

Melody Maker

3^d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

EVERY THURSDAY Vol. XXI No. 648

JIVER HUTCHINSON IS BACK FROM INDIA

HOME FROM A PHENOMENALLY SUCCESSFUL TWO MONTHS' VISIT TO INDIA WITH HIS ALL-STAR COLOURED BAND IS LESLIE "JIVER" HUTCHINSON, WHO RETURNED TO THIS COUNTRY ON DECEMBER 15.

This was the first civilian band to entertain troops in this area; their fame had preceded them, and everywhere they were greeted with packed houses, and audiences so enthusiastic that a concluding speech by Leslie was well-nigh impossible.

Only in one instance were audiences small. This was at the Garrison Theatre, Calcutta, whither they were escorted under armed guard, to play while rioting in the streets made it hazardous to venture out of doors.

Flown to Chittagong, these boys gave shows within seven miles of the Burmese border, they undertook a two-day boat-and-train journey to give three shows at Comilla; at the Hospital Theatre they broke all records; they broke the local E.N.S.A. ban by playing at West and East African camps, where they gave a special calypso programme; they broadcast twice over the All India radio; and only lack of time necessitated Leslie's turning down an offer to record for H.M.V. over there.

But Leslie's one regret is that he was not able to bring his music to more of these jive-starved troops.

High-spots of their two-hour show were Leslie's "Fiesta In Blue"; Yorke de Sousa's piano; Bertie King's "Stardust"; the Cab Quay Trio; guest artiste Ceclia Nicholson; though it would be invidious to single out any one item among so star-studded a programme.

Home again, big things are lined up for Leslie, whose immediate plans include an overseas airing on December 29, three days at the Gliderdrome, Boston, Lings, starting on the 31st, a concert at Gateshead the following Sunday, followed by a series of one-night stands in the Midlands, bringing them to a Sunday concert at Warley, Birmingham, on January 13.

ROS RECRUITS

LATEST acquisition of Edmundo Ros's famous Rumbla Orchestra is Douglas Tanguy, who brings an unusual "double" into the line-up with clarinet and accordion.

Hailing from the Channel Isles, Douglas was seized as prisoner of war when the Germans invaded, and was shipped as slave-labourer to the Continent by them.

Since his liberation he has thrown himself whole-heartedly into the profession, winning immediate attention after being given his first break by Nat Allen, before fixing up his present enviable post with Ros at the Bagatelle Restaurant (where Princess Elizabeth finds the music very much to her taste), and the Astor niterie.

THE Three Nairn Brothers, popular hot-harmony trio from Glasgow, are to open a Continental tour in Amsterdam on January 18.

Featured originally on the Mecca circuit, they made a fine reputation in their long run at the Stoll Theatre in "Hi-de-Hi!" and will be travelling the Continent under the Jack Hylton banner.

GONELLA LEADS IN RACE TO CONTINENT

Holland, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland and Luxembourg Tour Starts in January

SINCE LAST WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE HONOUR OF TAKING THE FIRST BRITISH DANCE BANDS TO THE CONTINENT WOULD FALL UPON BANDLEADERS LOU PREAGER AND VIC LEWIS, WE LEARN THAT THE FAMOUS TRUMPET-PLAYER NAT GONELLA WILL PIP THEM AT THE POST BY TAKING HIS 14-PIECE BAND TO BELGIUM, HOLLAND, ITALY, SWITZERLAND AND LUXEMBOURG ON A TWO AND A HALF MONTHS' TOUR, COMMENCING JANUARY 12.

Nat was the last British bandleader to leave the Continent (Holland) after the outbreak of hostilities, so that it is fitting that he should be the first to resume musical relationships across the Channel.

He travels under the aegis of the Jack Hylton organisation, the actual details of his tour having been planned by Mr. Gorlinski, who is in charge of this side of Jack Hylton's activities.

FIVE COUNTRIES

Opening in Ostend on the night of his arrival he will spend twelve days in Belgium, moving on to Holland to start a three weeks' tour on January 25. On February 18 he travels south for a month's season in Italy; then, turning homewards, will visit Switzerland and Luxembourg.

He returns to this country at the end of March.

The band that Nat will be taking will be substantially the same as that with which he is currently winning the plaudits of Southampton dancers at the Court Royal Hotel, and will comprise Jock Forbes, Ken Lamb, Dennis Cracknell and Duzgle Campbell (reeds); Frank Osborne (tmb.); Monty Montgomery, Fred Dinning and brother "Bruts" Gonella (tpts.); Eddie Farrow (pno.); Bill Haines (bass); Phil Seaman (drums); vocals being undertaken by 15-year-old ex-Lew Stone chirper, Helen Mack.

Nat's Southampton commitments terminate on January 5, and he plans one or two one-night appearances in London before he sails.

The Editor and Staff of the "M.M." Wish You All A Very Happy Christmas

"TOP TEN" OFF THE HOME-WAVES

YET another jazz programme has been killed by the B.B.C. so far as listeners in this country are concerned. Latest victim is no less than the popular "Top Ten" feature formerly aired on Wednesdays at 9 p.m. (Light), which is henceforth available only on the Overseas Service to short-wave listeners.

This programme, devised by B.B.C.'s most swing-conscious producer, Pat Dixon, has had 72 airings. Both the famous "Squadrons" and, latterly, Ted Heath's great band, have shared weekly broadcasts and built up a tremendous following.

Now, capricious whims of programme planners have whisked "Top Ten" into the short waves to be recorded and subsequently beamed to a scattered audience around the world.

"M.M." CONTESTS AGAIN

ON page 6 will be found details of the first of the "Melody Maker" Dance Band Championships, which have been scheduled for the coming 1946 contesting season, due to open with the Hertfordshire Championship at the Watford Town Hall on Wednesday, February 6 next.

Whether this season can possibly eclipse in size the 1945 record, to achieve which more than 300 different bands took part in no less than 53 County and District Championships, not to mention the seven Area Finals, the "All-Britain" Final and the Swing Band Championships, will remain to be seen.

INNOVATIONS

But certain innovations are being introduced which should make contests more attractive and valuable to the competing bands than ever before.

The first concerns prizes. Last season we introduced, for the first time, exclusively designed medals for all members of winning and second bands.

To these will now be added medals for each of the nine best individual instrumentalists at each contest.

They will be of silver with gold centres, and will bear on enamel bands the words, "Melody Maker" Dance Band Championship — Individualist's Prize.

All individualist's prize winners will thus have the choice of one of these very handsome medals, National Savings Stamps or, in some cases, also swing records, the titles of which they will, as hitherto, be able to select for themselves.

Moreover, arrangements are now being made which it is hoped will ensure the possibility of all medals being presented on the spot, thus obviating the delay which, owing to war-time shortage of materials and labour, was so often unavoidable last season.

The second and even more important innovation concerns the reports by the judges to bands on their performances.

Hitherto, only the winning, second and third bands ever had the benefit

(Please turn to page 6)

CINEPHONIC

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ONE OF THE FINEST BALLADS IN THE COUNTRY

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CYRIL GRANTHAM DEMOBBED AFTER FINE WAR-RECORD



Lt.-Com. Cyril Grantham, R.N.V.R.

ONE of the finest war records in the profession must surely be held by former sax-clarinet-vocalist Cyril Grantham, who was for eight years with Gerald at the Savoy Hotel and won an enviable position on stage, air and record.

Entering the Royal Navy as an ordinary seaman nearly six years ago, he has risen to the rank of lieutenant-commander, R.N.V.R., and has taken part in every major invasion but one.

He wears the D.S.C., the 1939-45 Star, the Atlantic Star with the France and Germany rosette, the Africa Star for Special Service with the Army, the Italy Star, and has been mentioned in despatches for his courage and devotion to duty at Salerno.

He was at Dieppe during the original landing, being aboard a 12-gun flak ship, and was afterwards commissioned and given charge of a flotilla of 12 L.C.I.s. He crossed to the States to take these over for the British Navy, and put them into action, first in the Pantellaria landings, then the Sicilian operation, then in the South of Italy, Salerno and the Anzio beach-head.

Next, he returned to this country for D-Day, survived that historic occasion, setting many hundreds of men down on the beach, and a few weeks later was on his way to take part in the Pacific campaign when news of the Japanese surrender was announced.

Finally, returning to this country without a scratch, he made his first contact with the profession after five and a half years, in a recent "Navy Mixture" programme—and confesses that the sight of a microphone and audience scared him to death!

Now released from the Navy, he is picking up the threads of his long and brilliant pre-war career, and all who have not seen him since he donned uniform in 1940 will not only give him a warm welcome back, but will also salute a very gallant naval officer.

U.S. HIT PARADE

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

1. IT'S BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME (1-1-1-8)
2. IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING (4)
3. I'LL BUY THAT DREAM (3-3-2-1-1-7-5-5-7)
4. CHICKERY CHICK (8-0-7)
5. TILL THE END OF TIME (5-2-4-1-5-2-1-1-1-3-1-1-1-3-7)
6. THAT'S FOR ME (2-4-5-3-2-7-0-0-9)
7. I CAN'T BEGIN TO TELL YOU (0-0-0-0-8)
8. IF I LOVED YOU (0-5-8-5-4-4-2-2-1-9-2-5-1-1-3-7)
8. DID YOU EVER GET THAT FEELING IN THE MOONLIGHT?

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I WANNA GET MARRIED
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JOE KAYE FOR ST. LEONARDS

FOLLOWING an uninterrupted spell of six years as resident M.D. at the Norfolk Hotel, Brighton, bandleader Joe Kaye has left there to take up a similar engagement at the Royal Victoria Hotel, St. Leonards-on-Sea (Sussex).

The inside story behind the move is that immediately the recent sale of the Norfolk (for £105,000) was completed, the son of its former owner took over the Royal Victoria at St. Leonards, and basing his decision on the success Joe had achieved at Brighton, lost no time in signing him up for St. Leonards.

Joe is due to open at the Royal Victoria any day.

His band will be a six-piece, consisting of himself, leading on violin, Frank Barker (baritone, clarinet, violin), George Murrell (piano, arranger), Sid Plummer (2nd piano, accordion), Nigel Plunkett (Spanish and Hawaiian guitar), and Ray Sherer (bass, guitar, vocals). As more musicians become demobilised Joe expects to increase the combination.

Joe must not get far off holding the record for the length of time he stays in his jobs.

