

IN THIS ISSUE:
EXTRA 4-PAGE
SUPPLEMENT ON



LONNIE DONEGAN

&

JOHNNIE RAY



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IF I COULD LIVE MY
LIFE AGAIN

BILLY FURY'S
MAYBE
TOMORROW

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RECORDINGS —WATCH FOR DETAILS

HARRY SIMEONE'S 'DIFFERENT' SOUND PROMOTES NEW LABEL TO MAJOR FORCE

THERE is no doubt that the Top Rank disc concern is rapidly developing into a major force in the recording industry. And when they have fully established themselves as one of this country's major recording companies, as seems inevitable, they will surely regard the foundation stone of their success as . . . Harry Simeone.

Why should this hitherto-unknown artist create such an impact upon the British public? Well, of course, we mustn't ignore the fact that, this being the first release, Top Rank launched an intensive publicity campaign on Harry's "Little Drummer Boy" disc.

What's more, it had the advantage (with which all issues on this label are blessed) of being played in all Rank cinemas throughout the country.

But this alone was not sufficient. The record itself had to be saleable. And that's precisely what it turned out to be. Because "Little Drummer Boy" has a different sound—a strangely haunting and captivating charm, strong enough even to shake the States out of their overwhelming rock mentality.

Strong competition

Across the Atlantic, the Simeone disc rose to No. 13 in the "Billboard" charts, and a few weeks later attained a similar position over here. Further proof to the contention that Britain is more melody-conscious than America is the fact that two other versions of the song have found their way into the NME Charts.

The Beverley Sisters' version has just topped Simeone's in popular appeal, which is not surprising when one considers the affection in which the singing sisters are held here.

Despite that, the achievement of Harry Simeone in reaching No. 13 in Britain is really amazing—more so, when one realises that this is



HARRY SIMEONE

JOHNNIE RA(Y)DIANT!

BOYISH Johnnie Ray breezed onto the London stage again on Monday and for the seventh time completely won over his audience.

It happened at London's Palace Theatre, where Johnnie is playing for a fortnight. Although mid-act screams were missing, the Ray favourite tunes were still there—for Johnnie has only added two new numbers to his repertoire since last we saw him in the capital.

But no matter. The fans still applauded loudly for the now well-tried repertoire.

He opened with "Who's Sorry Now?", a lively choice and a nice compliment to the outgoing star at the Palace—Connie Francis. "Shake A Hand" is an old favourite and the fast-tempoed gospel song created much excitement and got the crowd in the mood for the next effort by the slim Johnnie—"Walking My Baby Back Home," another Ray old timer.

New to his act is "It's All In The Game," sung with great sincerity and power, and a big new winner for him. Next the hand-clapper, "Yes Tonight—Josephine," followed by his evergreen "Walking In The Rain."

Changing the mood, he went gay with "Somebody Stole My Gal," and then probably his most dramatic number—"All The Way." It was evident by this time that Johnnie works as hard as ever and the perspiration was dripping off his face. He still wore that strained expression at times, changing it in a twinkling to one of boyish happiness.

He still fumbled for words, and once or twice lost the beat. A new number to Johnnie's programme came next—"Love," the

the first time ever that a new British record label has appeared in the Top Twenty with its very first record release.

Although a newcomer to the record lists, Harry Simeone has been a musical backroom-boy for many years, having been staff arranger to the Columbia Broadcasting System, Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians, and Paramount Pictures—in that order.

He comes from Newark in New Jersey, which is also the birthplace of Connie Francis—though Harry would be the first to admit that their childhood days did not coincide. To be exact, Harry was born in 1911!

The Pennsylvanians

After graduating from the Juilliard School of Music, he immediately joined CBS, and remained there until bandleader Fred Waring recognised the worth of his arrangements in 1939, and took him onto his permanent staff.

Many of the Waring records issued in this country during the 1939-45 period flowed from Harry's pen. He has also composed several numbers, although I can only trace one on record in this country—called "Drugstore Cowboy," it is included on Fred Waring's "For Listening Only" Brunswick LP.

When he moved to Paramount, he worked in conjunction with the late Victor Young, on such pictures as "Here Come The Waves," "The Affairs Of Susan," and the Bing Crosby-Bob Hope "Road" series.

For the past seven years, Harry has been both arranger and conductor for a popular weekly American TV show, called "The Firestone Hour." This keeps him well occupied, though he does also manage to arrange for various other radio and TV shows.

And although his name is completely new on the British scene, the very fact that over seven million copies of his own compositions and arrangements have been sold in America shows that he is by no means a novice.

If he maintains the standard of his present hit, the "Little Drummer Boy" could be the forerunner of a whole procession of Harry Simeone hit recordings.

passionate summing up of the many facets of his emotion. Johnnie gave it his all and made it powerful listening. Next, more drama in "With These Hands," and his twelfth song speeded up the pace with "Up Above My Head."

Johnnie, as ever, paid a handsome tribute to the orchestra—this time on the stage with him and conducted by Harold Collins. Another round of applause went to Herman Kapp, Johnnie's MD, who plays drums for him by special permission of the Musicians' Union. Kappy, as he is called, beat out a mean rhythm and set the tempo for the orchestra and Johnnie alike.

No Ray performances would be

complete without his "Little White Cloud That Cried" and "Cry"—and they came next, Johnnie sitting down at the piano for the first time during these numbers.

His final number was, again as usual, "Going To Walk And Talk With My Lord," the jubilee revival number working up to an exciting climax.

Johnnie is still the great showman, using his lean, elegant hands, his boyish figure, his unsteady legs to maximum effect. Flowers were strewn at his feet from front row girls and five girls in a box; who threw necklaces of pink blooms down to him. Johnnie laughed and murmured: "This is a flower show!" A.E.



THE BEVERLEY SISTERS

WHO'S WHERE

(Week commencing March 16)

DAVID WHITFIELD, PETULA CLARK, ROY CASTLE Southampton Gaumont. MICHAEL HOLLIDAY Belfast Opera House. MARINO MARINI QUARTET, JOAN REGAN Shrewsbury Granada. JACKIE DENNIS London Metropolitan. TOMMY STEELE, YANA London Coliseum. BILLY DANIELS Manchester Hippodrome. RUBY MURRAY, GARY MILLER Birmingham Hippodrome.

ALMA COGAN Glasgow Empire. MURRAY CAMPBELL, AUDREY JEANS, TINO VALDI Flinsbury Park Empire. ORESTE KIRKOP Leeds Empire. CONNIE FRANCIS, FRANK WEIR Liverpool Empire. CHARLIE DRAKE, EDMUND HOCKRIDGE, BERNARD BRESSLAU London Palladium. TONI DALLI, TRACY SISTERS Chiswick Empire.

RADIO LUXEMBOURG

FULL PROGRAMMES - 208 METRES

SUNDAY 6 Beaver Club; 6.15 Serenade; 6.45 Accordion Time; 7 Juke Box; 7.30 The King Brothers Show; 7.45 Teddy Johnson and Pearl Carr; 8 Frank Sinatra; 8.30 Take Your Pick; 9 Ward Sister; 9.30 This I Believe; 10 Record Rendezvous; 10.30 Woodbine Quiz Time; 11 Top Twenty.

MONDAY 6 Non-Stop Pops; 6.30 Monday's Requests; 8 All Star Jubilee; 8.15 Film Time; 8.30 Smash Hits; 9 Deep River Boys; 9.15 The New Lawrence Welk Show; 9.45 Perry Como; 10 Jack Jackson; 10.30 Pete Murray; 11 How Christian Science Heals; 11.15 Frank and Ernest; 11.30 The World Tomorrow.

TUESDAY 6 Non-Stop Pops; 6.30 Tuesday's Requests; 7.45 Gala Party; 8 The Denals Day Show; 8.30 Godfrey Winn's Concert; 9 All Star Jubilee; 9.15 The Big Ben Banjo Band; 9.30 Your Record Date; 9.45 Records From America; 10 The Capitol Show; 10.30 Fontana Fan Fare; 11 Revival Time; 11.30 The World Tomorrow.

WEDNESDAY 6 Non-Stop Pops; 6.30 Wednesday's Requests; 8 Liberace; 8.30 First Time Round; 9 Embassy Double Top; 9.15 I Remember When; 9.45 Favourites Old and New; 10 Pete Murray; 11 Back To The Bible; 11.30 The Hour Of Decision.

THURSDAY 6 Non-Stop Pops; 6.30 Thursday's Requests; 7.45 Record Hop; 8 The Bristol Club; 8.30 Lucky Number; Song Parade; 9.15 This Week's Top Discs; 9.45 George Gershwin; 10 It's Record Time; 10.45 Italy Slings; 10 Old Fashioned Revival Hour; 11.30 Radio Bible Class.

FRIDAY 6 Non-Stop Pops; 6.30 Friday's Requests; 8 Band Parade; 8.30 Musical Monograms; 9 David Jacobs; 9.15 Dickie Valentine Show; 9.30 Sporting Challenge; 9.45 Capitol Choice; 10.15 Record Hop; 11 The Voice of Prophecy; 11.30 The Bishop S. C. Johnson Programme.

SATURDAY 6 Non-Stop Pops; 6.30 Saturday's Requests; 7.30 Ranch House Serenade; 8 Jamboree; 9.45 Juke Box Parade; 10 Irish Requests; 10.30 Spin With The Stars; 11 Bringing Christ To The Nations; 11.30 Record Round Up.

AFN HIGHLIGHTS

547, 344, 271 METRES

SUNDAY 12.05 Family Theatre; 3.05 Scope; 5.05 Recollection At 30; 7.05 People Are Funny; 8.05 AFN Playhouse; 9.15 International Bandstand; 10.05 Romance In Music.

MONDAY 11.15 Request Show; 12.05 Melody Mart; 1.05 Outpost Concert; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 3.15 One Man's Family; 3.30 C. P. MacGregor; 5.15 New Yorkers; 7.30 Crime Classics; 9.30 Golden Record Gallery; 10.05 Late Request Show.

TUESDAY 11.15 Request Show; 12.05 Melody Mart; 1.05 Outpost Concert; 3.15 One Man's Family; 6.05 Music In The Air; 7.05 What's My Line; 9.30 Modern Jazz, 1959; 10.05 Late Request Show.

WEDNESDAY 11.15 Request Show; 11.55 Les Paul; 12.05 Melody Mart; 3.15 One Man's Family; 4.05 Request Show; 6.05 Music In The Air; 7.05 Groucho Marx;

8.30 Suspense; 9.30 Jim Reeves; 10.30 Late Request Show.

THURSDAY 11.15 Request Show; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 3.15 One Man's Family; 4.05 Request Show; 6.05 Music In The Air; 9.30 World of Music; 10.05 Late Request Show.

FRIDAY 11.15 Request Show; 11.55 Les Paul; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 2.30 Robert Q. Lewis; 3.15 One Man's Family; 4.05 Request Show; 6.05 Music In The Air; 7.05 Rusty Draper; 8.30 City Hospital; 9.30 Stars Of Jazz; 11.05 Late Request Show.

SATURDAY 11.15 Request Show; 12.45 Guest Star; 1.05 Saturday Salute In Music; 3.30 Merv Griffin; 4.05 Request Show; 6.05 Music In The Air; 7.30 Upbeat Saturday Night; 8.05 America's Popular Music; 9.05 Dixie Beat; 9.30 Cha Cha Time; 11.05 Late Request Show.



JOHNNIE in action at rehearsal

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SCOOP ★ PRESLEY THROUGH FEMININE EYES —

HAZEL GUILD, American journalist in Germany, has seen the world's rock 'n' roll king several times and sums up —



ELVIS poses by the milk white, super-charged BMW sports car he was given by the workers. He waves to the crowd who wait outside to see Elvis in person. He often finds love messages in lipstick on his car.

ELVIS IS LONELY

EVEN with millions of dollars, there's one problem you can't beat—loneliness! And Elvis Presley, world's rock 'n' roll king, and probably the world's most famous soldier, is a lonely lad.

He misses his mom, who died last summer. He misses his buddies in the States. He misses home in Tennessee, and that fine Southern cooking. All the money and fame in the world can't make up for these lacks!

So before you start to criticise Elvis, to talk about his hip-swinging and high-livin' antics, let's take a look at the real Elvis—a lonely GI, a boy hiding behind a uniform.

"I want to do the best possible job that I can in the Army," almond-eyed Elvis Presley told me recently. The blue-eyed six-footer sat quietly in the lobby of his hotel, which he has since left, in Bad Nauheim, West Germany, as we chatted. His surroundings in an old-fashioned, quiet, little family hotel seemed at considerable odds with Elvis, the hep young pelvis-swayer.

Uniform

But he sank into a deep chair and relaxed, perhaps here finding some of the homelike atmosphere for which he's been so lonely.

As soon as El gets home, like most other soldiers, he clambers out of his uniform and crawls into his civvies—to give him a mark of individuality, the stamp of being a person and not a military number.

The night I spoke to him, he was wearing dark grey flannel slacks and a jazzy flame-red turtle-neck sweater of heavy wool.

"I brought the sweater from Hollywood," he added nostalgically. "It's pretty comfortable."

Elvis off stage is a great contrast to the guitar-swinging, body-grating extrovert that he reveals to the audience. He's calm and controlled, quiet and relaxed—but mighty serious about his current career as a soldier and his future back in the entertainment business.

"I'd expected to be hounded and hated when I became a soldier," Elvis admitted. Plenty of boys in uniform had threatened to "get him" when he cropped his sideburns and became a GI.

"When I came in the Army I was expecting a lot of kidding and so-called harrassment from the other boys. People told me when I got in they would make it hard for me. But it was really just the opposite. I think that anything that happened to me in the Army I brought on myself. When the fellows found out I was doing the same things they were, on guard detail, road marching, KP (punishment for minor faults), they figured we're all alike."

He admitted that he got his share



Unusual picture of ELVIS these days. He's in civvy clothes during a short leave trip to Munich to watch his friend Jerome Courtland filming there. Interesting note—Elvis is wearing the same sports jacket he wore when recording "Jailhouse Rock" music two years ago.

and a male secretary, are all now living in a rented home in Bad Nauheim.

Like other soldiers whose families are in Europe, Elvis is permitted to live with them.

Since his mother's death, Elvis is trying to find as much of a home as possible in Europe—and, he points out, it hasn't been easy, being in a strange land with new customs and cultures.

Elvis talks earnestly about his Army job. He's proud, and justifiably so, of doing an excellent job as jeep driver with Hq. Co., 1st Medium Tank Battalion of the Third Armoured Division, which means he does a mighty fine task of piloting his little Army wagon through the ruts.

Elvis' outfit did such a bang-up good job on their recent month-long manoeuvres in the rugged Grafenwoehr training section, each member of the unit rated a special three-day pass.

Elvis took his leave time over his birthday, January 6, when he marked up his 22nd year.

"I'm mighty homesick at times," he added when we met. "And I'll be real glad when I can go back to the States."

That won't be for quite a while, though, as his normal tour of duty ends only in March, 1960. Meantime, he issues a most sincere, "I hope the folk back home haven't forgotten me."

