

Melody Maker

INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

SENSATIONAL BAND - CHANGES AT CHURCHILLS

EXTENSIVE AND SENSATIONAL BAND CHANGES ARE TO TAKE PLACE AT THE EXCLUSIVE CHURCHILLS NITERIE IN BOND STREET. IN ADDITION TO THE DEPARTURE OF HARRY HAYES AND HIS BAND—AS ANNOUNCED IN OUR LAST ISSUE—LATIN-AMERICAN SPECIALIST ROBERTO INGLES AND HIS SEVEN-PIECE OUTFIT ARE ALSO SCHEDULED TO LEAVE AT THE END OF THE COMING WEEK.

The selection of the new dance band to follow Harry Hayes will cause a big quota of surprise, since not only will the leader of this combo be famous stage and West End figure Jack Jackson, but also because his band will contain no less celebrated a pianist, vocalist, and ex-bandleader than the already much-discussed Hamish Menzies.

Hamish will be brought in with much the same outfit as he recently featured at the "Rose Room," with Jack Jackson playing trumpet and fronting the band. The full instrumentation will be piano, bass, guitar, tenor trumpet and drums.

EDMUNDO'S 12-PIECE

Replacing Roberto Ingles at Churchills will be rumba pioneer **Edmundo Ros**, who is leaving the Astor after over four and a half years of continuous residence there. Edmundo will, of course, continue his nightly appearances at the Bagatelle Restaurant, going on to play at Churchills for the same hours as his Astor date—namely, from 12.30 a.m. to 4 a.m.

Edmundo is taking his full 12-piece band from the Astor to Churchills.

With Edmundo himself drumming, vocalising and leading, the Ros outfit will include the following musicians: **Eric Spencer** (piano); **Harold Earle** (guitar); **Sid Rich** (bongoes, etc.); **Dudley Misso** (maracas); **Bob Butcher** (alto sax, clarinet and flute); **Bob Taylor** (alto sax, flute and clarinet); **Eric Ryan** (tenor sax and clarinet); **Malcolm Campbell** (saxophone and tenor saxophone); **Jack Davis, Jun.** (bass); **Ronnie Mills** (trumpet); and **Wilfred Kear** (trumpet). Edmundo's vocalist at the Bagatelle is the attractive **Shirley Marron**.

Jack Jackson, in his capacity as a special representative of Poster's Agency, has been responsible—jointly with **Leslie Macdonnell**—for negotiating Edmundo Ros's engagement at Churchills, and both bands will start on February 10.

Edmundo will be heard broadcasting at 9 a.m. on February 10, so that his opening day at Churchills looks like being an exceptionally busy one.

Roberto Ingles leaves Churchills with many interesting plans for the future, his date-book being so full that he told the *Melody Maker* that he felt he would, in any case, have been forced to give up late-night work before very long.

INGLES: BIG PLANS

Featured at the Savoy Hotel for some time past, to which popular and exclusive resort he went direct from the Berkeley Hotel, Roberto has a very large West End following, which he has increased still further by his 14 months of "doubling" at Churchills, which resort he opened jointly with Harry Hayes.

Roberto will be concentrating exclusively upon the Savoy for his evening work for the time being, but has new plans and ambitions for broadcasting—in which sphere he has already made his mark in no uncertain manner—and with records, his success in the recording studios to date being also very marked.

In addition to his many Parlophone recordings, made with a band over 20 strong, Roberto will start something new shortly with a new series of piano solo waxings, in which he will be accompanied by two guitars and string bass. First of these will be issued on April 1.

HARRY ROY'S ASTOR "SOLO"

THE forthcoming departure of **Edmundo Ros** and his band from the Astor niterie will leave **Harry Roy** in sole charge of the Park Lane establishment's music. "I shall emphatically not engage another rumba band, or any new band at all," Harry Roy, who now has a big say in the direction of affairs at the Astor told the "M.M." "In future, all rumbas, sambas, etc., will be played by my full orchestra. During the evening, however, my outfit will break up into several smaller combinations from time to time so that, by taking turn and turn about, all the boys can have reasonable periods of rest."

In order to carry out his ideas for splitting up the one big band into various sections so that the whole of the Astor's music can be provided by it, Harry is introducing several additional musicians into the outfit. These will include a grand new singer, lately arrived in this country, in the person of **Charles Judah**; an additional bongoes player in **R. Selby**; and an additional sax and trumpet whose names have not yet reached us as we close for Press.

British Trumpet Off to U.S.A.

A **NOTHER** British musician off to America to look around and possibly settle down, is trumpeter **Len Whiteley**, who has just sailed on the U.S. liner, "John Ericson" for New York, resigning from **Lew Stone's** Band, at the Embassy Club, to do so.

Len is crossing the water to be the guest of eminent British bandleader, **Ray Noble**, whom he met in Hollywood while in the R.A.P. Captured by the Germans in 1943, Len spent two years as a prisoner-of-war.

Repatriated 18 months ago, Len has been with **Frank Weir**, **Harry Hayes** and **Lew Stone**, awaiting the opportunity to accept **Ray Noble's** offer to go to America and complete the necessary six-months' residential qualification, after which, Ray feels sure he can find employment for him.

If all goes well, Len's wife will join him shortly.

Chosen by Lew to replace **Len Whiteley**, is well-known ex-Hilton trumpeter, **George Taylor**, who not long ago returned from a highly successful sojourn in Australia, where he earned a sound reputation, not only as a musician, but also as a social worker.

GERALDO S.O.S.

N **EW**s breaks this week of a chance for musicians on all instruments who would like to play in a band that is to be formed and coached by no less a personality than **Geraldo**.

Gerry has been asked to supply a band for an important permanent job starting in the summer, and is ready to consider musicians from all parts of the country.

They should write to him at his office, 73, New Bond Street, London, W.1, mentioning the *Melody Maker*.

CHESTER SHOW FOR HALLS—BUT NO ROCKETS

S **P**ECULATION is rife regarding the future of the **Blue Rockets** Dance Orchestra, following the news that, when the famous **Charlie Chester** "Stand Easy" radio show goes into **Variety** on February 24, it will have no accompanying band.

The very successful **Charlie Chester** Show comes off the air on Monday, February 17, after an unbroken run of 55 performances, in which the **Blue Rockets** were always conspicuously featured; and **Charlie** and his **Gang** open up the following Monday at the **Brighton Hippodrome** in a **George and Alfred Black** road-show, "Stand Easy" but without the **Blue Rockets**. The show will come to **London** the week of **March 3** to play the **Pinsbury Park Empire**, and will play dates all round the country until **September**, when it is expected to return to the air.

Future plans of the **Blue Rockets**, when their air-show ends, are linked up with the **Melachroino Organisation**, of which they are an integral part. It is understood that the band is most likely to tour **Britain** on its own account, cashing-in on its nationwide radio popularity, but our information also suggests that some of the band's cornermen will not tour—preferring to stay in **Town**.

In the meantime, this **Sunday** (2nd) the **Rockets**, directed by **Benny Daniels**, are billed to open a week of one-night stands by playing a concert at the **Pump Room, Bath**; on **Tuesday**, they are at **Oxford**; on **Wednesday**, at **Scunthorpe**; **Thursday**, at **Oswestry**; and on **Friday**, at **Weston-super-Mare**. A busy week concludes with a visit to **Newport** on **Saturday**, and a **Sunday** concert at **Cardiff**.

