

PRESS CUTTINGS

by
**Leonard
Feather**

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Album

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLICATIONS

<u>Paper</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Name Used</u>
1. FILM KURIER	Berlin	Sept. 1931.	Own
2. CINEMATOGRAPHIE FRANCAISE, Paris		June, 1932.	"
3. MELODY MAKER	London	July, 1933.	" , also Geoffrey Marne, "Plume", "Phæbe the Fan", "Detector", etc.
4. FILM PICTORIAL	London	April 1934.	Geoffrey Marne.
5. THE GRAMOPHONE	London	Sept. 1934.	Own.
6. GRAMOPHONE RECORD	"	Sept. 1934.	Own.
7. TUNE TIMES	"	Nov. 1934.	Geoffrey Marne, "Elegy".
8. BALLROOM AND BAND	"	Jan. 1935.	Maurice Grahame.
9. THE ERA	"	Jan. 1935.	Own.
10. SWING MUSIC	"	March 1935.	Own, Benny Hoff, Edgar Jackson
11. KINEMATOGRAPH WEEKLY	"	May 1935.	"Screencomber"
12. RHYTHM	"	June 1935.	Geoffrey Marne
13. POPULAR MUSIC	"	July 1935.	Own.
14. SUNDAY GRAPHIC	"	Aug. 1935.	-----.
15. NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS, New York.		Aug. 1935.	Own.
16. RADIO PICTORIAL	London	Sept. 1935.	Own.
17. DAILY SKETCH	"	Sept. 1935.	-----.
18. PICTUREGOER	"	Oct. 1935.	Own.
19. DOWN BEAT	Chicago.	Oct. 1935.	Own.

Europäische Zusammenarbeit

Von Leonard G. FEATHER

Der englische Film behauptet nun auch seinen Platz.

Diese Aeusserung ist jetzt endlich eine Tatsache geworden. Die Ereignisse in der englischen Filmindustrie während der letzten Monate sind sehr ermutigend, sogar merkwürdig gewesen.

Trotz der schlechten allgemeinen Lage kann man leicht sagen, dass der englische Film seinen Platz behauptet. Man braucht bloss an die neuen Verhandlungen der Gaumont British zu denken. Diese Firma hat mit einer grossen asiatischen Gesellschaft einen Vertrag abgeschlossen, wonach künftig die Produktionen der Gaumont in 180 chinesischen und japanischen Kinos aufgeführt werden. Die britischen Produktionsfirmen scheinen endlich am Export Interesse zu finden. Viele andere Verträge sind auch neulich abgeschlossen worden, z. B. die British and Dominions Produktionen wird United Artists nach den Vereinigten Staaten bringen. Ein anderer Gaumont-Vertrag für Australien wurde auch neulich angekündigt.

In Kanada ist die Lage noch sehr ungewiss. Vor der Ottawa Konferenz entschieden sich die kanadischen Theaterbesitzer kein Kontingent zum Schutze britischer Filmen zu dulden; sie schlugen es vor, jeden Film frei auswählen zu dürfen. Die britischen Firmen haben aber dennoch einen ganz wichtigen Vorteil im Kanada gewonnen: freie Einfuhr für britische Filme. Ehemals zahlte man 1 1/2 cents pro Fuss. Jetzt aber zahlen die Amerikaner und alle anderen Ausländer 3 cents pro Fuss.

Grosser Markt für Englische Versionen

Jeder weiss, dass es für Versionen in englischer Sprache einen ungeheuren Auslandsmarkt gibt. In den Vereinigten Staaten sind ungefähr 14.000 Lichtspieltheater für Tonfilme ausgestattet; Australien, Südafrika und Indien besitzen 2675 Theater. In vielen Ländern, z. B. in China, wird die englische Sprache wie eine zweite nationale Sprache benutzt, und hier können englische Versionen auch grosse Gewinne erreichen.

Der Britische Film in U.S.A.

Die britischen Produzenten halten es für unmöglich, einen englischen Film in den Vereinigten Staaten aufzuführen. Es scheint, dass die englische Konkurrenz den Ameri-

kanern nicht allzusehr behagt. Der englische Filme läuft grosse Gefahr boykottiert zu werden. Um diese Schwierigkeit zu überwinden gibt es nur eine Möglichkeit eine englische Theaterkette in Amerika zu gründen. Mit der Zeit würden sich die Amerikaner gezwungen sehen, englische Filme oder europäische Versionen in englischer Sprache zu bringen. Die Europäer müssen aber daran denken, dass Amerika den Weltmarkt nur der Qualität seiner Produktionen verdankt. In Europa heisst es also dieselben Methoden anwenden.

Muss man aber den britischen Film sowie die englischen Versionen Europas internationalen Geschmäckern anpassen? Die amerikanischen Produktionen waren fast immer rein national. Vergessen wir aber nicht, dass die besten europäischen Talente nach Hollywood gerufen wurden.

Dies bringt uns den Beweis, dass ein wahrer internationaler Film eine internationale Mitarbeit benötigt. Europa soll Amerikas Beispiel folgen; sowie Hollywood sollen Berlin, London und Paris die besten europäischen künstlerischen und technischen Mittel vereinigen, und internationale Versionen europäischer Film drehen.

Man weiss, was deutsche und französische Filme und Versionen einbringen. Die deutsch-französische Zusammenarbeit ruht auf gemeinsamer Basis. Auch wird sie von Jahr zu Jahr stärker. Um eine echt europäische Zusammenarbeit zu schaffen, müssen englische, deutsche und französische Firmen in voller Gemeinschaft arbeiten.

Der englische Markt ist wohl der interessanteste. 180.000.000 Menschen sprechen Englisch. Die Zollschranken sind auch nicht so straff wie in Europa. Diese kleine Aufstellung gibt uns einen Ueberblick der Möglichkeiten des Marktes:—

Grossbritannien: Einfuhrzölle: Sprechender Positivfilm: 33 1/3 %; Sprechender Negativfilm: 10 % ad valorem.

Südafrika: Einfuhrzoll 7 1/2 %.

Indien: Positivfilm 37 1/2 %; Negativfilm 25 % ad valorem.

Australien: 1 sh. 6 pence pro Pfund Sterling Einnahmesteuer.

Neuseeland: 12 1/2 % der Einnahme.

Nur europäische Firmen können perfekte Versionen in deutscher, französischer und englischer Sprache herstellen. Amerika besitzt eine ausserordentliche Technik die

bis jetzt in Europa noch nicht erreicht wurde. Europa aber besitzt einen unerschöpflichen Reichtum an Litteratur, die es uns ermöglicht, den Weltfilmmarkt zu erobern.

Dies wird aber nur dann möglich sein, wenn Deutschland, England und Frankreich ihre Kräfte zusammenschmelzen.

Leonard G. FEATHER.



Blanche MONTEL et Henri ROLLAN
 deux interprètes de *Clair de Lune*
 dont M. H. Diamant-Berger a effectué la réalisation
 entièrement en extérieurs

ES EL 15 OCTUBRE 1932

EL ULTIMO PLAZO
 para enviar al Anuario ilustrado
LE TOUT-CINEMA
 la publicidad de su firma y todos los
 informe correspondientes.
LA EDICION 1932-33
 es esperada con impaciencia.
DEJAR DE FIGURAR EN ELLA
EQUIVALE A BORRARSE DURANTE
UN AÑO DEL MUNDO CINEMATO-
GRAFICO.
 Dirija con urgencia todos sus in-
 formes a
Publications FILMA,
19, rue des Petits-Champs, 19
Paris (1^{er})

GRANDE - BRETAGNE

L'Essor du Film britannique

1933 fut réellement une année triomphale pour le film anglais. Incontestablement la production britannique a atteint un degré de perfection et un niveau comparables à la majorité des films américains et elle s'est assurée finalement une belle place sur le marché des Etats-Unis en combattant victorieusement la race des malfaisants qui s'étaient juré de ne jamais aller voir un film anglais !

On peut déclarer que la situation actuelle est étrangement parallèle à celle de Noël 1932, époque à laquelle je vous l'ai exposée, puisqu'elle a de nouveau fait aller de l'avant la production anglaise. En 1932 ce fut *Rome Express*; cette année c'était *La Vie privée de Henri VIII* qui a ouvert de nouvelles voies. Alors que l'année dernière, une vague de films lyriques nous a assaillis, nous nous trouvons maintenant en face de su-

jets historiques; après *Henry VIII*; *Catherine la Grande*; *Dick Turpin*; *Jud Suss*, etc.

Soyez Prophète en votre Pays

Un des côtés caractéristiques de l'émancipation de la production britannique est qu'elle s'est scindée en deux parties distinctes. La première comprend les firmes avec, très souvent, du capital américain, qui fournissent L. 50.000 pour un film dont

COMPAGNIES	STUDIOS et adresses	Appareils sonores	ACTIVITES
Associated Sound Film Industries.	Wembley ; 1.	A. S. F. I.	Un certain nombre de petits films réalisés par <i>Adrien Brunel</i> .
Associated Talking Pictures.	Ealing ; 1.	R. C. A.	LOYALTIES, réal. par <i>Basil Dean</i> ; <i>Gracie Field Pict.</i> , etc.
British and Dominions.	Boreham Wood ; 3.	Western	BITTER SWEET, réal. par <i>Herbert Wilcox</i> ; <i>Sidney Howard</i> , comédies, etc.
British International.	Elstree ; 9.	Ambiphone	Produit récemment le RED WAGON par <i>Paul Stein</i> . A engagé un grand nombre d'artistes et metteurs en scène étrangers.
British Lion.	Beaconfield 1	R. C. A.	THIS IS THE LIFE, le premier film de <i>Binnie Hale</i> réal. par <i>de Courville</i> ; puis <i>Les Gorge Gee</i> , comédies et d'autres courts sujets pour Fox réal. par <i>Leslie Hiscott</i> .
Gaumont British Gainsborough.	Shepherds Bush 5	British Acoustic	Une puissante organisation ayant réalisé THE GOOD COMPANIONS; I WAS A SPY; THE WALLS LYNN, comédies, etc. Arrangement avec Fox pour l'échange de vedettes et films en Amérique.
London Films.	Islington 2	A. C. A.	Le plus grand centre de l'industrie britannique. Grande sensation avec HENRY VIII et CATHERINE LA GRANDE, par <i>Alexandre Korda</i> , distribué en Amérique par <i>United Artists</i> . Tourné dans les British and Union Studios à Elstree.
Nettlefold-Fogwell.	Walton-on Thames 1	R. C. A.	Réalise l'opérette DEUX CŒURS UNE VALSE et autres lyrics.
Sound City.	Shepperton 2	Visatone	A produit plusieurs courts sujets pour M.-G.-M.
Twickenham	Twickenham 1	R. C. A.	LE JUIF ERRANT, réal. à Twickenham par <i>Maurice Elvey</i> et distribuée par Gaumont. Twickenham a sous contrat un nouveau directeur, <i>Bernard Vorhaus</i> , qui a produit THE GOST CAMERA.
Warner Brothers First-National.	Teddington 2	Visatone	Ont engagé <i>Sally Blane</i> et <i>Laura la Plante</i> pour deux films; tourne actuellement I ADORE YOU, en lyric.
Windsor.		R. C. A.	Une nouvelle compagnie pour laquelle <i>Carmine Gallone</i> visite l'Europe pour produire plusieurs lyrics internationaux.

(Les chiffres indiquent le nombre des plateaux.)



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elles sont sûres de pouvoir le placer, grâce à des combinaisons américaines ou des circuits anglais. Le second groupe se compose de firmes plus petites qui sont obligées à cause de leurs modiques ressources de faire sortir des films plus ou moins « navets » et dont beaucoup d'entre eux ne sont destinés qu'à remplir les conditions du quota nécessaire aux firmes américaines.

La restriction de ces dépenses contraint ce genre de firmes à ne sortir que des bandes sans aucune valeur, mais malheureusement un certain nombre de ces maisons éditent encore de pareils sujets dans une proportion alarmante.

Cependant la situation de la plupart des firmes britanniques est comparativement saine. Ci-contre un résumé de l'activité des principales firmes et de leurs studios.

Obstacles des Ostrer Circuits

Afin de pouvoir faire son chemin dans les salles rivales, un film indépendant doit avoir beaucoup de mérites. Cela est actuellement la cause que beaucoup de cinémas sont absorbés par un certain nombre de circuits. Le plus important en est maintenant le formidable *Circuit Gaumont* qui, contrôlé par *Ostrers* et d'autres distributeurs, avec l'organisation *Gaumont-Ideal* a maintenant incorporé les *Denman-Pictures Houses*, the *General Theatre Corporation*, les *Provincial Cinéma Théâtres* et d'autres encore, comptant ensemble plus de 300 salles. Puis l'*Associated British Cinemas*, contrôlé par *British International*, comptant 200 salles. D'autres importants circuits, englobent le *County*, l'*A. B. King*, *Moorhouse*, *Union Cinéma et Cie* et *Emery*, de sorte qu'il y a maintenant plus de 120 circuits contrôlant environ 2.000 salles. Chacun des circuits est forcé, par la loi, de passer une proportion de 15 %, le quota des distributeurs étant encore de 17 1/2 %. Presque tous, cependant, passent à l'heure qu'il est, une proportion beaucoup plus élevée à cause de l'offre et la demande.

L'Importation Etrangère

Faisons remarquer ici qu'un nombre de studios ont importé des vedettes et des metteurs en scène étrangers. Certains patriotes mal intentionnés ont soulevé des objections à ce sujet. Qu'ils jettent un coup d'œil sur le cosmopolitisme d'Hollywood et ils s'apercevront que cela produit un alliage dans les cerveaux et talents provenant d'autres pays susceptibles de produire une bande commerciale et artistique. L'Art est international! Mais il faut admettre que les artistes importés doivent être des vedettes, plutôt que des ex-vedettes, et que les directeurs étrangers aient assez d'expérience dans la langue anglaise pour qu'ils comprennent les nuances du dialogue qu'ils sont appelés à enregistrer.

Un problème encore plus important est celui du sujet. Aucun film britannique peut espérer du succès, même à *Oshkosh* ou autres petits patelins, s'il présente un *Yorkshireman* entre deux âges à travers ses complications matrimoniales, ou un *Oxford gentleman* avec son accent, qui veut s'enrichir et être bigame avant 25 ans. De pareilles vieux sujets appartiennent à la catégorie des anciennes histoires choquantes; aujourd'hui elles suffisent à peine à amuser un public provincial. Et même la province n'est pas aussi arriérée que les fabricants de « navets » se l'imaginent. Elle commence à s'apercevoir du manque de scénarios étoffés comme par ex. *Henry VIII* ou des thèmes bâtis sur des caractères dont la renommée a été créée par *Grand Hôtel* et exploitée dans *Friday the 13th* par *Victor Saville*.

Les marchés français et autres continentaux sont ouverts à de pareilles réalisations et à de belles comédies musicales basées sur des sujets théâtraux.

Quant à l'humour anglais, c'est une chose spéciale; la farce britannique durera aussi longtemps que le sable de la mer, car elle est toujours formidablement populaire dans l'empire.

Or si les producteurs anglais comptent placer leur marchandise humoristique à

l'étranger, ils doivent se rappeler que la plupart des comédies basant leurs effets sur le dialogue, (le jet des tartes à la crème étant quelque peu démodé) il est indispensable d'établir des versions étrangères.

Des Versions Franco-Anglaises

Comment? Des versions étrangères? Impossible, pour une foule de raisons, dont la principale est la faillite de précédents essais, dit-on. Il ne conviendrait donc pas, à ces producteurs britanniques d'entreprendre de nouveaux essais sur une plus large mesure. Or jamais il n'y eut en Angleterre autant de cinématographistes étrangers, influents et talentueux, qui sont au courant des exigences des acheteurs continentaux que maintenant.

L'année dernière, quand j'ai parlé ici de la possibilité de collaboration franco-anglaise en Angleterre, le temps n'était pas encore favorable. Or maintenant plusieurs firmes britanniques, auxquelles de solides ramifications financières permettent d'investir d'importantes sommes à la réalisation de grands films. Assurément ils y trouveront leur compte et contribueront à faire profiter l'Angleterre de ces productions, en d'autres termes, des versions françaises.

Après l'argent, le principal objet dans ces versions étrangères est le courage et le temps. Il ne faut pas s'aventurer dans une version pareille sans y pratiquer des remaniements tant dans l'histoire que dans l'atmosphère, traduire le dialogue phrase par phrase et croire que le nom d'une grande vedette portera l'affaire aux nues.

Peut-être sont-ce les producteurs français qui n'osent pas. Si c'est le cas, s'ils n'ont pas confiance en ce que peut donner un studio britannique, qu'ils regardent le tableau ci-avant. Ils se rendront compte que 1933 fut pour l'industrie cinématographique anglaise une année de triomphe, une année de grands films et, surtout, une année de grandes promesses.

Léonard-G. FEATHER.

COMING CONTESTS

Interesting List Scheduled

HERE are no less than six contests already listed for October, which will give some indication of the extremely busy season which lies before us. Of these fixtures no less than four are entirely new and open up fresh areas in which, it is to be hoped, young and ambitious bands will welcome the innovation.

The contest which should have taken place at Torquay next Tuesday has had to be cancelled, unfortunately. The local bands have had such a busy season that several who would have competed have expressed the desire for the event to be held over until a later date. It has caused the organiser a great disappointment because the advance sale of tickets has been admirable.

Just a word to remind you that on Friday, August 11, Mr. R. M. Ackroyd holds a contest at the Alhambra Ballroom, Rhyll; a pleasant destination and a very keen contest are the reward of those who travel to Rhyll.

The Aldershot and District Contest to be held in the Maida Drill Hall, Aldershot, on Wednesday, October 4, is a fresh enterprise on the part of Mr. E. Lawrence, who showed us how to get good bands and a packed house at Camberley at the beginning of this year.

At Aldershot he expects to attract, in addition to the civilian bands, several drawn from the Service. It is an assured success even at this stage.

Two nights afterwards, on October 6, Mr. N. S. Forbes is trying his hand at a contest at the very attractive Brent Bridge Hotel Ballroom, which should draw a considerable number of bands

in North London, especially those in Golders Green, of which there are many. A smart local crowd attends this ballroom, and altogether there is a great opportunity for London semi-pro. bands to increase their big connection in one of the best areas in the Metropolis.

The Fourth Annual Bedfordshire Contest has been transferred this year to the Assembly Hall, Luton, where it takes place on Thursday, October 12, under the experienced organisation of Mr. H. Carter, who has always scored a "bull" before.

Luton is equally handy, and within striking distance of town.

