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*Christmas Greetings from Australia to all my friends in Britain*  
**Shirley Basse**



*Have a good Christmas*  
sincerely,  
**DICKIE VALENTINE**





KEITH GOODWIN recalls the major film musical successes of 1957 and forecasts a good 1958, too!

# POP STARS ARE



GRACE KELLY and BING CROSBY in "High Society."



DORIS DAY

TOMMY STEELE

## WHO'S WHERE

(Week commencing December 23)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| DAVID HUGHES<br>Tooting Granada               | LITA ROZA<br>Gloucester Regal                  |
| LORRAE DESMOND, EDNA SAVAGE<br>Stockton Globe | DAVE KING<br>Finsbury Park Empire (comm. 26th) |
| RUBY MURRAY<br>Liverpool Empire               | LONNIE DONEGAN<br>Chiswick Empire (comm. 24th) |
| DAVID WHITFIELD<br>London Palladium           | DES O'CONNOR<br>Swansea Grand (comm. 26th)     |
| EVE BOSWELL<br>Manchester Palace              | NAT GONELLA<br>Glasgow Empress                 |

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THE music business and the film industry work hand in glove with each other these days. Screen idols make hit records, and disc stars attract armies of teenagers to cinema box-offices. Over the past year, numerous movies have been released featuring pop singers in major rôles, and in many cases, songs from these films have been prominently placed in the hit parade.

Frank Sinatra—probably the most accomplished singer-actor of all—appeared on West-End cinema screens towards the end of 1957 in "The Pride And The Passion," an epic that somehow failed to impress the majority of film critics.

Sinatra had a straight, dramatic rôle—but got an opportunity to exercise his admirable vocal chords in "The Joker Is Wild"—the screen biography of American entertainer Joe E. Lewis. Frank's songs included "All The Way" and a revival of "Chicago."

We can look forward in 1958 to what promises to be one of Sinatra's greatest screen performances—"Pal Joey"—which received rave notices in America.

Another Sinatra movie to come is the recently-finished "Kings Go Forth."

Bing Crosby, another exceptionally talented actor, was seen

### 'HIGH SOCIETY' BRITAIN'S BIGGEST BOX-OFFICE SUCCESS: TOMMY STEELE, FRANKIE VAUGHAN IN 'MOST POPULAR STARS' LIST

MGM's "High Society" topped the "Biggest Box Office Attraction" section of the "Kinematograph's Weekly" Annual Survey announced last week.

Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly and Louis Armstrong are all prominently featured in this star-studded musical which was released early in the year.

Sinatra's "Guys and Dolls" was another picture listed in the top box office attractions. "The Tommy Steele Story" and "These Dangerous Years" were also in this list. In the "Most Popular Stars" category three pop music personalities gained positions in the top ten.

Frank Sinatra was placed fourth and Tommy Steele ("The Tommy Steele Story") was seventh and Frankie Vaughan ("These Dangerous Years") eighth, coming in front of Marlon Brando and Yul Brynner—high honour indeed, which has since encouraged film executives to make more pictures featuring pop stars.

playing an important acting rôle in London's West End during November in "Man On Fire," whilst Doris Day—a staunch singing favourite with British fans—has a starring part in "Pajama Game," a film version of the stage musical comedy hit, now showing in London.

Pat Boone (voted by NME readers the world's outstanding popular singer) made his screen debut in "Bernardine"—a story

set in high school surroundings. From this film came "Love Letters In The Sand," one of Pat's biggest record hits, coupled with the title song.

The film, unfortunately, didn't get a West End showing, but it is hoped Pat's second movie

—"April Love," with Shirley Jones—will have a special première.

Another money-spinner was the controversial "Island In The Sun," which afforded Harry Belafonte an opportunity to get his teeth into a straight acting part. It also helped spread the popularity of Harry's recorded version of the title song to become a hit parade best seller.

"Loving You," Elvis Presley's second starring movie, received an enthusiastic welcome from his multitude of fans throughout the country; the general consensus of opinion was that as an actor, Elvis has quite definitely improved since his debut in "Love Me Tender."

"Jailhouse Rock" the next Presley picture, is awaited here. Like his previous effort, it contains a liberal sprinkling of tunes destined for hit parade honours. The title song has already topped the US best sellers, incidentally.

That bundle of charm and vitality, Debbie Reynolds, knocked the disc world sideways—both sides of the Atlantic—with her wistful recording of "Tammy"—title song of a delightful picture starring Debbie.

By virtue of her No. 1 hit record, "Tammy" was re-released

## NME INFORMATION BUREAU

### BAND CALL

(Commencing December 20)

- TERRY LIGHTFOOT'S JAZZMEN**  
Friday: Star Hotel, Croydon; Saturday: Wood Green; Sunday: Hot Club of London, Woolwich; Monday: British Legion Hall, South Harrow; Tuesday: Humphrey Lyttelton Club, London, W.
- JOHNNY DANKWORTH ORCHESTRA**  
Friday: Queens Hall, Burslem; Saturday: Queens Hall, Preston; Tuesday: Regency Ballroom, Bath; Thursday: Dorking Halls, Dorking.
- RONNIE ALDRICH AND THE SQUADRONAIRES**  
Friday: Victoria Hall, Halifax; Saturday: Baths Hall, Darlington; Tuesday: Kings Lynn; Thursday: Assembly Rooms, Tunbridge Wells.
- FREDDIE RANDALL BAND**  
Friday: St. Georges Hall, Hinckley; Thursday: Embassy Ballroom, Skegness.
- ERIC DELANEY ORCHESTRA**  
Friday: De Montfort Hall, Leicester; Saturday: USAF, Sculthorpe.
- CHRIS BARBER BAND**  
Friday: Crystal Ballroom, Luton; Sunday: Colston Hall, Bristol; Monday: Humphrey Lyttelton Club, London, W.
- VIC LEWIS ORCHESTRA**  
Friday: Municipal Hall, Keighley; Tuesday: USAF, Sculthorpe; Thursday: Holdsworth Hall, Manchester.
- BASIL KIRCHIN BAND**  
Friday: Savoy Ballroom, Southsea; Saturday: Drill Hall, Wellingborough; Sunday: Palace Theatre, Reading; Tuesday: Holdsworth Hall, Manchester; Thursday: Town Hall, Longton.
- LENA KIDD BAND**  
Friday: Egremont; Saturday: Floral Hall, Morecambe; Thursday: Corn Exchange, Sleaford.

## RADIO LUXEMBOURG

FULL PROGRAMMES - 208 METRES

- SUNDAY**  
6 Beaver Club; 6.15 Sing and Be Happy; 6.45 Accordion Time; 7 David Whitfield Show; 7.30 The Winifred Atwell Show; 8 Opportunity Knocks; 8.30 Take Your Pick; 9 This I Believe; 9.30 All The Vaughans; 10 Record Rendezvous; 10.30 Bing Sings; 10.45 Ted Heath and his Music; 11 Top Twenty.
- MONDAY**  
6 Requests; 8 Christmas Crackers; 9 Deep River Boys; 9.15 Song Hits of the Century; 9.45 Ronnie Hilton; 10 Jack Jackson; 10.30 Top Pops of Tomorrow; 11 Talking Points; 11.05 Bible Christian Programme; 11.15 Frank and Ernest; 11.30 The World Tomorrow.
- TUESDAY**  
6 Requests; 8 Spike Harrigan; 8.30 Concert For You; 9 Alma Cogan Show; 9.15 Tunes to Remember; 9.45 Today's Top Ten; 10 Capitol Christmas Party; 11 Revival Time; 11.30 Oral Roberts.
- WEDNESDAY**  
6 Requests; 8 Double Your Money;
- 8.30 Under the Mistletoe; 9 Stargazers; 9.15 Cugat's Carnival; 9.45 Favourites Old and New; 10 Record Show; 11 Back To The Bible; 11.30 The Hour of Decision.
- THURSDAY**  
6 Requests; 8 Sing and Be Happy; 8.30 Lucky Number; 9 Song Parade; 9.15 Song Hits of the Century; 9.45 Voice of Romance; 10 It's Record Time; 10.30 Favourites Old and New; 10.45 Italy Sings; 11 Old Fashioned Revival Hour.
- FRIDAY**  
6 Requests; 8 The Magic of Sinatra; 8.30 Melody Fair; 9 Star Turn; 9.15 Dick Haymes Show; 9.45 Scottish Requests; 10.15 Record Hop; 11 The Voice of Prophecy; 11.30 Still Waters.
- SATURDAY**  
6 Requests; 7 Rhythm on the Range; 7.30 Intrigue; 8 Tamboree; 10 Irish Requests; 10.30 Spin with the Stars; 11 Bringing Christ to the Nations; 11.30 Jack Jackson.

## AFN HIGHLIGHTS

547, 344, 271 METRES

- SUNDAY**  
12 noon Christmas In Our World; 3 Portraits In Music; 5.05 Under The Christmas Star; 7.05 The Joyful Hour; 8.30 Mitch Miller; 9.35 News and Sports; 10.30 Messiah.
- MONDAY**  
11 a.m. Request Show; 12 noon 686th Air Force Concert Band; 12.30 Holiday in Bavaria; 1 Outpost Concert; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 3 One Man's Family; 3.30 Santa Claus; 4 Requests; 5 Under The Christmas Star; 6 Christmas In The Air; 7.05 Bob Hope; 9 American Music Hall.
- TUESDAY**  
11 a.m. Request Show; 12 noon Christmas Around The World; 3 Christmas Carol; 4 Command Greetings; 6 Christmas In The Air; 7.05 Christmas Sing With Bing; 9 Dragnet.
- WEDNESDAY**  
11 a.m. Stinglest Man In Town; 11.55 Organ Mistletoe; 12 noon Masters Of Melody; 12.30 21st Precinct; 2.05 Army Hour; 3 Christmas In Carol and Song; 3.30 Moods In Melody; 4 Christmas International; 5 Eddie Fisher; 6 Christ-
- mas in Germany; 7.05 G. P. MacGregor; 8.30 Suspense; 9.45 Ebony and Ivory; 10.30 Request Show.
- THURSDAY**  
11 a.m. Request Show; 12 noon Man About Music; 3 One Man's Family; 4 Requests; 5 In The Mood; 6 Music In The Air; 7.30 21st Precinct; 8.30 Fantasy; 9.45 Songs of Many Lands; 10.05 Request Show.
- FRIDAY**  
11 a.m. Request Show; 11.55 Les Paul; 12 noon Man About Music; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 2.30 Robert Q. Lewis; 3 One Man's Family; 4 Requests; 5 Serenade In Blue; 6 Music In The Air; 7.05 Premiere; 8.30 Richard Diamond; 9 Stars of Jazz; 9.45 Melodia; 10.05 Request Show.
- SATURDAY**  
11 a.m. Request Show; 12.30 Western Swing; 1 Saturday Salute In Music; 3.30 Galen Drake; 4 Request Show; 6 Music In The Air; 7.30 Grand Ole Opry; 8.30 Operation Entertainment; 9 Music Views From Hollywood; 10.05 America's Popular Music; 11.05 Request Show.

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FRANK SINATRA



FRANKIE VAUGHAN



One of the first film musicals of 1957 was RKO's "Bundle of Joy," starring husband-and-wife team Eddie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds. They are seen above meeting in a department store—one of the scenes from the film.

# TOP MOVIE FAVOURITES

in Britain not long after the first circuit tour. You'll remember, too, that Debbie co-starred with singer-husband Eddie Fisher in his first movie "Bundle Of Joy" earlier on.

Cinema heart-throb Fab Hunter had a giant-sized disc hit on his hands with his initial release "Young Love," and another shortly afterwards—"99 Ways." But his movie "The Girl He Left Behind" hardly attained anything like the same high degree of public acclaim.

Andy Griffith, America's country-boy comedian who has recorded some funny records for Capitol ("What It Was Was Football" and "Romeo And Juliet," for example) turned his hand to serious acting during 1957. Subsequently he was hailed as one of the most important discoveries in recent years. His gripping portrayal of a wandering hobo who

is built into a TV star was outstanding in Elia Kazan's "Face In The Crowd."

Watch out for Andy in 1958 with the comedy hit "No Time For Sergeants," also the oddly titled "Onion Head" (with singer Erin O'Brien).

Following the break-up of the Dean Martin-Jerry Lewis partnership, both the comedian and the singer appeared in movies as solo stars.

Martin achieved a certain degree of success in "10,000 Bedrooms," which also headlined Anna Maria Albergetti—the diminutive, 21-year-old singer who has recently cut an album for Capitol in the US. Martin also has a dramatic rôle opposite Marlon Brando in

"The Young Lions," which we shall see in 1958.

Jerry Lewis added serious singing to his impressive list of show business accomplishments—amazing sales with albums and singles, particularly "Rock-A-Bye Your Baby." He also kept audiences happy via his polished screen performance in "The Delicate Delinquent."

Although he had appeared in small movie parts before (do you remember "Blue Gardenia"?), Nat "King" Cole got an opportunity to prove his worth as an actor in "China Gate."

He has now completed work on "St. Louis Blues," a biography of famed composer W. C. Handy. Nat takes the leading dramatic rôle, with a host of other musical stars also featured—including Eartha Kitt, Pearl Bailey, Cab Calloway, and Mahalia Jackson.

## Fred's two

Singer-dancer-comedian Fred Astaire was prominently featured in acting rôles in two of the year's most successful film musicals—"Funny Face" and "Silk Stockings." Pretty Audrey Hepburn co-starred in the former movie and sang the beautiful "How Long Has This Been Going On" in a plaintive, distinctly appealing manner. Cyd Charisse played the female lead in "Silk Stockings."

Cyd's husband, singer Tony Martin, appeared on screens here with Vera Ellen in the British musical "Let's Be Happy"—moderately entertaining, but never really amounting to very much.

Sal Mineo—the young fellow whose recording of "Start Movin'" did just what the title suggested—was seen briefly in the late James Dean's last movie "Giant"—but to greater advantage in "Rock, Pretty Baby" a few months later.

"Both Ends Of The Candle," the film biography of singer Helen Morgan, had Gogi Grant dubbing



PAT BOONE in "Bernardine"

the sound track vocals for Ann Blyth, although Gogi was not visible on the screen.

Veteran singer-actor-dancer Gene Kelly played a comedy, non-vocal rôle in a delightful movie, "The Happy Road" (screened midway through the year), then later appeared alongside Mitzi Gaynor, Kay Kendall, and Taina Elg in the Royal Command film, "Les Girls." The incomparable Cole Porter wrote the musical score for this colourful production.

Howard Keel, Ann Blyth, Dolores Gray, and Vic Damone all played singing-acting rôles in the film version of "Kismet"—a movie that somehow failed to gather the acclaim it deserved.

Glamorous Julie London, now filming "A Question of Adultery" in London with Anthony Steel, has been on view with both a 'ing and singing rôles. "The Great Man" (starring Jose Ferrer) call upon her dramatic talents, while the technicolour rock 'n' roll-laden "The Girl Can't Help It" afforded an opportunity to secure her first record hit here, "Cry Me A River."

Dynamic Little Richard and portly Fats Domino won a few more fans via their appearances in this movie, but many people thought Jayne Mansfield was the big attraction!