A **N**EW recruit to television this **Saturday** (February 1) will be **Santiago** and his **Latin-American Music**, from the **Milroy** niterie. **Santiago** and his boys will face the cameras from **8.30-9.15 p.m.**

PIANIST DIES IN CROYDON DAKOTA CRASH

A FEW days ago, into the **London** office of the **Melody Maker**, walked **Mervyn "Bob" Frazer**, one of the North's outstanding pianist / arrangers (writes **Jerry Dawson**).

In a long conversation over lunch he told **Editor Ray Somie** and myself all his plans for the future. He had that morning collected his visa and aeroplane ticket for his long-awaited return trip to **South Africa** to rejoin the girl he had married during his four years' **R.A.F.** service in the **Union**.

He had contracts signed and sealed for radio appearances and theatre dates as a solo pianist; open offers for his services as a bandleader and arranger, and an idea to start a musical paper on the lines of the **Melody Maker** for the benefit of the profession in **South Africa**.

We envied him the great new world that lay before him, and the opportunities for happiness and success in the **Dominion** and with great feeling if he could take us with him as stowaways, made him farewell, we to go back to our office desk, and **Bob** to go off to the airport to await his plane, which was due to leave any time after the following morning.

His departure was delayed; he was advised that **Saturday** last (28th) was to be the day—and now, as I write this, his body lies in the mortuary at **Croydon**, a victim of the **Dakota** crash in which the pilot and eleven passengers lost their lives a few chasty minutes after taking off.

Demobilised from the **R.A.F.** during the summer, **Bob** immediately joined **Bill Gregory's** Band at **Hammer's** Restaurant, **Liverpool**, and was responsible for most of the arrangements which the band played on its broadcasts. He teamed up with **Ken Frith** in a two-piano act which was a regular feature of **Northern** radio programmes, and less than three months ago moved over to the piano-chair in **Jack McCormick's** Band at **Lewis's** **Manchester**.

Twenty-eight years old, **Bob** was a thoroughly schooled musician and an outstanding stylist who had already made his mark in the world of music. I know it is usual to speak well of people in an obituary, but I say this with every ounce of sincerity I possess—never can I wish to meet a

(Please turn to page 2)

ST. BERNARD WALTZ 3/6
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LEADER ROY RICHARDS TURNS RECORDIST

AT long last South London now has its own up-to-date recording studios, which are located at the front of the famous Locarno Ballroom in Stratham Hill and are under the personal supervision of bandleader Roy Richards.

A professional musician for 23 years, 14 of which have been spent leading his own bands, Roy was for three years at Hammersmith Palais; has also played at the Nottingham Palais; Locarno; Royal, Tottenham; was a popular figure on the Continent before the war; and during the war years took a 23-piece band show overseas for ENSA, visiting eleven different countries.

With the title of Roy Richards Recordings, this establishment should prove a boon to semi-pros, in particular, as they get little or no chance to hear themselves as others hear them.

In an effort to help bands to become record-minded, Roy offers a FREE 10 in. single-sided record to any band which would care to go along to the studio during the period Sunday, February 2, to Sunday, February 9, both dates inclusive.

An appointment will, of course, be necessary, and anyone wishing to take advantage of this generous offer should wire, write or call on Roy at 158, Stratham Hill.

The offer is a genuine one with no snags, and no conditions attached.

For the benefit of any vocalists who may care to make recordings, the services of a first-rate pianist are always available, and there is no extra charge for this service.

Deniz—From Hawaii to Cuba

ADD two extra musicians—button-up open-neck shirts—exchange the Hawaiian Lei for the knotted silk cord of Cuba—and the Deniz Hawaiian Trio becomes overnight the Deniz Rumba Quintette.

At the same time it becomes one of the most authentic-sounding Latin-American outfits in the West End, despite the absence of the conventional trumpet and flute, and patrons of the Coconut Grove niterie in Regent Street, W., have not been slow to appreciate the outfit.

Playing opposite to the Sid Phillips Orchestra, the quintette comprises Joe and Frank Deniz on guitars, Jules Ruben on piano, bassist Carl Kahn and drummer Don Aldo.

TWO terrific nights at the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Monday and Tuesday, February 3 and 4, will mark the occasion of a grand Butlin's Pageant, at which several big attractions will appear, not the least being the Squadronaires and Felix Mendelssohn and his Hawaiian Serenaders. There will also be a concert orchestra and an old-time orchestra, both conducted by Al Fried.

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing February 3)

Carl BARRITEAU and Band.
One-night Stands, London and Wales.
Billy COTTON and Band.
Empire, Glasgow.
Leslie DOUGLAS and Band.
City of Varieties, Leeds.
Teddy FOSTER and Band.
Winter Gardens, Cleethorpes.
Roy FOX and Band.
Empress, Brixton.
Morton FRASER and Harmonica Rascals
Empire, Chatham.
Gloria GAYE and Girls' Band.
Ritz, Birkenhead.
Henry HALL and Band.
Palace, Leicester.
Joe LOSS and Band.
Empire, Leeds.
Vera LYNN.
Empire, Chiswick.
Felix MENDELSSOHN and Hawaiian Serenaders.
One-night Stands, London and North
Sid MILLWARD and Nitwits.
Concerts, West of England.
Fred MIRFIELD and Band.
Queen's, Poplar.
Oscar RABIN and Band.
One-night Stands, South.
Charles SHADWELL and Orchestra.
Empire, Shepherd's Bush.
TROISE and Mandoliers.
Empire, Kingston.
Eric WINSTONE and Band.
Green's Playhouse, Glasgow.

LEADER FOR TELEVISION

ASTORIA bandleader Harry Leader makes his television debut on Monday, February 3 (3 p.m.).

Entitled the "Harry Leader Band Show," the transmission, in addition to Harry's own combo, will feature ex-Geraldo star Dick James in the dual rôle of vocalist and compère, impressionist Len Reid, and ballroom dancing exponents Nellie Duggan and Len Scrivener.

Harry also has several broadcasting dates, including "Music for Dancing" each Friday at 10 p.m. (Overseas).

On Friday, February 7, Harry's band will be appearing at a police charity ball at the Dudley Ballroom, Birmingham, and on Sunday (9th) will stage-present a concert at the London Casino.

ROSE ROOM CHANGE

FRITH STREET'S Rose Room, famous Sunday night rendezvous of West End musicians, sees yet another change of small-piece swing units when the Ronnie Nelby Trio opens there on Sunday next, February 2.

Foremost piano exponent Ronnie will be ably aided by two other musicians of equal fame. These are clarinet-altoist Joe Crossman, long associated with bandleader Lew Stone, and ex-Ambrose and Frank Weir drummer Norman Burns.

In place of Warwick Hurst-Barnes who has left to negotiate the opening of a new night spot, the Rose Room is now being ably managed by Charles Bohm and Irene Foster of the Music Artistes Corporation, 23 Albemarle Street, W.1.

DUTCH RAMBLERS TO AIR ON B.B.C.—FEB. 12

NAT ALLEN TO TOUR AGAIN

AN important item of news this week concerns Nat Allen, who will shortly be leaving London for a Variety theatre and dance hall tour.

This is good news for his many fans and followers in the provinces, who, without a television service, have missed the fine shows Nat and his Band have given on "vision" lately.

Highlight of the tour will be a season at Green's Playhouse, Glasgow, commencing March 10, and other dates up North will be announced in due course.

For all these dates and Green's, Nat will be augmenting his band, and with the thought in mind that in these days youth deserves its chance, has hit upon the happy idea of having a "teen-age" contingent in his orchestra, which, besides being an integral part of the band, will also be featured as a small outfit to be known as the "Teen-Agers."

