, boss of the DECCA group which includes Brunswick, made a presentation of a Gold Record to Bill Haley amid tremendous applause from a big gathering of Decca executives, show-business celebrities (Gary Crosby was there to congratulate Haley personally) and pressmen.

In his speech prior to the presentation, Mr. Lewis commented on this "phenomenal feat." He said that the sale of a million records of one number in America was thought pretty high but, considering the size

of their population to that of this country, the Haley sale here was, indeed, something quite extraordinary. "No other company in this country has ever achieved anything like this number," added Mr. Lewis, "and so you can imagine the feeling of pride I have in presenting this Gold Disc."

But that was not all Haley received from Mr. Lewis. The Decca boss presented him with his own personal tribute—a handsome solid gold wrist watch.

To each of the members of Haley's band — the Comets — Mr. Lewis presented a magnificent silver cigarette box.

Bill Haley, in reply, expressed his thanks to all concerned for making his visit here such a memorable one.

He said he would cherish both the gold disc and the gold watch all his life.

But what's happened to Bill Haley's records following this award? None of his discs has entered our Top Ten lists since.

repeat the success of their consistent-selling longplay of his "Salad Days."

Dickie Henderson, with mumps, was away from the Prince of Wales show. Inevitable crack: "He'll be away a mump or two." Anglo-American rock 'n' roll entente was fashioned by a package show, starring Britain's Tommy Steele and America's Freddy Bell.

It opened at Liverpool Empire on May 6. Idea was kicked around in the press that some discord had arisen over (a) billing; (b) who closed the show; (c) who should sing "Giddy-up A Ding-Dong."

Having seen the opening night at Liverpool, I can report that most of the fan support was Tommy's—he had a crowd of Cup Final density milling round the theatre. Yet Freddy Bell impressed all observers with his slick, immaculate act. As for "Giddy-Up," though Freddy had written it, they agreed Tommy should sing it.

I can report, too, that Messrs. Steele and Bell did their provincial tour, and a week at the Dominion, in the West End, under the friendliest conditions.

Ronnie Ronalde came bang into the news with two fine contracts: one to appear (for the seventh time) at New York's giant Radio City music-hall, the other to do a disc jockey series on Radio Luxembourg.

Virginia Zeani, soprano with a visiting Italian opera company, set London talking with a five-star performance in "Lucia di Lammermoor" at the Stoll Theatre.

Frankie Laine came to the London Palladium for the fourth time but the honours were stolen by a brilliant young Mexican juggler, Rudy Cardenas.

Alan Dean, British singer who had, several years previously, gone to live in America, made a short visit home. He impressed as a top-line performer on TV dates, and in a week's West End cabaret at the Astor Club.



Before going on to detail the trend of 78 sales in May, it is worth dwelling on the fast-expanding world of the longplay.

One difference of content between the two forms of disc must be noted right away: that whereas on 78 the best sellers often included items of negligible artistic merit, the most popular LP's were—on the whole—those with some musical quality.

Most consistent among the latter were the soundtracks of film musicals. Notable were three on the CAPITOL label, "The King and I," "Oklahoma!" and "High Society." During most of 1957, these were to feature prominently among the First Five of LP sales.

Easily the most successful solo singer on longplay was Frank Sinatra. "Songs For Swingin' Lovers," "This is Sinatra," "Close To You"—these were but some of the succession of favourites which, aided by the rich orchestral backings of Nelson Riddle, came from the American vocalist.

It seemed generally accepted in record circles that, if the youngsters were the biggest buyers of 78's, the longplay market was predominated by the older age-groups.

This could account not only for the "better" type of stuff which sold on LP, but for the fact that, on most of the vocal LP's, the songs featured were mainly favour-

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

## APRIL

INTO PUBLIC NOTICE came an 18-year-old from the Old Kent Road: TERRY DENE.

He was launched at a Sunday concert in Romford (Essex) and a Saturday show at Croydon (Surrey). He was a slim, rather pale-faced youngster, twanging at a guitar and yelling out the standard rock 'n' roll items.

Evidently the kids liked him. Whether or not he had talent in the accepted sense of the term was conceivably beside the point. Just how difficult it is to assess winners in show business was shown by the fact that two A & R managers (both experienced) turned him down for recording. Decca, however, signed him—despite his similarity to their Tommy Steele. Signing proved commercially justified.

You couldn't have had a greater contrast to the growing breed of juvenile rock 'n' rollers than the American artiste who came to London to do a cabaret at the Café de Paris, and variety at the Dominion, in the West End. This was the time-defying Sophie Tucker.

True artiste that she was, she confessed "I got butterflies" just before going down the famed Café stairs; but the butterflies disappeared at jet speed the moment she confronted her audience.

SOPHIE'S OPENING PERFORMANCE WAS A FORTHRIGHT LESSON IN THE WAY YOU DO IT.

Despite having little voice, despite sexy patter which would have sounded incongruous from anyone else around the seventy mark, she really got 'em. The public warmly approved; and fellow performers took due instruction from a Master Hand at work.

Oreste, Maltese tenor, ex-British opera, split with Paramount after only one Hollywood film, "The Vagabond King."

Britain's very own Julie Andrews (starring in "My Fair Lady" on Broadway) added American TV to her triumphs by her lead rôle in a Rodgers and Hammerstein version

of "Cinderella." Her audience was estimated as 50 million.

Despite the anti-climax produced by some American visitors, there came a case of one who did live up to reputation. Piano-playing Count Basie, with a band of top-calibre jazzmen, rated many raves—even from "serious" critics. (He came back in October to repeat his triumph).

Australian crooner Jimmie Parkinson, after 18 (fairly successful) months in Britain, sailed for home.

THE VARIETY CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN HELD A LUNCH TO HONOUR GOLDEN DISC PERFORMERS: WINNIE ATWELL, EDDIE CALVERT, MANTOVANI, VERA LYNN, DAVE WHITFIELD.

Denny Boyce and Geoff Taylor's Rock 'n' Rollers went over to tour the U.S.A. . . . Mildred Mayne, "unknown" Irish girl, leaped to prominence by landing the name rôle in "Zuleika" in the West End . . . Terry Dene sang from the ring at an Albert Hall all-in wrestling show . . . Celebrated actor Laurence Olivier played a music hall performer in "The Entertainer" . . . Manchester magistrates banned The Vipers Skiffle Group.

JOHNNIE RAY—VARIOUSLY REGARDED AS SINGER, SHOW-MAN AND UNINTENTIONAL COMEDIAN — LANDED BACK AT THE LONDON PALLADIUM FOR THE FOURTH TIME. ONLY THINGS THROWN AT HIM WERE ROSES FROM HIS FANS.

Billy Butlin announced band bookings worth £90,000 for his holi-

day camps . . . Alma Cogan, according to Ed Sullivan, "knocked 'em dead" on his American TV show . . . modern jazz ace Gerry Mulligan brought his quartet to Britain . . . Dickie Henderson stole the honours in a new "Follies" show at the Prince of Wales, W. . . Cicely Courtneidge celebrated 50 years on the stage with a Savoy Hotel reception.

Re Dickie Henderson, much of his gathering popularity was due to his impressions of "pop" singers. He started with versions of a crooner's performance (no name specified) before and after making a record. To this, later, he added a delightfully droll burlesque of a vocalist getting caught up with his trailer mike. No doubt about it, the acclaim for these efforts stemmed considerably from their being not all that far from the truth.

Nottingham and Leicester areas had an Easter Parade of top talent: Frankie Vaughan, The Platters, Johnny Dankworth and the Ronnie Aldrich Squadronaires were all in action.

Rosemary Clooney came to London again—to further negotiations over British screening of her TV films, and to do a TV show with Cyril Stapleton's Show Band.

Back from America came leading skiffler Lonnie Donegan. Despite one or two reports to the contrary, he had done himself proud over there. Only a few hours after his return, London Palladium boss Val Parnell put him on his bill in support of The Platters.

Rock 'n' roll was obviously thriving on the controversy between those still saying it was "the most" and those insisting (and hoping) it had had it. Late in April, it claimed 35 of the first 50 places in the

American charts. Let's just see how, at the end of the month, it was faring in Britain.

Bang in the sales picture was a short, raucous, shock-haired coloured American, Little Richard. He had crashed three discs into the Twenty: "Long Tall Sally," "The Girl Can't Help It," "She's Got It" (respectively 4, 11 and 17).

Lonnie Donegan's "Cumberland Gap" was at the peak, having got there in double-quick time. Tab Hunter's "Young Love" was second (he also had "99 Ways" at 13). Harry Belafonte's "Banana Boat" — only calypso representative—lay third.

Various forms of "the beat stuff" were in vogue. THE TEEN-AGERS had "Baby, Baby" at 5, and "I'm Not a Juvenile Delinquent" at 12. Johnnie Ray's "Look Homeward, Angel", was at 8; McDevitt's "Freight Train" at 9; Fats Domino's "I'm Walkin'" at 15.

At numbers 16, 17 and 19 was the neat little trilogy of Andy Williams' "Butterfly"; Charlie Gracie's "Butterfly" and Tommy Steele's "Butterfingers".

Guy Mitchell was "Knee Deep In The Blues" at No. 20.

So, all in all, "rock" and similar noises were well in prominence. Pat Boone's "Don't Forbid Me" (No. 6) had beat—but was melodious. And, making up the Twentys, were Slim Whitman's "Kathleen" (7); Nat Cole's "When I Fall In Love" (10); Max Bygraves' "Heart" (14); and "True Love," by Mr. Crosby and Grace Kelly.

## MAY

OFF TO AMERICA flew the BEVERLY SISTERS. They had just finished their seventh Palladium season — and this was their seventh U.S.A. trip. They reported that, besides increasing amounts of normal fan mail, they had frequent letters from husband-seekers asking for any spare proposals of marriage to the Bevs to be passed on.

ORIOLE Records bought the disc rights of the new Julian Slade musical, "Free As Air," hoping to

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# TOMMY STEELE'S FILM A GOLD MINE

## THE TATHAM DIARY Continues - - -

ites of many years' standing. A new number on a top-selling LP was a rarity.

It is significant that Sinatra, despite his high-flying parade of longplays throughout 1957, had comparatively little success with any "latest hit" on 78.

A check on the last Top Twenty for May shows the first three as Andy Williams's "Butterfly" (LONDON); "Yes, Tonight, Josephine," by Johnny Ray (PHILIPS); "Rock-a-Billy," by Guy Mitchell (PHILIPS).

Coming into the lists around this time were two of the most successful ballads of the year: "Mr. Wonderful" and "Around the World." Former was the title song from the Broadway show, starring Sammy Davis. It showed in the Top Ten via Peggy Lee (BRUNSWICK).

Latter was one of the last compositions by Victor Young, written for the Mike Todd screen epic, "Around the World In 80 Days." It was no surprise when versions

by Bing Crosby (BRUNSWICK) and Ronnie Hilton (HMV) came quickly into the sales lists; but what was a surprise (and a mighty pleasant one at that) was that Gracie Fields, on COLUMBIA, entered with them.

As Gracie also cut top quality longplays for DECCA and the WORLD RECORD CLUB, she may justifiably be gratified with her contribution to the disc world in 1957.

Late in May came a vivid illustration of the fact that success in "live" performance by no means assures success on record. In 1956, American film baritone Howard Keel had, after an indifferent start, completely won over a first-night London Palladium audience.

In May, 1957, he excelled even that performance with a brand of vocal versatility and showmanship which received all-round acclaim.

Yet, despite continued efforts, his disc sales remained comparatively poor. Even his Palladium successes failed to boost a Keel disc into Britain's Top Twenty.

## SON OF BING SINGS TOO



IN TOWN ARRIVED PRIVATE GARY CROSBY, aged 23... he was on leave from Germany where he is serving with the American Forces Network. Son of the great Bing, Gary's visit to London created tremendous excitement. He appeared on a Sunday Night at the London Palladium TV show and on a Val Parnell 'Spectacular'. He also had time to make one or two 'personal appearances' at the RECORD MIRROR offices where this excellent shot was taken by our cameraman, DEZO HOFFMANN. Gary proved as nice and as unassuming—almost shy, in fact—as his famous dad.—R.M. Picture.

Barry rock 'n' roll group was included in the highbrow Festival of Culture.

On July 2, American Mike Todd took London's Festival Gardens for an outside party after the British premiere of his movie, "Round The World In 80 Days." By all reports, it would have taken that amount of time to get around Todd's party properly.

Estimates of the cost ranged from £10,000 to £75,000; but there was no argument about the outlay being worth it, in terms of the lavish press coverage it provoked.

Film itself was shown at the Astoria (in London's Charing Cross Road), which had undergone lengthy, costly alterations to cope with the special Todd-A.O. screen process.



EVENT OF SHOW BUSINESS SIGNIFICANCE CAME WITH "THESE DANGEROUS YEARS," A FILM PRESENTED BY HERBERT WILCOX AND ANNA NEAGLE. STAR OF IT WAS EXUBERANT VOCALIST FRANKIE VAUGHAN. HE WON OVER THE CUSTOMERS BY (AS EXPECTED) HIS INFECTIOUS SINGING STYLE AND (NOT AS EXPECTED) HIS ACTING ABILITY.

So where's the significance? In this: that Frankie had been going the rounds of the disc and music-hall world for several years without our folk doing anything about him. One hoped that the mounting profits of "The Dangerous Years" and "The Tommy Steele Story" would prod our movie higher-ups out of their lethargy vis-a-vis our young singing personalities.



ALONG CAME ANOTHER TRAIN in the world of skiffle. It was "Last Train To San Fernando" by an emigré from the U.S.A., Johnny Duncan. Gathering sales of this disc led to the unique case of an American at the head of the best-selling British artistes.

With British stage musical "Salad Days" nearing its third birthday in the West End, your current diarist and weekly columnist went to review it.

Referring to the huge success of jokes that, to him, were stale and tame, he commented:

"Had the authors done the thing properly and included 'That was no lady, that was my wife,' the audience would no doubt have fallen into uncontrollable hysteria."

Many readers wrote in. Few agreed with this thumbs-down report.



BRIEF non-singing visit to London by top American thrush, Patii Page. At the time, her disc of "Old Cape Cod" was third in the U.S.A. sales lists. It came to Britain soon after, but when—after some weeks—it had failed to show in our lists, it was a reasonable conclusion that "Cod" had had its chips.

Bob Hope came over for the British premiere of his film "Beau James," being a biog of one-time New York mayor, Jimmy Walker.

Vocalist Frankie Brent quit the Freddy Bell outfit, cut a disc in Britain (for NIXA) before heading back for Philadelphia.



FOR THE SECOND YEAR RUNNING, THE DECCA LABEL PUT OUT A COLLECTIVE DISC TO AID THE NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION. ON IT: JOHNSTON BROS., BILLY COTTON, JIMMY YOUNG, MAX BYGRAVES, BEVERLEY SISTERS, TOMMY STEELE.

## JUNE

TRAIN TREND in skiffle music continued. It had been started by Mr. Donegan's nasal narrative about "Rock Island Line", and continued by the McDevitt "Freight Train". To this, in June, the Vipers added "Streamline Train" backed with "Railroad Steamboat". Tough, but no-one thought of staging an all-star skiffle session at Clapham Junction.

Many knew: that Norman Wisdom was starting on a new British movie, "Just My Luck", at Pinewood. Few knew: the real reason for knockabout Norman having told Hollywood what to do with the film he was to have made out there. It was that they wished him (a) to scrub round his celebrated gump suit; (b) to play a dude, monocled Englishman. Norman and Celluloid City didn't see eye-to-eye—about the monocle or anything else.

Pat Boone, the college boy with a voice as smooth as lacquer, waxed a song older than he. Boone born: 1935. "Love Letters In The Sand" born: 1931. This, at least, brought crooners into line with comics.

Relative failure of the intended new beat prompted the logical headline: CALYPSO COLLAPSO. Music moguls then tried Hawaiian rock; they had a job palming it off.

IMPORTS: Eddie Fisher (for the Palladium); Guy Mitchell (for one-nighters). EXPORT: Ronnie Ronalde (for Radio City). Ronalde report to the RECORD MIRROR said he found New York "as fantastic as ever". In his first hour or two after arrival, he (a) had a natter with Jack Dempsey; (b) visited a New Jersey swimming pool with

His DECCA disc, "White Sport Coat", entered the RM best-selling lists. Also, he was put out in variety: some dates as bill-topper, others in support of the McDevitt group. Box office returns justified the move.

FILM OF TOMMY STEELE'S LIFE WAS PREMIERED. CYNICS HAD "HAD A GO" AT THIS, ON GROUNDS OF TOMMY'S YOUTH. BUT HIS VITAL PERFORMANCE IN IT, PLUS THE FACT THAT IT SOON SHOWED ITS POWER TO DRAW THE CUSTOMERS, MADE MOST PEOPLE CYNICAL ABOUT THE CYNICS.

On release, the film was one of the biggest box-office winners in years. It was a 'long-queueer' everywhere. Anglo-Amalgamated, who made it, also made a fortune. Profits, £100,000 by September, may yet soar to £200,000. Tommy is now making picture ("The Duke Wore Jeans") for the same company—everybody's going to 'cop'—and 'cop' big.

Another example of "old favourites" returning to vogue came with the report that Mario Lanza (filming "Seven Hills of Rome" in Italy) was to feature the yesteryear tune, "Come Dance With Me". Also reported Lanza was doing take-offs of topline vocalists, Sinatra included.

Show biz aristocracy started, as usual, to gather at Blackpool for the season. Anne Shelton, Vic Oliver, Ruby Murray, Tommy Cooper, Hylda Baker headed the early contingent, with Tommy Steele among those to come.

In the West End, the American musicals "Fanny" and "Damn Yankees" found business something short of fabulous; the customers, however, started looking eagerly forward to the coming imports: "My Fair Lady," "Bells Are Ringing" and "Most Happy Fella." There was a long time to wait, but general opinion seemed the wait would be worth it.

Lonnie Donegan continued his skiffle assault on the West End by topping the bill at the Hippodrome. Also there was another London regular, Alma Cogan.

Another report by Ronnie Ronalde from New York. He was there for the stage show supporting the Marilyn Monroe-Sir Laurence Olivier movie, "The Prince and the Showgirl." He said the first week's takings exceeded 150,000 dollars. Ronnie enthused over the TV performance of comic/vocalist Jerry Lewis.

Max Bygraves and Joan Regan headed the new London Palladium show, "We're Having a Ball." Press reaction: mixed. Public re-



action: fine. Joan and Max duly planned a DECCA disc duo—on long-play.

Supporting act in the Palladium show due for quick rise up the ladder were three blondes with close-trimmed hair: The Kaye Sisters.

Yet probably the biggest cheer of the lot went to an American act, The Goofers. They played instruments, did comedy, performed acro-

batics, swung from trapezes, hopped about on polo sticks and generally did everything but dig a hole in the middle of Oxford Street.

Donald Peers cut his first record in England for three years—on the ORIOLE label. Numbers: "I Want You To Want Me" / "Start Movin'." The brook didn't babble quite so busily for this one, though Peers went on to do plenty of TV and variety work.

Russian State Variety clicked over well at Streatham Hill Theatre, in south-west London. SO LET'S HAVE ANOTHER DISC ROUND-UP:

Johnny Ray, on the week ending June 29, left the number one spot for number three with "Yes, Tonight Josephine"; but at least the gal was getting place money.

Pride of place went to Lonnie Donegan, with his double deal of "Gamblin' Man" and "Puttin' on

the Style." Close behind him, Mr. Presley was getting "All Shook Up" in no uncertain fashion.

Lying fourth was a musically unpretentious, but commercially successful disc, "Little Darlin'", by U.S.A. vocal group, the Diamonds. Whether its success owed anything to its fashionable dropping of the final g is a moot point.

Among those still around was that steady mover to end all steady movers, Russ Hamilton's "We Will Make Love." It was sixth. Welcome newcomers to the

lists were the young British group, The King Brothers, with their PARLOPHONE version of "White Sport Coat."

Around this time came the extremely human story of Don Rennie's nose. Don, a fine romantic tenor, had been handicapped on TV by a nose of undue prominence. Then, working under his car one day, the jack slipped. Don got face injuries, had to have an operation, and had the nose adjusted while he was about it. So this nose made a news feature.

## JULY

IN KEEPING WITH THE TREND FOR "OUTSIDERS" entering the disc world, the NIXA label signed Old Vic and film actor John Fraser to croon for them. Old Vic authorities were rumoured to be returning the compliment by presenting Lonnie Donegan and Pet Clark in "Romeo and Juliet."

In Brighton, Winnie Atwell headed a summer show at the Hippodrome. In Great Yar-

mouth, Tommy Trinder and Benny Hill did the same. In most seaside resorts summer seasons opened. In York, many eyes opened when the John



artificial waves at one end, and a waterfall at the other.

Elvis Presley, not content with "Love Me Tender", continued his onslaught on English grammar with "All Shook Up". But that didn't worry nobody; it sold good.

RECORD MIRROR HAD ITS THIRD BIRTHDAY, GAVE EVERY SIGN OF PROSPEROUS FUTURE. BOOM IN TEA SHARES.

Colin Grainger, international outside-left, booked for vocal variety tour. Arsenal reported trying to sign Little Richard.

Build-up of Terry Dene started.

# NO SECOND TO CHARLIE, SAYS DOROTHY

## THE TATHAM DIARY Continues - - -

Still reporting from America, Ronnie Ronalde said rock was still rolling out there. Evidence: frantic success of a show headed by Fred Freed and The Teenagers on Broadway.

High-power vocal impact on a new longplay from America by 17-stone Brazilian woman, Leny Everson. R.M. review said she was "a combination of Frankie Laine, Elvis Presley, Sophie Tucker, Ella Fitzgerald and Yma Sumac."

COLOURED girl from Cardiff, 20-year-old Shirley Bassey, hit West End variety in devastating



style at the London Hippodrome. Criticism came for the method of introducing her—disc jockey David Jacobs read out glowing press quotes from the stage. But her per-

formance was slick, compelling, high-powered.

UP IN BLACKPOOL THE "RECORD MIRROR" THREW A COCKTAIL PARTY FOR SUMMER SEASON ARTISTES. ANNE SHELTON, TOMMY STEELE, RUBY MURRAY, TOMMY COOPER, WILFRED PICKLES AND MANY OTHERS WERE THERE. GENERAL REACTION: "WHAT A WONDERFUL IDEA. IT'S THE ONLY CHANCE WE'VE HAD FOR A PROPER GET-TOGETHER BY ALL THE ARTISTES FROM ALL THE SHOWS."

Looking again at the sales lists, we find Presley's "All Shook Up" at the top at the end of July. What's more, the rock 'n' roller with the hep hips claimed second place also, with "Teddy Bear."

Lonnie Donegan's coupling of "Gamblin' Man" and "Puttin' On The Style" lay third. Fourth, still consistently adding to its sales, was Russ Hamilton's "We Will Make Love."

Russ, as composer of the song, was also raking in royalties through other discs of it: by Kathie Kay (H.M.V.), Johnny Southern (MELODISC), Jean Campbell (POLYDOR), Gerry Grant (EMBASSY).

## AUGUST

BACK FROM AMERICA CAME RONNIE RONALDE. By all reports he had done a fine job for British show business; "he really stopped the show" said folk who had seen him at Radio City. A "welcome back" party was attended by, among others, Shirley Bassey, Dickie Henderson, film star Betta St. John and tenor Peter Grant (her husband), Elizabeth Larner and husband Peter Page.

Wedding of blonde vocalist Joan Regan to Palladium box-office manager Harry Claff was ment to be hush-hush. It proved to be crush-crush. About 600 people turned up.

Impresario Jack Waller died, aged 72. His string of successes had included "No, No, Nanette," "Please Teacher," "Hit the Deck" and "Merrie England." More recently (in 1956) Waller had lost £30,000 on "Wild Grows the Heather," a British musical, but he more than recouped with the farce "Sailor, Beware"; it chalked up its 1,000th performance the week after he died.



JUMPING shrewdly on the skiffle bandwagon, showman Stanley Dale launched a touring show featuring The Vipers and vocalist-comic Jim Dale, and acting as a focal-point for a national skiffle competition. It proved a box-office winner.

Early in August came an incident which triggered off talk a-plenty. GUITAR - STRUMMING AMERICAN, CHARLIE GRACIE, WAS BOOKED FOR THE LONDON HIPPODROME. SO WAS BRITISH VOCALIST, DOROTHY SQUIRES. BUT WHEN MISS SQUIRES FOUND SHE WAS BEING BILLED BENEATH GRACIE, SHE WITHDREW. SHE ARGUED THAT HE WAS COMPARATIVELY UNKNOWN TO, AND UNTRIED BEFORE, BRITISH AUDIENCES, WHEREAS SHE HERSELF HAD A KNOWN RECORD AS A PERFORMER.

Result was that in her place they brought in a talented coloured singer, Fredye Marshall.

Both Charlie Gracie and Miss Marshall went over well. As for Dorothy Squires, she came out of it well, too.

Her stand gained her widespread

respect, particularly as people knew her as a colourful, high-powered performer. Also, she was due for a return visit to America's Las Vegas, at a super salary. Happily—throughout the controversy—Dorothy, Charlie and Fredye remained on the most friendly terms.

Long controversy among R.M. readers on the size of records.



Majority view: that old-type 78 rpm discs should be scrapped in favour of the light, unbreakable 45 rpm's. But some dealers reported:

"Though, of course, you get the same amount on each, many customers think, because the 45 is smaller, they're being done out of something."

Craze continued for juvenile disc singers.

Examples: Paul Anka (15), The Everly Brothers (18, 20), Tommy Sands (19), Terry Dene (18), Tommy Steele (20), and the Teenagers (all 17, except 14-year-old Frankie Lyman).

Conversely, the over-forties still offered many respected personalities: Crosby, Sinatra, Nat Cole, Tony Martin, Frankie Laine, Billy Eckstine, Billy Daniels.

In the West End, JOYCE BLAIR took over (temporarily) from Joan Heal in the lead of "Grab Me A Gondola," successful West End musical. Tough on her was the fact that though she showed herself a performer of talent, those behind the show seemed little inclined to encourage press coverage of her take-over.

Britain's Presley fans enthused warmly over his second film, "Loving You." General verdict on his showing wasn't too bad, either.



WELCOME NEWS: at a time when the closing of theatres was being frequently (and depressingly) reported, the Royalty, Chester, re-opened. Some £30,000 had been spent in doing it up. First week, with Jimmy Young topping, the box office reported a "take" of £1,800—best for years.

Louis Levy, Britain's top writer of film music, died at 62. His most recent scoring had been for "Dam Busters," "Good Companions,"



## FRANKIE'S FINEST YEAR

No more 'Dangerous Years' for FRANKIE VAUGHAN. He's come through to the top, just as he did in the story of his first film of that name. The personality singer, big-selling disc-artiste and, now, dramatic film actor, is set for an even bigger year in 1958 than he enjoyed in 1957. He crowned his year's achievements by appearing at the Royal Variety Performance at the London Palladium on November 18.

"Let's Be Happy." Millions of radio listeners remembered him for his "Music From the Movies" broadcasts.

Anna Russell, English emigré to America, came back to Britain to appear at the Edinburgh Festival.

She also did a London concert at the Albert Hall. It was packed. It deserved to be: Miss Russell's explosive, acid-voiced longhair de-bunking of all forms of singing had the audience catching leech-like on.

Following her variety successes at the London Hippodrome, and on her subsequent provincial tour with Charlie Gracie, Fredye Marshall was signed by A & R chief Norman Newell for the HMV label.

As August ended, there was a newcomer at the Top Ten pinnacle—"Diana," by the juvenile prodigy PAUL ANKA, on COLUMBIA. Pat Boone's "Love Letters In The Sand" was second. (You can't, unfortunately, shorten the title to "Love Letters"; there's another song called that.)

Mr. Presley was still having himself a bawl. His "All Shook Up" was at 4; "Teddy Bear" 7th; "Paralysed" 10th.

Charlie Gracie, helped by his variety appearances, had landed his "Wandering Eyes" (LONDON) at No. 11.

Fresh to the lists was a song, "Tammy." Through it film star Debbie Reynolds came into the Top Twenty. Her better half, Eddie Fisher, hadn't been in it for some time, but no resultant rift in the marital lute was reported.

In the longplay world, Mr. Presley was lording it. Sound-track of his film "Lovin' You" was No. 1. Tommy Steele was second, with the track of his film biography. Completing The Five were tracks of "King and I" and "Oklahoma!" followed by Sinatra's "Swingin' Affair" (note again the magic of the dropped g).

## SEPTEMBER

DESPITE THE EBBING fortunes of some types of variety bill it was often evident that a show with a novel slant could pay off handsomely.

Stanley Dale's skiffle package was an example; Max Wall's rock 'n roll show was another; and two more were "Disc Doubles" and "Personality Platters", put on by Leonard Urry and Cecil Buckingham.



They followed a theme similar to that of "Hollywood Doubles" a few years previously, i.e., with (in most cases) comparative "unknowns" portraying established stars. Public certainly seemed to like the formula.

Performing happily in "Disc Doubles" was experienced crooner Denny Dennis. He had a long catalogue of stage, band and disc successes to his

credit. He was now tunelessly acting as the "double" of Bing Crosby.

Tommy Steele, plus parents, moved from Bermondsey to a new, detached house in Catford, south-east London. At a "warming" party, this notice was on display:

HELLO! WELCOME TO THE SHINDIG! DON'T THINK ABOUT LEAVING EARLY. WE DON'T INTEND SLEEPING TONIGHT. DON'T THINK ABOUT WORK 'COS I AM DOING A RECORDING SESSION IN THE MORNING. LET'S SUFFER TOGETHER!



Terry Dene changed his group, bringing in the energetic Terry Kennedy "rock" group, which had made its mark in variety with Max Wall.

Another teen-ager started coming to the fore: 16-year-old Terry Wayne. He had kicked off well in the provinces, showing his capacity to bring fans rallying. He was given a disc contract on the COLUMBIA label.

Versatile Sinatra! He had evidently decided to show his mettle as a conductor, to add to his vocal and acting credits. In 1956, he had batonned a somewhat arty longplay, "Tone Poems of Colour". In September, 1957, he conducted the backing of a Peggy Lee LP, "The Man I Love".

Also, vocally, he announced his intention of trying his larynx at flamenco!

With longplays of stage shows chalking up sales, the Nixa label reported with elation that they had landed the disc rights of the West End revue, "Share My Lettuce".

Norman Wisdom faced another spell of unremitting work. Finishing his "Just My Luck" movie early in September, he went straight into rehearsal for ATV's "Norman Wisdom Show". Then followed provincial variety dates. Then active preparation for his lead rôle in the musical "Where's Charley?", due for a December opening at Manchester, a Christmas season in Glasgow, and a West End run at the Palace, starting February.



YOUNG MR. STEELE WOWED 'EM ON THE CONTINENT. IN DEMARK, SWEDEN, NORWAY, BELGIUM AND GERMANY, THE FANS CAME CROWDING. OFFERS FROM AS FAR AFIELD AS ICELAND AND SOUTH AFRICA WERE BEING CONSIDERED.

Top TV comic Tony Hancock took a turn on the variety stage. He drew good business at Finsbury Park Empire, in north London. Apex of his performance was his "cod" version of scenes from Shakespeare ("Britain's leading scriptwriter").

On a trip back to London came Jeannie Carson, one of the frequent instances of a British artiste who had to go to America to find maximum recognition.



IN NEW YORK, visiting RECORD MIRROR correspondent "A.H." met current disc "rage" Paul Anka. He reported: "No sudden freak, this young man. He's been studying piano since he was five."

Nancy Whiskey, singer on the Chas. McDevitt successful "Freight Train" disc, left the group. She went into variety as a solo act. Replacing her: Shirley Douglas, from Ireland.

Tommy Trinder, having broken box office records in his Great

CONT. ON PAGE 91

Fifty years ago he came from America to London, began his career here as a traveller for gramophone records, signed Harry Champion to make 'Boiled Beef and Carrots', became a millionaire and one of the most beloved characters – and philanthropists – this country has known

## SALUTE TO

WITH THE PRESENT BOOM in gramophone records it is fitting to pay tribute to Sir Louis Sterling, one of the mighty pioneers of this industry.

**YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE HEART.**

He certainly has. **SHAKE HANDS WITH A MILLIONAIRE.**

Not if he can help it. No sooner does he find he is in danger of being a millionaire than he gives it all away to charity. Money, after all, is only something millionaires don't need.

**I'M IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE.**

Sir Louis loves all mankind that are man kind.

**FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS.**

Even if they live Down Under or in America his friends are his neighbours.

If you want to rub shoulders with celebrities you attend a Mike Todd or Elsa Maxwell party.

If you want to meet people who matter—you get invited to a Sterling party.

What a collection!

Aneurin Bevan with Paul Bennett, V.C.

Jennie Lee with Wee Georgie Wood.

Ralph Bunche and Sir Leslie and Lady Nicholls.

Edith Summerskill and Douglas Furber.

Nigel Patrick and Hy Kraft.

Benno Moiseiwitsch and Harriet Cohen.

Louis Golding and Joy Shelton.

Lord Sholto Douglas and John Harding.

Sol Hurok and Eddie Fisher with Debbie Reynolds.

Dame Myra Hess and Phil Silvers.

Hannah Wernstein and Sir Andrew and Lady McFadyen.

Jack Hylton and Admiral Sir Charles Daniel.

This could go on for over a thousand names.

About four hundred will be at the Sterling home on Christmas Day.

Sir Louis has the gift of making friends and the art of keeping them.

He is beloved by many societies.



**THOSE WITH SHOW BUSINESS** associations include:

The Rats Revels Society. He is President.

The Grand Order of Water Rats. He is Companion.

The Saints and Sinners Club.

The Variety Club.

The Savage Club.

and every theatrical charity organisation.

He is also a prominent member of the exclusive Grand Street Association whose members are men from the East Side of New York who have risen to eminence on both sides of the Atlantic and form one of the most influential charity fellowships in the world.

It is indicative of Sir Louis Sterling's modesty that in Who's Who 1957 he only



# Sir Louis Sterling LL.D.

divulges that he was created a knight in 1937. That he is Chairman of two big companies and a director of one of the most important financial houses in the world. And that he has the degree of a Doctor of Literature.

He began collecting books from the date of his arrival in England from America on the 4th of February, 1904.

Having left school at an early age he compensated himself by reading. He had very little luggage when he first landed in this country, but he did bring thirty books with him. By the time he was 70 he had collected one of the finest private libraries in the world.



**FEELING** that he would like to make some acknowledgment to London for all the city had given him he presented his library to the London University. On Tuesday,

October 30, 1956, the Sterling Library was opened by the Chancellor of the University, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. The Chancellor was accompanied on the platform by the Vice-Chancellor (Dr. J. F. Lockwood), the Chairman of the Court (Sir Norman Birkett) and Sir Louis Sterling.

The Chairman of the Court made one of those marvellous speeches for which he is universally known, in the course of which he said:

*"It is over fifty years since a youth came from America to this great city of London. So far as this world's possessions, earthly possessions, were concerned, he had little, but he obtained a post as a commercial traveller with a gramophone company and he had that which is, in my judgment, beyond rubies, he had not merely a*

*love of books, but he had what the great Gibbon had, an invincible love of reading.*

*"And on his journeys upon his ordinary work as a commercial traveller, in the humblest way, he began to collect, here a little and there a little, and after fifty years, as fortune came to him, he built up the great library which he has presented to this university. He says that it cost him a small fortune, and, of course, those are comparative words; to you and me it would be a very big one, but there it is. And he has told us, and I end with this, he has told us the motives operating in his mind. It was in effect, a perfect illustration of one of the great sayings of the world, 'Freely ye have received, freely give'.*

*"It was from London that he acquired the opportunity to make any money*

*at all; it was from London that he had drawn his pleasures and fulfilled his ambitions, and it was to London, therefore, that he had desired to make some small return. In my own profession of the Law, the great Bacon said, in very memorable language, that those of the legal profession who had received countenance and profit from the exercise of their calling ought of duty, by way of amends, to be a help and an ornament thereunto. And the same principle is applied here by Sir Louis.*

*"From London I received, to London I will give.*

*"And, therefore, this afternoon in the name of the University, I am privileged to say to Sir Louis, that we hope he and Lady Sterling will long remember this day, and long remember, we hope, the satisfaction which*

*must come from the knowledge that this noble gift has given such wide and such manifest pleasure; and it must be to him a very great satisfaction to think that his name will for ever be linked with this University, and that on the day it was opened for the use of the public, it was opened by Her Majesty who presides here today."*

Then Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother said:

*"It is my most pleasant duty as Chancellor to express to Sir Louis Sterling the deep gratitude of the University for his noble gift.*

*"From their earliest days, universities have owed much to the private benefactor. Today, the State is the main source of their financial support but, paradoxically enough, the importance of private benefactions remains as great as ever. For there are some vital objects, in aid of which it is not legitimate to seek grants from public funds. Herein lies the real significance of Sir Louis Sterling's gift. Sir Norman Birkett has already described the great importance and value of the Sterling Library to the University, yet the University could not have acquired it otherwise than through private benefaction; and what gift could be more welcome to a university than one which so signally strengthens and augments the resources of the library?"*

*"The focal point and nerve centre of every institution of higher learning has traditionally been its library. So, on behalf of the whole University, which is proud to number you among its honorary graduates, I thank you, Sir Louis, for your kindness and generosity, and I now have very great pleasure in declaring the Sterling Library open."*



**AS HER MAJESTY** said "It is all too infrequently that we have the opportunity of expressing our gratitude to the benefactor in person."