From 1929 to 1933 he was with the Savoy Company, directing his band at Claridge's, the Berkeley and the Savoy Hotels. He then went to the Ritz Hotel, where he stayed for six years, from 1933 to 1939, prior to going to Brighton, where, from 1940 to the end of the war he doubled important work with his Norfolk Hotel engagement.

Joe Kaye should not be confused with drummer Joe Kay, who was recently at Murray's Club, London, and who, to save confusion and embarrassment, has agreed, Joe Kaye informs us, to be known henceforth as Jay Kay.

HEATH'S SWELL SHOW SUNDAY

MAESTRO Ted Heath is all set to give out at his second terrific Swing Session concert on Sunday next (23rd) at the London Palladium.

Apart from his full band, including such outstanding musicians as Kenny Baker (tpt.), Harry Roche, Lad Busby (tms.); Les Gilbert (one of our leading altoists, who rejoins the Heath outfit after being in Germany), hot tenor stylist Johnny Gray, Dave Goldberg (gitar), Jack Parnell (dms.), and Charlie Short (bass), special guest stars will be Kathleen Stobart, amazing tenor saxist; Art Thompson, the fine pianist and great exponent of boogie-woogie; ace clarinetist Frank Weir; polpot vocalette Beryl Davis; and sensational Canadian drummer Earl Freeman.

Frank Weir will be featured in Artie Shaw's "Concerto for Clarinet," and Les Gilbert will render "Contrasts"—Jimmy Dorsey's melodious signature tune.

As before, Sergt. Dick Dudley, of the American Forces Network, will copere the show in his own groovy style, and will also sing "Hong Kong Blues" and the perennial favourite "Frankie and Johnnie."

Tickets, priced 2s. 6d. to 10s. 6d., are on sale at the Palladium, 8, Argyll St., W.1 (phone GERard 7373).

THIS sounds a little like corn in Egypt, but the "M.M." has actually heard of a rhythm section—piano, bass, drums, complete with up-to-date library—that is free to take an engagement anywhere on New Year's Eve. Bandleaders or promoters who wish to benefit from this phenomenon should contact Sergeant Worth, at Harrow 0448.

CANARY COOPER BACK WITH CARL

NOW back in her rightful sphere—that of vocalising with Carl Barribeau's ultra-stylish outfit—Mae Cooper can look back on some of the exciting and sometimes frightening moments that she has spent in the past twelve months or so.



Mae Cooper

Readers will no doubt remember that in the midst of a wave of popularity whilst singing with Ivy Benson when the latter was resident with the B.B.C., Mae Cooper was suddenly and inexplicably banned from the air. She was just as amazingly reinstated as a radio singer only a short time later, after she had left Ivy and joined Carl Barribeau, which event was followed by her receiving call-up papers for National Service.

Mae chose working for ENSA rather than taking on a factory job, and was placed with a party that almost immediately left for the Continent (prior to VE-Day). This party, which did some sterling work with the boys out there under conditions which are better forgotten, claims to be the first ENSA party to cross the Rhine—which they did whilst this area was still under enemy fire.

Mae was released from ENSA only a couple of months ago, and is now singing as well as ever—as well she might with the backing which she receives from the band.

This is by far the best outfit that Carl has yet fronted (writes Jerry Dawson) and one of the chief reasons for this is the magnificent arrangements which the boys, and in which they are absolutely rehearsed to the point of perfection.

Altogether, in a straight contest, I would be inclined to back this outfit against most of the name bands we hear on the air nowadays.

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing December 24)

Gloria GAYE and Band,
Assembly Rooms, Tunbridge Wells.
Nat GONELLA and Georgians,
Court Royal Hotel, Southampton.
Adelaide HALL,
Palace, Blackpool.
Henry HALL and Band,
Band of the Week, B.B.C.
Joe LOSS and Band,
Green's Playhouse Ballroom,
Glasgow.
Monte REY,
Hippodrome, Stockton.

Ron Banned But—

DESPITE Middlesbrough Town Council's ban upon harmonica-ace Ron Chesney on December 12 (as reported in last week's issue of the MELODY MAKER), promoter Harry Fielding fulfilled as much as possible the promise of his playbills and let the audience see Ron in person—in the third row of stalls.

At the end of the concert, Ron was introduced to the audience, and amid a cluster of Northern Press reporters and photographers, he was besieged by autograph-hunters and sympathisers.

The Town Council's action has thus resulted in an immense amount of additional publicity for this already popular artiste.

How Green Is My Paula!

COMMENCING January 26, vocalist Paula Green is to be featured in a new weekly series entitled "Paula Calling."

In view of her popularity with the Forces overseas Paula will no doubt have a host of new listeners when this programme takes the air. More later about the musical support to Paula's vocalisms.

Brand's Essence

Back from the HIGH SEAS,
Here is the LOWDOWN

by
Ex-P.O. PAT BRAND

HERE we are again! The old familiar cry of the harlequinade with which I used to greet you on this page each Christmas till war tore the cap and bells from my head and placed bell bottom trousers on my nether limbs.

Four years ago... And for the past four years, whilst my way has lain upon the seven seas (or, to be exact, about three of them), the Melody Maker has been keeping these columns warm for me, retaining my name in nice black type at the head of the page, and employing at tremendous cost, a vast staff of hard-working anonymous news-hounds to fill them for me. Thereby probably leading you to suppose that I had conquered space and was in two places at once, or else that one of me didn't really exist at all.

Ray Sonin, Jack Marshall, Laurie Henshaw, Max Jones, and all the others who weighed in with news and views, my sincerest thanks for a grand gesture and a grand job done!

Now, at last, they have handed me back my typewriter, dusted the chair, and gracefully bowed themselves backwards out of the door... and left me to get on with it.

But... four years is (or, again, are) a long time. It was perhaps significant that on my first night home I should find myself groping from hostility to hostility through an impenetrable black-out as any which existed prior to my joining up! For this action on the part of the Beckton gas workers in plunging the Gay City into blitz-like gloom aptly depicts my feelings on re-entering Tin Pan Alley and Archer Street.

For I find myself returning now rather as an inquiring layman than as a fellow-inmate of the musical madhouse. The names of many of the inhabitants are strange to me, as are those of the haunts at which they play. The names of others are just names. Others whom I remember from days gone by are still wallowing in the bog of Service life. Names at the top of the profession when I left are now submerged by newly risen stars. A few (and how reassuringly they are to the returning wanderer!) remain where I left them—but (dare I ask it?) have they the same right?

The shake-up is, of course, inevitable. The "blitz" success of some, at a time when few of us had time or inclination to bother whether our judgment was correct, should never have been sustained—and is not being so. To others, success came too soon and too easily, and with it a "to hell with to-morrow" attitude that, together with the fake American accent and the contempt of their public that is only now having the tables turned upon it, could not last.

To others, plodding diligently away in semi-obscurity, the war has brought a chance that they have seized and will, let's hope, hang on to and cultivate.

Others, whose playing might in moments of exuberance have been described as "out of this world," will certainly never play again in this one. I salute their memory.

A chanced "Alley," yes. But, in addition, there is a change in myself, equally inevitable and equally unsettling.

For four years I have been the unwilling receptacle for every kind of radio bunk that other people want to listen to, canteen piano that they "must" play, and "Ensa" shows. The amount of good jazz I have heard in that time could be carried in a whisky tumbler (if I correctly remember what that looks like). I have, in common with every other jazz-lover in the Services, alternately squirmed, steeled myself against it, and finally schooled myself to endure

other people's choice of programme on the radio and the programmes that "Ensa" is so stendishly "clad to present," and stagger away with no more than superficial bruising.

I'm sorry, "Ensa," to have to bring this up. But I can honestly say that I never once saw a name-band "Ensa" show in four years, nor any band, however little known, that could play jazz. I saw, and unwillingly listened to till I gave up hope and ceased going, juvenile hands, ladies' bands, mixed bands, and bands (I'm convinced) of octogenarians. I heard "In The Mood" almost as many times as I heard Revellie.

Maybe it isn't your fault. Perhaps the fact that "the troops" will cheer anything, sometimes out of sheer relief at its conclusion, sometimes to "get their money's worth," and frequently in sheer irony, leads your representatives to imagine that this is really "the stuff to give us." Perhaps you really cannot get "the stuff." Perhaps (horror of horrors!) this really is "the stuff" they (or the majority) want.

But, by and large, I have emerged from the ordeal with one unshakable determination. Never, so long as I am able, will I submit my ears to anything but the very best, on wax, on stage, on the stand, or on the air. I have a duty to my long-suffering ears, and I intend carrying it out.

All of which brings up two major points. What do I mean by the "very best"? and what does the majority want?

For you, my readers, have to live; and am I, as reporter and commentator, justified in ignoring "what the public wants" if that does not coincide with my conception of the "very best"?

Well, let's see where the difference, if any, lies, and ask, first of all (and none to get an answer!): what does the public want?

The listening public, since the advent of wireless, has become lazy. We all know that. It will put up with anything by the simple expedient of not properly listening to it. But during the war it has become also lazy in its taste. It has accustomed itself to a gradually falling standard in the playing of dance music, due as much, perhaps, to lack of full-blooded competition as to the calling-up of key men, musicians and arrangers, and the impossibility of recruiting fresh talent exempt from National Service. Dance music, in the general sense of the term, has become merely a drug on the senses.

And now, when as never before there is a grim significance in the term "mighty atom," the public is looking for something to stimulate and exhilarate it.

Can it find it in dance music?—and I don't mean by dancing to music.

Maybe I have become jaded during these past years, but I don't think it can from the general run of dance programmes broadcast or numbers recorded, or the few bands I've listened to since coming home.

I don't think it is any longer enough just to give the public something loud and fast, and with as many top notes as the boys can hit without collapsing.

I don't think it is enough to give them songs about breaking hearts or boys coming home. It is not enough (please!) to dress the boys in funny hats and let them bash each other over the head occasionally.

They want (and this is borne out by the immense swingover to classical music) musicianship and melody; they want music that means something, whether it be written by Richardson or Rachmaninoff. They want colour in their music such as they are, at long last, getting from Clair de Lune; and they want rhythm—and new rhythm such as they are getting from Cuba, from Spain, from Greece, from many parts of the world



THE Prince Littler pantomime, "Humpty Dumpty," at the Chiswick Empire, London, is richer this year for the presence of charming Eric Winstone vocalist Hazel Bruy (above).