He needn't worry too much on that score, though. The boy modestly admits that he's way ahead financially. During 1958 his earnings on hit records brought him over two million dollars in royalties, a considerable jump over the \$94 a month he earns as private, first class, with Uncle Sam's finest.

More mature

"Being in the Army is a good experience for any young man," Elvis comments. Unlike some other famed American entertainers who resented the two years out of the limelight, Elvis points out: "When you come out you are more mature, more capable of thinking for yourself."

He's tried to go about his personal life quietly, too. Although he's often dated a pretty German girl, 17-year-old secretary Margrit Durgin, he comments, "That heavy romance talk is a lot of publicity."

Just recently, too, the BMW factory in Germany presented him with a handsome white sports car, the supercharged \$8,000 model.

When Elvis parks it in front of his Bad Nauheim home, the local girls find a way of attracting his attention—painting messages of "I love you" and "Please call me at ..." all over its snowy white body.

Elvis' favourite music in Europe, as at home, is rock 'n' roll. When he wants to go to sleep, he slings a classical record on the record player.

"I'm not knocking anyone else's favourite type of music," he hastens to add. "But the longhair stuff isn't for me."

Guitar

One of his first purchases in Germany was a guitar, to get back to the old plunkin' and grindin' rhythm. "I wanted to bring my own along," he grins, "but there wasn't room in my dufflebag."

He's been to a few jazz clubs in Germany. But since he doesn't drink or smoke, he finds the hazy atmosphere a little distasteful.

Next summer, he's hoping to visit England and meet some of his active fan-club members. But it'll have to wait until his next leave-time pops up.

Elvis would like to find two things in life—the right girl and the right song.

"I wonder if the folk back home have forgotten me?" muses the soldier-a-long-way-from-home. "It's hard to tell from over here."

With a firm movie and record contract, and appearances on leading TV shows scheduled for his return to the States, Elvis doesn't have to worry.

Private Presley can chuck off that uniform and be right back in business in his sideburns and blue jeans.

But Elvis Presley, the lonely lad, has a lot of personal problems to work out, either in uniform or in civvies. After meeting him and talking to him, I'm sure I'm right when I say he's just a sad youngster out-of-the-teen-ages, in search of someone to love.



JOHNNIE RAY WHEN'S YOUR BIRTHDAY, BABY! ONE MAN'S LOVE SONG IS ANOTHER MAN'S BLUES PB 901

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MAX'S CO-STAR ARRIVES —AND GOES TO SLEEP!

AMERICAN singing star Shirley Jones breezed into London on Tuesday morning—and went straight to bed!

After her tiring two-day journey, the blonde songstress was unable to take telephone calls or receive visitors at her Dorchester Hotel suite. The purpose of her visit is to co-star with Max Bygraves in the 20th Century Fox musical, "Bobbykins", which goes into production on March 16 at Boreham Wood Studios.

It is a great pleasure to welcome Shirley to these shores and we certainly hope she will be able to find time for at least one television appearance before she returns to the States.

British viewers saw her on their screens during her previous visit a few years ago.

Shirley's rise to success was certainly a quick one, and this talented young woman (she will not be twenty-five until the end of this month!) is already one of the world's foremost leading ladies in musicals.

Her entry into films was nothing short of meteoric! With only the experience of a second lead in a stage production "Me And Juliet" and a part in "South Pacific", she walked straight into a starring role in the film version of "Oklahoma". She followed this with "Carousel", another Rodgers and Hammerstein creation. In both cases her co-star was Gordon MacRae.

The delightful Miss Jones' next screen appearance was with Pat Boone in "April Love". In each film she made, Shirley's acting improved, and after "April Love" she was quoted as saying: "I'd love to do a straight film without any music at all."



Her next film "Never Steal Anything Small", in which James Cagney stars, will soon be showing at British cinemas.

Shirley always enjoyed singing, and took lessons while still very young. At the age of six she used to travel 28 miles from her home in Smithton—a small town with a population of only 800—to Pittsburg for singing instruction.

Even today, when she isn't working Shirley still studies voice, practising scales and the like for three hours a day.

Married to Jack Cassidy, Shirley Jones is the name with which she was christened.

DAVID SAMPSON.



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Pat Boone disappoints, but three British girls have a red hot rock disc

I SHAN'T earn any bouquets for predicting another hit for Pat Boone, but I shall, I'm sure, collect a few brickbats for saying that I find Pat's latest offering rather dull and boring.

Lengthy title is "With The Wind And The Rain In Your Hair." I like the idea enormously, but neither song nor singer make the most of it; the melody offers no "purple passage" and Pat is just that much too relaxed so that he gives an impression of coldness with no real feeling.

Song is slowish, with a rock beat but the accompaniment is not very adventurous.

In all it is one of the most disappointing waxings that I have heard from this excellent performer.

"Good Rockin' Tonight" has a fairly fast beat, features Pat in his brightest mood, but the number is only commonplace. Label is London.

PETULA CLARK

I first heard the song "Suddenly" on BBC-TV as an entry for the Eurovision Song Contest. At that time I wasn't impressed, but now I am very impressed. What made me change my mind? A new arranger and a different singer.

Petula Clark gives an ideal interpretation on Nixa, with the aid of a delightful arrangement from the pen of Bill Shepherd, who directs the orchestra and chorus.

The rock-beguine tempo gives the number brightness and sparkle. The lyric is well above average and, coming from Pet, is completely convincing.

"Watch Your Heart" is an English version of a French song, but it clearly doesn't come from the Champagne country.

It has a reasonably bright bounce about it and Pet puts a smile into the words but otherwise it is ordinary.

Mr. Interpreter, was your translation really necessary?

COASTERS

Rock with a novelty-nonsense angle can be heard on London label per The Coasters. "Charlie Brown" is a character full of woe, but his misfortunes can be amusing to listen to and there's a zippy beat to help the number along.

Vocal is a group job and I strongly fancy this original waxing to be the first to appear in the

charts and to outsell rival versions. Flipover is the tale of "Three Cool Cats," on the slow side rock-wise, but there's a faint smile to be had from the lyric

MAX BYGRAVES

Nobody—least of all Max Bygraves—will deny that the enormous success of "Tulips From Amsterdam" exceeded expectations. But the prospect of the platter being in the selling, Max comes along with another happy sounding ditty of similar type.

"Napoli Napoli" changes the location to Italy but the other ingredients are the same—a simple, lifting melody, a big chorus to add to the cheery mood, and Mr. Bygraves singing of romance in the sun.

Unpretentious but most enjoyable; I don't see why this song should not soon be in the hit parade.

Coupling of this Decca release is "Old Tymes Square," a bright jogg-along slice of hometown nostalgia.

PAUL & FORD

It's a long time since I was able to enthuse about a Les Paul and Mary Ford record, but something of their originality turns up once again in "All I Need Is You" (Philips).

Side opens with a magical sound like a hundred guitars strumming, muted and faraway as if out-of-doors on a summer night.

Not until half way through does the multi-voice vocal of Mary Ford start; again the faraway effect predominates.

Striking in its originality, lovely in the sound that is created.

The warmest praise and recommendation for a waxing that does credit to the art of recording, and that flatters the musical ear of the listener.

On the other side Mary tells a



THE THREE BARRY SISTERS

tale of love in the supermarket. "At The Save-A-Penny Super Store" is medium-paced and pleasant and has the merit of finding an unusual setting for the story.

ARLYNE TYE

The name of Arlyne Tye may not be familiar to you but I reckon if you once heard her sing "The Universe" (London) you wouldn't forget her quickly.

To a slow rock beat the lass sings this unusual semi-ballad in a voice varying from a whisper to a full strength high note on echoing echo.

The title not being very informative I must tell you that Arlyne uses the universe as a description of how much her loved one's love means to her.

Which in turn means that this is a strongly commercial lyric. It only remains for this disc to get the necessary airings—pretty difficult for an unknown like Miss Tye.

"Who Is The One" is another slow rocker, this time following the theme of the eternal triangle.

Again the voice and delivery of Miss T. command the attention and earn most favourable comment. I would like to hear more of this lady.

ONE of the hottest rock records of the year has been etched by an English vocal group of three girls—The Three Barry Sisters. Their treatment of "Tall Paul" just could not be bettered although much credit must go to the arranger, who turned out the pile-driving accompaniment.

Number moves relentlessly and with enough energy to launch a rocket into orbit.

If records like this can be made in British studios, then we have nothing to learn from the Americans. Rather the reverse!

A first-class production is again the keynote on the coupling, "Till Then." This oldie is given a firm but not wild rock treatment, and the girls bring their feminine charm into play in their delightful vocalising.

For my money this is the stronger item, but Decca are treating "Tall Paul" as the "A" side.

VERA LYNN

"Walk With Faith In Your Heart" is a religious ballad and there are not many vocalists who can put over such a song with sincerity and conviction.

One who can do so is Vera Lynn and she's going to give a lot of people a lot of pleasure with this recording.

The Roland Shaw orchestra provides the accompaniment for this side and for "The Glory Of Love."

The oldie is brought out and brushed up bright and new but the modernisation is the mildest possible. A completely straight performance from Vera. That's on Decca.

TOMMY DORSEY

The disc that confirmed the arrival of the cha cha was the irresistible Tommy Dorsey band waxing of "Tea For Two." So can the same orchestra cash in on that success with a follow-up in the same tempo?

I wouldn't like to say, but I can say that "Dinah Cha Cha," from the Tommy Dorsey orchestra, is a joyful earful.

The precision of the brass gives the disc "bite" and buyers of the earlier disc will be well pleased with this one.

"I Still Get Jealous Cha Cha" fills the reverse of this Brunswick biscuit, and again an exciting sound is achieved without striving for unusual effects.

ROGER WILLIAMS

"The Key To The Kingdom" opens quietly and builds up slowly to an impressive concerto-like climax, a frequent format for recording by pianist Roger Williams.

A quiet and serious ballad, classical in style with words sung by a mixed chorus. Music like this makes an agreeable change, but this particular composition does not stir the emotions quite so deeply as may have been intended.

In sharp contrast, "Dearer Than Dear" is a light trifle which may just possibly have been inspired by "Trudie."

Small female vocal group croons for most of the time, and the Williams piano gets rhythm and guitar backing. That's on London.

GARY MILLER

Gary Miller is joined on Nixa by the Bill Shepherd Music and the Beryl Stott Chorus for "The Railroad Song."

A rousing "I'll-sing-the-verses-you-join-in-with-the-chorus" song with a suggestion of rock in the accompaniment.

Maybe the line "Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah" will ring a bell for you.

Good fun but I don't see this as a pop best-seller. Gary Miller makes an excellent job of the vocal, singing with hearty, open-air zest.

Coupling is "Jezebel," sung most admirably by Gary, but no-one can sing this like Frankie did. Agree? An altogether odd choice of songs for Gary Miller.

RONNIE CARROLL

A religious ballad, "Walk With Faith In Your Heart," is sung by Ronnie Carroll on Philips. There's a quiet rock beat in the background for much of the time and the melody is suitably impressive and dignified.

Ronnie sings quite convincingly, but this sort of material is not ideal for him, nor is he ideal for the song.

Far more satisfying for the listener is "Sweet Music," a smoothly romantic ditty for the early hours, Ronnie is much more at home with this sweet melody and lazy tempo.

POPS

Reviewed by



KEITH FORDYCE

EPs By ALLEN EVANS

KAYES AT COLONY

The Kaye Sisters in gay mood doing their cabaret act at the Colony Restaurant, accompanied by the resident Felix King orchestra. There are six tunes on the Philips EP, plus King's introduction and audience applause. Best songs are the calypso Woman Smarter and A Certain Smile. They take off various sister acts, including The Beverleys, in another number called Sisters, which is quite amusing.

LADY IS A SQUARE

Frankie Vaughan sings four songs from his current film on a Philips EP. He tries rock—in Honey Bunny Baby, with fair success; ballad—Ray Noble's Love Is The Sweetest Thing, with so-so results. The Lady Is A Square is not much better—but That's My Doll is much more like the Frankie we know and like so much.

PAT BOONE SINGS SONGS FROM "MARDI GRAS"

Pat Boone sounds mighty good on this London EP. Accompanied by Billy Vaughn, he sings a soft, swiny Bourbon Street Blues, romps through a hand-slapper called Bigger Than Texas, and a pioneer song—A Fiddle, A Rifle, An Axe And A Bible. In Loyalty he duets with Steve Allen. Recommended buy.

THAT CRAZY QUARTET

Marino Marini and his three co-instrumental-singers make sunny weather of Nel Blu Dipinto di Blu (Volare to you), and three other Italian songs—Capricciosa, L'Amore Non Conosce Confini and Bbe. Good singing and guitar work make this a stand-out EP on Durium label.

DO I LOVE YOU?

Vic Damone brings his romantic voice to four love ballads on this Philips EP. All are given fine treatment, specially Gigi. Other tunes are Separate Tables, Do I Love You? (from "Cinderella") and Unafraid. In the two last-named songs he has choral backing.

BLUES BY BASSEY

Shirley Bassey chants "I was born to sing the blues," and you believe her. She really lets herself go as she warbles her way through Basin Street Blues, Careless Love Blues, Birth Of The Blues (her greatest number), and Born To Sing The Blues. With Wally Stott's backing, this Philips EP proves that Britain can produce a bluesy disc as thrilling as any from over the Atlantic.

THERE GOES MY HEART

Johnny Mathis is a high-toned, lippy, sensative singer, and he is heard on this Fontana EP to perfection while singing I'm Glad There Is You, which is excellent. Other songs, too, are worth listening to—There Goes My Heart, Street Of Dreams and My One And Only Love (the weakest of the four).

HITS FOR SIX-9

Ian Stewart continues his good work on Fontana, with his latest piano medley—Gigi, As I Love You, Petite Fleur, Tonight, Baby Face and Thank Heaven For Little Girls. All excellent.

SOPHISTICATED LADY

Manny Albam, his chorus and orchestra, play songs of Duke Ellington on this Coral EP. Vocal chords are mostly used like instruments. Songs like In A Sentimental Mood and In A Mellowtone come out well.