Among the many other "rock" stars featured in "The Girl Can't Help It" were the Platters, Gene Vincent, the Tremiers, Abbey Lincoln, the Chuckles, Ray Anthony, and Eddie Cochran. Another "rock" movie early in 1957 was "Shake, Rattle and Rock," which featured Joe Turner, Fats Domino, Tommy Charles, Anita Ray and the Choker Campbell Band.

Bill Haley and his Comets were extensively featured in "Don't Knock The Rock," shown just prior to Haley's in-person British tour.

## Rock 'n' roll

Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers headed the impressive parade of rock stars in "Rock, Rock, Rock," which also introduced Lavern Baker, Chuck Berry, Johnny Burnett, Jimmy Cavallo, the Moon-glows, the Flamingos, the Chuckles, the Bowties, Connie Francis, Teddy Randazzo, Ivy Schulman, and Alan Freed.

Towards the end of the year, yet another rock-saturated film arrived in Britain. The title? "Mr. Rock 'n' Roll." The stars? Among

ers, Ferlin Husky, Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers, Chuck Ber.7, the Lionel Hampton Band, Teddy Randazzo, Clyde McPhatter, and, of course, Alan Freed!

Crossing to the British side of the fence, we find that our own singers have been pretty active.

Two established pop stars immediately spring to mind—Tommy Steele and effervescent Frankie Vaughan.

Tommy appeared briefly in a cabaret scene in the film "Kill Me Tomorrow," but really got to grips with the movie world with "The Tommy Steele Story"—a phenomenally successful picture based on the singer's own life. Guest artists included Chas McDevitt's Skiffle Group and the Humphrey Lyttelton Band.

Towards the end of 1957, Tommy began shooting on "The Duke Wore Jeans," in which he will play two parts. In October, he was presented to H.M. Queen Elizabeth at the Royal Film Performance.

## Impressed

Frankie Vaughan impressed critics and filmgoers with his forceful, dramatic acting in the Anna Neagle-Herbert Wilcox production "These Dangerous Years," due to open imminently in the States. Shooting for Frankie's second starring movie "Wonderful Things" began at Gibraltar a few months ago, prior to completion at Elstree. Anna Neagle, who has expressed tremendous faith in Frankie as a serious actor, is once again producing.

Petula Clark, who hit the high-spots recordwise ("With All My Heart" and "Alone") appeared in "Women Across The Street"; a host of music artists, including Shani Wallis, Joy Nichols and drummer-leader Tony Crombie, took part in Charles Chaplin's "A King In New York."

British rock 'n' rollers—among them Tony Crombie's Rockets, Rory Blackwell's Blackjacks, Art Baxter's Rockin' Sinners, and Don Solloway—were seen in "Rock You Sinners," alongside singers Joan Small and Dickie Bennett.

## More to come

Now what of the future? Next year holds plenty in store for fans who like watching their favourite entertainer on cinema screens. Hit-discer Terry Dene has completed his first film "The Golden Disc"—ready for screening within a month or two.

Lonnie Donegan (soon to be seen in "Light Fingers") and Dickie Valentine are the leading stars signed to appear in the forthcoming "Six-Five Special" film (based on the popular BBC-TV series). Russ Hamilton, Jim Dale, Don Lang, the John Barry Seven and jazz singer Cleo Laine, (plus members of the Johnny Dankworth Orchestra) also appear.

Very shortly, America will send another mammoth rock-flavoured movie, "Jamboree."

Other films on the way here with musical interest include "The Singing Idol" (starring Tommy Sands); "South Pacific" (with Mitzi Gaynor and Rossano Brazzi); "Seven Hills Of Rome" (starring Mario Lanza).

Yes, 1957 has been good for films appealing to music lovers—but the boom is only just starting! Watch out next year for more screen stars in the hit parade—and more hit-parade stars on the cinema screens!



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# Mrs. King is giving

## her boys

(THE KING BROTHERS)

# a Christmas party

By  
JAY BLACK



The King Brothers join their family for Christmas. Left to right are—Denis, Mum, Tony, sister Moira, Dad and Michael.

know about making any," she said. "But I know they won't keep 'em."

"Supposing you could pick the resolution you would like them to make. What would be your choice for them collectively?"

"That's easy. I would want them to decide NEVER to get big-headed. They have had a tremendous amount of success in the last year and so far, thank goodness, they show no sign of needing bigger hats."

"They will have even greater success in the future, I am sure, but they are all very good and sensible and I am positive they will remain just as natural as they are now."

"What about individually?"

"Well, I would like Mike to look after money better. He just doesn't seem to be able to hold on to it. He never seems to know how much he has or how much he spends and he certainly never manages to save any. Tony is the direct opposite. He saves like mad and never spends a penny unless he is sure it is justified. He is not mean, in fact, they are all generous, thank goodness, but he looks after his money and I do feel that is a good thing."

"So what about a resolution for Tony?"

"Tony is easy, too," she laughed. "I wish he'd decide not to natter so much."

"Natter," I said, astonished. "Tony! We must be talking about different people. I should think I've met the boys on at least half a dozen occasions and never yet have I heard Tony utter a word."

"He must save it up for home, then. If he gets hold of something that annoys him or excites him, or even interests him, he goes on and on and on about it till I sometimes wish we could cover him up like a canary."

### Blameless?

"And now, what about Denis?"

"Denis," said Mrs. King thoughtfully, "I'm afraid that's not so easy. I can't think of anything for Denis."

"Oh, come now," I protested. "He must have some faults! If you don't know any perhaps Mr. King does."

"That's ridiculous," she replied scornfully. "Denis is the apple of his Dad's eye. He just can't do any wrong."

"But surely he scatters his clothes round the bedroom, or leaves his lights burning or loses his handkerchiefs, or something?"

"Ye-es, I suppose he does," said Mrs. King, vaguely. "But then you see, he's... well, if you know what I mean, he's... he's DENIS!"

So I said I fully understood and we left it at that.

## From YOU . . . to US

D. YOUNG writes from Accrington, Lancs:

I feel that David Whitfield is unfairly treated by his programme organisers on Radio Luxembourg.

I was surprised to find on listing his records that he has made 43 different titles, many of which brought him fame.

In spite of this, his programmes this season to date have used only nine of these titles, plus half a dozen feature numbers which were used last year.

Surely we could hear an occasional operatic aria and some of his past record successes for a change.

JOHN WATERFIELD writes from Plymouth:

Like Miss Davies, I often wonder why so many artists are being neglected by the disc-jockeys these days.

I thought Billy Eckstine's recent record of "Passing Strangers" was a real cracker, but it soon faded from the musical scene.

Unless the artist is under 21, it's beginning to look as if the d-j's just aren't interested. Of course, I realise that these teenage records sell like hot cakes, but surely there's still a market for the older established stars.

ANNE WRIGHTSON, of Ripon, Yorks, writes:

So Elvis Presley's Christmas album is being banned by some American radio stations because he sings hymns such as "Silent Night."

Now I am no fan of Elvis, but I consider this extremely unfair. There is no law on how a hymn should be sung, or who should sing it.

To say he "punts" his way through them is a feeble excuse. As the Salvation Army proves, there are many ways of singing a hymn without making it distasteful.

A. C. BELL, of London, N.W.6, writes:

I was very pleased to read that Lonnie Donegan has waxed two new titles for release on January 1. But are we still going to have to put up with the old-fashioned 78's as before?

I would urge Nixa to make a New Year's resolution and let us hear Lonnie on modern, superior quality discs, which an artist of his high calibre surely deserves.

[Reader Bell will be glad to know that Lonnie Donegan's new titles are to be made available on 45 rpm The Pye-Nixa Company started issuing standard-play discs at the beginning of December].

"IN this house, parties . . . and especially Christmas parties . . . are important."

The cheery voice bubbling over the wire from Hornchurch, Essex, was not one of the King Brothers, but the Kings' Mother. I had telephoned on hearing the startling news that the King Brothers had turned down a season in pantomime because it would mean missing Christmas at home.

I suggested to Mrs. King that surely this was carrying home-sickness, even at the festive season, a bit too far. The downright Mrs. King did not agree.

"Of course the boys must be here. Their young sister Moira would be terribly disappointed if they weren't. She is only ten, you know, and Christmas means a lot at that age even if you aren't too sure about Santa Claus any more."

"But surely, Mrs. King," I protested, "with two hit records in a row, and coming out top in the vocal group section of the NME poll, an awful lot of people are going to miss hearing them at holiday time."

"Not as much as we would," she replied firmly, "and after all we were their first audience."

She went on to explain that Moira has a very good voice and a very keen ear and was looking forward to having a wonderful time singing with the boys at the Christmas party.

"She is attending dancing classes, too," she went on. "Both ballet and tap, so we will have quite a cabaret. She is as bright as a button and as full of life as a firecracker. In fact she reminds me very much in her vitality of Denis at the same age."

"Sounds like another natural for show business," I commented.

But Mrs. King was not too sure about that. "I would worry if she were on tour much more than I do about the boys. After all they are always together and Mike particularly is very good about phoning up and keeping me in touch with what is going on."

"What about the party, Mrs. King," I asked. "I suppose you'll have a tree?"

"Oh, rather, we always have a tree for Moira. There will be just the family and two or three friends. There are a lot of people we would like to ask, of course, but the boys have made so many good friends in show life that it would be hard to know where to stop."

"Supposing the sky was the limit and everyone was free at the time, who do you think the boys would like to have at the party particularly?" I asked.

### The guests

Mrs. King took a moment to think that one over. "Well, Harry Worth and his wife for a start. They have become not only good friends of the boys, but of us all. And, of course, Frankie Vaughan. He has been a source of advice and encouragement which has never failed the boys when they needed it most."

"Then another two good friends, comedians Dickie Dawson and Bill Maynard, both great pals. And certainly Anne Shelton's pianist, John Spence, who also has given tremendous assistance in the lads' success."

"Sounds like a top-line variety bill," I remarked. "That's one party I would surely like to attend if and when it comes off. Tell me, have you ever had a real show-business party?"

Another infectious, chuckling laugh came over the phone. "We certainly have. I remember when Mike was 21 we ran a party. His birthday is April 25. The boys were in the Palladium show at the time. I told the boys to ask whoever they liked and over twenty of the Windmill girls and the Palladium girls turned up."

"There was a raving beauty in every corner of the house. I was quite worried about the boys for a bit and then I decided they were too young, anyway, and started worrying about their father."

After we'd finished laughing I asked about presents.

"Moira wants a watch. She doesn't care who it comes from . . . she just wants a watch. The boys are easy. Michael always wants clothes. That boy is chronically broke. He spends all his money on clothes. Tony and Denis like LP records. Their musical tastes are pretty varied and they never get enough. Then they are all interested in golf, so golf equipment will come into it somewhere."

"Another common interest is in cine-photography. They own a very good camera between them and on holiday in Spain in November they took over ten pounds' worth of film with them."

"What about New Year resolutions Mrs. King," I asked. "Do you think the boys will make any?"

She laughed again. "I don't



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# A Christmas 'thank you'

## HOW can I say "thank you" and yet at the same time imply far more than those two simple words usually mean? message from

# PAT BOONE

### who tells you about

# 'My Family Life'



Ever since I heard about my double success in the NME Poll, I've been trying to find a suitable way of expressing my gratitude for your continued support and faith in me as a singer.

"World's Outstanding Singer" and "Favourite American Male Singer"! What an honour! I'm at a loss for words, and I guess the only way I can express my appreciation for the way in which you have made me one of the proudest and happiest fellows in America is to say a simple but very sincere and heartfelt "Thank you" once again.

Some day soon I hope to see you all again. Don't think that I've forgotten you, because I haven't. I remember the pretty girl in the red hat who sat in the front row at Birmingham Town Hall; and the smart young fellow who whistled after every number at the State Cinema in... was it Kilburn?

Yes, I remember those two people and a lot more besides. And I'm happy to say that a lot of my friends in Britain keep in touch with me by writing regularly.

My wife Shirley and I enjoy reading these letters, and although she's never been to Britain, Shirley's convinced that you people are the greatest!

good. However, when I do get mad, I kind of boil over. This is very rare, though.

The kind of things that get me mad are unkindness, cruelty, hypocrisy, being pushed around or taken advantage of, ingratitude, and false accusations.

You probably know that Shirley and I have our own little house in New Jersey. When I go out on tour, Shirley rarely comes with me. You see, with three youngsters at home, it's hard for both of us to get away. I don't travel much now, though.

When we're not together, we call each other at least every other night—usually, the average is even higher.

A four-hundred-dollar 'phone bill is the result—cause we just can't hang up!

### Wants Boy

As I've already mentioned, we have three daughters. How many children will we eventually have? Well, if the fourth is a boy, we'll call it quits. If not, we'll go for a fifth. Eventually, we'd like to adopt a child—one or maybe more. One of the great wishes for the future is that my children will be as fortunate as I have been.

As for pets, well, we don't have any at the moment. We'd like a dog and a few cats, because Shirley and I love them, but the babies would sit on them! I guess we'll have to wait a year or two!

When I'm at home, I like to relax and take things easy. Sometimes I play records—my favourite is Bing Crosby, with Frank Sinatra and Perry Como crowding him close—and I also read quite a lot. My favourite book is the Bible.

I suppose sports are my main hobby. Baseball, basketball and foot-

ball used to be my favourite games, although now I follow any sport that happens to be in season.

My pet extravagances include little mechanical things like watches, radios, toy cars, guns, etc., and I like to tinker around with these things when I get time.

I used to collect newspaper clippings about myself, and that took up an awful lot of time. It's gotten out of hand now, however, so I just save the most unusual and most important ones.

I usually sleep pretty soundly after a hard day's work, and I dream very little. But when I do, they're fantastic! I don't know whether this is unusual in any way, but I usually manage to dream about things like murders, fantastic adventures, oil wells and gold mines and falling out of windows! Well, I figure I've told you everything possible about Shirley and myself, and I've really enjoyed doing so. You see, we look upon you as friends and we like to feel as close to you as possible.

Good to hear that my latest record "April Love" is already beginning to move into the hit parade in Britain. Once again, thanks for your continued, loyal support. The tune, as you probably already know, is the title song from my second movie, which should be showing at your local houses pretty soon. I hope you like it.

I can't definitely say when I'll be in Britain again—personally speaking, I hope it's real soon.

In the meantime, I'll keep in touch by writing little things like this—I get a kick out of writing to you and I hope it gives you some pleasure, too!

### Letters

Fans are always asking questions (I'm happy to say), and the letters I receive from Britain often enquire about Shirley—how I met her, what we did on our first date, etc. So I'm going to take this opportunity to tell you all about ourselves.

On our first date, Shirley and I went skating with a gang from school—it had snowed so hard that school was closed for two days!

I didn't kiss Shirley on our first date—in fact, it took 10 months of regular dating. I realise that this is a bit unusual, but I didn't want to hurt Shirley by making her think I cared more than I knew I did.

The night I first kissed Shirley was when I realised that I was in love with her.

The three characteristics I love about my wife most are her sense of humour, her kindness, and her love for me. Fortunately, neither of us have any in-law trouble—we wuz lucky!

In the mornings, I always get up first—either to get to work or to study when I'm in school. If the baby cries in the middle of the night, Shirley usually gets up.