Breaking completely new ground by playing the part of the Princess, Hazel is singing, dancing, and perfectly taking the part of this romantic character. Radio audiences, however, will be glad to know that at the end of the pantomime season she will be returning to the Winstone fold.

that have now been flung so closely together.

They can get these either from first-class orchestras, playing first-class arrangements; or from small combinations that really jump (but can also really play).

I sincerely believe I am right in this. I certainly know that this is what I want myself: Can I, and the public, get it?

Parallel with this change in public taste, have these past six years produced in musicians a change in their attitude towards their music? Among musicians who have remained regularly knocking out dance music, I am afraid I know the answer.

But I am referring specifically to those in the Services; those who, for the most part, have been deprived of the companionship of fellow musicians, who have been deprived to a great extent of any but individual practice upon their instruments, who have heard little radio, next to no new records, and who have been spared the Hollywood musical of the past three years that, under a variety of titles, has shown us Xavier Cugat and Harry James (and every star under contract to that particular studio), proving the existence of democracy by feeding the Dough-boys with snacks that would nourish one of our own lads for a day, and deafening them with swing that, speaking personally, sends me—yearning for my blitzed Colton Pickers and Little Molers.

What of these musicians (in their hundreds), divorced from transatlantic influence, from the nightly session, the plug, the leader who knows what the public wants (or will put up with), the insidious hysteria of the

Hitterbug—the men of the Pacific Fleet, the remoter Air Force stations, the jungle, and—these most of all—the prisoner-of-war camps? Some of them, incredible though it may sound, have never heard of Frank Sinatra or Dinah Shore. They have been playing (those who have been able) to please themselves. What will they bring back to us when their Group Numbers come up?

Will it be more "swing," higher notes, faster tempo, more incongruous chords? Or will they, working in their solitude like the early jazzmen, come back purged and with something to say in the true idiom of their craft?

I think, and I sincerely hope, the latter. And if they do—and the next six months will tell us if I'm right—the problem very neatly solves itself. And from the point of view of this page, for what it may be worth, let me say that anyone sincerely trying to recapture the lost art, endeavouring to raise the standard of British jazz and lift it out of the lethargy into which the war has let it sink, will have my fullest appreciation and my sincerest thanks.

The answer to the rest will, in the language of the Bard, be silence—if I can restrain myself.

Having got which off my chest I will leave you till next week while I take a further look around this strange new world of (Utility) Tin Pan Alley.

And till I pop up again in the New Year issue—to all of you still in uniform, may your Christmas dinner be hot and the Naaf issue plentiful; to you who have just got out, may your fire burn bright and your civilian issue waistband suitably distend; to you who have held the fort till our return, may the presence of old friends compensate you for the absence of so many seasonable essentials.

To you all—a Very Happy Christmas!

SKYROCKET'S
NEW YEAR

THE famous "Skyrockets" (under Paul Fenouillet) have a big date in Town for New Year's Eve, when they will play at Hammersmith Palais de Danse, sharing in a three-band broadcast on that night with Palais "regulars," Lou Preager and Jack Annot. Hammersmith fans have a treat in store, because the "Skyrockets" will be playing at the Palais for the whole of the week following December 31.

Speaking of Lou Preager above, reminds us of the bad luck which has befallen his drummer, Morris Grundy. This will be a drab Christmas for Norris, who has fallen seriously ill and will be cooped up in the Croydton Emergency Hospital until the New Year. Fans of his could greatly relieve the monotony of a Yuletide spent on the sick bed by dropping Norris a line at that address.

Acting as stand-in, during his absence is beat-man Johnny Marks, who renews his association with Lou Preager after many years. Until he left to join Phil Green, Johnny and Lou had been together on and off since 1925, when both started their professional careers.

"Wright"
Christmas Greetings

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PINE-TOP SMITH

Edgar Jackson's Record Review

THE release of these two sides—the first ever to be issued in this country by that great and now almost legendary celebrity of boogie-woogie, the late Clarence "Pine-Top" Smith—gives me a cue to say all sorts of things.

The first is to wish you all a very happy Christmas and send you my very best wishes for the success of the party, no matter when or where you may be holding it.

For boogie-woogie is essentially party music.

It originated in the lumber and turpentine camps of Texas, and in the "sporting" houses of the State. In Houston, Dallas and Galveston, all Negro piano-players played that way.

Subsequently it reached Chicago, where it became one of the chief attractions of the rent parties, which . . .

But unfortunately I shall have to skip all that, because, important as it is in the history of boogie-woogie, I just haven't the space to go into it this week.

And anyway, some of you may remember that I dealt not only with these rent parties, but also with boogie-woogie generally, at some length in the "M.M." for March 11, 1944, when reviewing Jimmy Yancey's "Yancey Somp" and "Five O'Clock Blues" (H.M.V. B9366), and later on May 27 of the same year when reviewing Yancey's "Slow and Easy Blues" and "The Mellow Blues" (H.M.V. B9374).

RHYTHMIC SUBTLETIES

Secondly, it gives me an opportunity once again to draw the attention of all our would-be exponents of boogie-woogie not only to the correct tempo of the music, but also to its rhythmic subtleties.

There is a good deal more to boogie-woogie than just playing the notes accurately at breakneck speed, thereby showing off to the gallery one's technical brilliance.

Boogie-woogie has to ride, and that means it must be played with a swing and a beat. Both have to a greater or lesser extent been lost in the refining of touch which so many of even our best swing pianists have cultivated in the belief that it makes their playing sound more arty.

Especially does this apply to beat. There is hardly a band in this country that has a really solid beat, simply because its players—and when I say players I mean the front-line men as well as those of the rhythm section—have become so engrossed in making their music sound polished. But that is another story that must wait for another day.

The third cue the record gives me is to congratulate the British Hot Record Society, to whose endeavours

we are indebted for this first opportunity of hearing "Pine-Top."

For although, contrary to what some people seem to think, "Pine-Top" Smith no more invented boogie-woogie than you or I did, he was without doubt one of its very greatest exponents.

The story of "Pine-Top" is perhaps best told in the words of William Russell in "Jazzmen," from which I quote with due acknowledgments but no apologies: his chapter on boogie-woogie and, in fact, the whole book should be published over here; it is the most enlightened work on jazz in all its branches one could imagine.

"Poor 'Pine-Top,'" says Russell, "never lived to see boogie-woogie make its Carnegie Hall debut. He was shot down, according to Mayo Williams, in a brawl over 'some' of gal in a cheap West Side (Chicago) dance hall."

"'Pine-Top' died as he had lived. Probably the most erratic and slightly character of Chicago's jazzmen, he kept everyone guessing what he would do next.

"INCREDIBLE INFLUENCE"

"He slept all day, wandered from one club to another all night, and was apt to drive up to a friend's house at 5 a.m. in a taxi and get the friend out of bed to pay his fare.

"Like Jimmy Yancey, 'Pine-Top' had travelled in vaudeville as a tap-dancer. He was one of Maddy Dorsey's pickaninies."

"When he outgrew the part he settled in Chicago in the early 'twenties. But even then he didn't stay put, and at certain periods was a well-known figure around the red-light districts of Omaha and St. Louis.

"About 1928, a short time before he was killed, 'Pine-Top' lived in a Chicago rooming-house at 4435 Prairie, where, by some fortunate coincidence, Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis also lived. Albert was the only one of the trio who had a piano, and there were frequent cutting sessions in Albert's room when the three got together.

"Luckily, 'Pine-Top' recorded several numbers and his music has exerted an incredible influence on many other pianists. His composition 'Pine-Top's Boogie-Woogie' is not only the most widely copied of all piano blues, but gave its title to the style."

[I must query the accuracy of that last statement. In the early days of its existence in Texas the style was known as "fast Western" or "fast blues" (as a differentiation from the slow blues of New Orleans and St.

• "Jazzmen," published in America by Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York. Unavailable in Great Britain.

Louis), but at the same time it was also known as boogie-woogie.—E. J.

"From the first sombre tremolo of 'Pine-Top's Boogie-Woogie,' his first record, to the end of 'Now I Ain't Got Nothing At All,' his last in the Vocalion series," continues William Russell, "there is not a superfluous note. We must admire his sincerity and zestful spirit. He was a genius in making thrilling music with the minimum of melodic movement.

"'Pine-Top' didn't quite make his last recording date. Mayo Williams had him signed up for another session with Vocalion.

"But the morning of the date 'Pine-Top's' wife rushed in an hour late, and, as Williams began to bawl her out for not getting 'Pine-Top' up in time, she calmly said: 'He's dead; he was killed last night.' 'Pine-Top,' it seems, had been 'rambling' round the town 'once too often.'"

WHY "PINE-TOP" ?

Many explanations of how Clarence Smith got his nickname "Pine-Top" have been advanced.

One is that it was due to the extraordinary facility with which he could climb trees. Whenever in his younger days, "Pine-Top" was missing, the chances were a grand piano to be busted harmonica that he would be found perched among the highest branches of one or other of the trees which surrounded his home, between which he rigged up telephones so that he could be summoned for meals.

Another is that it was due to the shape of his head. Actually he had a rather pointed cranium; but probably neither this nor his tree-climbing prowess gave him the name "Pine-Top," which possibly arose from the simple fact that "Pine-Top" was a common nickname around his part of the world.

"'Pine-Top's' record of his 'Boogie-Woogie' is conspicuous partly for his running instructions to the dancers.

"Oh, no, I don't mean Victor Silvester's text-book 'quick-slow-slow-quick' sort of thing. "'Pine-Top' didn't have to bother about telling a dumb bunch of stiff-joints where or when to put their awkward feet, in a vain attempt to try to explain to a rhythmless row of puddings how to do the antics which known as the "English style" and not even an acceptable apology for the movements that ride music should inspire.

PIANO-PLAYING

His audiences were born supple, born rhythmical, and born dancers. "Shouts 'Pine-Top': 'I want you all to know 'Pine-Top's Boogie-Woogie.' When I say 'Give,' I want you all to do a boogie-woogie." That and a like instruction is all you get from "Pine-Top." Whatever they may or may not mean to you, they apparently meant plenty to those coloured folk dancing to "Pine-Top's" piano in the Negro dives, dance halls, gin mills, rent parties, or wherever it may have been.

But of even greater interest is "Pine-Top's" piano playing. One might be able to get to the bottom of it by careful analysis and then writing a book on the results. But one certainly can't in the few lines I have left, so I shall not try. Sufficient to say that it is boogie-woogie in excelsis, and by that I don't mean only that it has drive and a beat.