Then, on the following night, Mr. Ernest Rutt stages the first of his two annual East London Contests at the East Ham Town Hall. This is the oldest established and possibly the best-favoured London contest, in which the standard of the competitors is extremely high and which always attracts a very big crowd.

The Twickenham event, organised by Mr. W. Andrews, which carries the Middlesex title, is scheduled for Tuesday, October 17. This, too, is a handy centre for bands on the Middlesex side of the water and should encourage many new contestants.

On Friday, October 20, the Ealing branch of the Junior Imperial League comes into THE MELODY MAKER fold with their West London Contest at the Town Hall, Ealing. This should prove a well-organised event in the capable hands of Mr. A. D. Wells, who, a year ago, ran an unofficial contest with most encouraging results.

WRITES & WRONGS

READERS AIR THEIR VIEWS

AS another devotee to hot music, I think the "circle" idea is great.

I feel sure there are enough enthusiasts in Bristol to form one, so will you please give publicity to this letter?

Will all interested in the formation of a circle write to me at the address given?
W. J. DURNFORD,
474, Fishponds Road,
Fishponds, Bristol.

This Circle grows faster and faster and bigger and bigger. We are only too pleased to be able to help the movement. Write in, anyone who wants to start one.

Dutch Dance.

Having met Mr. Tom Dallmore, the well-known English trumpet player, I am glad to avail myself of his suggestion to write to THE MELODY MAKER about the conditions for dance musicians in Holland; these have always been bad, and are growing worse and worse, for the following reasons:—

(a) The managements of dance establishments and hotels don't like to pay more for a Dutch musician than for a waiter. I say Dutch musicians, because by means of the fact "that nobody is a prophet in his own country," a foreign musician is far better paid. However, the salaries for foreign musicians have been changed as well, because

(b) This last year there has been much undercutting in salaries from inferior German and Hungarian musicians, so that it is absolutely impossible for any musician, whatever nationality he belongs to, to get a decent wage. There are about a thousand German musicians that cannot even hold their instruments, working for just their board and lodging and a few guilders pocket-money. The boss generally says, "They are not so good, but they are cheap." An example that may tell you enough is the following:—

A well-known German band leader, recording on "Deutsche Grammophon," played with his band in one of the best hotels of Holland for an average wage of fifty guilders each, or in English money about six guineas a piece a week. Other managements of good houses pay thirty-five guilders a week or less. And when you know that a simple workman makes between twenty-five and forty guilders a week, you can take your own idea what the conditions are like.

Don't think there are no good Dutch dance musicians; but they went to other countries to earn what they deserved until those countries turned them out, and so they came back here again.

Now you will easily understand that it is almost impossible to put a good Dutch band together, because when, e.g., the first saxophone player is good, you will have to pay him about a hundred guilders (about twelve guineas) weekly. This salary, taken from the band wage, leaves just enough to have the worst musicians to complete the band.

The Dutch Union is only three months old, and it will have a difficult task to improve the standard of the Dutch dance musicians, as it has no help from the Government yet. The percentage of foreign musicians is now 65 per cent. three months ago it was 75 per cent.

My personal opinion is that dance music is international, and dance musicians should work together in the following way:—
There should be made an exchange

of musicians between the different unions so that we could come back to the old standard.

I hope that the English musicians who know me, and who worked with me in Germany and Holland, will understand my article, and I finish my letter hoping your and our business will improve in the near future.

Wishing all my friends the best of luck.

MELLE WEERSMA,
President, Amstel 130,
National Union of Jazz Musicians.

We haven't got quite so low as seeing a "class" recording band working for six guineas a man. But some of our lesser known provincial palais bands would be glad to have that amount.

We are glad to see that you are making an effort to improve your conditions, and we wish your Union the best of luck.

Record Label Errors.

First, a reply to Ed. Wiltz. There is no doubt at all that the Panachord record of "Hebbie Jeebies" and "House Hop" (not "House Top") was quite correctly labelled. "Earl Jackson and his Musical Champions" was a pseudonym of the Blue Rhythm Boys, who recorded the same number under the title "Moanin'" on Victor and Brunswick.

Other interesting label errors were the issue by Parlophone of Duke's "Black and Tan Fantasy" under the name of Louis Armstrong; the reversal of labels on an old Armstrong, "Georgia Bo-bo," and "Drop that Sack" by "Lill's Hot Shots"; and the Hylton "Tiger Rag" and "Limehouse Blues" on H.M.V., some copies of which were labelled "Tiger Rag" on both sides.

Secondly, I should like to bring up a subject that will probably arouse much indignant and sarcastic comment, but which I consider to be really a matter for serious consideration. For some years I have been wondering why no band, coloured or white, has ever had the courage to score out, or even to busk, a hot record in three-four time.

You may protest that "hot record in three-four time" is almost a contradiction in terms, but I am convinced that a really clever composer could surmount the difficulties presented by the waltz time, and possibly produce something really inspiring.

Those readers who have been fortunate enough to hear McKenzie and Condon's thrilling record of "Liza," in the introduction of which a curious three-four effect was (perhaps quite unintentionally) produced, will have a good idea of what I mean. Even some of Whiteman's earlier waltz efforts, and also Ambrose's ambitious "Lazy Louisiana Moon" gave some slight idea of how a waltz arrangement could be made into something approaching a real "swing" record.

LEONARD G. FEATHER,
Ray Mead Road,
Maidenhead.

We should imagine that, by now, everyone who has ever been even remotely connected with record labelling is hiding away in shame. Let us, therefore, be compassionate and leave them in peace.

Your suggestion in regard to "hot three-four" is, at first sight, ingenious. On closer inspection, however, one sees that it is like asking for a blue piece of red chalk.

One can "syncopate" in three-four, of course, or in any time. But the essence of our hot music is its incessant basic duple rhythm. Do away with this and it is no longer fox-trot, hot or otherwise.

"Melody Maker" Dance Band Contests

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

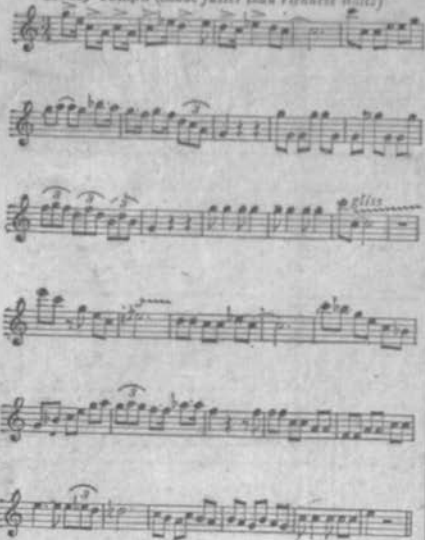
Title and Venue of Contest	Date of Contest	Organiser's Name and Address	Closing Date for Entries
NORTH WALES CHAMPIONSHIP ALHAMBRA BALLROOM, RHYLL	Friday, August 11th, 1933	Mr. R. M. ACKROYD, Leeds Bridge, Leeds	July 29th, 1933
YORK AND DISTRICT DANCE BAND CONTEST, RIALTO BALL ROOM, YORK	Friday, September 8th, 1933	Mr. R. M. ACKROYD, Leeds Bridge, Leeds	August 25th, 1933
SECOND ANNUAL LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE CONTEST Open PUBLIC HALL, PRESTON	Thursday, September 21st, 1933	Mr. G. MANLEY, 247, Scotland Terrace, St. Paul's Road, Preston	September 8th, 1933
ALDERSHOT & DISTRICT (Open) CONTEST MAIDA DRILL HALL, ALDERSHOT	Wednesday, October 4th, 1933	Mr. E. LAWRENCE, Kingsclear Garage, Camberley	September 22nd, 1933
FIRST ANNUAL HENDON & FINCHLEY CONTEST BRENT BRIDGE HOTEL, GOLDERS GREEN	Friday, Oct. 6th, 1933	Mr. N. S. FORBES, 47 The Drive, Golders Green, N.W. 11	September 15th, 1933
FOURTH ANNUAL ALL BEDFORDSHIRE AND LOCAL COUNTIES CONTEST ASSEMBLY HALL, LUTON	Thursday, October 12th, 1933	Mr. H. CARTER, 1 & 3, Silver Street, Bedford.	September 29th, 1933
NINTH ANNUAL EASTERN DISTRICT CONTEST TOWN HALL, EAST HAM	Friday, October 13th, 1933	Mr. E. RUTT, 54, Sandford Road, East Ham, E.6.	October 2nd, 1933
MIDDLESEX DANCE BAND CONTEST, YORK HOUSE, TWICKENHAM	Tuesday, October 17th, 1933	Mr. W. ANDREWS, 170, Bath Road, Hounslow	October 2nd, 1933
WEST LONDON CONTEST TOWN HALL, EALING	Friday, Oct. 20th, 1933	Mr. A. D. WELLS, 88, Grove Avenue, Hanwell, W.7.	October 6th, 1933

A THREE-LEGGED TIGER!

An Audience's Manners Censured

I NOTICED in a recent issue, under the heading, "Writes and Wrongs," that Mr. Feather, of Maidenhead, asks why nobody writes hot music in three-four tempo. You reply that, unless the basic duple rhythm is adhered to, it is no longer hot, and to challenge this statement I enclose a hot chorus, which I have called the

Lively Tempo (Shade faster than Viennese Waltz)



Three-legged Tiger, it being our old friend, Tiger Rag in three-four time.

It should be accompanied by a good, solid three-in-a-bar rhythm, each beat being equally stressed.

Now wha' d'ya think of that?

Ray Oatey.

Park Road, Chesterfield.

We congratulate you on a piece of unusually neat ingenuity. We have played this over and given it to sundry star musicians to try over. They all agree with us that, entertaining and novel as it is, it is not hot dance music.

By beating a steady three one can lose the waltz rhythm and almost imagine that it is written in four-four.

Until one does this there is no "hot rhythm" about it at all and when one does it, it is no longer waltz tempo.

Sorry, Mr. Oatey! It's clever, but it's a swindle!

* * *

Writes and Wrongs

GIRL RHYTHM EXPERTS

HAS it ever struck MELODY MAKER readers, I wonder, what an amazingly small proportion of the fair sex professes any interest in or appreciation of hot music?

In many other forms of art women have unquestionably been springing to the fore during the past few decades. But, as far as modern rhythmic style is concerned, there are, in England, as in most other countries, merely a smattering of feminine rhythmic vocalists; and as to instrumentalists or real fans, men have an almost complete monopoly. Even coloured girls have not been conspicuous in the instrumental field; there are one or two exceptions, such as Mary Lou Williams, the brilliant pianist of Andy Kirk's band.

As to our own English girls, is there a single one who has a collection of the best hot records, who can distinguish Dorsey from Goodman, Teagarden from Higginbotham, or vintage Armstrong from 1933 Armstrong? Who fully appreciated every item in Ellington's farewell concert? Who treats hot music, in fact, as something more than an amusing background for dancing?

If there are any such cases, they should certainly be given due honour by being elected honorary member or club mascot of every hot rhythm circle in their respective districts.

Up, girls, and at 'em!

Leonard G. Feather.

Ray Mead Road,
Maidenhead.

Indeed, there are, Mr. Feather! Possibly they have not yet crossed your path, but we know scores of them. One of the most expert and knowledgeable critics of dance music in the country is a young woman who, let it be whispered, sometimes writes in this paper under a *nom-de-plume* which would stagger you if you knew it!

Apart from that, there are hundreds of enthusiastic fans among the gentler sex. What about the girl on the back page of last week's issue? And have you never heard of Margaret West-Phillip, or the Gertler Sisters?

* * *

9.9.33.

* * *

SUPER FANS.

All sorts of strange men parade in and out of this office. Musicians are a queer lot, and the queerest of them seem to call at No. 85. I often come back from the local, and am confronted with celebrities, notoriety or nonentities waiting to see me. So I'm usually pretty hardened to shocks when it comes to callers.

* * *

But the other day I must admit I was knocked right off my feet. As I opened the door I beheld two clouds of billowing femininity. What I mean to say is that I saw a pair of

charming damsels airily clad in the most diaphanous of summer frocks.

I paused, thinking that I had walked into the wrong office. I looked at the name on the door. No, that was right.

Then I looked again, and felt sure I had had one too many. For, behold! what I had thought was *two* damsels now turned out to be one. Only I was seeing her twice. If you understand.

* * *

After some trouble I sorted out my bemused senses. It appeared that



the Misses Gertler had called on me.

Now, I must explain these girls to you, for they are by way of being famous.

Although they are not twins, they look amazingly alike. They even dress alike down to the last details. Hence my bemusement described above.

They are, I should think, the World's Most Super Fans. They might be described as *Fans in Excelis*.

Not only do they know everybody worth knowing in the jazz business, but know them well. They are on friendly terms with anyone (almost) you care to mention. All the celebrities who pass through these pages have met the Gertler Girls at some time or other.

* * *

If there is a special "do" on anywhere for musicians, you may be sure that Rene and Sadie will be



there; you will encounter them at the stage-doors and in the dressing-rooms of theatres where the famed are appearing with their bands; when a celebrity arrives in England they are almost always there to meet him; it is almost unnecessary to say

that they were at the Ellington Concerts and at nearly every variety performance.

They carry on long correspondence with these stars when they go away. Consequently, they are sometimes in possession of information which even beats our news hounds.

Armstrong is their pet. In their house at Brondesbury there are photos of him everywhere.

Even on the small table in the hall, just large enough for the telephone and a picture-frame, the same grin meets one.

Louis and Alpha are great friends of theirs. Many a discussion do they have into the small hours on records and recording musicians.

* * *

Somebody wrote in to us the other day, saying that he had never met a girl who knew anything about real dance music. He should meet Miss Rene and Miss Sadie. They'd make rings round the average male fan when it comes to knowledge on the subject. And, if their views are a little biased, at least they are well informed.

So, if you, dear reader, ever attain stardom, and you hear a gentle, but unfamiliar voice cooing through your telephone, the owner of which shows an alarmingly complete knowledge of your career, it's pretty safe to say that you're meeting one of the Gertler Girls.

Writes and Wrongs

FEATHER AND THE FEM-FANS

Mere Male starts an Uproar by
Suggesting that there are No
Girl Rhythm-Enthusiasts

MR. LEONARD G. FEATHER'S letter in the correspondence columns of THE MELODY MAKER for August 26 raises an interesting point, and I feel that I should like to make a few comments, as an English girl who has a collection of hot records, dating from the days of Duke Ellington's *Jubilee Stomp* and *Take it Easy*, issued on the old Purple Label Parlophone series, and one who attended seven of the "Duke's" performances in London, and has possessed most of Louis Armstrong's records since the days of *Wild Man Blues*.

I think the lack of hot instrumentalists among the fair sex is simply in proportion to lack of female instrumentalists in all branches of music. Think of all the large orchestras, and try to think of one that is composed entirely of ladies, or which has more than a minority of the softer sex! Pit orchestras to symphony orchestras all show the same dearth of lady players of outstanding ability.

The reason lies, I think, in the lack of opportunities offered to girls. At most schools the only instruments taught are violin and piano, and at very few places are there facilities for young girls to learn brass playing. By comparison with this lack of opportunity for girls, boys have Boy Scout bands, O.T.C. bands and, at some more advanced schools, school dance bands. The Universities seem to further this opportunity for men, and hot music has a great following in most colleges. On the contrary, there are very few girls' school orchestras that are composed of anything but strings and piano.

Lacking this early opportunity for attaining knowledge of brass and wind instruments, it is quite natural that very few girls, on leaving school, will be bothered to take to the study of them unless they are brought up in a musical environment. There are so many other things to do!

I speak from my own experience, although I have always cherished a secret desire to learn the trombone, to play it like Tom Dorsey!

It stands to reason that with the lack of training in this branch of music, very few girls can appreciate the technical side of orchestral playing. They may learn "Musical Appreciation" at school, and the instruments that compose various orchestras, but they lack knowledge of the execution.

Without knowing something about music how can you appreciate it?

My own love of hot music developed in a way that I am sure has led many others in the same direction.

Being passionately fond of dancing, I used to frequent dance halls and restaurants nearly every night, and sometimes afternoons as well. I found that I danced to the same numbers two and three, and sometimes four times a day, played by the different bands. If I went to parties at friends' houses there I would find records of the same numbers by, perhaps, the same bands. I began to grow tired of hearing the same few numbers so often, and longed for something a little different, but I wanted the rhythm. I searched, and behold! I found Duke Ellington's *Take it Easy* and *Jubilee Stomp*.

From that day I have made a col-

THIS IS WHAT DID IT!

HAS it ever struck MELODY MAKER readers, I wonder, what an amazingly small proportion of the fair sex professes any interest in or appreciation of hot music?

... is there a single one who has a collection of the best hot records, who can distinguish Dorsey from Goodman, Teagarden from Higginbotham, or vintage Armstrong from 1933 Armstrong? Who fully appreciated every item in Ellington's farewell concert? Who treats hot music, in fact, as something more than an amusing background for dancing?

Leonard G. Feather,
Ray Mead Road,
Maidenhead.

lection of records by such bands as Fletcher Henderson, Red Nichols, Dorsey Brothers, Louis Armstrong, Earl Hines, Joe Venuti—in short, the gang you all know—and I flattered myself that I had found something quite new and different, that no one in my immediate neighbourhood could appreciate! By studying the records that I had, and a slight musical knowledge of the piano and organ, I think I have developed quite a fair knowledge of these gentry, and I think I do know one from another (even if I cannot type too well!).

A year or so back I was introduced to THE MELODY MAKER, and have been a regular reader ever since. In fact, I attended the "Elizalde Concert," which was given at the Shepherd's Bush Pavilion, the "Hot Record" recital given at a cinema in Tottenham Court Road, with Edgar Jackson presiding, and, of course, the "Duke's" concerts, so you will see that it is no mere "flash in the pan"!

One or two of my girl friends have developed the same passion for "Duke" and company, carried away, I think, in the first place by my extreme enthusiasm, and later because they really liked their music!

Do I qualify, Mr. Feather?
"PAT."

London, S.W.15.

* * *

A Fair Offer!

I think I can safely claim to measure up to your correspondent's standard of keenness and knowledge on the subject of hot music, and am willing to be adopted by any rhythm club (or member thereof over 60).

In 3½ years I have bought and acquired, by fair means and/or foul, nearly 200 hot records, and am fairly able to identify thereon most of the stars of the racket.

However, I must agree with Mr. Feather that modern girls are almost entirely unaware of hot music. I except those who were recently caught up in the excitement over Ellington, whose music they either "adore" or "loathe," but whose "beaux yeux" they are curiously unanimous in extolling. The few serious feminine students of the Duke's music have not acquired the capacity for research which distinguishes the majority of male fans, and without which, I maintain, hot music cannot properly be appreciated and studied.