But if she is sick or very tired, I do—at least, she tells me I do—I don't remember!

There are never any fights between Shirley and I, but like other young married couples, we disagree occasionally. These little arguments are always quickly settled. Who gives in? Hubby does—the weaker animal!

Fortunately, I don't have a bad temper. In fact, sometimes I'm too calm and peace-loving for my own



## JOE HENDERSON & JACK FISHMAN add to America's music and Britain's dollars!



IT'S commonplace for British singers to make hit records of American compositions. But it's once in the proverbial "blue moon" an American star makes a British tune into a top-seller.

But for London songwriters Joe Henderson and Jack Fishman, "blue moon" season is in full swing. Right now one of their joint compositions is bending the ears of record buyers all over America.

The song is "Why Don't They Understand?"—a big beat ballad which embodies all the ingredients of a best seller. Recordings of the tune were released in Britain by screen star John Fraser, TV favourite Glen Mason and The Zodiacs vocal group some time back. Strange to relate, the tune somehow didn't catch on.

American music publisher Howie Richmond liked the song, bought it from Joe Henderson's music firm, and took it back to America, where young George Hamilton IV recorded it.

His ABC-Paramount version of the song (now released here on the HMV label) was soon subjected to coast-to-coast "plugging" by U.S. disc-jockeys, with the result that it rapidly developed into a noteworthy hit parade contender.

Week by week, it edged nearer the hit parade, and this week, it attained Top Twenty status by moving into the Cash Box best sellers at No. 17.

Both Jack and Joe have been songwriting, besides being successes in other fields, for quite a few years.

Jack has led a colourful and eventful career in journalism. He is, in fact, News Editor and Deputy Editor of the Empire News. His book "Seven Men Of Spandau" (a study of seven infamous war criminals) is a best seller in thirteen countries, including Britain, America and Japan.

We are concerned here, however, primarily with his prowess as a songwriter. The first point to take note of at this juncture in our narrative is that, in the technical sense, East London-born Jack can neither read nor write music!

Jack simply hums his embryonic compositions into a tape recorder and later gets a musician friend to transcribe them to "dots." His wife Lillian often helps.

"I try them out on her and if she knocks 'em down, then I know they stand a chance," says Jack. Jack's first published song "Sing Gypsy" (broadcast at the time by Richard Tauber), was written around eight years ago, and since then, he has contributed no end of tunes to the British music scene.

Jack Fishman and Joe Henderson co-authored "Dream Of Paradise" (recorded by David Whitfield) and

"What A Day We'll Have" (waxed by Vera Lynn). "Why Don't They Understand?" is their most recent published work.

Joe "Mr. Piano" Henderson has been closely associated with the music business all his life, and he has an enviable reputation in Britain as a top TV, radio, variety and recording star.

Joe's Nixa recorded "sing-song" "Sing It With Joe"—entered the hit parade soon after its release in 1955.

Fifteen months ago, Joe set up his own music publishing house in London's Tin Pan Alley.

From the tunes he wrote with Jack Fishman, Joe has authored "Reason Waitz," "Somebody," "Rockin' And Rollin'," "No One," "First Theme" and "Didn't We." "Coffee Bar Jive" (recorded by the composer) and "Meet Me At Battersea Park" (by Petula Clark) are among Joe's other scores, and like Jack, he has also turned out several notable songs for films. K.G.

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# KEITH FORDYCE'S POPS PAGE

THE last week-end before Christmas—the last real chance of getting those presents, and you just can't think what to get. Records? Yes, that's an idea. But then you can't always be sure of knowing what someone will like. May I help with a suggestion?

Whatever the age, there are a couple of discs that are pretty certain to please anybody. One is Bing Crosby singing the oldie, "Chicago," with the Buddy Cole Trio. If you like jazz-singing, if you like Bing, if you like the good old songs, well, this record is a good buy. Ask for Brunswick 05726.

The other useful gift, for Scots and Sassenachs alike, is Parlophone R. 4386. Here you'll find Ian Powrie and his Band with a Gay Gordons and a Strathspey.

Nearly everybody can dig up some discs of ballroom dance music, but not always can the music for a lively Gay Gordons be found.

So add that to your gift list, and someone's New Year party will be all the gayer as a result of your shrewd selection.

Now that all your gift problems have been so simply solved, you can relax and read the rest of these reviews in comfort. There's a new record label out—a subsidiary of Philips—and the name is Fontana.

The first rush copies of platters from the new stable have just reached me and the honour of opening the batting goes to singer Jimmy Jaques.

He puts over a couple of his own numbers in a light, easy and relaxed way. "Baby Don't You Cry" gives Jimmy a chance to show his paces on a beat number, while "Come Walking" is a slow, romantic ditty with a certain amount of c-and-w flavour.

Fontana will be releasing both British and American waxings, and

the first Stateside contribution is from Marty Robbins. The Ray Coniff ork backs up for "The Story Of My Life."

A catchy, jog-trot rhythm, and an original approach to the old subject make this a worthwhile listen. Singing is well up to standard for the type of song.

"Once-A-Week Date" harps on the old theme of "they-tell-us-we're-too-young" but left my heart strings completely untouched.

There's never been another quite so good as the original Jimmy Young disc on this topic.

Instrumental debut for Fontana is looked after by harmonica-player Tommy Reilly. He offers two items of film music and they make a good contrast. One is a jaunty old-sea-dog of a number, "Barnacle Bill's Hornpipe" (from the film "Barnacle Bill"). Makes an entertaining change.

On the flipover is one of those melodies which are ideal for harmonica interpretation. It's the title music from "Count Five And Die." Nostalgia and a certain melancholy beauty combine to create a true piece of "mood music"—to use that much misused term in its correct sense.

Strong, dramatic, positively "X" certificate, but ending on the optimistically triumphant note.

That seemingly permanent resident of the top twenty, Lonnie Donegan, aims to renew his lease with Nixa N. 15116. The better side is "Jack O' Diamonds," which in true Donegan style works up from medium fast to fast and furious as the climax approaches. Repetition in the lyrics is not only a frequent feature in Lonnie's songs but also probably a basic ingredient of his success.

If you haven't too many words to worry about you can concentrate on the beat. This song seems to have more repetition than ever, but that terrifically exciting build-up is there as always, so I'll gladly wage a goodly sum that this disc tops the 100,000 mark as readily as Lonnie's previous hits.

"Ham 'n' Eggs" completes the menu, but this comes from the cold buffet compared with the sizzling-hot "Jack."

Three hits in a row for Frankie Vaughan? Reckon it's a strong possibility. Contender to complete the trio is "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine" on Philips PB. 775.

Instrumental lead is on guitar, and there is twofold help from the chorus—vocally and by handclapping. Frankie is in great form these days—I don't think he could make a bad record if he tried, whatever the style or mood.

## Two specials as Christmas gifts

suggests

Not, I tancy, a swift-climbing hit. It takes two or three hearings to register full impact.

Wally Stott's ork and chorus again assist with the flipside, "Rock-A-Chicka."

Frankie is better than the song. Agreed it's real-gone crazy, but to my ears, sounds about six months behind the times. Trouble is that the times move so quickly these days!

Home-made recordings of a song called "Why Don't They Understand" didn't find their way into the hit parade during last summer, but in America George Hamilton IV has hised this number into the hit parade.

A late, but welcome consolation, for British songwriters Joe (Mr. Piano) Henderson and Jack Fishman. Now released over here on HMV, the Hamilton waxing turns out to be less attractive than our own versions, so I'm very doubtful about a delayed-action success in Britain.

"Even Tho'," a simple, happy, fast-moving ditty with a lively beat, might stand a chance.

Another American hit is the Jimmie Rodgers version of "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine." Released under the Columbia banner, Jimmie is going to find it tough going against Frankie Vaughan.

The latter puts a lightly "wicked" touch into his interpretation which is lacking on the Rodgers platter.

In the backing, too, the British disc has an advantage—the arrangement is virtually the same, but Wally Stott

contrives more punch and clarity of sound.

"Better Loved You'll Never Be" is a very slow ballad, in which Jimmie Rodgers is given substantial support from the chorus.

### BOTH SIDES OF THE PICTURE



The star faces his fans. Lonnie Donegan on the left is busy signing his autograph while he looks out on more of his fans, who are waiting to come inside to meet him. Pictures were taken when Lonnie went along to open the Record Shop at 6, High Holborn and to autograph copies of his new "Jack O' Diamonds" disc, which became available the same morning and is reviewed by Keith Fordyce on this page.

A trifle dull—might have sounded better taken as a simple solo with guitar to the Neapolitan serenade.

There'll be scores of records covering the many songs from the new rock 'n' roll film "Jamboree." One of them has been recorded by Charlie Gracie on London-American. A safe bet for the Top Twenty is "Good Baby."

Medium-fast, with little Charlie providing the cool record collector with exactly the sort of vocalising that is most in demand at the moment.

A bouquet to Charlie for doing to perfection what so many others try to do—but can't.

Good solid commercial value on the flipside as Charlie hots things up with "You Got A Heart Like A Rock." Make this disc your top priority if you're a rock merchant.

A new British vocal team, The Most Brothers, make their debut on Decca, and I like what I hear—very much indeed. "Whistle Bait" is first-class material and the boys don't miss their chance to create a big impression.

The song zips along merrily, cheekily and with an irresistible toe-tapping beat. The singing is "straight" and thoroughly enjoyable.

Makeweight, "I'm Comin' Home," is unusual. The beat is there, but the striking part is the tom-tom contribution from the drums. I think you'll enjoy it, if you are patient enough to listen two or three times. Once again the vocalising is good.

"I'm Comin' Home" turns up also on Parlophone R. 4385, but the presentation is completely different. Ron Goodwin creates a swinging sambash backing for the voice of Paul Beattie.

And what an interesting voice. Very similar to Ernie Ford; rich, deep brown, he-manly. (I have an odd feeling that I've heard this voice before, although the name is new to me.)

"Nothing So Strange" is a song with a beat, but otherwise indifferent. Mr. Beattie doesn't sound very enthusiastic about it.

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**NME MUSIC CHARTS**

BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN BRITAIN	BEST SELLING SHEET MUSIC (BRITAIN)
<p><b>Last This Week</b> (Week ending Wednesday 18th December, 1957)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 <b>MARY'S BOY CHILD</b> (Harry Belafonte) (RCA)</li> <li>2 <b>MA, HE'S MAKING EYES AT ME</b> (Johnny Otis Show/Marie Adams) (Capitol)</li> <li>3 <b>WAKE UP LITTLE SUSIE</b> (Everly Brothers) (London)</li> <li>4 <b>I LOVE YOU, BABY</b> (Paul Anka) (Columbia)</li> <li>5 <b>MY SPECIAL ANGEL</b> (Malcolm Vaughan) (HMV)</li> <li>6 <b>BE MY GIRL</b> (Jim Dale) (Parlophone)</li> <li>7 <b>ALL THE WAY</b> (Frank Sinatra) (Capitol)</li> <li>8 <b>REET PETITE</b> (Jackie Wilson) (Coral)</li> <li>8 <b>LET'S HAVE A BALL</b> (Winifred Atwell) (Decca)</li> <li>10 <b>ALONE</b> (Petula Clark) (Pye Nixa)</li> <li>11 <b>REMEMBER YOU'RE MINE</b> (Pat Boone) (London)</li> <li>12 <b>GREAT BALLS OF FIRE</b> (Jerry Lee Lewis) (London)</li> <li>13 <b>DIANA</b> (Paul Anka) (Columbia)</li> <li>14 <b>HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS</b> (Laurie London) (Parlophone)</li> <li>14 <b>LET'S HAVE A PARTY</b> (Elvis Presley) (RCA)</li> <li>16 <b>APRIL LOVE</b> (Pat Boone) (London)</li> <li>17 <b>SANTA BRING MY BABY BACK TO ME</b> (Elvis Presley) (RCA)</li> <li>18 <b>GOT'TA HAVE SOMETHING IN THE BANK, FRANK</b> (Frankie Vaughan and Kaye Sisters) (Phillips)</li> <li>19 <b>JACK O' DIAMONDS</b> (Lonnie Donegan) (Pye-Nixa)</li> <li>20 <b>KISSES SWEETER THAN WINE</b> (Jimmie Rodgers) (Columbia)</li> <li>21 <b>KEEP A KNOCKIN'</b> (Little Richard) (London)</li> <li>22 <b>THAT'LL BE THE DAY</b> (Crickets) (Coral)</li> <li>23 <b>PEGGY SUE</b> (Buddy Holly) (Coral)</li> <li>24 <b>PARTY POPS</b> (Russ Conway) (Columbia)</li> <li>24 <b>KISSES SWEETER THAN WINE</b> (Frankie Vaughan) (Phillips)</li> <li>26 <b>WAKE UP LITTLE SUSIE</b> (King Brothers) (Parlophone)</li> <li>27 <b>ALONE</b> (Southlanders) (Decca)</li> <li>27 <b>MAN ON FIRE/WANDERING EYES</b> (Frankie Vaughan) (Phillips)</li> <li>29 <b>MY DIXIE DARLING</b> (Lonnie Donegan) (Pye-Nixa)</li> <li>30 <b>TAMMY</b> (Debbie Reynolds) (Coral)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Last This Week</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 <b>MARY'S BOY CHILD</b> (Bourne) 2s. 6d.</li> <li>2 <b>TAMMY</b> (Macmellodies) 2s.</li> <li>3 <b>ALONE</b> (Duchess) 2s.</li> <li>4 <b>MY SPECIAL ANGEL</b> (Yale) 2s.</li> <li>5 <b>FORGOTTEN DREAMS</b> (Mills Music) 2s. 6d.</li> <li>6 <b>DIANA</b> (Robert Metlin) 2s.</li> <li>7 <b>LET ME BE LOVED</b> (Frank) 2s.</li> <li>8 <b>WAKE UP LITTLE SUSIE</b> (Acuff-Rose) 2s.</li> <li>9 <b>BE MY GIRL</b> (Sheldon) 2s.</li> <li>10 <b>THAT'LL BE THE DAY</b> (Southern) 2s.</li> <li>11 <b>REMEMBER YOU'RE MINE</b> (Belinda) 2s.</li> <li>12 <b>I LOVE YOU, BABY</b> (Sherwin) 2s.</li> <li>13 <b>AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER</b> (Felst) 2s.</li> <li>13 <b>MAN ON FIRE</b> (Robbins) 2s.</li> <li>15 <b>PUTTIN' ON THE STYLE</b> (Essex) 2s.</li> <li>15 <b>ISLAND IN THE SUN</b> (Feldman) 2s. 6d.</li> <li>17 <b>LOVE LETTERS IN THE SAND</b> (F. D. &amp; H.) 2s.</li> <li>18 <b>HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS</b> (Sterling) 2s.</li> <li>14 <b>WANDERING EYES</b> (Bron) 2s.</li> <li>16 <b>GOT-TA HAVE SOMETHING IN THE BANK, FRANK</b> (Campbell Connelly) 2s.</li> <li>21 <b>MY DIXIE DARLING</b> (Southern) 2s.</li> <li>22 <b>MA, HE'S MAKING EYES AT ME</b> (Feldman) 2s.</li> <li>23 <b>WITH ALL MY HEART</b> (Bron) 2s.</li> <li>24 <b>APRIL LOVE</b> (Robbins) 2s.</li> </ol>
BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN THE U.S.	BEST SELLING SHEET MUSIC (U.S.)
<p><b>Last This Week</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 <b>You Send Me/Summertime</b> (Sam Cooke)</li> <li>2 <b>Jailhouse Rock/Treat Me Nice</b> (Elvis Presley)</li> <li>3 <b>Raunchy</b> (Bill Justis)</li> <li>4 <b>April Love/When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano</b> (Pat Boone)</li> <li>5 <b>Chances Are/The Twelfth Of Never</b> (Johnny Mathis)</li> <li>6 <b>Wake Up Little Susie</b> (Everly Brothers)</li> <li>7 <b>7 Silhouettes</b> (The Rays)</li> <li>8 <b>Peggy Sue</b> (Buddy Holly)</li> <li>9 <b>Rock And Roll Music</b> (Chuck Berry)</li> <li>10 <b>Be-Bop Baby/Have I Told You Lately That I Love You</b> (Ricky Nelson)</li> <li>11 <b>Little Bitty Pretty One</b> (Thurston Harris)</li> <li>12 <b>Great Balls Of Fire</b> (Jerry Lee Lewis)</li> <li>13 <b>Kisses Sweeter Than Wine</b> (Jimmie Rodgers)</li> <li>14 <b>At The Hop</b> (Danny and the Juniors)</li> <li>15 <b>My Special Angel</b> (Bobby Helms)</li> <li>16 <b>Lichtensteiner Polka</b> (Will Glahe)</li> <li>17 <b>Just Born/Ivy Rose</b> (Perry Como)</li> <li>18 <b>All The Way/Chicago</b> (Frank Sinatra)</li> <li>19 <b>I'm Available</b> (Margie Rayburn)</li> <li>20 <b>Melodie D'Amour</b> (Ames Brothers)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Last This Week</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 <b>Around The World</b></li> <li>2 <b>Fascination</b></li> <li>3 <b>April Love</b></li> <li>4 <b>All The Way</b></li> <li>5 <b>Tammy</b></li> <li>6 <b>Silhouettes</b></li> <li>7 <b>Melodie D'Amour</b></li> <li>8 <b>Ivy Rose</b></li> <li>9 <b>Chances Are</b></li> <li>10 <b>You Send Me</b></li> <li>11 <b>White Christmas</b></li> <li>12 <b>Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer</b></li> <li>13 <b>Kisses Sweeter Than Wine</b></li> <li>14 <b>I'll Remember Today</b></li> <li>15 <b>Jailhouse Rock</b></li> </ol>