The whole character of his music is something worth studying, and not only for the devastating effect he can create by pounding for bar after bar the same right-hand melody note, altered in favour only by the changes of harmony; against his rumbling, rolling arpeggio left hand.

On paper it might look little, if anything, more than naive and monotonously repetitive. As heard from "Pine-Top" it takes you from intentionally tepid starts to boiling

climaxes—provided you are built the way to react to it.

"Pine-Top's Blues," on the other side, is none the less exciting because it is slightly slower or because it features him also as a blues singer.

The words are what "Pine-Top" is going to do to get away from a nagging woman, and mean neither more nor less than blues lyric usually mean.

But the way he sings them in his curiously high-pitched voice and what he gets out of the piano mark him as one of the great blues exponents of all time.

The records were made over eighteen years ago, and the recording is no better than it should be. In fact, the surfaces are awful. If your machine has anything like a good high-frequency response, you'll think there's an escape of steam somewhere.

But don't let that put you off. Music like this is worth hearing under even such distressing conditions, and not only for its historical interest.

AYLING FROM ROYAL TO LYCEUM

GENERAL re-shuffle among the bands working for the Mecca Company in London brings

Les Ayling and his Band, from the Royal, Tottenham, to the Lyceum Theatre dancefloor in the Strand.

In the meanwhile, Blanche Coloman and her Ladies' Band are at the Royal for a spell, following the termination of Joe Loss's triumphant season there; while Cyril Blake and his ten-piece Band, from the Ritz, Manchester, are now playing opposite the Coleman Girls at Tottenham.

Arrival of the Ayling Band in Town is a big break for Les, who has worked, on and off, for five years at the Royal, Tottenham, his latest spell

there, under the Mecca management, being one of twelve months' duration.

Les will be featuring a thirteen-piece band at the Lyceum, where he starts this coming Monday (December 24).

Conducting and playing piano and accordion, he will be supported by Bill Metcalfe, Graham Smith and Frank Pritchard (trumpets); George Gaynor (trombone); Fred Syer, Michael Senn, Ernie Jones and Joe Buttle (reeds); Peter Knight (piano); Sid Poacey (bass); and Arthur Goddy (drums). Vocals will be in the hands of Les Ayling's seventeen-year-old discovery, Diana Coupland.



Les Ayling

Roncoroni Back

AFTER a highly successful career in the 64th Field Regiment, where he rose from private to the rank of major, Joe Roncoroni last week rejoined the exploitation staff of the Noel Gay organisation. His war service covered most of the Middle East, the beaches at Salerno, and, finally, Italy.

Here, as soon as the tide of battle ebbed, every village seemed to produce some kind of dance band. On open-air floors they played numbers which have never been heard in this country, and many of these impressed Joe sufficiently to convince him that, properly treated, they would meet with instantaneous success over here.

Returning at a time when the recent departure of Hugh Charles on a good-will tour to America makes his reappearance doubly welcome, Joe has been pleased to greet so many old friends and make new ones.

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TROMBONE

by George Chisholm

FRED FARKOW, of Small Heath, Birmingham 10, seeks advice on how to extemporise, and asks if there is any basic foundation to improvisation upon which to build his own solos.

GEORGE CHISHOLM replies: In my view, there is no "basic foundation" in the sense you quote. I can only advise you to study the foundation of chords, their meaning in harmony, and their relation to any particular tune you may have come across.

When you have achieved a reasonable measure of success in this, accustom yourself to associating the various chords as you see them with the particular melody they support, and then try "drifting" slightly away from the melody in the simplest possible form.

If you can train your ear to keep you within reasonable bounds of the various chords, you should find yourself extemporising. Bear in mind one important thing—Simplicity in extemporisation is its greatest beauty.

ROY E. BOUTER, of King's Heath, Birmingham 14, is having difficulty in reaching the high notes required in modern orchestration after playing for some time, and wonders if it is due to his Rudy Muek mouthpiece, asking also which is the best bore for dance work.

GEORGE CHISHOLM replies: Assuming your mouthpiece is suitable to you, the only remedy is long and continuous practice of long notes from low B flat up the scale to top B flat, giving each note a semi-breve length in slow tempo. This will eventually strengthen your lip and at the same time improve your tone. If you also start each note at "pp," swelling to "f" in the middle and dying away to "pp" again, this will give the muscles of your mouth control over any note and should solve your difficulty.

If, however, you feel that your mouthpiece is not the right one for you, then that is a rather more serious question. Your teacher should know best, and it is not a matter on which I can advise you off-hand.

H. E. FREW, of Uppminster, near Romford, Essex, was in silver bands for seven years and played three years in an Army dance band. He asks how he can improve his playing.

GEORGE CHISHOLM writes: If you will give me more particulars regarding your difficulties, type of

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mouthpiece, etc., I shall be better able to give you a considered opinion.

TENOR-SAX

by Buddy Featherstonhaugh

SPR. C. PATTERSON writes from Chatham to ask which make of metal or ebonite tenor-sax mouthpiece to buy when supplies increase. He is using a metal mouthpiece with a lay of 3 mm. open at the tip and 2 1/2 to 3 mm. long, which gives a loud but rather rough tone, and seems to render notes above B natural rather thin. He thinks a more medium-length lay is required, and he also asks which make of tenor is best for the money.

BUDDY FEATHERSTONHAUGH replies: Your lay is certainly on the long side, especially if you are a beginner. Try having it shortened progressively, though this must be done by an expert. I cannot recommend makes of instruments, but suggest you study the advertising columns of the MELODY MAKER to get an idea of what makes are favoured by the leading players.

A.C./2 K. WESTON, at Preston, had to part with his tenor-sax on entering the R.A.F., and wants to know how to exchange his clarinet for one. He also fears that his six months' service may have affected his reading.

BUDDY FEATHERSTONHAUGH replies: Try advertising your clarinet in part exchange for a tenor. Your reading will probably have suffered after a six months' lay-off; how much, depends on you!

Pte. A. BISHOP, in Llandrindod Wells, Wales, using a plastic reed, is anxious to produce a tone that will satisfy him, and asks how this can be achieved.

BUDDY FEATHERSTONHAUGH replies: I, personally, use an "O" embouchure, keeping teeth clear of the mouthpiece, but this is considered unorthodox and requires great perseverance. I advise you to attempt evenly slack pressure from top to bottom notes of the instrument as far as possible, using slightly greater pressure for high notes if necessary.

A useful exercise to achieve tone is to sustain each note on the instrument as long as possible, going from pp to f in each and back to pp, thus discovering the vapour and pitch of each note, which will eventually be automatically accounted for when you come to play them. I don't personally care for plastic reeds, though I know many people who obtain excellent results with them.

Al Booth, of Roxburgh Street, Walton, Liverpool, 4, using the latest model "Martin" with a 4 Star "Brilliant" mouthpiece, is also anxious to develop a good tone. He has changed from a medium to a soft reed, and, whilst his tone pleases his lis-

teners, he is still not satisfied. Also, he is worried over the reed buzzing when he plays.

BUDDY FEATHERSTONHAUGH replies: Instrument and mouthpiece sound an ideal combination. See my previous remarks for tone production. Try to "sing" into the instrument, and keep a mental idea of the tone you want. Use as hard a reed as you comfortably can. Some people can use much harder reeds than others. And don't worry about the reed buzzing.

TRUMPET

by Alfie Noakes

L. SMITH, of the Royal Southern Hospital, Liverpool, 9, has been away from his instrument for three years, and seeks advice on taking up a post-war trumpet career.

ALFIE NOAKES replies: If your ambition is to play in a dance or symphony orchestra, you mustn't mind a lot of hard work and plenty of patience. It is a good profession and, if you rise to any heights, a well-paid one.

First essentials are a good teacher and a good tutor. Learning to play the right way will save many headaches no matter what type of orchestra you eventually join. Since you have played before, it ought not to take long to make up for lost time. First results may sound a bit sad, but keep at it and don't forget my advice—a good teacher and a good tutor. Good luck to you.

B. HARMS, of Bramley, nr. Guildford, Surrey, recently bought an "Ambassador," and wants to know how to learn music and how to play it.

ALFIE NOAKES replies: Go to a first-class trumpet teacher. By taking this very important first step, you will be assured of start-

ing in the correct and, in fact, the only sensible way to master the instrument.

V. T. GREEN, of Bradbourne Road, Leicester, is 17 years old and he is able to play only once or twice a week, though he spends some time every day practising. He wonders whether this small amount of playing accounts for his needing a lot of pressure to get the notes out and to enable his lip to last the evening out despite the use of a good model.

ALFIE NOAKES replies: Yes. You are not playing nearly enough to warrant your lip lasting one or two evenings a week in a dance band. As you are only 17, it is hardly possible that you have developed a strong embouchure to warrant your laying off the instrument even for one day. You will have to find much more time for practice. Half an hour a day is better than nothing, but I doubt whether that would be enough to ensure your lasting out an evening without your lip getting tired.

PIANO

by Pat Dodd

JIM BROOKE, of Carr Bottom Avenue, Wibsey, Bradford, Yorks, was for two and a half years a semi-pro pianist, able to sight-read orchestrations, with an "average" commercial style, his solo band style, with rhythm-backing, mainly single-note right-hand and a "walking" on chord bass. Invalidated from the Army, he intends turning pro, and seeks advice regarding the necessary qualifications.

PAT DODD replies: I should say your qualifications are quite adequate, and the only advice I can give you is to concentrate on your left hand which, contrary to the general opinion, is by far the most important thing in modern dance band playing.

T. McEWEEN, of Birches Barn, Wolverhampton, wants to know of one or two books which will help him polish up his playlog and study of chords as required in modern band work.

PAT DODD replies: I should suggest the Lew Stone book on orchestration as best for the study of chord building, since most other books of study are chiefly concerned with improvement of technique. For small bands, one needs to thicken the chords as much as possible, and for big bands I think it best to alter the chords to suit the sections (i.e., brass or sax) and, if possible, move with the sections.

If you want advice on any instrument, or on any aspect of dance music, write to "M.M.", 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Our experts will be glad to help you!

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U.S., FRENCH AND HOME BANDS IN BIG NEW JAZZ AIR-SHOW

BEGINNING December 28, the B.B.C. is to present on the Home Service a new, exciting weekly series of live and recorded swing programmes under the title "Kings of Jazz."