In this connection Nat would like to hear from promising young musicians on any instrument and under the age of 20 from all over the country, and letters giving full details should be sent to Nat's manager, at Elliott Direction, 13, Blenheim Road, London, N.W.8.

Those in the provinces unable to make the journey to London should not worry, as Nat Allen plans to audition them during the Variety theatre tour.

RABIN CHANGES

THERE have been several changes of late in the Oscar Rabin Band, and the newcomers include ex-Geo. Evans tenor star Don Rendell, who replaces Bert Tobias.

Frank Brierley, from Harry Gerard's Band at Norwich, is now in the trombone section, and on Monday last, trombonist Eric Watson, who has been playing with Harry Chatterton at Hull, Yorks, replaced George Burgess, who is now at the Astoria with Jack White.

On Friday last (24th) the Rabin Band paid one of its rare visits to Manchester for a one-nighter at Belle Vue, where close on 2,000 dancers and fans assembled to welcome the boys.

WAYNE LIKES KENT

TONY WAYNE, drummer-leader who had a long run as MD at the London Stage Door Canteen, and whose last important date was at the Hildon Manor Country Club in Kent, stays in that county for his newest engagement, which is MD at the St. Mildred's Hotel, Westgate-on-Sea.

For the moment, Tony is leading a five-piece, and playing on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights; but very shortly he will augment, and later on will also be fixing up two other orchestras for the establishment. Tony Wayne will be featuring a large dance orchestra nightly in the summer months, the season starting in May.

Leading on drums, Tony is supported at present by Jack Woolcott (alto and baritone sax) and clarinet; Johnny Robinson (piano); Harold Purkey (accordion); and Ted Hyde (bass, violin and vocalist).

GOING all out to establish herself as a bandleader, vocal star Paula Green is to play the week, commencing Monday next (3rd) at the Seaburn Hall, Sunderland, with her male band. Paula and her lads have already been seen by tele-viewers, but have yet to debut on the air.

TOMMY HUNT and his Band will be making their first visit to Acton Town Hall when Jimmy Boyd presents them at a dance there on February 7, supported by Fred Hedley and his well-known contesting band.

THE RAMBLERS, Holland's uncrowned Kings of Swing, are to play a 30-minute broadcast in the "Café on the Corner" series on Wednesday, February 12, at 4 p.m. in the Light Programme.

This will be the Ramblers' first airing to Britain since the fateful evening of May 9, 1940—the eve of the German invasion of the Low Countries (writes Bob Zeverijn, "M.M." Dutch correspondent)—since which time the band has been considerably augmented.

Under the leadership of pianist Theo Uden Masman, the line-up of the Ramblers now is: George van Heivoirt, Ferry Barendse, Sem Nyveen and Jack Bulterman (trumpets); Marcel Thielemans and Pierre Wijnobel (trombones); Tinus Bruyn, Fred van Ingen and Tony Helweg (altos); Kees Bruyn and Wim Poppink (tenors); Jack Pet (bass); Wim Sanders (guitar) and Kees Kranenburg (drums).

Last November this famous band celebrated its 20th anniversary with a mammoth concert at the City Theater in Amsterdam, in which a host of Dutch Variety stars took part. Congratulatory messages flowed in from musical celebrities the world over, including Jack Hylton, Roy Fox, Nat Gonella and Reginald Foort.

Dutch Swing-Scribe in Second Air-Crash

(Continued from page 1)

nicer guy than Bob Fraser, pianist, arranger, a true friend—and a gentleman.

His friends in the profession—and I am sure that he hadn't a single enemy—will join me in expressing condolences to his widowed mother, his South African wife, and his brother Louis, noted Northern drummer.

* * *

Another air-crash victim is G. J. Rietman, the editorial assistant of our Dutch contemporary "Symphonie and Swing," who was co-pilot of the ill-fated Dakota which crashed at Copenhagen on Sunday, resulting in the death—amongst others—of the Crown Prince of Sweden, American opera star Grace Moore, and Danish singer Gerda Neumann.

Truly a "black week-end" for the entertainment profession.

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BENNY TAKES THE VOCAL!

Edgar Jackson's Record Review

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA

***Oh, Baby! (Parts I and II) (Owen Murphy, arr. Mel Powell) (V by Benny Goodman) (Am. Columbia XCO36286/7). Recorded May 14, 1946.)

(12-in. Parlo. E11453—6s. 7½d.)

IN addition to enjoying the halo of presumed importance which would automatically attach to any 12-inch double-sided Goodman presentation, this record is the first ever to be put out in this country (and only the second in America) featuring Benny as a vocalist, and it would be outside the bounds of human nature if this combination of curiosity-provoking circumstances did not make it a real money-spinner for Parlophone and their dealers.

But whether those who spend their hard-earned cash on it are likely to be so pleased with their purchase, once they have got it home and played it a few times, will depend on how grey the whiskers have to be on a performance before some people realise how out-of-date it is, even though it was recorded less than a year ago, and by Benny Goodman's band at that.

FAUX PAS

For out-of-date is the perfect adjective for the arrangement. But before I say more about that let me put you out of your suspense and tell you about Benny Goodman's vocal effort.

It can be done in a very few words: All Benny manages to do is show that he hasn't the voice of a third-rate crooner, can't sing, and wouldn't know how to put over a song if he could.

Another faux pas was ever to have tried to put this Goodman stage show standby on to a record without altering the arrangement to allow for that weakness of the gramophone—its inability to play continuously, even with 12-inch records, for more than four or five minutes. For this presentation of "Oh, Baby!" runs to eight minutes, and with the arrangement as it is one has to turn the record over at a spot where it breaks the continuity most aggravatingly.

Nevertheless, many people may still rave about this record, and it is not difficult to say why. Whichever lineup of Benny's it was that did the session, academically speaking it was

good. It has the discipline and polish one has come to associate with the name of Goodman, plays with a *savoir faire* that has produced an easy bounce and at times even a sense of real spontaneity, and the solos, especially those by tenor, trombone and piano, all have their points. In fact, in spite of the vocal and the awkward turn-over spot I, too, could have raved about this performance—had I heard it ten years ago.

But to-day it sounds so demodé that one wonders what Benny could have been thinking about to have passed it. Most of the trouble lies, as I have said, in the arrangement. Made by Mel Powell—but in fairness to him I should add goodness knows how long ago—it starts off all right by giving Benny the lead against the rhythm of Red Norvo's vibes, followed by Teddy Wilson's piano solo, and the playing is all quite nice.

But after the vocal, Side I degenerates into such out-of-date clichés as the brass echoing demodé reed licks and vice-versa, bits by clarinet accompanied only by drums; odd drum breaks and other "tricks" which went out of fashion long ago.

And Side II can no more claim to be innocent of these bustles and bonnets than the style of the band, as distinct from its purely academic ability, does anything much to conceal the moths on them.

HARRY JAMES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

***Friar Rock (James) (Am. Columbia HCO1829). (Recorded December 19, 1945.)

***Keb-lah (Juan Tizol, Harry James) (Am. Columbia HCO 2028). (Recorded September 13, 1946.)

(Parlophone R3025—3s. 11½d.)

ALTHOUGH my record (by Bunny Berigan on H.M.V. B8632) gives composer credit to Ellington and Mills, was it not Juan Tizol who wrote, in 1937, "Caravan"?

Anyway, Tizol's "Keb-lah" is sufficiently reminiscent of "Caravan" to vindicate him on any charge of originality.

Nevertheless, for what the remark is worth, this is one of Harry James's better records—or at any rate, better recent records.