★  
The American charts are published by courtesy of "Billboard"

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PERCY C. DICKINS

## THE BIG THREE YOU MUSTN'T MISS

THE NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS is proud to be associated with three exciting publishing presentations, which are now available to you.

Firstly, the "1958 Super Annual," comprising 100 pages (price 3s. 6d.) can be obtained—and has been acclaimed a brilliant production. It is packed with exciting ingredients guaranteed to satisfy the taste of all enthusiasts interested in disc stars and popular music personalities.

If you have any difficulty in securing this 1958 Annual, a copy will be sent by return of post. For further details turn to the display advertisement on page 5.

★ Since the announcement last week that Paul Anka is to receive a "Gold Disc" for his million-selling "Diana" in Britain, more orders have been pouring in from readers everywhere for the magazine "Paging And Presenting Paul Anka." Devoted exclusively to this teenage sensation, this is the first-ever journal published on this phenomenal record favourite—including a complete biography, several pictures, two personally written articles by Paul Anka, besides portraits of him.

More particulars of how to obtain this magazine (price 2s. 6d.) can be found on page 10.

★ Postal havoc has been created by storming demands for the magnificent "Twelve-Star Calendar"—with an individual pin-up portrait for each month of 1958 of Elvis Presley, Tommy Steele, Pat Boone, Johnnie Ray, Doris Day, Frankie Vaughan, Lonnie Donegan, Dickie Valentine, Paul Anka, Harry Belafonte, David Whitfield and Guy Mitchell respectively.

This is the ideal gift for any friend or relative, besides an attraction appealing to every follower of disc personalities. Now on sale, price 2s. 6d., you will find all the details in the advertisement on page 11.

## Standing room only!

PENDING the possibility of us securing any extra private seat-holders' tickets, the NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS "Poll Winner's Concert" (at Royal Albert Hall, Sunday afternoon, January 12), is a complete sell-out, except for gallery standing tickets (price 3s. 6d.). These are obtainable—by personal application at the Royal Albert Hall, or by post (enclosing remittance and stamped addressed envelope), from NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS, 5, Denmark Street, London, W.C.2.



David Whitfield as Robinson Crusoe—the name part in the London Palladium's pantomime, which opens on Monday—raises his tankard to wish all our readers, on our behalf, the Compliments of the Season.

## THREE OUTINGS A WEEK FOR AR-TV 'CATS'

"COOL FOR CATS," AR-TV's popular disc programme is to be seen three times weekly in the New Year, as announced in the NME last month.

Times of transmission have now been confirmed. At 6.45 on Mondays and Wednesdays, a 15-minute edition will be transmitted. On Fridays, viewers will see a late night edition at 11.00, which will repeat some of the best numbers seen earlier in the week.

The successful AR-TV series, "Palais Party," returns to the screen on January 1. As on previous occasions, it will again feature Lou Preager's Orchestra and singers, and the £100 "Find The Singer" contest.

## MORE VENUES IN '6.5' TOUR

FURTHER dates have been announced for the ambitious "Stars of 6.5 Special" package show to be launched by agents Will Collins and Dave Forrester next month.

Four March engagements are Exeter Savoy (2), Lewisham Gaumont (5), Coventry Theatre (9), and Sheffield Odeon (16). A few February dates already announced have been switched, and the revised itinerary now includes Nottingham Odeon (February 10), Cardiff Capitol (February 19), and the Old Kent Road Astoria (February 23).

The tour will star artists who have appeared in the BBC-TV "6.5 Special" series, including Don Lang and his Frantic Five, Kenny Baker's Half-Dozen, Jimmy Jackson's Skiffle Group, singer Rosemary Squires, and clarinettist Carl Barribeau.

# Your Good Health! and

## JOHNNIE RAY: FIVE WEEKS IN BRITAIN IN THE SPRING

*Palladium and provincial variety:  
week of one-nighters planned*

AMERICA'S ever-welcome fabulous vocal entertainer Johnnie Ray stars in Europe for ten weeks—commencing next March. This will include his sixth consecutive annual variety appearance at the London Palladium. Johnnie has allocated the months of March and April, and the first two weeks in May to his next visit on this side of the Atlantic. Five weeks are scheduled for Britain.

## '12.5' ROCK FROM LONDON AIRPORT

THE "12.5 Special," BBC-TV's New Year's Eve presentation, of "6.5 Special" Saturday evening show, will be transmitted from the restaurant in the newly opened Queen Elizabeth Building at London Airport.

This location, overlooking the main runway, has been selected for the 40-minute show by producer, Jack Good, who told the NME: "Our original choice, the Cafe de Paris, would have been too small for our equipment. And, in any case, it was felt unwise to leave BBC vans in the West End, at the height of the revelry."

In addition to the usual hosts, and Don Lang's regular group, Wee Willie Harris and The Jazz Couriers have so far been booked.

## Vera Lynn back in radio series

VERA LYNN begins a new Light Programme series of "Yours Sincerely" shows on Thursday, January 4. It will run for 12 weeks and, as previously, she will be supported by Woolf Phillips and his Orchestra.

## Elvis Presley's next picture

ELVIS PRESLEY starts his next film, "Sing You Sinners," in Hollywood next month. His leading lady will be Dorothy Hart, a young actress who appeared with Elvis in "Loving You," cables Dane Marlowe.

Charles O'Curran will again be the choreographer and the film will be directed by Mike Curtis and released by Paramount.

# PAUL HERE

PAUL ANKA'S current already received a completion for him to appear His second visit would Sunday, March 2. The Canac appear for three weeks of leading variety theatre.

In addition, Anka would star in two leading ATV programmes. He appeared in "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" early this month.

Discussions took place last week-end for Paul to take part in the forthcoming British screen production "6.5 Special" but his commitments here during his current stay did not allow sufficient time for filming. Accordingly, the project was abandoned.

## LABEL TO HAVE OWN AIR SHOW

FONTANA, Philips' new label, is to have its own Radio Luxembourg programme. Heard every Tuesday at 10.30 p.m. from January 7, it will be introduced by Peter Madren.

The label will be launched here at the beginning of next month. British titles will include Tommy Reilly's "Barnacle Bill's Hornpipe," the theme from the new Alec Guinness film.

"Our Friends The Stars," the annual Sunday concert sponsored by the Songwriters Guild will be held at the Victoria Palace on March 23.

## NME ON SALE SATURDAY, NOT FRIDAY, NEXT WEEK

NEXT week's NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS will be published one day later than usual—on Saturday, December 28. This rearrangement is, of course, necessitated by Christmas holidays on Wednesday and Thursday.

This issue of the NME will be up to full standard, with latest news, special feature articles and reviews of several pantomime productions featuring top musical stars.

Will display and classified advertisers please note—all copy for insertion in next week's issue must be received at the NME offices not later than 11 a.m. on Monday, December 23.

In order to give readers our usual up-to-the-minute news service, our centre pages will not go to press until Boxing Night, ensuring full coverage of all events and late news concerning the world of popular music and stars.

## BRITAIN BUYS 80 MILLION DISCS

WITHIN the next few days, record sales in Britain are expected to top 80-million in 1957. Nearly four-fifths will be sold to pop music and jazz fans. More than a third will be microgroove discs—LPs, EPs and 45 rpm.

This estimate is based on figures released by the Government this week. It is the first time there has been any official statistics of domestic British sales published.

By the end of October, almost 63 million discs had been sold, less than three million fewer than in the whole of last year, with Christmas buying not accounted for.

If November and December sales follow last year's pattern, the 80 million figure will be reached next week.

A startling revelation is the progress of microgroove records. Sales of 45 discs are about double those last year.

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# Best Christmas Wishes to Everyone

## Julie London records in Great Britain



Our cameraman looked in on Julie London's recording session on Tuesday. Picture shows (l. to r.) Phil Green, MD of Julie's film, Julie London and Bobby Troup, her accompanist.

**JULIE LONDON** recorded three numbers in London on Tuesday. All were written by her fiancé, Bobbie Troup. Supervising the session was Si Waronker, president of Hollywood's Liberty Records, who flew to London for the purpose on Sunday.

One of the numbers, "Strange Affair," will be featured in the film "A Question of Adultery," which Julie is making at Elstree Studios.

The other titles will form her January release in America. One, "My Freshman," is Julie's return tribute to the Four Freshmen, who earlier this year recorded "Julie Is Her Name."

All the titles will be released in Britain on the London label. Si Waronker planned to return to America on Wednesday night. During his visit he had business discussions with Decca chief, E. R. Lewis. Afterwards he told the NME: "There is no truth in rumours of British issue arrangements for the Liberty label."

Artists recording for Waronker include Billy Ward of "Stardust" fame, Margie Rayburn and the Canadian vocal group The Four Grads.

## LONNIE DONEGAN SIGNS FOR BLACKPOOL

### Matinees only season at Palace Theatre

**LONNIE DONEGAN** has been booked for his first summer season. He will open at the Palace Theatre, Blackpool, on July 7, for at least six weeks' of matinee shows. His stay may be extended to eight weeks.

Impresario Harold Fielding is presenting the Donegan season. He plans to produce the show on similar lines to Tommy Steele's highly successful residency at the same theatre last summer.

"The production will be specially prepared," Fielding told the NME. "Supporting acts will be carefully selected to fit in with Donegan's presentation. As with Tommy's show this year it will be completely different from the normal variety bill."

Lonnie's season will be entirely confined to afternoon performances.

The booking means that Britain's two top teen-age attractions—Donegan and Steele—will play the special matinee seasons at the Palace on consecutive years.

### PANTOMIME

Next Tuesday, Donegan starts his first pantomime season. He will star as "Wishie Washee" in "Aladdin" at Chiswick Empire.

On December 29, he stars in ATV's "Jack Jackson Show." At the end of his pantomime sea-

son, the skiffle star starts a four-week variety tour at Finsbury Park Empire, opening February 10. The other dates will be at leading provincial theatres.

In March, Lonnie begins his first big acting film role. He will be featured in a major British production, final details of which are not yet settled.

Pye-Nixa revealed that latest advance sales for Donegan's new release "Jack Of Diamonds" exceed 130,000.

## New and Old Radio D-Js

**WILFRED THOMAS** is returning to the BBC with a peak hour record show on December 31. He will be featured in a weekly programme at 10 p.m., "Date With A Disc."

Singer Donald Peers becomes a BBC disc-jockey on January 4, when he presents a new series, "Spin Along With Me." It will be heard on Saturdays at 10.40 p.m.

Ken Sykora takes over the Thursday evening disc series from George Elrick on January 2. Sykora's programme, "These Record Years," will be heard weekly on Thursdays at 8 p.m.

As previously announced another new record programme to be heard during the winter will be "The Jack Payne Show" on Saturdays from January 4, at 1.45 p.m.

Among the disc programmes continuing are Sam Costa's "Just For You," "Pick Of The Pops" with Alan Dell on Sundays, and David Jacobs' Tuesday lunch-time programme, "Open House"—all on the Light Programme.

### ATV BOOKINGS

## Petula Clark to star from Prince of Wales

**PETULA CLARK** stars in ATV's big Sunday evening variety show this week-end, which is again being transmitted from London's Prince of Wales Theatre, owing to pantomime rehearsals at the Palladium. She is joined by the harmonica team, The Three Monarchs, and by comedians Jimmy Wheeler and Bob Monkhouse.

## Tony Bennett: TV project here

**SURPRISE** negotiations have been taking place this week for Tony Bennett, the American vocal stylist, to appear in London next month—for two major ATV engagements.

A final decision is expected today (Friday). If successfully concluded, Bennett will be available here immediately following a New York TV date in the "Perry Como Show" on January 18, until his next American TV commitment on January 31.

Accordingly, his projected appearances in this country would be Val Parnell's "Startime" (Thursday, January 23) and "Sunday Night At The London Palladium" (January 26).

## At Windsor Castle

**MAX BYGRAVES**, Kathie Kay, the Billy Cotton Band, Yana and the Geraldo Orchestra will be appearing at the annual staff party at Windsor Castle tonight (Friday).

The same artists were picked for last year when the Queen was unable to attend. It is expected that she will be present tonight with Prince Philip, the Queen Mother and possibly Princess Margaret.

## Anne guest of Show Band

**ANNE SHELTON** will be the guest star in the first of the new Show Band series on BBC-TV on January 9. Semprini is also scheduled to be seen in the programme.

Names of other artists to be seen with Cyril Stapleton and his orchestra have yet to be announced.

## Two tele-series for Martin

**STEVE MARTIN**, young Philips singer, will be appearing in two TV series next month. He continues his appearances in ABC-TV's "Top Numbers" and joins the new Alfred Marks series for Granada TV, which starts January 8.