The series will bring to listeners a selection of the star jazz outfits from three nations—England, France and the U.S.A.—and the present schedule allows for three shows from each of these countries. But it is hoped there will be a tenth broadcast, from England, of musicians assembled here from all three countries.

DUKE... BENNY... DJANGO

Jazz enthusiasts will be delighted to read that the American side of the programme is to provide sessions by Duke Ellington's Orchestra, the Johnny Guarnieri Trio, and the Benny Goodman Sextet.

Here is the line-up of attractions as known at the moment:—

Friday, December 28, 10.30-11 p.m.—"Sitting in with the Duke." An Ellington band show composed by Alistair Cooke. (Recorded in New York for the B.B.C.)

January 4, 7.45-8.15 p.m.—"Django Reinhardt Rides Again." A Reinhardt band session composed by Pierre Lefevre. (Live from Paris.)

January 11, 10.15-10.45 p.m.—"Big Band Jazz," by Ted Heath and his Music.

January 18, 10.15-10.45 p.m.—"A Date with Johnny," by the John Guarnieri Trio, with Slam Stewart (bass) and Sid Catlett (drums).

January 25—"French Jazz After Five Years of War," by Andre Ekyan's Band. (Recorded in France.)

February 1—"Little Jazz," an English Jam Session. (No particulars.)

February 8—"The Benny Goodman Sextet." (Show as yet untitled.)

February 15—"The Old Spirit of French Jazz." A French Jam Session featuring Harry Cooper (tpt.).

February 22—"The 'Squadronairs.'" (Show as yet untitled.)

We understand that Alistair Cooke will be composing all the U.S. shows; Pierre Lefevre will compose the French programmes, which are being produced by Imlay Watts and Charles Delaunay; while the production at the English end will be in the capable hands of Pat Dixon.

For the final show, if it can be arranged, the producers have a terrific ambition—they hope to see Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelly join forces with English and visiting American musicians to make a jazz band representative of the three nations participating.

BLUE ROCKETS SOAR AGAIN

SOME idea of the rapid strides being made by the famous Blue Rockets Dance Orchestra, under the direction of Eric Robinson, in re-establishing themselves in the eminent position they held some three years ago, is given by the fact that their next broadcast is scheduled for a big show, 10.30-11 a.m., on Christmas Eve (Light Programme).

For the past twelve months they have been doing excellent work as the Swing Section of the British Band of the A.E.F., under the direction of George Malachroino.

At present high-spotted in the new Charlie Chester "Merry-Go-Round" radio show, which a recent listeners' poll placed second only to Tommy Handley in order of popularity, they are estimated to have acquired a regular listening public of no fewer than nine million.

With most of the former members of the band demobilised, they have at last got going in their own right, and the present line-up comprises Jack Coles, Billy Smith, George Hawkins, Tommy Keith (tpts.); Lauri Clark, Jack Jones, Ronnie Rand (tpts.); George Clouston, Jimmy Goss, Benny Daniels, Lauri Gold, Vic Knight (saxes); Ronnie Selby (pno.); Freddie Phillips (gtr.); Bob Roberts (bass); Lou Stevenson (drums); with Lee Street, as usual, providing the comedy element in their stage shows.

Two more original members of the band—Jack Baverstock and Sammy Gelsley—will soon be returning from the B.A.O.R. and resuming their connections with the orchestra.

CONTEST FIXTURES

(First announcement of all contests is made six weeks before they are due to take place.)

LONDON AREA.

Wednesday, February 8, at the Town Hall, Watford (8 p.m. to 1 a.m.)—the 1946 Hertfordshire Championship.

Organisers: Messrs. Lyn Morgan and Charles Cooper, 78, West Way, Rickmansworth, Herts. (Phone: Rickmansworth 2767.)

PROVINCES.

HULL—Monday, February 11 (8 p.m. to 1.30 a.m.) at the Beverley Road Baths.—The 1946 East Yorks Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. (Phone: Ainsdale 78238.)



Sensational new vocal discoveries, the Beverley Sisters, smiling at cameraman Jack Marshall. Joy is in the foreground; twins Babs and Teddie are at top, left to right—or should it be vice versa?

COUNTLESS callers arrive at the hard-pressed "M.M." offices (writes Laurie Henshaw). Pros and semi-pros come and go. We get glamour girls, too. They're the most welcome, but when a Beverley of beauties drifts in, this is an event that'll sabotage any press-day procedure.

Normally, the alcoholic fumes have cleared from my addled brain by Tuesdays, but when a trio of talent-beauteous teen-age twins and an elder sister—tripped through the doorway I really thought my afternoon tea was loaded with gin. Literally, I saw double. The twins are identical; they even laugh in harmony. Rumour has it that one was christened twice; and if they get married, which is certainly likely, their respective husbands may have a job to keep their respectability.

tripods, took the above picture when he had recovered from the knock-out stimulant of triple-strength aperitif 'amour.

The joint really jumped when we persuaded the girls to chant the melodious strains of "Apple Honey." The illustrious Editor shot out of his sanctum with the speed of a jet-propelled Meteor, jerked to a stop, and stood transformed with an expression of beatific contentment on his features that no other mortal man has seen there for the last seventy years.

Maestro Ted Heath next came into the picture. He presented the girls as a last-minute attraction—and how!—at his first "Swing Session" concert at the London Palladium.

Soon, the Beverley Sisters are duo back on the air. Watch them from now on; they're destined for big things.

CONTESTS START

(Continued from page 1)

But the Beverley Sisters are not pre-occupied with such matters at the moment. Right now they are riding on the crest of an airwave that has carried them into the hearts of millions of radio listeners.

The Beverleys—twins Babs and Teddie, and blonde beauty Joy—are "naturals" at close-harmony singing. During spells from war work they perfected their act, crashed the B.B.C. and promptly knocked the austere Corporation highway.

They were put on the A.E.F. programme in several featured spots, and appreciative letters soon flooded the B.B.C. They were all set for beaming on the home programmes when the Ministry of Labour threw a hefty spanner into the rapidly spinning wheel of fame. The girls were whisked to the Midlands, where they nearly worked themselves to a premature death on work of national importance.

VE-Day spelt release from enslavement for them; too. Back they came to London, where they again went to town over the air in "Variety Band-box" and "At the Bowler Hat." This time they really arrived; and so did the letters—in bagfuls. And producer Cecil Madden, who may claim to have discovered them, is very proud of his protégées.

One of their many vocal specialities is "Apple Honey," and Cosmo Music Co., the publishers, were so intrigued with their original version of this tuneful melody that they invited the girls over to their offices and heard them again give out on the number. Ace arranger Den Berry sat back astonished. He was so impressed that he "phoned the "M.M.," gabbled a stream of panegyrics into the phone, and arranged for the trio to call at these offices.

When the honeys tripped in, we, too, were dazed. Camera-king Jack Marshall fell over himself setting up

of these reports, and last season, owing to space considerations, they had to be cut down to only the first and second bands. Thus bands to whom the reports would probably have been most helpful never received one.

Now, however, every competing band in every County and District Championship will be given a criticism of its performance.

Because they are of value not only to the bands concerned, but also to every band that may ever enter a contest, the reports will continue to be published in these columns.

The reports on the third and all other bands in a contest will be given to them verbally by the judges, in private, on the spot, immediately after the presentation of the prizes; and all contests will be so arranged that time is left available for this.

The fact that the reports will be given verbally and in private will mean, first, that the bands concerned will have an opportunity of discussing their performances with the judges, and secondly, that the less-experienced bands need have no fear that their shortcomings will be disclosed to the detriment of the prestige on which they rely for engagements.

A third departure from precedent is that the "Small" band cups will henceforth be discontinued—for the simple reason that there is no longer any need for them.

As explained in more than one of last season's contest reports, under the MELODY MAKER'S special system of adjudication small bands have just as much chance of winning contests as the larger ones, proved by the fact that last season smaller combinations won at least their fair share of contests.

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Remember "Human Cash-Registers"? Well, the Irrepressible Author of that Article Has Now Written What He Calls "A Further Psychological Discussion on the Mental Outlook—If Any—of the Musical Profession," and he Titles It

BANDLEADERS ARE HUMAN

by **ERIC WINSTONE**

IN response to an overwhelming demand from musicians who "enjoyed" my previous article on psychology, I have persuaded myself, entirely against my better nature, to delve still further into those Freudian complexes that separate members of the musical profession from the human race.

In Archer Street, as in any other "walk" of life, an understanding of one's fellow men can be an invaluable asset. And it is for the benefit of those musicians who, through the recent demobilisation, are finding themselves down to their last three resident jobs, that I propose to confine this second thesis to the study, understanding, and possible elimination, of bandleaders.

Although previously a subject of little importance, I am certain that in the near future, during the grim years of peace that lie ahead, it will eventually become a question necessitating the careful attention of every musician.

Indeed, if the old-timers continue to gate-crash their way back into the profession at the present rate, it will not be long before some bandleader or other will start expecting our younger stylists to read music, thereby striking directly at the principles of free musical expression as sponsored by Rhythm Clubs throughout the country.

Unfortunately, however, until some other method can be devised for paying the band, there is no denying that the bandleader still has a place in the world of modern music. And not only for this reason alone.

It is the leader, after all, who is actually responsible for getting the band started, and when one realises that the whole question of getting musicians to start anything involves the utmost in tact and sympathetic understanding, it will be seen that the main reason for a bandleader's continued existence lies in giving the down beat.

FROM a careful study of the methods involved in the execution of this function, it is possible to form a reliable analysis of character. For example, a leader who arrives on the stand flourishing a baton of unusual length will either possess an inferiority complex or a pair of extremely short arms; whereas a short baton will probably denote that it was broken the night before while beating the first alto player to death in a friendly argument.

In cases of this kind, allowances should be made for the fact that during the last five years bandleaders have suffered continually from a repression of their natural instincts.

Many a time, after having smilingly agreed to pay extra money to the pianist, they have only just got through beating their heads against the wall in time smilingly to agree to first-class hotel accommodation for the brass section and extra portage for the drummer.

All this has been a constant strain on their natural good nature, apart from being extremely bad for the upper part of the skull. Indeed, in many cases I have noticed several bandleaders' heads have begun to assume a curiously dented appearance, owing to the use of too hard a wall. It is little wonder, therefore, that leaders who have cheerfully faced the lean years of super-tax during the war are to-day inclined to speak sharply when the pianist's deputy sends a deputy, or when the entire band returns thirty minutes late from a fifteen-minute tea break.