The ensembles are just noisy and old-fashioned, and if the trumpet solo is by Harry James it isn't a credit even to the tone and technique which even those who admire him least have never been able to deny he possesses.

But there is a pleasant spot of tenor, behind which the rhythm sounds nice, and Tizol's trombone playing (yes, Tizol is, or at any rate was, with Harry James following his departure from the Ellington band) is sweet toned and melodious.

I wish I could say as much for "Friar Rock." But, unfortunately, this is only another of those like "Early" (reviewed 23/11/46)—fast, noisy, trite swing with what should, and could, be a good band wasted on a hackneyed arrangement of a negligible riff tune. James's trumpet solo is just so much exhibitionism.

CARIBBEAN TRIO FOR 'HOLLYWOOD'

THOSE who enjoy the choice musical apéritifs distilled by the famous Caribbean Trio will soon be able to imbibe their favourite swing vintage at London's newest night-spot—the Hollywood Club, Old Quebec Street, Marble Arch, W.1. The premises are the same as those formerly housing the old Quebec Club.

On Sunday last (26th) the Trio completed a short but successful run at the Rose Room. On its debut at the Hollywood Club a slight change in personnel will find ex-George Evans' fret exponent Malcolm Mitchell replacing Frank Deniz (guitar), who is now leading his own quintet at the Coconut Grove (see story on page 2). The Caribbean Trio's two other mainstays are, of course, Dick Katz (piano) and Coleridge Goode (bass).

HOWARD LUCRAFT is in urgent need of a clarinetist for his February commitments, and is anxious to hear from any instrumentalists known to him. They can 'phone him at Barnet 6891.



This exclusive "Melody Maker" action shot, taken during the actual transmission, shows a section of the Vic Lewis Jazzmen going to town in television last Wednesday (22nd). While Vic vocalises an old-time blues, Ronnie Chamberlain plays an artistic clarry. Jimmy Skidmore is reflectively tacet, whilst Frank Holmes swings it on the baritone.

TACTLESS TOPICS

by Claude Bampton

ENGRAVER'S DELIGHT

THERE'S a rat-tat at the door. Ah! . . . that new orchestration has arrived, the one everybody is asking for.

Once again the Royal Mail has delivered the goods . . . an express train has roared its way through the night . . . sorters, postmen, porters, guards, signalmen, stationmasters, postmasters, the little man who taps the wheels, and the lad who licks the stamps . . . they've all combined . . . and Operation Pop passes to you.

Do you care? Of course you don't. The mighty printing presses have rolled. Do you give them a thought?

The opulent merchant, his big fat cigar, the man of vision, discrimination, taste, wealth and enterprise, the merchant prince whose judgment has set those wheels rolling.

To wit, the publisher.

Do you think of him?

Or the arranger, the man whose skill has woven the fabric, whose pen has chosen every single note that each of you shall play (he hopes)?

Or the composer?

And generally speaking we don't think of any of the men whose work it is to convert the brain-child of the composer into the black and white before us.

And most of you have never even heard of the engraver, the man who takes over when the copyist has extracted the parts from the arranger's score.

A man of simple tastes, the engraver is an artist, a craftsman who serves his five or more years' apprenticeship and learns his business the long way.

Not for him the bright lights . . . not even a whiff of our opulent merchant's cigars.

No; for him, just the 7.29 in the morning, his bench, the tiny tools of his trade, his zinc plates, the new MS band-parts and his undoubted skill.

Have you ever seen a bit of stave, bare in its nakedness, left over, unwanted, at the end of a line? A

piece of page to spare or a flap stuck on, fin-like, at the end?

Who spaces out the bars, lines and pages and puts in every single note and sign, meticulously, accurately, one might say mathematically, not only one at a time, but also, miraculously, upside down . . . and backwards?

In they go, the stave lines, clef signs, key-signatures, time-signatures, bar-lines, double-bars, the minims, crotchets and quavers, accidentals, ties and rests, all the hundreds of signs which go to a single page . . . for each and every one of the many pages in a full set of parts.

A plate is finished . . . it looks a picture, even if it is necessarily back to front . . . our engraver picks up more of his innumerable little tools, and starts again, for he is a craftsman who has been taught to complete his job.

And in they go, the dynamics, the pp's, mf's, the dots and dashes of the accents, the sf's, the horizontal cones of *crescendo* and *decrescendo*, all the little odds and ends, in fact, which bring the page to life.

And the engraver's delight? Is to hear you play 'em.

Perhaps he's very old, and doesn't dance?

How stupid of me.

But perhaps he listens-in?

And you never broadcast?

Oh, well, it seems as if he's been wasting his time . . . still, perhaps

one of these days you'll have a look at the marks as well as the notes, and then not only the engraver, but the copyist, the composer, and the arranger, they'll all of them be so pleased.

Ighly delighted, in fact.

And the opulent one?

Well, a tear will roll down his nose, plonk on to the Havana, and he'll say: "Those, dear, dear boys, how beautifully they play my livery numbers . . . put 'em on the Free List!"

But don't say I said so!

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STEADILY climbing to fame via the bands of Harry Roy, David Miller, Johnny Gles, Sydney Kyté and Oscar Rabin, vocaliste June Scott, who hails from Barkling, Essex, was obliged to retire from the business to look after an invalid parent. Is now free for work once again, and would be a good bet for any enterprising leader who wants a good-looker who can sing. Telephone number? Can be supplied on request—*I just couldn't publish it.*



Jerry Dawson's GOSSIP

PHIL STANWORTH, Leicester tenor tooter and band comic, now entering second year of office as President of the Leicester Branch M.U. Has recently become a daddy.

Frank Ikin occupying alto chair in Charlie Bassett's band at Manchester Ritz, vice Tommy Phillips.

Trentham Ballroom, famous pre-war Midlands dancing spot, is still in the hands of the decorators, after doing good war service for the Bank of England.

Harry Heath, Tunstall Town Hall (Potteries) pre-war favourite, is still going strong there, and new outfits to the district include the Lionel Rai ensemble doing classy gigs.

Irwin Dash provincial contact man Bert Pearson, into Liverpool Hospital last Monday for minor operation. Will be hors-de-combat for a couple of weeks.

Vocaliste Evelyn Darby back with Laurie Kelly at Newton Heath (Manchester) Palais after lay-off for removal of tonsils.

Tea Dances now a regular feature at Lewis's Restaurant, Manchester, with, of course, Jack McCormick and his band.

The George Evans Orchestra in Manchester next week playing two nights each at the Devonshire Ballroom, Sale Lido, and Levenshulme Palais.

Competition for juvenile musicians aged 8 to 15 years, each afternoon at the Ritz, Manchester, this week. Finals on Saturday afternoon next (February 1).

Syd Hand on drums with Roy Tomkins at Sale Lido, from Monday last in place of Norman Cooke, who is now busy with gigs. Syd thus leaves Bonelli at Belle Vue after three years. No replacement announced yet.

Roy Tomkins is also in urgent need of 1st and 3rd trumpets and a trombone. Contact him at Sale.

Drummer Freddy Baines leaves the Geo. Worthington band at Harpurhey Baths (Manchester) to join Raymond Woodhead at Ashton Palais, in place of Wilson Bowers. Trumpet man Ronnie Haslehurst also leaving the Woodhead crew.

Alan Lee takes over the lead trumpet chair at Blackley Palais (Manchester) on Saturday next (February 1), with Jack Oliver's Band.

Commencing today (Thursday), North Regional's "Stay at Home" weekly programme will emanate from the NAAFI Club, Manchester, as will "Band of the Week" from tomorrow (Friday).