## Glenn Miller Band dates cover the country

**THE** complete itinerary of the British tour of the Glenn Miller Band, directed by Ray McKinley, has been arranged. Most appearances will be in Rank Super Cinemas.

The opening concert is on Sunday, January 19, at the 3,000-seater Dominion Theatre, London, as forecast in the NME two weeks ago.

Dates fixed so far are: Dominion, London (19); Gaumont, Luton (20); Capitol, Cardiff (21); Brangwyn Hall, Swansea (22); Gaumont, Cheltenham (23); Odeon, Birmingham (24); Gaumont, Coventry (25); Empire, Liverpool (26); Public Hall, Preston (27); Odeon, Newcastle (29); Odeon, Leeds (30); Odeon, Nottingham (31); Free Trades Hall, Manchester (Feb. 1); Davis Theatre, Croydon (2); Regal, Edmonton (3); Colston Hall, Bristol (6); Gaumont, Wolverhampton (7); City Hall, Sheffield (8).

## TOMMY STEELE BOOKED FOR 20 WEEK TOUR

**TOMMY STEELE** will tour Britain for 20 weeks of variety and concerts next year. This decision follows the announcement of a settlement in the action between impresario Harold Fielding and Tommy's managers, John Kennedy and Larry Parnes.

Kennedy told the NME that contracts were expected to be signed on Wednesday night for Steele to go to South Africa, opening in Cape Town on March 15. He will play dates later in Durban and Johannesburg.

It is unlikely that Tommy will appear in a resident summer show next year, Kennedy added. July and August have been set aside for his third starring film. This is currently being negotiated.

## BBC to show Sinatra film

**"HIGHER AND HIGHER,"** the first film made by Frank Sinatra, will be seen on BBC-TV next year. It is one of a hundred RKO productions bought by the BBC for £215,000—claimed to be the biggest deal ever made by a British TV concern.

Sinatra made "Higher and Higher" in 1943. Singer Mel Tormé made his screen debut in the film which also starred French actress Michele Morgan.

Another of Frank's musicals, "Double Dynamite," is in the deal.

## 14 Bookings for Brubeck

**FOURTEEN** venues have now been announced for the first British tour by America's famed Dave Brubeck Quartet early next year.

Following its debut at London's Royal Festival Hall on February 8, the quartet—Brubeck (piano), Paul Desmond (alto), Norman Bates (bass) and Joe Morello (drums)—will play a series of provincial dates.

Their itinerary is: Coventry Hippodrome (February 9), Bristol Colston Hall (10), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (11), Cardiff Gaumont (12), Newcastle City Hall (13), Manchester Free Trade Hall (14), Birmingham Town Hall (15), Leicester De Montfort Hall (17), Sheffield City Hall (18), Glasgow St. Andrew's Hall (19), Bradford St. George's Hall (20), Liverpool Philharmonic Hall (21), and Ipswich Gaumont (22).

Two further venues have still to be fixed for February 16 and 23, and it is hoped that a second London concert can be arranged. The quartet are scheduled to arrive on Feb. 7.

# ANKA TO RETURN IN MARCH?

British tour has been so successful that he has firm offer to return. Negotiations are nearing completion in Britain again in March.

Last four weeks, opening on Italian teenage star will probably play concerts, with one week at a

## Nat Cole as jazz pianist

**NAT COLE** as a jazz pianist will be a special feature of BBC's Network Three weekly programme "Jazz Session" on Thursday, January 2. The show, "Hot Cole," will be introduced by Frank Dixon.

For the rest of the winter quarter, "Jazz Session" will continue its fortnightly record review programmes.

They will be introduced by Dill Jones and, taking over from Ken Sykora, is Hector Stewart.

## LATE CABLES FROM THE U.S.

**DURING** a New York TV show on Wednesday, Harry Belafonte said that he will be touring Europe next summer and will appear at London's Royal Festival Hall in June.

The Ames Brothers are expected to open their British variety tour at the London Palladium next Spring, according to their manager. No definite dates, however, have been suggested.

Norman Granz's "Jazz At The Philharmonic" unit will open their projected 18-day British tour on May 18 (cables Lance Fielding). Possible line-up includes J. J. Johnson, Stan Getz, Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, blues singer Joe Turner and the Oscar Peterson Trio. European dates will follow the British trip.

# THE CRICKETS

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## HOLIDAY SHORT STORY

## Tempo

By MAUREEN PAVIS

All characters are fictitious.

"TELL you if you don't find something soon we're finished—both of us!" Ben Levante, his tie crooked and collar askew, almost tripped over an elephant footstool as he strode across the modern furnished room.

A red-haired young man in shirt sleeves picked up a bunch of music manuscripts which were strewn around the room and hammered out a few bars on the mini-piano, taking it out of the keys as if he got satisfaction from giving them such rough treatment.

He shook his tousled head dejectedly. "I've been through these all before," he sighed, stubbing out a cigarette on the piano top. "It's no use, Ben. There's nothing here."

Ben flopped on the stool and ran a hand over his stubby crew-cut. "If only..." he began and then bit his lip. No use starting that again. But if only Red and

Larry Lennox would bury the hatchet. Why should they ruin themselves because they couldn't agree on a simple thing—that a vocalist makes a song, but only after the composer has written it?

Red Connors, the guy who did the singing, would give no credit to Lennox for his composing. And Lennox just laughed in Red's face and said that the singer was no better than his songs and if it hadn't been for Lennox's songs, Red would never have got anywhere—no Golden Records and Vocalist of the Year award—nothing.

## Gold Disc

Ben frowned at the gold-plated record hanging on the opposite wall and sighed. Only last year. But such a long time ago. Beginner's luck? His own first year as an agent and manager and Red's first year as a pop singer.

They had ridden high together then... but now!

He looked across at Red, who was striking nonchalant chords at the piano. The kid just didn't seem to care about his lapse in popularity; his off-hand rejection of fame seemed almost callous.

Ben rose slowly from the stool. Red always had treated his brief glory with the boisterous abandon of a kid at a birthday treat. It was time he grew up... and realised this was far from a picnic.

He fingered some of the music on the piano. "There just has to be one," he said wearily.

Red banged away at the keys in a vibrant crescendo. "Take your pick, Ben," he shouted. "I searched. Till four this morning!"

"Oh," hands in his pockets, Ben sauntered over to the window. The piano quietened. "There's not one of these plug numbers I can handle, Ben."

"I know," Ben admitted. "Your 'rollicking sea-shanty' type of singing died out months ago—and the only composer to give you hep material has shut up like an oyster." He turned and faced Red, who was gazing intently at the Golden Record. "I'll get back somehow," he said quietly.

Ben beamed with delight. He had been wrong. Red's seeming indifference was just a blind to hide his true despondency. The ambition was there and that's all that mattered. "We'll get back, you mean," he retorted.

Red smiled gratefully. "Why did you get rid of all your other clients, Ben? I'm not worth it."

Ben waved him to silence. "You made me rich, remember?" he quipped, endeavouring to put Red at ease. "I can't afford to lose a goldmine."

## Solution

Red grinned ruefully. "You'll regret it—if you haven't already."

"It's up to you to see that I don't," Ben retorted. "Remember, you're the only grounds on which I can still call myself an agent!"

Red pulled at his copper-hued thatch. "There's only one answer," he murmured. "Larry Lennox."

"Lennox!" Ben repeated sharply. The kid must be delirious.

"Yes, Lennox," Red said, determinedly. "The songwriter who provided me with all those hits last year. The one we were talking about... remember?"

"I told you, didn't I," said Ben impatiently. "He's finished, washed up, resigned. He just doesn't write songs any more. You know that—and you can probably guess why."

"Then you'll have to get him to write again," said Red simply. Ben beat a hand on his knee. "How?" he breathed. "Just tell me how..."

"You're the agent!" Ben stared at him a full minute as his words sank in. "You're the agent." Well, what was he waiting for?

"You're right," he said suddenly, reaching for his hat. "I'm going to see Lennox." He thought to himself that it was almost hopeless, but he had to do something.

Red jumped up. "I'll come with you."

Ben grinned, picturing the noisy Red clashing once more with the quiet, dignified Larry Lennox. "No, Red," he warned. "You'll only stir up his temperament. In case you've forgotten—you're only one of the reasons he quit. You stay here. See you..."

As he left the building, a carryot head appeared at a window. "What are you going to tell him?" Red shouted down.

"I'll think of something," Ben yelled back.

## Who is more important—the singer or composer?

Across the street, the Blue Grotto nightclub sign looked inviting even in the cold light of mid-morning. Ben crossed over. He had to think. This situation called for a good stiff—milk!

## Big heart

"YOU'LL never make an agent, Ben. You've got too much heart!" Joe de Casen leaned across the shiny bar of the Grotto, sponge in hand, and regarded Ben intently, as he sipped his milk.

"Two of a pair, you and I," he went on. "Look at me. I own the joint. And here I am polishing my own counter." He smiled wryly.

"You've been here long enough to hire some help," muttered Ben, his mind still full of Larry Lennox.

"You're right," nodded Joe. "A year exactly I've had the Grotto. Matter of fact, it's our anniversary next week."

He grinned with pleasure. "We're going to celebrate—having a cabaret, and station ERA is going to televise it... Hey, steady!"

Joe broke off as Ben jumped off the bar-stool, knocking over the milk. Ben stared at the little white stream running over the bar ERA! Television! A plan was forming itself in his mind, involving himself, Red, Larry—and even Joe.

But it was a precarious ghost of a plan. Whether it worked or not would depend on them all.

He pointed a finger at Joe, who stared dumbfounded. "Cancel the cabaret," he said. "Red's going to sing."



Unlike the hero of this story, Russ Hamilton has no problem with songwriters. He writes his own hits.

"Red... Red Connors? He's now look," said Joe. "I appreciate the way he livened up the club in the good old days, but not the anniversary! I couldn't risk..."

"Do as you're told," demanded Ben, throwing a coin on the bar.

"But Red's a has-been. He's had it. Hey, wait..."

But Ben was already staggering across the dance floor, his heart thumping. Joe mustn't let him down. He just couldn't. "Yeah?" he shot back.

Joe mouthed more words of protest—but never spoke them. Instead he smiled faintly and shrugged: "What about this milk?"

"You've got the sponge," grinned Ben. "And you'll get Red, too."

Joe grinned. Ben knew it was okay. "Well, I'm halfway anyhow," muttered Ben, to himself, hailing a taxi. The next step was Larry, the temperamental, guitar-strumming composer who had been so good for Red, and vice versa.

"Kensington," snapped Ben to the driver.

Pity some misguided fool had suggested to Lennox that it was Red's singing, and his singing alone, that made his songs the hits they were. That didn't make him feel any friendlier towards the fading singer.

The taxi jerked to a standstill. "Thanks, don't wait," said Ben, hopping out.

He handed over the fare and made his way up the steps of the imposing block of flats where Lennox lived. "Larry's still keeping up a front," he thought. "Always play-acting, that fellow. Just like Red! What a pair!"

Ben got into the lift and pressed the button for the 4th floor. He swiftly stepped out into the passage and knocked at the door of flat 410.

He hesitated as he heard raised voices from inside. One he recognised easily; the grating voice of a colleague and almost the only man in the profession he had grown to dislike. He turned the glass door-

knob, walked in and stared straight at the stonily apathetic figure of music publisher Gerald "Hawkeye" Grant.

Ben looked away quickly. "Morning, Larry," he said warmly, addressing a tall, intelligent-looking man with the appearance of a classical composer rather than an originator of Tin Pan Alley tunes.

It was evident that he and Hawkeye had been arguing. They glared at Ben, still in the full flush of their dispute.

Ben smiled suavely and seated himself in one of the yellow leather chairs. "Don't let me interrupt," he said. Then, looking pointedly at Hawkeye, he added: "I just came for a word with Larry."

Larry came forward, eyes hostile, but manner polite. "I'm pleased to see you again, Levante. But don't you usually wait till a door is opened for you before coming in?" "I knocked," Ben said, as if he usually didn't even do that.

"If you've come about Red..." Larry began. "Oh, Red and I broke up weeks ago," Ben lied, glibly. "This is just a friendly visit—I hope," he said, frowning at Hawkeye.

"You're welcome to him," said the long, lean Hawkeye, nodding at Larry and rising awkwardly from a glistening white piano. "I've finished."

Larry handed Grant his hat. "Then you won't take a chance?" he asked quietly.

"I'm a publisher—not a fairy godmother," replied Hawkeye, tartly. "The moment you write a song I can sell, you have the backing of Grant Music. Until then..." He shrugged.

## Real reason

BEN took a swift, deep breath. So that was it. Larry's reasons for "resigning" from the popular music field was huff, after his publisher had dropped him!

He strode over to Grant, blocking his way out of the flat. "Does it mean nothing to you," he said in low exasperated tones, "that, last year, Larry here gave you three hits in a row?"

"That's not this year," the publisher said, avoiding Ben's scrutiny, and making an unsuccessful effort to leave.

"Look," he added, with forced patience, "last year, Lennox, with the help of Red Connors came up with some hits." Hawkeye gestured evasively. "The only kind of songs that sell nowadays are calypso and skiffle. Maybe a trickle of slow ballads as well, but not many. The sort of thing Lennox wrote for Connors is dated. The kids want something different..."

"Isn't that what I've given you—something different?" Larry broke in angrily.

"Yes—but it wasn't music," sneered Hawkeye, reaching for the door. "Be honest, Lennox—Connors has faded. Why don't you fade out, too?"

"Listen..." he said. (Will Larry Lennox write a song for Red Connors? Don't miss the final instalment of this behind-the-scenes tale next week.)

He opened the door to leave. Ben looked across at Larry. He was pale with humiliation at Hawkeye's blunt acknowledgment of his failure. "You can have your contract back, Grant," the composer said proudly. "I don't think I want it any more."

"That suits me," Hawkeye began. "Look out," broke in Ben. "Mind how you go down in the lift. It won't be able to bear the weight of all that stone you carry in the region of your heart!"

Hawkeye paused, his thin hands fingering the feather in his hat. "I don't ask to be popular," he said. "I just want to be a good song publisher. I think I've made it. I'd just like to keep things that way."

"Oh, you'll make a lot of money, don't worry," said Ben. "You'll just be hard up for friends, that's all!"

"Thanks for that," said Grant, sarcastically, his hand tightening on the door knob. But he showed no emotion at Ben's bitter words.

"I've a heart all right, Levante," he said. "You'll just have to dig a little deeper to find it, that's all. So long, fellows."

"Well, that's that," said Larry, after Grant had gone. He picked up the battered old guitar from the gleaming piano and looked at Ben.

"Tell me," he said despondently, "what does a phoney songwriter do when his publisher finds out?"

"Don't give me that!" said Ben gruffly. "You sound like Grant. You've got to show him he's talking through that tin hat of his. You know you're a good composer, and I know it. That makes two of us against Grant."

"But..."

"Look," said Ben waving a hand at the lavish furnishings. "You want to keep all this, don't you? You want to pay the rent?"

Larry stiffened automatically. "I have money," he said icily. "I am secure..."

## Security

"Secure?" Ben paused for thought. He had touched a tender spot. From now on he had to be careful...

"Your bank account may be secure," Ben asserted, "but are you? Is your pride? Wouldn't you like to prove yourself again as a composer and see Hawkeye bite the dust?"