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NME MUSIC CHARTS

BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN BRITAIN		BEST SELLING SHEET MUSIC IN BRITAIN	
(Wednesday, March 11, 1959)		(Tuesday, March 10, 1959)	
Last Week	This Week	Last Week	This Week
1	1 AS I LOVE YOU Shirley Bassey (Philips)	1	1 AS I LOVE YOU (Macmelodies)
2	2 SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES Platters (Mercury)	3	2 SIDE SADDLE (Mills Music)
3	3 A PUB WITH NO BEER Slim Dusty (Columbia)	2	3 A PUB WITH NO BEER (Good Music)
8	4 SIDE SADDLE Russ Conway (Columbia)	7	4 SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES (Sterling)
6	5 PETITE FLEUR Chris Barber (Pye-Nixa)	6	5 THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY (Bregman, Vocco & Conn)
5	6 KISS ME, HONEY HONEY, KISS ME Shirley Bassey (Philips)	5	6 KISS ME, HONEY HONEY, KISS ME (Lakeview)
9	6 LITTLE DRUMMER BOY Beverly Sisters (Decca)	10	7 DOES YOUR CHEWING GUM LOSE ITS FLAVOUR? (Feldman)
4	8 DOES YOUR CHEWING GUM LOSE ITS FLAVOUR? Lonnie Donegan (Pye-Nixa)	4	8 THE WORLD OUTSIDE (Keith Prowse)
10	9 MY HAPPINESS Connie Francis (MGM)	8	9 THE DAY THE RAINS CAME (John Fields)
11	10 MY HEART SINGS Paul Anka (Columbia)	17	10 GIGI (Chappell)
7	11 I GOT STUNG/ONE NIGHT Elvis Presley (RCA)	12	11 THE WONDERFUL SECRET OF LOVE (Leeds)
15	12 STAGGER LEE Lloyd Price (HMV)	11	12 APPLE BLOSSOM TIME (F.D. & H.)
16	13 IT DOESN'T MATTER ANY MORE Buddy Holly (Coral)	9	13 TO KNOW HIM IS TO LOVE HIM (Bourne)
19	14 GIGI Billy Eckstine (Mercury)	13	14 LAST NIGHT ON THE BACK PORCH (Keith Prowse)
12	15 PROBLEMS Everly Brothers (London)	14	15 TRUDIE (Henderson)
12	16 TO KNOW HIM IS TO LOVE HIM Teddy Bears (London)	16	16 MY HAPPINESS (Sterling)
21	17 WONDERFUL SECRET OF LOVE Robert Earl (Philips)	15	17 A CERTAIN SMILE (Robbins)
20	18 TOM BOY Perry Como (RCA)	23	18 PETITE FLEUR (Greenwich)
16	18 LITTLE DRUMMER BOY Harry Simeone (Top Rank)	18	19 PROBLEMS (Acuff-Rose)
—	20 C'MON EVERYBODY Eddie Cochran (London)	20	20 BABY FACE (F.D. & H.)
14	21 BABY FACE Little Richard (London)	—	21 WAIT FOR ME (Sterling)
26	22 I'LL REMEMBER TONIGHT Pat Boone (London)	19	22 MANDOLINS IN THE MOONLIGHT (Yale)
23	23 MANHATTAN SPIRITUAL Reg Owen (Pye-Int.)	—	23 I'LL REMEMBER TONIGHT (Robbins)
18	24 THE DAY THE RAINS CAME Jane Morgan (London)	29	24 SING LITTLE BIRDIE (Good Music)
24	25 THE WORLD OUTSIDE Russ Conway (Columbia)	21	24 SOMEDAY (Duchess)
22	26 MAYBE TOMORROW Billy Fury (Decca)	—	26 THANK HEAVEN FOR LITTLE GIRLS (Chappell)
—	27 WAIT FOR ME Malcolm Vaughan (HMV)	—	27 ANGELINA (Gabriel)
—	28 VENUS Dickie Valentine (Pye-Nixa)	28	28 I GOT STUNG (Hill & Range)
30	29 DONNA Marty Wilde (Philips)	23	29 (ALL OF A SUDDEN) MY HEART SINGS (Peter Maurice)
25	30 APPLE BLOSSOM TIME Rosemary June (Pye-Int.)	—	30 KISS ME AND KISS ME AND KISS ME (Leeds)

BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN U.S.

(Tuesday, March 10, 1959)

Last Week	This Week	Artist
7	1	VENUS Frankie Avalon
3	2	CHARLIE BROWN Coasters
1	3	STAGGER LEE Lloyd Price
2	4	DONNA Ritchie Valens
10	5	ALVIN'S HARMONICA David Seville & The Chipmunks
13	6	I'VE HAD IT Bell Notes
15	7	IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME Brook Benton
5	8	PETITE FLEUR Chris Barber
9	9	I CRIED A TEAR LaVern Baker
4	10	SIXTEEN CANDLES Crests
11	11	HAWAIIAN WEDDING SONG Andy Williams
8	12	PETER GUNN THEME Ray Anthony
12	13	TALL PAUL Annette
9	14	ALL AMERICAN BOY Bill Parsons
—	15	TRAGEDY Thomas Wayne
19	16	MAY YOU ALWAYS McGuire Sisters
14	17	LONELY TEARDROPS Jackie Wilson
20	18	THE CHILDREN'S MARCHING SONG Mitch Miller
—	19	NEVER BE ANYONE ELSE BUT YOU Ricky Nelson
—	20	SHE SAYS (OOM DOOBY DOOM) The Diamonds

The American chart is published by courtesy of "Billboard"

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the rain in your hair
HLD 8824 45/78

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In love in vain; Here I am in love again;
Why shouldn't I?; In the wee small hours of the morning;
Love Letters; In other words; When I fall in love;
Idle conversation; Why try to change me now;
Impossible; It could happen to you.


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BRITISH STARS TRIUMPH IN U.S.

Chris Barber wows Sullivan viewers...

THE Chris Barber Band's million-selling "Petite Fleur" opened the celebrated "Ed Sullivan Show" to thirty million U.S. tele-viewers on Sunday—a unique event in Anglo-American music history!

Introducing the first British band ever to televise "live" on a U.S. coast-to-coast show, Sullivan described the Barber group in glowing terms. Touching on their international fame, Sullivan later asked Chris and his band to play one of the jazz standards "which made them famous in Europe"—"Diga, Diga, Doo."

Nat Hentoff reports it was a very animated performance that received terrific applause. However, there was insufficient time for the projected presentation of Barber's "Petite Fleur" Gold Disc on the show.

He received this before a huge audience when making his second major TV appearance in "Canadian Hit Parade" from Toronto the next day. Again, the band was most enthusiastically received.

The success of Barber's current concert tour has started negotiations for a return visit in October. At almost every venue the Barber band have drawn capacity crowds, without the assistance of supporting American artists.

... Max Bygraves wins Como fans

MAX BYGRAVES' guest appearance in America's "Perry Como Show" is scheduled to be presented by BBC-TV tonight (Friday). The tele-recording has been rushed to Britain, but should complications arise, a substitute Como programme (including Paul Anka) will be transmitted.

Nat Hentoff reports: "Como introduced Bygraves by saying he was best-known as a comedian and singer, but critics unanimously raved about his acting in the film 'A Cry From The Streets.' Como also drew attention to Max's song-writing ability. Bygraves then presented a six-minute act.

"A vast proportion of Max's time included a comedy routine trying to prove songs written 30 or 40 years ago were not as good as today's. He sang snatches of 'On The Road To Mandalay' and 'Boots,' before analysing the lyrics, illustrating how absurd they were.

"He closed with a comedy rock 'n' roll routine and a song concoction of scrambled tune-titles. Como's office has since reported that audience reaction to Max's act has been extremely good."

PEARL, TEDDY SANG BRITISH TUNE TO SECOND PLACE

"SING Little Birdie," sung by Pearl Carr and Teddy Johnson, Britain's entry in the Eurovision Song Contest at Cannes on Wednesday evening secured second position.

This catchy number by Stan Butcher and Syd Cordell was only beaten by the Netherlands entry, "Een Beetje"—a cynical love song—sung by Teddy Scholten.

Domenico Modugno, composer and singer of last year's international hit, "Volare," represented Italy with another of his own compositions, "Piove," but was unplaced. Third position went to France.

Bandleaders' revelations shock British disc chief

TWO British bandleaders—Alyn Ainsworth and Ivy Benson—are claiming they recorded titles of an EP issued here and in America as by "Mark Jackson and his Orchestra." Both also say they received no royalties for the sessions, which took place in London three years ago for an American, Manuel Kopelman.

The EP is "Music For Lonely Lovers," issued here by Gala. The label's chief, Monty Lewis, told the NME: "I was shocked when Ivy and Alyn complained to me last week-end. We had the tapes for the disc from an American affiliate, believing they were recorded in the United States.

"We are withholding the royalties we would have sent to the American firm for the record until it has been decided who is really entitled to them."

One word bans song

AMERICA's current No. 2 record—"Charlie Brown" by The Coasters—which has been issued here on the London label, has been banned by the BBC as unsuitable for broadcasting. A British cover version, by Nixa's Ray Ellington, is also affected by the ban.

The reason is that the lyric includes the word "spitball." In America, this means "pea-shooter!" Another version with revised lyrics, by HMV's Bernard Bresslaw, has been passed for broadcast.

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The personalities who will play 21 consecutive days here from Wednesday, April 22, are Conway Twitty, the Poni-Tails, Bobby Darin, the Diamonds and Duane Eddy—plus rising young artist Dale Hawkins!



It was a proud moment for MAX BYGRAVES and BERNARD BRESSLAW on Tuesday when they were presented with Golden Hearts, their awards from the Variety Club of Great Britain, Max as 'The Show Business Personality of 1958' and Bernard as 'Most Promising Newcomer.'

MAX AND TED MAKE LP

MAX BYGRAVES and Ted Heath and his Music are to be co-starred on an ambitious new Decca album recording. Titled "Max and Ted", it is set for release this autumn.

The LP comprises popular songs from the twenties scored in modern style by arrangers Roland Shaw, Ken Moule and Ralph Dollimore. Titles include "Exactly Like You", "Sure As You're Born", and "Great And Glorious Feeling".

It will be the first time Max has sung with the Heath band. The recording sessions, under the joint supervision of Frank Lee and Raymond Horricks, began two weeks ago but were interrupted by Max's recent U.S. trip. They were resumed yesterday (Thursday), and conclude tomorrow.

Dors, Fury, Mudds in concerts

FILM personality Diana Dors and Decca's new discovery Billy Fury team with The Mudlarks in provincial concerts at the end of the month.

Fury misses the first show at the St. George's, Blackburn, on Sunday, March 22, then joins Diana and the Mudds at Newcastle City Hall (23), Manchester Free Trades Hall (24), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (25), and Sheffield City Hall (30), when Don Lang is also featured.

MARION RYAN'S UNIQUE TV PACT

WHEN revealing on February 20 that glamorous vocal stylist Marion Ryan had signed a new long-term contract with Granada TV, the extent of her big deal was not known. Information since received places her in a unique position as a TV attraction.

From next October, Marion has an agreement covering three years, which guarantees her 36 programmes in separate weeks for each year. But this is a minimum, which could be subject to a substantial increase in her yearly number of performances.

Besides a rising salary at the end of each year, Granada TV light entertainment chief Eddie Pola has plans to star Marion in an alternative show to "Spot the Tune" this autumn.

Marion joined Granada TV at the outset of their "Spot the Tune" series in February, 1956; her appearances in this series total 130.

Her "Oh Boy!" date last Saturday brought Marion's total of TV appearances to 250.

More 'Dances' for Cyril

CYRIL STAPLETON'S ATV programme "The Melody Dances"—seen again on Monday—returns on two more Fridays next month when the current Arthur Haynes series ends. Cyril's shows will be on April 3 and 10.

Included in all three transmissions will be Stapleton's new singer Shirley Sands. He has signed her to a year's contract and she will record for Decca.

Shirley will also be featured with him during the Show Band's return summer season at Scarborough Futurist.

EXTRA SOS STARS

SHIRLEY BASSEY, Reg Owen, The Kaye Sisters, plus Humphrey Lyttelton and his Band have been added to the star-studded list of names to appear at "The Record Show," organised by the "Daily Express" for Stars Organisation for Spastics—at Wembley Empire Pool on Sunday, March 22.

Summer signings

SINGERS Billie Anthony and Allen Bruce have been booked for "The Hughie Green Show," which begins a 12-week run at the Regal, Yarmouth, on June 29.



It was a proud moment for MAX BYGRAVES and BERNARD BRESSLAW on Tuesday when they were presented with Golden Hearts, their awards from the Variety Club of Great Britain, Max as 'The Show Business Personality of 1958' and Bernard as 'Most Promising Newcomer.'

'Cool for Cats' in variety

A STAGE adaptation of the popular AR-TV "Cool For Cats" programme is to be launched on a nation-wide variety tour, presented by Ker Robertson, in association with the Lew and Leslie Grade Agency.

TV producer Brian Taylor will be responsible for directing the variety offering, timed for approximately thirty-five minutes. Moss Empires have already confirmed they are willing to arrange dates at their leading theatres throughout the country.

Novello Awards to be presented at concert

THE annual Ivor Novello awards and certificates of merit will be presented to star personalities in the British popular music industry at the Songwriters' Guild of Great Britain's 10th "Our Friends The Stars" concert at London's Victoria Palace on April 12.

Two of the artists appearing in the show will be among the prizewinners—Joe "Mr. Piano" Henderson, whose composition "Trudie" was named the year's Best Selling and Most Performed Song, and Max Bygraves, runner-up in the same section with "You Need Hands."

Among the many bandleaders honoured are Billy Cotton (for outstanding personal services to British popular music) and alto-saxist Johnny Dankworth, whose "Colonel's Tune" was voted the Year's Outstanding Jazz Composition. Runner-up in this section was Tommy Watt's "Rock Bottom."

Ron Goodwin ("Lingering Lovers") and Donald Phillips ("Melody To The Sea") filled first and second places respectively in the section set aside for light orchestral works.

SHOW SCORE

The award for the best stage play, film, TV play or radio score went to Malcolm Arnold for his theme music for the film "The Inn Of The Sixth Happiness." Philip Green came second with his music for "Josia."

"I'm So Ashamed," by Ken Hare, was the Year's Outstanding Novelty Song, followed by the Pat Napper-Sid Collin composition "The Army Game." Finally, the Outstanding Song of the Year was Peter Hart's "The Wind Cannot Read," with "There Goes My Lover" (by Archie Leonard and John Harris) second.

JOHNNIE RAY'S SECOND LP HERE

JOHNNIE RAY is scheduled to record his second album in Britain. This time he waxes a collection of standard tunes which have been featured by him over the past ten years, but never included on discs.

His first British album was of his complete stage act recorded at the London Palladium in April, 1954.

On Wednesday, Philips a and r man Johnny Franz said that plans were being completed for the sessions to take place during the week following Johnnie's current Palace Theatre fortnight. The album would be recorded in stereo, but the first issues would be in monaural.

For the first time, Jack Parnell and his Orchestra would be featured on the Philips' label, accompanying Johnnie on the LP. Johnnie already has the numbers orchestrated and specially asked for the Parnell Orchestra in view of many studio dates they have at this time.

These include the six taped TV programmes (which all include Shani Wallis). Two shows take place on Tuesday, followed by two immediately after Johnnie's tele-recorded co-starring presentation with Connie Francis on March 23—concluding with the remainder of the series on March 30 or 31.

JACKSON DEBUT FOR DICKIE HENDERSON

DICKIE HENDERSON, a recent Top Rank signing, makes his first appearance on ITV's "Jack Jackson Show" on April 1.

Other Jackson Show bookings include Ronnie Hilton, Ray Ellington, Arlene Fontana, Toni Dalli and Tubby Hayes (March 18); Alma Cogan, The Three Barry Sisters and The Betty Smith Quintet (25th).

Principal guests in the Sunday afternoon "Music Shop" this week-end (15th) are Dickie Valentine and Jackie Dennis.

Malcolm Vaughan stars on March 22, and the following week features The Jazz Committee, with Don Rendell and Bert Courtney.