In such circumstances it is wisest to treat the whole matter as a joke. In the past I have seen many such an incident carried off with a gay laugh from the musician involved, and have on one occasion even watched the leader himself heartily enjoying the joke before being carried off himself a few minutes later with a stroke.

WHEN it comes to the actual production of the down beat, it should be remembered that the foot system is the one most generally in use. This consists of extending the arm holding the baton at right-angles to the body and stamping four times on the floor with the foot.

Except, of course, in the case of waltzes, when it will be found that three stamps are sufficient. For studio sessions, and other



Eric Winstone

work of a higher social stratum where quietness is essential except during rehearsal, a more refined method is employed. Here the leader will make a rapid sawing motion through the air, while the band, keeping an eye on the drummer, will usually manage to get the beat by the end of the introduction. The adoption of this method by many well-known radio bands is, of course, directly responsible for the length of the introductions in many present-day broadcasting arrangements.

In spite of the foregoing, however, it is wrong to assume that bandleaders cannot understand a note of music. In some cases it has been found that they understand two or even three notes, while with notes of the Bank of England variety their grasp of the subject is practically unlimited.

It will also be wiser in the future for musicians to refrain from the customary downward movement of the arm when the leader takes a solo. And the question of making dates with the girl crooner is one that should be approached with the utmost discretion.

Although most girl singers will tell you they are only interested in their art, there is often no way of finding out how Art feels about it. He may not be interested, but in that case you are probably wasting your time, anyway, so it is better to stay clear and keep the job.

YOU will, no doubt, have realised by now that the whole question of psychology as applied to bandleaders is based on the acceptance of the fact that, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, they are human. It is wrong to assume that every bandleader's father is necessarily a confirmed bachelor.

Given a fair opportunity in the future, they will no doubt prove as willing to see their own point of view as they have always been in the past.

And it is with the earnest hope that this discussion may be of some assistance to you until you become a bandleader yourself, that I close for the time being, with my best wishes. . . .

Aubrey Franks Out

FAMOUS London tenor saxist Aubrey Franks was discharged recently from the R.A.F. following a spell in hospital after a nervous breakdown.

Fans will hasten to congratulate their favourite tenor man on his return to the fold. Not only does Aubrey habitually play, broadcast, and record with the leading dance bands of the country, but his position as tenor sax winner of the Melody Maker Poll for the last two years in succession makes him automatically a formidable candidate for the leading reed honours.

I DON'T CARE WHO KNOWS IT AND I WALKED IN

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I suggested we talk over the routine of what we might play. They froze me...

THEY asked me, would I like to play at a Swing Concert. I said Yes, I would, and what should I play? They said, oh, it wouldn't matter, because it was going to be a Jam session and everything would be all right. Yes, that's what they said, but let me tell you all about it.

I start from the time I am waiting backstage to go on. Backstage of the theatre where these concerts are held, giving nondescript greetings in the stygian gloom to fellow-musicians, I find the bunch with whom I'm to play. They were the more or less usual set, all good players and friends of mine.

We stood around chatting about everything except what we were going to play. I spent most of my time listening to them, listening to what the band on stage was like, and wondering how I was to get my large, unwieldy kit on the stage, and which sucker I could lumber to help me.

Once I timorously suggested we talk over the routine of what we might play. They froze me.

SO there we stood, and before we knew where we were, we were standing on the stage in that curious stiff nonchalance that musicians have, while the comper was saying things we couldn't hear. It was all very bright, very dazzling, and very strainedly relaxed. Some-



I immediately assume an expression of complete happiness and confidence...

body suggested a tune which nobody could hear or make out, and we were OFF.

I'll say we were off, and how we were off!

The pianist started in one key, the bass in another, both playing different tunes, while the trumpet and trombone, under the impression they were "doing the right thing," started a totally different tune from anybody else.

Need I add that the alto and clarinet did the same in their own way?

Now, I've been playing many years, and this sort of thing will happen in the best of bands. I know exactly what to do in cases like this.

I immediately assume an expression of complete happiness and confidence, gaze right into the slightly bewildered and uneasy audience with an expression which is supposed to denote "Yes, I know it sounds all wrong, but it isn't really. It is just a very clever effect. They are all star players, you know, and you just watch how nicely it will all work out."

That is what usually happens. But this was no usual affair.

The pianist, though excellent, was inexperienced, and in cases like this one always looks to the pianist. One looked in vain. Everybody playing loud, and wrong.

I AM still grinning happily, but it is beginning to get me down. I am a sensitive soul, and I now start to sing in a carefree voice. I have to do that, otherwise the horror of it all will make me scream in rage.

Apart from doing what I did, there is nothing else a drummer can do. He is powerless. He feels as if he is in the middle of a catastrophe with his hands and feet tied.



I now start to sing in a carefree voice...

True, mine were not, and I was using them as best I could. But how long could I go on grinning like an imbecile? After all, I am supposed to have some ear for music—obviously, if I could sit there so happily, I was either stone deaf or an idiot!

Fortunately, it sorted itself out, and we found we were playing "Exactly Like You." But I was shattered and dazed as if I had received a knock-out blow. The feelings of the rest of the band can be summed up by their behaviour. Two went through it all with a calm and dignity that was a wonder to behold; definitely the type that made England.

But there present also was the nasty skulking type, one, in particular, belonging to the school of "blame someone else." He was shooting me, of all people, dark forbidding looks.

I smiled airily back, making a mental note to cut him out of all my future gigs.

The bass player shouted something across to me in a breezy, jolly fashion. I mechanically replied as if I knew what he and I were talking about. I took another look at him and saw he was completely composed, very happy, and manoeuvring into position



Swing Concert

by MAURICE BURMAN

EDITOR'S NOTE:—You didn't know that the Geraldo drummer was a writer with a great sense of humour and a penetrating power of description, did you? Neither did we, until he sent us a little article he had written after playing at a swing concert. He modestly asked our opinion, and we gave it by putting in a few commas, sending it to the printer and featuring it here. We think it's funny... we think it's clever... we think you'll like it. Oh, by the way, Maurice himself posed for the little pictures, which were photographed by Jack Marshall, and drawn by Hikki.—R.S.

where his hair would fall over his head and he would "send" himself.

I thought to myself, "Either he doesn't know or the stage has lost one of its 'greats.'" I subsequently found out by his language that he knew very much.

The pianist was nearly in a state of mental prostration. I couldn't bear to look at him.

The guitar was sitting there with an expression of complete indifference; after all, he couldn't be heard any way, so what could he lose?

Well, we finished together and

in the same key, and the applause came—yes, it came, but it was weak and at the same time defiant. I was panting a bit and would have liked to retire in a corner to lick my wounds, but no, we were informed we were about to play the Blues. I chirped up a bit at that.

As usual, when the Blues are announced, a sort of solemn hush falls over one, and there is a church-like atmosphere in the air, as if the very voice of Jazz were about to speak. What it would say, if it could speak, is a subject I do not care to discuss. I feel sure, however, it would have gin in its voice.

The new up-standing Director of Variety might well take note of the bandleaders' cynical attitude towards broadcasting which is expressed in the succinct and oft-repeated sentence, "If they like you, you'll get on the air, and when they don't like you any more, then you'll be taken off the air—whether the public like you or not."

It is true we have known cases of leaders who, having given regular and popular broadcasts, suddenly find themselves whipped off the air without a date to their backs. But, of course, the likes and dislikes of the mysterious THEY have nothing to do with it!

Perish the thought! Cor chase my Aunt Fanny round the "Mason's Arms"!

The craze for over-orchestration is spreading. The latest motto seems to be "If you can't be good, be complicated."

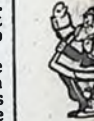
When the timps thunder, the violins play Bach without its bite, and the rest of the orchestra quaver until we get crotchety, then it is either an introduction to "Sentimental Journey," a symphonic arrangement of "Malruzy Doats" or a Fantasia on the tuning-up of a three-piece orchestra in a two-piece suit.

We wouldn't know... we have already switched off.

Still, I did chirp up a bit, not because of nostalgia, or anything like that, dear me, no! but because I knew that the boys must start in the right key, and they'd get by. I figured out we could make a good job of this and make them forgive and forget.

IT was quite good, but now I had my very own personal problem. My bass drum decided that it wanted not of me any more and slowly and ponderously started to move towards the auditorium. By skilful footwork and cunning handwork I got it back.

By this time the blues had



Radio Flashes

The male announcers are coming back, and, at last, we are hearing dance music announced as if the people concerned know what they are talking about. But the man who knows most about the subject is dwelling in marble Aeolian halls and being kept far from the maddening microphone.

In the meantime, we are getting a surfeit of Rich food when we could well do with some short'n'ing bread from the Miller.

We like Elizabeth Welch and Arthur Young, but are they the only singer and pianist the B.B.C. can find for its small programmes? They go. "To Town on Two Planos" and then exchange Reggie Forsythe for George Shearing, turn their hats round and come up through the trapdoor for "Short and Sweet."

Programmes are swell, but give the boys and girls a chance. What with gramophone records, gale warnings and repetitions of the programmes we heard yesterday, there isn't too much room on the air these days for solo artists.

Quiz-compilers, please note—"pops" mean current dance tunes. In the last "Saturday-Night Out," Post Office sorters and Guardsmen helpers had to guess the titles of tunes played to them. They were offered the choice of "pops"—also referred to as "Popular dance music"—or "Classical." With one exception they chose "pops," which each contestant hopefully translated into "jazz." The last "pop" was "Destiny Waltz." Bit of a grand-pop, if you ask us!

SCOTTISH NOTES

THE Glasgow branch M.U. elections have resulted in a real sweep of the poll by the candidates who may be said to belong to the dance-band side of the profession.

Outstanding feature was the election for president of Jimmy Boyle, who is taking over from J. S. Raitliffe, holder of this office for many years. Jimmy is in the R.A.F., stationed in Glasgow, and has had plenty of experience in committee work.

The dance which took place last Sunday in the Berkeley Ballroom was a real triumph of

finished and we were in the last number. It was a fast thing, the name of which I did not catch and do not know what it was to this day. I was just figuring out how quickly I could pack my kit at the end—when it happened.

I suddenly saw, as if in a haze, all the band pointing at me, and in the distance I could hear their horrid shoutings. I think it was "It's all yours" or "Take it." It certainly was all mine, but I did not want to take it one bit.