I have often tried to attract girls

to the baby art with a depressing lack of success. In one case I have fostered a healthy enthusiasm for the Blue Four, but the lady lapses from grace in refusing to take Armstrong seriously as a vocalist.

I can only conclude that the reason for the scarcity of girl fans is the natural conceit of the tribe. They are subconsciously averse to encouraging and becoming absorbed in what is, after all, the work exclusively of men, and hot music will, I hope, always remain the one profession where women cannot exercise their over-rated "creative urge."

BETTIE EDWARDS,
Regent Square, W.C.1.

* * *
Musicians' Language

Are there any female lovers of hot music? asks Mr. Leonard Feather. Surely there must be. I can't be unique among my sex!

As regards the instrumental field, whom have we to emulate? Surely we'd be held to ridicule as female Louis Armstrongs?

You men can set up an idol and strive to be like him, but even if I could be as good as any of them—who'd acclaim me for my trouble? What band would have me?

A woman in a band composed of men would be rather a problem; who would blush most? You know what musicians are when it comes to describing, in their own language, a record that just isn't right!

However, to return to the hot music department.

I almost wept because I couldn't see Duke Ellington. I did weep when he produced that commercial effort *Best Wishes*.

I'm almost insane about Louis Armstrong, but not so blinded that I do not know when he turns in a poor effort.

I loathe anyone who talks about "jazz bands."

I started a collection of hot records about seven years ago, but funds soon held it up.

I depend now on the B.B.C. And what funny ideas about hot music they have! Still, thank God for Robert Tredinnick.

You may think I'm crazy because I consider Earl Hines "jazzy" and reminiscent of Frankie Banta.

I have been told I'm crazy because Jack Payne's transcriptions are a pain in the neck to me—so let's be crazy.

MARION DOWNEY,
New Lane, Bradford.

* * *

Et tu, Andre!

Having read in THE MELODY MAKER Mr. Feather's contribution about girl rhythm experts, I am sure it will be of interest to many of your readers, who may be struck by misogyny, to note there is in our country an extraordinary high proportion of ladies interested in hot music. Maybe more than 50 per cent. of the members of our Belgian sweet and hot clubs are the fair sex.

Even more—is it another victory of feminism?—the S. and H. Club of Liège, which already counts more than 125 members, is led by two charming sisters (president and secretary). Also the committee of Ostend and the coast counts a young lady among its leading members.

ANDRE ACHÉ,
Secretary.

Hot Club de Belgique.

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11 November 1933

Writes and Wrongs

Asking for It!

CONGRATULATIONS to the noble "Fem-Fans" who did their best to explode my theory.

I should like to point out to M. André Ache, however, that I was by no means "struck by misogyny," but merely logical—and, what is more, I am still convinced that there are large numbers of the gentler sex who refuse to be educated in hot music. Even Miss Bettie Edwards, who surely can't be accused of anti-feminine bias, agreed with me in her very interesting letter.

Evidently there must be plenty of exceptions to my rule, though—and the more exceptions there are, the less rule there is. But they should do more for the Great Cause if they are really enthusiastic—associate themselves with the rhythm circles, where they are conspicuous by their absence, and use their feminine organising ability.

Anyway, if MELODY MAKER readers live to see a Girls' Hot Club (president, Nina Mae McKinney), an epidemic of Boswell imitators, some Mills Sisters, and even a Duchess to rival the Duke, I'll gladly shoulder the blame for having roused them from their lethargy.

If "Pat," Miss Bettie Edwards, Miss Marion Downey and M. André Ache will write to me, I would like to reply to them personally.

LEONARD G. FEATHER.

Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W.1.

Here is a chance for the fem-fans! Mr. Feather is absolutely "asking for it" here. Wade in, girls, and tell him what you think of him!

18 November 1933

A FEMALE BASS?

On the back page of this issue you will see two girls who appear to be looking for something.

They are Kay Munro-Smythe and May Munn, and they are looking for a vocal partner, or even partners.

I have introduced them to you before as the Rhythm Sisters, but then they were three. The third member of the party, Berti Shaw, is no longer with the trio.

Kay and May, therefore, are anxiously looking for a girl style singer. If she can play the guitar, so much the better; if she can't, it doesn't matter a great deal.

You would think that such a thing would be easy enough to find, wouldn't you? But, apparently, it isn't. What Mr. Leonard Feather said about there being a paucity of "fem-fans" seems to be justified.

If any girl reader fancies rehearsing with these two Scots girls, "with a view to," let them write to Kay, c/o of this paper.

I wonder if it is possible to make up a quartette with an extra deep contralto—is there such a thing?

The Screen Parliament—£3.3.0 For The Best Letter—Also 2 Prizes of £1.1.0

Let's BE THANKFUL For "QUOTA" FILMS

Here's the address to which letters should be sent: The Editor, Screen Parliament, "Film Pictorial," Talbot House, Talbot Street, London, E.C.4. (Note.—Letters sent to "Film Pictorial" should not be addressed elsewhere. Every letter must be original and exclusive to us; should we discover that this is not so, the prize, even if allotted, will be withheld.)

THERE is now a definite distinction between the first-class home productions and those generally referred to as "Quota pictures."

Into the first category fall lavish and expensive films such as *I Was a Spy* or *The Private Life of Henry VIII* which have set our industry on the road to prosperity.

But there are a number of smaller companies whose duty it is to make inexpensive British pictures, and it is to the unhonoured producers of these that a small tribute is now due.

Not long ago nearly every cheap quota production was shoddy, boring and a disgrace to the industry. But, in spite of the appalling restrictions of expenditure, there has been a marked improvement lately, and most of them now provide pleasant entertainment within the limits imposed upon them.

These little productions, some of them only forty or fifty minutes long, may well take the place of the miserable drivel from America, purporting to be comedy, which we have had to endure in supporting programmes for so long. Surely the average English audience would prefer the robust but wholesome humour of Kay Hammond in *The Umbrella* or Henry Kendall in *Great Stuff* to the nonsensical antics of most American two-reeler comedians?

Many flingers are too ready to condemn and too reluctant to praise. These independent producers, obliged to provide our second features at absurdly small cost, are making a very brave best of a bad job; let us be duly thankful.—*Leonard G. Feather, 2 Grosvenor House, W.1.*

[This letter wins our first prize of £3.3s.]

TWO POINTS OF VIEW

A Musical Debate

THE MOTION: "That white musicians have contributed more to the advancement of hot music than coloured musicians"

PROPOSED

(in fact, insisted upon!)

BY

LEONARD G. FEATHER

OPPOSED

(for argument's sake, which no fem-fan can resist)

BY

BETTIE EDWARDS



THE proposer is discovered deeply engrossed in an old, old record. Nichols and Miff Mole are vigorously pouring out their souls via an acoustic recorder, for this was before the days of microphones.)

Bettie Edwards: Hallo! What's the masterpiece?

Leonard Feather: It's a very old Red Heads.

Edwards: Old? Sounds decomposed; although, in fact, it never was composed!

Feather (piously): Please! You mustn't talk like that—it's blasphemy. Those were the days when white men were beginning to convert basic jazz into an art.

Edwards (scornfully): Which it

isn't, and probably never will be. A reflection of the generation—yes; but it depends entirely on the coloured musician for its sincerity.

Feather: Is that so! D'you mind if I start an argument?

Edwards: Go right ahead. (The battle begins. Feather advances cautiously on the enemy territory.)

Feather: In the first place, why did anyone take the trouble to make a study of hot music? Because of the work of Bix and Trumbauer, who were years ahead of their time.

Edwards (a quick counter-attack): And their inspiration came from

early ragtime. A history of jazz will tell you that it's a Negro expression of musical thought. The blues idiom of the Mississippi is the only evolution of modern music that will hold a permanent place. Stomps and gut-bucket music can have no survival beyond the dance fashions of the day.

Feather (holding his ground): I'm not denying that the music is descended from Negroes, but the point is that white men copied their ideas, and refined them, and that refinement has made hot music what it is to-day. America would still



exist where it is now even if Columbus hadn't discovered it in 1492. But it would be an enormous forest of primeval savages, instead of a civilised country.

Edwards (a howitzer): Who said it was a civilised country?

Feather: Er—well, we won't argue about that. The point is, white men have the greater practical knowledge of music; they are more finished instrumentalists, and it is that practical knowledge which enables them to make use of theory.

Edwards (advancing): Really? Then how would you account for the fact that somebody said recently that the four most accomplished musicians in the whole of jazz were

(Continued on page 12.)

Hawkins, Armstrong, Hines and Venuti? Three out of four!

Feather: I grant you that the coloured races have produced some very great artists. But even Louis and Hines are inconsistent. One forgives their wrong notes because their playing comes straight from the soul, and because coloured players are so temperamental. But the great men of white jazz don't have to be forgiven, because they don't make any slips!

Edwards: If there were any grave errors in coloured artists' performances you wouldn't have people like Constant Lambert seriously acclaiming them as standard musicians.

Feather: Constant Lambert has only skimmed the surface of hot music; it amuses him, but he hasn't studied it profoundly. You can tell that from the way he condemns all white music with one stroke of the pen. You wouldn't do that, would you?

Edwards: Far from it. My own household gods are the Blue Four. But a large percentage of the white music nowadays isn't worth the paper it's written on. Synthetic stuff, trying so hard and so vainly to assume the attitudes of race music, like *Blue Jazz* and *Shake Your Hips*, is simply a waste of time. Every phrase is repeated eight times, and sixteen if there's room.

Feather: You happen to have picked on two of the worst examples, but in moderation it's quite pleasant. I can enjoy a record like the Casa Loma *Clarinet Marmalade*. And if you grumble about synthetic stuff, what happens when coloured bands do it? Bennie Moten's *Toby* is worse than anything similar by a white band—and every bit as synthetic.

Edwards: *Toby* isn't a good composition, but it has a tremendous swing.

Feather (sweeping down in full force): Swing my foot! Drumming is the essence of swing, and Fletcher Henderson is bringing Gene Kruppa to London! And do you realise that some of the grandest records by coloured bands were arranged by white men? Where would Henderson be without white arrangements? Where would Luis Russell be? Ever heard of Eddie Macdonald? He's even arranged for Ellington and Redman. Remember Nat Leslie, who wrote *Radio Rhythm* for Fletcher?

Edwards: Yes—what of it?

Feather: Remember the Blue Rhythm's *Heat Waves* and Benny Carter's *Six Bells Stampede*? And *Low Down on the Bayou*, and plenty of others—all written by white men!

Edwards (crumpling a little): Who cares? Even assuming those records mean anything to dance music,

where would the composers be without brilliant coloured men to interpret their ideas for them? A lot of notes on lined paper don't mean a thing until you get the talent to bring them to life—and that talent is invariably coloured talent!

Feather (weakening): Not necessary—

Edwards: Wait! Look at Spike Hughes!

Feather: Must I?

Edwards: His stuff meant nothing until he got that coloured band together, and he takes the credit for the results—which were pretty grand. You can't say he's really improved as a composer.

Feather (a feint attack): I not only say that, but I also say he made some quite pleasant records with his own band over here. . . .

Edwards: Tchah!

Feather: Tchah—if you like, but I enjoyed them. Can you find me any

coloured man, outside of Ellington, who has put as much hard work into composing for jazz as Hughes, or Elizalde, or several others?

Edwards: Certainly. In the first place, Hughes admits his work is based on a study of Ellington, and every definite step forward in hot music has been made, and continues to be made, by coloured men. They have influenced white men in per-

sonal style as well as in composing and arranging. The white stars are as good as ever, but where are the new ones? Echo answers, where?

Feather: There's something in that, but Louis himself points to Hoagy as his ideal of a modern songwriter, and records his tunes as fast as he can get them. And Ellington is Ellington because he is building a Negro edifice on top of the improved jazz of the white men.

Edwards (retiring with honour): Which all goes to show that you cannot successfully dissociate white from black at the present stage of development in hot music. They are interdependent, and must travel together, though I look more to the coloured musicians for ultimate perfection.

Feather: That's in the future, and at least we agree there is a future, and for that, thank heavens, and good-bye for the present.

Edwards: Au revoir—and if you don't turn up to see Louis' show next week, white arrangements or no white arrangements, I'll willingly break all records.

Feather: Don't worry; your records are perfectly safe!

(Both armies retreat. Armistice is declared.)

NO FUTURE FOR HOT MUSIC

(Continued from page 4)

of them tried to form their own bands—Trumbauer, for instance, and Venuti—with disastrous results. Others just didn't feel the urge to go on with hot music, possibly because they felt it was uncommercial; but they may be just as great even to-day from the musical point of view.

Feather: You mean to tell me you'd compare Trumbauer's recent solos in *Saint Louis Blues* or *Bass Drum Dan* with the old Okeh masterpieces? Or Venuti's work in *In De Ruff* with *Goin' Places* or *Wild Dog*? No; I feel sure they've degenerated as artists as well.

Foresythe: Those records are no criterion—they've simply run dry of material.

Feather: Then why haven't they made any effort to compose, to do something that would advance hot music?

ENOUGH TO PLAY

Foresythe: As far as artists like Trumbauer are concerned, it's quite enough for them to be great instrumentalists. You wouldn't ask Mark Hambourg, or Kreisler, or even Gigli, to compose masterpieces. They are exponents, pure and simple. There was no need for Trumbauer or any of them to extend their activities to creative composition.

Feather: All right, then. Even assuming that some of them are as great as ever—which I don't believe—where are the new men to represent the advance? Who are the great and talented individuals of jazz to-day?

Foresythe: You may not know them, but perhaps there are scores of them still undiscovered, all over America. They may be working in banks, or eking out a living in gin-mills—it just happens that Fate hasn't elected to discover them yet.

THE FORMULA

Feather: That doesn't sound very convincing to me, frankly. I think I must be right, certainly as far as white musicians are concerned. And in the composition line, all we get is the Mike's-formula Casa Loma twaddle, which is all very well for the first couple of records, but certainly isn't going to help hot music anywhere except into the graveyard. Now, what about the coloured musicians? Whom have they produced, so far as composition is concerned?

Foresythe: Have you forgotten Ellington?

Feather: Ah, I knew he'd come up. But, if Ellington's made any progress since 1928, has it been genuine and permanent in the sense of advancing the whole of hot music? He still nearly always uses the same old set of harmonies that's served for fifty years or more. I can only think of one big effort to get out of the rut, and that was *Lightnin'*.

SMALL-TIME DUKE

Foresythe: So you really think that's all Duke's done for hot music? Well, I can tell you that I knew him out in Hollywood, four years ago, and at that time he was comparatively insignificant. Even unambitious. Oh, yes, he's definitely come on since then.

Feather: Hollywood? . . . That would be when he made *Check and Double Check*. Have you forgotten *Ring Dem Bells* in that picture?

Foresythe: No. I liked *Ring Dem Bells* very much.

Feather: Well, then, there you

are! It's as finished, as polished, as nine out of ten of his more recent records. And, even before that, when he was nearly unknown, he turned out that glorious *Mooche* with Adelaide Hall on Okeh. It was simple, I grant you, but every bit as emotionally appealing as any of the more complex things he's doing nowadays.

THE MOOCHE

Foresythe: No. The *Mooche* is different. You could tell that the germ of genius was there; but surely the value of jazz isn't determined by its effect on the emotions?

Feather: On the contrary, I should say it emphatically is. Above all other forms of music, even.

Foresythe: No, again. I believe that music is a form of higher mathematics. It has to be regarded from a detached point of view. It always has been, for thousands of years. That was how the Greeks dealt with music, and all their disciples. It was only during the eighteenth century that music began to be regarded as a romantic art.

Feather: And the eighteenth century produced Bach. Now, look how simple Bach is, generally speaking. Simple but emotional.

COMPLEX

Foresythe: Simple to hear and understand, yes; but really frightfully complicated and mental. That's what all music has to be.

Feather: I won't come to that yet; but the point is that Bach's music goes straight to the heart, or soul; and the best hot music does the same. That's the case I put up for *The Mooche*, or anything else Duke wrote years ago.

Foresythe: It may go straight to the heart, but it can't stay there for any length of time. You know, much as I admire Duke and his music, I found that two hours at that Ellington concert was really too much. That sort of spontaneous inspiration, which he allows in practically every number, gets rather dull after a while.

Feather: Well, if that's the way you find the very finest jazz of all, what do you suggest should be done about it? What is jazz? What should it be, I mean? Personally, I say it should be a demonstration of collective inspiration—spontaneous inspiration, mostly, with a background of prearranged musical thought.

CONTROLLED THOUGHT

Foresythe: More than that. The inspiration must be controlled throughout. I believe in the domination of the brain in everything connected with music; and, since the brain has been becoming increasingly dominant in jazz recently, I do feel that jazz has advanced.

Feather: But if you talk like that, you're trying to take away from hot music the only quality in which it does differ from all other forms of music—even rises above them. I mean the art of busking.

Foresythe: If you ask me, this solo business is just a form of exhibitionism with no lasting value. The solos achieve a superficial technical interest at the expense of genuine meaning. When there are wrong notes, they can be covered up by tricks, and made into passing notes, and so on. There's not a man in hot music whose busking isn't full of wrong notes.

Feather: I beg to differ. The music of Hawkins has meaning; it

also has technique; it also has no wrong notes.

Foresythe: Don't forget that it is possible to play a wrong note and then make it right.

Feather: Then, if it sounds all right in the end, who cares?

Foresythe: H'm.

Feather: Well, now, let's look at some of the other great solo men and see if they don't show that busking is the backbone of jazz. If we can show that, we can show why jazz hasn't advanced, because premeditation and spontaneity are like work and play—they don't mix. Now, take Armstrong.

ARMSTRONG

Foresythe: Louis is a great artist to this day—not because of his high notes and stunts, not even because his technique's improved—perhaps it's deteriorated—but because his playing is governed more by his intellect. His most enjoyable records, for instance, were the group he made comparatively recently, with Les Hite's Band, such as *Shine* and *Just a Gigolo*. Good arrangements and supporting band, as well as good work by Louis himself. There you have the epitome of his art: it represents the mental influence on the spontaneous.

Feather: Personally, I'd a thousand times sooner hear anything from the grand old Hines-Redman days. *Muggles* and *Save It, Pretty Mama*, and all those were just superb. Now, look at Hines. There's a great musician. Why hasn't he done anything worth while recently?