Bradford M.U. will stage a "Jamboree" at the Windsor Hall on Friday, February 24.

Brighton M.U. is exhorting all promoters to insist on Union membership as a condition of engagement, and all leader-members to advertise their status. Other branches could copy.

NORTHERN OFFICE:—2/4, OXFORD ROAD, MANCHESTER, 1

PROVINCIAL PAGE

Northern Song-Writing Contest: Tommy Smith to Air : Huddersfield Jamboree

WITH the opening on Monday next (February 3) of the Irving Berlin film "Blue Skies," which will be shown in Manchester and Blackpool during that week, Odeon Theatres announce a song-writing competition throughout the whole of the North-West area.

Each of the 27 theatres where the film is being shown during the next three months will stage its own local competition, and the winning song from each will go through to one of five area finals.

The winning song from each of the area finals will go forward to the Grand Final at the Odeon Theatre, Manchester, in April, and the eventual winner will be published by Messrs. Chappell and Co., Ltd.

This is an outstanding opportunity for would-be songwriters in the North-West, and the Odeon Theatre managers will supply all the details for prospective entrants.

LEICESTER

LISTENERS to the Midland Region will from time to time have heard Clive Allen singing in various programmes in the fulfilment with his six months' contract with the BBC.

Taking his first pro. job with Frank Watson, Leicester's well-known band-leader, in 1939, Clive, after a short sojourn at Lewis's Restaurant, Leicester, joined the Leicestershire Regiment. His pianoisms soon attracted attention, as did his voice, and before long Clive was featured vocalist, accompanying himself at the piano, with the Leicester Regiment Band.

Back into civil life, he returned to Lewis's Restaurant for a short time; eventually leaving that band to join Tony Linnell, of Leicester, as pianist and vocalist.

REDCAR

CURRENTLY appearing at the Coastham Hotel, Redcar, is Charles Amer and his Band, which, sixteen strong, is one of the largest resident units in the North.

Charles has completed two seasons for Butlin's at Filey, and hopes to return there next summer. The band recently played a number of ballroom scenes for the Gainsborough film "Holiday Camp," which includes original music written and arranged by Charles and members of the band.

With Charles at Redcar are: Syd Bakewell (piano); Howard Kershaw (bass); Billy Walker (drums); "Tich" Hewson (guitar); Ronnie Caryl, Des. Greenwell and Roddy Ross (trumpets); Billy Geldard and Arthur Brown (trombones); Frank Eckersley, Andy Padbury, Bob Callaghan, Les Norton and Ron Hunt (saxes, etc.); and vocaliste Carol Scott.

The band's business affairs are managed by Eric Davidson.

NEWARK

AFTER 5½ years' service in the RAP, most of which were spent in Iceland and the Middle East, Joe Crossland is now re-established with his band at the Corn Exchange Ballroom, Newark, Notts.

With Joe leading on alto are George Fatherby (piano); Ken Worth (drums); Freddy Flynn (bass); and Ted Butt (trumpet).

OLDHAM

AT least one band amongst those which Northern Variety chief Bowker Andrews has heard in his new series of dance-band auditions has proved to be the equal of anything which the North has to offer.

This is Tommy Smith and his Band, from the Savoy Ballroom, Oldham, of which Tommy is proprietor as well as bandleader.

It was in 1923 that Tommy formed the "New Oxfords," and in 1928 the band won its first

MELODY MAKER contest and took second place in the first "All-Britain" Championship. In 1932 he turned professional, took his band into the Plaza Ballroom, Manchester, and in 1934 started a ten years' run with Mecca.

In 1944 he took over the Savoy, since which time he has built up an outstanding band. Tommy still plays bass, and with him are Vernon Jackson (piano);

Amos Smith (drums); Alf Banks and George Jackson (altos); Joe Kershaw and Edgar Chadderton (tenors); Tommy Hilton, Jackie Mitchell and Freddy Cooper (trumpets); and Derek "Jock" Melvin (trombone), plus staff arranger Cliff Harrison, one-time pianist with the "New Oxfords."

So pleased were the BBC with Tommy's audition that they have advised him that he will be given a spot at the first opportunity.

Definitely a band worth hearing.

BOURNEMOUTH

RESIDENT at the Woodlands Ballroom in Bournemouth is Eddie Francis and his Band. With Eddie leading from drums and taking vocals is Ernie Munday (piano); Len Weststead (alto); Ron Mallett (tenor); and Fred Memmott (tpt.).

Eddie is also the newly elected secretary of the Bournemouth branch of the MU. He has a first-class assistant secretary in Miss Gwen Dickinson, whom he married recently.

HUDDERSFIELD

LAST Thursday, at the Cambridge Road Baths, Huddersfield, a Grand Jamboree was organised by the M.U. (Huddersfield Branch) in aid of the M.U. Benevolent Fund.

Eleven hundred people attended, and amongst the bands which gave their services were: Harry Beever's Band; The "Stylists"; Jack Gledhill and his Band; Aub. Hirst's "Westbourne Players"; The "Skyliners"; The "Ambassadors"; Alex Wilkinson and his Band; Paul Dickinson and his Band; Norman Hanscock and his Band; with Alma Daniels and her Boys providing intermission music.

U.S. HIT PARADE

HERE is the list of the nine most popular songs in America during week ended January 18 last, as assessed by the weekly nation-wide ballot conducted by the American Tobacco Co., and broadcast in their "Your Hit Parade" programme over the CBS network:—

1. FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS (1-3-3-4-6).
2. OLE BUTTERMILK SKY (2-1-1-1-1-1-1-2-6-2-4-8-6).
3. A GAL IN CALICO (5-4-7-8).
4. THE WHOLE WORLD IS SINGING MY SONG (7-6-6-2-5-4-2-3-0-8).
5. ZIP-A-DEE DOO-DAH (4-5-9-7-9-0-10-9).
6. THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER (3-2-3-4-2-6).
7. FOR YOU, FOR ME, FOR EVER-MORE (0-0-0-10-8-0-9).
8. THE THINGS WE DID LAST SUMMER (5-7-5-9-3-8-7-9).
9. OH, BIT I DO!
10. I'LL CLOSE MY EYES.

SCOTLAND

GLASGOW

ERIC WINSTONE and his Band succeeded Joe Loss at Green's, this allowing brass men Danny Deans and Bruce Bain to swing out before their local chinas. Featuring the usual Winstone scores, and advertising correct tempo, the band has a feature array, including Alan Kane (vocals), Joe Nussbaum; and Roy Marsh on vibes.

At the Albert Ballroom, leader Jack Chapman was until recently the sole remaining member of the band which he started off with back in 1930, but he has now been rejoined by bassist Tommy Renwick, recently demobbed. Tommy was in the RAF, and was making to-and-fro trips between here and India until the other day. He started in the original band on guitar and changed over later.

At Barrowland Ballroom, from where Billy McGregor and the band are now a regular old-time broadcast feature, the leadership of the band for these airings is now undertaken by Bert Cooper, who does most of the scoring. Bert came direct from a Lew Stone outfit, and his scores now require a library to themselves.

When Matt Moors leaves the Plaza, Glasgow, for his new job at the Lyceum, London, there will be a strong Glasgow representation in his line-up, although only three of the Plaza lot will be with him, including Vic Norton (piano) and Sammy Murtagh (bass). Matt has been recruiting this last few days, and at the time of writing has signed up Joe Gibbons, from Dennistoun Palais, Jack Drummond, Glasgow pianist, who has been playing in London, will be with the new band, starting next week, when fuller details will be available.