JOHNNY DANKWORTH IN JUNE

THE Johnny Dankworth Orchestra's long-awaited first tour of America will materialise in June, when he undertakes a 14-day concert series in major cities—according to his agent, Harold Davidson. But confirmation could not be obtained from Johnny Dankworth himself.

The itinerary embraces some of America's top concert venues, including New York's famous Carnegie Hall and appearances at the

Princess Margaret meets Count Basie

PRINCESS MARGARET was a surprise visitor to the Count Basie Band's final London concert at the New Victoria Cinema on Friday.

Unknown to the capacity audience, she enjoyed the show from a seat in the front stalls and later met the Count backstage.

This was the fourth time Basie has been honoured by royalty. In 1956, Princess Margaret attended two shows, and later that year, the Queen saw the band at the Royal Variety Performance.

CLIFF RICHARD: STAGE PLANS

CLIFF RICHARD will play a series of three weeks of variety and one week of concerts during the next six months. This is impresario Leslie Grade's plan of presenting Richard's appearances from March 30.

His first date will be the already announced week at Coventry Theatre. He follows with a week at Birmingham Hippodrome (April 6) and Manchester Hippodrome (13). Then comes his first batch of one-nighters, venues of which were announced last week.

Grade has arranged for promoter Arthur Howes to present Cliff's concerts. To avoid overstraining the young rock star these will be restricted to five days a week. Howes will also handle Sunday stage dates throughout the period.

The Stargazers in major radio shows

THE Stargazers vocal group, directed by Cliff Adams, have been signed to headline an ambitious BBC radio series—"Welcome to Music"—which commences on Saturday, April 11.

Broadcast for two hours from 9 p.m., the series is booked for seventeen consecutive programmes. Cast includes the BBC Revue Orchestra, the Eric Jupp Strings, and a third musical combination not yet picked.

Other vocal contributions are made by resident artists Janet Walters, Andy Cole and Mike Shaun.

FIVE FROM THE TOP OF THE U.S.

RITCHIE VALENS

Donna HL 8803

BILL PAR

ALL-AMERICA

HL 8798

The Crests

SIXTEEN CANDLES

HL 8794

RECORDS MAGAZINE—now in a new form. 16 pages of pictorial non-stereo releases. Full colour. Your monthly guide to the new recordings. LONDON RECORDS DIVISION OF THE DECCA RECORD COMPANY



Definitely an Italian get-together! CONNIE FRANCIS, whose parents come from Italy, met the gay MARINO MARINI Quartet at the London Palladium on Sunday, when they all appeared in the TV show from that theatre.

Beverley Sisters have big TV comeback plan

THE Beverley Sisters' retirement, while Joy has her baby, is only temporary. They revealed this week a plan for a big comeback in their own special TV programme in May.

Joy, the eldest, and married to England football captain, Billy Wright, expects her baby early in April. It will be at least a month after this before the Bevs resume their public activities.

Their last stage appearance was the Royal Variety Performance in November. Before this they made a tele-recorded series for the BBC. In a rush session last month they recorded "The Little Drummer Boy" for Decca, which has now overcome heavy opposition and stands fifth in the NME charts.

Teddy Beverley told the NME: "We are negotiating with the BBC for a major half-hour comeback programme. Then we shall carry on with other show business activities, but we shan't tour as extensively as in the past."

"We all agree that Joy's family life should come first."

Chas McDevitt, with The Freight Train Boys and Shirley Douglas, joins Cliff Richard on a one-nighter tour of Granada's beginning at Harrow on Tuesday.

U.S. TOUR

Glanz's stellar "Jazz at the Philharmonic" group will return here on a reciprocal exchange basis with the Dankworth Orchestra.

The tour starts on May 2 for 16 days. Ella Fitzgerald, the Oscar Peterson Trio, Stan Getz, and Roy Eldridge will again star, plus the British debut of veteran drummer Gene Krupa's Quartet.

JATP was last here in the summer of 1958.

AMERICA WILL SEE OUR 'OH BOY!' SHOWS

Steele, Donegan rebooked for April transmissions

Vocal stars in new TV series

ALMA COGAN and Dickie Valentine are two of the big names already lined up as guest artists in David Hughes' new BBC-TV series, "Make Mine Music," which begins a run of at least four fortnightly shows on Wednesday, April 8.

Alma guests with Leslie 'Jiver' Hutchinson in the first programme, and Dickie is featured in the second show on April 22.

David Hughes, who ended his pantomime season at Glasgow Alhambra last Saturday, includes Rikki Fulton in his resident team.

Tommy Steele —impresario?

TOMMY STEELE, a success as a singer, songwriter and a film-star, now wants to become an impresario. He is considering presenting, in conjunction with Larry Parnes, the West End production of "Flings Ain't Wot They Used T'be," now running at the Theatre Royal, Stratford.

Music for the show was written by Tommy's friend, Lionel Bart, who composed many of Tommy's early hits with Michael Pratt. Bart and Pratt have now renewed their partnership and are currently writing songs for Steele's next film "Tommy The Torador."

John Paddy Carstairs, responsible for many Norman Wisdom film successes, is to direct "Tommy The Torador." Sidney James will be in the cast.

Efforts are still being made to find a Continental star as Tommy's leading lady.

Work on the film starts in May on location in Spain, before switching to the ABC studios at Elstree.

New radio series starts at Easter

BBC sound radio's Easter holiday plans include the start of several new musical series. On Easter Sunday, March 29, Paul Robeson starts his series of ten half-hour Light Programme recitals, and is followed the same evening by the return of Harriott and Evans' late-night show.

Two new disc-jockey programmes are scheduled—Neal Arden begins a Tuesday evening series on March 31, and on April 3, David Gell opens the "Transatlantic Bandbox."

An Easter Monday highlight is a mid-evening 60-minute soundtrack presentation of the many successful Rodgers and Hammerstein films.

The lengthy Monday and Wednesday evening pop music shows, "Swingalong" and "Nightride," continue till June.

POP STARS' STAGE DATES ANNOUNCED

ALMA COGAN, Russ Conway and Jackie Dennis all announce important new dates this week. They include both television and nation-wide variety appearances.

Alma Cogan follows her season at the Palace Theatre, London, with a guest appearance in David Hughes' BBC-TV programme on April 8.

LATER this year tele-recordings of the "Oh Boy!" series are likely to be shown regularly in America, the first British musical TV show to be so honoured. Films of recent shows have already been shown to executives of U.S. networks. ABC expect to sign contracts very shortly.

PALACE VARIETY SEASON CUT SHORT: DENNIS LOTIS SHOW OPENING IN MAY

FOLLOWING the Lonnie Donegan-Alma Cogan fortnight at London's Palace Theatre (from March 23), only one further variety presentation will be staged there this season before a new musical opens early in May.

This sudden decision denies Cliff Richard and The Drifters the opportunity of appearing there during April, to replace their original two weeks scheduled this month.

American comedy star Alan King, is the major attraction for a fortnight from April 6, as forecast by the NME last week.

One of the chief supporting attractions is poll-winning vocal group The Mudlarks—making their return visit to a West End theatre, following last September's Prince of Wales debut.

On Good Friday, March 27, at the Palace, two special concerts will feature the Lonnie Donegan Group, plus Alma Cogan and a full cast—at normal variety performance times.

Dennis Lotis stars in John Osborne's stage musical "The World of Paul Slick," opening a season at the Palace theatre on Thursday, May 7. This follows a provincial tour at Bournemouth (April 13), followed by Brighton and Leeds respectively.

No announcement has been made regarding the new revue (starring Benny Hill), which Bernard Delfont announced he was presenting during the summer at the Palace.

Mel Torme joins Anka film cast

THE impressive array of pop music talent lined up for Paul Anka's first starring film, "Girl's Town," continues to grow, cables Nat Hentoff.

Additional names revealed this week are Mel Torme and trumpet playing bandleader Ray Anthony (whose wife, Mamie Van Doren, plays the female lead).

Jo Stafford, Carmichael for TV here

TWO long-established U.S. vocal personalities are to appear in Britain for major ATV programmes this summer. They are pianist-composer-singer Hoagy Carmichael and the stylish vocal star Jo Stafford.

A press-day cable from American correspondent Lance Fielding reports that both undertake a minimum of two top shows, each during the latter part of May and early June, including the London Palladium Sunday series.

Jo Stafford starred there in variety during 1952, but has never televised here before. Currently Jo is featured in a Thursday night Radio Luxembourg series.

Carmichael was starred in BBC-TV's "Off the Record" during his last stage tour in Britain in the summer of 1955. His chief claim to fame must be accredited to his great all-time standard songs "Stardust," "Skylark," "Lazybones," "Georgia" and "Heart And Soul."

BBC PUT ACCENT ON 'BEAT' MUSIC

BBC-TV's big plan for an hour of teenage attractions at 6.5 p.m. on Saturday evenings has been dropped. "Dig This," which took the place of "6.5 Special" in January, is being replaced after the March 28 programme.

From April 4, a new weekly series starts, with much greater emphasis on modern beat music in the "Oh Boy!" idiom. The Millermen continue, but in place of a regular team of singers they will be supported by star guests and perhaps another band. Probable title is "Drum Beat."

"Juke Box Jury," a record panel game which was to have joined "Dig This" to make up an hour of Saturday pop music, is now unlikely to reach the screen before June. Being discussed as the probable cast is David Jacobs as chairman, with Pete Murray and Alma Cogan.

All-star finale

THE twenty-first edition of Radio Luxembourg's "The Bristol Club" heard on March 26 will also be the last in the current series. Among those taking part are Dickie Valentine, Joe "Mr. Piano" Henderson, Alma Cogan, Jimmy Young and the Mike Sammes Singers. As usual, Kent Walton and Peter Noble will act as hosts.

"The Bristol Club" is due to return to the air in the autumn.

Billy Daniels' variety tour confirmed

BILLY DANIELS' fifth British variety tour—exclusively forecast in last week's NME—has been confirmed. He opens at Manchester Hippodrome on Monday. "Mr. Black Magic" and his accompanist, Benny Payne, are due to arrive at London Airport early tomorrow (Saturday) morning.

Negotiations are in hand for Billy to appear in ATV's "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" on April 12, but no London appearances have yet been arranged.

Billy's other dates include weeks in variety at Liverpool Empire (March 23) and Leeds Empire (April 6), plus a Sunday concert at Blackpool Opera House on March 29.

On Monday, March 30, he begins a five-day tour of U.S. bases in Germany, before returning to Britain for the Leeds week.

DAVE'S GUESTS: RONNIE, SHANI

RONNIE CARROLL and Shani Wallis are the two principal guest stars in "The Dave King Show," which occupies ATV's "Saturday Spectacular" spot next week, March 21.

The teaming of Johnnie Ray and Connie Francis in the "Spectacular" hour, which was exclusively announced in the NME three weeks ago, has now been set for March 28.

Arlene Fontana, a young American singer just issued here on Pye-International, makes her British debut this week-end in "Sunday Night at the London Palladium."

She has three other TV dates lined up for her stay in Britain—ATV's "Jack Jackson Show" (March 18), "Music Shop" (22nd) and AR-TV's "Cool For Cats" (27th).

The Palladium TV show on March 22 will comprise excerpts from the pantomime "Sleeping Beauty" now running there, starring Edmund Hockridge, Bernard Bresslaw and Charlie Drake.

On March 29, ATV's peak-hour Sunday night presentation will be televised from the Prince of Wales Theatre, and the following week (April 5) will visit Blackpool's Tower Circus.

CUT TAX CALL

A deputation of MP's, representing all Parties, went to the Treasury on Monday afternoon to state the case against purchase tax on gramophone records. They were sympathetically received.

U.S. HIT PARADE

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CHARLIE BROWN

HLE 8819

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Programmes would not be transmitted there for some time. A big snag is artists' contracts and musical copyrights which, though valid in Britain, might not necessarily apply in America. When the new series starts in September provision will be made for American repeats.

Tommy Steele appears again on "Oh Boy!" on April 4, with Lonnie Donegan scheduled for a fortnight later as part of Jack Good's policy of booking big stars.

Steele was the first star producer Good introduced to guest on the show, when he debuted on November 1. Donegan's only previous appearance in the series was during February.

Also booked for the April show is Dean Webb, a new rock singer being managed by John Foster, who was associated with Cliff Richard's early career.

Two MDs—Bill Shepherd and Harry Robinson—have been attending "Oh Boy!" rehearsals this week. ABC-TV announce that Shepherd and John Barry will be among the arrangers for the show in future.

The company had failed to name Robinson's successor as musical director of the series at press time.

In the High Court on Tuesday, the dispute between Harry Robinson and Jack Good over the name "Lord Rockingham" was put back a week.

Good's counsel, Mr. Neil Lawson, Q.C., told Mr. Justice Vaisey the parties had come to terms in principle.

CONNIE'S 'THANK YOU'

CONNIE FRANCIS' album of songs by British writers, waxed in London last week, is to be titled "My Thanks To You."

MGM manager Norman Newell states he was not the writer of "Good Health, Good Luck, God Bless You," as reported last week; it was penned by Art Noel and former variety star Charles Foresyth.

RONNIE CARROLL
Personal Manager,
Eddie Lee
Will Collins Agency

Fan Club Sec.,
17, Evelyn Drive,
Hatch End, Middx.



★ ARTHUR HOWES ★ ONE NIGHT STANDS

CONNIE FRANCIS

NEWCASTLE, City Hall
SUN., MAR. 15th, 6.20 & 8.40 p.m.
Booking: Laurence Hill,
1 Pink Lane, Newcastle

CUDDLY DUDLEY

VINCE EAGER
and Big Teenage Show
COLCHESTER, Regal
SUN., MAR. 15th, 5.30 & 8.00 p.m.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

(By arrangement with Harold Davison)
SHEFFIELD, City Hall
THURS., MAR. 26th, 6.30 & 8.50 p.m.
Booking: Wilson Peck
Fargate, Sheffield
Booking open March 12th, 10 a.m.

CLIFF RICHARD

ROCHESTER, Gaumont
SUN., APRIL 5th, 5.30 & 8 p.m.
TWO PERFORMANCES

LONNIE DONEGAN REVEALS THE SECRETS OF HIS SUCCESS

ASK any artist and he'll tell you the same thing—appearing before a huge audience can be a terrifying experience or a lot of fun. Personally, I always enjoy myself when I'm on stage—and there I've touched on one of the many important reasons why people seem to like my act and my singing.

I've always thought that the people in the audience realise that I'm enjoying myself. Often, they've said to me later: "You know, you appear to be having a wonderful time up there." Well, it's true. I was—and I always will.

You see, I have a genuine feeling for the songs I sing. My interest in folk and skiffle music goes back far longer than I care to remember, and it is this, I think, that gives added depth and authenticity to my performance.

By delving back into the history of folk music, I have learned many things which have aided my rise to success. For example, I've located many songs which have become big disc hits.

From memory

I find them in books, on old records (many of which are unavailable in Britain), and also in my memory, which is a storehouse of all the songs that I've learned since my early childhood. Sometimes, I only find lyrics—as in the case of "Nobody Loves Like An Irishman." Then, I write a melody myself.