HINES' LIMITATIONS

Foresythe: Simply because he hasn't been able to undergo that mental influence. His musical knowledge is limited. It was a real struggle for him to go through with *Deep Forest*, which I wrote for him. The harmonies were beyond his conception. But I insist that he hasn't gone off at all—he was always just grand in his own sphere. That's the trouble with the entire situation. In fact, to sum up, I'll put it like this (very slowly and deliberately): Art not being composed solely of a spontaneous expression, jazz has, in the last five years, developed, by the applied intellectual control of that spontaneous expression.

Feather: But, in view of the deadlock that that's produced, what future would you say there is for jazz?

Foresythe: There is no future for jazz as such. It can only merge and insinuate itself into standard music. You've already heard some of the results the merger can produce: Ravel's work has a distinct jazz influence; then there's John Green. He wrote some of the better popular numbers, such as *Body and Soul*, and he's also written some more advanced stuff that's worth something.

THE NEGRO ELEMENT

Feather: Then what of the Negro element?

Foresythe: There's a man you may not even have heard of yet—his name's William Grant Still. He's a Negro from Little Rock, Arkansas, and his music has been performed by leading symphony orchestras (the Berlin Philharmonic, Boston, Rochester, etc.), he is the prime mover behind the Willard Robison "Deep River Orchestra" (surely the most thoroughly and consistently Negroid combination), and has also written several works for Whiteman,

besides being on his arranging staff for a considerable period. Still's music is Negroid in the widest sense, as he makes use not only of Southern American Negro themes and influences, but also actual African, Martinique and Haitian themes and rhythms. Then probably one of the finest composers in America, who has not the slightest interest in publicity or mere commercial exploits, is Harold Bruce Foresythe. But as his music is almost entirely unknown, even in America, it is of no use for me to do more than mention his name.

Feather: Personally, I've only heard one instance of the use of jazz idiom in concert music—it comes at the end of Elizalde's *Rhythm Past and Present*, in Part II; just a sample of a composition that he still hasn't finished, and it honestly is amazing. Miles in advance of ordinary hot music, yet very closely related. But, except for that and *Lightnin'*, I can't recollect any record, not even one ten-inch side, which represents any important step forward; can you?

Foresythe: Records are no touchstones of music. The companies don't record any of the sort of stuff I mean—there's no money in it yet. They only record Duke because he has name value. If you want proof positive that my side of this argument hasn't been unreasonable, you'll have to go to the States to hear for yourself.

Feather: There's nothing I'd rather do in this world. Perhaps I will some of these days. . . . Who knows?

* * *

We lay back in our armchairs. The debate was over. Both of us had kept admirable control on our tempers, and had succeeded in wandering off the original subject to a degree of which even "Mike" would have been proud. Suddenly I sat up with an exclamation.

"What's happened?" demanded Mr. Foresythe.

"If it isn't a rude answer, I'd like to propose something else—two fresh cups of coffee. These are both stone cold. . . ."

NO FUTURE FOR HOT MUSIC

declares

Reginald Foresythe

in an interview with

LEONARD FEATHER

"**M**R. FORESYTHE," said I, without preamble, "there has been no material advance in jazz for five years."

"Let's hear about it," invited the pleasant and obliging young musician, who has himself set London arguing about his own compositions.

I repeated the substance of my dictum, and invited him to argue it if he could, which challenge he gladly took up.

"At least, just let's have a moment or two to prepare for the fray, and we'll start when the coffee comes in. Don't mind if I play a little Bach for a moment? It clears my head after a long sleep."

So I sat by, somewhat intrigued, as Reginald (New Music) Foresythe ran placidly through the Twelfth Prelude and one or two of the Fugues. When he turned round to add modestly that he was not very

good at Bach, I felt almost inclined to start another argument. However, my thoughts were soon carried back to their original track with the arrival of the coffee and the commencement of the argument. From then onwards the conversation ran more or less as follows:—

THE WHITE FROST

FEATHER: There's one main reason why I feel justified in saying that hot music hasn't advanced, and that's the fact that nearly all the famous men of five years ago have faded right out with hardly anyone to replace them—Nichols, Venuti, Miff Mole—crowds of 'em, all more or less lost to the world. How can you account for that decline?

Foresythe: I'm afraid there's quite a simple explanation. Of course, some of the greatest men have died: Bix, and Lang, and others. But quite a large number of them would be just as famous and admired to

this day if their success hadn't gone to their head. I'm thinking chiefly of the men who were under Whiteman. You know, Whiteman actually did a great deal for hot music, in spite of all that's said about him. The trouble was that, in fostering

these great artists by paying them enormous salaries, he gave them exaggerated ideas of their own importance, and they parted with Whiteman—with what result? Some

(Continued on page 22)



REGINALD FORESYTHE

LOUIS CAUTIONS THE FANS

Many False Impressions
from Wax Impressions

In an Interview with
LEONARD FEATHER

THE scene was Louis Armstrong's sitting-room. We had just been watching a selection of home-made films on a cinematograph machine which the trumpet king bought last year. It is one of his proudest possessions, and he always takes a great deal of joy in running through some of the pictures he and Alpha have taken in various corners of Europe and America.

I wish you could have seen Louis just then. The success of his cinema performance and the presence of a number of friends combined to put him in great spirits. The pictures had been accompanied by a series of good records, and occasionally there came the thrill of hearing Louis give vent to a spontaneous burst of song. As a special favour—for he is a modest soul—I had been allowed to play, during the last reel, his own famous record of *Confessin'*, which he had played for me by request on the stage last time I went to see him.

A Great Disc

"It's still a grand record, Louis," I said, as it ended.

"D'ya like it? Remember when I played that number for you the other day?"

"Yes, I remember . . . and as a matter of fact I enjoyed this record even more, frankly. You don't mind my saying that?"

Louis was surprised, but not offended. With a broad grin he asked me why I preferred hearing the record to seeing him do the same number on the stage. I told him there were several reasons: firstly, of course, the unparalleled set of men he had behind him in the record, the lovely backing of the vocal by Hawaiian guitar, and his own glorious climax, which made the whole thing seem so symmetrical. I expect you all know the disc well enough to realise what I mean. As to the stage version, there had been one or two disturbing factors, I explained—the band, a certain amount of gallery-courting technique, and the unfortunate distortions of an amplifier which had either been fixed up in too much of a hurry, or else just couldn't cope

with the volume when Louis got close to the mike.

"In fact," I concluded, "the best way to listen to your music, or anyone else's, if it comes to that, is in one's own home, on a good electric gramophone."

"My, my, my!" cried Louis. "D'ya mean that serious? . . . I reckon a phonograph record ain't worth half as much as a personal appearance, or even a radio concert. Folks get much more kick out of a show when they know the cats are playin' while they're listenin'; that's what makes 'em go to the stores afterwards and buy the records."

Publicity Value

"No, you're wrong," I replied, "so far as this country's concerned, anyway. People were buying your records in thousands long before anyone ever dreamed you'd appear or broadcast in this country. When you came over, everybody flocked to see you because of the reputation you'd made on records. And apart from the publicity value of records, think of the perfect performances you get on them. That's why I feel



you're pretty certain to get hot music at its best on the gramophone."

Louis had to admit the reputation his discs had built up for him. But he disagreed on the question of performance on records.

"When the boys get together in the studio," he declared, "they're all kinda nervous; there's so much waitin' about an' everything—it ain't so easy to make records. Then they gotta take care where they're placed during the solos; they gotta think about a million things at once, and sometimes it spoils the performance. It's like Johnny Hammond said in *THE MELODY MAKER* not so long ago.* That's why you get people like Rex Stuart losin' themselves like Rex did in *Bugle Call Rag* and *Chinatown*. Now I can tell you

* *M. M.*, December 2nd: "In more than one studio it is necessary to have a healthy contempt for music in order to obtain a properly important position . . . artists are seldom allowed to record what they can do best, with the result that our public rightly prefers to tune in on the radio."

Rex is one of the swellest trumpet men in Harlem—you certainly oughta hear him swing with the cats at the Roseland! But as soon as he gets inside the studio—bang! it all goes."

And here I had to agree, too. But surely, I added, this nervousness betrayed itself just as destructively at important concerts? After all, in the case of most records, if a serious error is made, part of the disc can be recorded again, and the results patched together, so that the final product is a composite of the best work of each soloist. But when a soloist is about to take a chorus on the stage, he knows that every note he plays, right or wrong, will reach the public ear. He has to reach perfection right away.

Stage Tension

Louis saw another point slipping away, and tried to retrieve it. "Well," he replied guardedly, "when he's on the stage maybe you don't notice so much. After all, there's the excitement of seein' the boys swing for the first time, and you can get a lot of fun watching what's goin' on with each separate instrument."

"That's just what I have against personal appearances. As you say, for the first few times, of course, they are extremely thrilling and interesting. But later on, when the novelty's worn off, the visual point of view's nothing more than a distraction, really. If we want to believe in music for music's sake, then it ought to appeal to one of our senses only—the sense of hearing, in fact. But when we go to watch, say, Ellington at the Palladium, we have our eyes clogging our brains with gaudy settings, tap-dancers, Freddy Jenkins being funny, and so on. There's nothing you can get, musically, on the stage under those conditions, that you can't get just as well or better in your own sitting-room with a gramophone."

A Score!

Here Louis waxed almost indignant. "Say, d'you mean to tell me you'd rather hear the Duke's brass section at home than in the theatre? Didn't everybody notice the differ-

(Continued on page 18.)

LOUIS CAUTIONS THE FANS—(continued from page 15)

ence in tone, and volume, when he came over here?"

Clearly a score for Louis!

"Mm . . . yes, there you're quite right. But that brass is literally unique. In most other cases the studios can deal with everything adequately."

"How about all the brass playin' you get on the stage?"

"Oh, I don't know . . . recording in the bass register's pretty nearly perfect nowadays, you know . . ."

"Huh, maybe. But it ain't just a question of recordin'; you gotta look at it from the standpoint of the artist. Now you listen to a band like Don Redman, see, say on the radio—you'll get a totally different impression from just listenin' to the records. Don's one of the greatest arrangers of 'em all. Yeah, man!"

"Well, I certainly wish I could hear him on the radio and judge for myself; in his case the recording definitely hasn't done him justice."

By now I felt on slippery ground; Louis was clearly getting the best of the argument.

"I mean American radio, of course," he added. "Over here it's

quite a different job doin' work for your B.B.C."

"Over here there aren't so many people to use it."

"Even then," Louis continued, "if your radio was organised same as ours, it'd be the same thing, like in the States—the radio industry'd cut the phonograph industry right out. Why over there it just broke the record companies; know why? 'Cause people could enjoy a good radio program without botherin' to go buy records. They could always hear the best hot music or anything they liked by just choosin' their own station."

"Do you honestly think that means that hot music is heard to greater advantage on the radio?"

"Sure, I do."

"Well, perhaps you're right about the States, but over here radio definitely plays second fiddle to records. You get bands playing down to the public, just as they do on the stage; and there's a constant background, in most cases, of noise. Cutlery and dancers and similar evils. If—"

"That's all atmosphere, though, . . ." Louis hesitated a little. One

pretty definite point back to me, I noted.

"It may be atmosphere, but to anyone who wants to appreciate music it's just a damn nuisance. Of course, atmosphere in Harlem or at the Roseland must be quite a different thing, but for the purposes of the argument I'm only dealing with Europe. Now even your own relay from the Palladium last year was a little disappointing, because it was difficult to tell just what was going on. You couldn't entertain two different audiences at once, so those who'd paid for their amusement got all the benefit, and the listeners had to suffer."

Louis again jumped at the opportunity for a big point: "How about my broadcasts from Holland?"

"One to you, Louis," I agreed. "You're right. It was a big thrill—every number; even with the atmospheric —"

"Even with what?"

"'Statics' to you," I translated. "But it's not often you get a radio performance as completely successful as that. And as far as radio's concerned, think of the simple and

obvious advantages of the gramophone—being able to choose your own program in a moment, your own artists, and make comparisons between any two records —"

"But on the radio sometimes you get commentaries 'n' explanations," argued Armstrong, "and you don't have to bother 'bout changin' the records. You just lie back and enjoy it."

"Well, judging by the way gramophones are improving, there's not much in that nowadays. You can get a record changer for a few pounds that'll give you half-an-hour's music straight off."

"Ah," said Louis, wagging a finger, "but there's plenty of folks that still have to wind it up before every record, and get lousy tone on a cheap portable. They could get much better tone on a radio for the same money. And then there's another thing: companies don't let the boys compose anything more'n three minutes long. Sometimes they have to cut the compositions down to fit 'em on a ten-inch record. One up to me?"

I let him have it.

WANTED—MORE DANCE

Leonard G. Feather

FEATHER: Pardon me, Mike, may I inquire what record that is you're playing?

Mike: You may. It is called *Empty Bottle Blues*, and is interpreted by Slimy Smith and his Susquehanna Serenaders. A typical jug band recording.

Feather: Meaning they were all bottled on the session?

Mike (with an air of condescension): A Jug Band recording is one produced, usually by artists of the coloured race, on unconventional instruments. *Empty Bottle Blues* features a scat vocal with hot gin-bottle obbligato, and the combination boasts two milk jugs, one solid china vase (fake Louis XIV), one washboard, three best-quality Woolworth combs coated with—er—suitable paper, and finally (for percussion purposes) one large plain van.

New Fields

Feather: I suspected something of the sort. What worries me is, if these fellows must experiment, why can't they try out some legitimate instruments that haven't been used in hot records?

Mike: Because you don't have to learn to play a china vase. Apart from which there are plenty enough instruments in jazz already, for orchestration or any other purpose.

Feather: I suppose that's your subtle way of inferring that you couldn't be bothered to review them if they needed any more intricate dissection?

Mike: It is. I couldn't.

Feather: Well, could you be bothered to answer a few easy questions on the subject?

Mike: You know me—I'll say anything once. Go ahead.

Shame!

Feather: I can think of so many instruments that would be worth consideration. For instance, the accordion. Now what's an accordion or a concertina ever done to you?

Mike: Only offended my highly sensitive eardrums. They're unmusical things; besides, I thought you were talking about legitimate instruments?

Feather: Well, ignoring ancestry for a moment, do you realise that accordions and concertinas have been very effectively used in hot music? Cornell for instance—quite an outstanding white performer.

Mike: With all due respect to Mr. Cornell, I find his name suits him admirably. He is corny to the nth degree. The same goes for Bennie Moten's man—I suppose you were going to drag him up.

Feather: Well, if you don't like the soloists, don't you think those instruments can at least be useful for a rhythmic accompaniment? I think there was an accordion behind the Dorseys in *Shim Sham Shimmy*.

Mike: I know there was.

Feather: Hi, wait a minute! I've thought of something else. Where are your Rhythm Styles?

Mike: In that cupboard over there.

(*Feather searches feverishly, pulls out Tom Dorsey's "It's Right Here for You," and plays it.*)

Feather: Now there's a harmonium used to bolster up a rhythm section; and very nice it sounds, too.

Mike: True.

Feather: Then the same can be done with the accordion—this sounds almost like one here.

The Flute

Mike: I'm not so sure it isn't one.

Feather: Whatever it is it strikes new ground. Well, to come to the more legitimate instruments—let's take the flute. Didn't Wayman Carver's flute work in *Firebird* and the rest of that group sound thoroughly agreeable?

Mike: I enjoyed it no end—but there wasn't enough of it for a very conclusive judgment.

Feather: And then surely there's no reason why instruments such as the oboe or the bassoon shouldn't take a place in jazz? Think of the increased variety of tone-colours you could get by installing a woodwind section. Yet in a normal dance band it's never been dreamed of.

Strings and Brass

Mike: I think you're missing an important point, and that's this: would you ask for a string section in a brass band?

Feather: I suppose not.

Mike: Obviously not. Well, it's the same thing in jazz; that particular idiom only uses the tone colours that are appropriate to its moods. I don't want to sound highfalutin', but it's possible to describe the mood of any instrument and see why it is or isn't used in jazz. For instance, the saxophone is mellow and cloying, and the clarinet has a kind of cheery manner; but the oboe is thin and stern, and the bassoon is like a deep, clear river. There isn't quite enough light and shade in jazz to make room for those moods.

The L.S.O.

Feather: Possibly you're right as far as gut-bucketing is concerned, but for scoring advanced compositions like, say, *High Yellow*, it really adds to the interest.

Mike: That's true. I know perfectly well *Elegy* wasn't half as impressive on the wax as it was in the ballet at the Savoy, with a woodwind contingent from the London Symphony Orchestra.

Feather: One up to me.

Mike: And then you must consider the fact that the oboe and bassoon are extremely difficult instruments to play. Look what happened when Trumbauer played the bassoon in *Runnin' Ragged*.

Feather (shuddering): Don't remind me.

Mike: Well, there you are! Doesn't that prove it's not worth worrying about?

Feather: It doesn't prove any-

INSTRUMENTS IN BANDS

Tackles "Mike"

thing of the sort. You might just as well say that because Kreisler can't play the double-bass the latter should stop being manufactured. It takes years of study, not a casual hour's practice, to become even competent on an orchestral instrument.

Mike: And even when you have become competent you find yourself out of place and superfluous in an ordinary dance band.

Keep Moving

Feather: You remind me of the people who said that aeroplanes were no use because you could get there just as well by boat. If we enlarge the range of jazz it only follows that jazz will come a stage further towards being a complete art instead of half-an-art. In fact, I might almost say that a brass band does need a string section, which is precisely why nobody who's studied music takes a brass band very seriously. And, talking about strings, there's another gap in jazz. Have you ever heard of a gentleman named Venuti?

Mike: The name does seem vaguely familiar.

Unequaled

Feather: Why is Venuti unique? Why have nearly all the other white fiddlers a bad tone, mediocre style and worse technique? Why are there hardly any coloured violinists at all?

Mike: Well, to tell the truth, I've often wondered that myself. It's generally accepted as being a glorious instrument, of course; but there isn't a Szigeti in jazz and probably never will be. Possibly the violin is too refined, in some mysterious way.

Feather: It seems a shame. The possibilities are enormous; but generally speaking there's no one, white or coloured, to approach Venuti. And violins are eminently

adaptable to all kinds of hot music. So are 'cellos, presumably.

Hot 'Cellos

Mike: WHAT? You want to use 'cellos in hot music now? Oh, I say, that's going too far. What would a poor 'cello do? Can you imagine a 'cello added to the existing instrumentation of Ellington's band? No! In standard music it's been an accepted orchestral tone colour for hundreds of years. In jazz—never.

Feather: There were some very pleasing rhythmic 'cello accompaniments to some of Jack Smith's vocals on H.M.V. They just gave one an inkling of what might be done. There's no limit to the variety of instruments that could be tried out like that. Now take the case of the organ. The most complicated, difficult instrument on earth—and one of the most beautifully moving.

And Organs!