EDINBURGH

FREDDY CLAYTON, star trumpet player with Gerald's, is rehearsing the "Wedding March." He's to marry Miss Marjorie Withers, of South Shields. Ceremony is expected to take place at the beginning of March in his native Edinburgh.

Freddy made his name as a trumpet player during his boyhood days, when he was a member of Edinburgh's Grassmarket Missions Band, which has turned out a score of first-class dance-band musicians, including Jock Bain and Joe Ferris, now playing beside Freddy in Gerald's Orchestra.

At the age of 14 he joined the Edinburgh Palais Band, and a year later left home to play in the Empress Ballroom, Dundee.

Later he joined George Elrick's Band, and was only 16 when Lew Stone snapped him up. Now, at the age of 19 he is leader of Gerald's swint section.

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ALL BY MYSELF

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What's wrong with the West End?—asked IVOR MAIRANTS last week. In this article, his survey of present-day conditions describes how dance musicians are dying a

Next week, Ivor Mairants concludes his survey with some practical suggestions for restoring West End dance music to the standard it enjoyed before the war.

NOW let us return to the West End and take stock. I did so recently after a break of six years. The place was famous and housed a famous band, but what an unhappy situation for musicians who take pride in their playing and look forward to going to work in order to get some pleasure out of music!

For those who do not know the routine—and I doubt if any reader will fall to recognise it—it is roughly as follows:

The musicians take their places on the stand while early customers are quietly eating dinner.

The music books are opened, the bandleader beats two, and the music starts. No one needs to mention what is going to be played, because it has been played since the job has started. Nor does anyone look at the music, but somehow everyone feels that after the tried and trusted starter has been played, something new and exciting will happen to-night. No use experimenting at the beginning, but soon, perhaps, a new arrangement will be used, or someone will suddenly provide a beat and the joint will jump. Who knows? While there's life there's hope.

This particular evening, a few new arrangements did happen to find their way into the books, and after a little scratching of the chin and quick mental debate, the leader gave the cautious command to try the first new one.

This new number was nothing corny by a local boy. Oh no! It was printed on lovely American art paper by a regular big-time American arranger.

THE intro. was a bit bewildering, but then you can always start at the chorus. But as it continued, somehow it was felt that this was not really a modern arrangement at all, but some obscure melody, covered by an even more mysterious arrangement.

Not only were the band getting a little hot under their respective nice clean collars and varied bows, but, agony of agonies, the customers were leaving the floor. As the band manfully came to the bitter end, the leader, who had meanwhile gone over to talk to a customer, came back to earth and rushed back to the stand.

Now slight panic takes hold, the old routine is quickly switched back, and there remains little chance of trying the other arrangements, which may, of course, be good.

Soon the first session finishes and

Death

saves a slight scene which might have been caused by an open discussion due to the failure of the new arrangement.

The scene now changes—and how it changes! Through the service door, past the kitchen and toilet, up the stone steps and into the room put aside for feeding (?) the band.

The burning question is discussed. The theme is: Why can't we improve our music?

The discussion becomes an argument and the argument turns into a shouting competition. Soon the theme is lost in the insults that fly around.

Why, you may well ask, does such a minor incident result in so much bitterness? Examine it yourself.

Some of the fellows genuinely think that the band can make a good attempt at playing the music they have to dispense and want to keep on trying (maybe). This category is followed by another, who says that the band must play better arrangements, specially written for the band. (Not without some truth.) A more stringent point of view is put by the uncompromising jazzier who refuses to take part in all this futility and proclaims his refusal to take part with vigour and at length. He says, acidly, "How can you play Woody Herman's 'Apple Honey' at the West End 'oom-ching' tempo?" (also not untrue).

THEN the know-all grows his statement in the forthright manner of a cynic and fatalist. "It's no ruddy good arguing, anyway. I've played in all the bands, and it's always the same rubbish. It stinks, and you'll never change it." (Partly true.)

Of course, nothing is resolved, and the argument is stopped only when the boys are actually back on the stand for the second session. The atmosphere, alas! is no longer bright, cheerful and hopeful! In its place there remains just—*atmosphere*.

The bandleader nags, the drummer does not know whether to play "oom-ching," "ching boom," "sideways rhythm" or a "chip chip." The saxes are sullen, the pianist is flustered, and some simply do not care. The same old tunes are repeated and number follows number with scarcely a chance to turn the music.

Second interval comes, and everybody troops off the stand with relief.

Nobody wants to talk about music, and the band breaks up in groups to talk about football pools, politics, or more personal things.

After all too short a period, they are back on the stand for the last lap, and one or two special arrangements are actually tried. Things liven up, and the brass take their mutes out where it says open, and play to the best of their ability. Everyone gets the spirit soon and the band sounds quite good. Even the few people on the floor become more

in the

animated, and snap out of their boredom.

Do you think this can last? Not on your life! Up comes the manager to complain that "we're frightening the customers!"

This is an old custom and brings to my mind one evening in 1940 when I was playing with Ambrose at the May Fair Hotel.

"Ammy" had left the band to itself for the last session and had gone up to his room in the hotel. The people in the restaurant seemed to be in a lively mood, so we took the opportunity of "swinging lightly."

The band, which included Tommy McQuater, Arthur Mouncey, George Chisholm, Andy McDevitt, Stanley Black, Billy Amstell and Maurice Burman, was quite a capable one and we were really enjoying ourselves.

Very soon, however, a message was brought to us by the manager from Mr. Ambrose to say that he could hear us up on the fourth floor, and if we persisted we'd arouse all the residents from their uneasy slumbers.

So, back to "The Lady is a Tramp." Once, at the Café de Paris, he came rushing in at the end of our first session shouting that Poulsen (the owner) had told him that we had been playing so loudly that we had frightened away forty-five customers who had made attempts to come in!

IN those days, however, we used to play quite a few buskers in the last session, and "went to town" in moderation, but to-day, when somebody requests a good old good one, this is what happens. It not only happens, it actually happens. The request was "Darktown Strutters' Ball" and the leader, turning to the band, said the following: "Shall we play it? No, I don't think so. It will probably be noisy, or everyone will mess it up! I'll tell the fellow we haven't got it." And turning back again to the customer he put him off. Notwithstanding the fact that the band boasted some of the country's best jazzers.

No! to be put off, the diner persisted, and finally the leader asked what key it was in and eventually someone growled "C." "Well," said he, "who's going to play the first chorus?" A stage wait ensued, and after what seemed a most embarrass-

ing interval, one of the musicians led in, and the rhythm section (always on their toes) quickly joined in. The remainder of the band just sat.

Did I say the rest of the band? Well, almost. One or two did more than just sit. Do not think they were fitting harmonies or a suitable figure against the soloist. No, no, no, they were quietly tootling or practising in readiness to take a chorus if they were asked, and so irritating the soloist. As one disgruntled member of the band remarked: "Next time we play a bucker I'm going to play claves."

A quarter of an hour or so prior to finishing time, the boys find it so hard to keep up their morale that sometimes they cannot resist a little tomfoolery in the shape of deliberately playing corny, to the disgust of the manager and the amusement of the band. But swift recrimination by the bandleader quickly restores their senses, and monotony is maintained to the end.

West End!

HAVE you ever seen school children coming out of school after classes, all tiredness of the classroom gone, looking forward with excitement to the free time left to them until bedtime? Of course you have. But, alas, this doesn't usually happen with West End musicians!