The gramophone industry is grateful to Sir Louis, who did so much to build up, in particular, COLUMBIA records.

The link between the music hall and records goes back to when he signed the late Harry Champion to record "Boiled Beef and Carrots" and "I'm Henry the Eighth" as an exclusive which became a best seller. Since then his love for down-to-earth show people has grown.

To go back to Kipling—here is a man who can talk with crowds and keep his virtue, and walk with Kings and Queens and not lose the common touch. He has filled "the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run".

An abler pen than mine must be looked to for the full story of the two most loving, best loved and loveliest people in London "Louis and Cissy". A very gentle perfect knight with his Lady of enduring beauty.

W.G.W.

# RECORD MIRROR Investigator LEN CONLEY Scours Tin Pan Alley, Discovers What The Publishers Did Best With In 1957, Learns What They Hope To Do Even Better With In 1958.

**G**ENERALLY SPEAKING, OPTIMISM IS THE KEYNOTE IN TIN PAN ALLEY TODAY. Optimism about almost everything — sheet music sales, the return of the ballad, the prospects for 1958.

Ninety-nine per cent. of the publishers won't go into mourning if Rock and Roll finally expires in the coming twelve-month. Some of them have had to play along with the trend because, however they felt about it personally, they are, first and foremost, business men selling a commodity (i.e., songs). They felt they must supply that commodity to pick up some of the rewards for pandering to public favour—however fickle or temporary that may be.

Calypso has never been a problem because it never really got started. And Skiffle, while it may be very jolly in coffee bars and cellars, has meant very little as a source of income for the publishing world.

## THE SIGNS ARE ALL UP

**W**HAT ARE THE HOPES IN TIN PAN ALLEY FOR 1958? Almost unanimously it is for the return of the ballad to public favour. Signs that this is coming to pass are there for all to see, and everybody is hopeful that they will be confirmed. The publishers have often been accused of being primarily interested in profit rather than artistic merit. But on examination one finds this accusation unfair and unwarranted. There are the exceptions, of course, but they exist in every profession and business. But on the whole the songsmiths of Tin Pan Alley are concerned with quality. Almost to a man they welcome the return of the "good" song, the song with a strong melody line and an inspired lyric, instead of a strig of riffs and an inane collection of words that passes for a lyric.

## IT'S THE MELODY THAT COUNTS

**I**F THERE HAS BEEN A DECLINE IN SHEET MUSIC SALES IN 1957 THEN SOME OF THE BLAME MUST BE LAID AT THE DOOR OF THE R AND R CRAZE.

In almost every instance sheet sales of an R and R number have been negligible. The reason is obvious. It is music that cannot be satisfactorily reproduced by the amateur pianist. Where there is a successful melody number or musical novelty then sheet sales have risen to the hundred thousand mark or over.

The phenomenal *Around The World* was quoted again and again in answer to the question, "are sheet sales possible today on the enormous scale of the past?" *The sale of copies of this song has soared to the record figure of over a quarter of a million!*

This bears comparison with the million or more sheet sale hits of past years when one realises that nowadays there are many more publishers, and in consequence, many more songs to choose from. Also, because of the high-pressure plugging of records on radio and TV the life of a song is considerably shorter.

**THE BIG TREND:**

**RETURN OF THE BALLAD... SHEET-MUSIC SALES BACK TO NORMAL**

The general belief is, therefore, if 1958 heralds the return of the ballad, sheet music sales will improve enormously. This will be an event welcomed by everybody on grounds not only of sentiment but of hard cash. Because, however successful a record may become, the income from royalties is comparatively small against the profit accruing from the sale of sheet music.

## ALL PART OF THE GAMBLE

**T**HE WORLD OF POPULAR MUSIC HAS HAD ITS SHARE OF TRIBULATIONS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS IN 1957 JUST AS IT HAS HAD IN PAST YEARS AND NO DOUBT WILL ALSO HAVE IN THE YEARS TO COME.

Songs that "looked like winners" failed to come up to expectations, "sure-fire hits" turned out to be damp squibs. But this is all part of the gamble. Perhaps the very thing that makes the publishing of popular songs such an unpredictable and fascinating occupation.

What songs will find favour with the people in 1958?

That's the 64,000 dollar question and anybody who knows the answer gets the prize!

Perhaps the best summing-up of the prospects for popular music in 1958 was contained in the succinct remark of Box and Cox's Ben Nesbitt—"There's nothing wrong with the business that a hit song won't cure."



Our Tin Pan Alley Investigator: LEN CONLEY.

## No 'Bad Years' At This House

(FRANCIS, DAY, AND HUNTER)

**T**HE Charing Cross Road octopus, with more subsidiary and associate companies revolving round its orbit than satellites round a planet, would find it difficult to have a bad year. Aside from current hits, the income from its vast 'standards' library, almost as long as Charing Cross Road itself, would ensure a comfortable income and a safe buffer from the vicissitudes of present day publishing.

With all the caution of a company-director speaking to an income-tax inspector, quiet, shrewd exploitation manager, Bert Corri summed up 1957 as 'an excellent year.'

With two phenomenal hits like *Green Door* and *Lay Down Your Arms*, the wolf is still a long way from F.D.&H.s palatial doors. These songs became associated so closely in the public mind with Frankie Vaughan and Anne Shelton, they almost became their personal property. The Frankie Vaughan record was a 'fantastic seller'; the Anne Shelton record too hit the jackpot.

Another successful song was *Gonna Get Along Without You Now*, recorded by Patience and Prudence on the LONDON label.

Pat Boone's *Love Letters In The Sand*, from his first film 'Bernardine,' reached Number 2 both in the RECORD MIRROR'S Top Ten and sheet music polls. The company had 'quite a good seller', too, in *Dark Moon*, recorded by Tony Brent. They also published the score from the "Free As Air" London musical comedy and 'this looks like being a steady seller.'

On the whole sheet music sales were bigger than 1956, but they have diminished in comparison with past years. They hope 1958 will see the return of the ballad because 'ballads sell sheet music.'

## 'Standards' Successes

(B. FELDMAN AND CO.)

**F**ELDMANS HAS BEEN A GREAT AND REVERED NAME IN POPULAR SONG PUBLISHING SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY.

Some of the biggest hits of all time bear the imprint of this famous house. Latterly, however, it has not been so active in the popular music field. The company has been concentrating on building up their magnificent "standard" catalogue, which they claim is

selling better than ever. New arrangements by Tony Osborne, Bert Barnes, Harry Gold, Ray Davies and Keith Papworth, have given a modern look to their famous "Top Score" series.

Their albums, too, have been selling well. The Doris Day, Salute to Jolson and Skiffle albums all continue as steady sellers.

They did have one big winner in the "pop" song field during 1957: *ISLAND IN THE SUN*, title song from the 20th Century Fox film.

This got well in the R.M.'s Top Ten.

The company hopes to be more active in popular music in 1958. They have appointed a joint representative with Francis, Day and Hunter in New York, whose job it is to "seek out good songs." And they have three professional men in their London office all set to go to town on the exploitation of any new material they publish. So it looks as if the famous old name of Feldmans will once again mean something in the world of popular song publishing.

## Still The 'House Of Hits'

(LAWRENCE WRIGHT MUSIC CO.)

**"A VERY TOUGH YEAR." "THE GOING WAS HARDER THAN EVER." "SHEET**

**MUSIC SALES DROPPED CONSIDERABLY." THESE WERE THE COMMENTS OF SYD RICHARDSON WHEN I ASKED HIM WHAT SORT OF YEAR 1957 HAD BEEN FOR "THE HOUSE OF HITS," RUN BY THE "DADDY" OF DENMARK STREET, THE ONE AND ONLY LAWRENCE WRIGHT.**

Nevertheless, in spite of these adverse comments there were some considerable successes to record for the company during the year's progress. *A House With Love In It* made a respectable showing both on sheet sales and records. They also had considerable success with *Your Love Is My Love* (from the film 'Don't Knock The Rock'). Another song that did very well was the standard ballad *We'll Keep A Welcome*, sung so robustly by Harry Secombe. The Harry Secombe recording was well plugged on D.J. shows, and the sheet music sold consistently.

With a 'standard' catalogue containing such timeless hits as *Sunny Side Of The Street*, *Little White Lies*, *Memories Of You* and the inevitable *Dream Of Olwen*, together with many others of like quality too numerous to mention here, the Wright firm need have little concern about the vicissitudes of current 'pops.' A catalogue

(Continued on next page)

# Continuing The Tin Pan Alley Review Of The Year

## LAWRIE'S 'HOUSE WITH LOVE IN IT'

like this is a valuable property which keeps increasing in value with the years; 1957 was no exception. Sheet music sales of 'standards' flourished and the income from royalties was consistent and considerable.

The firm's policy for 1958 remains one of support for British songs and writers. "Whenever we are able to get good British songs we prefer them to American," said Bill Ward. "And if we do publish American numbers they must be of lasting value."

Lawrence Wright will continue to encourage British writers of promise. They cite composer Donald Phillips as an example. After the success of his Skyscraper Fantasy, they signed him on an exclusive contract.

### Personalities at a Trade Music Guild Ball



First music social event of the year. In February a lively and harmonious gathering assembled at the Empire Rooms, London, W., for the annual Hit Parade Ball organised by The Trade Music Guild. DOUGLAS JOHN, the "Record Mirror's" staff photographer was there to take pictures. Above, the "Daddy of Denmark Street" LAWRENCE WRIGHT is seen with his daughter LAWRETTE (on his right) and next to her, her fiancée PETER WILLIAMS, whom she married later in the year. On Lawrence's left is his other daughter, JEAN. Next to her is BILL WARD, general manager of the Lawrence Wright Music Publishing Co.

### Sheet Music:

#### Mixed Sales

(CAMPBELL, CONNELLY AND CO.)

"SHEET MUSIC SALES ON THE WHOLE WERE NOT SO GOOD IN 1957," WAS THE COMMENT OF EDDIE STANDING. "SOME NUMBERS, HOWEVER, DID WELL."

Significantly enough they were all ballads. Biggest hit of the year was Don't Forbid Me. The Pat Boone record 'went very big,' and the sheet music 'sold very well,' added Eddie.

Little Darlin' was another encouraging success. It was among the first three best selling records for over three months and it stayed in the Top Five for another three. Funny What A Kiss Can Do had good performances but only made a fair showing otherwise. Eddie pointed out that a study of the Top Ten shows that the trend is now definitely towards the ballad. He welcomes this because he believes it will increase sheet music sales.

The policy of the company for 1958 will be to publish good melodies and ballads in preference to Rock and Roll and Skiffle. They will continue to refurbish their popular 'Gig Series' of standard hits such as East Of The Sun, The Very Thought Of You, Moonlight On The Ganges with new and up-to-date arrangements. They are also looking forward to some big hits from the Columbia films due to be released in this country next year. In addition, they also have some Continental songs which they hope to publish throughout 1958.

THE A.B.C.D. of Tin Pan Alley, otherwise known as Campbell, Connelly associate companies, Aberach, Berry Music, Cinephonic and Dash, all paint an optimistic picture of progress during 1957.

TO SAY HE IS NOT AVERSE TO ROCK AND ROLL.

One can understand why when his firm published Bill Haley's Rock which sold over half-a-million records.

The company also entered three melody numbers in the Hit Song Stakes for 1957. Unfortunately, none of them passed the post as winners, though they did well in the running.

Marianne got to Number 6 in the sheet sales, and the King Brothers' recording on COLUMBIA 'did big'.

By You, By You, By You, was recorded by Jim Lowe on American DECCA. Although the song copies sold well the record 'did not sell as well as expected.' The company's hopes for Love Is A Golden Ring, a sentimental ballad number, were also not realised in full. They had two big records—Dave King on DECCA, and Frankie Laine on PHILIPS.—but the sheet sales only reached a moderate 40,000.

There are no complaints about the returns from the 'standards' library. Believe it or not, old hits like Cruising Down The River, The Fleet's In Port, and We'll All Go Riding On A Rainbow, still keep the cash registers tinkling merrily in Cinephonic's counting-house.

It is precisely this cash value of a good 'standard' library to any publishing firm that prompts Syd Coleman (in common with other publishers) to proclaim his policy for 1958 to be 'the seeking of good songs with lasting value.'

Syd is convinced that a really good ballad stands a better chance of becoming a "standard" than any other type of song.



Here are the leading lights of The Trade Music Guild Committee—the men who work so hard to help their colleagues in the business. Back row (left to right): HARRY NORTHCOTE (Chappell's); PERCY HUGHES (Paxton's); HARRY WISE (Feldman) and STAN DALE (Campbell Connelly).

Front row (left to right): PETER McLAWS (Lawrence Wright); GEORGE SEYMOUR (Dash); JACK WHITE (President of the Guild and the well-known band-leader); SYD RICHARDSON (Chairman of the Guild; the Lawrence Wright Music Publishing Co.) and BERT BECKSTORM (Secretary of the Guild and Trade Manager of the Peter Maurice Music Publishing Co.).

### 'Butterfly' Their Biggest

(ABERBACH LTD.)

FRANKLYN BOYD RATES 'BUTTERFLY' AS THE FIRM'S BIGGEST HIT OF THE YEAR. THIS GAINED THE DISTINCTION OF A DOUBLE-TOP FOR SHEET SALES AND RECORDS.

It reached number one in the polls on both counts.

Fabulous, unfortunately, did not live up to its title.

Although the Charlie Gracie recording did well the song only made a fair showing, with sheet sales disappointing.

Elvis Presley's Love Me Tender had a similar result—recording successful but sheet sales 'not too good.' To balance this Presley's Don't Be Cruel did 'very well indeed.'

In general, sheet sales were lower than past years, but the fine return from record and Performing Rights Society royalties balanced this to make it an average year.

In 1958 the firm will continue to put its money on 'the

novelty song that sells.' That includes Rock and Roll, Country and Western, or as Franklyn Boyd put it to me: 'any other odd type of song that is in the public favour.'

They will continue to publish Presley material either by Aberbach, or through their newly formed associate Belinda Music.

### Rely On R'n'R? No Fear!

(BERRY MUSIC CO.)

ROY BERRY HOLDS A COMPLETELY OPPOSITE VIEWPOINT TO THAT OF COLLEAGUE BOYD.

He has no intention of following the Rock and Roll or Skiffle craze. "It may be good for quick returns but it has no lasting value," is his view.

He will persist in publishing melody songs.

This policy seems to have paid off in 1957. He had a phenomenal hit in More. It was recorded by Perry Como, Jimmy Young and Robert Earl. The Jimmy Young recording, particularly, 'went big', and the sales of sheet music topped 100,000 copies. Yes, Tonight Josephine was another big number. It climbed to number one in our Top Ten and 10 in sheet sales.

Roy Berry puts the blame for the general depreciation in sheet music sales firmly at the door of Rock and Roll, because 'it is music that cannot be successfully interpreted on the piano.'

### Rock And Roll?

Yes, Please!

(CINEPHONIC MUSIC CO.)

TO ADD TO THE CONFLICT OF OPINION AMONG THE ASSOCIATES UP STEPS CINEPHONIC'S SYD COLEMAN

### Big Hopes Of Hits For 1958

(IRWIN DASH MUSIC CO.)

FIRE DOWN BELOW, ONE OF THE DASH PLUGS FOR 1957, DID NOT EXACTLY START ANY BIG FIRE UP ABOVE, ALTHOUGH IT KEPT THE OFFICE COMFORTABLY WARM IN SPIRIT BY THE WAY IT PROGRESSED.

It was recorded by Jerry Southern, Barbara Lyon, Victor Silvester and Shirley Bassey, reached a modest 16 in the sheet sellers list, the sales keeping 'a fairly good average.'

The company did better with Chapel of the Roses, a religious ballad, but it had the initial drawback of being banned by the B.B.C. Fortunately, the ban did not retard its popularity. The recording by Billy Ward and the Dominoes reached Number 8, and had 'a tremendous sale.' Malcolm Vaughan's H.M.V. recording of this number sold well, too.

The company has high hopes for Half Of My Heart, from the film "Jeanne Eagels." They are banking on this being a big

(Continued on Page 87)



## Seasonal Greetings

and

## Best Wishes To All Our Friends

from

RALPH BOOSEY : PAMELA JARVIS LAFLEUR & CAVENDISH

MUSIC COMPANIES

295 REGENT STREET, LONDON, W.1

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# Continuing The Tin Pan Alley Review Of The Year

## TOFF'S WIN THE IVOR NOVELLO AWARD

good songs. Harold hopes that 1958 will see the end of what he describes as 'amateur guitar performers,' also that the record companies will 'stop biting the hand that feeds them by their neglect of such fine artistes as Joan Regan, Vera Lynn, and Dickie Valentine.'

### British Triumphs

(THE NOEL GAY MUSIC CO.)

**T**HIS MUSIC COMPANY COULD ALMOST ADOPT THE UNION JACK AS THE FIRM'S STANDARD! Ever since the days when the late Noel Gay founded the firm there has been a British-ness about most of their published songs. This is all the more admirable when one realises that, in spite of owing nothing to American influence or idiom, most of them were big successes. One has only to recall titles like *The King's Horses, Around the Marble Arch* and *Run Rabbit Run*.

Unfortunately, since the death of the founder the company has not been so active in the 'pop' field. They have concentrated on building a 'standard' catalogue of light music and yesteryear successes like *You've Done Something To My Heart, La Vie En Rose* and *My Thanks To You*.

It was good news, therefore, to hear from Ralph Walker that the firm intend in the future to be more active in publishing popular music. They have already made a start this year with *Song of the Valley*. This was composed by two new British writers, Bob Griffiths and David Lane, has been recorded by Dorothy Squires and Robert Earl. Their next 'plug' number is *Happy Go Lucky Day* which they think is a 'natural' for pantomime.

In 1958 the company hopes to enter 'pop' music 'with a bang.' Accent will be on ballads, and the trade-mark, as usual, will be British.

### Skiffle Can Help

(SOUTHERN MUSIC CO.)

**A**LTHOUGH THEY CANNOT RELY ON SHEET MUSIC AS A BREAD-WINNER, SOUTHERNS HAVE FOUND THAT SALES HAVE INCREASED OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS.

Alan Crawford believes that with the decline in Rock and Roll, sheet sales stand a much better chance in the future. Originally enough he thinks that Skiffle could be a big factor in this improvement. The wholesale purchase of guitars by would-be skiffles all over the country could create a demand for the music

of current 'pops,' is another of his views.

Southern's big song of the year was *The Great Pretender*. This got into the best sellers Top Twenty on three occasions. Another winner was *Long Tall Sally*. Little Richard's recording on the LONDON label 'sold tremendously.'

Alan refused to forecast the firm's policy for 1958 because 'it's too far ahead.' But he assured me that 'Southern's always have more tunes in hand than they can use.' If they can find a trump from among their deckful of songs then '58 should be another year of progress on the Southern front.

### Award Winner

(THE DAVID TOFF MUSIC CO.)

**T**HE DAVID TOFF MUSIC COMPANY WILL ALWAYS LOOK ON 1957 AS A YEAR TO REMEMBER. IT HAD THE HONOUR OF WINNING THE IVOR NOVELLO AWARD FOR THE BEST PIECE OF FILM MUSIC OF THE YEAR.

This was Phillip Green's *March Hare*.

In the 'pop' field they had another winner in Doris Day's *Que Sera*, which soared to a

double-top both for record and sheet sales.

Russ Hamilton's *We Will Make Love*, a British song, also enjoyed considerable success. Another British tune, *A Letter To A Soldier*, by a new writer, Mrs. Gee Langdon, also 'went very well.' It got into the best seller lists and was recorded by Barbara Lyon on COLUMBIA and Terry Burton on PHILIPS.

David Toff holds some original and interesting views on sheet music sales. He believes they are a valuable barometer of public interest in a song. "Whenever a song gets into the Top Twenty there is an incentive to work harder to drive it still nearer to the top. It also make it easier to interest artistes and band-leaders into performing the number."

Although Dave does not

think we will ever get back to the million-sale song copies of the past 'a good song will still sell a lot of sheet music.' He cites *Around the World* in confirmation of this view.

His company's policy for the coming year remains unchanged—the publication of good quality tunes and the encouragement of British writers. They already have two new British songs in hand which they hope will be big hits by 1958. They are *Call To Arms*, by George James and Harry Cosker, and *Russ Hamilton's Wedding Ring*. As for *Rock and Roll*, David considers it 'a novelty with no future. 'The ballad never died,' he asserts, 'it was only overshadowed by R and R.'

And he welcomes its return to public favour.



### Pickwick's Pick Hits

(PICKWICK MUSIC)

**T**HERE WERE NO COMPLAINTS ABOUT 1957 FROM PICKWICK'S CYRIL SIMONS.

As publishers of one of the biggest hits of the year, *Garden Of Eden*, there was no reason why there should be. The song climbed to Number 1 both for record and sheet sales. Around 750,000 discs were sold.

Frankie Vaughan's platter alone accounted for half-a-million. *Knee Deep in the Blues* was another huge hit. The *Guy Mitchell* and *Tommy Steele* recordings 'sold sensationally.' The other songs which made a fair showing were *I Dreamed* and *Wisdom Of A Fool*. Both the music and recordings 'sold consistently well.'

Cyril Simons avers that sheet music sales have dropped over the past three or four years, but he says that given a big hit you can still sell 100,000 copies or more. Main income nowadays for Pickwick (as it is for most publishers) is from mechanicals and P.R.S. royalties, with sheet sales a useful second string. Cyril would welcome a return of big sheet sales because 'you make four times as much from sheet music than from record royalties.'

He claims to have many interesting things up his sleeve for 1958 but prefers to keep them there until he is ready to bring them into the light of day. General policy of the company will continue to be one of publishing good ballads, instrumentals, and novelties. And if any good commercial *Rock and Roll* numbers turn up they will also still be considered. They are also on the look-out for first-rate British songs for publication in the States.

The accent, in fact, is on 'good material' and if they can find another *Garden Of Eden* there will be 'no complaints' about 1958 either.

### Thank You, Diana

(ROBERT MELLIN Ltd.)

**A** lady named Diana has made 1957 a memorable year for the Robert Mellin office, and they hope she will continue to make everybody happy well into 1958.

As everybody who reads their RECORD MIRROR carefully is aware the song was written by the current American teenage sensation, 16-year-old Paul Anka.

The new boy wonder also recorded it vocally on COLUMBIA, and the disc soared to Number One in the record charts in three weeks flat. The sheet music, too, is selling fast—the astonishing figure of 15,000 copies being chalked up

for one week alone!

Mellin chief Len Edwards has high hopes too for two new Anka compositions, *Tell Me That You Love Me* and *That Will Be The Day*. Another song they believe will soon climb into top rating is *My Personal Possession*. The recording by Nat 'King' Cole is, to quote the company, 'selling fast.'

The company started the year well with two successful songs, *Only You* and *I'm Sorry*. Both were recorded by The Platters on the PYE-NIXA label and they sold very well.

There were also recordings of *Only You* by The Hill-toppers and Al Martino. Another big record seller was Bill Haley's *Razzle Dazzle*. Frank Sinatra did Robert Mellin the honour of including two of his songs, *My One And Only Love* and *Rain*, in his top selling long-player *This Is Sinatra*.

"A wonderful year record-wise"; was Len Edwards' enthusiastic comment on the year's business. Sheet sales were average, 'probably no better or no worse than any other publisher's.' He also confirmed that what the firm lost in income from the fall in current sheet sales as compared to the past, was more than made up from the royalties earned from the vast sale of recordings of their songs.

Both Robert Mellin and Len Edwards fervently proclaimed their satisfaction at the prospect of a ballad revival. They were both of the opinion that this can only lead to an increase in sheet music sales.

With some good songs 'in the bag' already showing signs of promise the confident prediction is that 1958 could be an even more successful year than its predecessor.

### Film Song Successes

(ROBBINS MUSIC CO.)

**R**OBBINS are in a unique position in relation to other publishers, because, being owned by M.G.M. and 20th Century Fox, about 90% of their output consists of film songs. Although, naturally enough, these come mainly from 20th Century and M.G.M. productions, they also publish songs from films made by independent British producers.

For instance, Frankie Vaughan's first film opus gave them the title song, *These Dangerous Years*, *Cold, Cold Shower* and *Isn't This a Lovely Evening*. The *Amethyst March* from the film "Yangtse Incident," was another British composition.

With this added advantage of having numbers already made popular by screening and recording by top artistes in the States before they reached England, 1957 added up to as prosperous a year as any other.

Highlight of the year's song output was *Friendly Persuasion*—the Pat Boone disc alone sold over a quarter of a million. Tommy Steele's first epic—*Rock With the Caveman*—250,000 records to date and still selling! The *Shiralee*, also written by Tommy, *The Girl Can't Help It*, and *Anastasia*, were both big selling

(Continued on Page 88)

## THE MARLYN MUSIC CO.

says: **THANK YOU**  
AND WISHES EVERYBODY  
**A Very**  
**Happy Christmas**  
AND  
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**New Year**

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# Continuing The Tin Pan Alley Review Of The Year

## 'GOOD COMPANIONS' ARE PETER MAURICE

hit by 1958. It has already been recorded by Jeff Chandler and The Four Aces.

Dash had an extremely successful year with their light music compositions Manton's Toyshop Ballet, and Frank Chacksfield's Breath Of Spring. Both sold well on record.

The firm's policy for 1958 is to keep on trying for good British songs, although Frank Patton confesses they are not easy to find.

### Good Songs Not

#### 'Forgotten'

(MILLS MUSIC)

**MILLS MUSIC CLAIM ONE OF THE YEAR'S OUTSTANDING HITS WITH A 3 YEAR OLD LEROY ANDERSON NUMBER FORGOTTEN DREAMS. THIS HAD NO FEWER THAN SEVEN RECORDINGS AND OVER 70,000 SHEET COPIES WERE SOLD AT 2s. 6d. A COPY!**

The Cyril Stapleton DECCA/LONDON recording was placed 48th in the American Top 60.

Another song that did nicely was Scarlet Ribbons, originally recorded by Jo Stafford seven years ago. It justified the confidence placed in it by climbing into the best-sellers. The Harry Belafonte and Ruby Murray recordings, on H.M.V. and COLUMBIA respectively, both hit it well. An Italian song, Man Who Played His Mandolino, made a satisfactory showing with sheet sales and performances, but somehow did not justify the hopes placed in it. Old Cape Cod, brought out in September, and recorded by Patti Page and Michael Holliday, is a number Mills' hope will make the grade.

Mills Music general manager Fred Jackson reported to me that sheet music sales in 1957 on all publications were 'very good indeed.' By the end of July they had risen 25 per cent. above the total amount sold for the whole of 1956.

The firm has a fine educational catalogue, a most valuable adjunct to the popular music publications.

Their Recorder Tutor alone has to date sold 50,000 copies to schools in this country, and has been reprinted in the States. The First Edition of the John Gaval Guitar Tutor (3,000 copies) which was brought out at the end of June, was completely sold out by August 1.

Another unique activity of Mills Music is its Summer School which was held this year at Canford, near Bourne-mouth. Concentration is on classical music, and leading players and conductors are invited to take part. Among this year's guests were pianist Sydney Harrison and conductor Boyd Neel.

In 1958 Mills intend to run the Summer School again. As far as their musical policy is concerned they will continue to publish 'good tunes with musical value.' They will be bringing out more Leroy Anderson and Johnny Dankworth 'instrumentals.' These composers, incidentally, are under contract to Mills.

In the classical field they will be publishing Ernst Toch's 4th Symphony. This composer was honoured recently with the Pulitzer prize for his 3rd Symphony. Mills will also be publishing the compositions of the young British composer of the Festival Ballet's 'Alice In Wonderland,' Joseph Horowitz.

### Skiffle Saw

#### Them Home

(BOX AND COX)

**BEN NESBITT SUMMED UP THE YEAR 1957 FOR BOX AND COX AS 'AVERAGE.'**

They had a big number in I'll Be Home.

The Pat Boone recording on LONDON sold around 750,000, and the sheet sales were 'satisfactory'. Box and Cox had a promising skiffle tune in Charlie McDevitt's and Nancy Whiskey's Green Back Dollar. This was recorded on ORIOLE, and although it 'did quite well' did not achieve the success as the same duo's Freight Train. Two Rock-a-Billy songs by Johnny Duncan, Press On, and Johnny's Blue Yodel, did a fair trade on the E.P. recording. Macushla Mine, a ballad, recorded by Ruby Murray, jogged along comfortably without lighting any beacons.

Ben believes there is a turn back to the ballad, and he welcomes this. He cites their big 1953 hit Golden Coach, which sold over 200,000 copies (at 2s. a time) as an indication that it is only the good ballad song that can hit the large sheet sales.

For 1958 Box and Cox will indulge in a little fortune-telling. Their policy in a brief sentence is 'basically to try and keep up with the trends before they arrive'.



VERA LYNN did Mills Music proud with her rendering of their 'Faithful Hussar' on the DECCA label. It earned a 5-star rating from our reviewer Don Player.

### Sheet Music

#### Still Big

(PETER MAURICE MUSIC PUBLISHING CO.)

**PETER MAURICE HAD THEIR BIG HIT OF THE YEAR IN AUTUMN SERENADE. THIS SOLD WELL OVER 100,000 COPIES, IS STILL SELLING.**

I'd Give You The World, another ballad number, has 'gone steadily,' and the firm had 'quite a good hit' in Good Companions. Their albums, too, are very popular; the Tommy Steele album, especially, is a consistent seller.

Live-wire Jimmy Phillips believe that "sheet music is not a lost cause."

He told me: "Perhaps we will never reach the big figures of the past because the public have a wider range of numbers to choose from. Nevertheless, sheet sales are still an important part of any popular publishing firm's income."

Jimmy claims that more youngsters are learning the piano than ever before. "In fact," he says, "the piano-makers cannot turn out the pianos fast enough. And these parlour-pianists are the sheet buyers."

In support of this he cites the big sale of the Peter Maurice Piano Tutor.

For 1958 the company will keep providing the public with 'lovely songs with good lyrics.'

Jimmy sums up his outlook in these words. "I'm an optimist. I don't believe the public change; I think they will always accept something if it is good." His statements were heartily endorsed by Jimmy's brother, Bill, whose quiet optimism has seldom failed to prove justified.

### They Had

#### A Big Year

(BRON ASSOCIATED PUBLISHERS LTD.)

**BRON'S DENIS BERGER WAS ALL ENTHUSIASM WHEN I ASKED HIM TO COMMENT ON THE FIRM'S RECORD FOR 1957.**

"An excellent year. We've been out of the best sellers only three or four weeks at the most."

He lists Adoration Waltz as their top hit of the year. The David Whitfield recording 'sold very well,' reaching number 8 in our Top Ten. And sheet sales too were 'very good.'

With All My Heart, a ballad number, had no fewer than seven recordings. Petula Clark (NIXA) led the field, got into the best sellers. Mangos, a calypso tune, recorded by Rosemary Clooney, clicked with sheet sales, but the record did not do so well.

Two more songs which Bron have been working on and were very hopeful about are Wandering Eyes, recorded by Frankie Vaughan, and Charlie

Gracie. And the new Totchard Evans waltz song Everything, which David Whitfield has recorded on DECCA.

Denis Berger admits that sheet sales today bear no comparison with the past, but at the same time insists that if you get 'THE' song you can still attract lots of buyers.

For 1958, Bron promise some 'wonderful material' coming from the States, also some 'very good' British numbers. One, in particular, they think will be a smash hit.

Final comment on prospects for 1958. "We hope it is as good a year as 1957—we have no grumbles."

### 'Jingles'

#### Successes

(JOHN FIELDS MUSIC CO.)

**SCADIE'S SHAWL WAS THE NUMBER RATED BY HAROLD FIELDS AS THE FIRM'S BIG SUCCESS OF 1957.**

This is an instrumental composition by the writers of ZAMBESI. It got 'big performances,' was recorded on DECCA by Bob Sharples, in the States by Jan August, Bob Bergman and Laurence Welk.

The sheet music sold handsomely but, remarkably enough, better in America than in this country.

You, Me and Us, recorded by Alma Cogan on H.M.V., also had fair success. It made the best sellers list both on sheet and record. A novelty number Chin Cher Rin Chee (interpreted for me as being 'a South African flower') made a disappointing showing in Britain, but in America was a huge success. The Perry Como R.C.A. VICTOR recording sold around 350,000. It was also used as a big production number on television.

The John Fields Company, through its associate King Jingles, is probably the leading firm in the production of advertising jingles. Murray-mints, which won them the NEWS CHRONICLE award both in '56 and '57, Omo, Batchelors Peas, Andrews Liver Salts and Maltesers, are just a few of the jingles which have become nationally known.

Although Harold Fields affirms that record royalties are the main income, 'sheet sales cannot be ignored.' He points out that with gramophone royalties still the same as pre-war, 'a big sheet seller is the only chance of making a profit.'

The firm's policy for 1958 is to continue to ignore Rock and Roll and to keep on publishing

(Continued on page 86)



### "MY SON, MY SON!"

'OH MEIN PAPA' EDDIE CALVERT takes delivery of 'MY SON, MY SON' . . . he and his wife JOSIE are seen leaving the London Clinic (a nurse peeps in the car to wish the Calverts the best of luck) with their bundle of joy, GILBERT EDWARD JACK CALVERT. The Blessed Event took place in January.

Happy Xmas

KEITH PROWSE

MUSIC PUBLISHING CO. LTD.

90, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1. HYDe Park 6000

Happy New Year

# Concluding The Tin Pan Alley Review Of The Year

# MARLYN MUSIC GOES AROUND AND AROUND

records by Little Richard and Pat Boone.

Encouraging feature of Robbins' activities is the providing of British songs for Fox and M.G.M. European productions. "Sea Wife" is a current example—it contained Tolchard Evans' "I'll Find You," which was recorded on the sound track by David Whitfield. Alan Holmes claims that this gives a big filip to British songwriters, because it is unusual for American-made films to contain British songs.

The firm is fortunate too in owning a powerful standard catalogue containing such all-time song classics as Blue Moon, Deep Purple, Laura, and Singing in the Rain, apart from many of the Duke Ellington and Stan Kenton compositions, Glenn Miller and Judy Garland favourites. All go to make up a star-studded list which ensures that the Robbins bread is liberally buttered by the consistent income from music sales and royalties.

Tutors also have a good sale and help to swell the profits total. Harry James, Gene Krupa, and Benny Goodman, head the list of all-the-year-round-sale instruction books.

For 1958 Robbins are expecting some very important pictures containing, interestingly enough, mostly ballad numbers. Alan pronounces it his intention for the coming year to 'stick with ballads.' Not only because he believes they are coming back in a big way, but because they score all round—for sheet sales, performance, and the possibility of their becoming standards.

African radio. The recording by Ted Heath "sold very well," I was told.

Sheet sales during the year were, on the whole, disappointing. But this was adequately compensated for by a steady return from record royalties.

Burlington have an interesting policy laid down for the coming year. Their success with "Greensleeves" and "I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen" has encouraged them to attempt to stimulate public interest in folk tunes. They hope to build up a standard library of these traditional ballads.

They have made a start with an album of 10 Scottish songs which is to be issued this month. All the songs have been recorded on the BELTUNA label. The discs will be released in conjunction with the album. If this is successful they hope to follow it up with albums of English and Irish traditional.

For the rest, the intention is to 'follow the market.' They claim they are 'always willing to experiment.' 'In fact if 1958 sees the advent of space music we'll print that too!'



Seasonal Greetings and A RECORD NEW YEAR from THE SOUTHERN GROUP OF COMPANIES

SOUTHERN MUSIC PUBLISHING CO. LTD.  
LATIN-AMERICAN MUSIC PUBLISHING CO. LTD.  
LIBER-SOUTHERN LTD.  
IVAN MOGULL MUSIC LTD.

8, Denmark Street, London, W.C.2

## Christmas Greetings

from LILLIAN AZA

The BERT AZA AGENCY, 2 Vale Close, London, W.9.

### Good Disc 'Returns'

BURLINGTON MUSIC CO.

BURLINGTON had a mixed bag of titles for 1957. It added up to a comfortable success for the year. Two instrumentals, a couple of traditional ballads and a rock and roll number, all had top-selling recordings by famous artists.

Biggest hit of the bunch was Tutti Frutti. This had recordings by a trio of stars — Pat Boone, Elvis Presley and Little Richard. The Little Richard disc was a best seller, but sheet sales were negligible.

Donkey Cart, an instrumental, written by Buddy Kaye and Irwin Dash, was recorded by Frank Chacksfield, released in the States on LONDON label.

The Beverley Sisters hit the jackpot with Greensleeves, an old English traditional, with new lyrics written by the girls themselves. Their recording sold over 700,000 copies in America, although remarkably enough in England the sale was modest at 100,000. The Bevs. featured it on their recent visit to the States; it proved one of the most popular numbers in their repertoire.

Another traditional (Irish this time), I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen, was recorded by Slim Whitman and climbed to number 7 in the Best Sellers. Madagascar, another instrumental, topped the poll in a write-a-tune contest on South

ALL SHOOK UP — TEDDY BEAR — PARTY — PARALYSED

CYRIL BAKER & AL LESLIE

OF

BELINDA (LONDON) LTD

WITH

FRANKLYN BOYD

OF

ABERBACH (LONDON) LTD

JOIN TOGETHER TO WISH YOU

A

Happy Christmas

and

A Prosperous New Year

142 CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, W.C.2

COVENT GARDEN 0584/5

REMEMBER YOU'RE MINE — BLUE SUEDE SHOES

### Happy Harry & Co.

(MARLYN MUSIC CO.)