Mike: What an arch and foul thought! In any case, the church organ is only so exquisitely emotional because of its richness and variety and range; it is best suited to slow and mournful or grandiose music; hymns, for example; but for the twelve-bar blues idiom it would produce an indeterminate, muffled rhythm that might be technically very clever, but just couldn't sound stylish. No genuine attack or vitality. And the organ is far too expensive for ordinary use.

Feather: Didn't Fats Waller play the organ a lot at one time?

Mike: Yes, but Fats is inconsistent even on the piano, so the results on the organ couldn't be anything more than just musically pleasant. No, I'm afraid you can't convince me the organ's any use in that way, even with the greatest musicians in the world on it. For one thing, there are so few men with a full comprehension of the

(Continued on page 18)

The Great Man himself—
thinking about something
or other—or is it?



27.4.34

Feather-Foresythe Debate of no Value:

READERS AIR

mentallise have given up making hot records.

Surely Mr. Feather must recognise the Dorsey Brothers' *Shim-sham-shimmy* and *Old Man Harlem* as definite steps forward in the art of white jazz? Does not Benny Goodman's new Columbia disc provide a further landmark?

Switching over to the subject of Ellington, surely Mr. Foresythe might have given his interviewer a few examples of efforts of the coloured maestro to "get out of the rut" since 1928. *Creole Rhapsody*, *Blue Tune*, *Mood Indigo* and many others must share that distinction with *Lightnin'*.

These are two of several points in the feature in question that I feel must be criticised. Should you favour me with a reply, no doubt you will be tempted to mention that we are dealing with a verbatim report of an actual discussion, of an informal type, and that there was no special intention on either side to make special efforts to give thoroughly considered replies to each other's statements. In which case I should retort that nothing which has not been thoroughly considered should be published in your journal. Such errors of judgment may safely be left to a certain contemporary of yours!

Trusting you will take this in the spirit of constructive criticism in which it is intended, and wishing THE MELODY MAKER all the success it deserves.

L. H. Goldrei.
Regent's Park, N.W.1.

You have answered most of your own criticisms, and left us little to say. The debates were not intended to arrive anywhere—just pleasant verbal preambles round subjects of interest to our readers. The points raised are left inconclusive partly for the benefit of the contestants' dignity and partly to make readers think them out for themselves.

* * *

A Third Viewpoint

In regard to the debate in your pages as to the superiority of white or coloured musicians, both your contestants—and, incidentally, jazz enthusiasts in general—seem completely to ignore the fact that the admixture of white blood apparent in outstanding coloured musicians must have the deepest influence on their work; in fact, it is probably solely responsible for the artistry and brilliant finish which complement the Negro's natural, but crude, gifts of rhythm and harmony.

If my reasoning is at fault, it is odd that the ebony-black Negro, with no such leavening of lighter blood, is conspicuous by his absence in the ranks of notable coloured musicians.

Jill Merrick.
Camden Square, N.W.1.

We are afraid we find ourselves in disagreement with you on the question of

the importance of the actual colour—is not one of the most outstanding members of Ellington's Band, Cooty Williams, who is ebony black?

It is a fact that inter-marriage between white and coloured people does not necessarily produce coffee-coloured children—sometimes they are quite black, and sometimes "high yellow."

* * *

* * *

Feather-Foresythe

My reason for bursting into song at the moment is the interview with Reginald Foresythe, published in your issue of January 6.

Debates and discussions of this type are doubtless of great interest to the majority of your readers, myself included, but when highly controversial points are raised on one side, and allowed to pass without comment by the other, then it is time for normally peaceable people to rise in wrath.

The sale of gramophone records in the U.S.A. is negligible these days, and it is natural that such as Mill Mo'le and Venuti should turn to radio as their best source of remuneration. It does not signify that hot music has not advanced simply because half-a-dozen stars over whom we are inclined to senti-

YOU CAN TEACH HOT MUSIC FOR £1!

Eight Instructive Records for Rude Relations

by LEONARD G. FEATHER

HEART-CRIES, like the one on this page, reach The Melody Maker office by the dozen from week to week. A painful problem, indeed; but the most obvious solution of all seems to have escaped the victims of these persecutions. It is possible, with a great deal of patience, to instil into almost anybody a certain tolerance, if not a genuine appreciation, of hot music.

You can do it yourself for a pound!

How To Do It

The first thing to do is to convince your subject, by gentle persuasion, that he must agree to listen closely, just for this once, to everything you say and play. When your patient is settled firmly in the surgical (or musical) chair, you lock the door, cut the phone wires to avoid interruptions, and proceed as follows:—

First administer a gentle anaesthetic in the shape of a beautiful semi-straight record. *How Could I Be Lonely*, by the New Mayfair Orchestra (H.M.V. B5940). Here the melody is so strongly plugged throughout that the slight changes occasionally made can be appreciated; even in the opening trumpet (Max Goldberg) solo it is easy to sense which are the stylish little twists that give variety and interest without drowning the tune. And you can tell your patient

that Al Bowlly's voice has just the quality that suits this type of music. A world-famous tenor singing the same number might be ineffective and incomprehensible.

Helpless

Now that your patient is well under the ether, a spot of Venuti-Lang work will help. *Regging the Scale* (Parlo, R 778) features the tune the whole world knows, by ear, if not by name—the major diatonic scale. Point it out when Rollini plays right up and down it, one note to each bar, twice in the second movement, and twice again at the end of the record. Over these scales Venuti plays his variations on the world's simplest melody, and your job here is to draw attention to the brilliance of these variations, which start quite simply with the same rhythm fitted to different sets of notes, then work up to a climax in which the artist's astoundingly quick-fingered "twiddly bits" are very plainly observed. Even the scale can be turned into good jazz—that is the moral lesson you can preach when you play this disc.

Engineering When Necessary

"Yes," your patient may say, "it's very clever to mess about with the melody, but why not play it as it was written and intended to be played?" Your answer to this is that when a

really good melody turns up the artists don't try to change it. This you prove with *Mood Indigo* (Parlo, R 866), which is not only simplicity itself from the melodic point of view, but will also provide an answer to the claim that all jazz, particularly Negro jazz, is "fast, tuneless and noisy." *Mood Indigo* is slow, tuneful and quiet.

Another point in the eternal "no-tune" argument is this: Hot records

have so much more tune than everyday dance music that it takes several hearings to pick it all out. Demonstrate this with Nichols' *The Sheik* (Bruno, 1104), where we have three entirely distinct tunes woven around the original one. The advantage of this particular record is that the melody is actually heard behind each solo, making it very simple to follow. Hum the melody by itself to

(Continued on page 27.)

The Editor,
Harpender.

18th Jan 1934

Dear Editor,

I am crazy about hot music, but my people can't stand it. They say that if I bring any more records home there will be trouble. So I have to play them in the outhouse on a lousy portable.

What shall I do?

Yours truly,

J Marshall Steer

Teaching Hot Music for £1

(Continued from page 26)

show how flat and rhythmless it is. In most hot records, you explain, some such melodic basis is present in the same way; though the tune itself is not played, it could be hummed with every chorus.

"It Don't Mean a Thing"

Now you come to something more advanced—Ellington's *It Don't Mean a Thing* (Bruno, 1292), skipping as much as possible of the vocals. At this stage the patient's ear will be prepared for some of the strange sounds emitted here, and will find the final discord quite attractive. Bring out the fact that the brass team-work is of a perfect accuracy seldom excelled even in the greatest symphony orchestras; emphasise also the technical brilliance of Johnny Hodges' work after the first vocal.

And by the Boswells

By way of contrast, put on next the Boswell Sisters' version of *It Don't Mean a Thing* (Bruno, 1436), in which the same number sounds very different. The girls are always popular, but you must point out why they are good, giving two main reasons: one, their skilful juggling with the theme; two, the important fact that they are always perfectly in tune and balance, a virtue to which very few even good glee-club singers could lay claim! Remark, too, what grand things there are in the accompaniment, notably the trombone solo by Tom Dorsey, who, on an instrument often regarded, by the layman, as a mere music-hall joke, produces very pleasant and beautiful sounds.

The next record, *Sophisticated* (Col. CB 591), will again demonstrate the essentially refined musical charm of the Negro, but this time more from the individual instrumental viewpoint. *Sophisticated Lady*, being a tune that seems greatly to impress the lay mind as a rule, you can safely stress the beauty of the solos by Lawrence Brown, Bigard and Hardwick. And if your patient professes admiration for Duke's rhapsodic piano solo—well, let him cherish his illusions!

Daring!

Finally, you should make the daring experiment of putting on a record which is, from the layman's angle, "fast, tuneless and noisy"—and you may get away with it! Try *Maniac's Ball* by the Casa Loma Orchestra (Bruno, 1279). The first moments of interest come with the sixteen bars after the trombone solo. Here there is some clever rhythmic obligato work, backing up the commonplace, un-rhythmical melody line. Immediately after these sixteen bars comes the effect that will most impress your patient: the sudden dramatic entry of the record's star performer, the clarinet. He is saved up during two choruses and then introduced with a terrific rhythmic fanfare, like a monarch making his stately entry to the Court at the top of a staircase. The record closes with some remarkable team-work by the sax section, scored against the intriguing repetition of a phrase by the brass. All this, of course, you relate in the carefully-rehearsed "sales-talk" which you must prepare to go with every record.

Innoculated

Now you have run through your sovereign's-worth of discs, and the ground-work is done. Your patient, slightly hardened by now, will soon be prepared for another consultation in which more advanced stuff like *Hot and Bothered*, *Chant of the Weeds* and Armstrong's work will be dealt with.

Of course, he has gone away with the impression that what you have played him is completely representative of all hot music, past, present and future.

It really wasn't anything of the sort, but who cares about that?

CAN DANCE MUSIC ESCAPE

from the

BALLROOM?

Ray Noble

answers

Leonard G. Feather

In an Interview



RAY NOBLE and his famous recording Band, which is drawn from the principal West End hotel units.

"RAY NOBLE is so elusive," the Editor warned me. "See if you can find him."

Grimly I set out on my game of hide-and-seek. I eventually tracked down my quarry in the wilds of a recording studio; and, having surmounted the preliminary difficulty of my task, I found it quite easy to extract from Ray some interesting answers to the contentious question with which I greeted him: "Can dance music ever get away from the dance hall?"

Noble: Well, not to any large extent. I don't mean that dance music should be danced to and never listened to; but the first consideration with that type of

music, whether it's sweet or hot, is persistent rhythm all the way through—you've got to give it to them. There's always been plenty of good music composed for dancing, and always will be. Centuries ago the foremost musicians were writing for dances; Chopin's waltzes, in the last century, were suited to dancing; and more recently men like Johann Strauss composed works of musical value, also mostly in waltz form; so the fact that jazz is a utilitarian art isn't at all detrimental to it.

Feather: But all the works of Chopin—even of Strauss—have been performed at concerts as well as for dancing. And I've noticed that when there's any really great jazz played in a dance hall nowadays, at least half the crowd don't dance; they stand around the bandstand and gape. It happens whenever

the stars perform at THE MELODY MAKER band contests. So why is it that very few dance bands ever give a full evening's performance on the concert stage?

Noble: The answer's simple. You're thinking of special functions where the crowd consists of connoisseurs. That's different. But you take the average orchestra, pro or semi-pro, whether it's in a West End hotel or at a village barn gig, it's their duty to make people want to dance. Thank heaven more liberties can be taken on records, because people buy records to listen to, more often than not. But that monotony of rhythm that's become associated with hot music would be the first serious drawback in a concert performance.

Feather: Were two hours of Ellington in four-four rhythm at the Trocadero monotonous?

Exceptional

Noble: Not for that particular audience on that unique occasion.

Feather: And was Ellington's original ten-inch *Creole Rhapsody* a failure? On the contrary, it was a far bigger success than the longer version, which kept changing tempo and lost its homogeneity.

Noble: Then do you think all genuine hot music is written in strict tempo?

Feather: Oh, no! I'm sure occasional changes could be effective in a long composition. But I don't believe in a device like the *rallentando* applied to hot music. It just doesn't seem to fit, except perhaps in solo recitals. And there's another point. Would you say that a man with the imagination of Ellizalde and the technique of Paderewski could hold an averagely intelligent audience—the jazz equivalent of a Queen's Hall audience—for a longish piano recital?

Atmospherics

Noble: He'd be more entitled to try than a full band, because his individuality—and probably his playing altogether—would be drowned in a dance hall. But as that type of exponent and that type of audience are both non-existent, why worry? In any case you need an atmosphere of intimacy for hot solo playing; and the strongest objection is this: people who go to a solo recital at the Wigmore Hall are induced by the double attraction of (a) the artist, and (b) the particular works he's going to play. For a jazz recital of hot music there'd only be the first attraction; the performance would be mostly improvised; and musical students won't listen to extemporisation in any form of music, except from a man of super genius.

Feather: But he could play well-known numbers, and advanced compositions of his own.

Noble: Ah—that all depends on how you'd define hot music. The borders between "straight" and "hot" and between "hot" and "standard" are very vague; for instance, some of the best

Noble: That's one of the best hopes of the whole business. Find that audience, give them what they want, then add more and more of what we want ourselves—then jazz will be a commercial and a musical success right outside the ballroom. Eventually we shall be able to educate the same public beyond the mere sensual rhythmic appeal and bring them to understand music that's developed more intellectually on the same rhythmic lines. By which I mean the Constant Lambert school and the equally rhythmic works of Stravinsky.

Jazz as Such

Feather: Personally I imagine the Ellington public isn't willing to take the big jump across to that class of work. They want their hot music to be dance music till the bitter end; the word "jazz" signifies Ellington, Hawkins, Venuti and Co. to them; and I believe they're right.

Noble: Then I'd quite seriously advise them to stick to gramophone records, or, for second choice, the dance hall. There's more good genuine jazz music performed in the ballroom than'll ever see the light of day in the Albert Hall.

* * *

Here the inquisition came to an end. Ray Noble, having given me plenty of food for thought, was hustled away, to commit to wax another of his superb arrangements of the commercial music in defence of which he had spoken so convincingly.

Oh, yes, he must have been very convincing; because since this little chat I've made one unprecedented but very firm resolution.

I'm going to listen to every O.B. next week, for the first time in my life!

ker

Feat

Can Dance Music Escape from the Ballroom?

(Continued from page 16)

has just a slight element of busking in it, but it's very advanced as a composition. Would that do?

Noble: Unlikely. If you suddenly removed Furtwangler from a Queen's Hall concert, put Ellington's orchestra in the stand and pleaded for tolerance, the audience would still find fault with it all over the place.

Feather: Oh, very probably—I didn't mean that. Suppose we clear the auditorium too, and fill it with the type of people who heard Ellington at the Trocadero?

Noble: There aren't many of that kind. Thousands of so-called hot fans still prefer crudities like Calloway and Moten, and only take a mild interest in Ellington.

More to Come

Feather: But assuming that this better-class public can be encouraged and enlarged—then would there be any chance?

hot music has been made from popular tunes like *Dinah* and *Nobody's Sweetheart*. In fact, my advice to any budding young Ellington in the profession is this: Don't look down your nose at "commercial" music. Stick to the best orchestrations of the best straight numbers and you'll find yourself coming quite near enough to hot music to please yourselves and your public at the same time. Out-and-out busking is dangerous, particularly on the stage, where absolute perfection of performance is expected. In fact, after the question of rhythmic monotony I think that's the main spoke in the wheel of concert hot music.

Feather: But say Ellington performed his *Lightnin'* on the concert stage...

(Continued on page 17)

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HUGHES?

A Pertinent Question Asked and Answered

by
LEONARD G. FEATHER

who, in an interview, finds the "uncommercial" Irishman being very commercial in the service of a great National Newspaper

ONCE upon a time there was a musician named Spike Hughes, who went to America and made a lot of lovely records for the big British public, and came back to England and vanished from the world of hot music.

To-day there is a pleasant young man named Pat Hughes who sits at a desk on occasions during the day and or night scribbling "stories" for the *Daily Herald*. And whenever a famous musician visits London, whenever there is a wrestling match, or an exhibition of Chinese junk, or a man who has rolled a peanut up a mountain—in short, whenever something happens that calls for a "Special Feature Writer" (preferably music), Spike Hughes is likely to be on the spot, pencil in hand.

That's what's happened to Hughes.

My first glimpse of the new and busy Mr. Hughes showed only a head of sparse fair hair between two hands. Seated at his desk, the Great Man was getting ideas for a new "story." He looks slightly more than his twenty-five years, though as he rose to greet me, I felt that his clothes were a throw-back to his Cambridge days.

The answer to my question regarding his jump from jazz into journalism was simple. "The *Herald* pays me to go and listen to 'classical' music—music that I enjoy hearing and enjoy writing about! Reporting's an amusing life altogether; business and pleasure combined, as it were."

"But all the non-musical jobs you get," I inquired, "exhibitions and so on—do you like doing that, too?"

"Yes, it's good fun—I never do the same thing twice, you see; so there's enough variety about that part of the work to prevent my getting bored. So nowadays I'm doing work I like; but, supposing I took up dance music arranging as a whole-time job, I should naturally be obliged to arrange a lot of music by other people, and somehow I can't put my whole heart into that. Writing one's own music is easier and more pleasant. So is writing one's own articles."

These Names Make Hughes

When it came to the question of deciding which story he had most pleasure in getting, Pat was non-plussed. "All of them, really . . . well, there was one I particularly liked, and that was talking to Yehudi Menuhin, the boy violin virtuoso. He's one of the most charming and unspoiled personalities I've ever met."

We fell into a discussion of the celebrated American tour which produced those remarkable discs with Benny Carter's group. Ireland's White Hope recalled the grand times he had making



Patrick Cairns ("Spike") Hughes

those records, and told me something about the men who made them. Benny Carter is about Pat's own age, but has been in the music world since the age

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WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HUGHES?

(Continued from page 22)

of fifteen, and is a very brilliant and experienced musician.

Hawk the Bean

"Yes, they're a splendid gang. . . . Sidney Catlett, Luis Russell, Choo—great fellows, the whole lot of 'em. Hawkins? He's a charming personality too. They call him 'Bean' in Harlem; everyone has some nickname or other. Bean liked making *Nocturne* and *Pastoral* and the other soft, sweet numbers, but, of course, his own playing's every bit as great in the faster stuff. He's a born musician, but he's acquired plenty of theoretical musical knowledge, too, and done a certain amount of arranging."

No Quarter Asked

A striking feature of these artists, it seems, was their extraordinary keenness. They would willingly work all day and all night with hardly a break. "Working conditions like that aren't very practicable here," grinned Pat. "So that's why you haven't recorded since you came back to England?"