Their night's work finished, they go into the bathroom and, fairly silently, put their instruments away. Putting their coats on, there is no revival of spirit at having finished their daily toil, because their senses are still too numb. Earlier thoughts of visiting the Bag O'Nails for a jam session are forgotten. Good-nights and other remarks are made in monotonous, and they leave the building slowly with leaden feet, in the manner of human automata.

Of course, the next day the human instinct is restored and they are once again the pick of the West End musicians, with all the independent feeling of security that goes with a first-rate job. Later, however, the session that night continues as per previous night and previous week. Dare I say previous year?

Is it any wonder that even the best and hardest amongst our musicians feel that the situation is hopeless? As we know from our own experiences of in-between-job-times, a musician who does not work is quite free to starve, so the finest jazzier may be forgiven for seeking a little comfort and security through regular wages. Especially, in many cases, after a thin time in the Forces.

Is it possible to change this state of affairs? Is there a remedy or solution?

(To be concluded.)

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CLASSICS from the CLUBS

STARTING with the ever-popular "Lady Be Good," here is a selection from the L's which, like the I's, are rich in good old numbers worth remembering, and next week we will follow on with some more of them.

LADY BE GOOD	G
LADY IS A TRAMP	C
LAWD YOU MADE THE NIGHT TOO LONG	Dm
LAUGH, CLOWN, LAUGH	C
LAURA	C
LAZYBONES	C
LAZY RIVER	F
LET YOURSELF GO	C
LET'S CALL THE WHOLE THING OFF	F
LET'S DANCE	Eb
LET'S DO IT	G
LIEBSTRUM	Ab
LIFE IS JUST A BOWL OF CHERRIES	Eb
LIMEHOUSE BLUES	Ab
LINGER AWHILE	F
LITTLE GIRL	Bb
LITTLE WHITE LIES	Ab
LIZA	Eb
LOCH LOMOND	F
LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN	G

PERSONAL CHOICE.—Young new-timer clarinet/alto stylist, and L.R.A.M. at eighteen, Jehannie Dankworth chooses "Limehouse Blues" on the very good basis, "If it's good enough for Goodman it's good enough for me," this title being one which Benny G. features frequently in his radio programmes.

Carlo Kraemer

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COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

IN response to angry cries from new collectors, who complain they can't obtain the records we write about (it isn't so with copies reviewed this week!), and a few old hands who'd like to recall the glorious days of plenty, we are introducing a feature by Sinclair Trail—co-founder of this admirable column—which will present a series of yesterday's records that are still with us.

FORGOTTEN... BUT NOT GONE—1.

By Sinclair Trail
"The Trumpet's Prayer" / "Call Of The Franks." King Oliver and Orchestra. M.M.V. JF.38.

Louis Metcalfe, Ward Pinkett (trumpets); J. C. Higginbotham (trombone); C. Holmes (clarinet, soprano); A. Nicholas or Teddy Hill (clarinet); Louis Russell (piano); Will Johnson (guitar); Bill Moore (tuba); Paul Barbarin (drums). Recorded New York, February 1, 1929.

Although King Oliver doesn't appear on either of these two sides, they are both much too good to be stuck away



again for a few bars just before the coda. His playing is a little sour, and he has a sharp edge to his tone. The excellent muted horn will be by Metcalfe. Charlie Holmes and Higginbotham (pictured above) contribute fine solos to this side.

The reverse is the best of the several recordings of Luis Russell's weird and eerie "ash-can" opus, and is worthy of a place beside many of Oliver's better-known records. Charlie Holmes scores heavily on soprano, and the one and only Higginbotham is as virtuosic as ever. For trumpet-playing of delicate beauty, tinged with a rare melancholy, Louis Metcalfe's muted solo following Luis Russell's piano chorus would be difficult to beat.

Get this record out and give it a spin.

SECOND MASTERS

THIS week's collector's note comes from Arthur Parker, of Liverpool, who writes:—

Playing over the Decca "Gems of Jazz" Album, Vol. 1, the other day, I was immediately struck by the unusual version it contained of Jess Stacy's solo, "World is Waiting For The Sunrise," and, upon subsequent comparison with the familiar Parlophone version, found it to be an entirely different master. The Parlophone version is master 90447 B, whilst that in the Decca album is 90447 A.

For those who like these curiosities, the Decca version is taken at a slightly faster tempo, and receives a somewhat more vigorous treatment than the one which is well known to most British collectors.

Also, in the same album we come across yet another example of the Decca being a different version from the Parlophone, in the case of Bud Freeman's "Tillie's Downtown Now" (Parlo. master 60192 B; Decca 60192 A). This fact, of course, has already been noted by Orin Blackstone in his "Index to Jazz," but, for the benefit of readers, I should point out that the main difference would appear to lie in the Berigan trumpet solo, which is entirely different on the "A" master, although Bud's clarinet work seems to be very shaky indeed. The Parlophone version is unquestionably the better.

Other sides in the album are as per English releases, but I'm wondering whether anything similar has happened in the other "Gems of Jazz" volumes. Perhaps readers with the remaining volumes would care to check up.

Readers may also be interested to learn that the 1944, 1945 and 1946 "Esquire" Jazz Books are being published in this country in one volume by Peter Davies, Ltd., price 16s.

Finally, in case the legion of Ellington fans don't already know it, APN Munich-Stuttgart broadcast a regular Decca show every Saturday from 9 to 9.30 p.m., called "A Date With the Duke"—340 metres on your dial, as if I had to tell you!

TEN SHILLING JAZZ.

The last weeks of last year and the first fortnight of this brought us three records from the "private" companies—all priced at half-a-bar, or 10s. 6d., post free.

On Jazz 0003 there are two more sides by Webb's Dixielanders—"Dippermouth Blues" / "Riverside Blues"—while on the new Tempo label there are four by La Vere's Chicago Loopers—"Sunday" / "Baby Won't You Please Come Home" (A1) and "Blue Lou" / "Can't We Talk It Over?" (A2).

The original Webb releases were noticed in the Coaxer of 13/4/46. These sides, from the same session, parade much the same faults and virtues. Everything we said then about the new label deserving our support may be taken as repeated; what we said about the indifferent quality of the recording and processing must be said again.

George Webb's piano solo comes through from the middle distance and throughout both sides there is more mechanical interference with the true sound of the band than we've grown accustomed to through long years of record playing. Collectors will make allowances for a small concern of this kind, which will doubtless improve its products in the fullness of time. But they are unlikely to reconcile themselves to such a standard of recording of current performances.

The band plays less well on these than on the first releases. Too many times the soloist lets down the tension or bungles the telling break. And the denseness of the tuba-powered rhythm takes most of the life from the performance, imparting instead soporific qualities to the slower side.

But Wally Fawkes does well with his clarinet in the *en masse* passages and out on his own, and there is a cornet in the ensemble who phrases the "Riverside" breaks just right, in contradistinction to the solo cornet, who spoils this vital break as he does his traditional choruses on "Dippermouth." The band can play much better than this, as their forthcoming Decca sides should prove.

The performances of the La Vere bunch are quite different things, both as regards style and execution. Here we have reasonably polished displays of jamming by West Coast studio men, most of whom are old associates of previous jazz schools like the Chicagoans, New Yorkers, and New Orleans revivalists. In these jam-ups, stylistic identities have been sunk in a modern effort that is not pronouncedly old-sounding or new.

But the tunes are all good ones, not over worn, which get pleasantly treated by Venuti, Matlock and La Vere, and roughly handled by the ensemble. O'Brien and the two trumpet men (a different man on each pair) sound undistinguished to us, while the contributions of the guitarist, bassist and saxist are likely to seem unwelcome intrusions to every listener.