ONE of our smaller but hardest-working publishing firms is Marlyn Music Co. Home base is 41, New Bond Street. The boss: dark, bustling Harry Lewis, popular husband of Forcés' Sweetheart, Vera Lynn.

Harry's helpers are plugger Roger Welch and indispensable secretary, Rae Aronow.

Marlyn, four years old this year, specialises in light instrumentals. Biggest ever hit: "The Lazy Gondolier," via Mantovani's mighty money-making disc.

This year's main successes have included two instru-

mentals and also two songs that Vera has waxed for DECCA. The instrumentals were "Baffi" (four recordings) and "Ballet of Madeira." Vera's songs: "The One Beside You" and, her latest, "If I Were You." Marlyn look forward to '58 and more instrumental hits. And Harry won't grumble if he finds some hit songs, too!

Harry does his work quietly, effectively. No fuss, no shouting from the rooftops, but he and his music go round and round just the same.

Everyone at Marlyn is happy. The search for hits and encouragement of British composers — "one of these days someone all-British will come along with a hit that'll stagger the world"—goes on steadily but surely. Harry and his merry men are confident of the future and Marlyn will do just as much as the others to keep the good old British Music Flag flying.

CONFIDENTIALLY—  
To wish all my friends

A Very Happy Christmas

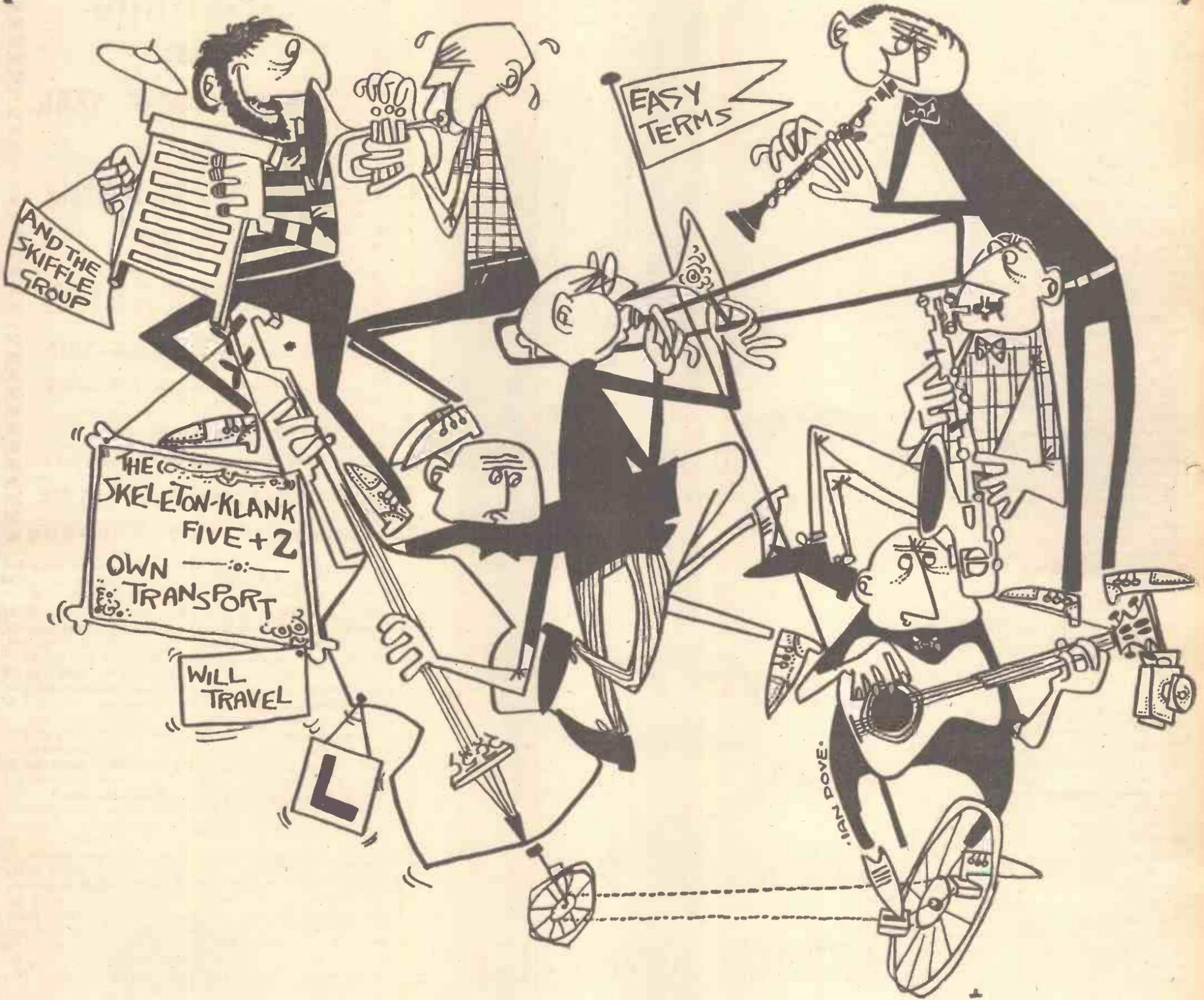
REG DIXON

PANTOMIME :

HIPPODROME THEATRE, BIRMINGHAM

# HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THIS?

Invent a title for this brilliant cartoon, by Ian Dove, on the current trend in musical crazes. For what the Editor of the Record Mirror and his staff consider the most appropriate and amusing entry, a prize of three guineas will be awarded. The next half-dozen runners-up will receive prizes of half a guinea. Send your entries to 'Cartoon Caption', The Record Mirror, 116 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1. Closing date: Monday, February 10, 1958.



## GREETINGS

To Everyone at 'HOME' and 'AROUND THE WORLD'

Many thanks to customers during 1957 and thanks in advance to all those whom we hope will take advantage of our SUPER BY RETURN POSTAL SERVICE DURING 1958.

GREETINGS and THANKS to "RECORD MIRROR" for their help and co-operation during 1957.

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*Greetings* for  
**CHRISTMAS**  
 and  
**THE NEW YEAR**  
 From  
**BENNY HILL**

## FRANKIE VAUGHAN

wishes all his fan club members

A Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year

HE LOOKS FORWARD TO MEETING THEM

ALL AGAIN IN 1958

A 'Longhair' Is Asked To Write The Profile Of A Voice, And Sums Up:

SARAH SPARKLES



THE Editor of Philips Music Herald has invited me to write the profile of a voice . . . the voice of a girl named Sarah Vaughan. The profile was to reflect my own personal opinions, which made it a little complicated at first sight for someone who's known among his friends as a highbrow. In all fairness, therefore, I must start off by candidly admitting that I know little or nothing about the realms of art in which Miss Vaughan undoubtedly reigns as a young and glamorous Cleopatra.

My first impression on examining the photo which the Editor had forwarded me with the assignment was that she must be extraordinarily attractive in the flesh. A dark girl with a naughty smile, whose tantalizing eyes sparkle with fun, realism and dreams almost at one and the same time.

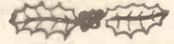


I BEG your pardon, I seem to be getting out of the groove already. My assignment was not to write a profile of a nice girl, but of a nice voice. I listened very carefully to it by means of an LP-programme of songs, including such titles as "Nice Work If You Can Get It", "Black Coffee", "I Cried For You", "Just Friends", "You're Mine", "You Taught Me To Love Again", "The Nearness Of You", "Come Rain Come Shine", "Ooh, What-cha Doin' To Me", and "As You Desire". The record reached me with the photograph. Quite a treat for a longhair. Be that as it may, all these songs sounded as if they'd been written exclusively for Miss Vaughan. Hers is a tailor-made and not a ready-made voice. It's almost as if she creeps in between the lines of a song and finds a wealth of hidden treasure there.



AN exotic bird that voice. Of course, I'm well aware that critics have frequently compared songstresses with birds throughout the ages. Isn't a paradise bird the most appropriate simile in this case? A bird living amidst a profusion of fascinating flowers, scents and warm green leaves. And there between those leaves this dartling bird can play its coquettish game of hide-and-seek, turning the heads of all the males of the species and bringing them to the verge of despair.

I can hear all these things in that voice: teasing, a streak of cruelty, the thrill of young persons' experience when they first realise that they're alive and healthy. There's a love for things beautiful, rather expensive things I fear, in that voice, coupled with the ability to be proud and stubborn in a girlish fashion. There's surrender in that voice too . . . surrender to moods which never last long.



QUITE apart from all these endearing psychological factors, one can't help being struck by her technique. Her voice seems to soar high into the air, very rapidly and relaxed, only to descend almost as rapidly again. It's clear and full of vitality—there's something in it that reminds me a little of Josephine Baker's voice way back in the Twenties—and, what's even more important, she knows how to exploit the natural flexibility of her voice to the full.

It was possibly an error on the part of the Editor when he sent me that photograph. After all, longhairs are human too. In fact, I find it extremely difficult to dissociate Miss Vaughan's picture from her voice.

It would certainly be fun to see and hear her in person. If ever a suitable opportunity presents itself, my ears will certainly be wide open . . . and my eyes too, for that matter! L.H.P.



"Kusti Bok Ti Kusti Salla Ava"

DANNY PURCHES



DOUGLAS JOHN & DEZO HOFFMANN  
THE Record Mirror CAMERAMEN

Wish Their Many Friends In Show Business  
The Compliments of the Season  
And Look Forward To A Year Of Happy Co-operation

This magnificent portrait of "The Divine Sarah," subject of our intriguing article about the great American singer, has been reproduced by permission of the Editor of PHILIPS HERALD. Hundreds of readers had asked us for a special story and picture on Sarah Vaughan—it was promised for the RECORD MIRROR'S Xmas and New Year Edition. Promise fulfilled — and we hope you like the picture and the article.

# THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF JUDY

## THE TATHAM DIARY Continues - - -

Yarmouth summer season, left for South Africa. Controversy in the press out there, after reports that Tommy had refused to appear in the ship's concert because some artistes, travelling third class, had been banned from rehearsing in the first class gymnasium.

Frankie (Laine) and Johnnie (Ray) did a disc duet on the PHILIPS label. Numbers: "Good Evening, Friends"/"Up Above My Head." It had little impact on the Top Twenty.

Nancy Whiskey's solo variety debut, at the London Metropolitan, was pleasant without being sensational. Fine impression was made by the John Barry Seven, on the same bill.

Paul Anka's "Diana" was still flying high at No. 1 at the end of the month, followed by Boone's "Love Letters, etc." and Duncan's "Last Train To San Fernando." Charlie Gracie's "Wandering Eyes" had climbed to 4th. Debbie Reynolds's "Tammy" was 6th. Russ Hamilton's "We Will Make Love" had at last left the Top Twenty, but his successor, "Wedding Ring", was starting to rake in the sales. Sinatra's "Swingin' Affair" was the top-selling LP, followed by the tracks of the Presley and Steele films. "King and I" and "Oklahoma!" were still established as steady, month-after-month money-spinners.



## Christmas and

## New Year

## Greetings

from

## ME AND MY SHADOW



Marie", with the Tony Osborne orchestra, and the happily-blending voices of Elizabeth Larnier and Andy Cole. Excitement among Britain's Lanza fans, when they heard the tenor was to visit Britain for the Royal Variety show, and to appear on the London Palladium TV show.



COLIN HICKS, 16-year-old brother of Tommy Steele, cut his first disc for the Nixa label. He also started a variety tour (with fellow rock 'n' roller Marty Wilde) at Sunderland Empire—where Tommy had started a year before.

Busy week for Russ Hamilton started October 21. He played a week at Chiswick Empire (creating a favourable impression) and made tracks for an LP in urgent demand in America.

Laurie London, from the East End, aged 13, made his debut on the PARLOPHONE label, quickly got into the Top Twenty.

Irish tenor, Josef Locke, returned to London variety for the first time in two years. He gave an exuberant, gloriously "hammy" display at the Metropolitan.

Count Basie came back, and started renewing his British success with a concert series.

New top in the sales charts: vocal group, The Crickets, singing "That'll Be The Day" on CORAL. Presley wasn't letting up at all; he had discs at 2, 11 and 18.

Good effort by British vocalist John Dale, who shot to seventh with "Be My Girl", on PARLOPHONE.

Frankie Vaughan was still flying high. With his "Man On Fire" still at No. 6, his "Got To Have Money In The Bank, Frank" came from nowhere to 17th. This title proceeded to give the R.M. staff writer's cramp, Frank.

LATE ADDITIONS TO DIARY 'STOP-PRESSED' ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE

## OCTOBER

EARLY THIS MONTH, the R.M.'s Green Man made a worthy contender for the Pun of the Year. Asked whether it was possible to get an LP of "The Bartered Bride" from the PHILIPS label, he answered, "If you ring 'em up, you'll soon find out on which side your bride is bartered."



Sir Laurence Olivier, who had packed out the Royal Court Theatre, London, in "The Entertainer" in a limited season some months previously, proceeded to do the same business when the show was revived at the larger Palace Theatre, in the heart of the West End. It was revealed that Sir Larry, to get atmosphere for his part as a struggling comic, had spent evenings at Collins Music Hall, in North London.

Garrett, came to Britain for TV and variety, opened to good effect at Chiswick Empire, West London.

Alma Cogan, after many West End appearances, went out for a week in the suburbs at Finsbury Park Empire. Told "Annie Get Your Gun" had been revived successfully in America, she confessed she had for long nursed an ambition to play the lead in it.

MOST WELCOMED VISITOR OF THE YEAR WAS JUDY GARLAND. STARTING A WEST END SEASON AT THE DOMINION IN MID-

Gag writers, who previously had worked out quips on the subject of Sabrina, were inspired anew by the visit to Britain of America's frontal assault, Jayne Mansfield.

At Finsbury Park Empire, North London, on a bill headed by Jimmy Wheeler, a newcomer to the variety scene scored a hit. He was 22-year-old Welshman, Ric Richards, who depped one night for Don Fox at short notice. He certainly showed contrast, including both "rock" and opera in his act.

Terry Dene became the latest British youngster to go into movies. He started filming in "Golden Disc" at Walton Studios.

Despite the set-back caused in show business by the closing down of THE PERFORMER, long-established



trade paper, the variety profession remained spirited. At the 51st annual conference of the Variety Artists' Federation, one resolution said:

"The conference is invited to note on the brighter side, that the Chester Royalty is now completely rebuilt; that the Birmingham Theatre Royal is to be rebuilt; that a new 500-seater will be opened in Middlesbrough; that a new theatre is scheduled for Great Yarmouth; also 2,000-seater for Torquay; the reopening of the Theatre Royal, Portsmouth; and Theatre Royal, Barnsley; with wonderful business being done in variety at a theatre whose usual fare was films, i.e., The New Theatre, Boston. All these examples need encouraging publicity."

Larry ("Jolson Story") Parks and his wife, comedienne Betty



PEGGY LEE made many records during the year; all sold well, but only one succeeded in getting into our Top Twenty—this was 'Mr. Wonderful', a truly wonderful rendition in the grand Peggy Lee manner of a grand song.

OCTOBER, SHE GAINED SO MUCH APPLAUSE, IT NEARLY DROWNED HER SINGING.

Joke of the year (and a true one at that!) came at the press reception for her. A red-coated flunkey was announcing the arrivals. Visiting conductor Gordon Jenkins whispered an enquiry as to where the men's room was. The flunkey acting automatically, cried out: "MR. MENSROOM!"

Rumour says that, from then on, that's how Judy introduced Gordon to everyone.

Judy Garland also did a disc session in Britain—at the EMI studios, in London. Session went smoothly, once an evening search for chewing gum in the St. John's Wood area had unearthed two packets.

TOMMY STEELE'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY IN SHOW BUSINESS WAS MARKED BY A BIG BBC TV PROGRAMME RECAPITULATING THE EVENTS OF THAT YEAR. TOMMY'S PERFORMANCE GREATLY ENHANCED HIS REPUTATION — ESPECIALLY SOME NEAT, RELAXED SONG AND DANCE STUFF WITH RUBY MURRAY.

Russ Hamilton went on a short visit to America, doing well on the Patti Page TV show. Strangely, his first disc had had out there the reverse effect it had had in Britain. "We Will Make Love" made little impact in the States; but the other side, "Rainbow", went high in the charts!

Fred Russell, known to the whole of show business as "The First Gentleman of Variety", died a week after his 95th birthday.

Impresario Harold Fielding put

out a touring show of the calibre to combat the problem of empty seats. Called "The Big Beat", it included Mike Holliday, Nancy Whiskey, Desmond ("Penny Whistle") Lane, Mike and Bernie Winters and the John Barry Seven.

Norman Newell, EMI artistes' chief, started putting the "good old" musicals on LP. His first were "New Moon" and "Rose

SO, AFTER HAVING SEEN THIS ANNUAL, HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY WANT TO MISS THE WEEKLY? FILL IN THIS COUPON RIGHT NOW.

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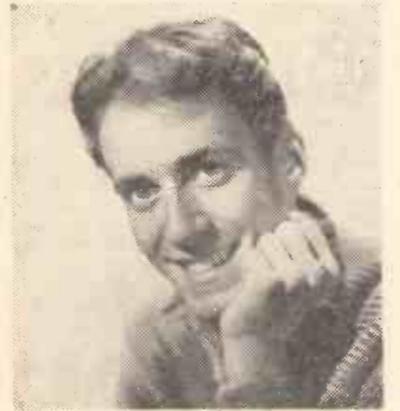


# KATHIE KAY

THE FIRESIDE GIRL

Wishes all her friends Health, Wealth and Happiness in the New Year

# Greetings FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR



FROM

# JOHN BARRY AND THE SEVEN

(Parlophone Records)

**A MERRY CHRISTMAS**  
to YOU ALL from BOTH OF US!



**TEDDY JOHNSON  
and PEARL CARR**

**HAPPY  
HOLLIDAY**



from

**MICHAEL**

Wishing All In  
Show Business  
And The Fans Who Support It



A Happy Christmas for 1957

and

A Prosperous New Year  
for 1958

WITH THANKS TO ALL

**DON FOX**

RECORD MIRROR'S VOCAL VIEWS COLUMNIST **DICK TATHAM**

Wishes Friends, Singing and Non-Singing

**A Melodious Christmas & Harmonious New Year**

Christmas  
Greetings  
from the  
**LYN  
DUTTON**  
AGENCY

and the  
artists it has  
pleasure in  
representing

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- ACKER BILK'S PARAMOUNT JAZZ BAND
- DICKIE BISHOP & HIS SIDE KICKS
- SANDY BROWN'S JAZZ BAND
- KEN COLYER'S JAZZMEN
- LONNIE DONEGAN & HIS SKIFFLE GROUP
- JOHNNY DUNCAN WITH THE BLUE GRASS BOYS
- CYNTHIA LANAGAN
- TERRY LIGHTFOOT'S JAZZMEN
- HUMPHREY LYTTTELTON & HIS BAND
- MIKE MCKENZIE
- THE MERSEYSIPPI JAZZ BAND
- JOHNNY PARKER & HIS BAND
- NEVA RAPHAELLO
- ALEX WELSH & HIS BAND
- YOLANDA

LYN DUTTON AGENCY, 8 Gt. Chapel St., London W.1  
Telephone: GERrard 7494

Season's  
Greetings

from

George and  
Alfred Black

22 HALF MOON ST., LONDON, W.1.

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Variety & Cinema  
Agency Ltd.  
wish you all a  
**Happy**  
**Christmas**  
and a  
**Prosperous**  
**New Year**

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Television's  
Sweet Songstress  
Season's  
Greetings to All

**T.D.** wishes all his  
friends in show business  
a very happy Christmas and all  
the Best for the New Year

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**STAN  
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sends

**Best Wishes**  
for  
**Christmas**  
and the  
**New Year**  
to

ALL HIS FRIENDS  
in  
**"THE PROFESSION"**

# "STRIKE UP THE BAND" Old Egypt Style!

**PROBLEM: MODERN-DAY MUSICIANS CAPABLE OF PLAYING INSTRUMENTS TYPICAL OF THE CULTURE OF 3,200 YEARS AGO.**

That was what producer-director Cecil B. DeMille, a disciple of authenticity, had asked for and that was what he expected to get. And get them he did—men and women of music who could comport themselves with ease and authority on the string and reed paraphernalia of the biblical lands of many a yesterday ago.

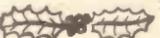


Paramount's music department, after a careful process of selection among dozens of expert musicians, set up special rehearsals in which the chosen few were introduced to the ancient and bizarre-appearing instruments utilized in De Mille's dramatization of the life of Moses, "The Ten Commandments."



**IT WAS BOB GOODSTEIN**, valiant property man on the mighty DeMille production, who had the job of keeping track of the extraordinary instruments, which were fashioned by expert craftsmen at the studio. Based on the most thorough museum research, the instruments were correct to the most minute detail.

*They included stand harps and lyres, with frames gaily painted and finished by carvings of the king's head; drums of all shapes and kinds, brilliantly coloured and festooned; sabas (flutes in this day and age); nefers which are oddly-shaped guitars, cymbals, castanets, and bell clusters.*



**FINALLY, WITH THE INSTRUMENTS** at hand and the musicians thoroughly rehearsed, all DeMille had to do was to issue the order to strike up the band, old Egypt style. The result provides another unique feature of the many-faceted DeMille production—particularly in scenes showing an orchestra in the court of the Pharaoh Sethi and a Bedouin instrumental aggregation producing music for a dance by the desert daughters of Jethro!



YEARS AGO . . . they made merry with music, too . . . this is a shot from Cecil B. DeMille's "Ten Commandments" and the unique instruments used by the here are described in the adjoining article.

## SEASON'S GREETINGS



TO ALL MY FRIENDS including The MEMBERS OF THE JOAN REGAN SUPPORTERS' CLUB of 73, Longlands Rd., SIDCUP, KENT

FROM **JOAN REGAN**

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

TO ALL FRIENDS EVERYWHERE

from

# BERYL REID

PANTOMIME: TUES. AND THURS. REQUESTS  
HIPPODROME BIRMINGHAM RADIO LUXEMBOURG

The Best Christmas Fare on Records from **JAMES ASMAN'S JAZZ CENTRE** 23 NEW ROW, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, Covent Garden 1380 LONDON W.C.2

## Greetings & Thanks

From

The Hon. Officers and Members of the Committee of

## THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE J.P.A.

To All Members Of Show Business In All Branches Who Have So Splendidly Supported Our Cause And Helped To Make Our Many Concerts And Functions So Successful In Past Years.

The People In Show Business Are The First To Support Worthy Charity. On Behalf Of Our Organisation We Convey Our Sincerest Appreciation To Them.

**W**AY BACK IN JUNE 1950 WHEN PEOPLE were beginning to really accept the fact there was a disc boom and that it might be here to stay, a little recording company opened up in London.

Among the directors were Petula Clark's father, Lionel, and Alan Freeman. They didn't see why there shouldn't be some rivalry to the major concerns—didn't see why Decca and EMI should be the only groups in the field. The newcomers had spirit and enthusiasm—and they sure needed both.

For a long time in smoky rooms they sat around trying to think up a name for their new independent label.

Finally someone came up with the out-of-the-blue suggestion—POLYGON.

## Nixa

And that was it.

Though not without quite a bit of bother.

Because it was subsequently discovered that many of the continental labels used the "Poly" prefix. And Alan Freeman was later advised by legal men that he couldn't turn "Polygon" into a registered trade-mark, anyway, because the name meant "a many sided thing" . . . and one day somebody may issue an eighteen-sided disc which would automatically be termed a Polygon! No, they weren't joking!

### NO PLANT OF THEIR OWN

**I**N THE TINY OFF-THE-BEATEN-TRACK OFFICES in Holborn's Harrison Street, Alan Freeman went to work in an attempt to establish the new label. It was a tough task. He had no pressing plant. This meant he had to get his copies pressed by one of the major companies. It also meant that he had to sell discs quickly in order to cover those factory expenses.

Well, Freeman soon showed that the bright red label had

## Another Record Success Story

enterprise was assured—and on a very high standard indeed.

But what of the all-important world of pops?

Here, Polygon returns to the story.

Pye and Polygon did a deal which was eventually to result in one of the most successful popular music labels on this side of the Atlantic.

### 'KING' DONEGAN

**ALAN FREEMAN** and **MICHAEL BARCLAY** worked solidly together to create the new pop label. The name Polygon was put aside in favour of Nixa, and Alan and Michael—starting with a basic roster of Polygon stars—began to build the new pop assault.

Petula Clark, of course, appeared under the new colours. Youngsters were given chances. Gary Miller moved over to Nixa from Philips and there was a powerful vocal acquisition in show singer **Edmund Hockridge** who was to prove himself a pop balladeer of tremendous potential with his hit version of "By The Fountains of Rome."

On the orchestral side,

## Nixa

But it wasn't only with home-made recordings that Nixa attacked. They went afield for their material, brought from Scandinavia the fantastic Singing Dogs' discs which not only stirred up controversy but also stirred up the Top Twenty. The Nixa roster also gave his early disc chances to **Dennis Lotis** and brought **Dorothy Squires** back into the charts. Pianist **Joe Henderson** furnished the company with several big sellers—and late this year the label beat all comers in a rush to sign up **Tommy Steele's** young brother **Colin Hicks**.

Linked with the British label are the Vanguard jazz catalogue and the Mercury label from the U.S.A.

## Nixa

Mercury spent many agonising months without a British distribution until Pye Group took the label over for this country. Immediately, **The Platters** found themselves repeating their U.S. triumphs—and their British - released recordings like "Only You" did so well that the group came over to star here in person.

**Patti Page** and **Freddie Bell** and the **Bellboys** were other Mercury stars who benefited from the deal. And, of course, Mercury's off-shoot **Emarcy** has brought high sales via **Sarah Vaughan**, **Sophie Tucker**, **Georgia Gibbs** and **Dinah Washington**.

# Polygon In Harrison Street

# Gives Way To Nixa In Haymarket

possibilities by producing a hit with the seventh recording to be released! It was called "Gypsy Fiddler". It was by a man who was just about to become known in this country, **Ray Martin!**

This was encouraging, but soon there was something bigger to hit the turntables. Again Alan took an unknown name, this time a singer called **Jimmy Young**. And he recorded him singing a song called "Too Young". It was Polygon's thirteenth release; it reached the counters in April 1951. Only snag was it couldn't reach them fast enough to keep up with the demand. After a BBC spin by **Jack Jackson**, "Too Young" became, over one week-end, the most wanted pop in Britain. This record not only made **Jimmy Young**—it made Polygon a force to be reckoned with.

**GRADUALLY THE LITTLE LABEL BUILT UP** its prestige with other hit discs by **Petula Clark** (her "Little Shoemaker" was one of them) and by **Johnny Brandon**. They also gave **Laurie Johnson** the chance of making some big orchestral pops that were well up to top American standards.

The overall picture was one of expansion in the re-

## Nixa

recording industry as the 1950's got under way.

**Philips**—a company long-respected in the radio and electrical world—branched out with a new record label.

Then the radio and television firm **Pye** also began to turn its eyes towards the disc world. This was no easy period to launch a new major company—most of the big talent was already contracted.

But **Pye Group Records Ltd.**, as the new concern was to be known, went about its business capably and with the right sort of approach.

For some time **Nixon's** highly-regarded company—**Nixa**—had been issuing LPs of considerable merit in the classical field.

**Pye** entered into a deal which was to bring a much wider fame to the name of **Nixa**. By taking over the **Nixa Record Company** a fine classical catalogue was secured by **Pye**.

The catalogue was later enlarged by the formation of an artists' company which brought the new firm the services of such magnetic names as **Sir John Barbirolli**, **George Weldon**, **Gwen Catley**, **Richard Farrell**, **Mindru Katz**, and **Iso Elinson**. It also meant that **Pye** now held the recording rights of the **Halle Orchestra**, the **Pro Arte Orchestra** and **Karl Haas** with the **London Baroque Ensemble**.

The classical side of the new

drummer **Eric Delaney's Band** was signed up to make some very big sides.

**Nixa** established itself with classical and pop sections, then turned to jazz also with the issue of the now-famous **Jazz Today Series** led by **Chris Barber**.

## Nixa

But perhaps the greatest commercial stroke of all, was securing the commercial services of **Lonnie Donegan**. Under **Nixa's** aegis the new king of skiffle flourished royally, brought the new cult to boom pitch.

### SINGING DOGS 'ARRIVE'

**LONNIE'S "LOST JOHN," "STEWBALL,"** "Bring a Little Water Sylvie" and "Dead or Alive" were the forerunners of even greater hits like his "Cumberland Gap" of recent months.

**Donegan** became such a name under **Nixa** that they put out a "Showcase" LP which swept almost at once into the **RECORD MIRROR's** album **First Five**.



**HERE'S A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION!**

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*The*

*Eddie Calvert*

**PRIMARY TUTOR FOR TRUMPET OR CORNET**

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## JACK JAY

Wishes Everyone in Show Business

*All The Very Best For*  
**CHRISTMAS**  
*and the*  
**NEW YEAR**

Thanks To All For Helping To Make The Windmill Go Round And Round!

**JACK JAY,**  
**THE WINDMILL THEATRE,**  
**GREAT YARMOUTH**

In those days there was no time to think of a future which was to hold such a merger as came about with **Pye's** excursion into records.

## Nixa

### BACK-ROOM PEOPLE

**POLYGON MAY HAVE PASSED ON AS A LABEL** but its spirit is very much to be found in the new **Nixa**. The foundations of the current disc success of **Nixa** and **Pye** were laid seven years ago down in **Harrison Street**.

When we find **Petula Clark**, the **Diamonds**, **Gary Miller**, **Lonnie Donegan**, the **Platters**, **Edmund Hockridge** and their contract colleagues riding high on a seller today it says much for people like **Leonard Smith**, **Alan Freeman**, **Michael Barclay** and **Brenda Slattery** . . . all good, conscientious, hard-working back-room folk who tackle their tasks with an enthusiasm that is reflected in the success of the company they represent.

# Season's Greetings

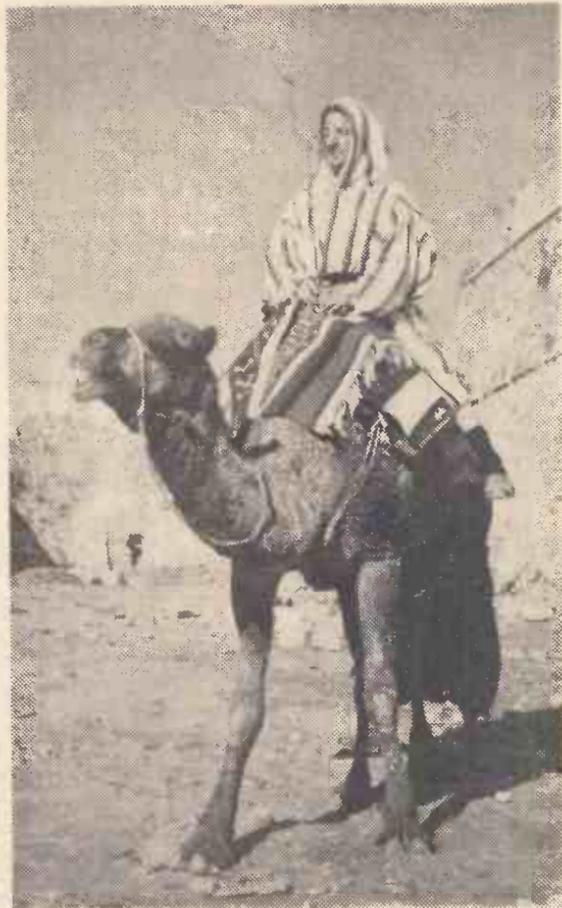
TO ALL OUR FRIENDS  
ON BOTH SIDES OF THE FOOTLIGHTS



## THE KAYE SISTERS

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LEN YOUNG

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# A Happy Xmas

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## THE HUMP!

## RONALD SHINER

(THE ONE ON THE CAMEL!)

# HERE'S LOOKING at YOU ...

and wishing you

A  
Happy  
Christmas  
from  
**BRIAN RIX**  
**BASIL LORD**  
**LEO FRANKLYN**  
AND THE



## "DRY ROT" COMPANY

WHITEHALL THEATRE, LONDON

happy christmas  
bill maynard

Continuing James Asman's Pen Pictures of the World's Greatest Musicians



DAVE BRUBECK



EDDIE CONDON



BIGG BILL BROONZY



JACK TEAGARDEN



MILT JACKSON

Contd. from previous page heard them back in Washington and persuaded the band to try their luck northwards once more.

They eventually drifted into the Kentucky Club, in New York, then called the Hollywood, and the Duke's first records were made. From then on the individual style of the Ellington orchestra began to make itself felt. In '27 it moved to the Cotton Club, where it stayed until 1932, and appeared in the film "Check and Double Check" with Amos and Andy.

The style of the Ellington arrangements gave unusual tone colours and musical patterns to the music and the "jungle" muted trumpet effects of men like Bubber Miley and Cootie Williams became a familiar feature.

The band visited Britain in 1933 and broadcast over Dayentry.

Its personnel, in a musical world of constantly changing line-ups, remained remarkably static, enabling the Duke to mould the unique personality of his ideas into the various leading soloists. The band has always kept ahead of general critical approval.

In more recent years the Duke has grown more daring in his writing and several orchestral suites have resulted. The expected muted horn has given way to high register work by trumpeters like Cats Anderson, but the rich texture of the ensemble has never been lost, indeed, it has become an even more prominent feature of the band's work. As a pianist the Duke is modest and sparing, revealing traces of his early influences from Kansas City styled players. As a composer he has reigned supreme through the years, going from strength to strength. As a leader he has proved himself a man of amiable stature, retaining his sidemen to a remarkable degree. He has carved himself a very individual niche in jazz history which has never been challenged by any band or musician since the Cotton Club days.

**BESSIE SMITH**

(BLUES SINGER)

**N**O BLUES SINGER has received such universal approbation and respect as Bessie Smith, born in Chattanooga, Tennessee at the turn of the century (the exact date is unfortunately unknown).

Bessie, who became COLUMBIA'S foremost recording star between 1924 and

1927, earned many fortunes and spent them all on high living and a wild generosity coupled with an inordinate fondness for strong liquor. As a Blues singer she gained an equal fame with musicians of the calibre of Louis Armstrong, and her influence is widespread, even amongst present-day white and coloured vocalists within the jazz field.

She was born amidst the worst vicious poverty in the jim crow South and was in her teens when Ma Rainey's Rabbit Foot Minstrels visited Chattanooga. She was invited to join the troupe and continued to work in such an environment until a Columbia recording executive heard her in a dingy dive in Selma, down in Alabama. He commissioned Clarence Williams to bring her to New York where, early in 1923, she made her first record, accompanied by Williams at the piano.

Her prolific recording career was, until 1928, gloriously successful, which had the added advantage of providing the Columbia record company with a vast amount of priceless material for re-issue in four tremendous LP albums, now available in Britain. With her on many of her sessions were most of the finest Negro jazz talent of the Golden Era, Louis Armstrong, Joe Smith, Clarence Williams, James P. Johnson, Fletcher Henderson and Charlie Green and many others.

She married a Philadelphia policeman, Jack Gee, who mishandled her affairs and, from 1928 dropped steadily out of sight. She drank to excess, attempted to use suggestive material and failed to recapture the changing public fancy of the time.

She ceased recording in 1930, began touring and made a Warner Brothers short called "St. Louis Blues." John Hammond, junior, brought her back to the Columbia studios late in 1933 for a session with a mixed group, the results of which became collectors' items. It did very little good for Bessie, however, and she continued to slip downwards until the autumn of 1937 when Hammond again made arrangements to bring her back to New York for another date at the studios.

She was travelling in a car in the Deep South which crashed outside a white hospital. Bessie received serious injuries and lay on the pavement with her arm almost severed, bleeding badly. She was refused admission to the hospital on account of her colour and was eventually driven to another medical centre some miles away. She bled to death from lack of attention on the way. The date was September 26, 1937, and jazz lost one of its greatest

singing stars. Her warm, dark accents made a simple Blues into sheer poetry, and she was a complete master of her art, "the greatest artist American jazz has ever produced," as John Hammond himself wrote after her untimely end.

**MA RAINEY**

(BLUES SINGER)

**G**ERTRUDE MALISSA NIX PRIDGETT was born in Columbus in Georgia the 26 of April 1886. She married a member of a troupe called the Rabbit Foot Minstrels

years of her fame, between '23 and '29. By 1933, when her mother died, she ceased to sing and settled down in Rome, Georgia, where she died close to the Christmas of 1939.

**FATS WALLER**

(PIANIST, ORGANIST AND VOCALIST)

**T**HOMAS "FATS" WALLER was one of the best loved of Negro jazz artistes. He was born into a religious family and his father was a preacher.

In New York, May 21, 1904.

Andy Razaf. He visited France in 1932 and returned to New York to begin a series of jazz recordings which were to be famous all over the world for their caustic wit and tremendous drive.