Let me explain. I like to be told when I am to take a drum chorus. I don't like to be hurried into these things. I am

What has happened to Dorothy Carliss? She sings as if she's bored. Be careful, Dorothy—boredom's 'catching.

The B.B.C. vocal-vetters get worse and worse! What fun they do have—banning and lifting the ban on singers who can please the public and the experts, but not always the Committee.

Latest reason advanced by the Gargling Gestapo for banning chirpettes is that they're "too American." We are against the phoney-American accent, but not against American style, and would be happier if we were sure that the powers-that-ban knew the difference.

How would Dinah Shore or Frances Langford fare under their hands? "Too English"?

At this festive season of the year, how about the B.B.C. making a gesture of good will to the bandleaders and taking the gag out of their mouths?

At the moment, some are allowed to do their own announcing, others may not.

The voice is part and parcel of individual personality—and, by gosh, our dance music could do with personality!

"Dynamo"

slow but sure—the type that builds Empires. I also like to get in position, as a golfer does when he takes a crack at the ball. "Stance" I think they call it.

Then, I like to feel the tempo. If it's fast, I play one way; if it's slow, I set another routine. These things can't be rushed, you know.

Nevertheless, with lights blazing at me, fingers pointing at me, voices shouting at me, still slightly groggy from the first demarche, dismayed, bewildered and completely flummoxed, I immediately assumed an expression of supreme confidence, plus an attitude of sending myself (this wasn't hard to do, I had practised it for years). Muttering strange and wild words to myself, off I went, hitting everything in sight hard and loud—anything I caught sight of I hit. I even tried taking a swipe at the player who gave me the dirty look.

Oh, it was awful! On and on I went, the noise of it all suffocating me.



I suddenly saw, as if in a haze, all the band pointing at me...

"Why, oh why," I moaned as I sat there beaming, "didn't I take that nice job in my brother-in-law's firm many



Then I became aware of another noise...

years ago?" "Still," I said to myself as I went thundering on, "as soon as I get through with this I'll skulk quietly off and out the back door and look for a nice tobacco shop." "Where," I said to myself, "was my education at the Royal Academy, my study of the piano, my composing?" It was all going up in a horrible din.

Then I became aware of another noise—it sounded like clapping. Oh, no, I said, "it is just the torture of your distraught brain." But the noise grew; in fact, it even drowned the terrific uproar I was making. Yes! they were applauding, and we finished off the tune quickly—and there we were standing to this most enrapturous sound. The very theatre shook.

Of course, I know what to do on occasions like this. I at once started making with the body, bowing and smiling to everyone in all directions. I even gave the player who gave me the dirty look a generous but lofty bow.

The others, too, were bowing; everybody was bowing.

To applause reserved usually for conquering-heroes, we minced off.



We minced off...

U.S. JIVE JOTTINGS

ON December 4, Cootie Williams and his Band followed the Duke Ellington Ork. into New York's Zanzibar Restaurant on Broadway. This is a really first-class job for any group and should make a welcome change for the ex-Ellington trumpet star, who has lately been engaged on one-nighters.

The Ink Spots and vocalist Ella Fitzgerald, who have been a part of the Cootie Williams entourage on its many stage shows, are also going into the Zanzibar with a new floor show at the same time as Cootie replaces his former boss.

Latest item of news from the Glenn Miller Ork. camp concerns singing

Sgt. Johnny Desmond, the featured vocalist who slew fem-fans in this country and elsewhere. The moment Johnny leaves the Forces, he has plans made to go out as a single, with a disc contract signed for the Victor people and several good stage and radio engagements already fixed.

They say Frankie Sinatra is in line to receive the American Unity Award of the Common Council for American Unity in recognition of his sincere work for racial tolerance in the film "The House I Live In." The Vets is also to receive an award this month at the Annual Newspaper Guild Ball at Madison Square Garden for much the same thing: his conscientious efforts in furthering racial harmony.

AT this time of the year it is customary to make some special salutation to readers. This we want to do, and also express our gratitude to those who have already sent us cards, letters and similar greetings, and the many who have consistently helped the "Corner" through the last twelve months.

More than that, we feel in ceremonial form and ready and willing to say something about the undeniable progress made by righteous jazz in the year 1945. Rather than try to cover the whole field, commenting on improved record releases here and in the States and on the general upward trend of jazz taste among the public, we have decided to comment on one particular aspect of jazz in 1945 and point a direction for next year which local enthusiasts might wish to follow.

Of first importance has been the appearance on the American scene of two real jazz bands—the Kid Ory Creole Band and Bunk Johnson's Band—playing New Orleans jazz nightly for anyone to hear and dance to. It is long since New Orleans bands have been seen working regularly at the job they are best fitted for—that of playing jazz for a decent wage—and the fact that record collectors are in both instances responsible for the revival is an encouraging sign.

The people behind these ventures—Marill Morden, Nesuhi Ertegun in Hollywood, and William Russell, Geno Williams, Ralph Gleason and others in New York—are record collectors, and "purists" at that. The kind of people who love jazz; the kind the smart critics accuse of poring over ancient history and locking themselves up in attics with a handful of dusty recordings made back in the early twenties.

Well, there's nothing very ancient about the history they're helping to make now at the Jade Palace on Hollywood Boulevard and at the Stuyvesant Casino on Lower Second Avenue! Says the critic Rudi Blesh: "As I write, the two greatest existing jazz bands—comparable with any in history—are playing at opposite ends of America. Given support, anything can happen. Jazz is a music that needs to be heard in actual performance. Writing, record collecting and other activities can build an audience. Given live jazz, this audience can help to keep it living."

Indeed, anything can happen! Over here we are badly placed to hear the real thing in the flesh. But it needn't necessarily be so. Marill Morden recently wrote us to say: "I was speaking to Ory, and he is very anxious to make a trip to England

Christmas Corner

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES



Tilford collector Ralph Venables, never at a loss for novel ideas, is using this set-up for his 1945 Christmas cards. We thought it was just about right for the Corner. Bud Freeman followers will recognise Summa Cum Laude stalwarts (from left to right) Pee Wee Russell, Max Kaminsky, Eddie Condon and Brad Gowans. But where's Bud?

as soon as possible. He says he feels he would like it very much. What are the chances, do you think?" It is hard to know what answer to give Marill. Jazz would go down well enough over here, we believe, but can a promoter be found to take a chance on it? The success, with audiences, of our own groups, like the George Webb Dixielanders, suggests the public is pretty sympathetic to "old-time" jazz, with its tunefulness and variety.

Perhaps what is wanted is an English Hot-Club with sufficient influence to guarantee a minimum of bookings to small, relatively obscure jazz groups that the big agents can't afford to gamble on.

It would be a tremendous job at first to get such a club on a sound financial footing, but they have done it in France and there seems no valid reason why we shouldn't be able to do it here. We believe that that is the first step to be taken towards making next year a really memorable one for jazz lovers.

The enthusiasm is here, the knowledge and the ability; all that is required is energy and initiative and perhaps a little cash. What do readers think?

NEEDLE POINTS

Some while back when the needle controversy raged and collectors argued the merits of thorn and steel and discussed the various aspects of record wear and tear, we received a long letter from Johnny Vyse stating his views on the subject and giving a deal of valuable advice on record maintenance and repair.

John, who has been many years in the collecting game, is at present with the Medical Corps in East Africa. Despite his overlong absence from the scene, he speaks with authority on matters concerning record repair, as anyone who knows him can confirm. We have witnessed him achieve incredible results with battered junk-shop finds by the application of the Vyse method of rejuvenation.

And so at Christmas time, when collectors suspend their many activities to survey the results of a year's "hustling" and pay a little attention to those domestic problems which invade the best-run homes at this season, it seems proper to disregard discographical affairs and give readers a chance to ponder the absorbing question of how to get the best out of the records they have. And that's where Johnny comes in to start the topic rolling with expert advice.

To quote: "I would sum up the disc-philosophy of jazz enthusiasts thus—a short life and a gay one. I personally prefer a long life and a gay one! Since 1938 I have never used other than thorn needles and can claim some know-

ledge of their advantages and disadvantages. This is how I figure them:

"ADVANTAGES.—(1) Record wear is negligible and thus depreciation in the case of rare records is reduced to a minimum. I have records played many hundreds of times still in fresh condition—whereas a loud disc carefully played with steels seldom gives good reproduction after fifty playings, or at most one hundred. (This depending on whether needles are changed each time; weight of soundhead and trueness of needle socket; quality of recording, etc.)

(2) Background noise and incidental dirt in the grooves is reduced to a minimum because abrasion by the needle is almost negligible.

(3) Expense is less, in my opinion. The old 2s. packet of eight used to give me around a thousand playings. I tested this often and on several brands, and number of playings varied with the thorn. For jazz lovers, the best type were the specially toughened medium thick continuity thorns.

"DISADVANTAGES.—These are all. I think, bound up with the question of nuisance and extra care required.

(1) The needles are hygroscopic and must be kept dry. It is always an advantage to warm them before use and store in a dry atmosphere.

(2) Sharpening requires great care, the short, fat point wearing worst and, at the other extreme, the long thin point breaking under strain. The ideal lies between these extremes.

(3) Records must be kept extra clean; grit will add to the strain on the thorn. Second-hand or steel-played discs need a lot of attention before being used with thorns.

"On the subject of improvising thorns, I can say that at home I tried many varieties from the English hedgerows. The best came from hawthorn or blackthorn, but all were unsatisfactory when treated. Certainly they couldn't compare with the imported thorn.

"The method (suggested by a reader) of affixing metal shafts to rose thorns is ingenious and perhaps worthy of attention in days of needle shortage. Out here, for instance, we have to use thorns from the ordinary African thorn bush because of the acute needle shortage, and without any treatment they give amazingly high performance. Their appearance and natural uniformity of size would make them suitable for commercial purposes to replace the prickly pear thorn.

PLAYING HEADS

"The head must be absolutely true, and the socket so placed that the needle point is at right angles to a

lateral section of disc through the groove. Untrue heads distort the music and wear the needle unevenly. The matter is of greater importance where acoustic heads are concerned, for needles (and through them the records) are subjected to far greater strains.

"The question of acoustic soundboxes is a complex one. The old mica diaphragm type of H.M.V. soundbox gives quite good results; the modern all-metal type will not play thorns, even when counterweighted. Here lies the root of the trouble, then, for so many people are dependent on this kind of soundbox that disappointing results are freely blamed on the thorns.