In the main, however, I try to revitalise old, long-forgotten songs via the skiffle interpretation. In this way, I can reintroduce great songs to a public who, in most cases, know nothing whatsoever of their existence.

You know, it has always been my intention to provide entertainment for a wide public and not for an isolated few.

I like to think that I've succeeded, too, because my audiences today are not made up simply of teenagers.

When looking at a variety audience today, I see more older people and youngsters just entering their teens than people whose ages vary between 15 and 18. And that, of course, pleases me immensely, because it

suggests that I'm presenting a successful family show.

What is my formula for success? Well, in a nutshell, I firmly believe that a little of everything goes a long way.

The word "everything" embraces a lot of things, so let's begin with



LONNIE spends as much time as he can keeping up-to-date with the latest recordings, specially country-and-western discs. Here he is putting on the "Country Guitar" EP.

the question of showmanship. Each artist has his own definition of the word; my idea is that it should be as informal as possible to conform with the style of music I sing.

If you've seen my act, you'll probably agree with me that my particular brand of showmanship embodies an earthy, uninhibited quality. I don't try to give this impression consciously—it's something that just happens when I'm on stage.

I try to appear as natural as possible because in this manner, I think, I can get just that much closer to my audience. And another thing—I like to feel relaxed, which is the ultimate aim of every performer.

Next, let's pass on to the ever-important essence of variety, which is very necessary towards the success or failure of an act.

By varying your material, you can inject spice and colour into a performance, and that's why I try to present a wide range of different material.

I get the same kick out of singing various types of songs ranging from folkly ballads to up-tempo skiffle numbers. Mind you, if I can put

over a simple folk song without involving much in the way of showmanship and it is well received, this really pleases me because it indicates that I'm helping to spread the popularity of this music.

Finally, the ingredient which has played such a noteworthy part in my success story is comedy—a difficult subject at which, I freely admit, I'm still what can be termed a learner. But at least I'm a good pupil, and I'm determined, sooner or later, to gain sufficient technical knowledge of the comedy idiom to be able to use it confidently and without undue worry.

Through two pantomime appearances, I seem to have built up something of a reputation as a slapstick comedian.

I'm happy I've been accepted in this style, of course, but, at the same time, I also want to try my hand at the subtler form of laughter raising.

Most of the comedy material in my present act is either "off the cuff" or previous "off the cuff" remarks that have gone down well

and I've retained. I have a habit of speaking my mind, and if a gag comes to me in the middle of the act, I never hesitate about cracking it.

This isn't necessarily a good thing. "Ad lib" gags can fall flat on their face and leave you feeling somewhat embarrassed. It depends, of course, on the nature of the joke, but fortunately, I haven't "laid an egg" too many times!

Hit records

People often ask me the secret of my hit parade consistency—they want to know why my records break into the best-sellers with unfailing regularity. Well, here's a two-part answer.

First, and without trying to appear egotistical, I think I know my subject well, which gives me a head start over most of my contemporaries.

By that, I mean that I don't think anyone can sing folk or skiffle songs very well unless they know what

they're doing. And years of study and research have given me a concise insight into the subject.

Second, on both personal appearances, TV and record dates, we (the Lonnie Donegan Skiffle Group) have continually striven to maintain the highest possible standard of entertainment. Failure to attain that standard would depress us more than it would the audience, and with this aim in mind, we're half way towards success.

My ambitions for the future? To stay at the top, to improve, to entertain the people who come to see me, and to further my appeal abroad. Regarding the last item, I'm pleased to be able to say that progress is being made, since "Tom Dooley" is now third in the French hit parade and I'm due for a Paris engagement soon.

Finally, a word of thanks to the NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS for devoting so much space to me this week, and also for allowing me to express some of my own views here. It's an honour for which I'm truly grateful.

LONNIE AT HOME

IN a few days time Lonnie Donegan and his family move into the luxurious Scandinavian-style house he has had built in Epping Forest, on the north-east fringe of London.

It is a belated concession to show business stardom. For, during the past few years, he has lived in an unpretentious, semi-detached house in the neighbouring area of Wanstead.

Inside, there are few indications that you are in the home of one of Britain's top box-office entertainers—except, perhaps, for the 12-stringed guitar lying across a chair, and the large collection of folk-song records.

What is it like being a guest in the Donegan household?

Almost certainly the first thing your host will do is make a cup of tea. For Lonnie is an inveterate tea-

drinker and expects everyone else to share his enthusiasm.

The conversation will be interrupted from time to time, as he attends in turn to the needs of the family and the needs of his career.

First, a telephone call from his agent, then a request from Fiona, his three-year-old daughter, to help tie her shoe-laces up. Next, he may play you a couple of tracks from the latest disc in his collection, then he gives a gasp of despair as Fiona informs him she is having trouble polishing her new red shoes—with black polish!

Proudly he will show you the china set on his mantelpiece—a magnificent blue cigarette box and two ash-trays, with the skiffle emblems of guitar, box-bass and washboard on them. They were designed and presented to him by one of his fans.



LONNIE is never happier than when he is surrounded by his family—and Harry Hammond found him in his happiest mood when he called at the Donegan home this week. Lonnie is seen with his wife, Maureen, who first met him through being one of his first fans, and his daughters, Fiona (3) and Corrina (9 months).

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'MY LONNIE'—by his wife,

Maureen

When Lonnie was one of the band



A picture from the past—notice the banjo player on the extreme left of the picture. Yes, it's LONNIE, in the days when he played with Chris Barber's band. Clarinetist MONTY SUNSHINE is beside him and CHRIS and OTTILIE PATTERSON are on the right of the picture.

NATURALLY Lonnie's rise to stardom has affected our lives to some extent. From my point of view, for instance, it means that I can buy that new refrigerator without quibbling over the price—and I can have practically all the clothes I want.

But it has its disadvantages, too... small things like being very careful where we go for a meal, in case Lonnie is spotted and pounced upon. In fact, I think the difficulty of being on our own is probably the biggest handicap of all. For all that, Lonnie himself hasn't changed in the slightest. He remains the placid, easy-going Lonnie I married years ago—and at home you just wouldn't credit that he's

an artist who is so continually in the public eye. Lonnie is a great believer in the truth, and always says exactly what he thinks. And I don't think that type of person can ever veer away from his normal course, do you? When he is at home, Lonnie likes whenever possible to break away completely from show business. The entertainment world is his life, and he couldn't be in any other—but he doesn't like the false side of it.

his health and his outlook, of having a break when he can. He's found a relatively new interest in golf; he likes it particularly because it's one game you can play on your own, and it gives him the chance of having a round on the local course when he is on tour. He's also a great football fan, by the way.

He realises the importance, both to

At home, he spends a great deal of time listening to his beloved records, specially his folk music collection.

He's not a wildly enthusiastic televisioner—though a few programmes do succeed in keeping him glued to the screen. Number one on his hit parade is "Highway Patrol."

But right now we are both more than fully occupied in preparing to move into our new house at Woodford on the edge of Epping Forest.

We're hoping to take possession next week—Lonnie has a couple of weeks off and, instead of going away on holiday, we shall spend the time settling into the new place.

We're both wildly excited about it and can't wait to get in! It should have been ready at Christmas, you see, so we're nearly three months late now!

Own design

At the moment, Lonnie eats, sleeps and breathes his new house. It's been designed largely to his own ideas, so that obviously whips up his enthusiasm.

It's an L-shaped house, not particularly big, but blessed with plenty of daylight, most of the frontage being glass. And one of the showpieces of the house is its curved wooden staircase.

The only drawback at the moment is—when is Lonnie going to have enough free time to live in it?

Indeed, the only regret about the summer season in Yarmouth is leaving the new house behind.

But that's a small consideration, really. The main thing is that we are both very fortunate to be in a position where we have such an attractive new home. And I'm very lucky to have such a wonderful husband as Lonnie.

LONNIE'S NME HIT SCORE

Below are Lonnie Donegan's hits, together with the dates they entered and left the NME British Charts, as well as the highest position each title reached.

Title	Date In	Date Out	Highest Position
Rock Island Line	6/ 1/56	15/ 6/56	8
Lost John/Stewball	20/ 4/56	17/ 8/56	2
Skiffle Session EP	6/ 7/56	13/ 7/56	20
Bring A Little Water Sylvie/ Dead Or Alive	7/ 9/56	23/11/56	7
Lonnie Donegan Showcase LP	21/12/56	11/ 1/57	26
Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O	18/ 1/57	17/ 5/57	4
Cumberland Gap	5/ 4/57	28/ 6/57	1
Putting On The Style/ Gambling Man	7/ 6/57	18/10/57	1
My Dixie Darling	11/10/57	17/ 1/58	10
Jack O' Diamonds	20/12/57	7/ 2/58	14
Grand Coolie Dam	11/ 4/58	25/ 7/58	6
Sally Don't You Grieve/ Betty Betty	11/ 7/58	29/ 8/58	11
Lonesome Traveller	26/ 9/58	3/10/58	28
Lonnie's Skiffle Party	14/11/58	19/12/58	23
Tom Dooley	21/11/58	27/ 2/59	3
Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavour?	6/ 2/59	—	3

DONEGAN HIGHLIGHTS

ALTHOUGH once billed as "The Irish Hillbilly," he was born in Scotland and has lived most of his life in East London.

His real name is Anthony (mother calls him Tony), but he took on a new first name for professional purposes after seeing the American folk singer Lonnie Johnson at the Royal Festival Hall.

He once worked as an assistant in a stationery shop.

During his National Service he played drums with The Wolverines jazz band in Southampton.

He received only a small session fee for his recording of "Rock Island Line," which appeared in the U.S. Top Ten and went on to sell more than a million copies.

He was the first British artist to get every one of his first five discs into the top five of the hit parade, and the first British artist to have an LP and an EP in the single best-sellers.

His recording of "It Takes A Worried Man To Sing A Worried Song" was once used to introduce the BBC religious programme, "Lift Up Your Hearts."

His starring season at the Palace Theatre later this month means that he will have topped at all of London's leading variety theatres during the past two years. The others were the Palladium, the Hippodrome and the Prince of Wales.

He has made two long working trips to the States, the second time as part of the famous Harlem Globetrotters package show.

He was the first British artist to be "given the treatment" by satirist Stan Freberg, who made a mickey-taking disc of "Rock Island Line."

Formerly a banjoist with the Chris Barber jazz band, he appears as an instrumentalist on the reverse side of the current hit, "Petite Fleur."

He made his film debut in "6.5 Special" and his pantomime debut in "Aladdin" at Chiswick Empire in December, 1957.

Last summer he appeared in the special Scottish Royal Variety Show in Glasgow.

QUOTES—from TV Stars

HUGHIE GREEN

(TV personality who has starred with Lonnie on many occasions): For my taste, skiffle has much more to offer than rock 'n' roll, and I rate Lonnie as the skiffle supreme. He is a very talented performer.

JACK JACKSON

(Top disc-jockey and TV personality): Lonnie has worked with me on my show on many occasions, and I think he's just great—a wonderful performer! To my mind, he is an artist who will live in the business for a very considerable time.

QUOTES—from Stars

CONNIE FRANCIS

(American singing star, who appeared on Lonnie's "Saturday Spectacular" during her previous visit to this country):

Lonnie is one of the most fascinating performers and complete entertainers that I have met. He is also a most charming person—one of the nicest in the business.

CLIFF RICHARD

I have not had the pleasure of working with Lonnie and getting to know him, unless you count the NME pollwinners concert at the Albert Hall in January.

But I will say this. His music does appeal to me. It is not exactly my type of music, but I like it just the same. I would certainly say he is a great artist.



LONNIE loves to play the comedian, as you see him above, with his drummer, NICK NICHOLLS.

Congratulations LONNIE

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A FRANK, STRAIGHT-FROM-THE-SHOULDER DISCUSSION

I don't always agree with the quality of the hit parade—says JOHNNIE RAY

**SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO
JOHNNIE
RAY**

**HIGHLIGHTS
OF A GREAT
CAREER**



HIS first hit record, "Cry," sold more than two million copies within a few months of its release.

He made his British stage debut at the London Palladium on March 23, 1953, and has played a season in the West End every year since then. He has appeared at the Palladium more times than any other American entertainer.

He has the ability to win over audiences whether they speak English or not, and has played in places as far apart as South America and the Far East!

He has been awarded more tag titles than any other show business personality, including "Cry Guy," "Nabob Of Sob," "Mr. Emotion," "Prince Of Wails," "Master Of Misery," "Song Wringer," "Million Dollar Moaner," etc.

He was formerly married to Marilyn Morrison and was once engaged to the Vic Lewis band vocalist Sylvia Drew.

In 1954 he played the part of a priest in the Twentieth Century-Fox film, "There's No Business Like Show Business."

He has recorded with Doris Day, Frankie Laine and the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

He had a hit record of "Who's Sorry Now?" two years before Connie Francis became famous.

Early in 1952 he had four titles in the American Top Twenty at the same time—"Cry," "Broken Hearted," "Little White Cloud" and "Please Mr. Sun."

His own compositions include: "Little White Cloud That Cried," "Paths Of Paradise," "She Didn't Say Nothin' At All," "Tell The Lady I Said Goodbye," "Whiskey And Gin," "Mountains In The Moonlight," "The Lady Drinks Champagne," "A Sinner Am I," "Destiny."

He made his first broadcast with an amateur show from Portland, Oregon, in 1943.

He appeared in the Royal Variety Show at the Victoria Palace in November, 1955.

JOHNNIE RAY came to the door of his fifth-floor suite in one of London's plush hotels and greeted me with outstretched hand. With his ever-present and never-failing charm, he ushered me into his lounge, poured two ice-cold lagers and settled down to talk about his current variety season at the Palace Theatre.

The conversation went like this:

J.R.: It was the most sensational opening night I could have wished for. The audiences were really appreciative. I get the impression that they don't come to scream so much as they used to—they concentrate more on listening.

D.J.: You must have been very pleased with your Press notices.

J.R.: Well, I honestly believe it's the best Press I've had in seven years of visits to this country. Even "The Times" gave me a great write-up—that really knocked me out!

D.J.: It must have seemed strange working at the Palace, where you've never played before?

J.R.: Yes, and believe me, it's a difficult theatre to work. I was very nervous before I went on stage on Monday, because they told me that the theatre didn't normally play variety and this made it quite a challenge.

Home again

But as soon as I had finished my first number, I thought—"Well, I'm home again." I like the lighting at the Palace and the orchestra there is one of the best I have worked with.

D.J.: Johnnie, I hope this isn't touching upon a sore point, but you haven't had a record in the hit parade lately. How do you feel about that—does it worry you at all? And would you say that your recordings are less commercial now than they used to be?

J.R.: Let's face it—if you, I, or anyone could predict what was going to be a hit record, we'd all be millionaires. I admit I don't always agree with the quality of the material I record, but then I don't always agree with the quality of the hit parade!

In any case, I don't think it's essential for a singer always to be in the hit parade in order to keep his name alive.

As a matter of fact, I don't think it's healthy for an artist to have one hit after another, because all the time he is having to try to top his last success.

I feel it's much better to have consistency in record sales and I think the audiences at the Palace Theatre this week have proved that it's not absolutely necessary for an artist to have a current best-seller.