Larry shook his head despairingly. "I've given up composing..." he began.

"From what Hawkeye said, composing's given you up," put in Ben. Larry looked Ben straight in the eyes. "You win, Ben," he said. "How do I make Hawkeye 'bite the dust'?"

Ben gave a sigh of relief. He had achieved the impossible. Larry was going to write again, and of all people, Hawkeye was responsible. He leaned forward confidentially.

"Listen..." he said. (Will Larry Lennox write a song for Red Connors? Don't miss the final instalment of this behind-the-scenes tale next week.)



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# Guy's fans will soon have their own fans!



**MEET** Do and Dena Farrell, two 19-year-old London girls whose unshakable faith in country and western music has set them on the road to success in show business.

The girls sing, both play guitar, and collaborate on writing their own material. Their combined talents have already won the approval of the critical Tin Pan Alley "men-about-music," and right now, they're waiting to see how Britain's record-buying public will react to their first release. It's on the HMV label and the titles are "Young Magic" and "New Love Tonight." Do and Dena wrote both songs, incidentally.

### GET-TOGETHER

The two girls met for the first time at a Guy Mitchell Fan Club get-together last year, when they were both secretaries of branches of the club.

They rapidly struck up a firm friendship and later found that they shared similar interests in music—namely the country and western style.

Do and Dena subsequently spent most of their spare time visiting each other's homes to listen to records and more specifically, to study the best works in the c & w field.

It wasn't long before they found that they, too, possessed a natural flair for writing original songs in the c & w vein, and after singing through and generally polishing up some of their compositions, they decided to make a determined effort to break into the entertainment world.

Chance show business acquaintances were impressed by their efforts and offered advice whenever possible; Guy Mitchell enthused over their work and encouraged them to pursue it in every conceivable way.

In a London coffee bar, Do and Dena coaxed enthusiastic applause from a bunch of espresso-addicts

when they sang one of their compositions with the resident rock 'n' roll band.

This reception was the final prod in the back that sent Do and Dena making the rounds of the London agents. Their confidence was dwindling when they called on Harry Lowe, but undaunted, they eventually persuaded him to listen to a test record they had made.

Harry was impressed, especially when he learnt that the girls had composed the songs. Realising the potential of the twosome, he contacted HMV's Wally Ridley to arrange a recording audition. To use a well-worn cliché, Wally was "knocked out" by the authentic c & w style of the girls, and immediately signed them to a disc date—the session which produced "Young Magic" and "New Love Tonight."

Television appearances were in the planning stage when misfortune befell the girls—Dena (formerly a bus conductress) was taken ill and is currently resting in Barts Hospital.

### POOLS CLERK

It's hoped, happy to say, that she'll be on her feet again in time for Christmas, which she'll no doubt spend with her partner Do (a one-time football pools clerk).

What will they do over the holidays? Well, it's quite possible that they'll simply take it easy and spend their time listening to c & w records.

But it's more likely that they'll unpack their guitars and start rehearsing some more of their own compositions. Having found the break they were looking for, Do and Dena Farrell intend to make the most of it!

KEITH GOODWIN

# 'Reet Petite' is a disc that grows on you: so does

THE telephone rang at 9.30 a.m. one Monday, a few weeks back. I realised at once that it could not have been one of my friends; they know better than to disturb me in the middle of the night. I decided the best way to find out who was calling was to answer the phone.

It turned out to be a fellow who used to be my friend. He works for one of the major record companies. "Have you heard Jackie Wilson's 'Reet Petite' on Coral?" he demanded, almost hysterically. "It's quite the most atrocious record that's ever been made."

Evidently the poor chap had spent the entire week-end brooding about it. And, needless to say, it wasn't the Coral company with which he was associated!

It occurred to me that this must, indeed, be an extremely controversial record for anyone to have such strong feelings on the subject to early on a Monday morning.

So I phoned Coral. "Yes, isn't it wonderful?" breathed an anonymous young lady, ecstatically. "I think it's a great record, and it's selling like hot cakes."

Obviously, I thought, "Reet Petite" was a record with a split personality—you either liked it or loathed it, but you couldn't be indifferent about it. And apparently the question of whether you hated it or dug it, depended on whether you were (a) square or round, or (b) Coral or non-Coral.

As soon as I reached the office, I got a copy. And put it on the turntable.

### What's this?

I promptly decided that I had been provided with the wrong record. Surely this must be Stan Freberg indulging in one of his satires? It was much too exaggerated to be anything but a take-off. But at whom was Freberg aiming his pointed barbs on this occasion—Paul Anka, or Elvis Presley, perhaps?

I stopped the record and took a look at the label. There hadn't been a mistake, after all. This strange collection of noises, ranging from gurgling to an outboard motor, was Jackie Wilson singing "Reet Petite"!

Now I'm not exactly a square, so I decided to get to grips with this phenomenon and listen to it objec-



tively. The first thing I noticed was a solid, driving, infectious beat—a really rocking accompaniment, sufficient to carry the entire record.

As for the singer, I couldn't understand more than four or five words of the whole lyric. I've still been unable to do so, even after a dozen playings

But the remarkable thing is that each time I have heard the record it has grown on me more!

Don't ask me to analyse this, because I find that impossible. Maybe it's the personality of the singer, or simply the cuteness and novelty of the song. But however much you may scorn this disc at the outset, I guarantee it will have won you over when you've heard it a few times.

The next step was to find out something about this fascinating new singer! Not only was I anxious to investigate the background of the youngster, who was capable of intriguing me in this way—but, let's be practical, if Jackie Wilson made the best-sellers, the Editor would be breathing down my neck for a thousand words about him, anyway!

Wherever the group went, audiences—whether right there on the spot, or sitting at home watching TV—started talking about the distinctive singing young man.

It was only a matter of time before he was signed to a recording contract, and it was Coral who succeeded in obtaining the vital signature on the dotted line. He is now a fully fledged performer in his own right; playing the clubs as a solo act, and undertaking a fair amount of song-writing. He has already written several

# JACKIE WILSON

says DEREK JOHNSON

It transpired that Jackie's show business career has been spent in company with another comparatively new friend of ours, Billy Ward.

He, of course, is the bandleader who has been going strong in the States with his group, known as the Dominoes for some years. He has enjoyed several hit recordings there, including "St. Therese Of The Roses," but it wasn't until he turned his attention to rock treatments of well-established evergreens, that he really made his mark on an international basis. His versions of "Stardust" and "Deep Purple" both made the best-sellers in this country.

It was Billy who discovered Jackie Wilson, when the latter was playing local bookings and minor TV spots, in his hometown area of Detroit.

Jackie was invited to join the group, an opportunity he grasped with both hands, just at the time when their rhythmic beat style was in great demand to meet the current vogue.

No sooner had Jackie become an integral part of the Ward package, than the group undertook seasons at two of the most important night spots in the country—New York's Copacabana, and the famed Sahara in Las Vegas. Other impressive dates followed, and they appeared on top networked television shows, including the Colgate Comedy Hour and the Ed Sullivan Show.

This protracted spell with Billy Ward was the biggest single factor in making Jackie Wilson's name.

songs with moderate success, not necessarily for his own act, and has very strong ambitions to become more widely known as a composer.

Although some will maintain that style and dusky good looks of this "Reet Petite" is unintelligible (though his fans will doubtless class that as its great charm), Jackie has shown that he is not merely a one-type singer.

Flip the record over and you will find a pleasantly medium-paced revival of "By The Light Of The Silvery Moon," which will surely appeal to the most conservative of tastes. One wonders whether Jackie's choice of number in this instance is inspired by the knowledge of Billy Ward's success with the revivals he has tackled.

### Only 23

Although he is a married man with three children, Jackie is only twenty-three, so obviously his entire future is before him. His record company is expecting big things from him, and if he continues to maintain the impression he has created with "Reet Petite," we are destined to hear a great deal more from him.

Yesterday, I phoned my colleague at the record company, who had originally, and somewhat sarcastically, drawn my attention to Jackie Wilson. And I pointed out that the disc is now No. 8 in the best-sellers.

"Well, I still think it's a diabolical record," he said. "But I wish it was on our label!"

## Adventurous Composer

STANLEY LAUDAN is probably best known to British audiences as the creator of such hit tunes as "Martinella," and as an Oriole recording artist. In "The White Baton" (Wingate, 13s. 6d.), he tells, most charmingly, the story of his life from the outbreak of the last World War until his arrival in this country in 1945.

In 1939, Laudan was at the top of the musical profession in Poland. Came the German invasion, and he was captured and imprisoned. He escaped only to leap out of the "Russian fire" into the "German frying-pan" into the "Russian fire." Russia was not the safest place for an out-of-work musician with capitalistic tendencies, and Laudan, after a period of selling Black-market watches, decided to protect himself by forming the first Collective night club that Russia had ever seen.

Humorously, he tells how the Board of Management consisted of charlatans, painters and tradesmen, who would sit in all earnestness and consider the case of the Night Club Commissar who had complained that the potatoes had been served cold on table five the previous evening.

The washing-up man at the club had owned three factories before the War, and the lift man had been a famous barrister.

While the club was running with outstanding success, Laudan was approached by an official of the Central Committee of Culture, and was asked to form in Russia a Western-style jazz and swing group. With the group he toured all the Soviet Republic before coming to Moscow.

There they were received with a most fantastic mass-type hysterical reception—the type of reception today reserved for the Elvis Presleys and Johnnie Rays of the world.

Laudan also tells how, with a friend, he went to the Royalties Bank in Moscow and collected a quarter of a million roubles for royalties on songs they had written. He adds that many composers must have millions of roubles stowed away in this bank.

There is only one snag—the Communists won't let the money out of Russia, and the composers would have to go to Moscow to collect.

J.B.H.

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**NAT HENTOFF'S** *American Airmail*

# BILLY DANIELS' FINE MAY BAN HIM

**BILLY DANIELS** received a suspended four-month sentence and a \$200 fine on the charge that he fired a gun in a Harlem after-hours club in January, 1956.

Daniels is unlikely ever to be able to work in New York again so long as the iniquitous system in this city remains in effect whereby no one can work at a place where liquor is sold without first getting a police cabaret card (no other major American city has this rule).

After Daniels' trial, the Deputy Police Commissioner in charge of cabaret licenses said auto-critically: "Daniels can never work in a night club here again, even though he pleaded guilty to only a misdemeanor: illegal possession of a gun."

Asked newspaper columnist Barry Gray: "Does denying Daniels his right to employment give him an opportunity for rehabilitation?"

Billie Holiday is another performer who can't work New York clubs because she hasn't a cabaret card.

David Niven is the most recent actor to start recording pop tunes... "Rumple," the musical starring Eddie Foy that closed on Broadway after 45 performances, opens in London's West End in January. Sallie Blair has an agreement with the Latin Quarter in New York whereby she'll play there once a year.

## THEY LOVE ALMA IN NEW YORK

says NAT HENTOFF

**ALMA COGAN'S** opening at New York's luxury Plaza Hotel on December 11 was unusually successful. The only setback has been a chill, which caused Alma to miss two shows on Saturday. Otherwise her engagement is going very well. The opening night show and all since have been played to capacity.

The attentiveness of the audience has impressed Alma. She had expected them to be talking and eating.

"I was very nervous," she said after the first show. "More nervous than I have ever been."

She is delighted with the quality of her accompaniment, pianist-leader Ted Straeter and his band ("nothing is too much for them to do for me, they're wonderful"). She gets insistent requests for encores at all shows. Alma does two shows a night.

In her repertory are "To Keep My Love Alive" (an English madrigal-type number); a cockney number, especially written for her; "With A Little Bit Of Luck" (from "My Fair Lady"); and a medley of all-British songs that were made famous in America—"These Foolish Things," "The Touch Of Your Lips," "Try A Little Tenderness," "South Of The Border" (a surprise to everyone), "The Only Girl In The World" and "Isle Of Capri."

Many leading personalities have seen her act, among them Johnnie Ray, Louis Armstrong and Cecil B. DeMille.

Capitol have planned to release her first LP, "I Love To Sing," in America shortly.



Stars who turned out to boost their latest recordings on "Off The Record" last week-end were (l to r): Fredye Marshall, Ken Mackintosh, Sheila Buxton, Chas. McDevitt and Shirley Douglas.



Bearded John Ridley of London, came to the rescue of Sammy Davis, Jr., in Chicago recently. Sammy had to make a speech to the Urban League, and as he gets a bit nervous when he has to make speeches in front of a large crowd of people, he recorded it on a Grundig Majestic Hi-Fi recorder. At the same time he recorded a message to patrons of the National Playing Fields Association of Great Britain, wishing them well with their work. This tape has been sent to London.

until 1960. She should be a major star by then... Morris Levy may sell his Roulette label to 20th-Century Fox... Audio Fidelity has come out with the first Stereo LP...

In an interview with Mike Wallace, Pat Boone came through as an unusually intelligent, unprejudiced man. He has been approached to star in this entertainer. Asked about segregation in the South, Boone answered: "It sickens me. I'm a Southerner from Tennessee, but I can never remember a time that I felt that somebody was beneath me because he was a Negro."

How about McCarthy? "His methods were bad. And I feel strongly about one thing just because a fellow was a Communist five or ten years ago, if he's not one now, I don't think he should be fired, or even investigated in public where it might hurt him. People have a right to change their minds."

Do you think that conformity is stifling Americans? "That's a big question. So many people work from 9 to 5, go home, eat, watch television, sleep and start over again the next day. It's horrible. It's just terrible. There's so much that's great wonderful things to know and do that it's a shame, it's tragic to die without knowing these things, without experiencing them."

This week's inflammable quote from Harry Belafonte, made to Jay Harrison of "The New York Herald Tribune": "There is a lack of sanity

in American music—specifically in the popular field. You know, the gross mediocrity and simple-mindedness that passes for real music. The way lyrics are slapped together, recorded and then turned into a daily diet—24 hours a day on the radio. What miserable stuff most of it is.

"Whose fault is it? That's a tough question, but I think it's less the artist's fault than anyone else. I'd like to blame all the people in the arts who have no background in the arts. That's encompassing enough, isn't it?"

"I mean people who make a livelihood by exploiting artists and do nothing to replenish the drainage. I mean people who want to see an artist remain immature."

Eartha Kitt now working on her first mystery novel, "Julia"

Frank Sinatra has promised jittery TV and advertising executives that after he finishes his current movie, "Kings Go Forth," he won't concentrate on anything else but his waning TV series until August. Observed one pungent critic: "That's made the sponsor awfully happy. Likewise those viewers (just about all of us) who've been disenchanted with Sinatra's previous unbridled displays of slackness." Sinatra will do 26 programmes in 1958, starting in 20 of them of which 16 will be musicals.

Sinatra and Peter Lawford, meanwhile, will collaborate in an independent production about Las Vegas in which neither actor will appear. Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr., unique plot about a group of war veterans, who relive their army training to capture Las Vegas for 24 hours and loot the casinos.

Dorothy Dandridge will star with James Mason in "Infamy," an MGM film about contemporary mutiny at sea. Lionel Hampton's fifth world tour, opening Christmas day in Hamburg, is scheduled to encompass 374 concerts in 96 cities on a route ending in April in Israel. He will appear in Ghana for the first time in March.