Cook's Tours?

"Exactly. And apart from that, when you've had men like Hawkins and Higginbottom and Henry Allen to play your music and take the solos . . . well, however good the fellows over here are, it's not quite the same thing; but if they all went to Harlem for a year and studied these men they'd improve beyond recognition."

"Don't you think the music over

here's advancing on the whole, then?"

"As far as arranging's concerned, certainly, but the solo work still has a long way to go."

"But supposing you did feel like recording again in England—what men would you use?"

The Same Gang

"Oh, I'd definitely have the same bunch as before; they're all good fellows and I know they'd give the best results possible. But I don't intend to record here."

"Why not?" I demanded.

"In the first place there are still several of the American recordings due to be released; two next month, called *Music at Sunrise* and *Music at Midnight*. I think you'll like 'em. Then some time after that you'll hear the two gutbucket sides we made for the fun of the thing. If they're a bigger success than the arranged records I shall lose all my faith in everything. Anyway, those'll all last till July, so there's no hurry, you see."

"Yes, but after that?"

A Surprise

Now came a surprise I really hadn't reckoned with.

"If I can find the time and the opportunity—and the money—I'm off to the States again, to make some more discs with the same boys. Of course, if Fletcher Henderson's over here at the time it'll be rather awkward, 'cause I shan't have Henry Allen or Hawkins or Dickie Wells or . . . well, there's plenty of time to think about that."

"Anyhow, the main thing is that you haven't lost your interest in jazz."

"Good, Lord, no!" cried Pat Hughes, positively, aghast at such a thought.

opulence

WRITES and WRONGS

Our Narrow-minded Contributors; Johnson's Band; Suggestions for Hot Record Circles

IN your issue dated January 20th, Leonard G. Feather says:— " . . . which is precisely why nobody who's studied music takes a brass band very seriously."

Mr. Feather is, of course, entitled to his own opinion, but he is treading dangerous ground when he infers that such men as Elgar, Bantock, Holst and Ireland have not studied music, because they certainly take a brass band seriously.

One of the reasons why the music of Ellington, Armstrong and Co. is not more generally recognised by straight musicians is because they are unable to follow the logic of such ill-informed and narrow-minded protagonists as your contributor.

Oxford.

COCHRAN.

THE FOUR BEST RECORDS FOR THE SOUTH POLE!

LEONARD G. FEATHER

has

A Musical Nightmare and is Disc-graced



Roy Fox Mathison Brooks Louis Armstrong Edgar Jackson Eric Ballard

WE find you guilty of arson, having wilfully set fire to a public building by playing twenty-three *Tiger Rags* in succession; and guilty of vandalism—in the presence of witnesses you played *Mood Indigo* on a mouth-organ . . . and for these heinous crimes we sentence you to solitary confinement at the South Pole for the rest of your life. . . .

I sat up in bed, quivering. The strange voice, issuing apparently from my radio-gram, thundered terrifyingly on:—

"To keep yourself warm in this region, you may take with you any six records you choose. In an hour you depart. *A rivederci!*" With this mysterious valediction (possibly South Polish for "I'll be seen' yer") the voice broke off and I was left in silence.

The banishment itself seemed of less importance than the choice of records. Frantically I racked my brains in an effort to make the selection for my future disc-comfort. I must seek advice. "If only," I moaned, "if only I could see half a dozen people and hear their suggestions! If I got four suggestions from each—that's twenty-four titles—and choose six out of them. . . ."

Edgar Jackson

Before I could end the soliloquy my wish was granted, and I found myself wafted away into the darkness, my pyjamas shivering in the night wind. Suddenly I landed with a bump, blinked, and looked around me. I was in the sitting-room of Edgar Jackson, erstwhile Editor of the M.M., and one of the few record critics who are studied but not jaded.

Hastily pouring out my tale of woe, I asked him what records he would himself take to the South Pole.

"The Boswell-Victor Young *Stardust*, Trumbauer's *Singing the Blues*, The Ellington-Crosby *St. Louis Blues*, and Teagarden's *I Just Couldn't Take It*."

he replied, almost immediately. Thank-

ing him, I found myself transported into the darkness again.

Louis Armstrong

At my next stop I found myself still in the darkness, for I was staring into the face of Louis Armstrong. "My, my, my—look who's come!" cried Satch'mo. "How's things, boy?"

I told him, and asked what he would do in the same circumstances. Out came Louis with this remarkable list:—

Ellington's *Ducky Wucky*, Henderson's *Queer Notions*, Redman's *Nagasaki*, and—Hylton's *Ellingtonia!*

If you knew what Jack Hylton has meant to him as a friend and adviser, you would realise how glad Louis might be, in Antarctic regions, of a musical reminder of his famous mentor. But as the other choices were somewhat bizarre, I asked Louis if he were positive that these would be his final decision.

"Boy," he answered, "I never let my mouth say nothin' my head can't stand."

Eric Ballard

Again I was spirited away, this time landing beside what seemed to be a couple of sympathetic tree-trunks. I looked up and up and up, eventually arriving at a face. I recognised Eric Ballard, the tall and genial Big White Chief of the No. 1 Rhythm Club.

"Mr. Ballard, supposing you were—"

"Don't tell me; I know all about it. I was just wondering. . . . If I were you I'd take:

Armstrong's *West End Blues*, Ellington's *Mooche*, Trumbauer's *Three Blind Mice*, and Nichols' *Dinah*

—if Teagarden's solo doesn't keep you warm, nothing will."

Mathison Brooks

Whereupon I took a mental note, a flying leap, and a dive into the office of Mathison Brooks, whom I found hard at work on his Wednesday disc review for the *Daily Herald*. "Yes, yes, I know," he said; "there's my list for you."

Picking it up, I found these four suggestions:—

Ethel Waters' *You Can't Stop Me From Loving You*, Armstrong's *St. Louis Blues*, Hawkins' *Day You Came Along*, and Ambrose's *Stardust*.

The Charlady

As I left the office I was confronted by a large female caretaker, who insisted on having her little say. "Barnacle Bill the Sailor," she bellowed, "Rhymes, Stormy Weather, and The Last Rahnd-up—you can take 'em to the South Pole and leave 'em there." With this she gave me a great kick that sent me flying off into the darkness again.

Roy Fox

On landing, I found myself face to face with the famous Roy Fox smile, put the horrible question to Mr. Fox and received some further surprises. "I'd be all for sweet music," he said. "I guess I'd take

Ambrose's *Body and Soul*, Whiteman's *When Day is Done*, Whiteman's *Rhapsody in Blue*, and Any record of *Liebestraume*."

At this juncture, just as I was beginning to despair of finding anyone with views similar to my own, my final nocturnal peregrination brought me to THE MELODY MAKER office, where I found "Mike" dressed in a night-shirt, playing *Bugle Call Rag* on a large meerschaum pipe.

"Mike" "Put that down, Mike." I almost wept, "and tell me what four discs you'd use to keep the South Pole warm."

Mike ran his fingers through his thick golden locks and looked at me penetratingly, silently. Then, with a dramatic flourish, he reeled off these four suggestions:—

Venuti-Lang's *Doing Things*, Ellington's *Baby, When You Ain't There*, Armstrong's *Save It, Pretty Mama*, and Hughes' *Arabesque*.

"I'd take *Arabesque* for the sake of Hawkins," he explained. "But, if it's all the same to you, I'd rather stay here and get on with next week's review."



"Mike"—being exclusive

As I departed I heard strains of *Bugle Call Rag* emerging again from the pipe. "Mike" must be either ambidextrous or a very dilatory scribe. . . .

* * *

Not long afterwards my great journey had begun. On a giant airplane, enclosed in a special cell with thirty-two bars, I contemplated my fate. Ignoring all the advice given me, I had selected six entirely different records of

my own choice:—

Ellington's *Hot and Bothered*, Lang's *Walking the Dog*, Baltimore Bellhops' *Comin' and Going*, Armstrong's *Tiger Rag*, Venuti's *Stringing the Blues*, and Ellzalde's *Dixie*.

At the Pole, I jumped out and opened my parcel of records with nervous fingers. As I looked my eyes almost bolted out of my head. What was this? *Swampy River?* *Jersey Lightning?*

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The Four Best Discs for the S. Pole

(Continued from page 15)

Who ordered these? *Basin Street Blues?* *Old Man Blues?* . . . Feverishly I scanned the other titles. All wrong! Somebody must have given me six wrong numbers!

I tore after the plane as the pilot was entering the cockpit to leave me in my eternal exile. Then the machine gathered speed, and I ran faster—faster—along the thin ice. Too late—the plane rose into the sky, and I sat down and wept. All the wrong records! Suddenly the mystery was solved—I was looking at the backings!

I leaped into the air with joy—fatal on thin ice. With a crash it gave way, and down I went—down—down, till all I could feel was the sensation of being drenched through and through. . . .

* * *

"There, now!" exclaimed the housemaid, in a strenuous effort to push me back off the floor into bed. "Wake up, can't you? You've gone and upset your water-bottle!"

Note—All the above selections of records are based on authentic statements by the people mentioned.

24.234.* * *

Croydon Rhythm Club, No. 7, held an entertaining meeting on Monday last, when the records selected by Leonard G. Feather to accompany him to the South Pole were played and discussed, and this club is now going so strong that it finds weekly meetings necessary.

WHAT IS THE PERFECT FAN?

Lew Stone



Lew Stone Gives Leonard Feather the Answer
In an Exclusive Interview

hot music for long; but if he wants to trace the advances made since it evolved, it's best to secure, if possible, a collection of representative records from about 1920 onwards. I really feel that the only way to become a discriminating critic is to listen to the music constantly and find out gradually what appeals most to the senses."

I bethought me of Reggie Foresythe's academic views on the same subject. Music as higher mathematics. None of that for Lew Stone! "Hot music altogether," he continued, "is largely a matter of the senses and of innate ability. Now take my band."

Self-Taught Stars

Restraining myself from making the obvious retort, I let him go on. "Practically all the men in my orchestra," said its proud leader, "are self-taught musicians. Only one of them has had a complete academic musical training. And that accounts for their individuality, the sincerity of their musical expression, and the personality in their playing. Most of the best teachers, too, are men who've learnt from nobody in particular, but who have just cultivated an inherent talent; that applies just as well to a teacher of jazz as it might to, say, a swimming instructor. And, similarly, it's no good trying to tell people what to like and what not to in jazz. Your ideal fan, by the way, ought to bear that in mind. He should be very patient with people who aren't interested in his hobby, and try to veer their ideas round slowly into appreciating various subtle phrases or ideas in orchestration."

As the jig-saw of ideas slowly fitted itself together, I could see the ideal fan

(Continued on next page.)

Famous Leader Criticises Bigoted Enthusiasts

(Continued from previous page)

taking shape. What other qualities should this super-being possess?

What taste, I asked, should he have in hot music?

"The main thing is that he should be an agnostic in all matters. I don't mean that he should let any one critic lead him by the nose—far from it. But he shouldn't be afraid of changing his views every now and then. And there are several popular prejudices he should try to avoid. For instance, quite a number of fans are crazy about simple swing records without any arrangements, and just won't be bothered to listen to an advanced arrangement. Others have just the opposite view, and think that so-called 'gutbucket' playing is the ruination of jazz."

"And what's your point of view?"

"I think there's plenty of room for both forms of interpretation, and that's one of the points your fan should appreciate. He naturally shouldn't have any bias for white or coloured musicians. Nor ought he to run about telling everyone that hot music is the only art worth living for. If one can't see the other fellow's point of view, one should at least—well—"

"Let Him Live," I suggested.

"Exactly. And another thing is this: there are a certain number of over-enthusiastic fans who go to the extreme of idolising any of the various performances of their favourites artist or artists, whether that particular performance justifies their praise or not. The fans should have some sense of proportion."

Leonard Feather



"Well, then," I concluded, "roughly, your idea of the perfect fan is this: all he needs is a natural sense of rhythm, harmony and tone, and a sense of proportion—which is not so natural!"

"One other thing," added Lew, "and that is the power of concentration. He must put his whole heart and soul into the subject, and, if possible, buy all the best records that are really significant. Of course, there are scores of records of another class, which are quite satisfactory, but which don't attempt to do anything new. That's the type he must avoid. And with all those qualifications I think he'd be fully entitled to turn into a Celestial Being when the time comes."

Here Lew Stone was called away on some urgent mission. As he went, a thought struck me in connection with his final remark.

For every one of those Celestial Beings there will probably be half-a-dozen Stokers of Hades. . . .

ONCE again Lew Stone is in the news. All the fans have been following up, with a devout interest, every move he has made since that historic—well, important—day when he first arranged to form his own band at the Monseigneur.

Of course, it is common knowledge that thousands of fans consider Lew Stone's an ideal dance band; but hitherto nobody has examined the other side of the medal, to discover whom or what Lew Stone considers to be an ideal fan.

When I assailed him on this subject I knew what I was in for, having read that England's "pocket dictator" of jazz is (as Nat Gonella always says) so shy. But it was not his reticence that proved troublesome as much as the difficulties of answering the question.

The Perfect Fan

"What makes a perfect fan? I haven't the faintest idea. I suppose anyone who takes an intelligent interest in hot music can be called a good fan, so long as he does his best to encourage other people to take an interest too."

"Quite. But the thing is," I replied, "what constitutes an intelligent interest? For instance, do you think one should have an elementary technical knowledge of the instruments and the theoretical foundations of music?"

"Oh, no—not in the least," answered Lew quickly. "Of course, anyone who wants to distinguish between good and bad music has to have a natural musical ear, by which I mean an ear for harmony and good tone. But the practical side concerns the performer, and the performer alone."

Classical Music

I asked him whether he considered a study of classical music necessary for the appreciation of the best jazz. A second and even more emphatic negative was the reply. "The first necessity for a hot music fan is an instinct for rhythm. He doesn't even need to have studied

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT "JAZZ"?

An Examination Paper for
the Hot Fans

Thirty Questions to Test Your
Knowledge

by LEONARD G. FEATHER

HOW much do you know about hot music?

It's all very well for you fans to declare that you have every Nichols record since the year dot, and that you'd sooner miss the 8.36 to town than miss the latest Ellington. The fact remains that some of you have never taken the study of hot music seriously enough. You couldn't, for the life of you, say what Joe Venuti likes for breakfast, or tell me Armstrong's theories on the Loch Ness Monster. In short, you couldn't answer an examination paper on your favourite subject.

Supposing you had to pass a general knowledge test in Modern Rhythmic Music (or whatever you call it), there would unquestionably be plenty of perfectly silly questions that might stump you, because you've never deliberately committed any facts to memory.

If you run through the following test you will be able to discover your particular percentage, as the marks total up to exactly one hundred. No old MELODY MAKERS, dictionaries, discs, Debretts or even telephones, should be used during the exam—if you brave it from start to finish without any references or help whatsoever you will have the advantage of a clear conscience when the task is done. Now go ahead and try hard:—

1. What was the first record ever made by (a) The Five Pennies, (b) Trumbauer's Orchestra? (Both sides in each case.)
2. What are the real names of: (a) "Choo"? (b) Duke Ellington? (c) Ed Lang? (d) "Tricky Sam"?
3. Who is gramophone critic of: (a) "The Daily Sketch"? (b) "The Daily Herald"? (c) "The Daily Express"?
4. In what hot record did: (a) Spike Hughes play the piano? (b) Earl Hines play the celeste? (c) Frankie Trumbauer play the bassoon? (d) Hoagy Carmichael play the fool?
5. What are the countries of origin of: (a) The Ramblers? (b) Ray Ventura's Orchestra?
6. Name the instrument played and band played in by: (a) Stanley Black, (b) Andy White,

- (c) Andrew Brown, (d) Harry Gold, (e) Reg Pink.
7. Who were: (a) The Washingtonians? (b) The Missourians? (c) Buddy's Brigade? (d) The original Charleston Chasers? (e) The Californian Ramblers? (f) Lil's Hot Shots? (g) The Stokers of Hades?

8. For what companies are the following at present recording: (a) Earl Hines' Orchestra? (b) Benny Goodman's Orchestra? (c) Paul Whiteman's Orchestra?

9. Name the films in which these stars made their first screen appearances: (a) Ellington. (b) Bing Crosby. (c) Cab Calloway.

10. What are the signature tunes used by the following bands: (a) Louis Armstrong? (b) Lew Stone? (c) Luis Russell?

11. Who wrote *Tiger Rag*? When?

12. Who recorded it: (a) As a piano solo last year? (b) As a saxophone and clarinet solo?

13. Who played the trumpet solo in: (a) Billy Cotton's first record of it? (b) Spike Hughes' record? (c) Billy Cotton's new "Super" version? (d) Ray Noble's version?

14. Who took the trombone solo in: (a) Armstrong's version? (b) Lew Stone's?

15. In what record of it was there an ocarina solo? By whom?

16. Who composed: (a) *Blue Harlem*? (b) *Blue Rhythm*? (c) *Blue Jazz*?

17. State whether the following are white or coloured artists: (a) Milton Mésirov, (b) Mills' Blue Rhythm Band, (c) Mills Brothers, (d) Mildred Bailey.

18. Give the complete personnel of: (a) Ellington's Orchestra, excluding singers and dancers, as it stands at present; (b) The original Blue Four in such records as *Cheese and Crackers*.

19. Who composed the lyric of *Mood Indigo*?

20. What famous saxophonist quitted and rejoined Paul Whiteman's Orchestra innumerable times?

21. What well-known clarinettist was killed in a car accident?

22. Who once recorded a trumpet solo entitled *Coppin' Louis*?

23. How many of the Boswell Sisters are really sisters?

24. Did Ed Lang ever visit England?

25. On what instrument was Adrian Rollini first registered with the American Federation of Musicians?

26. Who told the "M.M." that Armstrong's show was "a disgusting and abortive exhibition, likely to nauseate all decent men"?

27. What were the last two coloured bands to be taken over by Irving Mills, the American impresario?

28. Who wrote the special arrangement of *Paradise* played by Ellington at the Trocadero?

29. What famous hot number was originally played thirty years ago as a march?

30. State which of the following allegations are correct:

- (a) "Red" Mackenzie is so called because of his Red Indian blood;

- (b) Hoagy Carmichael is coloured;

- (c) Roy Fox is very proficient on the piccolo;

- (d) Clarence Williams and Cooty Williams are sons of Spencer Williams and Mary Lou Williams;

- (e) Red Nichols' Five Pennies comprised anything up to a dozen men;

- (f) Bix started playing the cornet at the age of eighteen months, and had to be given a special sound-proof nursery following complaints by neighbours;

- (g) Al Bowlly sings in his bath?