DEREK JOHNSON

conducted this
conversational interview

(asking questions submitted by NME readers)

D.J.: Do you make a point of always including your latest record titles in your act?

J.R.: Oh, no. My latest release in Britain is "When's Your Birthday, Baby?" but I'm not doing it at the Palace.

D.J.: How often do you find it necessary to revise your stage act?

J.R.: There's no particular time limit. I make changes only when I feel the act is no longer fresh. Of course, I always have to sing "Cry," "Little White Cloud" and "Walking My Baby Back Home"—they're three numbers which I'm never allowed to drop.

You see, an audience gets irritated if it isn't given what it has paid to see; so I always try to give my audiences something of what they are anticipating.

D.J.: I wanted to compliment you on your recent LP with the Billy Taylor Trio, which I thought was excellent. How come you got together with this group—were you attempting to break fresh ground or to widen your appeal?

J.R.: Certainly not. It's just something that Billy and I have always wanted to do, so we went ahead and did it. We selected the songs ourselves, and performed them exactly as we wanted without any interference.

New film?

D.J.: Well, I must say it turned out great. By the way, our readers are constantly wanting to know why you haven't made a film since "There's No Business Like Show Business." Is there any explanation for this?

J.R.: It's simply that all the scripts I have read have seemed inferior. I don't think it's worth while making a movie just for the sake of it—that could do more harm than good.

There is another factor, too—I do prefer to work to live audiences. But I'm sure that I

shall have another movie when the right part comes along.

It would have to be projected well into the future, though, because right now I don't have much time for that sort of thing.

D.J.: Yes, I expect you're pretty heavily booked, aren't you?

J.R.: I think the bookings go well into next year, but I don't say for sure, because I never know more than two or three jobs ahead. I let Bernie Lang, my manager, worry about that.

D.J.: I've often wondered whether an artist of your stature still has to practise regularly—scales, voice projection, and so on.

J.R.: I can't answer for other singers, but in my case, I don't do a thing. But that isn't really surprising because I never have practised. You know, I don't think I've ever sung a scale in my whole life.

Off stage

Matter of fact, you'll hardly ever hear me sing a note when I'm off stage—except when I'm composing at the piano, that is.

D.J.: By the way, excuse me for being personal, but I'm curious to know what that is you wear around your neck.

J.R.: Oh, that's a St. Christopher. I always wear it.

D.J.: Do you have any lucky charms, which you take on stage with you? I know a lot of artists do.

J.R.: No, not me. And I'm not really superstitious, either. The only phobia that I've got is that I intensely dislike working with something over my head—like a chandelier.

D.J.: Coming back to singing, Johnnie, what about all these impressions of you that other singers are frequently doing? Do you mind?

J.R.: Not in the least. I think it's very flattering—especially when

(Continued on next page)

**JOHNNIE'S
NME HIT SCORE**

Below are Johnnie Ray's hits, together with the dates they entered and left the NME British Charts, as well as the highest position each title reached.

Title	Date In	Date Out	Highest Position
Walkin' My Baby Back Home (first week of NME charts)	14/11/52	14/11/52	12
Faith Can Move Mountains	9/ 1/53	9/ 1/53	9
Ma Says, Pa Says (with Doris Day)	3/ 4/53	3/ 4/53	12
Somebody Stole My Girl	10/ 4/53	7/ 8/53	6
Full Time Job (with Doris Day)	17/ 4/53	17/ 4/53	11
Let's Walk That A-Way (with Doris Day)	24/ 7/53	23/10/53	4
Such A Night	9/ 4/54	6/ 8/54	1
If You Believe	8/ 4/55	15/ 8/55	7
Paths Of Paradise	20/ 5/55	20/ 5/55	20
Hey, There	14/10/55	9/12/55	5
Hernando's Hideaway	7/10/55	4/11/55	11
Song Of The Dreamer	28/10/55	25/11/55	10
Who's Sorry Now	17/ 2/56	24/ 2/56	17
Ain't Misbehavin'	20/ 4/56	8/ 6/56	17
Just Walking In The Rain	12/10/56	22/ 2/57	1
You Don't Owe Me A Thing	18/ 1/57	3/ 5/57	12
Look Homeward, Angel	18/ 1/57	31/ 5/57	7
Yes, Tonight, Josephine	10/ 5/57	30/ 8/57	1
Build Your Love	6/ 9/57	25/10/57	17
Up Above My Head/Good Evening Friends (with Frankie Laine)	4/10/57	1/11/57	25

**JOHNNIE
BECOMES
DRUMMER**



JOHNNIE RAY takes over the drums from his musical director, HERMAN KAPP, who usually drums while Johnnie sings. Kappy is thinking of getting his own back — by singing!

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JOHNNIE RAY'S GREAT TEST SORROW



JOHNNIE with BERNIE LANG

by the man who has managed J. R. since his pre-fame days

Bernie Lang

A QUESTION I am constantly asked by Johnnie Ray fans and admirers—either personally or by letter—is: Why does he still wear a hearing aid, when they believe his operation in 1957 was successful?

The truth of the matter is somewhat regrettable. Despite earlier indications, Johnnie is generally not enjoying clearer sound than he did prior to undergoing hospital surgery. But believe me, sincerely, this handicap is something which has caused Johnnie endless pain—besides psychological suffering which has plagued him for almost twenty years—the most important part of his life.

I am deeply concerned and insulted when I hear irresponsible people suggest Johnnie uses his hearing aid as a publicity stunt. This is cruel and completely untrue.

Going back to the latter part of 1951, I can tell you about a brave attempt by Johnnie to discard this assistance, although it was making his professional and personal life somewhat easier.

Disguises

In those days Johnnie was so conscious of other people's detrimental remarks, and I began helping to try alternative ways of disguising the equipment. One of them was to place the internal button behind his

ear, with scotch tape holding the cord on to the back of his neck—so it was not so visible to audiences.

But in those days, Johnnie worked long hours in hot night club rooms, particularly playing a great deal of piano besides singing. I remember only too well the Copa, Pittsburgh (during the latter part of 1951) when his act worked up into a frenzy—but with shattering results.

Because Johnnie perspired such a great deal, it caused the tape to fall away on his neck, with the ear apparatus hanging down.

This caused Johnnie great personal humiliation—and he made a brave attempt to dispense entirely with any assistance. Returning to the dressing room, he threw the hearing aid at me, exclaiming he would not wear it again!

For three years he denied himself this virtual necessity; during that time the amazing fact came to light which confounded Johnnie. He had always been under the impression his deficiency was the aftermath of a school accident (suffered at the age of twelve) when being tossed from a blanket, he struck the ground heavily with his head. Doctors, however, were absolutely certain Johnnie was born with it. It may have been hereditary, but he was a victim from the time of his birth, although the noticeable effects were not realised until several years later.

Because of this diagnosis, a sudden hope of possible restoration to normal hearing became a

hopeful reality. Accordingly an operation was tried in 1957—but it did not prove successful.

At the beginning of the following year, he underwent a fenestration operation as a further attempt to remedy the drawback of a lifetime. In Johnnie's case, the mechanics were correct and no after-effects were suffered.

Hope of cure

Imagine his joy when, shortly afterwards, there was a surge of hearing; he was convinced this denoted a miracle cure. But regrettably, progress did not advance. Johnnie's hearing faltered and his hopes gradually diminished. True, he gained some advantages but there were losses as well; overall Johnnie was then finding more discomfort by the unbalanced condition of his hearing, as opposed to what he had become accustomed to.

'I nearly fell out of the box!'

(Continued from page 9) they're good impressions. Quite the best I've ever seen is Dickie Valentine's. He not only has my voice, but he's got my walk, bows and gestures, too. Gee, when I saw him at the Palladium I nearly fell out of the box!

to ask is this—what do you think of trends in pop music at the moment?

J.R.: In my opinion, rock 'n' roll is not nearly as dominant as it was a year or two ago. More than that, I can't say—I wish I could.

I'd like to know what's going

to happen. The music business today is rather like the chicken that's laid the egg—and we're now waiting to see what will come out!

D.J.: Well, that's great and many thanks for giving me your time. I'll be off now.

J.R.: Hey, not so fast. Before you go, I've got a question to ask.

D.J.: What's that, Johnnie?

J.R.: I want to know why your readers seem to place so much importance upon the hit parade. Does this imply that their loyalty rises and falls with the positions in the best-sellers lists?

Because from my experience, that is certainly not the case—and I have my audiences at the Palace Theatre to prove it. So, tell me, why is the hit parade so all-important to your readers?

D.J.: Well, that's certainly a controversial subject, Johnnie. I think we'd better pass it over to the readers, don't you?

J.R.: You do that! Don't forget!



JOHNNIE RAY relaxes in his dressing room between shows. Dig the natty emblems on his shirt!



JOHNNIE'S FASCINATING HANDS

PALMIST AMAZED 'CRY GUY'

IT is now almost six years since the "New Musical Express" conceived an idea so enterprising and intriguing in its originality that, even to this day, it never fails to capture the imagination and stir the pulses of those who read it.

I refer to the remarkable and fascinating reading of Johnnie Ray's hands, on the occasion of his first visit to this country in the spring of 1953. Hailed by Johnnie himself as a unique piece of journalism, it is without parallel in the history of the musical press.

Since there must be many thousands of our readers who are not familiar with the circumstances of this chain of events, let me tell you briefly what took place.

Johnnie had been swept to the crest of the wave in America, where he had taken the entire country by storm. Now he was undertaking his first visit to Britain, to play his initial engagement at the London Palladium.

As he stepped off the plane at London Airport, a battery of photographers greeted him. Our staff photographer brought back a picture of Johnny genially waving his acknowledgment to the assembled crowds, and it was this photograph which was responsible for setting the whole stunt in motion.

Sensitive

It was immediately seen from it that Johnnie possessed the most sensitive and distinctive hands, full of character, and in themselves telling the story of this amazing young man.

So the NME decided to have the hands read professionally—without Johnnie's knowledge and without the palmist being aware of the identity of their owner. We sought out a palmist in Wardour Street and took along enlarged pictures of Johnnie's hands.

The palmist had no idea whose hands she was reading (in fact, when she was subsequently told, she stated that she had never heard of him since she knew nothing at all about show business).

She knew nothing of his nationality or his profession, for we gave her no clue to the newspaper making the enquiries.

Yet her reading was so amazingly accurate that even Johnnie was spellbound when he read it. Let me tell you just a few of the comments made by the palmist about her unknown subject:

"I have never seen a pair of hands that express such a highly emotional and sincere character. He has had a lot of trouble, most of it financial, but that is all past. He will climb to the very peak of success in his own sphere.

"He has a straightforward character.

with plenty of understanding, grit, pluck—and certainly confidence. He'll achieve fame—the sort of fame where his name will be in lights.

That person is terribly emotional. At times he suffers from awful depression—one moment he could be on top of the world, and the next he could be right down. The heart line is also emotional, indicating the highly artistic side of the person.

He will go far in life, and he has a remarkable gift that has to do with the public. Travel is indicated—plenty of land and water. He'll be world-renowned later in life. Fame and position are indicated—both financial and positional.

These hands fascinate me. He will use them in a way you or I would not, they will earn their owner a lot of money. His artistic talents are strong, and he will go right to the top of his profession."

This is but a segment of the fantastically accurate reading by the palmist, which summed up Johnnie Ray even more clearly than he could have done himself!

She also stressed the importance of the initials T, H and J in Johnnie's life. When our reporter asked Johnnie, without indicating the nature of his quest, what significance the initials held, Johnnie replied unhesitatingly:

"Well, T and H are obviously Tom Rockwell and Harry Angers, who have probably helped my career more than anyone. And J—she's a girl whom I knew very well at one time, although unfortunately there was an

unhappy ending to our association."

When Johnnie was finally confronted with the reading of his hands he was completely non-plussed.

He agreed that it was a most accurate summing up, and was quick to congratulate the NME on their initiative in devising such a scheme. Madame Ve-ara, the palmist, has certainly shown that there is a positive answer to all who are prepared to scoff at the business of hand-reading.

If you think that your own hands may bear the characteristics of a Johnnie Ray, you may be interested to know that (six years after her revealing Ray reading) Ve-ara is still operating from her small office in Wardour Street!

DEREK JOHNSON

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THIS MONTH'S TOP TEN POPS — FROM TOP POP CLUB

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 APPLE BLOSSOM
 TIME GIGI LIVIN'
 LOVIN' DOLL MANHATTAN
 SPIRITUAL HIGH SCHOOL
 CONFIDENTIAL LITTLE
 DRUMMER BOY MY
 HEART SINGS SIXTEEN
 CANDLES



DAVID JACOBS, disc jockey, TV and radio star, was one of the first show biz personalities to fill a top pop club enrolment form. Now, on Radio Luxembourg, he plays Top Ten discs exclusively. His verdict on this month's issue: "S-E-N-S-A-T-I-O-N-A-L!"

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DINAH SHORE



MARILYN MONROE



FATS DOMINO

Voice coach praises Marilyn Monroe

MATTY MALNECK was Marilyn Monroe's voice coach for the picture, "Some Like It Hot," and he reports to writer Henderson Cleaves: "She is a very hard worker and has a good instinct for how to sing a song. She has a wonderful pre-knowledge of how to sing a recorded song in such a way as to co-ordinate with her actions on film later."

"She sings every note of her songs. I don't see any reason to use any other voice for Marilyn's in any picture. She has a very good range. She's just gorgeous all around!"

★ It looks as if Montgomery Clift will co-star with Elizabeth Taylor in "Suddenly Last Summer," which will be shot in London this summer.

★ According to Frank Capra, one of the best of all screen directors, Frank Sinatra could be a great director "if he'd settle down."

★ It's quite possible, say people in the business, that signing with Capitol will mean a renaissance of Dinah Shore's recording career. She's been extremely successful on television in recent years, but somehow hasn't been able to get a record hit.

★ Writes columnist Jack O'Brian: "Lawrence Welk will gross \$3,500,000 this year and will laugh all the way to the bank at all the people who call him square."

★ Max Bygraves' heavy cold (which prevented him being guest of honour at the Cancer Care luncheon in New York) was caught when his plane was sidetracked to Goose Bay. He stepped out for a while into the Arctic snow and got a chill.

PUBLICITY HELPED TOMMY

TOMMY LEONETTI'S career seemed at first to be seriously damaged when a Senate Investigating Committee unearthed evidence that a former manager of his had been involved with hoodlums.

Dick Clark summarily cancelled a Leonetti appearance on his TV show — an action for which Clark has since been widely criticised — but now has rehired him.

Leonetti's night club engagements have zoomed up, and his new record of "Moonlight Serenade" has been doing very well since the publicity.

He's also about to be married to Patricia Quinn, daughter of a diplomat.

★ Connie Boswell is back in the big time with a featured role in the Jack Webb TV series, "Pete Kelly's Blues."

★ There is a rumour that, while in London, Liberace might try to come up with a show that can be the framework for a new TV series for him.

★ The film Julie London made in England will be released in America under a new title, "My Strange Affair."

★ Tony March, whose father is the famous actor, Frederic March, has signed with American Decca as a pop singer.