I appreciated Alma Cogan's phone call the morning after CBS showed "The Sound of Jazz," an hour-long TV programme, for which Whitney Balliett and I had selected the musicians, tunes, sequence, etc. I hadn't been aware she was that interested in jazz, but she quite evidently is. Highspot of the show for me was Billie Holiday, seen reacting to solos by Lester Young, Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, Vic Dickenson, Gerry Mulligan and Roy Eldridge.

**ASK** any level-headed jazz lover to name the five greatest jazz pianists of all time, and Earl Hines and Erroll Garner are bound to figure somewhere in the list. Both are well represented on record, and both have exceptionally good new releases available this week.

**FATHA PLAYS FATS**—Vogue LAE 12067 (Jitterbug Waltz; Black And Blue; Darktown Strutter's Ball; Blue Turning Grey; Honeysuckle Rose; Squeeze Me; Ain't Misbehavin'; Keepin' Out Of Mischief; Can't Give You Anything But Love; Gonna Sit Right Down; Lulu's Back In Town; Two Sleepy People): A comparatively recent Hines recital of tunes associated with the late, great Fats Waller. Hines deserves his "Fatha" nickname—listen to his versatile piano work here and you'll soon discover why. "Squeeze Me," "Lulu," and the long "Honeysuckle" are real gems and the album as a whole sets a remarkably high standard. Guitarist Eddie Duran, bassist Dean Reilly and drummer Earl Watkins comprise a sympathetic, lightly swinging rhythm trio.

**EARL "FATHA" HINES**—Philips BBL 7185 (I Ain't Got Nobody; Caution Blues; My Monday Date; Down Among The Sheltering Palms; Love Me Tonight; 57 Varieties; You Can Depend On Me; Diane; Rosetta; These Foolish Things; Deed I Do; I Hadn't Anyone Till You): A further selection of inventive, melodic variations on well-known themes by the incomparable Mr. Hines. The first half-dozen titles, all recorded between 1928-32, are piano solos; bassist Al McKibbon and drummer J. C. Heard assist the keyboard genius on the remaining tracks. I won't single out any one title for special praise.

**THE GARNER TOUCH**—Philips BBL 7192 (Laura; Indiana; I'm In The Mood For Love; Way You Look Tonight; Penthouse Serenade; Frenesi; Play, Piano, Play; Body and Soul; I Cover The Waterfront; Lady Be Good; Mean To Me; Easy To Love): Few people have managed to extract a "personal" sound from the piano, but the unmistakable Garner style is pleasantly showcased here. There's a nice bouncy, happy "feel" about the faster tracks ("Play Piano" is a real swinger!) and Erroll displays a fine lyrical touch during the ballads. Bassists John Simmons and Wyatt Ruther and drummers Fats Heard and Shadow Wilson help out from time to time, but with or without accompanists, Garner is consistently superb!

**GUY CARAWAN**—77 LP/8 (Boll Weevil; Old Joe Clark; Old Blue; Ground Hog Hunt; Freight Train; Black Eyed Susie; This Is The Way That I Do Feel; 900 Miles; Dink's Song). Recorded during his recent trip to Britain, this album features nine tracks by one of America's best-

**BLACK SATIN**—Capitol T858 (The Folks Who Live On The Hill; If I Should Lose You; Starlight Souvenirs; What Is There To Say; Black Satin; You Don't Know What Love Is; Nothing Ever Changes My Love For You; One Morning In May; Moon Song; As Long As I Live; Let's Live Again). From a jazz viewpoint, this album by the George Shearing Quintet and Orchestra verges dangerously near boredom!

Record it simply as sophisticated, nicely arranged and brilliantly played background or "mood" music, and you'll have yourselves a ball. The jazz content is virtually nil, and even George's usually acceptable piano is rather dull.

**WAIL, FRANK, WAIL**—Esquire 32-033 ("Wail, Frank, Wail," "Zarou," "Fosterity," "Georgia," "Shutout," "Yaho"): Basic tenorist Frank Foster blows some virile, broad-toned solos on this set, and sounds very much at home in a small group setting. Newcomer Freeman Lee, whose trumpet work is just a little uncertain at times, appears on three tracks, and the



known and most accomplished folk-singers, Guy Carawan.

I like the appealing, lyrical quality of Guy's voice, also his subtle phrasing on tunes like "This Is The Way." His guitar and banjo playing is fine and there's a wonderfully relaxed, informal atmosphere about all Guy's performances on this album. "Boll Weevil" and "Ground Hog" are my particular favourites, but the album as a whole is well worth hearing.

**THE BUDDY DE FRANCO WAILERS**—Columbia 33CX 10091 (A Fine Romance; Perfidia; How Long Has This Been Going On; I Won't Dance; Sweet Blues; Check To Check; Let's Call The Whole Thing Off; Moonlight On The Ganges; Angel Eyes). A moderately entertaining set, not over-exciting or outstanding in any way, but worth a spin for some fine Harry Edison trumpet and a collection of better-than-average De Franco clarinet solos.

The nostalgic "How Long" and Edison's pleasantly simple "Sweet Blues" are the best tracks, and the latter also includes an excellent solo by guitarist Barney Kessel. Jimmy Rowles (piano), Bob Stone (bass) and Bobby White (drums) complete the rhythm section.

There's a distinct Ellington flavour about many of these tracks, best of which are "Tuxedo" (excellent Jo Hunter trumpet), "Swallowin'," "Rockin'," and "Dream" (fine usage of violin during the theme statement here). Graham blows some lyrical, broad-toned tenor, and Phil Seamen kicks things along from the drum chair. Highly recommended!

**KING PLEASURE**—Esquire EP157 (Parker's Mood; What Can I Say; Don't Get Scared; I'm Gone): Four commendable examples of vocalese—lyrics fashioned to improvised jazz solos—by the greatest performer in the idiom, King Pleasure. His work-outs on "Mood" and "Scared" are exceptionally good.

combo is completed by pianist Elmo Hope, bassist John Ore, and drummer Art Taylor

**HI-FI SUITE**—MGM-C-762 ("Feedback Fugue," "Bass Reflex," "Wow," "Flutter Waltz," "Reverberation," "Squawker," "Hi-Fi Pie," "Tweeter," "Woofer"): This nine-part suite, sub-titled "From Piccolo To Tuba In Rhythm," is the work of Leonard Feather and Dick Hyman, and is played by a specially organised orchestra under their joint direction. I find the whole affair quite intriguing, and especially enjoyed the solos of people like Joe Newman, Thad Jones, Frank Wess, Benny Powell, Oscar Pettiford and Eddie Safranski. Recommended!

If you're looking for vintage Ellington, sample **THE DUKE STEPS OUT** (HMV 7EG 8249)—you won't be disappointed. Best of these four fine titles (all recorded between 1929-30) is "Stevodero Stomp," but "Saraboga Swing," "The Duke Steps Out," and "Double Check Stomp" are no less enjoyable.

I wonder how many hands today can swing the way this one does? It all sounds so simple and easy, and the solos of people like Hodges, Carney, Ellington, Barney Bigard, Cootie Williams and Joe Nanton are gems that justify close inspection.

**PRESENTING KENNY GRAHAM**—Nixa NJL12 (Tuxedo Junction; Cuban Fantasy; Swallowin' The Blues; Olwen's Dream; Don't Get Around; Monkey Business; Rockin' F'ythm; I'll Get By; Time's A-Wastin'; Bongo Chant; I Dreamt I Dwell In Harlem): One of the most original-sounding albums produced in Britain in years, this record features a set of scores by one of our most talented yet underrated arrangers, Kenny Graham.

There's a distinct Ellington flavour about many of these tracks, best of which are "Tuxedo" (excellent Jo Hunter trumpet), "Swallowin'," "Rockin'," and "Dream" (fine usage of violin during the theme statement here). Graham blows some lyrical, broad-toned tenor, and Phil Seamen kicks things along from the drum chair. Highly recommended!

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# He walked in, played guitar and sang, wowed 'em—and disappeared!

A YOUNGSTER walks into the offices of a recording company, pulls out a battered guitar and gives an audition! That sequence of events seems almost standard procedure these days, although a decade or so ago it would have been considered a very rare occurrence—and highly irregular!

As it is, the story of Jimmie Rodgers follows the familiar pattern of the moment. Jimmie, like so many of his contemporaries, decided to take matters into his own hands, and display his wares before the executives of a major label. But there is one slight difference, so far as Jimmie is concerned.

He happened to choose a day when the entire office block was being redecorated, and he was forced to pick his way among a confusion of carpenters, painters and electricians to get to the recording manager's office.

Anyone less determined would have postponed the attempt, when they saw the existing state of chaos. But not so Jimmie—he was adamant about going through with it.

He couldn't have been more unwelcome at this particular time, but credit the powers-that-be with sufficient admiration for his nerve, that they granted him a hearing.

He unpacked his beat-up guitar, amidst the clatter of the builders' work and launched into a couple of songs called "Honeycomb" and "Their Hearts Were Full Of Spring."

The managers (a well-known pair, who sometimes record themselves under the names of Hugo and Luigi) listened attentively and non-committally. "Come back in a few days, and we'll let you know the result," Jimmie was told.

## A 'find'

Obviously, they could not discuss their respective opinions in front of the young man they were auditioning, even though each was trying hard to contain his excitement at the prospect of having found a great new money-spinner.

As soon as they were free to talk, they compared notes—and without hesitation, decided that they had found a potential disc star.

But it wasn't as easy as that. For although comparatively raw, Jimmie

had had some experience of trying to break into show business. And when he did not receive outright acceptance, but was invited to call again, he interpreted this as being the old-fashioned "brush-off." So he promptly disappeared!

Within a matter of hours, the heads of Roulette Records had made up their minds to put Jimmie Rodgers on disc without delay.

But try as they may—and they made hundreds of phone calls in the course of a concentrated search, involving every night club in New York—he just couldn't be located. And it wasn't until six months later that he was finally tracked down in his home town of Camus, Washington.

## Sent fare

They immediately sent him, by express delivery, the fare to go to New York for a record session. Jimmie needed no further bidding, and arrived without delay. The two titles he was asked to cut were the same as those with which he had auditioned.

Roulette realised the gimmick value of "Honeycomb," and embarked upon an intense exploitation campaign on this title. Within days, after being heard on nearly every radio station in the country, the record was beginning to register.

It is impossible to assess public reaction, or to explain why they should suddenly champion a completely unknown artist in this fashion. But the fact is that in a surprisingly short space of time Jimmie Rodgers found himself sitting on top of the hit parade, with the best-selling record in the States—and being acclaimed as a brilliant and versatile new singer!

If there is such a thing as an overnight success, then Jimmie comes nearer to that description than any other name which occurs to me.

His background had never been especially musical, even though his

## That's the crazy success story of



# JIMMIE RODGERS

mother had played piano in one or two groups. It was she, indeed, who gave him his basic knowledge of both piano and guitar, but during his school days he did not consider them seriously.

At the outbreak of the Korean war, he joined the Air Force, and it was during his four years' service that he learned many of the songs which now form his repertoire. His Commanding Officer encouraged him to enter various camp shows and con-

certs, and in this way he developed a feeling for entertainment.

The flare-up in Korea may not have solved many political problems, but at least it provided the solution to Jimmie's own personal problem. For now he knew what he wanted to do when he was demobbed—sing professionally.

Unfortunately, when the time came he could make little impression and, in order to make a living, he roamed over the Pacific north-west, working on logging camps and farms. The only advantage to this was that he increased his knowledge of folk music by listening to the songs of his fellow-workers.

Slowly, he began to get jobs in some of the smaller local clubs.

And then one day, when he was performing in a tiny niterie in Nashville, a friend heard him and persuaded him to go to New York to see if he could break into the recording business. And that is where our story began!

As invariably happens when an artist hits the big-time, Jimmie found himself inundated with radio, TV and cabaret offers. And he is still in the throes of fulfilling these dates.

But meanwhile, this 24-year-old newcomer has cut another two titles, which are rapidly soaring into public recognition, and which look set fair to provide him with another best-seller.

## Competition

So far as Britain is concerned, Jimmie has very tough competition. For the important side of his record—"Kisses Sweeter Than Wine"—has also been waxed by one of our most consistent record sellers, Frankie Vaughan.

It is no fun, even for a fellow Englishman, to have to compete against Frankie. But Jimmie, without the assistance of personal exploitation and long-standing public affection, is faced with a formidable task.

But such is the ability of this talented newcomer, and the degree to which his personality has already registered, that he looks fully capable of overcoming this—and any other—obstacle which may present itself, along the road he is travelling . . . the road to stardom.

DEREK JOHNSON.



# PAUL ANKA 'GOLD DISC' PRESENTATION PLANNED FOR SUNDAY

PAUL ANKA will receive his "Gold Disc"—signalling sales exceeding one million copies of his "Diana" recording in the British Isles—during his first-house performance on the stage of Regal Theatre, Edmonton, this Sunday (December 22).

The presentation will be made by Mr. F. J. Lockwood, chairman of Electric and Musical Industries; it will take place in front of the audience, when Paul has concluded singing "Diana" prior to the conclusion of that concert.

Technical difficulties have made his receiving this award on TV an impossibility. Firstly, Anka could not delay his return to America (which eliminated the "Jack Jackson Show" on Sunday night); furthermore, an attempt to film the programme in advance was impracticable, as his dates throughout this week have taken place in the provinces—not allowing sufficient time to visit London for the ceremony.

After the Edmonton concert, Paul and his touring manager, John McCadden, return by air to New York—where rehearsals commence on Monday morning for his appearance in Patti Page's "The Big Record" show on Christmas Day.

Paul also appears at Cardiff Gaumont (tonight, Friday) and for three shows at Nottingham Odeon tomorrow (Saturday) before going back home.

## They clapped for Eve

THE old negro spiritual "He's Got The Whole World In His Hands," which has recently crept into the "pop" class, saved the Tom Arnold pantomime "Aladdin," at the Palace, Manchester, from being a bore.

It's sung by Eve Boswell, bringing tremendous zest and sincerity to the title role.

She raises this walking-paced show—which, at its opening on Tuesday, ran for nearly four hours—to an exciting level, punching over "Chickadee" and "Alone" with the force of a prize fighter.

The first-nighters rose to her clapping rhythm and when they screamed for "Sugar Bush" and

"Pickin' A Chicken," Eve laughed and cracked to Charlie Windsor, the MD, "That's funny, Charlie! It's just as we rehearsed it."

Comedians Norman Evans (Widow Twankey) and Ken Dodd (Wishee) worked hard with old gags and sketches, some of which have seen better days.

There was a welcome for veteran radio star Leonard Henry, as Vizie, Ann Wilson, as principal girl, and the former light opera singer Arthur Richards, who battled with lines right out of Victorian melodrama.

The singing was uniformly good—which is more than I can say for the dancing—all it needs is a beat.

PEGGY WALSH.



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## THIS IS NAT "KING" COLE

(With arrangements and conducting by Nelson Riddle, Nat Cole sings—Dreams Can Tell A Lie; I Just Found Out About Love; Too Young To Go Steady; Forgive My Heart; Annabelle; Nothing Ever Changes My Love For You; To The Ends Of The Earth; I'm Gonna Laugh You Out Of My Life; Someone You Love; Love Me As Though There Were No Tomorrow; That's All; Never Let Me Go.)