* * *

And that's all. If you get eighty per cent, or more, consider yourself one of the jazz cognoscenti.

If you get less than forty—well, you'd better throw up your job, immerse yourself in a heap of old MELODY MAKERS from No. 1 onwards, and start life all over again!

The answers to all these questions will be given next week. In the meantime, amuse yourself by writing down the answers on a sheet of paper and keeping it by you until next Friday.

Don't send in your solutions—this Examination Paper is for amusement only.

3 March 1934

BIG CHANCE A SOUTH POLE ECHO

LEONARD G. FEATHER'S article on records suitable to the Polar regions, in our issue dated February 17, has apparently roused the desire for similar Antarctic experience on the part of many readers, who desire to know the catalogue particulars of the records mentioned. Here they are:—

BRUNSWICK

Boswell-Victor Young's *Stardust*, 102.
Ellington-Crosby's *St. Louis Blues*, 116.
Teagarden's *I Just Couldn't Take It*, 01683.
Ellington's *Ducky Wucky*, 1426.
Redman's *Nagasaki*, 1489.
Ellington's *Mooche*, 1235.
Nichol's *Dinah*, 01591.
Ellington's *Baby, When You Ain't There*, 01681.
Elizalde's *Dixie*. Out of print.

PARLOPHONE

Trumbauer's *Singing the Blues*, R. 3323.
Armstrong's *West End Blues*, R. 448.
Trumbauer's *Three Blind Mice*, R. 105.
Armstrong's *St. Louis Blues*, R. 618.
Hawkins' *The Day You Came Along*, R. 1685.
Venuti-Lang's *Doin' Things*, R. 3352.
Armstrong's *Save It, Prettiest Momma*, R. 558.
Ellington's *Hot and Bothered*, R. 582.
Lang's *Walking the Dog*, R. 740.
Baltimore Bellhop's *Comin' and Going*, R. 1356.
Armstrong's *Tiger Rag*, R. 942.

COLUMBIA

Henderson's *Queer Notions*, C.B. 678.
Ethel Water's *You Can't Stop Me from Loving You*, D.B. 579.
Venuti's *Stringing the Blues*. Out of print.

DECCA

Hylton's *Ellingtonia*, F. 3764.
Ambrose's *Body and Soul*, M. 402.
Hughes' *Arabesque*, F. 3639.

H.M.V.

Whiteman's *When Day is Done*. Out of print.
Whiteman's *Rhapsody in Blue*, C. 1395.
Ambrose's *Stardust*. Out of print.

WHAT DID YOU KNOW?

Solutions to LEONARD G. FEATHER'S Examination Paper

Which Appeared in Last Week's Issue

1. (a) The first record Red Nichols' Five Pennies ever made was *That's No Bargain* and *Washboard Blues*; (b) Frankie Trumbauer's first was *Singing the Blues* and *Clarinet Marmalade*. (4 marks.)
2. The real names of "Choo," "Duke" Ellington, Ed Lang and "Tricky Sam" are (a) Leon Berry, (b) Edward Kennedy Ellington, (c) Salvatore Massaro, (d) Joseph Nanton. (4 marks.)
3. The gramophone critics of the *Daily Sketch*, *Daily Herald* and *Daily Express* are respectively: (a) Robert Tredinnick, (b) P. Mathison Brooks, (c) Christopher Stone. (3 marks.)
4. (a) Spike Hughes played the piano in Joey Shields' vocal record of *St. James' Infirmary* and *The Devil is Afraid of Music*; (b) Earl Hines played the celeste in Armstrong's *Basin Street Blues*; (c) Frankie Trumbauer played the bassoon in Venuti's *Runnin' Ragged*; (d) Hoagy Carmichael played the fool in a comedy-hot disc by his own orchestra, *Barnacle Bill the Sailor*, in which he sang and talked. (4 marks.)
5. (a) The Ramblers come from Holland; (b) Ray Ventura's Orchestra is French. (2 marks.)
6. (a) Stanley Black plays piano, Maurice Winnick's band; (b) Andy White plays trombone, Blue Rhythm Band; (c) Andrew Brown plays saxophone, Cab Calloway's Orchestra; (d) Harry Gold plays tenor saxophone, Roy Fox's Band; (e) Reg Pink plays tenor saxophone, Percival Mackey's Orchestra. (10 marks.)
7. (a) "The Washingtonians" were Ellington's Orchestra; (b) "The Missourians" were Cab Calloway's Orchestra; (c) "Buddy's Brigade" were Spike Hughes' Orchestra; (d) the original "Charleston Chasers" were Red Nichols' Orchestra; (e) "The California Ramblers" were Adrian Rollini's Orchestra; (f) "Lill's Hot Shots" were Armstrong's Orchestra; (g) "The Stokers of Hades" were Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra. (7 marks.)
8. (a) Earl Hines' Orchestra records for Brunswick; (b) Benny Goodman's Orchestra records for Columbia; (c) Paul Whiteman's Orchestra records for Victor (H.M.V.). (3 marks.)
9. (a) Ellington made his first film appearance in *Check and Double Check*, featuring Amos and Andy; (b) Bing Crosby's first was in *King of Jazz* (as one of the Rhythm Boys); (c) Cab Calloway's first was *The Big Broadcast*. (3 marks.)
10. The signature tunes used by Louis Armstrong, Lew Stone and Luis Russell are respectively: (a) *Sleepy Time Down South*; (b) *Oh Monah*; (c) *Call of the Freaks*. (3 marks.)
11. La Rocca, the left-handed cornet player of the Dixieland Band, composed *Tiger Rag* in 1911. (2 marks.)
12. (a) Art Tatum recorded *Tiger Rag* as a piano solo last year; (b) Jimmy Dorsey recorded it as a sax and clarinet solo. (2 marks.)
13. (a) Nat Gonella played the trumpet solo in Bill Cotton's first record of *Tiger Rag*; (b) Bruts Gonella played it in Spike Hughes' record; (c) George Burgess played it in Billy Cotton's new "super" version; (d) Nat Gonella played it in Lew Stone's record. (4 marks.)
14. (a) Hix (not Higginbottom!) played trombone in Armstrong's *Tiger Rag*; (b) Lew Davis played it in Lew Stone's version. (2 marks.)
15. Jack Hylton's *Tiger Rag* has an ocarina solo by Harry Berly. (2 marks.)
16. (a) *Blue Harlem* was composed by Duke Ellington; (b) *Blue Rhythm* was by Nat Leslie; (c) *Blue Jazz* was by Gene Gifford. (3 marks.)
17. (a) Milton Mesirow is white; (b) Mills' Blue Rhythm Band is coloured; (c) The Mills Brothers are coloured; (d) Mildred Bailey is white. (4 marks.)
18. (a) The present personnel of Ellington's Band is: Duke Ellington, Wellman Braud, Fred Guy, Sonny Greer, Freddie Jenkins, Cooty Williams, Arty Whetsel, Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, Juan Tizol; Otto Hardwick, Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard. (b) The original Blue Four were Joe Venuti, Ed Lang, Arthur Schutt and Adrian Rollini. (19 marks.)
19. Albany (Barney) Bigard composed the lyric of *Mood Indigo*. (1 mark.)
20. Frank Trumbauer quitted and rejoined Whiteman's Band several times. (1 mark.)
21. Frank Teschmaker was killed in a car accident. (1 mark.)
22. Jack Purvis recorded a trumpet solo called *Coppin' Louis*. (1 mark.)
23. The Boswell Sisters are really sisters. (1 mark.)
24. Ed Lang visited England in 1924 with the Mound City Blue Blowers, and appeared first in the suburbs and then at the Palladium. (1 mark.)
25. Adrian Rollini first joined the American Federation of Musicians as a xylophonist. (1 mark.)
26. It was Percy Bush who described Louis Armstrong's performance as "a disgusting and abortive exhibition, likely to nauseate all decent men." (1 mark.)
27. Jimmy Lunceford's and Fletcher Henderson's Bands are the latest coloured units to be taken over by Irving Mills. (2 marks.)
28. Benny Carter arranged *Paradise* for the Duke's concert at the Trocadero. (1 mark.)
29. *That's a Plenty* was originally composed and played as a march. (1 mark.)
30. (a) "Red" Mackenzie has no Red Indian blood in him; (b) No, Hoagy Carmichael is not coloured; (c) Roy Fox does not play the piccolo; (d) Clarence, Cooty, Spencer and Mary Lou Williams are unrelated; (e) Red Nichols' "Five" Pennies have consisted of anything up to a dozen performers; (f) there is no truth in the rumour that Bix played the cornet in his cradle; (g) It has been said that Al Bowlly sings in his bath! (7 marks.)

Total: 100 marks.

THE STATE OF



JACK RUSIN

(Photo by Aca)

Famous
U.S.
Pianist
Gives
Us
Inside
Dope
on the
Present
State
of Music
and
Musicians
in
America

THE above, brethren, is my text for this week. At least, it is one of the most interesting points I raised in a long chat with the famous Jack Rusin, who has been visiting England, not with Elizalde this time, but as accompanist to Miss Frances Williams.

"You've been to England before," I said, "and you've a pretty good idea of how hot music's progressing over here. Well, do you think your native land deserves the laurel wreath for its powers of appreciation?"

Fortunately, Jack is not only one of America's foremost white pianists, but is also an obligingly fluent conversationalist. This remarkable young man, a former art student from Pittsburg, was celebrating his twenty-fifth birthday—his brother Babe, the tenor star, is three years his junior.

The Lowdown

And between celebrations this is what Jack had to say:—"In America the upper classes have exactly the same taste as yours over here. They like sweet, straightforward chorus music—the sort of thing Jack Harris goes in for—and they don't care about the Dorsey Brothers and Benny Goodman as long as they can hear Guy Lombardo."

"But surely," I inquired, "some of the principal coloured hot bands are amazingly popular? I mean, Ellington makes just as big money in the States as he did over here, and—"

"Yes, but nobody really appreciates them properly. They're put over cleverly by good managers, and they bring in singing and dancing novelties. They just get by with some classes because they're—well, unique, and sometimes they give folks a sort of sensuous pleasure; but all the highbrows, and the people associated with classical music—they don't give a damn about jazz. Don't try to understand it."

Wasted

"One or two of them do over here," I said with a touch of barely justifiable pride. "Well, what's the effect in the States of this lack of understanding?"

"You can imagine—it's forced some of the finest white musicians to ruin their personalities by losing themselves in these sweet society orchestras, pandering to their audiences' tastes. They often work for conductors who don't even know what they're worth. Fact is,

the conductors are to blame for the position as much as anyone.

"There's dozens of star players, such as Bunny Berrigan, running around in second-class jobs because there isn't a leader sharp enough to pick them out, or maybe just because there's no call for hot players. If Berrigan were over here I reckon he'd be snapped up in no time."

Down Town

Next Jack began to tell me about the class of people who really do go in for hot music a little—the lower classes, who go to the cheap dance halls where they can dance the rhythmical "Lindy Hop," as they call it, to the music of the finest coloured bands in the world. But none of the so-called better classes would allow themselves to be seen in the Roseland or the Empire Ballroom.

"It's all very sad," said I.

"Ah, yes," said Jack.

We sighed.

"What," I proceeded, "about the college boys we hear so much of, who are supposed to buy all the hot records and get the best hot bands to play for their dances?"

"Oh, they're keen all right, but they don't get right into the skin of the thing like these Lindy-Hoppers. And even the two classes together make a

(Continued on next page)

THE STATES

In an Interview by
LEONARD G. FEATHER

pretty small proportion of the public; consequently such a thing as a Rhythm Club could never exist in the States."

I asked what was the position of the American semi-pro, and whether he had the support of the Press to foster his enthusiasm. But it seems that the spare-time musician is a somewhat rare bird over there, and has no kindly MELODY MAKER to give him the latest news and organise band contests for him. Indeed, there is no organ in the States at all that comes anywhere near to being an equivalent of THE MELODY MAKER.

See Page 19

"There are exceptions to this sweet-society-music complex," said Jack Rusin; "the Casa Loma Orchestra started out as a group of college boys; very good-looking, all of them—and that's what the girls want. These fellows are first-rate musicians as well, but that doesn't matter so much—because these boys presented an attractive appearance they were one of the few hot bands to get into big time and big money. But you can see that that can't often happen. Roger Wolfe Kahn got together a group that had the finest star hot men in the country, but it broke up pretty quickly to make way for the Rudy Vallée type of leader and combination."

"It's pitiful," I said, almost breaking down.

"Doesn't bear thinking of," said Jack Rusin, tears in his eyes.

"And records? Is there any sale for hot records nowadays?"

"Very little. The biggest sellers there

in the last two years have been popular tunes arranged and played by Ray Noble! I guess if it wasn't for the European market there wouldn't be any hot records made at all."

"There must be some exceptions," I objected. "I've seen Teagarden, Goodman, Redman and the Dorseys on the best-seller lists in 'Variety' quite recently."

"What you don't realise," said Jack, "is the terrible state of the record industry altogether. It doesn't mean much these days to be a best-seller. All the records sell almost equally badly."

Feeling that if this morbid talk went on any longer we should both collapse completely, I decided to change the subject, and asked Jack for some impressions of England and its musicians as he has found them on this, his second visit to our shores.

Star Stylist

"Oh, I've heard some splendid pianists over here lately," he declared with real sincerity. "There's one fellow that every amateur in England can afford to study, and that's young Gerry Moore. I heard him the other night at the Bag o' Nails, and, believe me, that boy's good!"

* * *
Well, to judge by Jackie Rusin's comments, it sounds as though you fans are living amongst a public that is encouraging hot music far more seriously, buying hot records far more readily, and, in fact, generally showing itself more advanced than the very United States from which the music emanates!

HENRY HALL GOES HOT AND HARD HITTING

Musings on Two Years of Radio

"SWEET MUSIC"
NONSENSE

BY A SPECIAL
"MELODY MAKER"
CORRESPONDENT



Three Directors Of The Hall Family — Betty, Henry and Michael.

On completion of his two years at Broadcasting House, Henry Hall was besieged by the lay Press, who, naturally, misinterpreted his statements.

To a Special Correspondent of the MELODY MAKER the B.B.C. Dance Orchestra's Chief gives the truth about his policy, and has a few gentle pleasantries to make concerning Ellington, Calloway, and other distinguished visitors.

THE Press men have been all over Henry Hall. On the occasion of his second anniversary at Broadcasting House he gave scores of interviews. You probably read some of the headlines: "Sweet Music to Preval," "The Public Wants Melody," and so on, ad nauseam. And you probably gathered that Henry Hall must be a very elderly and dull individual without a scrap of humour.

Realms of B.B.C.

I knew all along there must be something wrong. I had my first inkling of it when, on Calloway's first night, I was in a party with Mr. and Mrs. Hall at the Palladium. How Henry Hall enjoyed that act! Then, when we went on to the Café de Paris to hear Roy Fox's opening with his sweeter-than-ever policy, I wondered how the contrast struck him.

When his anniversary came round I had a chance to query him

SPECIAL NOTICE

On account of the Easter Holidays, the next issue of the "MELODY MAKER" will be on sale on

THURSDAY NEXT,
March 29.

The following issue will appear on Friday, as usual.

In the stately realms of Broadcasting House.

He looks much younger than his photographs, by the way, and he has got a most pronounced sense of humour, which bobs up every now and then most unexpectedly. In addition to which he is the most un-Americanized of all the British band leaders; and that, believe it or not, I consider a very good fault.

"How did you enjoy Calloway?"

I said first.

"I enjoyed him very much."

"And the band itself?"

"It was just what I expected."

"Meaning . . . ?"

"It was just what I expected," repeated Henry Hall with a

humorous twinkle.

I tried to get round the question more subtly. "What would you do if you were Calloway?" I asked.

"Would you use a better band, providing you had Cab's personal attributes?"

"If I were Cab Calloway, I should probably be able to retire and take up gardening."

"No you," I said. "Think about

Ellington, Duke Ellington and Calloway. Duke and Calloway

have got the public."

"But the slightest thing will

send them down."

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send them down."

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send them down."

cause there are so few chances of seeing them. In the same way Wozzeck attracted interest for just one performance, but you couldn't carry on performing it indefinitely. There's a limited appeal. It isn't as if there are so many extraordinary bands to come from the States, anyway. When I returned from my trip and told the Press I hadn't heard very much in the way of marvellous bands, nobody believed me: but I meant it. Ellington, of course, is exceptional. So was the Casa Loma orchestra. I heard it for eight hours at a stretch once, and that really did thrill me."

Creating Demand

"And that, to all intents and purposes, is an out-and-out hot band?"

"No; they play plenty of straight music in the dance hall, and record a lot of hot numbers."

"Why," I asked quickly, "don't you do the same—make some hot records, I mean?"

"I have. We've done two numbers called *Wild Ride* and *East Wind*. They'll probably be coming out sooner or later."

"And," I persisted, "don't you think you could create a bigger demand for hot music on the radio? In your anniversary programme you played *Hot Toddy*, and you said the Prince of Wales had once requested it. Now when the Prince of Wales wears a straw hat everybody else in Great Britain cries out for straw hats. Wouldn't the same rule apply to his musical tastes?"

"Another number he requested," smiled Henry Hall, "was *The Last Round Up*."

I grinned a rather sickly grin and said nothing.

"In any case," insisted Harry, "how can you say I don't encourage hot music? Who gave Spike Hughes his first real break by performing the whole High Yellow suite?"

"You certainly did," I confessed.

"And who broadcast Ellizalde's works? And Reginald Foresythe's? Who gave the first radio performance of *Southern Holiday*?"

"The answer," I murmured humbly, "is in the second person singular—thou!"

"And I spend more money on those arrangers than I do for ordinary orchestration—yet I'm told I never do anything for hot music!"

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"Would you use a better band, providing you had Cab's personal attributes?"

"If I were Cab Calloway, I should probably be able to retire and take up gardening."

Nothing doing!

"Do you," I said, "think these importations, such as Ellington and Calloway, have any lasting influence over here with the public?"

"Not the slightest. They're all a nine-days wonder, and they attract great interest for a while be-

I grinned a rather sickly grin and said nothing.