★ Frank Sinatra will have Gina Lollobrigida as a co-star in "Never So Few." Sammy Davis Jr. will definitely not be in the picture.

★ There's a new Ron Goodwin album on Capitol "Music In Orbit."

★ Reporters are surprised at the strong showing Chris Barber is making on his tour. Usually, one hit record is not enough to guarantee large turnouts at concerts, but Chris has been an exception.

★ Nat Cole's best album in years is "Welcome To The Club." That's the Basic band behind him with Gerald Wiggins on piano instead of Count.

★ Harry Belafonte may sign a long-term contract with NBC for about three spectaculars each season.

★ A Conference of Christians and Jews has given Richard Rodgers a Human Relations Award for his song, "You Have To Be Carefully Taught," from "South Pacific."

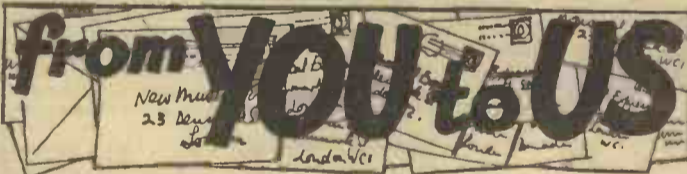
★ The Mills Brothers deny retirement rumours. "We're too young!"

★ Fats Domino might add his son to his act. He's ten, sings and plays piano.

★ It finally happened: there will be a "Newport Jazz Festival of Fashions" at this year's Newport Festival.

'Mardi Gras' girl's big break

NEWEST glamour girl is dancer Barrie Chase, a sensation in the Fred Astaire TV spectacular, which received such fervent reviews it had to be repeated. She's been signed by 20th Century-Fox as a result of a bit part she did in "Mardi Gras" and she'll co-star in "Can Can."



WRITE TO:
 NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS,
 23 DENMARK STREET,
 LONDON, W.C.2

WENDY LEWIS, of Cowley, Oxford, writes:

Why do so many people have a grudge against British talent?

Take, for instance, Cliff Richard. Many people say he is a carbon copy of Elvis Presley. Even if this is so, why shouldn't Britain have its own Elvis in the person of Cliff Richard?

Perhaps someone would like to write and tell me when America has discovered a Tommy Steele.

★ RAYMOND PRICE, of Wallasey, Cheshire, writes:

I notice that the already long run of "Oh Boy!" has been extended. I think this is wishful thinking!

The show cannot be expected to run for so long when its contents remain almost the same week after week.

I'm afraid that unless some drastic changes are made, "Oh Boy!" will suffer the same fate as the old "Six-Five Special."

I SAW BUDDY, BOPPER

AND RITCHIE OFF ON THE PLANE

by BRUCE HOLLAND
 (Iowa disc jockey and regular NME reader since he was based with the United States Air Force in Britain.)

I WAS one of the last persons to speak to Buddy Holly, Big Bopper and Ritchie Valens before they took off from Mason City Municipal Airport last month on the flight that ended their brilliant lives.

I was present at the 'teen hop in which Buddy, Bopper and Ritchie appeared and met and talked with them for some time. I went to the airport and saw them off on their last journey.

The pilot, Roger Peterson, was a personal friend of mine and we belonged to the same club in Clear Lake, near Mason City, where the dance took place.

The reason the three asked Peterson to fly them to Fargo was because they were weary of

travelling by coach and wanted a chance to get their dirty clothes washed.

When they took off, flying weather visibility was over five miles. What caused the plane to crash still hasn't been determined.

The plane came down only five miles from the airport. It was discovered at eight in the morning by the owner of the flying service from which the plane had been hired.

It's a truly tragic thing and probably wouldn't happen again in a hundred years, but it did this time. On February 14, Valentine's Day, Ritchie Valens' new LP was released. Disc-jockeys all over America called that Saturday "Valens-time Day" in tribute to the "next Elvis Presley."

Here in Mason City we are still shocked at their deaths. They were three fine people, and formed part of the cleanest and finest show I have ever seen.

C. KIERNANDER, of London, S.W.1, writes:

A few months ago Philips issued LPs of Frankie Laine, Guy Mitchell, Frankie Vaughan and Johnnie Ray, comprising their hit songs. RCA have recently followed suit with releases of Perry Como and Elvis Presley.

Surely it would not be expecting too much for their companies to follow this example, with, say, Nat "King" Cole and Malcolm Vaughan among others.

I am sure many pop fans would greatly appreciate such a move, as it proves a most satisfactory way of collecting hits by one's favourites.

★ MICHAEL SHEPHERD, of Belfast, Northern Ireland, writes:

Could you please explain why Nicky Sullivan, guitarist of The Crickets, is never mentioned in any articles or featured in any photographs of the group?

(Nicky Sullivan left the group before its British tour last year.)

★ BERYL GREENWOOD, of Brentwood, Essex, writes:

My friends and I are glad to see that Russ Hamilton has recorded "The Reprieve Of Tom Dooley."

We always knew that scoundrel was not meant to hang, and we think this might also prove another break for Russ!

★ DAVE MUSKETT writes from Bognor Regis, Sussex:

It makes me mad to keep on reading letters from people like May Smethurst.

Just because she doesn't like certain artists and their songs, what gives her the right to say that the record-buyers don't know what they're doing?

Can't people be allowed to buy the records they like without being dictated to by other people's opinions?

This also applies to some, fortunately not all, of our oh so partial disc critics.

★ THE MAN I'M VERY FOND OF ★ WHY BRITISH AUDIENCES THRILL ME ★
★ WHY I THINK ROCK WILL LAST ★ MY OWN FAVOURITE SONG ★

MANY readers sent us questions they'd like to put to Connie Francis. We sent a reporter to see her and she gladly sat down and gave her answers, which are printed below:



DAVE SOMMERVILLE

QUESTION TIME

with

CONNIE FRANCIS



These, and many other secrets, are revealed in

reason for your choice? (Jackie Greenham of Manchester 11).

A. It's a recording which you haven't heard yet, because it forms part of my new album. The title is "Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me" — and the reason I choose it is because I sang it for someone special, who was present at the session.

??

Q. What is your impression of British audiences, compared with American audiences? (Lily Charlesworth of King's Lynn).

A. There's a very clear distinction between the two, in that over here the audiences seem to be much more impressed by performances rather than by names. That's how it used to be in the States 30 years ago, but it doesn't apply any more.

Back home an artist can give a terrible performance, but as long as he has a couple of hit records behind him, he can do no wrong. And that, I think, is unfortunate.

Personally, I feel that British audiences are very warm, and I am very happy and thrilled by their reactions.

??

Q. Have you any special aims or ambitions in show business, or are you perfectly content as you are at present? (Sally and Marian Martin of Paisley).

A. Well, I don't have any aims like going into musical comedy, or becoming an all-round entertainer, if that's what you mean. I should like to extend my TV experience to some extent, and it looks as though this wish will be fulfilled on my return to the States, because I'm going to do a weekly colour series with Jimmie Rodgers, replacing the George Gobel Show.

Another thing is that today my life is dominated by record charts. They are all-important to me. I'd like to be an established star, so that I don't have to worry about charts. Let's face it, I'm sure Sinatra and Ella don't bother about them!

Q. Are you completely devoted to show business, or do you have any marriage and possible retirement plans in view? (Eileen Winterfield of Great Yarmouth).

A. Well, of course, show business does tend to dominate my outlook at the moment, and I hope to go on singing just as long as the public wants me. But as soon as there is a slackening of interest, I'd like to marry and have a dozen babies.

That's how I'd like it to work out at the moment. But plans can change from day to day — circumstances alter cases.

Right now I don't have any marriage plans, although I am very fond of Dave Sommerville, who is one of The Diamonds vocal group, and whom I met in Hawaii.

He's one of the most refreshingly well-adjusted people I have met in show business, and it's always a pleasure to be with him.

??

Q. To what do you attribute the fact that your records have done better in Britain than in America, from the point of view of chart placings? (Cheryl Williams of Lee, S.E.12).

A. That's a difficult one. I think there are probably two reasons. The main one is that beat music is still very predominant in the States, much more so than in Britain—and since straightforward rock isn't suited to girl singers, it stands to reason that the men have been controlling the record lists.

Over here, there's a much heavier accent on the melody, so it gave me a greater chance to make headway. Also in America right now, there's an enormous craze for vocal groups, and they have been well to the fore in the hit parade.

Q. What is your opinion of current trends in pop music? Is rock 'n' roll here to stay? (Leslie Flowers of Darlington).

A. I believe there will be rock just as long as there is pop music. Of course, the sound will be modified as time goes on. I think we are in a sort of transition period right now, and a more subtle kind of rock is in the process of developing.

??

Q. You are particularly associated with your treatment of oldies. Who picks all these revivals for you? (P. L. Owen of Kettering).

A. My father picks nearly all my material for me, and events

have shown how I can rely upon his judgment. He decided upon "Who's Sorry Now?" and all my subsequent big hits.

The two numbers which sold the least copies since my father started taking a hand were "Fallin'" and "I'm Sorry I Made You Cry"—and those were the only two I picked for myself!

??

Q. Which medium gives you the greatest satisfaction — TV, records or live performances? (Janet Cuthbert of Market Harborough).

A. No doubt about it—records. I absolutely live for my recording sessions. And what with new singles,

plus EPs and LPs, I find I'm in the studio every week now. Contrary to general opinion, I don't find it fatiguing.

??

Q. They say that a singer is her own severest critic. Do you find fault with your own performances, and in what respect? (Peter Norton of Swindon).

A. My dynamics have always been my weakest point. I notice on listening to my records that I have

the tendency to blast rather too suddenly. I always used to be lacking in microphone technique—I never knew just how far to position myself away from the mike.

But I think I am beginning to rectify these faults now. And the new album which I have just completed is my first recorded work to eliminate these faults to the full.

??

Q. What is your own particular favourite from amongst your many recordings, and is there any

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KEITH GOODWIN

welcomes 'That Old Black Magic' man—

BILLY DANIELS, the master showman



THE curtain rises, the orchestra plays the opening bars of "That Old Black Magic," and on to the stage strides a smiling figure whose hair, greying at the temples, gives him an air of mature dignity.

That will be the scene at Manchester Hippodrome on Monday when lithe, finger-snapping Billy Daniels—hailed as one of the entertainment world's greatest showmen—opens his fifth British variety tour.

Since the advent of rock 'n' roll a few years ago, Billy has become one of the many near-forgotten "greats" of show business as far as British fans are concerned. But early tomorrow (Saturday), he arrives to begin four weeks of music hall, concert and TV dates which should re-establish him as a major force here once again.

Unlike so many visiting American artists, Billy comes to Britain without a hit record to boost his box-office appeal. But there's nothing really strange about this.

In the past, he has never relied on a best seller in order to come here, yet he's always been successful.

Not that he hasn't had a fair share of hit discs to his credit. You'll hear some of them during this tour—established Daniels' favourites like "Bye, Bye Blackbird," "I Get A Kick Out Of You," "Them There Eyes," "Too Marvellous For Words," "My Yiddisher Momma," "Deed I Do," and, of course, his perennial theme "That Old Black Magic."

But if Billy's popularity has suffered a temporary slump in Britain, it definitely hasn't dwindled across the Atlantic. Since we last saw him in April, 1956 (a tour which he opened at the London Palladium), he's been kept busy with sundry engagements.

In California, he starred in his own highly successful TV series and late last year wound up an extensive residency in cabaret at the Stardust Hotel in Las Vegas, where he played to enthusiastic audiences every night for several months.

If you haven't seen the effervescent "Mr. Black Magic" since his first trip here back in 1952, then you're in for a surprise.

Billy's stage personality has undergone many radical changes—now he's a less extrovert and far more relaxed and mature performer.

Many of the mannerisms which were his trade marks—the high kicking, wild arm movements and frequent clapping of his hand to his ears—have all but disappeared. You'll see them still, but only in moderation in a lighthearted way when he virtually pokes fun at himself.

More subtle

His singing has changed, too. He's inclined now towards a softer, subtler approach that emphasises his distinctive ballad style, though he's by no means forgotten how to punch

over a jump number with a force and vigour that is all too rare these days.

His range has suffered not at all over the years and he continues to hit high notes with ease and precision. He still bends notes at certain points in a song where few of his contemporaries would think of doing so—another noteworthy highlight of his unique style.

But contrary to general belief, the artistry of Billy Daniels isn't the kind that can only be enjoyed via "in person" performances.

The warmth and intimacy, life and vitality of his sparkling stage act is accurately reflected in the grooves of a Vogue album recorded a few years ago at Hollywood's famous Crescendo Club niterie.

On his album, Billy presents a fine cross-section of his impressive repertoire supported only by a small instrumental group headed by his erstwhile pianist and friend Benny Payne, who'll be with him in Britain again this trip.

Billy gags his way through an act that can only be described as brilliant and concludes with a snappy cross-talk routine with a celebrated member of the audience—the multi-talented Sammy Davis, jr.

Standards

On another recent album—"You Go To My Head" (HMV)—he injected a new lease of life into 10 time-worn ballads and up-tempo standards with a brassy, jazz-inflected big band directed by alto saxist Benny Carter. This was something fresh and new in Billy's recording career, yet it turned out to be one of his finest albums.

Success didn't open its well-guarded

doors to Billy until he was 35. Before the war, he sang on a local radio station in his home-town—Jacksonville, Florida—and later worked as a singing waiter in New York.

During the middle thirties, a talent scout booked him into a daily radio spot and he also cut his first record for RCA - Victor—"Diane." A spell with the little-known but excellent Erskine Hawkins band gave him the confidence to launch a solo act, but aside of occasional night club dates, he made only minor headway.



BENNY PAYNE

The war found Billy wearing the uniform of the Merchant Marines for three years, but on his discharge, he got his foot firmly on the first rung of the success ladder when he teamed up with Benny Payne, who had previously worked for Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway and Pearl Bailey, and

who will be with Billy again on this trip.

Billy prepared a polished, colourful act and soon became a much-sought-after club attraction. Then his million-selling "That Old Black Magic" disc added the finishing touches to his success story and in turn paved the way for his British debut.

Forerunner

In a roundabout way, Billy was the forerunner of many of today's young "big beat" stars as far as presentation is concerned. But whereas hip swivelling and general body movements are an integral part of the rockers' approach to singing, Billy's gyrations were never anything more than a genuine attempt on his part to add a welcome touch of humour to his act.

And there we have touched on the very secret of "Mr. Black Magic's" success. He likes to enjoy himself while he's working. But it doesn't end there. He likes the audience to have fun, too—and they always do!

IT'S THE NME'S SEVENTH BIRTHDAY . . .

Music has changed a great deal

TO those of us who find the passing years recede all too quickly, 1952 seems a lifetime ago. And that's precisely what it is—and the lifetime in question is that of the newspaper which you, dear reader, are now busily absorbing . . . the "New Musical Express."

For this week marks the seventh birthday of the paper with which we are proud to be associated, and which you—we sincerely believe—are always happy to read.

Many platters have spun round and round since the first edition appeared on the bookstalls. A glance at the paper in those days would have revealed that the predominant news was of radio programmes and of the activities of Britain's big bands.