Fats loved to mock the mundane "pop" song and did it to perfection. His piano style echoed the strong early influence of his mentor, James P. Johnson, whilst his work at the unwieldy organ was amazingly swinging and jazzlike. He featured in several films, the most famous being "Stormy Weather." Fats lived well, possessing a tremendous appetite for both food and drink. His heart gave way whilst journeying on a train to yet another date and he died in the arms of his manager on December 15, 1943.

**JELLY ROLL**

(PIANIST)

**O**NE of the most colourful figures in jazz was undoubtedly the diamond-toothed, boastful, controversial Ferdinand Joseph La Menthe.

The young La Menthe quarrelled with his father over family matters and borrowed his grandmother's family name Morton. A "jelly roll" is a New Orleans sweetmeat which had been given a sexual connotation.

Morton gained the nickname because of his declared prowess with the opposite sex. He was born in Gulfport, Louisiana, on September 20, 1885. His father was a wandering trombone player and the young boy began learning to play guitar when he was 7. he took to the piano three years later. By 1902 he was playing in the bordellos along the vice belt in Storeyville, providing incidental Blues and ragtime music for professional population.

After this he travelled fairly extensively, partly playing and partly living by his wits, by gambling and by following even more questionable occupations. His first recordings were made between 1923 and 1924, but his real fame as a record star began in 1926 when he brought his Red Hot Peppers to the Victor studios.

His studio groups included many fine jazzmen such as Kid Ory, the Dodds Brothers, Omer Simeon and George Mitchell and, apart from a few regrettable attempts at novelty appeal, these Red Hot Pepper sides are now regarded as gems of jazz recording history. He made many solo sides as an imaginative ragtime

pianist and wrote a large repertoire of classic tunes, many "borrowed" from traditional and folk sources. By 1937 his fame had died away and he was running a night spot in Washington, living in obscurity. At the behest of Alan Lomax and the Library of Congress he made an historic series of recordings in which he described his life, his influences and his music in great detail. He wrote to the press emphasizing his claim as the "Originator of Jazz" and attacking W. C. Handy, who also, less worthily, laid a claim to the same title.

A book entitled "Mister Jelly Roll," was written by Lomax, culled from the 1938 Library of Congress sessions. He made a few more sides with a band and as a solo pianist in 1939 and died in Los Angeles in July, 1941. His piano work was strongly ragtime, sometimes appealingly "blue" and melodic. His main band activity, the Red Hot Peppers, was extremely New Orleans flavour, and he used the best musicians during this period. His earlier and later recording groups were less interesting, but Morton's own work was always brilliant and exciting.

**HUDDIE**

**LEDBEATER**

(BLUES SINGER AND GUITARIST)

**"K**ING of the Twelve-stringed Guitar" was how "Lead-belly" referred to himself. He was born in Mooringsport in Louisiana in 1885, found low life experience almost as a child among the bordellos there and in Texas.

He learnt to play accordion and guitar and worked around the two States, living a violent life. He was imprisoned for murder between 1918 and 1925 and again between 1930 and 1934, when he actually sang his way to a pardon by composing a Blues song about the prison governor!

He was discovered by Alan Lomax and, his father and worked for them, assisting as a driver and general help. He recorded for them and assisted them to capture a great deal of rare Negro folk material in camps, prisons and farms. He, like Jelly Roll Morton, also made many recordings for the Library of Congress and eventually became a folk entertainer at concerts and exclusive night clubs. He visited France in 1949 and returned to

THESE FOLK MADE JAZZ

called "Pa" Rainey and used her married name for all her recording activities.

She began with Paramount in 1923 and continued to make numerous sides for the Negro market. Backing her on these sides were numerous fine jazz artistes, including Louie Austin's Blues Srenaders, Tommy Ladnier, Louis Armstrong and Joe Smith.

Her style was forthright and direct, revealing the influence her singing must have had upon her prodigy, Bessie Smith. She remained a minstrel artiste throughout the

the squealing baby was designed to follow in his proud father's footsteps and take to the Gospel, but, after a long period of study Fats became a professional pianist at the age of 15.

He achieved personal fame as a soloist on both the organ and the piano keyboard, playing in cabaret and in theatres for many years. He accompanied Bessie Smith and other Blues singers on records and along the circuits and joined the Erskine Tate band in 1925. He also achieved some fame as a song writer in the '20s in collaboration with



ERROL GARNER



GERRY MULLIGAN



SYDNEY BECHET



LARS GULLIN



LIONEL HAMPTON

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

Continuing James Asman's Pen Pictures of the World's Greatest Musicians



Orleans. The band played for three years to increasing audiences and success until Ken became disillusioned by certain faults within the band and joined the Christie Brothers Stompers for a spell. As he became convinced that he had reached a dead-end he dramatically resigned and returned to the Merchant Navy once again, this time with a burning desire to visit New Orleans and learn his jazz at the feet of the masters he had respected for so long.

New York City, where he died early in December of the same year. He possessed a rich, folksy voice and a strong, rhythmic guitar style. His memory for folk tunes and lyrics was prodigious and he was unwittingly responsible, in part, for the upsurge of the so-called Skiffle rage of the present time. Many of the most popular Skiffle ditties are adapted from the Leadbelly library, including "Rock Island Line" and "Diggin' My Potatoes."

**KEN COLYER**

(CORNETIST, TRUMPETER, GUITARIST AND SINGER)

**K**ENNETH COLYER was born on the Norfolk coast in Great Yarmouth, on April 18, 1928. His father worked as a butler and his mother as a cook, but Ken had a yearning to go to sea.

He moved to Cranford and, attracted by the jazz records his brother Bill collected, he taught himself to play the harmonica, the guitar and eventually, the cornet. Whilst the British Revivalist Movement was stirring with George Webb and others during the early '40s, Ken served in the Merchant Navy as a cabin boy, diligently practising on an old trumpet he carried. Slowly the ambition grew in him to play jazz music seriously and, in 1949, the Crane River Jazz Band came into existence with a musical policy firmly devoted to the native music of New

After adventures more suited to a boy's thriller, Ken Colyer left the old rusty tub in which he was cook, ducked out of a mutiny and travelled the distance from the port of Mobile down to the Crescent City. There he played with most of the pioneers, white and coloured, and managed to make one private recording session with a veteran band headed by clarinettist Emilé Barnes.

He was jailed in the notorious Parish Prison for six weeks for violating his permit and eventually returned to this country to find a band awaiting him at the quayside organised by his faithful brother Bill.

Ken then began an extremely successful leadership from early in 1953, until unfortunate disagreements divided him from the band and the first Ken Colyer Jazzmen became the famous Chris Barber Jazz Band. Ken formed a new outfit, composed of unknown musicians and reverted to his own purist policy. There has been little change since that time and this outfit accompanied George Lewis on his recent visit to England with a certain amount of distinction.

**CHRIS BARBER**

(TROMBONE AND BASS)

**C**HRISTOPHER BARBER was born on April 17, 1930 in London, the son of a headmistress and a statistician. He was intended to take up a career as an actuary but his first love was obviously classical music.

He was converted to jazz when he was 15, and he studied for three years at the

Guildhall School of Music on trombone and double bass. Later he formed his first revivalist jazz group which reflected his growing enthusiasm for the jazz music of Ellington in particular. He played consistently in jazz clubs, in London and in the provinces, but achieved only minor success. He opened his own jazz club in London, but this also was not particularly remunerative.

In 1953, at the behest of Bill Colver, he joined with Monty Sunshine and others to await the arrival back in Britain of ex-Merchant Seaman Ken Colyer and played trombone in the Jazzmen for one year, until the differing attitudes within the band caused him to break with the leader. Barber took over the reins of the band Colyer left with Pat Halcov replacing Ken on trumpet, and their success was phenomenal.

the war he worked in an engineering factory in Kent, where he met another jazz enthusiast, Eddie Harvey. At subsequent meetings with Eddie and other nearby jazz lovers the nucleus of an amateur jazz group was formed. Amongst the enthusiasts was Wally Fawkes wearing his first long trousers, ambulance driver Owen Bryce, engineer Buddy Vallis, Beg Rigden and others. Early in the '40s the band began to practise in the Webb's front room, an insignificant happening which was to change the face of Britain's popular taste. By 1942 the George Webb Dixielanders were boasting that they had played in every hall in South East London—once! They received an increasing pressure of publicity from small collector organisations like the Jazz Appreciation Society and made the Red Barn in Barnhurst a veritable

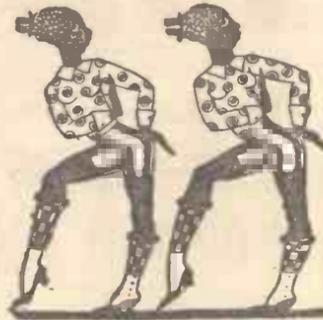
distinguished itself in the affairs of the country for generations, is Viscount Cobham, and Lyttelton's father was the Housemaster of St. Christopher's at Eton where Humph first saw the light of day.

He was educated at Eton, teaching himself to play first harmonica, then the banjulele, piano, drums and trumpet. He bought his first horn when he was 15. At the onset of hostilities Humph joined the Grenadier Guards and was on active service abroad. He was invalided out after the Armistice and began studies at the Camberwell Art School.

He drifted into the London jazz scene about the same time, playing regularly at the Feldman Swing Club and under the leadership of drummer Carlo Krahmer, now head of the Esquire Record Company and the first to recognise the talent of this young Guardsman. He took part in jam sessions at the Orange Tree in Friern Barnet and was invited to join the George Webb Dixielanders shortly afterwards.

A year later, in 1947, he found the established style of the pioneer Dixielanders too limited for his own ideas and formed the first Humphrey Lyttelton Band. For a year or so he used a nucleus from the disbanded Webb outfit, including Webb himself on piano. In company with the visiting Graeme Bell Australian Jazz Band he initiated jazz dancing in London and speedily became the paramount figure in the British musical scene.

He recorded prolifically, became a regular broadcasting personality and television performer.



His ability as a journalist and jazz critic proved to be formidable, and he also gained a minor reputation as a cartoonist. Despite the comfortable success he enjoyed, Humph refused to become static and the progress of the bands he led in more recent years have shown the various musical experiments he has made, including a brief amalgamation with the Bell outfit to make big band music, an excursion into West Indian rhythms with several coloured musicians and, at the moment, a change of both mode and repertoire in "Mainstream" music. In addition to the instruments listed, he later revealed a surprising proficiency on the clarinet. As a trumpeter he has suffered from a thin tone, but plays with immense sympathy and understanding of the jazz idiom. His stature as a critic is echoed in his imagination as a leader, for Humph has the courage of his own convictions and has never been afraid to seek new fields, no matter how unpopular they have appeared to be. In his autobiography, written in 1954, called "I Play As I Please," he details his life story. Another book is in production.

**THESE FOLK MADE JAZZ**

On banjo and guitar was another star-to-be, Lonnie Donegan, who headed a Skiffle Group as a unit within the band. Lonnie's version of Leadbelly's "Rock Island Line" recorded at a concert at the Royal Festival Hall in London became a commercial hit overnight and set Skiffle right in the public eye.

Lonnie branched out on his own and the band replaced him with another young Blues singer, Johnny Duncan. Duncan, too, gained fame in the RECORD MIRROR'S Top Ten and Barber has now dropped the Skiffle section of his band in which he played bass. The band has also brought to popularity a Belfast singer called Otilie-Patterson, and is now the most popular jazz group playing in this country.

mecca for jazz-lovers all over Britain.

Your author initially arranged a recording session in Derby for his own label Jazz and subsequently persuaded Decca to make tests. The band broadcast, appeared in concerts all over the country and became a symbol for a growing aversion to the commercial "jazz" and swing of the day.

In 1947 Humphrey Lyttelton replaced the two trumpet lead and, a few months later left with Wally Fawkes and others to form the first Humphrey Lyttelton band.

The Dixielanders were broken up completely and George dissolved the attendant Hat Club of London. He joined Humph a short time afterwards and remained with him for several years. After retiring from the Lyttelton band he concentrated on his own jazz club in Woolwich and on a new band under his leadership. The band ventures proved abortive and George Webb today has almost ceased playing, except for occasional guest appearances at clubs and concerts. He now works as jazz concert organiser in the West End.

**GEORGE WEBB (PIANO)**

**T**HE prematurely bald, diminutive figure of **GEORGE WEBB** today represents the pioneer field of British Revivalist jazz more than any one in Britain.

He was born in Camberwell, October 8, 1917, and his father was one of the original "ragtime" vaudeville acts.

George is self-taught at the piano, but benefited by the experience his father was able to offer him. In the early part of

**HUMPHREY LYTTELTON**

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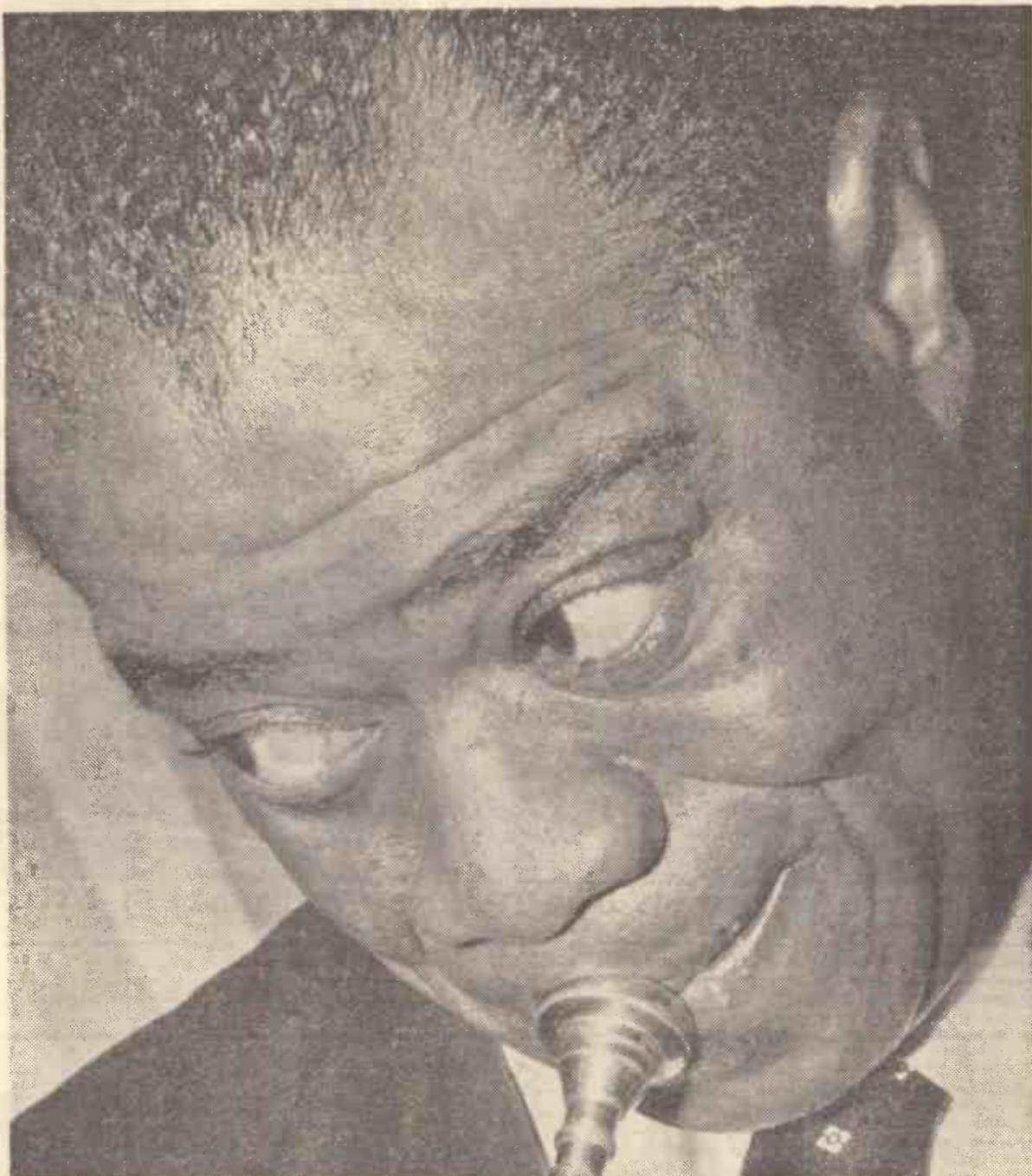


**THE  
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BARBER  
JAZZ BAND**

AND

**OTTILIE  
PATTERSON**

See You Again  
Next Year!



These magnificent shots were all taken by the RECORD MIRROR'S own cameramen. The one above of LOUIS ARMSTRONG was caught during the Great Satchmo's visit to London last year when he appeared at the Empress Hall, Earl's Court. Below he is seen in a "trumpet double" with HUMPHREY LYTTTELTON . . . the two are great friends and admirers of each other. Picture on the right—another ace jazzman, the inimitable COUNT BASIE whose two visits to London this year culminated in his biggest triumph of all—a spot in the Royal Variety Performance at the London Palladium on November 18. —R.M. Pictures

Christmas Greetings

from

**THE  
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INFORMATION  
CENTRE**

and the

**G. J. C.  
BAND AGENCY**



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And

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POSTSCRIPT: TO ALL THOSE PROSPECTIVE ADVERTISERS, WHO INCLUDED MANY SHOW BUSINESS PERSONALITIES BUT WHOSE GREETINGS ANNOUNCEMENTS DO NOT APPEAR IN THIS EDITION: SORRY, BUT IT'S ENTIRELY YOUR FAULT. WE WARNED AND WORRIED YOU LONG ENOUGH FOR YOUR 'COPY' INSTRUCTIONS. YOUR FAILURE TO SUBMIT THEM RESULTED IN WHAT WE SAID WOULD HAPPEN: YOU'VE BEEN LEFT OUT!

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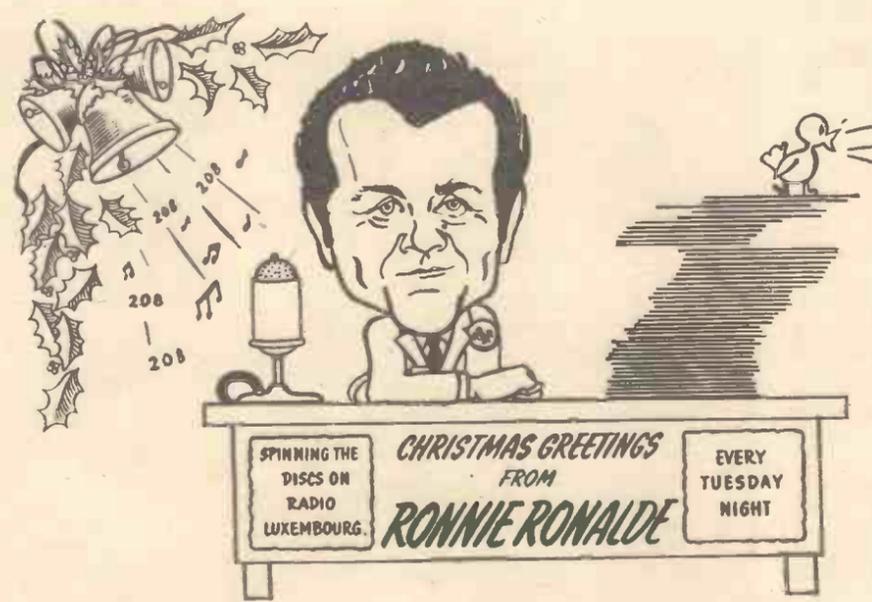
# ★ RONNIE RONALDE ★

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**SKATERS WALTZ** }

# A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS



The man with the travelling "mike" and tape machine at work on one of his celebrity subjects—this time JOAN REGAN in her London Palladium dressing room during a break in the "We're Having a Ball" show. See story below—R.M. Picture.

★  
**SO MANY TOP LINE ARTISTES** ask NEVILLE POWLEY where his "box" is when they meet him that he feels he should carry his tape recorder both on business and pleasure. This may well prove a good idea for he can never be certain when he may have to record an interview at the most unusual time in the most unexpected place. Since Neville first mastered the art of using his portable tape recorder he has recorded interviews in corridors, vacant offices, passages, studios, stairways, cellars, attics and in even odder places than those! Interviewing is an art with Neville. He has regular programmes to meet such as "Stars On Wings," a half hour show featuring British artistes. This finds its way into most countries in the world from Ceylon to Iceland.

## 400 INTERVIEWS WITH THE STARS... 'LONDON LINK' WITH SOUTH AFRICA

FOR SIX YEARS NEVILLE POWLEY was head of Variety Productions with the British Forces Network, during which time he produced and compered many of their shows. He was also programme organiser for the Forces Broadcasting Station in the Canal Zone for two years. This led to his becoming London producer for Forces Broadcasting. About 18 months ago Neville decided to go free lance. Since that time he has done more than 400 interviews with top record personalities for most parts of the world, but mainly for South Africa's top dee-jay Bill Prince. Plans for Bill's programmes stretch well into the New Year. "London Link" (a weekly spot in the Bill Prince Show) is one on which Neville reports on the London entertainment scene each week. "Command Performance," is another popular programme. The first series ran for three years; it features the biographies of British artistes, illustrated by their records. In spite of Neville's heavy foreign commitments, he is not unknown to B.B.C. listeners, having reported regularly for "Town and Country" and the summer series from the North, "Let's Go." Forgetting records for a moment, Neville has also appeared in I.T.V.'s "Sunday Paper" series as a crime reporter with Superintendent Tom Fallon of Scotland Yard. But Neville's life is mainly devoted to publicising the recordings and careers of British artistes throughout the world. Neville Powley has twice interviewed the editor of the RECORD MIRROR — one transmission was for Ceylon, the other for South Africa.

# Colin Grainger



## Conveys Happy Greetings For Xmas and the New Year

AND THANKS FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT  
 GIVEN TO HIS KICK-OFF AS A SINGING  
 VARIETY ARTISTE IN 1957

Hope To Be Singing For You Again  
 As Soon As The Present Football Season Is Over

## Greetings

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 IN SHOW BUSINESS

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 Rialto Cinema, York

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AND

A Prosperous New Year

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THIS YEAR OF VARIETY

# DON ROSS REVIVES OLD MUSIC HALL

LEN EVANS REVIEW CONTD.

ARTISTES APPEARING ON THIS BILL WERE AL READ, NAT JACKLEY, RAWICZ AND LANDAUER, FREDYE MARSHALL, GINA AND GERALDO, THE HASSANI TROUPE, MARGARET BURTON, THE TILIBS BROTHERS, THE GEORGE MITCHELL SINGERS AND A TROUPE OF JOAN DAVIS DANCERS. THE SHOW BEGAN ITS SIX WEEKS' SEASON ON OCTOBER 28.

For the week of October 14 the Ritz Cinema in Huddersfield went live—and very successfully, too. A bill headed by Al Read and Albert Saveen with "Daisy May" played to first rate business and the management stated it intended to stage high grade variety bills at least once every three months. Big names were an essential, however.

Variety returned to Brixton—but not to the old Empress—week of October 28. A full variety bill was staged at the Odeon-Astoria Cinema and included singer Shirley Bassey, Jimmy Wheeler, Tony Fayne and David Evans, Howard Jones and Reggie Arnold, Walthon and Dorraine, Richman and Jackson, Jean and Peter Barbour, and MacAndrews and Mills. The timings were unique in that on Monday, Tuesday and Friday the programme was staged once nightly at 8 p.m. and on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday twice nightly, at 6.40 and 8.55. With a bill so strong as this one could only hope that the Rank Organisation would find it worth while repeating the idea—and soon.

## QUEEN'S FOR SALE

Morris Abrahams must have been a very sad man this month for the famous East-end music hall, The Queen's, Poplar, upon which he had lavished so much pride and affection, as had his father before him, had to be put up for sale. It closed over a year ago

after a great fight on the part of little Morris, who had cradled more than one music hall star, at this famed house—the last in London to possess an open bar.

On Tuesday, October 15, John Tatley, the last bachelor member of the vocal group The Jones Boys, was married to Anne Hart, well known as the glamorous "feed" to Tommy Trinder.

Around the middle of the month agent Don Ross, who is also one of the directors of the Palace Theatre, Hull, announced a bold experiment for that theatre. In short it was to transform the old music hall into the style enjoyed by audiences a hundred years ago with refreshments obtainable in the body of the theatre and consumed whilst the show was in progress.

The house was closed at the end of the month and was due to re-open in its new guise at Christmas when a flat rate of 2/6 admission charge was to be made, the customers to sit where they chose. This revolutionary, though not altogether unexpected trend in music hall, would be watched with interest for upon the success of the Hull venture might depend the future of not a few variety houses in other parts of the country—to say nothing of the possibility of re-openings. What could capture public imagination more than to have what is after all a popular priced cabaret? Full marks to Don Ross for his boldness to back his own imagination.

The 51st Annual General Meeting of the Association of Touring and Producing Managers was held on October 10 when officers were elected for 1957/8. Tom Arnold was elected Chairman; E. J. Hinge, O.B.E., Vice Chairman; W. Foster Horsfield, deputy chairman; W. Barrie Baldrick, hon. treasurer and Nat Day, hon. secretary. At the luncheon that preceded the meeting Nat Day was presented with an inscribed gold cigarette case, a gift from the Council and members of the ATPM to mark his tenth year of office as honorary secretary. Tom

Arnold made the presentation and also presented Mrs. Nat Day with a wrist watch.

Another Jazz Jamboree was held at the State Cinema, Kilburn, on October 27. Johnny Dankworth and Humphrey Lyttelton were among those who staged their bands in this outstandingly successful show.

Clarkson Rose signed a three years' contract with the Worthing Corporation to stage his famous "Twinkle" concert party for summer seasons at the Pier Pavilion, Worthing.

Howard Ward, for many years on the staff of "The Performer" and now with "Record Mirror," notched up the respectable score of four score years on October 26.

Music hall names were not to be associated after all with the replacement artistes in "My Fair Lady" on Broadway for on October 25 it was announced that 28 year old actor Ronald Radd would succeed Stanley Holloway in the part of "Doolittle."

A memorial service to Fred Russell was held on Tuesday, October 29, at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the service being conducted by the Rev. Austen Williams.

## TESSIE IN 'LEGIT'

Some variety folk were ever on the look out for fresh experience, and to this end Tessie O'Shea made her debut in legit week of October 7 when she appeared at the Theatre Royal, Margate, in Peter Ustinov's "Romanoff and Juliet." On October 24 Gladys Dawson, who for years toured in variety with her husband Sid Gatum in the double act, Gatum and Dawson, made her bow in a straight play when she appeared in "The Egg" at the Saville Theatre, London.

The Entertainments Committee of Scarborough approached comedian Benny Hill with a view to his taking over the Floral Hall for the 1958

season. It was reported that he had accepted. Greatrex Newman had been invited to play a return season with his "Fol de Rols" but had to decline the offer.

Harry Joseph, proprietor of the City Varieties, Leeds, the venue of those popular BBC TV old time music hall programmes, was proposing to cater well for the children this Christmas by starting a five weeks' season of juvenile entertainment, lasting about an hour and a half. Two shows a day would be the rule with the evenings left free for the usual variety programmes. The starting date—December 30.

Anna Deere Wiman and Sam Wanamaker re-opened the New Shakespeare Theatre, Liverpool, as a rep. house on October 31. Formerly the theatre had been known as the Pigalle, and before that the Shakespeare Theatre.

SINGER ALMA COGAN (DUE TO PLAY A SHORT SEASON IN THE PERSIAN ROOM OF THE PLAZA HOTEL, NEW YORK, IN DECEMBER) TOGETHER WITH DICKIE HENDERSON WERE TWO OF THE GUESTS OF HONOUR AT THE VARIETY CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN LUNCHEON AT THE SAVOY HOTEL ON OCTOBER 8.

After undergoing large scale alterations and redecorations the County Theatre, Bedford, re-opened during the first week in the month with a policy of live entertainment. It had been closed for five months. But the Palace Theatre, Bath, once a music hall, was still live although in a different way. It was being transformed into a modern dance hall at a cost said to be £20,000. A feature of the house is to be a mural around the walls depicting the many old music hall stars who played the Palace in days gone by.

This month Frank Pope, on behalf of F. J. Butterworth, found it necessary to scotch the rumour that the Hippodrome, Norwich, would be going rep. and pointed out that arrangements for the theatre had been completed for the rest of the year and that King Rat Cyril Dowler would be taking a panto there for Christmas.

## NOVEMBER

### PAUL ANKA ARRIVES

The power of disc prowess was becoming more and more evident and this time it was 16 year old Canadian singer Paul Anka was the much sought after artiste. Val Parnell secured the services of this young man for his "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" and thus made something of a capture for this singer, unknown to most, made a startlingly quick appearance at the top of the Hit Parade with his ultra-popular waxing of "Diana."

Arthur Worsley was still making a habit of it—and a very successful habit, too, for on November 1 he flew off again for New York for yet another appearance on Ed Sullivan's fabulous TV programme "Toast of the Town." Arthur can certainly claim with all due modesty to be America's favourite British ventriloquist.

BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT DATE IN THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER SO FAR AS VARIETY WAS CONCERNED WAS UNDOUBTEDLY THE 18TH, FOR IT WAS ON THIS MONDAY THAT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ROYAL VARIETY PERFORMANCE IN AID OF THE VARIETY ARTISTES' BENEVOLENT FUND WAS HELD AT THE LONDON PALLADIUM BEFORE A GREAT AUDIENCE THAT INCLUDED HER MAJESTY AND PRINCE PHILIP.

As a detailed review of the Royal Show by the Editor is contained in this special issue there is no need to say more about the performance

proper, although a few sidelights may not be amiss. For instance, the accent was even more than usual on the vocal side of entertainment, with the emphasis on recording artistes, and this year's show did not contain a single speciality act, the nearest approach being the superb musical clowning of The Goofers. This was the 14th time the London Palladium had the honour of staging the Royal Show and the seventh time that Val Parnell, Managing Director of Moss' Empires, had been responsible for the presentation of the programme. Several closures were made for this night. The Victoria Palace went temporarily dark owing to the fact that all the Crazy Gang were once again in this year's performance; The Alhambra, Bradford, was closed for the night to allow Dickie Valentine to appear, although at the Empire, Leeds, a vocal topliner was put in for the night in place of David Whitfield, another Royal Performer. And Winifred Atwell came out of hospital on November 8, 10 days before the Royal Show, after having undergone an operation. Once again there was no direct broadcast of the Royal Performance, but the BBC made a recording and from this transmitted an hour's radio show on the Light Programme the following Sunday afternoon (November 24). And Dickie Henderson found the night of the 18th a very busy one for he doubled the Lon-

don Palladium Royal Performance with his usual appearances in resident revue at the Prince of Wales's Theatre in Coventry Street!

## CLOSE DOWN OF FAMOUS USO

THE VAST USA United Services Organisation's Camp Shows—the American equivalent of ENSA—came to an end on November 2, when the last American vaudeville unit returned to the States.

The organisation, which was to be liquidated on December 31 this year, played to millions of American and Allied servicemen in all parts of the world during and after the Second World War. Shows were started early in 1940 as "The Friends of the Soldiers" and the first unit to entertain US forces based in Great Britain arrived here in January 1941. During the war 34 members of USO units lost their lives.

AFTER a protracted business and pleasure trip to this country, musical-comedy actress Lizbeth Webb returned to her home in Tripoli in company with her husband, on November 6.

The annual "stag" party of the Vaudeville Golfing Society was held at the Park Lane Hotel on Sunday, Concluded on opposite page.

## Seasonal Greetings TO ALL

from

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THIS YEAR OF VARIETY

## CLOSING DAYS OF THIS YEAR OF VARIETY 1957

LEN EVANS REVIEW CONCLUSION

**YANKEES:**  
**£23,000 LOSS**

November 10, when a jampacked gathering of stalwarts and their friends settled down to hear some choice speeches and some equally choice cabaret items.

During the first week in the month it was announced that Clarkson Rose, of "Twinkle" fame had been elected King Rat of the Grand Order of Water Rats for the year 1958. "Clarkie," whose famous party is now 37 years old, was Prince Rat of the Order for 1957.

On November 5 Irish colleen Ruby Murray was saying "au revoir" before flying off to New York for her first appearance on American TV. Accompanying her were bright British comedienne Audrey Jeans, and their indefatigable agent Keith Devon.

HUGHIE GREEN succeeded on November 10 Bob Monkhouse (who in turn had succeeded Dickie Henderson) as compere of Val Parnell's favourite "Sunday Night at the London Palladium." And the same day comedians Stan Stennet and Wally Dunn flew back to this country after a most appreciated tour in Malaya. (Stan arrived with 500 letters and messages from the lads out there to their parents here).

**ANOTHER CLOSES DOWN**

AFTER A RUN of 50 years the Queen's Theatre in Holbeck, Leeds, finally closed down. The Queen's

first shows were touring versions of plays and musical comedies and after a spell of variety and revue went over to films about 25 years ago.

David Hughes, one of those singers who can play anything from a single in variety to male lead in a big musical, was announced to be making his debut in pantomime this year. He was to open on December 23 at the Granada, Sutton, in the title rôle of "Robin Hood."

Sporting a fine moustache, America's ace comedian Danny Kaye flew into London on the 10th on a very brief visit; the following week he was beginning work on his new film in France.

November 11 saw the beginning of a four weeks Birthday Show staged by Bob and Maurice Kennedy at the Hippodrome, Dudley. Pat Kirkwood, Ken Dodd, Charlie Cairoli with Paul, the Hedley Ward Trio and Boyer and Ravel were some of the twinkling stars on the bill. It was also announced that "Cinderella" would be staged at Dudley this Christmas with Shirley Abicair in the title rôle and Derek Roy playing his favourite part of "Buttons."

Live shows continued to be popular at the Regal Cinema in Hull, where, after a spectacularly successful week the last week in October with Lonnie Donegan topping, the theatre again presented "flesh and blood" entertainment on November 24 when Cyril Stapleton and the

### A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year



### MORECAMBE & WISE

Currently: COVENTRY THEATRE

Show Band Show, with Ronnie Hilton, were the attractions. Film policy was to be interrupted again on January 13 to make way for "Cinderella" pantomime with Edna Savage and Lorrae Desmond starred.

A Gerald Palmer ice pantomime, "Cinderella," was due to play a three and a half weeks season at the Garrick, Southport (an Essoldo theatre) beginning Boxing Day. Principals: George Martin ("Buttons"), Rene Strange and Iris Villiers. Mr. Palmer was responsible for the ice show staged at the Garrick during the summer season.

Scots comedian Jack Radcliffe got back home to Glasgow on November 16 after a tour of America and Canada.

At the Finsbury Park Empire, London, N., on November 25, band-leader Eric Delaney staged his new spectacular touring show with most successful results. Eric introduced some novel ideas of his own; these were readily appreciated by audiences.

An entertainer in more fields than one, Sunderland and England outside left Colin Grainger deputised for singer Ronnie Hilton at Preston on November 17 and at Newcastle the following night. Ronnie was in the Royal Performance on November 18 so Colin sang with Cyril Stapleton and the Show Band. The footballing-singer has already played several of the Moss' Empires up north.

Pamela Butler, charming understudy to Joan Regan at the London Palladium, was married to stage director John Myllus at St. Jude's, Earls Court, on November 2. Once with the George Mitchell Choir, Pamela later became a principal in the touring version of "Kismet." When Miss Regan was laid low through influenza she appeared in her stead at the Palladium for a spell.

That popular Canadian couple Bernard Braden and Barbara Kelly had embarked on a courageous venture of playing a series of one-night stands in places not usually visited by star artistes. The venture was proving happy both to artistes as well as to audiences.

The American musical "Damn Yankees" came off at the London Coliseum on November 9; the show, according to a writer on a national daily newspaper, ended £23,000 in the red.

Judy Garland and Alan King, stars of the Judy Garland Show at the Dominion, Tottenham Court Road, were guests of honour of the Variety Club of Great Britain at their luncheon at the Savoy Hotel on November 12. Guests were introduced by TV and radio personality David Jacobs, who is a Variety Club member and one of Britain's most popular disc jockeys and television comperes.



# And Still More L.P.s For Xmas & The New Year..

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so much in these modern  
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Top British clarinetist  
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render Dear ● As Time  
Goes By ● Once in a  
White ● A Lovely Way to  
Spend an Evening ● You  
Go to My Head ● Stars  
Fell on Alabama ● Body  
and Soul ● You Are Too  
Beautiful ● Someone to  
Watch Over Me.

Palladium pianist Pat  
Dodd, with George Fier-  
stone (drums) and Joe  
Muddel (bass), provides  
some intimate persuasive  
music in this excellent  
selection. Playing is deft,  
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tive. Just the thing when  
you're in reflective mood  
and want to relax and for-  
get your worries.

Pat, a conscientious per-  
former, has done a perfect  
job here and deserves to  
make a hit with this excel-  
lently chosen selection.

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Love ● I Want a Little  
Girl ● Jersey Lightning ●  
Rockin' Chair ● Someone  
Stole Gabriel's Horn ●  
Just Squeeze Me ● Ole  
Miss Rag.

Popular Humphrey Lyttel-  
ton scores with eight breezy  
numbers. Varied fare, and  
all the titles have punch  
and style — ideal for  
'Humph' devotees.

### AT THE EMBERS

Dorothy Donegan

(COLUMBIA 33S1116)

● That Old Black Magic  
● Over the Rainbow ●  
Humoresque ● Autumn  
Leaves ● Lullaby of Bird-  
land ● This Can't Be Love  
● September Song ●  
Donegan Walk ● My  
Funny Valentine ● Sweet  
Georgia Brown.