Chuck Mackey (A2) is a noticeable improvement on Billy May (A1); Venuti's work on the latter record adds up to more than Joe Rushton's on the former. Otherwise the groups are the same, except for the addition of Van Eps on A2. La Vere himself is responsible for some mild honky-tonkings on "Blue Lou" and "Sunday"—the sides most to our taste. Altogether these make inoffensive listening, though not wholly exhilarating, they put to shame a lot of our local releases.

APPEALS

14904684 Pte. A. Roxbee, 8, Platoon, C. Coy., 2nd Batt., Queen's Royal Regt., Poona, India Command, wishes to form a rhythm club and is in urgent need of swing literature. "The boys here would be very grateful for any gen on the subject," he writes.

Collector John O'Farrell, well known from West London Club days, is now in West Hartlepool, wishing to contact fellow spirits in that neighbourhood with a view to forming a W.H. Jazz Club. Please write him at 20, Collingwood Road, West Hartlepool, Co. Durham.

CHATTER

by Chris Hayes

RAN into strapping Eric Arden recently. We last met in 1938 at the Royal Easter Hotel, Bournemouth, where bandleader - arranger Eric played for five years. Unfortunately, after four years a Nazi captive at Oflag VII, where he led an officers' dance band, Eric, a major in the West Yorks Regt., lost an arm in an air-raid ten days before armistice. He is now a dance band producer at the B.B.C.

* * *
Pianist and multi-language vocalist Carl Matheson, who had an outfit in Bergen, Norway, until he entered the R.A.F., now leads a quartet at the Golden Lion Hotel, Hillingdon, where he is assisted by Nick Nixon (tr.), Bob Wilson (bass) and Eddie Brooks (drums). Also a composer, Carl wrote and broadcast last year a special come-home waltz for the Northern Ireland Government called "I'm Going Back to Ulster."

* * *
Around town I see blonde 24-year-old Bobbie Hope, who has been singing with the Stardusters and Redd Stanton at Fulford Ballroom, Hull, and with Al Collins and Tony Wayne, since her release from the W.A.P., after four years on photographic work, with some broadcasting in the R.A.P. revue, "Bags of Panic." Bobbie started singing with Joe Lovelady at Quaintway Restaurant, Chester, when 14!

* * *
Looking forward to his third summer season at Ryde, Isle of Wight, for the municipal authorities, Jimmy Luff is playing the winter at the Hotel Ryde Castle, which is run as a dancing club, with a Palm Court concert every Sunday. Drummer Jimmy leads Harry Jelliffe (pno.), Ron Wade (sax), Frank Potter (trmp.), Jack Naylor (bass, gr.), Harry Martell (vln) and Terry and Johnny (tpts).

* * *
During my early days on the "M.M." I often wrote about a clever 16-year-old Halifax drummer named Eddie Cornish, at the time with Hal Swain, Eddie, who spent last summer with Ben Oakley at Southend, is now with Eric Robinson on television. Served six years in the R.A.P. and led No. 6 Middle East R.A.P. Command Dance Band. His dad is licensee of the Boar's Head Hotel, Halifax.

* * *
When trombonist Denis Shirley left Fred Hedley to join George Evans he was Fred's third loss to the tree-top in two years, other two who made good being altoist Derek Hawkins who is now with Roy Fox, and trombonist Bob Lloyd, who went to Harry Roy. But Fred kept on finding new talent for others to whip away, and he advertises it at Putney Palais every Sunday!

Your Queries

THE following guitar query is answered by "M.M." 1946 Poll-winning guitarist Iver Mairants:-

Ken Moore, Huddersfield.—You say you have no complaint with the tone of your amplifier, as it is both clear and undistorted. What you are concerned with most seems to be the quality of mellowness produced. There may be two explanations.

I have a tone control both on the amplifier and on the guitar, and can therefore get the balance of tone to suit the acoustics of the studio. As there is a good output of volume on my amplifier, there is still sufficient volume left after the tone has been cut down to the required mellowness. The reason for the more biting tone some time ago was a less efficient amplifier. The guitar is the same. Most units have no tone control, and therefore permit the higher frequencies to take their course, and many times the acoustics of the hall or studio change the tone.

The touch or technical application of the performer also determines the quality of tone. For instance, a hard plectrum vigorously attacking the strings will produce a harsh tone on the best instrument, but a light deft touch will result in a more mellow tone. Too much volume will also produce harshness when attacked too vigorously.

No playing is corny if it is up to date, rhythmic, has an attractive melodic line and is applied at the right time and place.

A good example of chord playing can be found on the Charlie Barnet record of "Wandering Blues." The guitarist is Russ Etric. However, the general present trend is single-line melody, but based on chord positions.



After five years in the A.T.S., 22-year-old brown-haired blue-eyed Welsh girl, Rita Matthews, who sang for Monty Raymond at the Patti Pavilion, Swansea, before going into uniform, decided to pick herself a bandleader and ask for an audition! Sticking a pin in the MELODY MAKER classified advertisements, she selected Teddy Wallace, who liked her as much as the troops did in Germany, where she toured, broadcast and recorded with the Guards Div. Dance Band.

Wembley Empire Pool was converted into a ballroom this week for supporters of Wembley Speedway, who danced for two nights on a mammoth floor of approximately 18,000 square feet, normally the ice-rink. Asked about music, the cinder-track fans unhesitatingly picked Wembley Stadium's own Bertram Willis and his Orchestra.

CONTEST FIXTURES

LONDON AREA
LEYTON.—Wednesday, February 12 (7.30 p.m. to 1 a.m.), at the Leyton Super Baths, High Road, E.16.—The 1947 South-West Essex Championship.

Organisers: Entertainments Committee of the Borough of Leyton, Town Hall, Leyton, E.16 (Phone: LEYtonstone 3650, Extn. 218).

PECKHAM.—Tuesday, March 11 (7.30 to 11.30 p.m.), at the Co-operative House, Eye Lane, S.E.15.—The 1947 South-East London Championship.

Organisers: The MELODY MAKER Greater London Area Contest Organisers' Committee. All comm.: The Area Secretary, 154 South Norwood Hill, London, S.E.25. (Phone: LIVINGstone 1587.)

PROVINCES

BIRMINGHAM.—Tuesday, February 18 (7.30 to 11.45 p.m.), at the New Baths Ballroom (Thimblemill), Smethwick.—The 1947 Birmingham District Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 28, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leics. (Phone: Hinckley 563.)

IPSWICH.—Wednesday, February 26 (7.45 p.m. to midnight), at the Baths Hall.—The 1947 Suffolk County Championship.

Organiser: Mr. T. W. Geary, Baths Superintendent, Exchange Buildings, Lion Street, Ipswich, Suffolk. (Phone: Ipswich 651.)

SULL.—Monday, March 3 (8 p.m. to 1 a.m.), at the Beverley Road Baths.—The 1947 East Yorkshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. (Phone: Ainsdale 7838.)

EPSON.—Wednesday, March 5 (7.30-11.45 p.m.), at the Municipal Hall.—The 1947 Southern Counties Championship.

Organisers: The MELODY MAKER Greater London Area Contest Organisers' Committee. All comm.: The Area Secretary, 224b, Bruton Road, London, S.W.9 (Phone: Bruton 4841).

DERBY.—Wednesday, March 12 (7.30 to midnight), at the King's Hall.—The 1947 Derbyshire County Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 28, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leics. (Phone: Hinckley 563.)

PRESTON.—Wednesday, March 19 (7.30 p.m. to midnight), at the Queen's Hall.—The 1947 North Lancashire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. (Phone: Ainsdale 7838.)



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