Now the emphasis has shifted very considerably—every aspect of the paper is centred on records and recording stars. Radio has given way to television and the lead stories frequently tell of more and more American visitors descending upon our shores.

The story of musical entertainment over the last seven years narrows down to two main considerations—the tremendous upsurge of stay-at-home entertainment, namely records and television.

In 1952, television was scarcely at the beginning of its domination, yet today it is all-powerful (aided by the advent of ITV in 1955) and has been largely responsible for the closing of countless theatres and cinemas.

Live shows

However, it is significant that attractive live shows, and certain individual entertainers, have proved that they can still draw the crowds despite the counter-attraction of TV.

From the musical point of view, even more important has been the advent of the record boom. Today, discs are all-important in assessing the box-office value and star appeal of an artist.

The period of the NME's life has also marked the birth and development of the long-playing record, which is rapidly assuming dominance in record sales and could be responsible for the decline of standard play records.

In the past few years, we have also seen the breakdown of the stalemate in Anglo-American band exchanges. Starting with the Stan Kenton tour, in which the NME played a substantial part, most of the leading American aggregations have visited these shores—to such an extent that their arrival is now becoming common-place.

There has also been a tremendous influx of American stars, for which TV and records must again be held

largely responsible. For most of them who visit these shores have achieved a reputation on the strength of record sales, and hope to exploit their latest releases through the medium of British television.

For this is the era of overnight sensations, the day when unknowns zoom into the limelight on the crest of a disc success, and more often than not disappear from the reckoning just as quickly as they arrived.

Elvis arrives

There are exceptions of course. The most notable throughout this period being one of the most remarkable phenomena ever to appear on the show business scene . . . Elvis Presley. He arrived in a blaze of glory in 1956, and he's still here—as big as ever.

In Britain, the same year saw the advent of our own young star in Tommy Steele, who has also been able to maintain his position at the top.

Yet others, who have enjoyed their moment of glory, have now faded from the scene, the most outstanding being Bill Haley, the man who reigned supreme through the heyday of rock. But Haley was largely restricted to the gimmick of the day, whereas Presley and Steele have proved their adaptability and versatility.

In 1952 pop music couldn't make up its mind in which direction it wanted to travel. Names like Johnnie Ray, Frankie Laine and Guy Mitchell began to assume importance in the best-sellers lists, which the NME inaugurated for the first time in Britain at the end of 1952.

In 1953, the ballad was at its peak, and we applauded the birth of a new star in Ruby Murray, who carved her own little corner in history by having five simultaneous entries in the Top Twenty.

Suddenly, a bombshell burst in Tin Pan Alley, when rock 'n' roll exploded upon the world. The melody was forgotten, and beat reigned supreme. This was the signal for hundreds of new rhythmic entertainers to launch themselves upon an eager world.

In Britain, a new and complementary craze started—skiffle.

Today it has faded, but it leaves behind one of the only big names it created during its short, pulsating career—Lonnie Donegan.

Now the initial excitement of rock has subsided. The melody is beginning to come back into its own, and there is now in process a fusion between beat and melody, which is producing one of the most refreshingly exciting periods in the history of pop music.

Rock will never die—let us say that it is being absorbed into the mainstream of Tin Pan Alley's output.

It is taking with it the fascinating lilt of the colourful Latin-American rhythms, and the captivating nostalgia of the current Italian influence.

After a period of male domination at the height of the rock craze, girl singers are beginning to come back into their own—though their challenge is headed by new names in the hit parade stakes. . . . names like Connie Francis, Shirley Bassey, Jane Morgan.

Apart from Presley the 1952-59 period has seen the establishment of many young international artists, notably Pat Boone, while Britain has produced a considerable number of new stars of substantial box-office appeal, of the calibre of Frankie Vaughan, Michael Holliday and Cliff Richard.

World-wide

It is an age when the gramophone record has become all-powerful in determining star status . . . an age when the world is shrinking, and there is developing a healthier integration of nations through the medium of show business.

A much more widespread interest in pop music and its performers has become apparent over the past seven years.

Since 1952, the NME's circulation figures have rapidly increased, until we are now proud to have the world's largest sale for a musical newspaper.

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TAIL-PIECES BY THE ALLEY CAT

BECAUSE his latest disc did not rise higher in hit parade, Cliff Richard failed to join the select group—of Lonnie Donegan, Paul Anka and U.S. vocal team The Crickets—who entered Top Ten here with first three releases... Horatio Nicholls' "Mistakes" has been deleted from Connie Francis' album of British songs—also the Eily Beadell-Nell Tolerton title, "Cruising Down The River"... Four days prior to booking Chris Barber's Band for his U.S.-TV show last Sunday, Ed Sullivan refused them—then changed his mind...

While Glen Mason searches for a new flat, he and Ronnie Carroll share a West End hotel room... Lena Horne conveyed receiving the "message" on Perry Como's Show (BBC-TV, Friday)... Next Tommy Steele film is in colour...

TWO HIT SHOWCASES

ROSEMARY CLOONEY

(Rosemary Clooney sings Come On-a My House, Half As Much, This Ole House, Man (Uh-huh), Mangos, Hey There, We'll Be Together Again, Botch-a Me, Tenderly, Where Will The Dimple Be?, Blues In The Night, Be My Love, Companion, Love—You Didn't Do Right By Me, Mambo Italiano.)

Fourteen winners from the versatile Rosemary Clooney, who c. switch from sad song to gay song and make both as convincingly sincere. On the gay side, Rosie is happy with "Botch-a Me," "Where Will The Dimple Be?," "Man (Uh-huh)" and "Come On-a My House."

The sadder songs leave a tender feeling—"Blues In The Night," "Tenderly" and "Half As Much." On Philips label.

DORIS DAY

(Doris Day sings Sentimental Journey; Ready, Willing And Able; If I Give My Heart To You; Whatever Will Be Will Be; A Very Precious Love; Lullaby Of Broadway; Secret Love; It's Magic; The Deadwood Stage; Bewitched; Canadian Capers; Love Me Or Leave Me; The Black Hills Of Dakota; Everybody Loves A Lover.)

Philips have rounded up fourteen of Doris Day's most successful discs, using the NME Charts for their choice. Doris handles all the songs with great skill and the album offers much entertainment—both for fans who knew the songs when they were first issued, and for the new Day converts alike. "Whatever Will Be Will Be," "If I Give My Heart To You," "A Very Precious Love" and "The Black Hills Of Dakota" are four standouts from 14 outstandingly sung songs.

Here's a switch, Toni Dalli did not sing "Granada" on ATV "Saturday Spectacular"—but Jane Morgan did!... 20th Century-Fox label is Al Martino's third within last year... An Alley Cat forecast confirmed—Capitol have signed Dinah Shore...

First Decca LP by Max Bygraves scheduled to start waxing yesterday—with Ted Heath and his orchestra... Jane Morgan's real name is Jane Carrier... During Saturday's "Oh Boy" show, Marty Wilde often seemed to resemble Frankie Howard...

Spectacular rise by Connie Francis' "If I Didn't Care" in U.S. "Cash Box" sellers—also Ricky Nelson's "It's Late," The Fleetwoods' "Come Softly To Me," Lloyd Price's "Where Were You On Your Wedding Day," Teresa Brewer's "Heavenly Lover"



This all-star trio brought last week's "Oh Boy!" to a great climax. They are (l to r) CLIFF RICHARD, MARION RYAN and MARTY WILDE.

and Buddy Holly's "It Doesn't Matter Any More" (penned by Paul Anka), etc. In New York, ex-NME circulation manager Mike Collier appointed National Promotion Director by Hugo & Luigi—within RCA group... New Johnny Franz Philips singer-composer could hit first time—Johnny Gentle with "Wendy"...



Turning film producer, Julie London also appears in "The Golden Hatchet"—with Dana Andrews co-starring... Palladium TV audience applauded Bruce Forsyth—when he paid tribute to Perry Como on Sunday's show... Had Johnnie Ray recorded "It's All In The Game,"

Tommy Edwards might have remained unknown...

David Platz (Essex Music chief here), visiting his boss Howie Richmond in New York... Hollywood Dot Records' Randy Wood secures sound-track score of Red Nichols' screen biography "The Five Pennies"—starring Danny Kaye, who sings "The Saints" with Louis Armstrong... Don't expect one-horse race for Billy Eckstine with "Gigi"; an outsider worthy of place bet is Vic Damone...

After twenty years, Russ Morgan leaves U.S. Decca for Mercury... Joe Henderson writes musical score of "Jazzboat"; title song by Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van Heusen for this British film musical... On Mon-

Life-lines of Dickie Valentine

Real name: Richard Bryce.
Birthdate: November 4, 1929.
Birthplace: St. Pancras, London.
Height: 5ft. 8in.
Hair and eyes: Dark brown.
Family: Dickie married former Glasgow ice skater Elizabeth Flynn on October 27, 1954, at Caxton Hall, London. They now have two young children—Kim Elizabeth and Richard Jr.
Present home: Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex.
First band engagement: On February 13, 1949, he began a five-year spell as the featured singer with Ted Heath and his Music—his only regular band engagement.
First song with Heath: "It's Magic," which he performed at the band's London Palladium "Swing Session" on February 13, 1949.
First solo variety appearance: At Manchester Hippodrome on April 19, 1954.
Former record label: Decca.
No. 1 disc hits: "Finger Of Suspicion" and "Christmas Alphabet."
Other major disc hits: "A Blossom Fell," "Mr. Sandman," "I Wonder," "Old Pianna Rag"



"Three heads are better than one," is DICKIE'S motto, according to this picture of him.

(composed by his wife), "Christmas Island," "All The Time And Everywhere," "In A Golden Coach," "The Windsor Waltz," "Broken Wings."

Decca LPs: "Presenting Dickie Valentine," "Here's Dickie," "Over My Shoulder" and "With Vocal Refrain By Dickie Valentine."

Current record label: Pye-Nixa. Latest hit parade entry: "Venue" (No. 28 this week). Backed by "Where" (on which he is accompanied by his three-year-old daughter Kim. Her royalties?—A sweet for every record sold!).

Royal Command Performances: In 1954 and 1957 at the London Palladium.

Pantomime appearances: Newcastle (1955 and 1957), Liverpool (1956), and Finsbury Park (1958).

Cabaret debut: Just before joining Ted Heath and his Music, Dickie appeared as a solo artist at London's Blue Lagoon and Panama Clubs. Since then, he's starred at the famous Café de Paris.

Film debut: At the age of three in "Jack's The Boy," starring Jack Hulbert.

Most recent film: The screen version of the BBC-TV "6.5 Special" show.

U.S.-TV appearances: He starred in Ed Sullivan's celebrated "Toast Of The Town" show from New York

in the spring of 1954.
British TV: He has starred in all the major BBC and ITV productions ("Sunday Night At The London Palladium," "Startime," "Saturday Spectacular," "6.5 Special," "Jack Jackson Show," etc.) and has twice had his own series—"The Dickie Valentine Show" and "Free And Easy" for ITV.

Major poll honours: He was voted "Britain's Top Male Singer" in the NME Poll in 1952/3/4/5/6/7; in the 1957 poll he was also voted "Outstanding Musical Personality Of The Year" and was placed fourth as the "World's Outstanding Singer"; in 1955/56, he was twice a *Daily Mirror* Disc Festival winner.

Most thrilling experience: Topping the bill in variety at the London Palladium for a fortnight beginning on April 11, 1955. He later topped the bill at London's Prince Of Wales Theatre on two separate occasions.

Early setback: As a child, he suffered with asthma—and was told by a medical specialist that he would be wasting his time by making singing his profession. But Dickie's enthusiasm wasn't dampened so easily, and he eventually overcame his physical disability.

Owes a debt of gratitude to: Stage star Bill O'Connor, who paid for Dickie's singing lessons at the start of his career and continued for a year.

Favourite of own recordings: "Don't Leave Me Now."

Favourite of own impressions: Johnnie Ray and Mario Lanza. Ray is one of Dickie's most ardent admirers.

Favourite singers: Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, the late Al Jolson, Peggy Lee and Jeri Southern.

Favourite orchestras: Ted Heath, Les Brown, Stan Kenton and Stanley Black.

Favourite composers: George Gershwin, Jerome Kern and Tolchard Evans.

Favourite screen star: Rod Steiger.

Favourite colour: Blue.

Favourite food: Spaghetti.

Lucky number: 13.

Hobbies: Cine photography and experimenting with tape recorders.

Sports: Swimming and fishing.

Hardest professional task: "To maintain a good performance, hold the position I have secured, retain the goodwill of my fans—and continue to equal or better previous theatre box-office figures."

Advice to aspiring vocalists: "Start your career by singing with a dance band—the experience is essential."

Professional ambition: To appear in a musical at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, where he was a call boy for 3½ years!

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day, Dennis Lotis commenced rehearsals for stage production of John Osborne's "World Of Paul Slicky." Not a singing star until 36, Frankie Laine (now ten years older) is forecast by critic Dane Marlowe to have dramatic acting career... Long-awaited Bernard Bresslaw disc surprisingly competes with The Coasters' U.S. "Charlie Brown" hit... Last Monday week, Lonnie Donegan was billed in AR-TV "Alfred Marks Show"—but did not appear...

Rival labels now issuing Chris Barber discs in America... If the Dean of Canterbury has any connection with Terry Dene, perhaps he can help Edna Savage's marital problems?... Singer June Hutton presented a son to her husband Axel Stordahl, noted orchestra leader...

Platters, then "Pub With No Beer" could have Slim Dusty occupying top bar... Possible Nancy Whiskey Scottish TV series... Harry Secombe planned to Jamaican holiday this week with the family.

The late Manie Sacks had a U.S.-TV tribute last week—including Nat "King" Cole (who revived "Mona Lisa"), plus Dinah Shore with "Buttons & Bows," Eddie Fisher, a trumpet solo by Harry James, more singing from Rosemary Clooney, assistance by screen star Jane Wyman—for Kay Starr's "Side By Side," a medley of Frank Sinatra tunes, two Tony Martin vocal offerings, Ethel Merman joining forces with Mary Martin; introducing the parade of stars was Perry Como!

Harry Belafonte stars in film of recent London play—Errol John's "Moon On A Rainbow Shawl" Guest appearance by Guy Mitchell in next U.S.-TV "Bob Hope Show"

From same label as Rosemary June, Arlene Fontana's TV dates, starting on Sunday's Palladium show, are plentiful—excluding "The Epilogue"... Don Lang on BBC "Saturday Club" gave latest Peggy Lee disc title, "Okay, Alright, You Win" a great work-out... Jack Benny cracked at a Hollywood luncheon: "Eddie Cantor has suffered in the same way as George Jessel throughout their careers—they wanted to be Al Jolson!"

Capitol orchestra leader Les Baxter takes legal steps—claims "Tequila" by The Champs infringed one of his compositions... Congratulations Frankie Avalon, "Billboard" No. 1 with "Venus"; same title brings Dickie Valentine back in British charts... When The King Brothers appeared in BBC-TV series "A to Z" last week, Denis King was unable to appear—but Joyce Shock replaced him for one number... If Shirley Bassey continues guarding her front door from The

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