You have to imagine  
for yourself all the warm  
décor, smart conversation  
and good food at "The  
Embers" while you listen  
to this disc. But all the  
heat and brilliance of  
Dorothy Donegan at her  
piano comes out to dazzle  
you, and this fine jazz  
artiste is right on top of  
her form.

### TRANSATLANTIC

Dennis Wilson (piano) with  
his Quartet and Orchestra  
(DONEGALL DON 1005)

● The Touch of Your Lips  
● We'll Gather Lilacs ●  
Green Sleeves ● Sky Lark  
● Have You Met Miss  
Jones? ● Transatlantic  
Lullaby ● It's Only a  
Paper Moon ● Stardust  
● I'll See You Again ● My  
Prayer ● The Very Thought  
of You ● Poor Little Rich  
Girl.

Fine playing from Dennis  
Wilson, piano star from  
Leicester, puts a new bloom  
on these lilting melodies  
from the past. Supported  
by an instrumental quartet  
as well as a full orchestra,  
he makes the music stylish  
from first to last, yet it's  
always lively enough to  
keep you and your friends  
in a festive mood.

### SARAH VAUGHAN

sings

GEORGE GERSHWIN

Volume Two

(12 in. MERCURY MPL  
6527)

● Aren't You Kinda Glad  
We Did? ● They All  
Laughed ● Looking For  
A Boy ● He Loves And  
She Loves ● My Man's  
Gone Now ● I Won't Say  
I Will ● A Foggy Day ●  
Let's Call the Whole  
Thing Off ● Things Are  
Looking Up ● Please  
Do It Again ● Love  
Walked In

Sarah—with her sleek,  
satin voice—ranges the  
years again in search of  
the best of Gershwin.  
This offering goes from  
"Please Do It Again"  
(1922) to "Aren't You  
Kinda" (1946)

### LIONEL HAMPTON PLAYS LOVE SONGS

Lionel Hampton, Oscar  
Peterson, Buddy Rich and  
Ray Brown

(H.M.V. CLP 1136)

● Love for Sale ● Stardust  
● I Can't Get Started ●  
Willow Weep for Me.

Playing pretty for a  
change, Hampton goes in  
for four love songs on his  
latest disc. Only four num-  
bers on a 12-inch longplay?  
Yes—for these are really  
originally arrangements that  
deal with the melodies in  
lots of unexpected ways.  
The quality is Hampton at  
his best, so what more can  
you ask?

### YOU ARE MY LUCKY STAR

Petula Clark

(NIXA NPL 18007)

● It's Foolish But It's Fun  
● Sonny Boy ● Zing Went  
the Strings of My Heart  
● Alone ● I, YI, YI, YI,  
YI ● Goodnight My Love  
● I Wish I Knew ● Slum-  
ming on Park Avenue ●  
As Time Goes By ● It's  
the Natural Thing to Do  
● You Are My Lucky Star

Twelve famous film songs  
make up popular Petula  
Clark's latest disc—and  
very welcome they are. Her  
fresh young voice is as  
attractive as ever, and this  
selection of melodies from  
the movies should increase  
the already high reputation  
she enjoys.

### EMPEROR OF SONG

Paul Robeson

(H.M.V. DLP 1165)

● Ma Curly Headed Baby  
● Carry Me Back to Green  
Pastures ● I Still Suits Me  
● Just a Wearyin' for You  
● Swing Low, Sweet  
Chariot ● My Old Ken-  
tucky Home ● Fat Li'l  
Feller wid His Mammy's  
Eyes ● Short'nin' Bread ●  
Song of the Volga Boatmen  
● Waggon Wheels ● My  
Way.

The rich, velvet tone of  
Robeson seems better than  
ever in these nostalgic  
songs that seem to have  
been written specially for  
him. Superb diction and  
and pitch make every  
word tell, and the sheer  
quality of the singing is  
really spell-binding.

### THE DIAMONDS

(10 in. MERCURY MPT  
7526)

● Till My Baby Comes  
Home ● Shoo Ya Blues  
● One and Only ● Honey  
● Girl of Mine ● Honey  
Bird ● For You Alone ●  
My Dog Likes Your Dog  
● Cool, Cool Baby ●  
You Are the Limit

Vocal group who  
reached fame through  
their high-selling 78 of  
"Little Darlin'" bring  
us an energetic display  
of beat numbers. Defini-  
tely for the cats.

### FAMOUS THEMES FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA

Monia Litter, Semprini, Wil-  
liam Hill - Bowen with  
George Melachrino and his  
Orchestra

(H.M.V. DLP 1167)

● Rhapsody in Blue ●  
Tristesse ● Hungarian  
March ● Warsaw Concerto  
● Legend ● La Campan-  
ella.

There can be no better  
value for money than you  
get here. Popular melo-  
dies by Chopin, Liszt and  
Gershwin are given the  
full lush Melachrino treat-  
ment, the three pianists  
are all masters of nimble  
technique and recording  
quality is first-rate.

### PARTY PACKET

Big Ben Banjo Band

(COLUMBIA 33S1118)

● Medley ● Charleston ●  
Sleepy Time Gal ● Temp-  
tation Rag ● Medley ●  
Alabama Bound ● How  
High the Moon ● Whist-  
ling Rufus ● Medley.

Just the thing to cheer  
you up on a cold winter's  
night, this medley of good  
old tunes is as bright and  
lively as you could wish.

### VIOLIN AND VOICES

Max Jaffa with the Bill  
Shepherd Chorus

(COLUMBIA 33S1120)

● You've Done Something  
to My Heart ● They  
Didn't Believe Me ● Long  
Ago ● The Way You Look  
Tonight ● The Girl That I  
Marry ● She's My Lovely  
● All Alone ● A Pretty  
Girl Is Like a Melody ●  
I'll Never Be the Same ●  
Thanks for the Memory.

There's enchanting nove-  
lty here in these roman-  
tic arrangements for violin  
and chorus of popular  
numbers of a little while  
ago. Max Jaffa's violin  
sings like a bird, and the  
voices blend superbly.

### FOLLOW THE SUN

Philip Green and his May-  
fair Orchestra

(COLUMBIA 33SX1062)

● Rendezvous in Rio ●  
Viva Venezuela ● Miami  
Beach ● Spring in Siam  
● Honolulu Honeymoon ●  
Jamaican Jamboree ● Tan-  
gier Intrigue ● Baghdad  
Bazaar ● Midnight in  
Malaya ● Mexico, Ole! ●  
Venetian Blue ● Las Vegas  
Vacation.

"Round the World in  
Eighty Days" has nothing  
on the trip this breezy  
disc takes you in fifty  
minutes. You can sit  
round the fire and enjoy  
your roast chestnuts while  
Philip Green brings you  
all the warmth and glam-  
our of Rio, Miami  
Beach, Morocco and  
Baghdad! Playing is beau-  
tifully smooth and bal-  
anced, and recording  
quality is tip-top.

### FAMILY SING-SONG

Vaughn Monroe with the  
Moonmen and Orchestra  
conducted by  
Gene Hammett.

(R.C.A. RD 27049)

● I Want a Girl ● Let Me  
Call You Sweetheart ●  
Home on the Range ● Till  
We Meet Again ● Whiffen-  
poof Song ● You Are My  
Sunshine ● There's a Long,  
Long Trail ● The Side-  
walks of New York ● Girl  
of My Dreams ● Daisy  
Bell ● Wait 'Till the Sun  
Shines Nelly ● The Band  
Played On ● Goodnight  
heart.

Roll back that rug,  
spread yourselves com-  
fortably round the room,  
and give your lungs a bit  
of exercise by joining in  
these good old choruses.  
Vaughn Monroe has an  
easy, relaxed style that  
should put you at ease,  
too, and if he can't make  
the family sing up no-one  
ever will!

### PEARL BAILEY

ABROAD

Pearl Bailey

(COLUMBIA 33SX1065)

● Bill Bailey, Won't You  
Please Come Home ● Non  
Dimentic ● South Amer-  
ica, Take It Away ● Shein  
Vi Di L'Vore ● C'Est  
Magnifique ● Loch  
Lomond ● That's What I  
Like About the North ●  
You Came a Long Way  
from St. Louis ● Mambo,  
Tango, Samba, Calypso  
Blues ● Any Place I Hang  
My Hat Is Home ● Ballin'  
the Jack ● There's a Boat  
dats Leavin' Soon for New  
York.

No mistaking the one and  
only Pearl Bailey—even  
though she's gone abroad  
for this selection. Volup-  
tuous singing and the aban-  
doned style that makes  
your temperature soar to  
the fever mark. A pearl of  
a record!

### HALL-MARKS

Henry Hall and his  
Orchestra

(10 in. COLUMBIA 1067)

● Teddy Bears' Picnic ●  
She Wore a Little Jacket  
of Blue ● I Took My  
Harp to a Party ● Leave  
the Pretty Girls Alone ●  
Slow Waltz Medley ●  
Music Goes Round and  
Round

● Around the Marble  
Arch ● Little Man, You've  
Had a Busy Day ● Fast  
Waltz Medley ● Horsey,  
Horsey ● The Sun Has  
Got His Hat On ● It's  
Time To Say Goodnight

Utterly delightful  
feast of musical memo-  
ries of the twenties  
and thirties. Henry has  
given them a sparkling  
treatment with his  
modern orchestra, and  
has the able help of the  
Coronets vocal group.

### AT HOME WITH DOROTHY AND RAYMOND

Dorothy Collins  
Raymond Scott Quintet

● Express To The Moon  
● Tiger Rag ● Bird  
Life In The Bronx ●  
Dinah ● Ectoplasm ●  
Street Corner in Paris  
● Tico-Tico ● Sometimes  
I'm Happy ● Snake  
Woman ● Singing In The  
Rain

Husband-wife team of  
composer - conductor  
Raymond Scott and voca-  
list Dorothy Collins  
brings us a longplay of  
great musical interest.  
See how modern it is—  
that first title is, in full:  
"Dedicatory piece to  
the crew and passengers  
of the first experimental  
rocket express to the  
moon."

### MOVIE MOODS

GEORGE CATES and his  
Chorus and Orchestra.

(CORAL LVA 9065)

● Moonglow and "Picnic"  
Theme ● Friendly Per-  
suasion ● Man On Fire  
● This Could Be The  
Night ● Anastasia ●  
Whatever Will Be, Will Be  
● The Strange One ●  
Wilt Thou Have My  
Hand? ● Boy On A  
Dolphin ● Your Kiss ●  
Love Theme from "Giant"  
● Theme from "Rebel  
Without a Cause"

The movie world is an  
obvious source of soar-  
ing, surging music—and  
here is some of the best  
of it from the films of  
recent years, arranged  
and conducted by the  
brilliant George Cates.

### SCRAPBOOK

The voices of Walter  
Schumann

(RCA RD-27025).

● All You Need is a Song  
● Autumn Nocturne ●  
Scherzo (Tchaikovsky's  
Fifth Symphony) ● Have  
You Ever Been Lonely? ●  
He's Gone Away ● Chlo  
Blues ● When You're  
Away ● Elijah Rock ●  
I'll Remember April ●  
Hospodi Pomitui (Lord  
Have Mercy) ● Surrey  
With the Fringe on Top ●  
Blue Moon ● Chanson  
Epique ● Bells of St.  
Mary's

Varied listening—of top  
quality on all tracks.

### A FLASH OF STRINGS

Orchestra conducted by  
DORIAN.

(LONDON HBD 1077).

● Treble Talk ● Pirouette  
● Beeswax ● Sixty Second  
Swing ● For the Birds ●  
El Cumbanchero ● Hurry,  
Harry, Little Bells ● Clean  
Sweep ● Elf on a Pogo ●  
Velo Violin ● What's the  
Rush? ● Holiday for  
Strings.

Yes, it's a feast of  
strings all right—not so  
much the dreamy, "late  
hour listening" type, but  
ones charged with tre-  
mendous rhythm and  
vitality.

### THIS IS FATS DOMINO

● Blueberry Hill ● Honey  
Chile ● What's the Reason  
● Blue Monday ● So  
Long ● La-La ● Troubles  
of My Own ● You Done  
Me Wrong ● Reeling and  
Rocking ● The Fat Man's  
Hop ● Poor, Poor Me ●  
Trust in Me.

(LONDON HAR 2073).

The rock 'n' roll man  
is at it again, and he's  
never been in better form  
than here.

### ALEXANDER THE GREAT

(LONDON HBU 1076)

TOMMY ALEXANDER &  
His Orchestra.

● Mad About the Boy ●  
Tomboy ● We'll be To-  
gether Again ● I Hadn't  
Anyone Till You ● Mid-  
night Sun ● Lullaby of  
Birdland ● Old Devil Moon  
● The Song Is You ● All  
the Things You Are ● It  
Could Happen To You ●  
Flamingo.

Not one for the pur-  
ists, but you get a rollick-  
ing mixture of "quicks"  
and "slows" just right for  
the party.

### HOW ABOUT YOU?

Dennis Lotis  
(NIXA NEP 24053)

● I've Told Every Little  
Star ● Where or When  
You've Done Something to  
My Heart ● But Not for  
Me.

Four more tracks from  
Dennis' LP, these four  
numbers will appeal to all  
Lotis lovers. Good back-  
ing from Tony Osborne  
and his orchestra shows off  
this appealing young ar-  
tiste's voice to full advan-  
tage (extended play disc).

### CAFE RENDEZVOUS

Bill Snyder (Piano)  
with Instrumental Accom-  
paniment

(BRUNSWICK LAT 8200)

● Cafe Conversation ●  
When I'm With You ●  
Sheer Magic ● Raggedy  
Ruthie ● Iris ● Fountain  
in Central Park  
● Black Orchid ● This is  
Me Loving You ● Ridin'  
the Offbeat ● The Window  
Shoppers ● Ginger ●  
Choppin' Up Chopin

Pianist-composer Snyder  
—known to many by his  
"Lover's Touch" LP  
and other discs—turns in  
another good pianistic  
stunt, with suitable back-  
ing.

### SONNY

Sonny James  
(12 in. CAPITOL T867)

● Near You ● A Fool  
Such As I ● Heartaches  
● Ages And Ages Ago ● I'll  
Never Get Over You ●  
Secret Love

● Beg Your Pardon ●  
Just Out of Reach ● How's  
The World Treating You ●  
I Forgot More Than You'll  
Ever Know ● Almost ●  
Because of You

Sonny James, dubbed  
"the Southern Gentleman,"  
sold over two million copies  
of his "Young Love." This  
longplay gives further evi-  
dence of a feelingful, "com-  
mercial" vocal style. Defi-  
nitely one for "pop" fans.



"FRUSTRATING; BUT ENDLESSLY FASCINATING!" — so says Hubert Hughes of the disc business. Mr. Hughes is commercial manager of the records division of Philips Electrical Ltd. He operates from a luxury office overlooking Hyde Park in the headquarters of the Philips label in Stanhope House, near Marble Arch, London.

Since Philips issue discs by an imposing array of topline British artistes, and (through their business link with American Columbia) a formidable list of U.S.A. performers also, his summing up of the record world is based on experience of no mean scope.

He goes on to tell you: "In this business of making records, there's a continual succession of problems to be overcome—and, believe me, the surmounting of them often entails working at top speed, and under high pressure. But it's worth it. There's always a challenge, which I find most interesting and stimulating, to unearth and develop new technical ideas; to present artistes of top calibre; to equip them with up-to-the-minute material; and to present them by the most modern and enterprising methods."

**SYSTEMATIC ...**

HE IS KEEN to stress the systematic way in which Philips try to develop new recording artistes. He explains: "We work, naturally, on a mathematical 'breakdown' of the price of a record. Certain proportions go, for example, to purchase tax, to the wholesaler, to the retailer, to overheads, to advertising, to artistes' royalties and so on. But there is always a definite amount set aside for the promotion of new talent.

"It may be the case, as you will see from our files, that the launching of a new performer will show an initial loss. That we take in our stride. It is a necessary hazard. Short-term losses are worth tolerating if, in the long run, we produce new disc artistes who become established as public favourites. You may be sure that anyone signed by the Philips label is given a fair and thorough opportunity to make good."

**PORTABLES ...**

MR. HUGHES IS FULLY ALIVE to the growing demand for microgroove records. He states, for example, that whereas a year ago the 45 r.p.m. disc accounted for some 10 per cent of the trade's "singles" the figure is now somewhere between 15 per cent and 17½ per cent.

One thing he will watch with special interest in 1958 is the promotion of the portable electric player. He points out: "With these portables, the amplifying is done by a transistor—roughly, a valve without a filament. This allows you to dispense with a 'mains'

connection, yet at the same time achieve reproduction of acceptable quality."

Already, he says, these portables have become very much the vogue on the Continent, where microgroove discs "form 90 per cent of the Philips output."

Why this far higher proportion of "modern" recordings as compared with Britain? Major explanation is that, during the war, practically all the old-style radiograms were destroyed in the German occupation; thus, when the recording industry got going again after the war, it had perforce to start from scratch, using the most modern methods available.

**DEVELOPMENTS.**

DURING THE PAST YEAR THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS at Philips headquarters (where the record boom has been fully reflected).

One has been a considerable increase in the number of presses available to the organisation. In these days of mounting demand for discs, this is a step of first-rate strategic importance. Several labels, in 1957, were on occasions faced with the difficulty of being unable to issue discs fast enough to cope with customers' demands.

No one can say the difficulty won't recur in 1958, for the public interest in records is still growing at gathering speed. But Philips can at any rate declare with assurance that they are better equipped than ever before to meet the demands of the market.

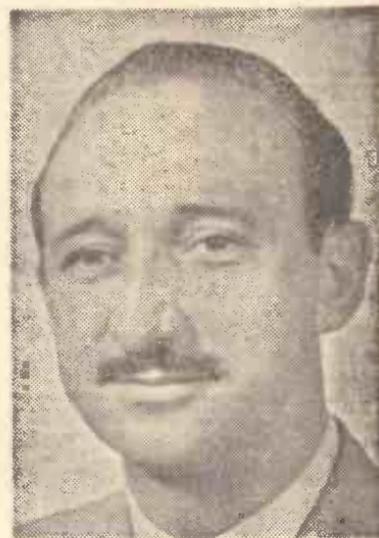
Early this year Philips brought into operation at Stan-

# THE TRICKY SIDE OF THE DISC INDUSTRY



**THEY HELP PHILIPS TO TICK ...**

Just three of the many leading lights of the great PHILIPS concern (left to right) HUBERT HUGHES; JOHNNY FRANZ and advertising expert 'BING' TAYLOR.



hope House their new recording studio — British-designed, and incorporating the most modern technical devices from all over the world. The new studio equipment alone cost over £25,000.

**SPLIT-SECOND ...**

MANAGEMENT OF THE STUDIO (with all its intricate problems of split-second timing, delicately-balanced sound, and disc grooves measured in thousandths of an inch) is under the trained technical eye of Peter Kay.

In July, 1957, Philips started to use the name Flamingo in connection with the copywriting of some of the music they issue on discs.

Purpose of this is mainly the copyrighting of some of the music they issue on disc. Flamingo does not, for example, issue sheet music, though no doubt arrangements exist for this to be done in liaison with one or other of the established type of publishers.

Major decision made in 1957 (but which will not take practical effect till 1958) was to issue a second popular international label: Fontana. From America this will bring top performers from the epic label, e.g. certain discs by Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra, also by Johnny Mathis, 'Something' Smith and his Redheads, Sal Mineo, Harry James, and others.

**RIVALRY ...**

A friendly rivalry will spring up within the organisation, since British artistes already on the PHILIPS label will compete with those signed by Fontana, Jack Baverstock, who produced such successes as the Russ Hamilton "We Will Make Love," and the McDevitt "Freight Train" for the ORIOLE label will be A and R man for FONTANA.

Let's now meet Philips A and R man JOHNNY FRANZ — or rather, renew acquaintance with him — for he is known to many not only for his A and R work, but for high-grade piano accompaniment of "name" artistes (chiefly Anne Shelton, but also Doris Day, Ruby Murray and others).

Job of an A and R man, as you may know, is picking artistes, and choosing their songs.

Of artistes, Johnny says: "We at Philips are not interested in five-minute wonders; we prefer performers who will sell consistently year after year. In other words, talent is our aim all the time."

Top-seller for PHILIPS in 1957 has almost certainly been Frankie Vaughan. The exuberant vocalist (with such hits as "Green Door" and "Garden of Eden" already to his credit) put in a real storming finish to 1957 with a coupling of "Man On Fire" and "Wanderin'

Eyes," followed by the swift-selling "Money In the Bank, Frank."

**SELLERS ...**

ANNE SHELTON, without producing anything to sell comparably with her 1956 hit, "Lay Down Your Arms," sold satisfactorily on 78, and (in November) produced a super-grade long-play, "The Shelton Sound."

Robert Earl, as usual, showed an ability to sell consistently through his soaring, lyrical singing; many felt his best effort of the year was on that evergreen ballad, "Fascination," while others preferred "My Special Angel," which got a five-star R.M. rating. From America, such artistes as Frankie Laine, Rosemary Clooney, Johnnie Ray, The Hi-Lo's, Guy Mitchell and Jo Stafford added to the rich PHILIPS catalogue. Probably the best-sellers from this source were Mitchell's "Singing the Blues" and Ray's "Yes, Tonight Josephine."

Shirley Bassey, Bill McGuffie, Harry Secombe, Ronnie Carroll were other British artistes who, with varying degrees of success, helped to carry the PHILIPS banner through 1957.

British newcomers to the label during the year included the Kaye Sisters, Terry Burton, Marty Wilde, Steve Martin, Marie Benson, Murray Campbell and Sonny Stewart.

Of songs, Johnny Franz says: "Main problem of an A & R man is getting the right song for the right artiste at the right time. It can be a real headache: I may urgently need a song for Robert Earl and find three good ones — all agreed!"

suitable for Frankie Vaughan (who's all fixed up anyway)!"

ESPECIALLY SUCCESSFUL during 1957 were the classical records issued by PHILIPS. In August at the Radio Show, they launched their "Favourite Music" series. This covered a wide range of 12-inch classical long-plays, with sleeves of high artistic attraction, at the keen price of 33s. 8½d.

Their initial stocks were scheduled to last three months. They sold the lot in a week.

**SALESMAN ...**

MAN WITH A difficult job at PHILIPS is sales manager Allan Tulloch.

In a notoriously unpredictable business, he has to predict. In other words, the moment he is advised, say, that Frankie Laine and Johnnie Ray are doing a disc together called "Good Evening, Friends," he has to decide its likely sale, and give the necessary pressing instructions.

It's a tricky business. On the one hand, PHILIPS don't want to be left with unsold stocks; on the other, they don't want to run out of records if a disc starts to sell fast.

Allan Tulloch tells you: "Here at PHILIPS we put out on the average, three new records a day. You have to watch the progress of each one most carefully — particularly the popular 78's. We try all the time, when a record starts to 'move,' to see that orders are met with the minimum delay at the moment, for example if we get an order from far afield (say in Glasgow) we can meet it in 24 hours. That, I hope, isn't too bad." Agreed, Mr. Tulloch, find three good ones — all agreed!

## How PHILIPS, With Its Tremendous Line-Up Of Recording Stars, Tackles The 'Frustrating But Endlessly Fascinating' Business With Sound Judgment, Skill And Success!

ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL  
24 DECEMBER — 11 JANUARY, 2.30 and 7.30 daily

**LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET**

The great new Christmas Production of

**THE NUTCRACKER**

In its entirety. A Ballet in a Prologue and Two Acts and Four Scenes  
FULL BALLET COMPANY OF ONE HUNDRED  
Decor and costumes by ALEXANDRE BENOIS  
LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA  
TICKETS 15/-, 10/-, 7/6, 5/- from Box Office  
(WATERLOO 3191) and Agents

# HOPE YOU HAVE A

Happy

Christmas



Wonderful

New Year

## Alma Cogan

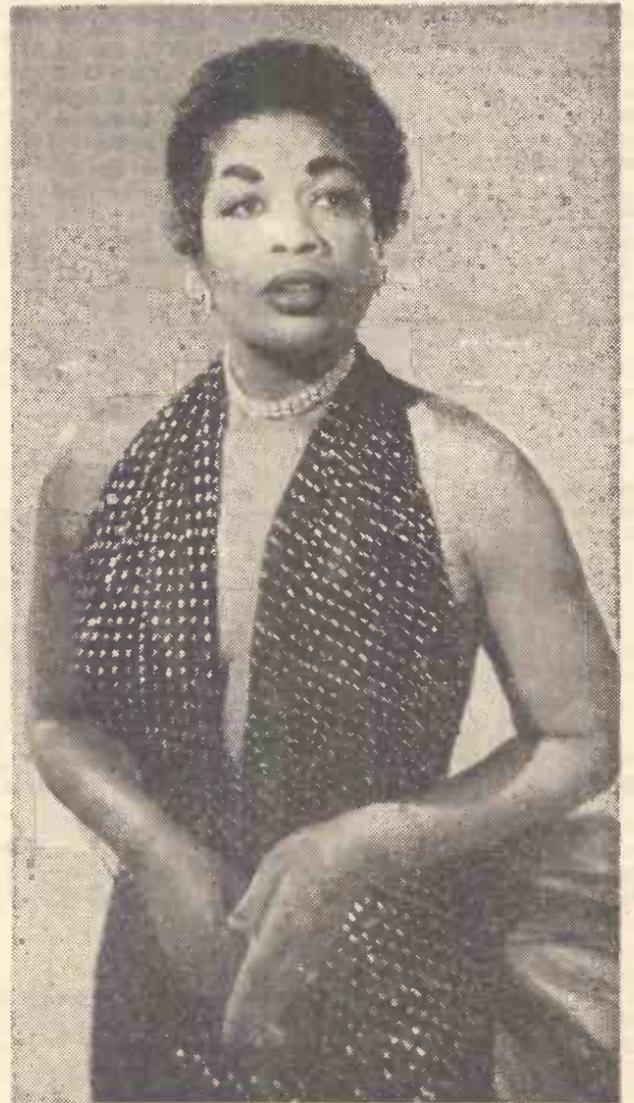
### MUSICAL AND SEASONAL GREETINGS



STANLEY BLACK

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FROM



FREDYE MARSHALL

# My Most Memorable Year

By  
**CYRIL DOWLER**



**KING RAT, 1957**

## The Grand Order of Water Rats

THE DORCHESTER HOTEL, LONDON, W., IS THE SCENE OF MANY IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS BUT TO MOST VARIETY PEOPLE THE MOST IMPORTANT IS THE ANNUAL BALL OF THE GRAND ORDER OF WATER RATS.

I cannot describe my feelings when the King Rat for 1956, Dave O'Gorman, announced to that vast assembly (Prince Littler was guest of honour) that the man who would preside over the destinies of the G.O.W.R. and be 'in the chair' for the next year was Cyril Dowler (me!).

Looking back on a crowded year, memories collide with each other...

The first initiation at which I was called upon to perform was, by a coincidence, Harold Berens, the only man I have ever been 'The Proposer' of for admission to the order...

We have had new members at the rate of almost one a month. Recently, there was Wally Peterson of the Peterson Brothers from South Africa.

The initiates have varied from Benny Lee, that popular broadcaster, to Percy Edwards, the 'BBC Bird Man'; and from Harry Shiels who had such a terrific war record as a real service entertainer, to the well-known TV personality, Arthur Haynes.



ON THE PHILANTHROPIC side, too, it has been a record year.

Stanley Matthews made a special journey from Blackpool to Chelsea to help in the football match we organised at Stamford Bridge. This raised £1,600. An almost identical sum was the result of the Blackpool Water Rats charity football match organised by past King Rat, Ben Warriss.

Our annual outing to Clacton was even more of a success than in previous years. It coincided with companion Billy Butlin's birthday, and it fell to me to have the most pleasurable duty of presenting this wonderful man with a pair of gold cuff links from his brother Water Rats in recognition of the great things he has done for our charities and for us.

Another outstanding memory was to find myself an ordinary barker as a guest of honour of the Variety Club of Great Britain. This, of course, was an honour extended to the whole of our members.

Our headquarters, the Eccentric Club, is comprised of the most charitable men in the world and we Water Rats are proud and privileged to have such landlords and friends. We established closer social contacts than ever when these good-companion 'Eccentrics' revived their time-honoured 'Steak and Kidney Pudding' night and invited some of us along. We did an impromptu concert; their gratitude was far in excess of our efforts.



IT WOULD BE almost impossible and probably unwise for me to try to mention all those who have contributed to making my year of office so happy and glorious. I'd be sure to leave out someone that I particularly wanted to remember. I feel sure, however, that my brother Water Rats would wish me to record a special word of grateful indebtedness to Leonard Jones, our dedicated secretary, who ought to have been in the diplomatic corps—even though he is such a brilliant and successful accountant.

THE GREATEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR (AND IN MY LIFE) WAS ON DECEMBER 9, WHEN AT A CHARITY MIDNIGHT MATINEE HRH PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH, HONoured US WITH HIS PRESENCE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 'RATS' VICTORIA PALACE SHOW, IN AID OF THE NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION, OF WHICH HE IS PRESIDENT.

The one sad thing to mar the year for me, the Order and our profession, was the loss of our Preceptor, Past King Rat Fred Russell, O.B.E. What his brother Water Rats think of him is expressed on

another page of this great Christmas number (how our Grand Old Man would have loved this issue!) by the GOWR poet laureate, past King Rat, Charlie Chester.

We treasure the words of companion Lord Alexander, of Hillsborough, in his moving address at the Preceptor's memorial service at St. Martin-in-the-Fields. This peroration was reported verbatim by the Hackney and Kingsland Gazette, the newspaper which started this remarkable man on his journalistic career. The report will be preserved in the Rats museum, a room in the Eccentric Club in which many memories are lovingly preserved in the care of Barry Lupino, the Curator of our Order.

THE LAST INITIATE of my year was Derek Roy.



THE YOUNG MEN who are the officers and workers of the future have a great tradition to live up to. They will find a sense of fellowship that increases the more you give your sincerity to it. Not to be wondered, then, that the great ones have devoted themselves to the ideals of our order both in the past and today.

I know that the new members will give this unique organisation so much of their lives that it will go on from strength to strength. The officers for next year will, I am certain, give King Rat, Clarkson Rose, the same loyalty and help that they have so unselfishly given to me.

Although I have tried to avoid individualising, I simply must thank 'Clarkie' for being such a wonderful Prince Rat; no king could wish for a better.

MAY GOD BLESS ABSENT RATS AT HOME AND ABROAD, PARTICULARLY THOSE OVERSEAS RATS WHOSE FRATERNAL COMRADESHIP WE CHERISH, AND THOSE OF OUR BRETHREN WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE, WHOSE MEMORY LIVES AT THE END OF EACH LODGE MEETING.

"And this is the emblem of our society;

"Each member acts with the greatest propriety.

"Jolly old sports,

"To us they raise their hats,

"A jolly lot of fellows are the Water Rats."

## Greetings from America

STAN LAUREL



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Are glad to be kept so busy but wish they could find time to come over and see Bernard Delfont, Rosa Heppner, Sophie Elvin, The Water Rats, Olivelli's, Hannen Swaffer, a little guy called Wood and a host of others.

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TEmple Bar 5224  
Direction :  
**ROBERT LUFF**  
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7003 & 1070



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EDGWARE, MIDDX.  
Edgware 3733



**DOROTHY SQUIRES**  
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Jermyn St.,  
London, W.1  
Whitehall 9901

**TERRY DENE**  
FAN CLUB  
SECRETARY,  
59, Old Compton  
Street,  
London, W.1



**JOAN HINDE**  
Britain's Premier  
Trumpeter.  
Direction :  
**CECIL BRAHAM**  
AGENCY,  
TEmple Bar  
8503/4.




**JIMMY WHEELER**  
Direction :  
Billy Marsh,  
(Bernard Delfont  
Agency)

**LARRY PAGE**  
COLUMBIA  
RECORDS  
Fan Club Sec.:  
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Hayes, Middx.




**DICKIE HENDERSON**  
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Bernard Delfont



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**THE HEDLEY WARD  
TRIO**  
Dir.: Fosters Agency  
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**HARRY BENET**  
THE  
VENTERTAINER  
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79 Elphinstone  
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**RONNIE RONALDE**  
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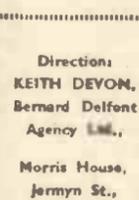
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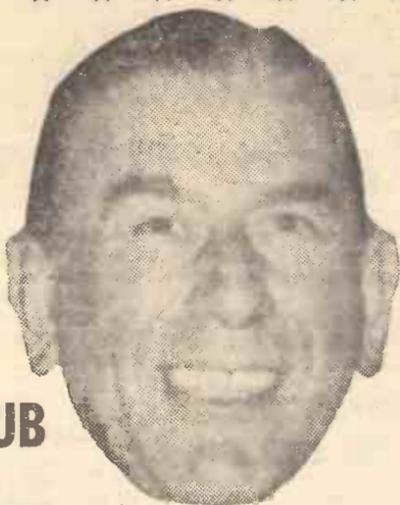


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# The Royal Variety Performance: London Palladium, Monday Nov. 18, 1957

## An Excellent Programme: But A Little More Variety Would Have Made It Even Better

### The Courage Of Tommy Steele Was The Heroic Highlight Of The Evening

The Royal Variety Performance of 1957 presented to Her Majesty the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and The Queen Mother at the London Palladium on the night of Monday November 18 will not go down in history as the greatest of the series (the first Royal Command, as it was known until recent years, was staged in 1912 at the Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue); but it did produce some excellent entertainment . . . Excellent entertainment, indeed, but not wholly consistent, I regret to say.

A big, glorious show, yes, but not so spectacular as some of its predecessors.

Variety? . . . Well, yes, but lacking in speciality acts, acrobats, dancers, straight magicians (thank goodness, though, for Tommy Cooper) and a good old British red-nosed comedian — for example, a rollicking Billy Russell (so often described as "the salt of the British music-hall") or even one without a red-nose, like a rousing, down-to-earth Jimmy Wheeler. Had it not been for the irresistible Crazy Gang, Great Britain would have been most poorly represented where comedy was concerned . . . I'll give three hearty cheers for those wonder veterans right now—and more later on in this review.

For me—and, I guess, to the majority of that stiff-shirted audience—the highlight of the entire show was the courage of Tommy Steele. And courage I mean in the fullest sense of the term. I have written pages about this remarkable youngster from Bermondsey right from the very first day he entered show business, but I now write about him with an admiration I didn't think he'd ever give me cause for. I'm not going to praise his performance purely by rock 'n' roll standards. I praise him as a trouper, a real, darned good plucked 'un, a youngster of tremendous courage fighting the toughest battle he has ever had to tackle since his first booking as a variety artiste at Sunderland Empire just over a year ago.

But more about this later on . . .

Let's preamble a little more about the show in general before reviewing the long, long catalogue of acts.

The American contingent did not raise the roof, although it did very well. Mario Lanza, undoubtedly the possessor of a magnificent voice, failed to register the mighty impact so confidently anticipated. The applause was generous, but was nullified simply because Mario did not present himself properly.

There was an uncertain air about him as he made his entry, and, of course, it might be that nervousness got the better of him. Certainly there was no vibrance in the manner in which he went from one song to the other and for an artiste of his stature persistently to wave his forefinger to the audience suggested more of the pop-singing type—in fact, he almost took on the appearance of the guy Dickie Henderson had earlier in the programme so devastatingly lampooned.

Judy Garland got a big hand, but nostalgia had a lot to do with this; Leo de Lyon suffered because time was against him, and the other American act, The Goofers, second 'turn' on, can really claim to have scored the biggest success for their country.

### Allowances More Than Usual To Be Made

The Royal Variety Performance is a tremendous undertaking for all concerned—from the planners to the artistes. One must make more allowances than usual. It would be utterly impossible to please all the people all the time. The producer is burdened with a responsibility that must be a nightmare weeks before the show. Timing the artistes is his biggest worry. He wants to cram the cream of the entertainment profession into his show; he is ever in danger of being criticised for allowing this one 'too much' time, for giving that one 'too little.'

I heard many comments, for instance, on the 'throwing away' of seven such great singing top-liners as Frankie Vaughan, Ronnie Hilton, David Whitfield, Malcolm Vaughan, Dickie Valentine, Dennis Lotis and Teddy Johnson in a scene lasting less than four minutes and in which not one of these artistes sang a number solo.

I heard comments about the brevity of Winifred Atwell's act . . . I heard comments about the length of others.

The task of the planners and the producers is open to more criticism in an event of this kind than even an American musical comedy by our national newspaper critics.

And now—let's go on with the show: let me attempt to give those of you who were not there some little idea of what went on that huge Palladium stage in the presence of a packed-to-capacity audience distinguished by the presence of the Queen and other members of the Royal Family.

### MAX STARTS THE BALL ROLLING

A LIVELIER AND MORE COLOURFUL OPENING than the one which kicks off the current Palladium revue, "We're Having a Ball," could not have been thought of. The setting—a gaily lit and lushly designed sort of country house with a verandah—is beautifully staged and those involved must have been extremely happy, for the original Palladium Company, including the George Mitchell Singers and the George Carden Dancers know the routine to the last note and step to perfection.

The Kaye Sisters joined in the whirl of song and dance, and the first round of applause went to them. Max Bygraves' cheeky entry in a one-man "bubble" car was robustly cheered and the comedian promised everybody outfront that from this moment on they're really going to have a ball and that the artistes were really going to live it up.