"The Hand Made Gramophone of the monster horn is built for triangular fibres, but gives as good, or better, results with thorns on heavily recorded discs. Of the electro-magnetic heads—most commercial types give good results, but the best are undoubtedly the super-light heads and piezo-electric range.

IN THE GROOVES

"It is too seldom realised how important it is to keep the grooves of a record clean. In junkshop finds it is possible to effect considerable improvement, while on well cared for, but steel played, discs the background noise can be to a certain extent eliminated.

This noise is due to three factors: (1) Dirt which is so glued on with grease that no brush will remove it (few seem to realise the necessity of handling discs by their rims only); (2) the slight abrasion of the disc surface through the surface wax and shellac; (3) accidental scratches. Obviously, nothing can be done about the latter, but the annoying hiss—which makes it desirable to cut out the high frequencies—can be decreased. Here is the way I used to clean up a junkshop record.

"First I took off most of the gross surface dirt with soap and water and a soft brush. When the surface was dry I cleaned it with benzene or petrol. This removed the old surface wax, and grease and dirt embedded which had not been touched by the soap and water.

"Next it was necessary to replace the surface wax. For this I used a 1:1,000 solution of beeswax in petrol, and applied it by polishing it in with a warm rag, but lightly. I then played the record over three or four times with a fresh thorn to remove surplus wax from the grooves (and a lot more dirt, as was proved by dissolving this wax in petrol and putting a microscope on the sediment). I finished the job by polishing lightly with a fine soft brush.

"This rather long wax process I find most satisfactory and a complete remedy to top groove wear which you get after several hundred playings with thorns. But all discs benefit from this treatment every hundred or so playings. Its biggest advantage is that many discs that would break down any thorn will take them quite adequately after treatment.

"I have tried most of the groove lubricants and found them messy and not very efficacious. People have used fine machine oil, I'm told, but I have no experience of this.

"Finally, to revert to the question of the superiority of thorns, the fact that they are preferred by the classical record collector answers the query. 'Are they musically better?' To me, the results are well worth the trouble taken, and I shall return to thorns until something comes along which reproduces music with higher fidelity and wears the records less quickly. Until then, cheerio, and good luck to the Corner!"

On which hopeful note from Darkest Africa we conclude for this week, wishing one and all the best they can get and sufficient stamina to enjoy it!

SWAP AND BUY
J. McCrimmon, 3, Brock Rd., Househillwood, Glasgow, will pay good prices for Oliver's "Riverside," Hampton's "Central Ave.," Shaw's "Summit Ridge," Armstrong's "Ory's Creole Tr.," Bessie Smith's "St. Louis," Oliver's "Call of Freaks," and any O.M.S. and N.O.R.K.s. Also jazz publications.

Anybody want a Mayral portable gram. with pick-up head ready for attachment? Drop a line to 154109, L.A.C. Poole, J. D. c/o 369, Victoria Ave., Manchester, 9.
R. Cockerell, 175, St. Sepulchre Gate, Doncaster, Yorks. wants Miller's "Nearness of You" and J. Dorsey's "Tangerine." Offers two deleted Miller's. "Two Romantic" and "Over the Rainbow."



KID SHOTS AND PAPA BUNK

Just in case readers thought it was going to be a White Christmas, here is a touch of old New Orleans—coloured section. Shots Maddison is one of the younger school of N.O. trumpeters, while Bunk Johnson is the daddy of them all. As you will read above, Papa Bunk is to-day stomping 'em in New York with a band of Orleans jazzmen.

[Bill Russell photo.]

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Grace Notes

The Rest of the News in Brief

AMBASSADOR of song can antly be used to describe Noel Gay managing director, Hugh Charles, who left on a goodwill mission for the States on December 6.

This is his first trip across the Atlantic, and there is little doubt that the man who wrote "There'll Always be an England" will himself receive as great a welcome as did his inspiring composition in the United States.

BUMPING over Belgian roads, whither Stars in Battledress" were recently whisked at a day's notice, are Harry Farmer and probably the most travelled Hammond organ in the world. But organ seems to be "taking it," and the lonely outposted troops are certainly taking the swing Harry brings.

DECEMBER 1 was opening night at Holborn Hall, W.C.1, for newly formed Gordon Brooks Ork., comprising Frank King, Stan Snowden (alt. cl.), Jeff Jackson (tr.), Syd Gold, Mike Asher (tpt.), Ted Chris (pno.), Fred Smith (bass), Allan Hollingworth (drums). First of a series here, fans gave great acclaim.

ACCOMPANYING Grace Fields on her Italian tour, alto-clarinetist Benny Bromnick leads his "Yeomen of Swing," comprising Bill Siviers (tenor), Ron Shimmell (drums), Dick Wynn (g'tar), Jeff Bell (pno.), Tommy Lister (bass), Bob Livingston (vocals). After 5 1/2 years' service, hopes to select civvy suitings early New Year, and sends seasonal greetings to all old pals, including Miff Ferrie and Mick Summers.

BLIND boogie-woogie pianist Eddie Thompson, back from successful cine-variety with Brian Michie's "Victory Show," protégé of drummer Charles Bistoquet, created recent furore at Feldman Club, now hopes to settle in small club residence.

HALIFAX (Yorks) demobes reunited at the Empress Ballroom; Proprietor Charlie Lucas, ex-Navy, and M. D. Harry Nichol, ex-Army, alto-clarinetist, fronting pre-war line-up of Stanley Sykes (tenor, violin), Ronald Askham (tpt.), Norman Teal (bass), Clem Wood (drums), Rowland Marsden (pno.); in only resident job in district.

"FLAGS ARE FLYING" revue for troops directed by Northern leader Les Sheldon, on VJ-Day played before 10,000 and Gen. Sir Wm. Slim at 14th Army H.Q. in Burma. Latest figures for past six months are 20,000 miles covered and 80,000 personnel entertained by Jack Tidbury, from Cumberland Hotel, London (alt. cl.), Russ Nicholson, ex-Rabin (tpt.), Alan Roper, ex-Eddie Shaw (pno. arr.), Eric Delaney, ex-Ambrose Octet (drums), with Les on tenor and clarinet. Good show by a good show.

DECENT flying visit to Coventry, where he spent five war-working years, paid by ex-Joe Loss, present Carroll Gibbons' altist Eddie Pratt. Occasion was Jazz Jamboree at the Drill Hall, organised by Coventry promoter Macdonald, including Billy Monk; Castilians, other local name-bands, and special very popular appearance of Harry Gold's "Pieces of Eight." Coventry recalled Eddie's fine wartime musical efforts when his "Modcrivaires" took stand for final feature.

HOMING (to 3, Coles Bullings, Warminster, Wilts) from not-so-gay Vienna is ex-Cotton slip-horn Tommy Ward, who's been bringing welcome live to the boys stationed in the Waltz City. Happy homecoming next week.

FOUR years after doctors told her she would never walk again, following car crash on her way to entertain troops, "Booms-a-Daisy" songwriter Annette Mills back in Town and walking as well as ever. Last appearance in "Variety Band-box" 18 months ago, was carried on to stage. Congratulations, Annette, and welcome back.

HOME for first time in 51 drummer Gordon Desmond expects demob. in January and intends reforming the 11-piece he has been leading for past year so as to tour North. Joining Welch Infantry Regt., later attached Army Welfare, has drummed five years throughout Persia, Iraq, Libya and Egypt, but will be home all Christmas at 7, Silverdale Terrace, Liverpool, 15.

Tops with the Yanks, he frequently aired over Palestine Broadcasting System and led first band on powerful Radio Beirut after its sabotage. Proud possessor of tattered Jerry-shot curtains, souvenir of many a "hot" session. Miraculously, he and drum came through with whole skins.

EVER-INVENTIVE Merchant Navy Comforts Service aim for £50,000 Christmas Target with thousands of special recordings of modern version of Dickens' "Christmas Carol" free for listening groups on application to M.N.C.S., 62, Heath Street, N.W.3 (Hamstead 6062). They helped put lights in the streets again—so you can see your way to helping them.

UNBANNED band on January 1—Dutch Ramblers, wrongly accused of pro-Nazism, reopen with new stars, altoist Tinus Bruyn, brother Kees replacing Andre van der Ouderaa on tenor, Francis Bay, trombone; Marcel Thielemans definitely rejoining. Line-up now: Tinus Bruyn, Ton Helweg and Fred van Ingen (altos), Kees Bruyn and Wim Poppink (trns.), George van Helvoirt, Ferric Barendae, Sam Nyveen and Jack Bulterman (tpts.), Francis Bay, Jan Koulman and Marcel Thielemans (tms.), Wim Sanders (gtr.), Kees Kranenburg (drums), Jack Pat (bass), and, of course, pianist Masman leading.

TWO ex-P.O.W.s now grace Notts again: ex-Hall, Mantovani singer, Ken Crossley, holidaying after four years in Jap camp; Dave Ashmore, on tenor with "Kings of Swing" at Victoria Baths, after four years among the Jerries. Out of the swine and into the swing again.

MAJOR on "Music Parade" last Sunday, pianist Ian Stewart, making first broadcast since joining Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, 1939. Studied as chorister, Salisbury Cathedral; 1934, aired frequently from NBC; returning, joined Gibbons at Savoy; 1937, became featured "Song Reporter" for BBC. War career spent chiefly Far East, rising to Brigade Major of 99th Indian Infantry Brigade as part of 17th Indian Division. Only practice was on homing ship from Far East, Michael Northward bound.

VIOLINIST-LEADER NORMAN COLE, strongly re-established at London Piccadilly Hotel, rejoined by former pianist, Jack Dent, out of R.A.F. after five years. Norman reports cole situation greatly improved.

BANJOISTS, Mandolinists, Federation invites your 2s. 6d. subscription to your own Organisation. Hon. Sec.: Leslie J. Marsh, 57, Donogallo Road, N.17 (Totterham 5007), says Annual Contests again lined up for 1946. Rules, etc., from him. Don't fret in solitude; string along with your fellow-instrumentalists.

STARS FOR BOURNEMOUTH

PREMIER pianoman George Shearing and trombonist Miff Ferrie comprise a novel New Year gift to be presented to patrons of the Bournemouth Town Hall on January 2 by Louis Mendoza, king-pin of Bournemouth dance activities, and leader of the Rhythmers and Caballeros bands.

Miff will be accompanied by his Penrymen in their individual type of live, whilst George will be featured as solo artist in some of his scintillating piano transcriptions. Proceeds will be donated to St. Dunstan's Institute.

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