The soft, soothing, dulcet tones of Cole's voice, singing this romantic collection of songs, is Nat at his very best. There's quality and sincerity in this Capitol LP, capturing the love-mood perfectly.

## OUR VERY OWN

Geoff Love and his orchestra give a polished, majestic interpretation of twelve melodies of the late Victor Young, which include "Around The World," "Golden Earrings" (with a beguine tempo), "My Foolish Heart," and "To Love You," as a tango.

Love's arrangements are full of imagination and one feels that Victor Young himself, had he been alive, would have been very impressed with this album—which is high praise for Geoff Love. This is a Columbia disc.

## ELLA and LOUIS AGAIN

(Vols. 1 and 2)

Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong have got together for Norman Granz and his Verve label, and in these 12-inchers, issued by HMV, two great vocal stylists put new life into 19 well-known "standards."

They have recorded together before, but these tracks are all made in 1957, and the enterprising Granz has introduced a gimmick or two. For instance, he kept the tapes running during rehearsals . . . just in case. And so good was the "Stompin' At The Savoy" rehearsal, that's the version you hear in the album!

Other numbers, which will hypnotise you with their persistent beat, are "Let's Do It," "Makin' Whoopee," "Let's Call The Whole Thing Off," and "A Fine Romance." Ella and Louis duet as well as sing solo—and they get together quite well, considering how individual they both are.

Louis plays some mean trumpet, too, with the Oscar Peterson Trio and Louis Bellson (drums) in the meaty, beaty background.



## MOTION PICTURE SOUND-STAGE

Gordon Macrae sings a dozen famous songs from big pictures, with his resonant, strong voice. Most of the numbers have been given attention before on LP's, but Macrae gives "Easy To Love," "Dancing In The Dark," and "You're A Sweetheart," an extra something which lifts this Capitol LP above the average.

## SIX-FIVE SPECIAL

(Based on the BBC-TV series, on Parlophone label, with Don Lang and his "Frantic Five" [courtesy of HMV]—Six-Five Special, Ham-shackle Daddy, and You Started Something; John Barry Seven—Let's Have a Wonderful Time, Rock-a-Billy Boogie and Every Which Way; Terry Wayne [courtesy of Columbia]—Boppp! The Blues and Teenage Boogie; Jim Dale—Crazy Dream and Just Born To Be Your Baby; Laurie London—Pick A Bale Of Cotton, and Up Above My Head; The King Brothers—Party Time; Jimmy Jackson [courtesy of Columbia] Six-Five Five.)

A lively platter's-worth of piping hot rock, served up by some of our younger and more promising exponents. Add to those already mentioned in the paragraph above, such ace accompanists as Tony Osborne, Geoff Love and Ken Jones, plus the Rita Williams Singers and the "Six-Five" producer himself, Jack Good, supervising, and you have an album you'll play time and again.

## GOSPEL TRAIN

Sister Rosetta Tharpe gives everything she's got to her vocal preaching, as she chants "Up Above My Head," "Two Little Fishes, Five Loaves Of Bread," "99! Won't Do" and other revival songs, which she says, "just come naturally to me."

## by ALLEN EVANS

There's a great power behind her unruly singing and her followers, as well as those introducing themselves to her for the first time, will find this Mercury album an intriguing one.

## ON REVIVAL DAY

The new jazz craze in America is for religious songs served up with a steady beat. This Capitol album certainly has excitement, as the St. Paul Church Choir of Los Angeles (a coloured aggregation of 150 voices) chant in unison—usually behind a soloist—twelve joyously sung hymns-cum-spirituals, such as "Didn't It Rain?" and "In The Garden." A compelling and unusual LP.

with only a piano accompaniment, the voices supplying the other "orchestral" sounds.

## WARM BRANDY

Dolores Gray—London's "Annie"—gives an intoxicating warmth to a selection of romance-plus numbers. From "Penthouse Serenade (When We're Alone)" to "Don't Blame Me," from "Close Your Eyes" to "You're My Thrill," the throbbing voice of Dolores Gray very much with you.

Sid Feller has arranged and conducted the accompaniment, using a varied assortment of instruments, from cellos, strings and woodwinds to bongo drums and bass flutes.

## VOGUE RECORDS New Releases

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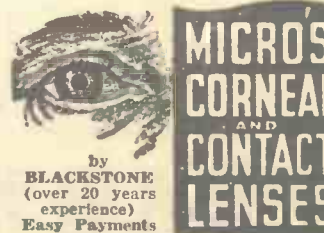
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## Perry heads The Ratings

AN interesting survey recently published concentrates on viewing positions of U.S.-TV musical shows. According to Nielsen ratings, these are placings of top sixteen coast-to-coast programmes; their research is based on a complete week, resulting as follows: 1 Perry Como; 2 Dinah Shore; 3 Lawrence Welk (Saturday show); 4 Eddie Fisher; 5 George Gobel; 6 Lawrence Welk (Monday show); 7 "Club Oasis"; 8 Patti Page's "Big Record"; 9 Pat Boone; 10 "Hit Parade"; 11 Frank Sinatra; 12 Gisele Mackenzie; 13 Rosemary Clooney; 14 Polly Bergen; 15 Patrice Munsel; 16 Guy Mitchell. Because they are both considered variety presentations, neither Ed. Sullivan or Steve Allen have been included in this list—but Perry Como's superiority is overwhelming; his rating figure is four times higher than Guy Mitchell!

A pianist with fast fingers away from keyboard (but ego shattered by failure of amorous advances), caused dismissal of feminine singer featured in same small group; now the Alley Cat's hawk eyes are focused on this rat, and if necessary, Jack Jackson's "Tiddles" will be asked to assist in laying trap for this despicable vermin... Phil Harris is reported making a comeback at Las Vegas (joined by his wife, ex-screen star Alice Faye) early next spring... Disc sales progress by Petula Clark likely to land attractive U.S. project early in '58.

These are the selections of yours truly in "NME Super Annual" Critics' Choice, for 1957: Best Record — Frank Sinatra's "You're

Sensational"; Song—"Around The World"; New Disc Artist—Nancy Whiskey; Non-Vocal Record—Mantovani's "Around The World"; Musical Director—Nelson Riddle; Novelty Recording—Johnnie Ray-Frankie Laine, "Up Above My Head"; Outstanding Singer—Ronnie Hilton; Disc Personality—Harry Belafonte; Composer—Jule Styne; LP Album—"A Night In Las Vegas With The Mary Kaye Trio"; Most Improved Disc Artist—Vic Damone; Worst Record—"Short Fat Fannie" (Larry Williams).

Latest personality invited to write his memoirs is Col. Tom Parker—a fabulous showman, who has guided Elvis Presley to stardom under his management. Producer Freddie Carpenter is having to spend more

## TAIL-PIECES by THE ALLEY CAT



Alma Cogan Tommy Steele Petula Clark Frank Sinatra

time at Liverpool than anticipated—rehearsing the Tommy Steele pantomime presentation. Whilst Pye-Nixa are hopeful that in America Mercury will issue John Fraser's "Why Don't They Understand," HMV release the Stateside hit by George Hamilton IV within next few days here.

Will RCA present Harry Belafonte with a "Gold Disc" (for his million-seller in Britain, "Mary's Boy Child"?)... Bing Crosby is expected to play a fortnight at Las Vegas Sands Hotel, just to oblige a director of this venue—Frank Sinatra... If any special reason is responsible for Malcolm Vaughan outselling his rivals with "My Special Angel," give the credit to HMV chief, Wally Ridley.



MGM have commissioned a screen musical "The Private Lives Of Henry VIII"—from Sandy Wilson, British composer of "Boy Friend" fame... In order to televise on Jack Jackson's show last Sunday, long return journeys from provinces to London (during pantomime rehearsals)—included Dickie Valentine (from Newcastle), Ronnie Hilton (Sheffield), Ruby Murray (Liverpool) and the Jones Boys (Birmingham)... New York's largest mail-order record firm lists "Count Basie In London" No. 16 in LP best sellers' chart.

Arriving home on December 27 will be the Tanner Sisters—following a South African two months' variety tour with Tommy Trinder... Surprise announcement from Hollywood: Mel Tormé will wax albums for a label sold exclusively in supermarkets... Cowboy/screen star Hugh O'Brian (having recorded an album of songs), makes guest vocal appearance in Dinah Shore's U.S.-TV show.



Currently riding high here with "Ma, He's Making Eyes" disc, Johnny Otis claimed he was a joint composer of "Hound Dog"—but New York Federal Court dismissed his suit against Elvis Presley's music publishing firm... After reading British press quotes in comedian Alan King's two-page advertisement in American "Variety" publication, you could think he was a bigger success than Judy Garland here!

To remain in top bracket of highly paid variety stars, Russ Hamilton needs another record hit, before attempting next stage tour... "Marco Polo" will be Mario Lanza's next film in Italy, following British concerts early next year... Choice of Robert Morley (to introduce ATV "Sunday Night At The London Palladium" programmes in January) is a daring gamble by Val Parnell... When British viewers receive BBC tele-filmed "Perry Como Show" next month, guest artists will include screen star Ginger Rogers on two dates... Last Sunday, chief of U.S. Liberty Records Sy Waronoker, arrived in London—to supervise a disc session here by Julie London on following evening... Fulham F.C. professional soccer player Jeff Taylor is a member of well-known TV vocal choir, Cliff Adams' "Granadiers"... When his college studies are completed, a change of residence (from New Jersey to Hollywood) is likely by Pat Boone and his family.

Accordian dealer Ferdinando Gaudini is attracting many celebrities to his Pinocchio Restaurant in Soho; Sophia Loren lunched there last Friday, whilst earlier this month, distinguished guests included Grace Kelly with her husband, Prince Rainier... 20th Century-Fox are planning to star Bing Crosby in "Holiday For Lovers"—to be filmed in Europe... Jerry Lewis takes the greatest delight in calling Betty Hutton "Hedy Button".



After a month's holiday in Britain, Hollywood manager Bob Gunter sailed home from Southampton on Sunday; his clients include Julie London, Mel Tormé, Les Baxter, Andre Previn and Shorty Rogers... Long lapse of time since his last Philips release probably indicates David Hughes will join another label shortly... A new act is being staged for Billy Eckstine by top American cabaret producer, Nick Castle... Hope Capitol here can cope with two hits in Top Ten—and that

Frank Sinatra goes "All The Way" to reach No. 1 slot... Musicians' Union have refused permission for Ivy Benson Orchestra tour of Germany... Asked by compere David Jacobs on Saturday's Show Band broadcast for title of closing number, Cyril Stapleton replied: "It will be 'Slow Train Blues,' because of complaints we have not played this tune recently"; then Cyril cracked: "The composer, Eric Winston, has been making all the complaints!"

A new home at Mill Hill (Middlesex) has been purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Edmundo Ros... Instead of sending Christmas cards this year, Lew and Leslie Grade have made a handsome donation to the Sunshine Home For Blind Babies... British music publishers are finding Harry Belafonte a tough businessman; he refuses to allow royalties on record sales here with any title copyrighted by his own company.

The David Whitfield critics will be shocked by his sensational performance as "Robinson Crusoe" at London Palladium... Lonnie Donegan refused an offer to televise in "Sunday Night At The Prince Of Wales" this week-end... Val Parnell has announced the appointment as Press Director for ATV, of Robert Stannage, who formerly held the same position with Warner Brothers.



Now that Jimmie Rodgers has entered best sellers here with "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine" (closely followed by Frankie Vaughan, with same title), this could result in fierce battle — with publisher Bert Corri renaming the song "The Blood Flowed Like Wine"... Nice gesture by Alma Cogan, who telephoned from New York to London last Friday—to thank NME Managing Director Maurice Kinn for a suggestion in her cabaret act, which (according to Alma) was the highlight of her performance... Currently Ricky Nelson is red hot as a big hit disc maker in America; however, at a California concert, correspondent Dane Marlowe reports attendance was approximately 500 people, whilst Nelson's personal fee exceeded £1,000.

Music Industry Council of Hollywood is solidly campaigning for Mel Tormé to receive a TV "Emmy" (as 1957 best supporting actor in "The Comedian") and Frank Sinatra for an "Oscar" (or equally high accolade) for great starring rôle in "Pal Joey"... Dave Barbour, who was once married to, and composed several songs with, Peggy Lee, provides musical accompaniment for new album waxed by stylish Jeri Southern... Rather embarrassing for American Decca label — their subsidiary groups have scored many more hits than parent company: congratulations to manager Bob Thiele (U.S. Coral and Brunswick) for No. 1 hits, Debbie Reynolds's "Tammy," The Crickets' "That'll Be The Day," plus Buddy Holly's fast rising "Peggy Sue," Jackie Wilson's "Reet Petite," plus consistent successes with Steve Lawrence (including "Fraulin") besides reliable sales from Don Cornell, the Lawrence Welk Band (leading orchestral album favourite), Johnny Desmond, Teresa Brewer, and vocal groups the Modernaires and the Lennon Sisters.

Teenagers are enthusiastic about "Hand Jive"—title of new course (with a publication of same name) presented by Jack Heath, Good Music live-wire director in Britain; with instructions and illustrations, fans will revel at Bud Allen's simple plan for an entrancing pastime... Johnnie Ray will probably be extremely surprised that a London friend (Josie Boulton) made her stage debut on Monday in a "Workshop Theatre" presentation at London's "Q" Theatre; directed by Robert O'Neil, Miss B. played the rôle which featured Ann Miller in film, "The Women"... Within three weeks of issue, Johnny Mathis' sales of "Wild Is The Wild" are estimated beyond 400,000; looks like fourth consecutive smash hit for him with this Dimitri Tiomkin composition — written with co-author Ned Washington.

Although MGM chiefs (particularly Sam Goldwyn) are anxious to retain him for musical direction of forthcoming "Porgy And Bess" film, composer/conductor Johnny Green hopes to secure release within six months... Jimmy Jacques (an

# CHAS McDEVITT SKIFFLE GROUP with SHIRLEY DOUGLAS "Across The Bridge" "Deep Down"



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unknown artist) is confidently tipped in some quarters as Jack Baverstock's best new capture for Fontana label—launched next month... For many years, Cab Calloway has been stuck on several labels—now he joins Gone, the record firm reputed to be coming into prominence.

Chief of MCA, Jules Stein, visits London on Christmas Eve — to observe development progress here... In Frankie Vaughan's second screen rôle (currently shooting at Elstree Studios) he is in trouble with the law again; advance reports indicate Anna Neagle has another winner with this production... Visiting London this week—producer of forthcoming "Jamboree" film,

Max Rosenberg... Pressure of space last week caused deletion of details of Perry Como's big selling discs in Britain, in tribute article by Malcolm Johns; titles include "Don't Let The Stars Get In Your Eyes," "Wanted," "Idle Gossip" and "More"/"Glendora," besides the songs mentioned during the past five years.

Sam Phillips (responsible for discovering Elvis Presley) has a new recording artist—a property he is unlikely to sell for a low sum—named Jerry Lee Lewis... A Midland reader reports that he is a keen Eula Parker fan—watches her on ATV "Lunch Box" whenever he stays home with sickness.



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