Max's breezy personality soon got across and he had little difficulty in breaking down the traditional frugidity of the 20-guinea stall-ticket buyers. Especially when he cracked that gag about calling the London Palladium the "London Plasma" . . . ("Plasma," he explained, "because 20 guineas for a seat is real blood-money.")

A couple of up-to-date gags held Max in good stead and then he introduced The Goofers, that tuneful American team of zany clown-musicians.

The team—Tommy Terry, Jimmy Dell, Jack Holliday, Jimmy Vincent and Frank Nichols—scored a solid hit despite the drastic curtailment of their act, cut from 22 minutes to nine. They threw themselves about, gagged and goggled, played (individually and collectively) piano, bass, guitar, trumpet and drums with split-second precision and crammed everything they possibly could into the time allotted to them. Pity they couldn't finish up with their spectacularly funny trapeze business, but they bowed off to plenty of applause and were royally approved, too.

Bob Monkhouse made his first entry as compère. Slick and smart he rattled off his gags to fairly big laughs and then introduced the Scottish comedian, Jimmy Logan, who, grotesquely garbed in flaming

red shirt and outside green pants, and armed with a gigantic bass, rendered a couple of hill-billy numbers.

Jimmy's act didn't quite come off. The comedy stuff just wasn't strong enough.

a tremendous offering of "We'll Keep a Welcome in the Valley." Reception here was what they call in show business a show-stopper. The warm, lovable personality of Harry generated throughout the presentation.

wisely take the micky out of the Bard. Bud Flanagan shone and Jimmy Nervo, Teddy Knox, Charlie Naughton, Jimmy Gold and "Monsewer" Eddie Gray shone with him. The Queen, Prince Philip and the Queen Mother

### HARRY SECOMBE: A REAL TRIUMPH

Harry Secombe, immaculately attired in a super alpaca tuxedo (who'd ever associate him with the Goons in this turn-out?) was heartily received and registered the first big socko success of the evening with his magnificent rendering of "On With The Motley." "So much for culture," he remarked, then retired, temporarily, to give way to the 80-strong Morrision Orpheus Choir, from Wales. Conducted by Ivor S. Sims, these lusty-voiced males fervently let out with "Land of My Fathers." Harry returned and, with the choir, stirred one and all with

### SPECIAL By ISIDORE GREEN

YELL OF THE NIGHT was the inimitable, impossible Crazy Gang's "interpretation" of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Act V—Scene 1), currently the laughing hit of Jack Hylton's "These Foolish Kings" at the Victoria Palace. Every member of the Gang had a part after his own heart—to well and

laughed unrestrainedly at this frenzied mocking of William Shakespeare.

Leo de Lyon, the American comedian, who has already established himself as a leading Palladium favourite, went over nicely and neatly with his unique simultaneous humming-and-whistling act, but the total result was not sensational—time, or lack of it, hindered his act.

### THE MEN BEHIND THE ROYAL SHOW SCENES



PRINCELITTLER, C.B.E. Chairman, Moss Empires Ltd.



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CHARLES HENRY Producer for Moss Empires Ltd.



GEORGE MARGRAVE Manager, The London Palladium



ARTHUR SCOTT Organiser & General Sec., The Variety Artistes Benevolent Fund

### 'OUR GRACIE' IN HER 8th ROYAL SHOW

OUR ONE AND ONLY GRACIE FIELDS—this was her eighth appearance in a Royal Variety Show—received her usual big plaudits. Tastefully attired in a plain black gown, the now grey-haired Gracie emphasised more than ever that the blood of show business still runs as red as ever through her veins. Her voice may be a little thinner now, but her personality radiates with all its old power. She switched from ballad ("The Old Songs") to comedy ("Alfonso, My Hot Spanish Knight") from comedy to swing ("Just Bound to See You Baby"), then again to comedy ("Happy, Happy Wedding Day"), wound up with the religious Christmas ballad, "Mary's Boy Child" (which recording by Harry Belafonte, incidentally, became Number One in our Top Ten).

Gracie was accompanied at the piano by Bert Waller, formerly with Frankie Vaughan.

Great Britain can be proud of Dickie Henderson. In what was probably the triumph of his life, he registered the outstanding comedy solo hit of the Royal Show.

He delighted the members of the Royal Family and the audience with the funniest mickey-taking skit ever presented on any Vaudeville stage . . . it was on one of those overnight recording stars. The hand-trailing microphone business was a sheer joy and Dickie set the seal of triumph on a performance which stamped him as one of the finest and slickest comedians in show business today.

Bob Monkhouse appeared again, to crack a few more gags and to introduce Count Basie and his Band.

Here was an ideal closing of the first half presentation.

The impeccable Count at the piano and his glitteringly-arranged musicians—17 in number—offered a delightful lesson in jazz music. The skill and artistry of Count Basie is transplanted to each of his bandsmen whose interpretations of "April in Paris" and "Old Man River" were absolute classics of their kind. The powerful drum-work of Sonny Payne was one of the outstanding features of a jazz demonstration which must have even appealed to those who normally couldn't care less about this kind of music. A terrific reception marked the close of this perfectly presented offering.

Following the interval, the stage was alive with and filled by over 200 Boy Scouts, dressed in blazing red blouses and blue hats, singing, as one, "Riding on the Crest of a Wave." They represented the Gang Show which this year is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Producer Ralph Reader, who pioneered this talented troupe, received a special ovation all to himself as he appeared with his Gang.

Max Bygraves made another entry, this time to burlesque the

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

# The Royal Variety Performance :

TV character, 'Sergeant Friday' 'I'm Sergeant Saturday,' cracked Max, "I've come a little late"), then indulged in a brief piece of cross-talk with Joan Regan, whose only appearance this was. She did not sing.

Harry Secombe also appeared with Max and Joan for a fleeting moment.

Another entry by the Kaye sisters who joined Max in a delightful soft-shoe interlude made his a very pleasant addition to the proceedings.

## WARM WELCOME FOR JUDY

Judy Garland was heartily acclaimed and "Miss Show Business" put heart and soul into her offering which opened with "Rock 'n' Bye My Baby" — one of her greatest numbers—followed by her delightful tramp routine with Jimmy Brooks in "We're a Couple of Swells" and closing with "Over the Rainbow." The sweet, childish simplicity in her voice has now given way to something more harsh and 'belting', but the artistry and polish are still there, and, besides, it will take a long, long time to forget the joy Judy has brought countless thousands in the past. Those memories seemed to remain vividly in that audience tonight and the applause at the end of her act confirmed her popularity in unmistakable fashion.

Judy's talented Boy Friends—eight of them tonight—filled in the change-of-dress wait with their accustomed skill and wonderful dancing.

Uproariously funny was the 'Diplomats' sketch in which, at a long conference table, the Russian satellite was discussed by (a) Brian Reece (representing England); (b) Alfred Marks (powerfully representing Russia); (c) Ben Lyon (representing the U.S.A.) and (d) Bud Flanagan (representing Israel). Said Bud: "What is this satellite business? I don't even know how much a gross they cost . . . and, anyway, all I know about a satellite is that somebody set it right to my business . . ." and so on and so on. He even managed to get a crack in about Jack Isow's restaurant.

Jerry Desmonde made a lightning entry in the midst of the discussion—as the gov'nor of the restaurant in which the Diplomats were, as they stood up to follow his orders, revealed as waiters.

## THE NERVOUS MARIO LANZA

One of the most eagerly awaited artistes of the Royal Variety Performance was Mario Lanza. He was accorded an enormous reception, as he came on stage, but by his manner he seemed extraordinarily nervous, uncertain. He

waved his hands apprehensively, his forefinger jutting at the air, pointing in no definite direction. The range and power of Mario's voice was heard to whatever advantage possible under the circumstances, but I must say though, he was rapturously received following his renditions of "Because You're Mine," the "Stars Are Brightly Shining" aria from 'La Tosca' and 'The Loveliest Night of the Year.' But I would like to hear a Lanza less tensed, more relaxed.

Guest conductor Constantino Callinicos, a Greek, who is also Lanza's music-teacher, worked wonders with the Palladium musicians—I can tell you that he rehearsed them non-stop for over two hours the day before.

Then followed a sequence called 'Cavalcade of Variety—from the Minstrels to the Rock 'n' Rollers.' Bob Monkhouse introduced it. Norrie Paramor, blacked up, led the Big Ben Banjo Band, in a rousing selection of Dixieland melodies, with the following musicians participating: Banjos: Billy Bell, George Elliott, Cliff Devereaux, Ernie Shear, Bert Weedon and Andy Wolkowsky; accordion: Reg Hogarth; bass: Joe Muddell; trumpet: Derek Abbot; trombone: George Chisholm and, drums, Jock Cummings.

Next on were the Ragtime Octet—Ronnie Hilton, Dickie Valentine, Malcolm Vaughan, Teddy Johnson, Dennis Lotis, Frankie Vaughan, David Whitfield and (at the piano) Herschel Henlers. Garbed in old-time evening dress, these top-of-the-bill recording stars together sang "Hitchy-Koo" and "Alexander's Rag Time Band"—and that was the

## REHEARSING THE FINALE

It's nearing Royal Performance time . . . only five hours to go. Most of the company has completed its rehearsals, but those participating in the 'From Minstrel Music to the Rock 'n' Roll' Finale stay behind to polish up their respective parts. Tommy Steele leads the band . . . on the left are the Goofers; you'll probably recognise Max Bygraves on bass, Tommy Cooper (extreme right) clarinet, Bud Flanagan, banjo, Arthur Askey (also on bass), Teddy Knox, guitar . . . can you pick out Harry Secombe, Charlie Naughton, Jimmy Gold—and any others?

end of that . . . a profound disappointment to the respective admirers of these artistes whose talents were not given the fullest opportunity to shine and whose appearance was as brief as some of the stars in "Round the World in 80 Days."

Very brief, too, was the appearance of Arthur Askey and Vera Lynn, but their few moments together had compensations, for, with Arthur as George Robey and Vera as Violet Loraine, they delightfully revived that unforgettable "Bing Boys" hit-tune, "If You Were The Only Girl in the World" and had almost everybody singing it with them.

Markova brilliantly interpreted the "Dying Swan" ballet sequence, was received with loud and prolonged cheering.

Alma Cogan, with yet another gorgeous dress, this time an orange-coloured creation, warmly rendered "That's Happiness," one of her finest numbers to date, and pleased most of those present although limited time must have nullified the volume of applause. Cracked Bob Monkhouse: "Alma has presented six of her dresses to charity. Six homeless families have now moved into them."

The 20 John Tiller Girls received a tremendous ovation for their wonderful precision dancing and high-kicking in a splendidly arranged routine devised by Barbara Aitken and another stand out comedy hit of the evening was that of Prince Philip's favourite "magician" Tommy Cooper.

(I recall the occasion when, at a Variety Club luncheon, Prince Philip "stooged" for Tommy.)

Tommy, a natural comedian if ever show business produced one, presented his rib-tickling impressions of famous people of "past, present and future," produced roars of laughter from the occupants of the Royal Box and retired a pronounced hit.

Winifred Atwell, Queen of the Keyboard, was, alas, also cut (to a mere four minutes) but this great performer extracted every ounce from the time allotted and, at her "other piano" rang out merrily with "The Last Train to San Fernando," "Bring a Little Water, Sylvie," "Puttin' on the Style" and "Don't You Rock Me Daddy O." As always, the reception for Winnie was warm, sincere.

"Now," as Bob Monkhouse announced, "We come to the bang up-to-date modern trend—rock 'n' roll—and TOMMY STEELE."

This must have been the first time in the history of Tommy's show business career that his entry was not punctuated with shrieks and screams. He came on "dead," as show business describes a performer who is coldly received, and I reckon this state of affairs must have considerably shaken the

## SAID THE QUEEN TO BUD: 'I DON'T MIND THE SKIT AT ALL'

PRESENTED to the Queen, the Queen Mother and Prince Philip after the performance, were: Arthur Askey, Count Basie, Max Bygraves, Alma Cogan, Tommy Cooper, Gracie Fields, Judy Garland, Dickie Henderson, Mario Lanza, Jimmy Logan, Vera Lynn, Markova, Joan Regan, Harry Secombe, Frankie Vaughan.

Said the Queen to Arthur Scott, organiser and general secretary of the Variety Artists Benevolent Fund (whose first Royal Variety Performance this was—he has succeeded the late Henry Marlow): "We very much enjoyed it all. We love coming to these variety performances."

Prior to the show, the Royal Family were introduced to the Crazy Gang, headed by Bud Flanagan as "the headmaster of Cheam" and the others as "pupils" of the school where Prince Charles is.

The Queen laughed continuously as she chatted with the "headmaster" and the "pupils", put Bud absolutely at ease when anxiously asking if she "didn't mind the skit". She replied: "Why, not at all."

Golden Boy from Bermondsey. But he didn't show it. He doggedly carried on with his opening number, "Rock with the Cave Man"—the number that introduced him to the music-hall profession—and finished with hardly a handclap for his reward. Smiling, but with a glint of determination in his eyes, Tommy went into "Hound Dog" with all its accompanying body wriggles and shakes and frantic guitar plucking, but the audience refused to be "sent." Tommy sensed the atmosphere, worked away harder than ever and shouted almost defiantly "are you ready for the handclap?" The response was negligible. Any other artist would have had his heart broken at this horrible silence to his efforts.

Then belting away with even more doggedness and determination, Tommy plunged into 'Singing the Blues' and that began to get 'em.

The Royal Box occupants watched Tommy with admiration. The Queen began to clap her hands, the Queen Mother spon-

taneously followed suit, Prince Philip swayed his body rhythmically, clapped too, and then the house broke out into a crescendo of hand-clapping and cheering which really rocked the house to the rafters. Tommy Steele had conquered the toughest audience in the world of show business and turned near tragedy into a resounding triumph. Good for you, Tommy . . . this proved, conclusively, that you're a born trouper!

The finale brought the entire company on stage in a blaze of

light, colour and with almost everybody playing some sort of rock 'n' roll and skiffle instrument.

Gracie Fields sang 'God Save the Queen' and following smiles and waves from the Royal Box to the artistes and audience, another Royal Variety Performance was over.

Postscript: A special round of applause for Palladium orchestra-leader Cyril Orndel. His was a long, arduous and responsible task. But he and his grand musicians accomplished it wonderfully. Really great work, boys!

Merry Xmas

to all

PHILIP HINDIN

and A Happy New Year

5/6 COVENTRY STREET, LONDON, W.1. (Gerrard 0990)

HY HELLER

of "LINDY'S" on BROADWAY

Always Welcomes Any Friend Of GEORGIE WOOD

CYRIL DOWLER

KING RAT—1957

Thanks the "Record Mirror" and its readers for supporting the Grand Order of Water Rats (and I thank the Rats for supporting me).



Love to my Sister Ratlings

from

RHODA ROGERS



(\* Here's an actress—if anybody will take the trouble to prove it"—Vide Georgie Wood)



# Sincere Greetings



from



Dorothy Reynolds

and

Julian Slade

# Seasonal Greetings



TO  
ALL  
MY  
FRIENDS  
AND  
FANS

from

## ROBERT EARL

★ Wishing You All  
A  
Very Happy Xmas



With All My Heart

## PETULA CLARK

HANK  
FOSTER  
and his  
HILLBILLIES

★  
THANK ALL  
CONCERNED  
FOR  
BOOKING US

★  
P.A.:  
33 Whitworth Road  
London, S.E.18



Have A  
Wonderful  
Christmas  
And May  
1958  
Be A  
Happy One



# RUSS HAMILTON

A  
Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year  
To All

TERRY WAYNE  
wishes to thank all concerned  
for bookings and everything

Particularly to my Personal Manager  
BILL SAWYER  
Direction: SYD ROYCE AGENCY



DOROTHY SQUIRES...  
Britain's Queen of the Ballad  
—scored her biggest hit this  
year with "Our Song."

Christmas Greetings  
and  
Best Wishes For 1958

from

## VICTOR SILVESTER

**The Man Who Makes The Big Names In Show Business Bigger Still:  
Introducing LESLIE FREWIN, One Of The Slickest Publicity  
Agents In The Country**

# SHADOW OF THE STARS



Hectic all the time . . . typical scene at the Frewin H.Q. in Mayfair with the phone constantly in use and the secretary taking notes. A great life this publicity agent business! . . . this story tells about some of the intriguing duties of the man whose job it is to keep his clients' names in print.

**IF YOU WERE TO ASK NINETY-FIVE PER CENT OF THE PEOPLE connected with the magical World of Entertainment: Who is about the best-known contemporary personality within the realms of show business public relations and publicity,** the answer would be, I willingly wager—Leslie Frewin.

The stars come and go—Judy Garland, Rosemary Clooney, Gregory Peck, Julie London, Audrey Hepburn, James Mason, June Allyson, Diana Dors, Deborah Kerr—dozens of them. If you're interested in these things you will invariably find that the man who is their shadow and publicist is the same man, tall, broad, articulate—Leslie Frewin. Films, stage, radio, TV, records (plus industry and commerce) Leslie is the leading light in what is probably Britain's most successful PR and Publicity set-up. America asks for his services, France makes him offers, Spain Germany . . .

**RIVALRY RESPECT HIM**

**WHY?** Probably there are a hundred pretty likeable types who specialise in projecting to an ever-hungry public the top mortals and things involved in show business. Recently a contemporary publication talked of Leslie's successful handling of Judy Garland's London season, described him as "the top publicity man on this side of the Atlantic".

What makes him so efficient, effective in his job? The best answer would probably be supplied by Leslie's own rivals: they may gossip about him, argue about him, love him or hate him but one thing is certain—they all respect him. As a publicist of international repute he has a wealth of experience behind him; he has a reputation for integrity and honesty in all his dealings.

"There is only one way to do any job," Leslie has been quoted as saying, "and that's the right way." His professionalism is well known; if he

Leslie Frewin has been responsible for British stars at innumerable Film festivals all over the world. Here's a group at a Frewin party in the South of France. (Left to right) Nichole Maurey, Yvonne Furneaux, Ginger Rogers, Richard Todd, Diana Dors, Susan Hayward, The Begum Aga Khan, Nichole Chanteuse.

stages a Press jamboree it's a cinch it'll be at once off-beat and intelligently handled.

Three hundred or more Press men met Judy Garland before she opened at the Dominion in London. They met her in the lush London home of the Earl of Londonderry in Park Lane. And when I say "met them" I mean just that. It was no free-for-all scramble of dozens of dead-line-scared journalists hoping to see Judy.

ever, get a chance to meet the star. Stars are mostly taken round to talk to a few well-chosen groups—and that's it.

"I told Judy: 'you must do something different. You are going to be right on time; it is your party—therefore you must receive your guests.' Judy didn't demur. She thought the idea first class. And, being the professional she is, she responded wonderfully."

BY  
**KENNETH KENT-TAYLOR**

They were surprised, charmed, to find Judy and her husband Sid Luft standing at the top of the imposing staircase waiting to receive them—red-coated flunkies and all—with Leslie discreetly in the rear.

**JUDY DECEIVED 'EM**

**I WENT TO SEE LESLIE FREWIN** in his plush Berkeley Square offices—the headquarters of the Leslie Frewin Organisation Limited. He poured me a drink from behind the small, elegant little French bar tactfully built in a corner of his office.

I asked about the Judy Garland Press reception. Said Leslie: "I reason that so many Press receptions are like a rigger scrum, and journalists who are mostly present in a professional capacity—and

**IT IS ALMOST A LEGEND** in Show Business that Leslie Frewin is on first-name terms with pretty nearly every headline star in the entertainment business, as well as with the cream of authors, writers, directors, producers, designers and most of the top social names in Britain.

Mrs. Gerald Legge didn't write him one "thank you" note after the Garland show—she wrote him two. Sharmar Douglas called him up to ask whether she could bring Lord Patrick Beresford, Sylvia Ashley and others. Mrs. Pandit, the High Commissioner for India seldom accepts show-business invitations—but she accepted Leslie's.

At Judy's first night—probably the most memorable first night of this decade—those present included eight Ambassadors, seven Dukes, twenty-one knights of the realm, members of the Royal Household and famous names from almost every branch of art, letters, sport, commerce. Leslie

Frewin had invited them on behalf of Judy, Sid and the theatre owners. One recalls that in his spectacular campaign for "The Dam Busters" he staged not one Royal opening, but two—on successive nights.

It Had Never Been Done Before.

**NO PICTURE IN SIGHT**

**YET, IF YOU** visit the Frewin H.Q. in his contemporary Mayfair offices, there is nothing in them to indicate in any way that he is connected with the entertainment world.

There's not a picture of a star in sight—yet there must be few whom Leslie hasn't personally publicised.

I felt sure he would be the owner of a fabulous collection of autographed pictures of the world-famous stars he has pub-

licised. "Frankly", he said, "I haven't one autographed photo of anybody I've ever handled. It really hasn't occurred to me to ask for them. As a matter of fact, I've only ever once asked for an autograph."

That once, I learned, was to a man he knew well and whom he admired—Sir Alexander Fleming, the research bacteriologist who discovered penicillin.

Leslie looked a little sad. "I thought he was a wonderful person, with a brilliant, sly wit and great charm. He gave me an autographed picture of himself two months before he died."

"It must be a collector's piece. Sir Alexander told me it was only the second one he'd ever autographed."

The other was for Marlene Dietrich.

**HE'S AN AUTHOR, TOO**

**LESLIE FREWIN** has additional claim to fame—he is an accomplished and successful author.

His "Blond Venus", the first biography of Dietrich published here two years ago, has been republished in many countries and recently hit the bookstalls of America with much success.

His book of verse, written during his army service—"Battle Dress Ballads"—in which, as he says: "I tried to bring Kipling's 1914-18 'Barrack Room Ballads' up-to-date, as it were."

About six years ago, after directing the huge publicity campaign for Walt Disney on "Rob Roy, The Highland Rogue", he wrote a period book—"The Legends of Rob Roy MacGregor", which received first-rate reviews and is

still selling to "schoolboys of all ages".

It seems a long time since Leslie first started to publicise the world's show business celebrities at the old Gainsborough Studios, at Poole Street, Islington, London, N. Since then he's put over 250 major films on the front pages—pictures ranging from the Crazy Gang comedies to the Hitchcock thrillers, from "Moby Dick" to the recent "The Tommy Steele Story".

Incidentally, Britain's two biggest screen box-offices successes of the year—Tommy's first film, and Hammer's "The Curse of Frankenstein" were both publicised by Leslie's Organisation, fitted in between Martine Carol's first British movie which he also publicised, and three other films.

His company now represents a line-up of top international stars—plus famous companies like Ziv TV of America ("Highway Patrol", etc.), the biggest producers of U.S. TV films; Globe Films of Italy, Imperial Films International of Latin-America.

How does Leslie find time to direct his many interests?

"I suppose it's because I work hard, travel a lot and like people. During the course of my job I have to do a lot of entertaining, but when I'm 'off duty' I spend as much time as possible at home."

"At home" is a charming new house on the outer suburbs of London, and a beautiful 300-year-old seven-bedroom cottage standing in its own land in the shadow of the South Downs in the actual area on which the Battle of Hastings was fought.

Leslie has few hobbies—but he loves driving: he has an off-white Jaguar and another car. "I suppose my principal hobby is of dreaming up ideas for other people", is his comment.

It seems to be a hobby paying off top-rate dividends.



TO ALL OUR FRIENDS  
AND CLIENTS IN  
SHOW BUSINESS



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SEASONAL GREETINGS

from  
THE MANAGEMENT,  
PEGGY MOUNT,  
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Merry Christmas  
and a happy  
New Year



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Of The Season To His Many  
Friends In Show Business



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**THAT AMAZING DISC STORE DOWN THE CHARING CROSS ROAD...**

**DOBELL'S  
MECCA  
OF JAZZ**



**THE JAZZ STUDENTS**

*IT'S ALWAYS HOUSE-FULL at Dobell's. Jazz enthusiasts from all over the country visit this unique disc-store, browse through the catalogues, read the sleeve notes on the LP covers, listen to their choice and, eventually, purchase at least some kind of jazz record.*

**SPECIALISTS**

● **ONE RESULT** of the present boom in jazz appreciation has been the appearance of numerous record shops specialising in jazz. Nearly every town of any size has at least one jazz specialist dealer catering for local enthusiasts.

With this aspect of the record boom in mind, the RECORD MIRROR called on one of the first of this country's specialist shops, Doug Dobell's Jazz Record Shop, in London's Charing Cross Road.

The premises that Dobell's shop occupy were originally owned by Doug Dobell's grandfather, whose business as a bookseller was the first in Charing Cross Road; Doug's father inherited the business, and in 1945 persuaded Doug to join the staff.

Doug found that his time was being more and more occupied by collectors calling to pass the time of day, or offer a rare record, or barter for something in Doug's own collection.

It was then that Doug realised that there was a full-time occupation in what had been, and still was, his best loved recreational activity.

And so, after much persuasion, Doug's father agreed to allow him a desk in a corner of the book shop from which to build up a worthwhile service to jazz enthusiasts.

From rather small beginnings in May 1496 the trade at Dobell's book shop, for jazz records, grew and grew. From catering exclusively for the specialist collector, Doug began to stock whatever was of interest in new records. Since

Victors, and other much prized American record issues.

**THE LONG PLAYER**

● **STILL, BUSINESS** is the aim of any shopkeeper, and so the jazz department began to spread into every corner of the shop and down to the basement. The advent of the long-playing record sounded the death-knell of the book trade in the shop, and it was agreed that records should take over the entire premises.

Doug Dobell has always been something of an idealist in his musical activity. He has shown this in his determination to stay a jazz specialist and not be tempted into the popular and classical fields. Perhaps he would be much

**HE WON'T BE TEMPTED BY THE 'POPS' OR CLASSICS**

Doug's interest in jazz goes back well before the last war and his collection of early recordings is one of the best in the country. Like most pre-war collectors, Doug often exchanged or sold records to other enthusiasts, which activity was part and parcel of the fun of collecting in those days. Bartering for a record in another person's collection and offering a rarity from one's own shelves, was a specialist business, occupying the spare time of most collectors. Doug found himself involved in correspondence and meetings with collectors from all over the world.

**BARTERING**

● **SOMEWHAT** naturally, being available each day in his father's bookshop,

it happened that at much the same time several specialist record companies were started, devoting their issues to jazz, the sales took on a very healthy look. Such labels as TEMPO, MELODISC, JAZZ COLLECTOR, MANOR, ESQUIRE and others were laying the foundation for the boom that was to follow, and was to be taken up by the major companies.

The success of Doug's hobby-business was slowly encroaching on the bookshop space, and Doug's father, who was of the old school of gentlemen booksellers, no doubt had serious misgivings at times when he found himself surrounded by youngsters babbling away in an almost unintelligible language about Okehs, Gennetts, Paramounts,

richer today had he done so but he has remained faithful to jazz, proved that jazz fans will travel many miles, from every part of London to buy and hear jazz records in a specialist atmosphere.

As the need for assistance became apparent (today Doug has a staff of ten people working in his London and the recently opened Brighton shop), he always engaged someone whose knowledge of jazz and of jazz fans would ensure the best specialist service available.

So it is that the shop takes on a jazz club atmosphere at times when collectors gather to hear the latest issues. Some customers are inclined to hang around all day, yet there has

*(Continued on next page)*

● **THE PRESENT TREMENDOUS boom** in gramophone record sales is absolutely the biggest ever in this country, particularly in the popular music field which has reached unprecedented heights.

Yet it is in the relatively smaller and hitherto neglected jazz market that the most remarkable changes have taken place.

The market for jazz records has increased out of all proportion to, say, 10 years ago. Then, jazz enthusiasts were a select little band of diligent explorers whose activities in search of records were centred as much on second-hand junk shops as on the local record

stores. Back in those days 78 rpm shellac records (which constituted the stock of most music stores) rarely consisted of jazz material, and the collector turned to the junk shops in search of earlier, much prized recordings. The acquisition of these would often considerably increase his standing with other enthusiasts.

The rise of jazz clubs throughout the country, allied to the advent of the long-playing record, has produced a new and considerably increased following for jazz. The pugnacious attitude of the old-time collector toward the record companies, which resulted in petitions, organisations and even pirate re-issues of early jazz masterpieces, all aimed at securing the issue of more jazz on records; this attitude now has no foundation.



**OPENING TIME**

*KEN LINDSAY (left) and BRIAN HARVEY get in bright and early . . . they need to, for Dobell's Jazz Record Shop is soon filled with customers, as you will read in this article. As usual, there's a busy day ahead of them . . . jazz seems to be almost as popular—and as big-selling—as 'pop'.—R.M. Picture.*

# GREETINGS

from

## LONNIE DONEGAN

THE LONNIE DONEGAN CLUB,  
34 GREEK STREET, LONDON, W.1.

### CONTINUING THE STORY OF DOBELL'S 'MECCA OF JAZZ' IN THE CHARING X ROAD

never been a tendency to discourage them; Doug feels that the camaraderie among collectors is of interest, helps to mould the taste of the young and inexperienced jazz fans who come to the shop to get the sort of knowledgeable service sometimes lacking in the usual record store.

#### BANG ON!

● **WE CALLED** at the shop during one of the few slack periods. We talked with Doug Dobell, and heard more of his experiences and views on this most interesting side of the record trade.

Doug said that the most outstanding difference he noticed between today's collectors and those of the older school was that these days the youngsters rush in clamouring for discs before the musicians have even entered the recording studio!

"No kidding," he said, "they read about a forthcoming session in one of the musical papers, and before you can say 'O.K. Dad,' they're in after it. In earlier days there was the endless search for the **OLDEST** disc one could find; early Gennetts and Paramounts being at a premium!

"From a more personal angle, the four biggest developments in this shop to date (apart, of course, from the advent of the long-playing record—bless it!) have been the opening of a secondhand department, the acquisition of the Export Company, Agate & Co. Ltd., the recent opening

of a branch in Brighton, which I hope may be the first of many, and the formation of the 77 Record Label, which was formed during the spring of this year, on a virtually non-profit making basis."

Added Doug: "Aim of 77 records can be summed up thus: (1) To record Limited Editions of Jazz and Folk music which, due to normal commercial considerations, would tend to be neglected and remain unheard; (2) To preserve on wax some of the great jazz now being played in Great Britain and elsewhere, (3) To bring to a wider public as many as possible of the more neglected but nevertheless fine jazz musicians playing today and (4) To help to create and sustain interest in Jazz and Folk Music."

#### OLD RIVALS

We also met Ken Lindsay down in the basement in an office which is reached via Doug's Secondhand Department. Lindsay has been working with Doug Dobell since April of 1956 as manager of Doug's mail order company, Agate and Co. Ltd.

Ken, it seems, was at one time Doug's rival, since he was originally manager of the International Bookshop, just across the road from Doug's shop, where Ken established a jazz record department in 1948.

Ken told us that, in fact, he was specialising in the sale of new records before Doug had expanded to that side of the trade from his secondhand and rare record business. He



added that in those days there was a friendly, but keen, rivalry between the two shops, but even so, that didn't stop Ken and Doug from helping to form an association of jazz record specialists which was known as the Jazz Record Retailers Association. The association did a great deal to persuade the record companies that there was a demand for jazz records!

"Of course" Ken says, "nowadays I am sure that some dealers would say that there are **TOO MANY** jazz discs issued! But I personally think it's wonderful to be a jazz fan today and find such shops as Dobell's absolutely crammed to the doors with every kind of jazz delight that one could wish for . . ."

Ken's main function as manager of the Agate company is to send records to customers who find it impossible to get to the shop. "Of course, many of the customers are overseas, and we particularly cater for lads serving in the Forces, who," as Ken puts it, "seem to think that the only good thing about being overseas is being able to get their records from us without having to pay British purchase tax!"

A final word from Ken indicated that he feels like the black sheep of the family in the Dobell fraternity . . . "you see, I supply **ANYTHING** on record to my customers, including the latest 'pops' and records in the classical music field. I think the fellas in the shop feel I'm sabotaging them, bringing Doris Day and London Philharmonic records in to the premises!"

#### 'A CAREER'

● **THE** knowledgeable attention to shop customers comes in the main from the shop manager, Brian Harvey.

Brian seems to live in a continuous whirl of activity, but found time to give us a brief glimpse of life in a record shop today:-

"From behind the counter, Dobell's is something more than a job, it is a career and an entertainment. Of course, for every customer who knows his jazz (and what is good in it) there is always the one who says 'Hawkins is too modern' or 'Louis doesn't play jazz anymore.'"

"Nevertheless we try to sell the best records, and help to a greater appreciation those who are still forming their taste.

"Altogether, the shop is one hell of a life and I wouldn't swap it for anything. We meet all the musicians (many practically live with us!), most of the critics, and all the fans.

"Life is never the same from one day to another; you can plan what you are going to do during the day, but it never works out like that. Someone will always come in with an acetate of a new session, or plans of a session we should do for our own '77' Label. But don't think that life 'behind the counter' is all beer and listening, it's hard graft for 10 to 12 hours a day, and if we really get to hear any disc in its entirety we're mighty lucky. Hardest of all is the wear on the feet . . . after three years I reckon mine are more like hooves! **BUT IT'S WORTH IT.**"

# In These Songs Are MY FRIENDS, MY FUN, MY MEMORIES

writes

JIMMY DURANTE

in

## THE SLEEVE NOTES OF HIS HILARIOUS LONG-PLAYING DISC

THE CLUB DURANT L.P. RECORD COMMENTED ON HERE IS ALSO NOTABLE FOR THE NOTES JIMMY DURANTE HIMSELF WROTE FOR THE SLEEVE (OR COVER). THEY ARE REPRODUCED BELOW, GIVE AN INTRIGUING INSIGHT INTO THE CAREERS OF "SCHNOZZLE" AND HIS FRIENDS IN SHOW BUSINESS:

★ ★ ★

I JUST finished hearing this album—well, maybe, not just. I heard it about three hours ago. It was sent over 'cause they wanted me to write something about it. And after hearing it, I been sitting here thinking. I wisht I could write down all the things I been thinking, I know I can't, but I gonna try.

I guess for sentimental reasons, my favourite part of this thing is the part about where Clayton, Jackson, and Durante get together. And do you know what I thought of after I heard it? I thought of a million things that probably have nothing to do with this album. Or maybe they have.

I thought about the time Lou Clayton walked into the Club Durant for the first time and bought out one of the partners. That was probably the biggest thing that ever happened in my life. 'Cause it was Lou who made me push the piano out on the floor and start singing songs, instead of just playing for singers. And it was Lou who patted my nose one night and said, "Kid, from now on you're gonna be known as SCHNOZZOLA!"

(Perhaps I should tell you why we called it the Club Durant. Lots of people think I'm so ignorant I don't even know how to spell my own name. The real story is even harder to believe. We had only a few dollars between us when we hired a painter to make a sign for the Club. He charged by the letter. We had to scrape up every nickel to get the thing done, and we just didn't have enough for the final "E," so it became Club Durant. It could only have happened to me!)

I THOUGHT about the first time I saw Eddie Jackson; he was working with a shimmy dancer. I thought he had the greatest voice I ever heard, so I hired him to come to work with me at the Old Club Alamo in Coney Island. I used to hire the talent there. And outside of the real bosses, I was boss. Even in those days I guess I was meant to be a commander of men!

I thought about the time the police closed the Club Durant because I told the waiter to serve drinks to a couple of guys that said "hello" to me when I walked in the joint that night. I thought they were friends of mine; they turned out to be revenue men.

I thought about the time I got an offer to go to Hollywood as a single. I turned it down. Lou tossed his dancing shoes out of the window and said, "You're taking the job, and I'm going to be your manager, and Jackson will work in the act."

I thought about the time Lou insisted I make a deal and go on television. I was scared and told Lou "What do we need it for? There are a million clubs we can work around the country." Lou insisted and he closed the deal with N.B.C. that has given me security for the rest of my life.

I thought about the time Lou got sick in Chicago, and the doctor told me Lou had about six months to live. We never told Lou, but for the next six months it was murder hearing Lou say every once in a while that he thought he was getting well. I kept hoping he was right and praying for some miracle. Lou died in September, 1950.

I got a kick out of the part of this album where Jolson and I sing together. I swear the night we sang that song, Al was so full of steam and pep and his arms were flying around so much, to me he looked like he was three feet off the ground when we finished. The audience must have liked it 'cause it was at the end of the show and they applauded right through the commercial. We went off the air and they were still going. Jolson grabbed me and yelled "Come on, Jimmy, we gotta take a few bows on this one." We went back on the stage and Jolson kept bowing and bowing; then he started to throw his script page by page at the audience. I got such a kick out of Jolson, I forgot to bow myself and just stood there joining the audience and applauded.

I'm glad that they picked 'Sing soft, sing sweet, sing gentle' with Bing Crosby. Everybody loves Bing, and I'm no exception. I like him 'cause he knows so many big words. And in this number he threw one or two in which I still haven't been able to find out what they mean. When I get a new song I gotta study pretty hard to learn it. Bing went over this song only twice before we went on the air. After the show, he told me he sang it almost as good as me. Which, I imagine, is about all any singer could.

AND Sophie Tucker! What can I tell you? When I listen to her, I know I'm hearing an awful lot of show business. I'm mad about Sophie . . . every acre of her. You talk about pep . . . she sings every song like her life depends upon her stopping the show with it. Sophie to me is Entertainment . . . I mean Entertainment to me is Sophie Tucker.

You know . . . I'm awfully happy that they included Ethel Barrymore in this collection. It's funny how she happened to do



our show. I was walking down Vine Street with Jackie Barnett one afternoon when I saw an elderly woman waiting to cross the street. I excused myself from Jackie and asked the lady if I could help her across the street. She let me. And afterwards I tipped my hat and came back to Jackie. "Lovely lady," I said. "She sure is!" said Jackie, "That was Ethel Barrymore!" Well, I was so embarrassed I ran back to her and told her I was only kidding. In talking, I told her how honored I'd be if she would appear with me on my Television Show. She said, "What would I do? I don't sing or dance . . . but I play the piano a little . . ." Well, that made me hesitate. I don't mind singers or dancers but I think twice when it comes to piano players. I'm afraid I might give them an inferiority complex. Anyway, she did the show. She's a great sport and we had a great time. And here in this album is what I think was one of the high points of the show.

MY favourite girl friend of all times is Helen Traubel. When she comes on our show, she is such a hit that she has been back many times. When she first came with us she had only appeared in operas and several radio shows, singing operas. When she finished with us she walked out of the studio strutting like Eddie Jackson and yelling "Hot Cha Cha," like me, and she is now one of the highest paid night club entertainers in the country, besides being a great big hit in the movies. The song in this record is typical of the way we work together and, boy, I love that kind of carrying on.

Bob Hope . . . I had a ball with him. After we did the song, Bob got me to go for coffee with him. And where does he take me but some little Ham-and-Eggs joint with a disc jockey sitting in the window. Then he whispers something to the disc jockey, and the next thing I know Bob and me is up at the mike singing this song that we just did without a piano or nothing. He said he had got such a kick out of it, and 'cause they don't let you do encores on television or radio this was his way of taking an encore.

SAY, and how about this Peter Lawford? I don't think any Television song I ever sang gave me personally as much of a kick as this one. Pete must have felt the same way because when we finished the show I was getting ready to go out on a tour of the few night clubs that I play every year: The Copacabana in New York, The Chez Paree in Chicago, The Riverside in Reno, and the Desert Inn in Las Vegas. Well, Pete asked me if he could join the act and just do that number. I told him I'd love it but how could any cafe afford it. "I don't want any money," he said, "I'll do it for nothing . . . we'll have some laughs!" Well, he joined our act. We billed him as "Surprise Guest Star," nobody knew who it was till he came out and then the house came down. And we laughed for twelve weeks around the country doing the number in this album. Yeah, Pete's my boy!

Wonderful Eddie Cantor is in this album. And what that means to me. Eddie was one of the first people I ever met in Show Business. It was a Coney Island saloon. I was the piano player and Eddie was singing waiter. We have been close friends ever since and his friendship is something I prize. We've worked together many times. In radio and television we were always jumping back and forth on each other's programme. And I'm sure you can tell when you hear us together here that we get more of a kick out of it than anybody.

There are some guys that you won't hear on these records, but it ain't because they ain't a part of this album. I wanna tell you about them.

THIS  
L. P.  
WILL BE  
LIFE OF THE PARTY

THIS RECORD YOU  
MUST GET . . .

Especially if you're giving a party at Christmas or New Year's Eve. But it'll go over big at any party, any time.

It's a Durante comedy classic, spontaneous, warm-hearted Durante entertainment, faithfully reproduced, generating all the irresistible, inimitable Durante humour.

It's a 12 inch Long Playing disc, issued on BRUNSWICK LAT 8218, called CLUB DURANT (read Jimmy's sleeve notes as to why the "E" has been left out). It was made during a performance of one of Durante's television shows in America four years ago. The guests are among the biggest names in Show Business and they seem delighted to have been asked. Jimmy's banter with the late Al Jolson is sheer joy. ("Jose—make way for Nosey!" declares Durante during their 'Real Piano Player' sequence) . . . and joy is the keynote all along as he duets with the one and only Sophie Tucker, the great dramatic actress Ethel Barrymore and the Metropolitan opera star, Helen Traubel. ("Schnozle" even gets her to sing "Watch Them Shuffle Along"!)

The fun ripples as Durante joins vocal and gagging issues with Bing Crosby, Eddie Cantor, Bob Hope and Britain's Peter Lawford with whom he is hilariously involved in a Rhythm and Blues comedy gem.

Jimmy doesn't forget his old partners, Clayton and Jackson and the trio are together in a boisterous sing-song which includes the timeless "Bill Bailey," "I Can do Without Broadway," "So I Ups to Him" and "Jimmy the well-dressed man."

Throughout Roy Bargy's orchestra is in close attendance; the arrangements, the timing—it's perfection all the way along. Entertainment of Lasting Pleasure.

I recommend that you become a life-member of Club Durant. I.G.

★  
TYPICAL  
'SCHNOZ'—  
HUMOROUS,  
SINCERE

MANY of these songs were written by Jackle Barnett. I first met Jackie in 1936. He was waiting for me outside the stage door of the Casino de Paree. He wanted an autograph. I gave it to him, and he looked like such a nice kid that I didn't charge the usual 15 cents. I next met him in 1941. He was now a writer and I needed material. He wrote me a spot for radio and I paid him for it. He's been writing for me ever since and I've been paying him ever since. Through the years, he has written over 500 songs for me, and when we go on the road he handles everything and manages my business. Aside from all this, I consider Jackie a very close friend. He does an imitation of me that hands me a big kick. In fact when they made the movie "The Cantor Story" they had Jackie in it playing the part of me. And on our television show he plays the part of my conscience.

I've had Jack Roth with me since 1920. He's my drummer. Jack looks very distinguished, like a banker. But he's got the talent of a Willie Mays 'cause he can catch a flying piano board at twenty paces without ever missing a beat. A few years ago he earned a purple heart. In the middle of the act I threw a part of the piano at him. He zipped when he should have zagged . . . he got a free trip to first base—plus a couple of teeny weeny stitches. Jack is a hard worker, and I was lucky to have him with me all these years.

My piano player is Jules Buffano, and though he can't wear the long service stripes of Roth, he's been with me a long time. He has hair which he better get rid of if he wants to stay with the organisation. He is always happy and he is always very hungry. He plays my style of piano and he plays for my voice. (Which I hope doesn't make him too mad.)

SO, like I started out to say, these were some of the things and people I thought about after hearing this record for the first time. I hope the public enjoys them. I know my copy will keep me from many lonesome hours. 'Cause here in these songs are my friends, my fun, and my memories of some very happy moments. From the bottom of my heart, I thank everyone who has made it possible. Thank you and goodnight Mrs. Calabash, wherever you are.

# YOU CANNOT DIM HOLLYWOOD OF ITS GLAMOUR

*Writes Celebrated Film Writer  
IVY WILSON  
From The Great Film City*

Norman Wisdom, Terence Young, Greer Garson, Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Jean Simmons, Stewart Granger, with Ireland represented by Maureen O'Hara, Errol Flynn, Barry Fitzgerald, and Dan O'Herlihy.

Hardly a month passes without some glamorous party at which the stars turn out in lovely gowns to dine and dance amid surroundings that would rival those of any of the Arabian Nights' tales.

## HARD-PRESSED HOLLYWOOD

★ **THERE IS PLENTY OF LIFE** left in Hollywood, both social and economic. Television will make demands for more and more material and Hollywood film studios will be hard pressed to produce enough films to supply that demand. And there always will be a need for pictures to fill the theatres while such box office successes are being made as Michael Todd's "Around the World in 80 Days," MGM'S super entertainment, "Les Girls," Warner Bros.' "Sayonara," Columbia's "Pal Joey," Paramount's "The Ten Commandments," 20th Century-Fox's "The Sun Also Rises," Universal-International's "My Man Godfrey," Allied Artists' "Love in the Afternoon," United Artists' "The Pride and the Passion."

*So, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all creators of good entertainment, whether it be in films, on the stage, in the concert hall or opera house. And let us be glad that there is still a Hollywood providing glamour to offset the grimmer aspects of an upset world.*



IVY WILSON, one of the most beloved of all English film writers who have settled down in Hollywood to cable news of the Film City all over the world.

## AUDIENCES OF 7,000

### THE ARENA CIRCUIT

**OLE OLSEN (Of The Famous Comedy Team, Olsen & Johnson) HAS A NEW SHOW BIZ IDEA**

To Georgie Wood, the RECORD MIRROR.

Dear Georgie,

When you saw that vast arena in Cleveland, Ohio, early this year, packed with 7,000 customers you must have wondered how the Olsen & Johnson Jamboree would establish the intimacy which is an integral part of our offering. We learned this trick in record-breaking appearances at the Canadian National Fir in Toronto where audiences were nearer 70,000 than 7,000 and we have been very fortunate in playing so many of these Arena Shows.

Your own George Formby and Tommy Trinder had a vast experience of this on their Canadian tours.

The Arena type of show has also been very successful in Australia.

It makes it possible to have the biggest of names available at the box-office. It's great fun too. You saw for yourself in Cleveland that "Hellzapoppin" took on the atmosphere of an English pantomime.

### COUNTY FAIR AND THE ALBERT HALL

We are very successful in Night Clubs as you witnessed in the Latin Quarter, New York (and oh! that wonderful week-end we spent in Canton, Ohio), but even though the work is more strenuous when playing in an Arena, Chick and I find it pleasurable and profitable.

When all is said and done there was very little difference between the Country Fair in Cleveland and the Albert Hall except for the acoustics.

Why does not the RECORD MIRROR organise a terrific Charity Jamboree at your Harringay, Arena or Wembley Stadium? Maybe this is an idea for the Variety Club of Great Britain to mull over. Georgie Jessel did this type of show for your Jewish Ex-Service Men in the Empress Hall, Earls Court, and he was greatly impressed by the possibility for Arena Shows in London. Personally, I think they are only good for special events in your country. I could be wrong. You and your Editor probably have the answer to that one.

Warmest greetings to our friends, especially Bernie Delfont, and, of course, The Grand Order of Water Rats.

*Yours fraternally,  
OLE OLSEN  
(Private Secretary to  
Chick Johnson)*

*Continued from previous column*

joined her in New York, and we took the fatal step. She worked most of the smart Supper Clubs around New York. Then when I got my deal to come West to do a show in Palm Springs she followed me out, and after just being a housewife for six months she decided she'd get active again.

Auditioning for the "Ray Bolger" Show, she got the comedy lead on the TV series, and Mr. Bolger told everybody "Christine is one of the potential bright stars on the horizon—it's difficult to find a comedienne who sings a song the way she does".

Her billing the Sophisticated Pixie—exactly describes her as an artist. She now has her mind on discs, and she usually gets what she wants. I'm glad she does. After all, I'm her husband!

*In The Review of Tin Pan Alley which begins on page 84, the continuation from page 87 unfortunately 'jumps' to page 86 instead of to page 88. Due to the tremendous technical nature of this production—the largest music and show publication yet printed in this country—the error, although spotted during the early part of the run, could only be rectified if there was a long hold-up which would mean the entire upsetting of our time schedule. This section went to press several days before the final plates were cast for the rotary machine and this page, being one of the later ones, we thus have the opportunity of pointing out the error and to 'warn' readers before they begin reading the article in question. (Certain other errors are corrected in page 121.)*

## Introducing 'RM' Readers to a Great American Singer

*They Call:*

### SOPHISTICATED PIXIE

By LOUIS QUINN

(A Slightly Prejudiced Assessment)

CHRISTINE NELSON has been described by Danny Thomas as the closest thing to the great Ethel Merman around today.

George Gobel said, whether it is comedy, miming or belting out a song, she has all that it takes to be a star, and can deliver comedy with the best of them.

She started as a dramatic actress in such shows as "Peter Pan" and "Dough-Girls." She caught on with her sympathetic approach and big voice. Bookers told her she should concentrate on comedy.

So concentrate she did. She got some special material songs and went to work for a friend of hers in Miami Beach, Florida. She went in for two weeks and stayed twenty. From there it was an easy jump to Chicago, where she got the comedy lead in "The College in Story," which ran for over a year.

Then into the very exclusive "Buttery" for six months.

### NOW HAS HER MIND ON DISCS

That's where I met her. I was doing my Night-Time radio show in Chicago, and she was a guest on my show.

She left Chicago to do the Arthur Godfrey Talent Scouts Show and emerged a winner. I

*Continued at foot of next column*

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association staged their banquets, in recent years, in the handsome Coconut Grove, where before and after the presentation, the stars and guests mingle on the dance floor to the music of a top band and with big name entertainment, so it becomes a jolly affair for all concerned.

## HONOURED BRITISH GUESTS

★ **THE JOURNALISTS ARE** provided with much material for first-hand stories that reach readers from one end of the world to the other. Lots of photographs, taken informally, add to the coverage.

The occasion is now a "must" with most stars, whether or not they are nominees for awards. Invitations are in great demand for, besides the fun, there is the advantage of breaking into world-wide print.

Several special luncheons are held during the year, honouring outstanding films, their stars, producers, and directors. Adding to the brilliance of these affairs are visiting stars of various nationalities. Among the British who have been honoured guests are Sir Carol Reed, Sir Laurence Olivier, Claire Bloom,

The present no one ever exchanges

PLAYER'S MEDIUM NAVY CUT CIGARETTES 100

As a Christmas gift  
*Player's always please*

IN DECORATED CHRISTMAS PACKINGS • 100 FOR 19/7 • 50 FOR 9/9!

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Greetings

from

HARRY

--and 'DAVY' too!



Here's Hoping You'll Be 'IN THE MOOD' For

A  
Happy  
Christmas



A  
Happy  
New Year

from

JOE LOSS

# Season's Greetings to All Golfers

from **THE MEMBERS** of the  
**VAUDEVILLE**  
Golfing Society

Presidents: Mr. DAVE CARTER, Mr. BILLY BUTLIN, M.B.E.

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**AFFILIATED GOLF CLUBS**

Fees shown as under are subject to revision by club concerned. Members should not query any revision but report matter to their own committee.

**LONDON**  
Coombe Wood (Surrey): Members' Privileges.—Weekdays Free; also Sunday afternoons. Green Line Bus No. 718 from Eccleston Bdg., Victoria, to George Road, Kingston Hill or No. 85 from Putney Bdg. Tube Station.  
Fulwell (Middlesex): Members' Privileges.—5 days free, 5/- per day weekends. No play Sat., Sun. or Bank Holidays before 10.30. Starting time must be booked by 'phone for weekend play. (Half-hour train service from Waterloo to Fulwell).  
Maylands (Rowford): Members' Privileges.—7 days free. (Parties visiting this club must give a few days notice).  
Sudbury (Middlesex): 5 days free. No Sat., Sun. or Bank Holiday play.  
**PROVINCIAL**  
Birmingham: (Sandwell Park, West Bromwich). Members' Privileges.—5/- per day, 15/- per week. (Robin Hood). Members' Privileges.—7/6 per week, 5/- per day. 32 bus from Hippodrome. Edgbaston. Members' Privileges.—3/6 per day. No play Sat. or Sun. before 11 a.m.  
\*Members playing Birmingham theatres must play competitions at Edgbaston.  
Blackburn G.C.: Member's Privileges.—2/6 per day, 7/6 per week.  
Blackpool: (North Shore). Members' Privileges.—7/6 per week. (St. Anne's Old Links).—3/6 per day, 5/- Sat. and Sun.  
Bolton (Deane). Members' Privileges 1/6 per day, 6/- per week.  
Bradford: (West Bradford G.C.). Members' Privileges.—2/- per day, 3/6 Sunday. (West Bowling). 6/- per week.  
Bristol: (Long Ashton). Members' Privileges.—3/6 per day, 5/- week-end.  
Broadstairs: (North Foreland). 2/6 weekdays, 5/- week end, £1 monthly. \*Members playing Ramsgate and District must play comps. at North Foreland.  
Broadstone: (Poole). Members' Privileges.—10/- per week.  
Cardiff: (Cardiff G.C.). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Coventry: (Hearsall). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Derby: (Chevin). 2/- per day, 7/6 per week.  
Eastbourne: (Willingdon). 2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Edinburgh: (Ratho Park). Members' Privileges.—1/- weekday, 2/- Sunday.  
Exeter: (Exeter Golf and Country Club). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Glasgow: (Hayston). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day.  
Gorleston G.C.: Members' Privileges.—2/6 per round, or day. 3gns. per season June to Sept.  
Harlepool: G.C.: Members' Privileges.—1/6 per day, 5/- per week.  
Hull: (Kirkella). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Ipswich: (Purdis Heath). Members' Privileges.—3/6 per round, 5/- per day.  
Isle of Man: (Howstrake). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week. 17/6 per fortnight, £2 2s. per season.  
Keighley: Members' Privileges.—1/- per day, 5/- per week.  
Leeds: (Moor Allerton). Members' Privileges.—3/6 per day, Sat., Sun., 5/- per round.  
Leicester: (Birstall G.C.). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Liverpool: (Childwall). — Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 7/6 per week.  
Manchester (Chorlton-cum-Hardy). Members' Privileges.—1/6 per day.  
Morecambe and Heysham: Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 7/6 per week, £2 2s. per season.  
Newcastle: (Three Mile Bridge, Gosforth). Members' Privileges.—5/- per day.  
Newport (Mon.): (Rogerstone). Members' Privileges.—7/6 per week.  
Newport: (Tredgar Park). Members' Privileges: No fee.  
Northampton: (Northampton County G.C., Chapel Brampton). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Nottingham: (Rushcliffe). Members' Privileges.—5 days free.  
Oxford: (North Oxford G.C. Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, including weekends.  
Plymouth: (Velverton G.C.). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week, £2 per season.  
Preston: (Lancs). Members' Privileges.—3/- per day, 10/- per week.  
Ramsgate: (St. Augustine's, Ebbsfleet). Members' Privileges.—3/- per day, 5/- per 3 days, 10/6 per week.  
Reading: (Sonning). Members' Privileges.—5/- per week.  
Rowlands Castle: (Portsmouth). Members' Privileges.—3/6 per day.  
Sheffield: (Dore and Totley). Members' Privileges.—2/- per day.  
Skegness: (Seacroft G.C.). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- Mon. to Fri.  
Southampton: (Stoneham). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day.  
South Beds G.C.: (Luton). Members' Privileges.—1/6 per day.  
Southport: (Southport and Ainsdale). Members' Privileges.—3/6 per day, 5/- Sat., Sund. and Bank Holiday.  
Stoke-on-Trent: (Trenttham). Members' Privileges.—10/- per week.  
Swansea: (Clyne). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 5/- per week.  
Swansea: (South Bay G.C.). Members' Privileges.—5/- per week.  
Swindon G.C.: Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 10/- per week.  
Weston-super-Mare: Members' Privileges.—10/6 per week.  
Wigan: (Dean Wood). Members' Privileges.—2/6 per day, 7/6 per week.  
Wokington G.C.: Members' Privileges.—2/6 round, 5/- day, 10/- week.  
Yarmouth: (Yarmouth & Caister G.C.). Members' Privileges.—1/9 per round, half annual sub. per season.  
York: (Fulford). Members' Privileges.—2/- per day, 7/6 per week.

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**KIM BENNETT**

23 DENMARK STREET,  
LONDON, W.C.2



A Merry Christmas  
and

A Prosperous New Year

FROM—  
**GEOFF LOVE**



# James Asman Recommends— THESE TRADITIONAL JAZZ RECORDS FOR XMAS & 1958

JACK TEAGARDEN —  
JAZZ GREAT

Jack Teagarden (tmb & vcl) with Jimmy McPartland or Dick Cary or Fred Greenleaf (tp), Edmund Hall or Kenny Davern (clt), Dick Cary or Leonard Feather or Norma Teagarden (pno), probably Leonard Feather (gtr), Walter Page or Kass Malone (bss), Jo Jones or Ray Bauduc (drms), New York, Nov. 1954 "King Porter Stomp"/"Eccentric"/"Davenport Blues"/"Original Dixieland One-Step"/"Bad Acting Woman"; "Misery and the Blues"/"High Society"/"Music to Love By"/"Meet Me Where They Play the Blues"/"Riverboat Shuffle"

LONDON LTZ-N15077

IN A LAZY and easy-going way Jack Teagarden from the Lone Star State of Texas has gradually crept into the affections of the jazz-going public. I can remember him indolently carolling his amiable way through a few vocals in the Red Nichols Five Pennies and, later, within the ranks of the Paul Whiteman band. Always he seemed to possess the kind of personality which could move mountains. He certainly managed to move the mountains of corn and cold dance music towards the end of the 1920s.

He first began a starlit professional career at Houston in Texas with Peck Kelly's Bad Boys in the righteous company of such young hopefuls as Leon Rappollo, Pee Wee Russell and Leon Prima, Louis' brother. He arrived in New York in 1927 and, by his personal style of playing and singing, speedily won a new reputation as a hot trombonist of individual merit.

With Nichols, Whiteman, Ben Pollack and others, Big T, as he was familiarly called, paved the way for leadership and this great moment arrived late in the '30s. Despite his own considerable presence the venture was unsuccessful and, in 1947 he joined his idol Louis Armstrong in the first All Stars group to begin the series of tours which, even at this moment, are continuing with almost monotonous popularity.

In 1951 Teagarden returned to bandleading fronting a much smaller group and obviously benefiting from his previous experience. During a trip to New York in 1954 he made these sides, incorporating several available musicians as well as one or two visiting firemen, critics and friends.

**EXCEEDINGLY  
ENJOYABLE**

DIXIELAND DOIN'S

Preacher Rollo and the Five Saints

"Sensation Rag" / "Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gives to Me"; "Pralines"/"Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home"

M-G-M EP. 606

PREACHER ROLLO is actually a white veteran drummer named Rollo Laylan who heard his first jazz aboard the Mississippi Riverboats, roomed with the late Bunny Berigan at college and chased jazz in Chicago and New York during the boom.

Clarinetist is Tony Parenti, famous for his work in New Orleans Dixieland bands, and the rest of the efficient, neat unit is made up of musicians lesser known and accrued in the Florida area where Rollo now works.

Pattern is well laid down, following the style of the ODJB with firm ragtime modes interwoven. "Sensation Rag" and "Pralines" are rag numbers neatly played. The music provides a swing far beyond that of any of the British groups reviewed this week.

It was exceedingly enjoyable

Contd. at foot of next column



"And now for Mrs. Lazenby of Charlton-cum-Crickleton I shall play part of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony."  
(Courtesy NAAFI NEWS)

## MY FUTURE IN FILMS BY BURT LANCASTER

(Exclusive to the RECORD MIRROR)

COMING UP THE HARD WAY GAVE ME the opportunity as a vaudeville artiste to meet real people on both sides of the footlights and to get to know what they will respond to. The answer to that one is easy. They will respond to sincerity.

That is the aim of Hecht-Hill-Lancaster Pictures. We have set ourselves an exacting and busy schedule.

In the spring of 1958 we hope to put into production "The Unforgiven." The star we hope will be either William Holden, James Stewart, Kirk Douglas, or Glenn Ford.

Our spectacular production of "The Way West" will probably be filmed in 1958, or early 1959, with screenplay by Clifford Odets, and with an impressive cast of top Hollywood names.

Our productions planned for as far in advance as 1960 are the following:—

- "BALLAD OF CAT BALLON".
- "KIMBERLEY".
- "AND THE ROCK CRIED OUT", BY RAY BRADBURY.
- "THE VINCENT YOMANS STORY".
- "RABBIT TRAP".
- "THE HITCH HIKER".
- "CRY TOUGH".
- "TALL DARK MAN".

We still plan to film "The Devil's Disciple" (which we hope will be another Bernard Shaw screen achievement) as well as "First Love," which we will possibly make in Europe, and we expect to go to Australia to film—guess which play? . . . Yes, you're right, "The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll."

I really believe we have pictures that will contribute pleasure and enjoyment to all audiences.

**I CERTAINLY HOPE SO—BECAUSE I LOVE MY JOB BUT ALSO, AND THIS IS MORE IMPORTANT, I LOVE PEOPLE.**

OUR WEEKLY EDITIONS ARE NOT AS LARGE AS THIS, BUT THEY'RE JUST AS INTERESTING! BE ABSOLUTELY SURE OF GETTING YOUR RECORD MIRROR EVERY WEEK BY PLACING A FIRM ORDER WITH YOUR NEWSAGENT . . . IF HE'S NOT CO-OPERATIVE, FILL IN THAT SUBSCRIPTION FORM ON PAGE 91.

hearing this back in the Jazz Centre with our holiday well behind us and the growing Xmas and New Year's trade to prepare for.

(I hope that, if there are any female readers of this column written by my husband, they will read between the lines and note that it can't be so much of a rest taking a holiday with a specimen. Dot Asman.)

## Corrections

BECAUSE of the tremendous nature of compiling this extraordinary production, certain sections had to go to press before others. Every effort has been made to reach the goal of perfection but, unfortunately, with print—typesetting, proof-reading, etc.—it is impossible to guarantee a newspaper (especially one this size) escaping scot-free.

Before going to press with the final section, we had another run-through with those already printed and discovered a number of errors which we take the opportunity of correcting here. We detail them as follows:

PAGE 35 ("The Lewis-Decca Story"): 13th line in the opening of the story: the word *christened* should be *christened*.

PAGE 35 ("The Lewis-Decca Story"): *Roberts* should be *Robert*.

PAGE 35 ("The Lewis-Decca Story") Col. 4: *musicions* should read *musicians*.

PAGE 39 ("The Lewis-Decca Story"): Text of picture referring to Mr. M. E. Roach should read *assistant publicity manager, not one of the assistants of . . .*

PAGE 39 (Under heading of "Crosby the Great"): *Bdunswick* should read *Brunswick*.

PAGE 39 (in same paragraph): "*Hora Stacato*" should read "*Hora Stacato*."

PAGE 42 ("Time Machine of Benny Green") Col. 4 (third line): 1957 should read 1958.

PAGE 63 (Len Evans Variety Review) Col. 5: *Benn* should read *Ben*.

PAGE 68 (Len Evans Variety Review): *This is really a stop-press re the closing of the Prince of Wales Theatre, Cardiff: the theatre is to re-open in January, 1958, with a policy of plays, opera, ballet and films. The theatre has been taken over by two Cardiff business men.*

PAGE 71 (Len Evans Variety Review) Col. 1: *Aileen Stanley* should read *Aileen Cochrane*.

PAGE 75 (Len Evans Variety Review) Col. 1: Stan Stennett will be appearing not at the *Empire, Leeds*, as stated, but at the *Grand, Leeds*, where he will play "Sammy" in "Mother Goose" with George Lacy as "Dame."

PAGE 79 (Dick Tatham's Diary): The first five lines in the second column have been wrongly inserted; please read them as they should have been correctly placed, i.e. immediately under the month of February—they will give a correct continuity of the diary.

PAGE 81 (Dick Tatham's Diary) Col. 5, line 4: *polo* should read *pogo*.

PAGE 82 (Dick Tatham's Diary) Col. 1: *ment* should read *meant*.

PAGE 83 (under picture of Sir Louis Sterling): *LL.D.* should read *D.LITT.*

[Editorial footnote: If there are any others we haven't been able to trace in time for correction, we apologise in advance. We have done our utmost to be letter-perfect; if we haven't quite succeeded, we have certainly tried hard; it isn't that we can't spell . . . it's just that those gremlins sneak in when we're not looking . . .]

# SINCERE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

from  
all of us  
on the  
**HIT**  
**LABEL**



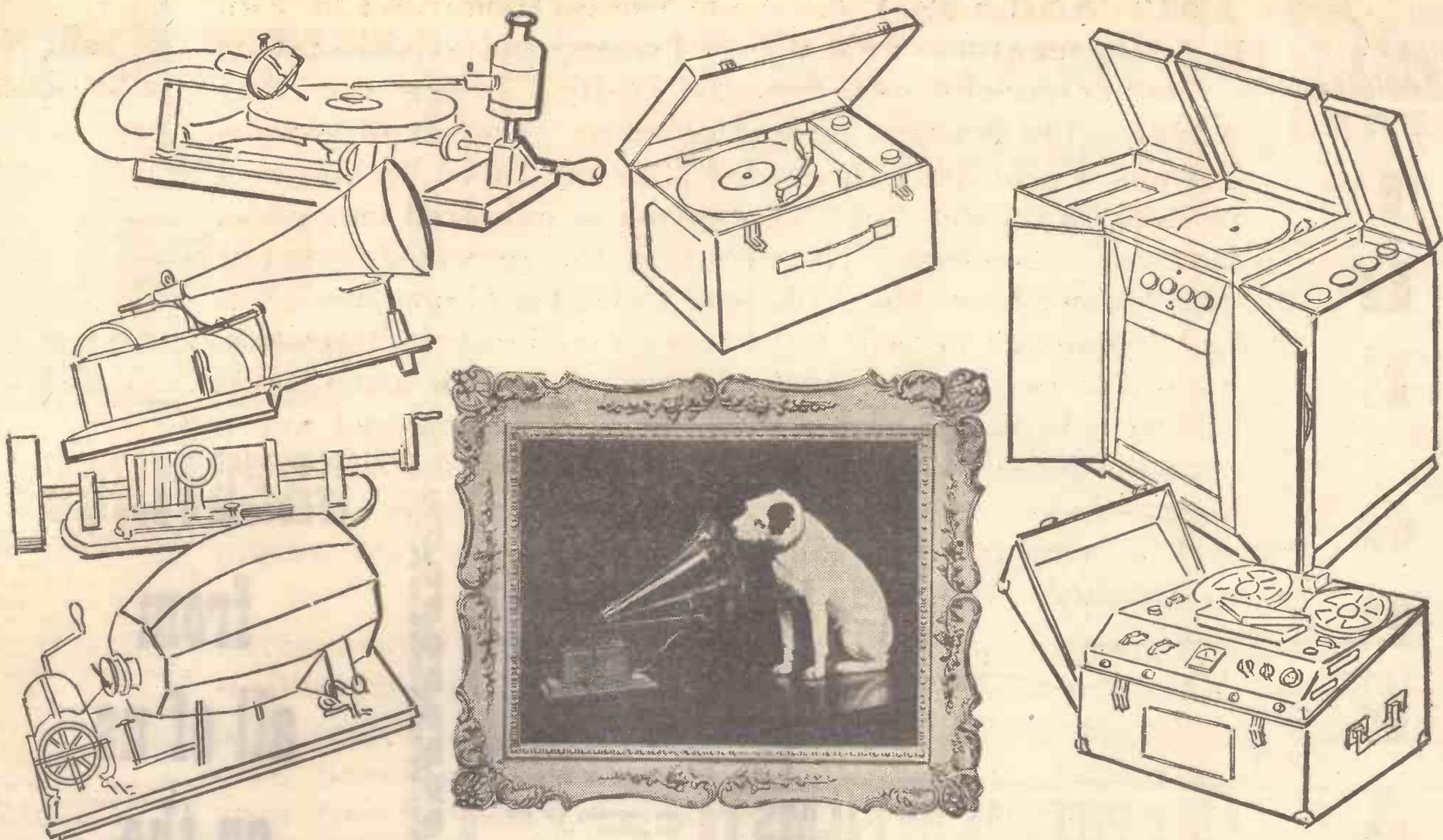
# PHILIPS

-of course!

*The Records of the Century*

Philips Electrical Limited, Gramophone Records Division,  
Stanhope House, Stanhope Place, London, W.2.

Philips are world-renowned makers of  
Radiograms, Record Players and Record Playing Equipment  
incorporating the  
world-famous 'Featherweight' Pick-up



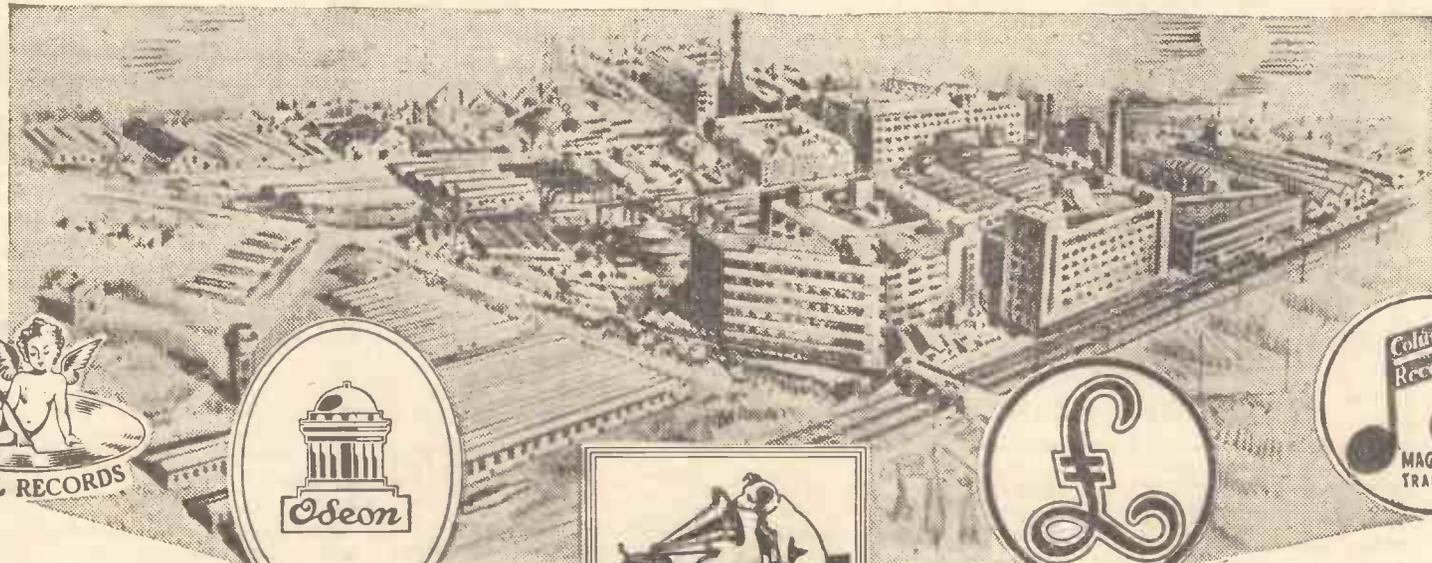
DAME NELLIE MELBA  
Another singing great

# THE FASCINATING H.M.V. STORY



ADELINA PATTI  
a truly great soprano

The Great Saga Of A Great Industry  
By Lydia A. Walton





# THE GREAT STORY BEGINS

**C**OMPANIES like Electric and Musical Industries Ltd. with their numerous subsidiaries and widespread activities belong rather specially to the twentieth century. In many cases they represent the practical adaptation of the principle of rationalization, a principle propounded after the 1914-1918 war as a panacea for the ills of over-duplication of industrial enterprises then not uncommon. The giants of the recording industry, The Gramophone Co. Ltd., and Columbia Gramophone Co. Ltd., continued in their separate ways until early in 1931 when, within the framework of the newly created Electric and Musical Industries Ltd., they merged their interests and entered into a period of rationalization. Today the activities of Electric and Musical Industries Ltd. are widespread and varied, not the least of them being its record industry, which has grown from strength to strength.

A gramophone record is an exceedingly well-known article and is in common use throughout the world. There are millions of records in circulation and many of them have originated in this country. It is not easy then to appreciate that seventy years ago the gramophone was only just invented and that sixty years ago The Gramophone Co. was not yet in being. Indeed it is just sixty years since Berliner's emissary arrived in England to exploit the gramophone. But one anticipates. Many record enthusiasts are well informed about the background history of the reproduction of sound and to such the following review will be oversimplified. To others, however, the brief survey will give a background to the history of a company which in fact developed the industry in the eastern hemisphere.

**I**N his "Romance of The Gramophone", T. Lindsay Buick refers to a curious box known in China over three thousand years ago into which a Chinese Prince, in diplomatic communication with a ruler who lived in a distant part of the country, spoke his messages. The box was then carried by a trusted bearer and when the ruler opened the box he could actually hear the words of the Prince speaking in the far away principality.

From that time onwards, at differing intervals, various phenomena of improvised sound have been recorded, those referring to frozen sound not to be taken too seriously, particularly in these days of domestic refrigeration and deep freezes!

A hundred years ago, however, there was a well authenticated invention by Edouard-Leon Scott de Martinville, a Parisian; and although the device was not successfully exploited it was the bridge between the past and the present. Scott's invention, known as the Phonautograph, was a drum in the centre of a small steel rod, at the end of which was a screw thread and crank. Over the drum Scott laid a sheet of white paper smeared with lamp black. In front of this was placed a barrel-shaped horn the inner end of which was covered with a diaphragm composed of gold-beater's skin.

Attached to the centre of the diaphragm was a short

stout hog's bristle the end of which came into contact with the paper on the drum. When the crank was turned the drum rotated and the screw caused it to travel simultaneously in a lateral direction. This caused a straight white line in a spiral form round the drum. When one spoke or sang into the horn, however, the diaphragm was agitated and the character of the line was changed. It no longer remained straight but developed variations differing in intensity with the tones and power used. Scott had in fact discovered how to make a picture of sound. He called his line "written sound" or a "Phonautograph", the latter being the name now given to the invention. Scott proved that (1) each note had its own vibrations, (2) the vibrations were consistent on the diaphragm so that the bristle always recorded accurately and (3) each tone caused its own mark.

Twenty years later, in April 1877, another Frenchman, Charles Cros, deposited with the Academy of Sciences in Paris the specification of a machine which he claimed would reproduce "audible phenomena." This document was not unsealed until the following December, but the facts were well known and lucidly referred to by one Abbe Leblanc, who, explaining the object in view, suggested that the instrument should be called the Phonograph and the photographs of the voice Phonograms, both terms being used by Edison later. The word

Phonograph, however, had been used in England fourteen years earlier in connection with another invention.

## Edison

**I**N AUGUST 1877, Thomas Alva Edison, an American inventor, produced an instrument which recorded and reproduced sound. He called it the "Phonograph." The Phonograph was a device with a cylinder mounted on to a crankshaft, both grooved to coincide. The crankshaft fitted into a flywheel on one end and carried a crank at the other. The diaphragm was a thin iron plate erected in front of the cylinder. A steel point was sprung beneath the plate. Tinfoil was placed around the cylinder, the steel point was adjusted to rest upon the foil and when agitated by the vibrations of the voice moved up and down on the foil making a pattern of indentations. When the stylus was set back upon its track and the cranks turned again the vibration from the indentations reproduced the sounds that had made them. Edison had reproduced sound; he had invented the first talking machine.

In May 1886 Chichester Bell and Charles Sumner Tainter widened the field.

They devised and patented a method of recording on a cylinder by cutting wax with a specially shaped sapphire stylus. The result was better than anything yet produced and revived interest in the talking machine. The Graphophone, as the Bell

and Tainter machine was called, was put upon the market and there was soon a considerable demand. The American Graphophone Company was formed to develop the market for this invention. The Columbia Graphophone Company Ltd., well known in this country for forty years, has an historical link with the American Graphophone Company.

## Berliner

The following year an exiled German, Emile Berliner, studied Scott's Phonautograph, one of which was in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington.

Berliner was impressed by Scott's work and realized its implications. He thought that the lateral or written form would prove better than the "hill and dale" or vertical methods used in the phonograph and graphophone.

Although he commenced his experiments with a cylinder, Berliner was inspired to change over to a plate, or disc. He cut his paper cylinders into strips and took them to a photo-engraver who transferred the markings on to a flat piece of zinc. Berliner then had to devise a machine to reproduce his recording. This he did, and the results pleased him so well that he proceeded on those lines for his invention. He had three aims:— to perfect (1) a photo-engraving process, (2) a scheme for "etching the human voice" and (3) a duplicating method.

Berliner then devised a turntable mounted on a baseboard,

hand driven and controlled by a flywheel. At the side a movable bracket supported the recording sound box which was attached to the mouth-piece by a flexible tube.

A heavy glass plate was blackened over a smoky flame and laid on the turntable and the recording box carefully adjusted so that an elastic stylus just touched the smoky surface of the plate. After the record was traced Berliner "fixed" it with shellac varnish and took it along to his friend to be photo-engraved. Berliner then devised his reproducer or Gramophone as he named it. The turntable was hand operated as on the recorder, but he found that the grooves on the hard record carried the sound box along. This simplified his design and he was able to fix the sound box on the end of a horn supported by a bracket arm. The record could be played. Berliner coined the word "Gramophone" and christened his instrument. He patented his device in November 1887, just about seventy years ago.

The first disc record ever made is believed to be preserved in the National Museum in Washington. Within six months, Berliner had succeeded in etching in wax on zinc a record which after immersion in an acid solution was capable of becoming a matrix. It was, however, four years later before the process of taking copies was developed to Berliner's satisfaction, and with this development was laid the foundation of a world-wide industry.

## Launched

**B**ERLINER then commenced operations in America but it was not until 1897 that he turned towards England. In July of that year he sent Mr. William Barry Owen, a very live wire, to exploit the gramophone in this country. Barry Owen, bringing a few sample instruments, was to interest suitable people and encourage them to raise money and finance and create a demand for the new invention. Edison's phonograph had been introduced already to the English market by his agent Colonel Gouraud, but the disc machine was quite new.

In due course Barry Owen met Mr. Trevor Williams, a London solicitor and company promoter. He in turn interested some city men and they formed a syndicate, called themselves the Gramophone Company, arranged the necessary credit, and started business in The Hotel Cecil in the spring of 1898. An immediate order was sent off to Berliner for machines and records. The Gramophone Company had arrived!

In a short while the company moved to premises in Maiden Lane and plans were soon afoot to make recordings in England and Europe, and to arrange to process and press the records' this side of the Atlantic. To implement these plans it was necessary to have a licence from Berliner to use his system. In due course an exclusive licence for a wide territory was successfully negotiated and the company was all set to forge ahead.

Meanwhile, in Washington

(Continued on next page)

# HOW THE DOG WAS 'BORN'



## The Great Caruso



Yes, indeed, the Great CARUSO . . . the greatest tenor of all time. Here is an historic picture as he appeared as Don José in the opera 'Carmen'.

## They Helped Build An Industry



THE BROTHERS WILLIAM and FREDERICK GAISBERG

dog was white, the horn of the phonograph black and the background sombre.

A friend had suggested that a brass horn might liven up the picture and mentioned "the little company in Maiden Lane." Mr. Owen was intrigued and asked to see the picture, which was in fact in the hands of a hesitating phonograph company.

Mr. Barraud duly obtained possession of his picture and brought it along for inspection. Mr. Owen saw its possibilities, but observed that a phonograph was not appropriate for a gramophone company. The artist insisted that the one could be painted out, and the other painted in. Accordingly the current best model was loaned to him and Mr. Barraud departed. In due course he returned with the picture which now is so well known all over the world that its new face needs no description. The outline of the painted out phonograph and its black horn are visible in the original picture to this day. The artist called his picture "His Master's Voice." The little white dog was a real dog named Nipper. He had belonged to the artist's brother, Mr. Mark Barraud, and after Mark's death attached himself to Francis, from whom he became inseparable. Mr. Barraud noticed Nipper's cocked head, and curious expression, each time the phonograph was played, and was inspired to put the tableau on to canvas.

During the time the picture was having its face changed the Gramophone Company changed too. It became The Gramophone Company Ltd. Mr. Trevor Williams was the Chairman and so remained until 1930 when he was succeeded by Mr. Alfred Clark. Mr. Owen was the first Managing Director.

The Italian and German companies were formed later, and in December the company paid its first interim dividend of 10 per cent.

## Fairy Tale

THE PROGRESS indicated by the general position at the end of 1899 reads like a fairy tale. There were companies in Germany, France and Italy, representatives or agents in Russia, Spain, Austria and Hungary. Recordings had been made in Italy, Hungary, Austria, France, Germany, Russia, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Poland, and there was a special Hebrew section in the catalogue. Gramophone motors were being imported at the rate of six hundred per week. The first royalty cheque to America for the year ending May 1899 was over £10,000.

Expansion continued apace, and 1900 had scarcely dawned when plans were afoot to develop in India. Shortly afterwards a representative was sent to Australia with 100,000 records. Twenty-six years later a factory was built there, and officially opened by the Prime Minister of New South Wales. Preliminary arrangements were made for the very important event of recording in the Vatican. This was a real hall-mark of the acceptance of the gramophone as an instrument with a vocation.

The technical advance of the year was the introduction of nickel plating of shells. At this time the company decided to

(Continued on next page)



TETRAZZINI laying the corner stone of the HMV Cabinet Factory—July 1911

there were the two brothers, William and Fred Gaisberg who had been associated with the talking machine from its infancy and were versed in the intricacies of recording. Berliner had arranged for them to come over when the time was ripe. Accordingly in July 1898 they set off for England with the recording apparatus.

The recorders were provided and their equipment: what about the pressing? Berliner had that in hand also. His nephew was ready when required to do so, to go to Germany and install presses in a little factory in Hanover, where Emile's brother Joseph had made telephone parts. So soon therefore as recording started the Gramophone Company entered into negotiations for pressing in Europe. The installation of the factory in Hanover was commenced in August 1898, and in May 1899 permanent pressing commenced. Records were pressed at the rate of ten an hour per press, and a good presser operated three presses concurrently. The working hours were 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and very soon orders were reaching the factory at the rate of 5,000 records daily.

## 'Angel'

TOWARDS the end of 1898 the "Angel" trade mark was devised and registered by the company. This was a cherub sitting on a disc and writing. The "Angel" mark was in use for many years along with the "Dog" until finally superseded by the latter, but was revived again in 1953 to

become the principal trade mark of Electric & Musical Industries (U.S.) Ltd., the new selling company in America. In the same year, 1898, Albert Chevalier of "My Old Dutch" fame agreed to record for the Gramophone Company. A sale room was opened in Paris. About the same time a room was opened there by Columbia Phonograph General, the selling company of the America Graphophone Company. By the end of 1898 there were six hundred agents on the company's books, a recording laboratory in the London premises, a sales room in Paris and a factory in course of installation. The gramophone was justifying its invention.

The Johnson system of recording and matrix making was taken over the following January — Eldridge Johnson was the owner of a small machine shop in Camden. He worked closely with Berliner particularly on mechanical work, making gramophone parts and so forth. He founded a business which ultimately became the Victor Talking Machine Co., and is now the Victor Division of the Radio Corporation of America.

Mr. Alfred Clark, another talking machine pioneer and inventor, came to England. He brought a letter of introduction from Edison, with whom he worked. Mr. Clark joined the Gramophone Company, and commenced an association which lasted a lifetime, during which period he formed the French company and became its first Managing Director, became successively Joint Managing Director, Managing Director and Chairman of the English Company, Founder

Chairman of Electric and Musical Industries Ltd., and finally the President of that company until he retired in 1946, a few years before his death. Mr. Clark was a brilliant and far seeing man and a natural organiser. He was one of the architects of the company. He attracted respect, loyalty and devotion from his staff and workpeople at all levels, and today, seven years after his death, he is yet spoken of with affection and his passing with regret.

1899 was a momentous year for the young company. In the spring an artist named Francis Barraud called at Maiden Lane and asked for the loan of a brass horn.

This somewhat unusual request was referred to the Manager, Mr. Barry Owen, who immediately requested to see Mr. Barraud. It appeared that Mr. Barraud had painted a picture which was not easy to sell. It was of a dog listening to a phonograph. The



MR. WILLIAM BARRY OWEN



# TO HAYES!

## Caruso

have a second string to its bow, and accordingly made arrangements to build typewriters. The company was reorganised, and renamed for this purpose, and became The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. (see unique reproduction on page 74) and so remained for seven years. The manufacture of typewriters was abandoned a couple of years before the company changed its name back to The Gramophone Co. Ltd.

Berliner's early records were about five inches in diameter. All records made by the Gramophone Company, however, were seven-inch until 1901 when ten-inch records were introduced. Two years later twelve-inch records were added to the list. All these were single sided. The average playing times were 7in., 1 min. 50 secs., 10in., 2 mins. 30 secs., and 12in., 3 mins. 50 secs. The prices were 2/6, 5/- and 7/6 respectively, except for special labels.

From the earliest days the company had in mind the need for development of recording to the maximum extent. What imagination those pioneers had! How well they set the pattern.

The parochial, the national, the international, the high-brow, the lowbrow, the devotional, the recreational, the vocal, the instrumental, the orchestral, the historical and so on.

Is it not still the pattern of today? In implementation the

**T**HE COMPANY expanded beyond the limits of Maiden Lane and moved into larger premises in City Road early in 1902, at first as tenants and within a short while as owners. This year was a red label year. Caruso, the great tenor, recorded for the company, on the first occasion actually underneath the suite once occupied by the composer Verdi. With the coming of the "Concert" record a number of fine singers had been persuaded to record, and their records were given a red label and listed in a special catalogue, the first of the well known "Red Label" catalogues. The records were priced at 10/- each, and the catalogue was issued in September. Some of the famous names included were, Caruso, Plancon, Sammarco, Scotti, Calvé (whose picture adorned the cover), Suzanne Adams, Chaliapin (then spelt Schaliapine), and the Choir of the Cappella Sistina, to which reference already has been made. This was indeed the gramophone's passport to the world of art.

Expansion continued in all countries and the average daily sales of records was 11,500. Higher priced records began to appear, commencing with the recordings of Tamagno, the great tenor, whose discs were £1 each. Thereafter, as giant after giant was added to the list, the company built up the catalogue which has become the treasure house of the

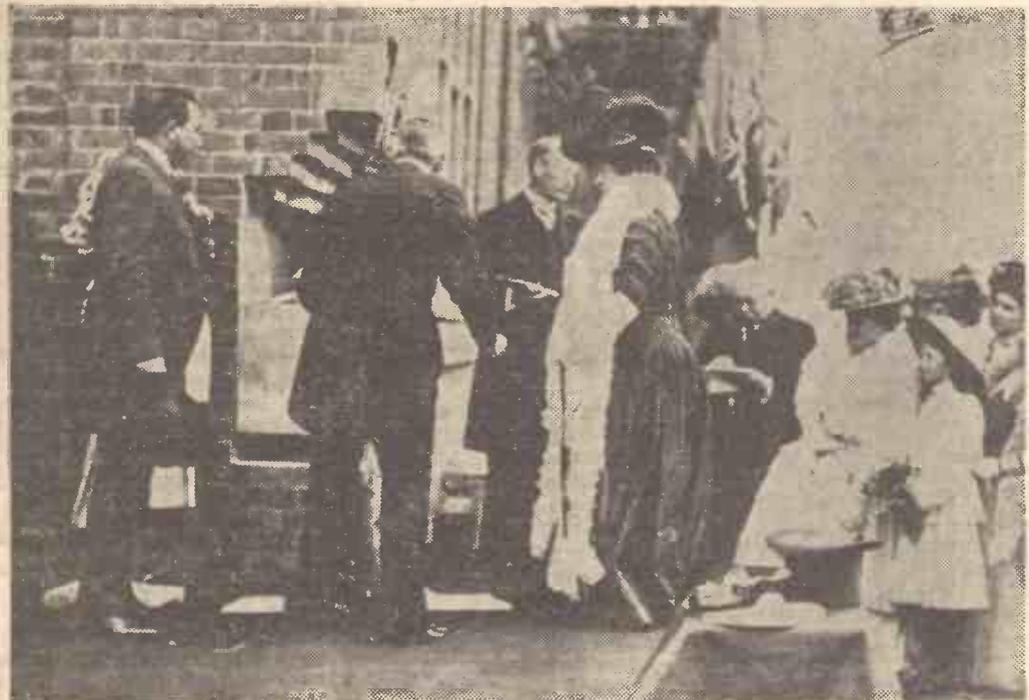
decided to open in England. In reporting on this site Mr. Williams advised the Board that five acres was not enough for the development envisaged. He was looking forward to seeing a new Head Office and large distributing organisation, the centre of a business of world-wide ramifications. Could he possibly have envisaged the 75 acres when he retired from the Chair, or the 150 acres of today?

The site was duly purchased, and on February 9th, 1907, Edward Lloyd, the well-known tenor, emerged from retirement to cut the first sod for the new development. According to the "Talking Machine News" of the period, a short cinematograph film was made of the ceremony and was afterwards shown to the Gramophone Staff in London.

In February too the company was honoured by Royal Appointment to Her Majesty Queen Alexandra. An auspicious month! After this the company was further honoured by Royal Appointment in many lands.

Dame Nellie Melba laid the foundation-stone of the new factory in May, and in June the 7in. record was withdrawn from circulation. The following June the first record was pressed in the Hayes factory, and in July commercial pressing commenced. By the end of August there were twenty-eight presses working. The month's output was 27,782 records, and there were 162 employees on the payroll.

**THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LTD. HAD COME TO HAYES.**



Dame NELLIE MELBA laying the Foundation stone of the Record Factory at Hayes, Middlesex, on May 13, 1907.

recorders went everywhere: to all the principal cities in Europe (including Russia), and away to India and the Far East. There were no orchestral accompaniments in the earliest days, but in 1900 the company was able to announce that it had recorded in Italy some operatic selections with orchestral accompaniment, instead of piano accompaniment as previously. In its circular to the trade the company said that operatic selection with piano accompaniment had not been realistic! The next year "Educational" was added to the "plan," the first "Language Lesson" records being made then. The Indian recording was followed up by the establishment of a branch in India, and the "Concert" or 10in. record was introduced.

Golden Age of Song. Dame Nellie Melba was recorded in 1904, and Madame Adeline Patti in her Welsh Castle the year after. Madame Patti was already sixty-three years old when she recorded. The late Fred Gaisberg in his "Music on Record" tells the story of that recording. It was an ordeal for Madame to sing into the small tunnel and she was two days getting used to the recording machine before she would sing to it!

The company's first appointment as a Royal Warrant Holder was to the Shah of Persia in 1906, the year of the first deposit of celebrity matrices in the British Museum. The year too that the Chairman of the company surveyed land at Hayes as the possible site of the Record Factory which the company

## Problems

**I**T MUST NOT BE ASSUMED that the first decade of the company's life was without its problems. The company prospered because it was in a new field, was developing the field with imagination, was giving the best value possible, consistent with technical development, was alert for every improvement in technique and was well organised. The company had to combat pirating in many countries; and at home it was constantly fighting for its right to the word "Gramophone," coined, as will be remembered, by the inventor Emile Berliner. However,

(Continued on next page)



## SHOWBILL

The Christmas Hit from  
**Frank Sinatra**

**'MISTLETOE and HOLLY'**

b/w 'Jingle Bells'

**Sue Raney**

**'Please hurry home'**

b/w 'Don't Take My Happiness'

**TEX RITTER**

**'Here was a Man'**

b/w 'It Came Upon A Midnight Clear'

**DEAN MARTIN**

**'MAKIN' LOVE**

**UKULELE STYLE'**

b/w 'GOOD MORNIN' LIFE'

**SONNY JAMES**

**'UH-HUH-MM'**

b/w 'Why Can't They Remember'

**FRANK SINATRA**

**'ALL THE WAY'**

b/w 'CHICAGO'

from the film 'The Joker is Wild'

**TOMMY SANDS**

**'A Swingin' Romance'**

b/w 'Man, Like Wow!'

**JOHNNY OTIS SHOW**

The greatest of party discs

**'Ma!'**

b/w 'Romance in the Dark'

**GENE VINCENT**

**'Dance to the Bop'**

b/w 'I Got It'

**45 R.P.M. 7-INCH EXTENDED PLAY RECORDS**

**'AROUND THE WORLD' NAT 'KING' COLE** EAP 1-813

**'THE KING AND I'** (four parts) EAP 1,2,3,4-740

**'KENTON IN HI FI'** EAP 1041

## NEW LPs!

**'A Jolly Christmas from Frank Sinatra'** LCT 6144

**'Joy to the World'—The Roger Wagner Chorale** P 8353

**Jackie Gleason presents 'Merry Christmas'** LCT 6147



# TIDE TURNS TO TRIUMPH

in this the company fought a losing battle, the Courts ruling the word to be generic. So "Gramophone" became a common word and ceased to apply only to an instrument made under the Berliner patents.

The Columbia Phonograph Co. General had expanded into most capital cities in Europe, having transferred its Head Office from Paris to London in 1900 and having commenced to manufacture in England a short while later. Although Columbia was selling, at first, only cylinders the company very soon introduced discs. Cylinders had a fairly long life in England all things considered, but ultimately petered out largely as a result of a price war. There were many entrants into the disc trade and competition was keen. The Gramophone Company maintained its prices and its quality. Having the top artists in all fields it was good policy to do so. However, seeing the need for a competitive price line the company used the Zonophone label, which it acquired in 1903 and built up into a really good second line catalogue. So when the company had its new factory in Hayes there was every prospect of keeping it busy.

The factory, which had cost over £100,000 to build and equip, must have been a very important undertaking to a village of 3,000 inhabitants, as Hayes was then. Much labour had to be recruited locally and taught a new trade.

A year later the factory manager was able to report that 85 of the pressmen were able to go on piece work, and with an output of 160 records per day were exceeding the Hanover figures. By the end of 1908 the factory staff had expanded to 225 workers and 10 clerical staff. Very soon a Sports Club was formed, a sure indication that people were settling in.

Business continued to expand in India, where a new branch was opened in Bombay. The Vernacular Catalogue was becoming an important one. In September 1909 Madame Clara Butt, the great contralto, recorded for the company. The same year the company suffered a serious reverse in a legal action in Italy, and closed the branch for the time being. By December the record output for the five factories was 44,300 daily. Eleven years later the Hayes factory alone had a monthly output of 900,000.

## The War

THE COMPANY'S PLAN for development at Hayes was implemented quickly in the next few years. The Head Office was transferred to new buildings there in 1911, and the following month Madame Tetrazzini, another of the company's great sopranos, laid the corner stone of the Cabinet Factory, the following June the recording studios were opened by the fine bass Chaliapin, and in August the building of the Machine Factory was begun.

The same year, 1912, double sided records were inaugurated throughout the company. The Machine Factory was opened in November 1913 and was geared up just in time to go on to war work with the first munitions contract the following August. Early in the 1914-1918 war the London Staff was evacuated to Hayes, and history repeated itself in the war of 1939-1945. The factories came under Government control and were not released until the end of

1919. The company lost its German factory almost immediately and evacuated its Russian factories in 1917.

During the war Their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary visited Hayes and there were several Royal visitors to the workers' canteen, where Her Royal Highness Princess Mary used to give a helping hand. After the war that great little person Tetrazzini visited the canteen specially to sing to the workers. There were 5,000 of them; ten times as many as those to whom Tetrazzini had sung when she laid the corner stone of the Cabinet Factory eight years earlier.

In 1917 Columbia Phonograph Co. General became The Columbia Gramophone Co. Ltd., and six years later an English syndicate bought it and turned it into a public company. Mr. (now Sir) Louis Sterling was Managing Director. Columbia now really began to grow. Within three years it owned its parent company in America. It also acquired other companies which brought in connexions in South America and the Far East, and added some good trademarks to its possessions, not the least being the Parlophone and Odeon marks. By the joint process of purchasing established businesses, and expanding its own, Columbia was soon nearly as large as Gramophone.

A couple of years after the war the London Staff went back to town. New premises were opened in Oxford Street by Sir Edward Elgar, the composer, and the following year, May 1923, the company recorded Their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary. Twenty years earlier the company had recorded the royal poetess Her Majesty the Queen of Roumania who, as Carmen Sylva, had spoken some of her poems, and was listed in the Red Label catalogue.

The post-war years found the company with a unique problem of serious proportions. As has been mentioned the company's business in Germany was commandeered early in the war.

Making matters worse the enemy Government then sold the business to a German competitor, with the result that when the war was over the company found itself in competition with its own trade mark, its own recordings, new recordings made by its own apparatus and, in a truly Gilbertian situation, receiving claims for royalties on records which the competitors were selling. Fortunately the company was in a category of those qualified under the Treaty of Versailles, to make a claim against the erstwhile enemy.

Litigation continued on and on over a period of twelve years, during which time first one and then another matter would get adjustment or rebuttal. Although ultimately the company received compensation, one result was the loss of the use in certain territories of the "Dog" trade mark. By private arrangement since the 1939-1945 war the ownership of the "Dog" trade mark in those territories has been restored to the company. In the meantime, however, it was necessary to create a new company in Germany, build a new factory, devise a new mark and under it develop a business to beat the competition of the lost "Dog."

## £1m Profit

THE LIFE OF THE ACOUSTIC MACHINE was drawing to its close. In 1926 electrical recording was introduced, followed in due course by the matched impedance method of reproducing. With the almost concurrent introduction of mobile recording apparatus, the company's versatility became even greater than before, to such good purpose indeed that in 1928 the company's profits passed the million mark for the first time.

Columbia, who had introduced the laminated record in 1923, was also in at the beginning with electrical recording, one of the first results being a record taken in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, of 4,850 voices, 850 being those of the Associated Glee Clubs of America, and 4,000 being the audience. Columbia then undertook a most comprehensive programme in connexion with the Beethoven Centenary in 1927. When this was completed about two years later, the whole set of symphonies and quartets comprising 125 records in 22 albums was presented to the Beethoven Museum in Bonn.

These two great companies

report that sounded like a world review. So, Gramophone and Columbia were spinning records round the world.

Gramophone inaugurated a pension scheme in 1930. This brought the company into line with Columbia who had operated a scheme for some time. The year saw the completion of various building projects at home and abroad. There were now in Hayes, the Record, Cabinet, Machine and Assembly factories, and a large Research building. In America it was believed that the collapse of the record industry was inevitable with the growth of the radio trade. This belief was not general in England, indeed Mr. Clark prophesied that the record industry would receive new impetus. He was proved right, but not immediately. A world depression was developing and when Mr. Trevor Williams left the Chair in 1930 as foreshadowed the previous year, Mr. Clark succeeded him in time to face the depressed conditions.

## Rumours

THE TWO GREAT COMPANIES had enjoyed alike expansion and prosperity and had suffered from depressions, war



Mr. ALFRED CLARK, the first Chairman of Electric and Musical Industries, Ltd.

were approaching their zenith. Their prosperity encouraged the entry of many newcomers into the field and whilst many of these could not possibly stay the course inevitably the market was loaded with discs of all marks and prices. Added to this was the emergence of radio from the growing-pains stage, with the challenge of new diversion in the home. Both companies accepted the challenge and entered the radio field, a new industry for each, the progress of which, however, is material for another story. Columbia continued to expand and was now nearly as large as Gramophone. Mr. Trevor Williams at the Annual General Meeting in 1929 gave notice of his intended retirement, and referred to the enormous growth and complexity of the business. Sir George Croydon Marks at the Columbia meeting gave a

and other crises beyond their control. Both had extended until ramifications were world wide: between them they owned fifty factories in nineteen different countries.

Both companies were in the Record Industry, both newly starting in the Radio Industry, and Gramophone was in the Television field. In a world depression they were going to be vulnerable in every part of the globe. The position called for rationalization. Rumours of amalgamation rife in 1930 were confirmed in April, 1931, when Electric and Musical Industries Ltd. was created to merge the interests of the two competitors. The merger was completed in due course, and the two merging companies again became private companies.

At the end of 1931 Sir Edward Elgar opened new

Recording Studios in St. John's Wood: concrete evidence of the companies' faith in the future of the record. The London Symphony Orchestra recorded Elgar's "Falstaff." Mr. Clark, Chairman of E.M.I., Mr. Sterling, E.M.I.'s Managing Director, and Mr. W. M. Brown, the Managing Director of Gramophone were present. So too were Sir Landon Ronald, who had been a Musical Adviser to the Gramophone Company for thirty years, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Sir Walford Davis, Sir Barry Jackson, Mr. (now Sir) Cedric Hardwicke, and other distinguished men and women in the field of music, art and literature. As on an earlier occasion the proceedings were filmed, but this time for showing in the principal cinemas throughout the country.

Then followed a period of re-organization. Where Columbia and Gramophone factories operated in proximity manufacture was centred in one, and the other was dismantled. So far as possible English manufacture was centred in Hayes. The identity of the different catalogues was respected and maintained, but the administration was centralized so far as possible. The times were a challenge which the company accepted. Despite depression it continued to grow. Early in 1933 the company was honoured by appointment as Royal Warrant Holder to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Later that year H.R.H. Prince George visited the factory, and the following year the Prince of Wales paid a visit.

In 1934 the tide was turning. To encourage new optimism the company organised a Show Train, which was sent off from Paddington by Prime Minister Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, on a 2,750-mile journey around Great Britain. This was a great success. The following year the company introduced a 10" dance record to retail at 1/6. Two years later record prices were increased. That year there was a disastrous fire in the company's shop in Oxford Street, London. The rebuilt shop was opened in the spring of 1939, whilst air raid shelters were being built at Hayes.

When war broke out one of the first concerns of the company was the safeguarding of the priceless record catalogue built up over the years. Accordingly masters were carefully packed and crated, and there was a wholesale evacuation of these to a safe place, from which they were in due course restored at the end of hostilities.

History repeated itself. The City staff were evacuated to Hayes, and the plant was declared "A Protected Place." The company formed its own corps of Local Defence Volunteers, and maintained its own Air Raid Precautions. During early raid warnings the personnel went to the shelters, but this was such a waste of time that in a short while emergency sheltering only was adopted. The company suffered heavy damage in several of its properties. All the company's energies were directed to war contracts. Some record production was maintained; radio production had to cease.

## Vast . . .

AS THE COMPANY emerged from war conditions it entered a period of reconstruction. By now the organization

was so vast that decentralisation on a functional basis was decreed.

Accordingly in 1946 E.M.I. Studios Ltd. was formed to become responsible for all recording activities.

That year saw the death of two pioneers. Mr. Trevor Williams, Founder Chairman of The Gramophone Co. and a Director of the company until his death, and Mr. Charles Gregory, the Columbia recorder who had been with the Columbia Company since joining in Washington in 1894. Mr. Clark at the age of 73 retired from the Chair, and became President of the company. The industry has been one to fire the imagination of its disciples and to hold them. Long service is normal. Sir Alexander Aikman C.I.E. succeeded Mr. Clark as Chairman, and presided until 1954 when he was succeeded by the present Chairman Mr. J. F. Lockwood. The pioneers were coming to the end of nature's span. Mr. Clark died in 1950, and Mr. Gaisberg the following year, both having been connected with the industry from the days of their youth.

About this time a factory was commenced in South Africa and pressing began in September, 1952, the year that the company entered the microgroove field with 10 and 12 inch records 33 1/2 r.p.m., having playing times about 30 and 50 minutes respectively and the 7 inch record 45 r.p.m., having a playing time equal to a standard 78 r.p.m. record, and very different from the 7 inch records withdrawn in 1907. In the following year optional centres were provided so that records might be played on standard instruments, and in 1954 Extended Play 7 inch 45 r.p.m. were introduced with a playing time of 15 minutes. Later that year the company presented its High Fidelity Tape Recordings. There were four series, two in the celebrity class and two in the standard class with playing times of sixty and forty minutes in each class.

Following changes in American contractual relationships the company formed a selling company in the United States. The old Angel mark, which had always been protected, was revived for use of Electric and Musical Industries (U.S.) Ltd. A little later a Canadian company was formed to use the same mark. The new Pakistan factory was now ready, and the first record was pressed there in June, 1954. Next year the company acquired the majority holding of Capitol Records Inc., an American company becoming well established in the Popular market. Less than twelve months later the unique Capitol Tower was opened as the new Head Office on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood.

IN THE MEANTIME THE MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY'S STAFF IN THE HOME FIELD RETURNED TO LONDON INTO NEWLY ACQUIRED PREMISES IN THE WEST END. THERE, AT THE SIGN OF THOSE WELL-KNOWN TRADE-MARKS "HIS MASTER'S VOICE," "COLUMBIA," "PARLOPHONE" AND OTHERS, THE COMPANY CONTINUES TO MAKE HISTORY IN THE RECORD INDUSTRY UNDER THE REGIS OF E.M.I. RECORDS LIMITED.

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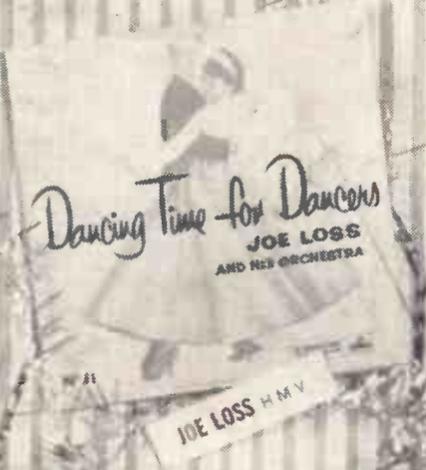
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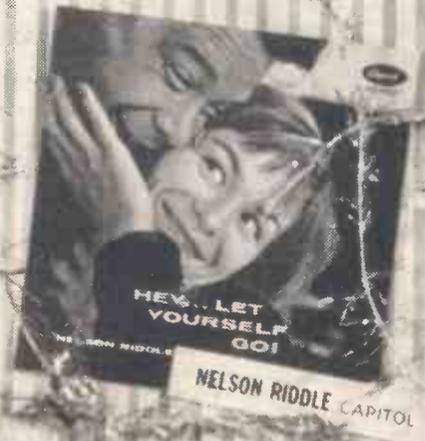
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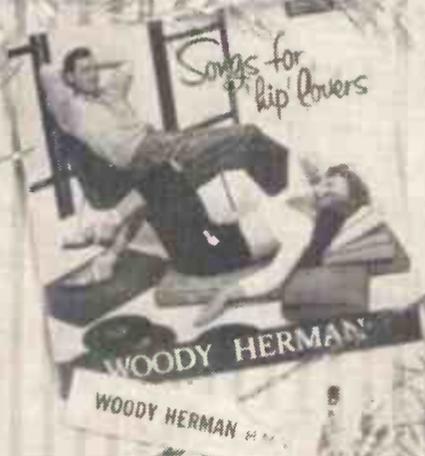
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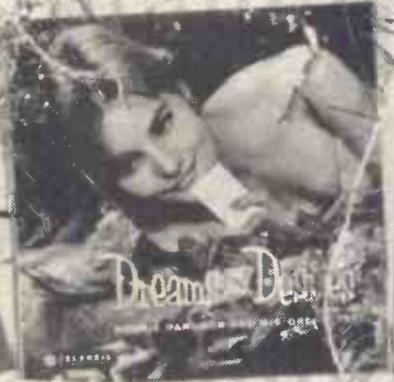
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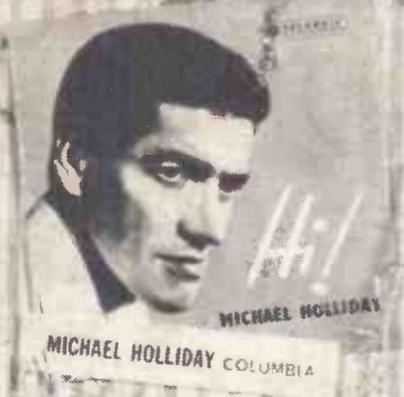
NORRIE PARAMOR COLUMBIA



THE KING AND I CAPITOL



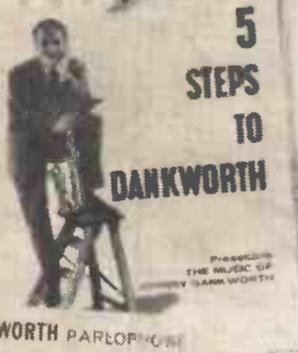
CHRIS BARBER and LONNIE DONEGAN COLUMBIA



MICHAEL HOLLIDAY COLUMBIA



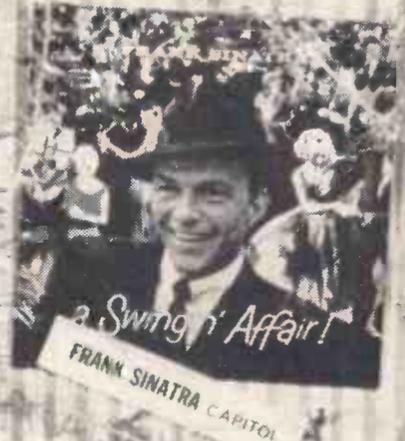
LES GIRLS M-G-M



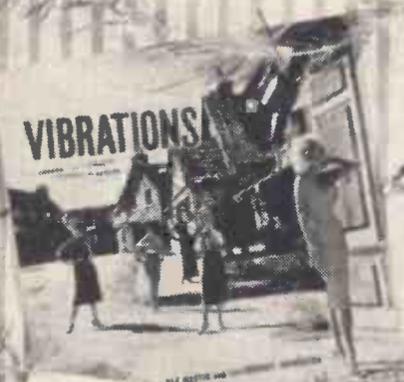
JOHNNY DANKWORTH PARLOPHONE



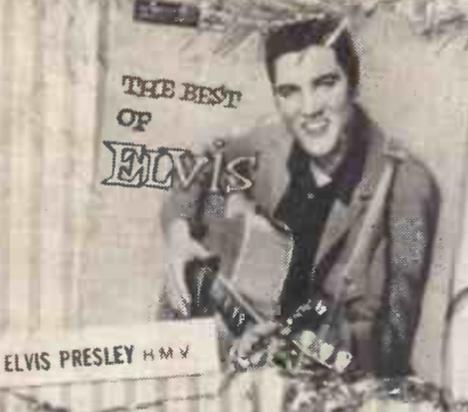
NAT 'KING' COLE CAPITOL



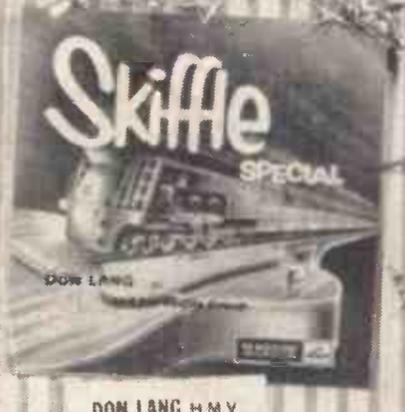
FRANK SINATRA CAPITOL



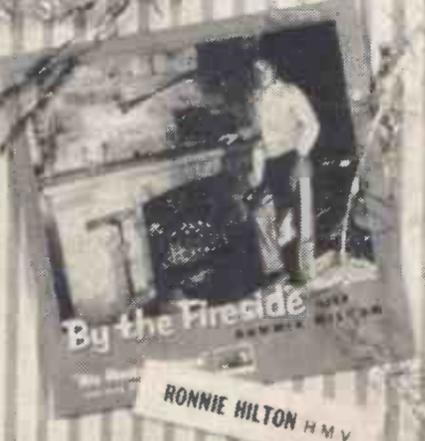
RAY MARTIN



ELVIS PRESLEY HMV



DON LANG HMV



RONNIE HILTON HMV



JUDY GARLAND CAPITOL