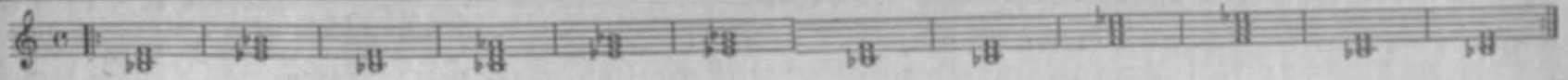
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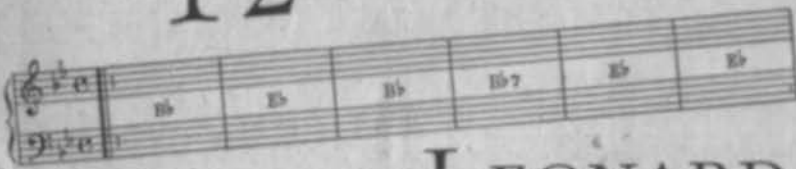
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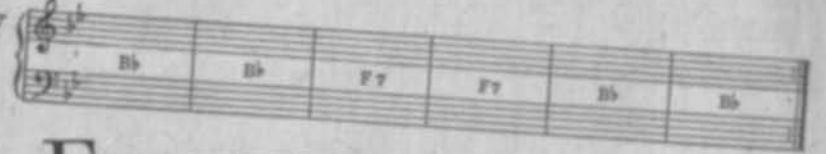


12-BAR

BLUES



by



LEONARD G. FEATHER

LISTEN carefully to almost any improvised blues record by any band, white or coloured. You will find that the essential harmonic basis consists approximately of the chords of B-flat, E flat, B flat and B flat 7th for one bar each, followed by E flat, B flat, F 7th and B flat for two bars each.

It is difficult to say just why so many famous dance musicians naturally pick on this particular sequence of chord to express their spontaneous musical thoughts. Certainly the origin lies with the Negroes.

Twenty years ago W. C. Handy wrote *St. Louis Blues*.

Ted Lewis used this and similar numbers for years and years ever since the war, eventually bringing this sort of thing to quite a pleasant art with his record, in 1931, of *Dallas Blues*, featuring Benny Goodman, Mugsy and



Fats Waller. These slow numbers bore a great resemblance to the blues idiom practised later on records by the Negroes.

If you make a comparison with Armstrong's version of *Dallas Blues* you will see great similarities of style as well as sharp contrasts.

In the embryo days of coloured hot music, which means any time up to 1928, the coloured bands used often to enjoy themselves with a good, low-down blues. Louis and Hines based several of their grandest joint efforts on this theme—*West End Blues*, *No, Papa, No*, and the glorious *Muggles*. Louis used it again later in *Mahogany Hall Stomp*, one of his best swing numbers, and in *St. Louis Blues*.

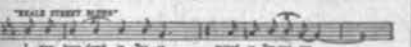
Fletcher Henderson and Benny



Carter have from time to time produced splendid blues arrangements.

The former gave us *Just Blues*, and Benny was responsible for *Dee Blues* with the Chocolate Dandies. Of course, both these bands have from time to time dabbled with some of the famous old tunes that are also fundamentally the same. *Sugar Foot Stomp*, *Royal Garden Blues* and *Memphis Blues* are all pretty nearly the identical tune.

Luis Russell has contributed slightly to this idiom, too. However, I think his very moving theme number, *Call of the Freaks*, in



which it was introduced from the vocal onwards, alone justifies its existence.

White musicians, unlike the Negroes, seldom trouble to build up big orchestrations on the twelve-bar foundation: they just use it lazily as a setting for a studio busk.

However, Joe Venuti worked wonders with it in *Tempo di Barre*,

which was perhaps the greatest disc he ever made.

Red Nichols, on the other hand, turned the blues to a different purpose. He used it for semi-novelty hot numbers with elaborate lyrics, such as *Corinne Corinna* and *Fan It*. What a contrast with the Chicago style of Eddie Condon!

The Chicagoans' use of the theme is one of the most interesting. In the weird, raucous gut-bucket style almost peculiar to this city, they would create a record out of a string of such twelve-bar phrases, utterly and completely busked, and often linked together by vocals that were, like the solos themselves, practically made up as they went along! What could be quainter than the cries of Billy Banks in *Spider Crawl*:—

The graveyard sho' is a mean ol' place,

I said the graveyard sho' is a mean ol' place;

They throw you down a hole, and dump dirt in your face.

No less naïf are Teagarden's plaints in *Texas Tea Party*:—

I've got a gal down in Texas, one down in Tennessee,

I've got a gal down in Texas, one down in Tennessee,

The one in Texas is the only one that remembers me!

Teagarden seems to be an old hand at playing and singing this type of thing. He did it in *Makin' Friends* on Okeh, *That's a Serious Thing* on Victor, and *Beale Street Blues* on Columbia and on Panachord. In every case both he and



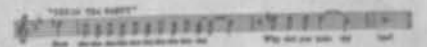
the accompanists sound as though they are all having a damn good time.

Lastly, gentlemen, the Duke. His contributions to the twelve-bar tradition are in several classes by themselves. In the early days there was nothing very blue about them—the phrase constituted, in fact, the lighter movement of *Black and Tan Fantasy*, though it was taken

in a bluer spirit in *Creole Love Call*.

Later he evolved a formula:—scored first chorus; series of solos accompanied by rhythm and occasionally by brass and sax figures; repeat of first chorus; fade out.

Hence *Rocky Mountain Blues*,



Sweet Chariot, *Sloppy Joe* and a score of others up to the very recent *Dragon's Blues*.

But generally speaking the Duke has more ambitiously tried to build something big and valuable out of these little dozens of bars.

The only point we don't want to overlook is—why does the twelve-bar blues persist? The answer must be that exponents of the jazz idiom find that it introduces a simple and well-balanced series of chords which lend themselves to an infinite variety of treatment and to the creation of an emotional appeal.

And, as you can see, from this ingenuous foundation one can build up a library of the best hot music by all the finest artists in the world!

MAN WHO FOUNDED RHYTHM CLUB MOVEMENT

André Ache Visits London

AN interesting personality has invaded London—André Ache—the man who started the Hot Club movement in Europe.

The son of a celebrated Belgian barrister, Mr. Ache is young enough to be enthusiastic and old enough to be a clever organiser and propagandist for his cause. For two years he has been working ardently for the federation of Sweet and Hot Clubs in Belgium.

"The idea of a hot club," he told me in his fluent English, "first came to me in February, 1932, when I founded the Sweet and Hot of Brussels. The main principle of the committee was to entertain only those who are genuinely concerned with hot music. We have the strictest rules about admitting visitors."

"How on earth," I demanded, "do you manage to find out before letting them in whether they're genuine fans or not?"

"We don't. We find out afterwards. There is a man whom we keep to watch the audience during the playing of the records, and if there is somebody who is talking or in any way disturbing the interest in the performance, we have him put away immediately."

Kindly Meant

I think Mr. Ache meant "kicked out"—but either way, it's not a bad principle.

"Treating them rather like schoolboys, though, isn't it?" I said.

"It is the only way to build a club of real fans. Complete silence and attention. And as for the money side, we have no subscriptions.

There is a programme which is printed for the whole federation of six clubs all over Belgium, and used by all of them in turn. Visitors are expected—but not obliged—to buy a copy, and the sale of the programmes makes a sufficient profit for each club. It is not a commercial enterprise, you see; we just want to recover expenses."

"And are all the clubs running successfully on those lines? Even to the complete silence?"

An Ambition

"Certainly. There are clubs in Liège, Antwerp and other towns. And some day perhaps we shall be able to federate with a chain of Hot Clubs in England. We might form an international bureau for the exchange of news, catalogues and records. This is one of my great ambitions."

"Is it true," I asked next, "that over fifty per cent. of your members are—er—females?"

"Quite true! Some of them have held important positions. For instance, we had a girl president of the Liège Sweet and Hot. She married the president of the Brussels club; and the Liège secretary is engaged to one of the committee members. The president and the secretary are sisters."

So Belgium, too, has its Gertlers!

"Amazing," I said. "Two romances brought off in complete silence, eh?"

Mr. Ache had no answer to that one.

Nevertheless, a knowledgeable critic and a very sincere, affable young man. May his Hot Clubs never grow cold.

LEONARD FEATHER

The STAR or the STORY?

YOU film "fans" are constantly bickering in Film Pictorial's Screen Parliament as to whether it's the star or the story that entices the hawbeens from your pockets into the cinema till. So hotly does the controversy rage that I suspect it is in danger of separating husband and wife, mother and child, young man and his girl. This would never do, so I thought I'd try to stop these heart-breaking wrangles by settling the question once and for all.

I button-holed Henry Kendall as he came off the set and told him I expected him to speak for the stars, on your behalf, while I stood up for the story faction.

"All right," said Henry. "I'll talk—but not until we've had a cup of tea."

That settled it. We both sat engrossed in thought till the tea arrived. Important points for the argument flashed through my mind. Then, as we sipped, our patience gave way and we suddenly bubbled over (with thoughts, not tea). Before we realized it our debate had begun.

"I insist," said Harry in a very firm tone, "that it's the story who matters, every time. Of course, when I say that, I naturally mean 'star' in the American sense of the word. If you're thinking of the way the daily papers use the word for any small-part player who happens to commit suicide, or bigamy, or something—well, that's different, of course."

"Taking the word in the original sense," I said, "I maintain that the film's the thing. A good or bad production can make or mar the very careers of stars."

Harry had a worried face—just the face you often see him make on the screen. "I dunno," he replied. "Now suppose Greta Garbo came to England, and made a quota 'quicker' picture in ten days. I rather fancy audiences would still flock to see the film, and not give two hoots who made it, or where or why."

"They might fall the first time," I grinned, "but once bitten, twice shy. . . . too many poor films can absolutely ruin a star. Take Constance Bennett, or Ann Harding. They've both been pretty badly served in the way of stories lately, and their popularity's bound to be affected after a time."

"That doesn't count for much," scoffed Harry. "One outstanding picture and they'd be right back on top. Of course, publicity has a lot to do with that. The stars thrive on publicity and publicity really thrives on the stars. Look at the enormous campaigns that have been launched for Garbo, Dietrich and Hepburn. The companies know it's worth their while to spend enormous sums to advertise these people, because it's the stars the public care about."

At this point I reminded my opponent, ever so gently, that the genius of a great director, such as Lubitsch, can also attract the public, and that a great or famous subject, such as *Camelot*, *The Wandering Jew* or *Alice in Wonderland* can give a picture far more title value than star value.

This made Henry Kendall munch his toast and think. As he sat plunged forward in an armchair, chin in hands, I could almost see the brain cells moving.

"In answer to your suggestion," he commented, "may I point out that neither Lubitsch nor any other director has any real name-value outside London and the big cities? And even when the film has a famous title, it's often packed full of stars to make it more attractive. For instance, you may say there was no earthly need to cast Gary Cooper in the small part of the White Knight in *Alice*. The cast was an all-star



Henry Kendall as he appeared in "Counsel's Opinion."

cast. Why? Because, as I keep telling you, it's the players who count.

Harry relaxed and drank his tea.

"Nobody," I retorted, "went to see the film because Gary Cooper was in it. Everyone went because they wanted to see how a favourite book of theirs looked in screen form. Take another example, if you like—*All Quiet on the Western Front*. You can't tell me that had a star cast, yet the picture was an enormous success. And think of all the starless jungle and travel pictures that have made hits.

"Yes, yes, I's'pose you're right there."

At last! A point to me! Eagerly I started an attack from quite another angle.

"Even the name of the producing company," I continued, "can mean something. Since London Films produced *Henry VIII* the public's been very interested in their other activities.

You hear folk talk about a film having 'that Paramount polish'; and they like to see the Metro lion before the title comes on the screen." "Doesn't mean a thing, old boy," declared Harry quite calmly. "Now look here, we'll take a parallel case in the art of music. This afternoon I went to the Queen's Hall. Jascha Heifetz, the world-famous violinist, played Beethoven's Eighth Symphony. Did I go there because the symphony was being played, or because it was Heifetz who was performing?"

"How should I know?"

"Well, I'll tell you. I went because Heifetz is a star performer. I didn't even know what he was going to play. Similarly, a star's 'fans' will go to his or her latest picture with hardly a glance at the title."

"Talking about music," I said, "there's

HENRY KENDALL argues it out with GEOFFREY MARNE

another aspect of the question. Sometimes the fact that there are lots of popular song hits in a film, such as *42nd Street* or *Gold Diggers*, is worth quite a lot to it."

"Even there," said Harry, prodding my waistcoat with a very determined forefinger, "it all depends on who's singing the numbers in question—whether it's a film star or a famous radio or stage favourite."

I began to see that this Kendall bloke had the courage of his convictions. Hastily I collected my wits and invented another allegory of sorts. "If a passenger wants to get from one place to another along a railway line," said I, "he's got to have a train to take him there—without a vehicle, he's stranded. Now the cinema is that railway line, and the film's the train. And the passenger needs that train just as a film star needs good vehicles."

"BUT," persisted my obstinate opponent, "it wouldn't be any use running a train if there weren't any passengers. Nor would it do much good showing a film without any stars. I admit that to get to stardom you need the right vehicles. Any well-known artiste has his vehicles carefully chosen for him. But the vehicles wouldn't be any use without the stars."

"This is all much too complex for me," I murmured. "From what you just said it really looks as though the stars and the films are interdependent. The one can't go on without the other."

"Well," said Harry, "in that case the motion's neither carried nor defeated. We both win."

"But I still think it's really the film that counts."

"It's the star."

"It's the film!"

"Star!"

"Film!"

"Please, may I clear away the tea, sir?"

Curse that maid—woman always has the last word in the end!



KEMP

HARLEM IN LONDON

by
Geoffrey Marne

THE black-lettered indication on the faded yellow wall invites you, with a touch of frigidity, up the narrow flight of steep bare stairs.

The rest of the building is quiet, for business hours are long since past; but from your destination comes a vague jangle of noise. You are reminded of the approach to Hampstead Heath on a bank holiday, where cheerful cacophony invites you to join in the fun; but, as you approach, the sounds sort themselves out, then blend again into an unknown symphony offering itself for your attention.

There is a little argument with the old doorman. You have difficulty in persuading him to bring out your friend. Eventually the friend comes. You are acknowledged, signed in, a tingling but timorous initiate.

The first manifest component of the strange atmosphere into which you have been drawn is the aura of smoke. Over this long, narrow, low-roofed room is a veritable plain of clouds—the grey clouds born of a hundred cigarettes. Perhaps you will wonder whether tobacco is the only plant in use. . . .

Gradually, as you are led across to a little rickety wooden table, the complete picture filters into your dazed mind. Of the crowd who fill the room, most of the men and some of the women are coloured. Light coloured, high yellow, buck Negro: every type is represented copiously.

At one end of the room is a little bar, smartly built in contrast with the drearily pseudo-modern wall-paper.

But the greatest impression of all is made by the dancers. When a coloured man dances, he means and feels every step. No idle small-talk, no careless shuffling round as a sop to convention: these people are dancing for dancing's sake, putting their very souls into the easy, gliding movements.

You begin to converse with the others sitting at your table. One is an African-born Negro. He has

studied for many years in London, and wants to write an autobiographical book of impressions.

At last the dancing stops: the tired pianist totters to her feet and joins the cramped crowd at one of the tables. Suffocation-point may



be reached any minute now. There is not a square inch to spare now that the dancing space is cleared.

Suddenly a thick-set coloured man comes forward, raises his hand for silence. Very gradually the babble subsides.

This is the boss of the club. Not only the boss, but also the star cabaret turn. Closing his eyes, clenching his hands, he sings a series of popular melodies and spirituals.

Naïf sincerity, wedded to a delicate sufficiency of artistic and

technical ability, make these moments memorable. The plaintive simplicity of *St. James' Infirmary* achieves a new significance in the sway of the vibrant bass-baritone. At the end of each item the crowd, never spoiling the emotional effect by premature applause, awaits the first second of silence and then howls for an encore.

But there are further surprises in store. A celebrated coloured dancing act, appearing in vaudeville, have turned up in full force and offer to do their stuff. Some of the later arrivals, wedged in at the back of the room, clamber on to chairs. This is something they must see at all costs.

Next there is a tall, attractive young English girl who is persuaded to entertain the eager audience. With all the natural style and grace of swarthier singers she renders *Dinah* and a couple of current dance hits, improvising at the piano a fascinating, swinging accompaniment.

After the three songs the English girl retires, proud of her success. Outside this smoky room she has met with many setbacks; has done just a little cabaret and radio work, has even been a film extra. The public do not understand her, don't appreciate the true value of her singing.

Soon the dancing starts again. The piano is taken over by a famous Harlemit who has dropped in to see some pals. He plays a few numbers. Enthusiasts stop to watch the amazing work of his throbbing left hand. Here is hot music as it should be heard!

Gradually, as the night grows old, the crowd trickles out and your party breaks up. Your friend suggests that you make a move. A few handshakes, cheery farewells to newly-made acquaintances, a warm feeling inside you as you begin to know what is meant by the phrase "Harlem hospitality"; and in a minute or two you have left the dully-lit room behind you, to step out into a world of flaming lights and Neon signs.

One day, perhaps, you will enjoy the thrills of going the rounds of the Harlem gin-mills. One day you will see the romances, some strange and some sordid, of the men who sit, unhonoured and obscure, making music amidst a turmoil of gin, reefers and riotous noise.

In the meantime you can live with the memory of this evening, for you have had a potent foretaste of what will lie in store for you when the real thing comes your way.

And all the time you have been within a hundred yards of Piccadilly Circus!

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

SUNDAY.

THIS evening Jimmy took me to see that one and only Paul Robeson in "Emperor Jones." It is all about a Negro porter who murders a man and escapes to a desert island and becomes emperor of it, and when he gets too high and mighty they make it too hot for him and he tries to escape but dies.

Well, I must say it's a long time since I've been gripped as I was at that film to-night. In the figurative sense, of course.

Paul Robeson is the *uttest*, *ufmost* thing in he-men, and besides acting marvellously he sings several songs.

But why I mentioned the film is this: in the early bits there are two café scenes with some really first-class piano playing. Just casual blues swinging, but it sounds like a mixture of Fats and Joe Sullivan at their best.

Then there's a bit where a girl sings the *St. Louis Blues*, and a dance-hall scene where a band plays *Casa Loma Stomp*, bits of, quite swell-ly. Altogether very pleasing.

I do think it's just a *tragedy* that nobody's ever built a full-length film around the subject of Negro music. If I had the money I'd do it myself if I had the time.

MONDAY.

Went to the local rhythm club meeting to-night. There were more girls than ever. Jimmy said it was

about time they changed the title to Knitting Club. I must say the girls didn't seem to take much notice of the records: but then, neither did the men after a while.

What with the amplifier going wrong and the announcer mumbling in his beard quite inaudibly and then playing a lot of things one knew already, anyway, I began to wonder what these clubs were for at all.

Afterwards they decided to have a general discussion on hot music topics.

My dear, there was the *deadliest* silence. Everybody got restive and waited for everybody else to speak. Then eventually they got going by a fellow saying *Mood Indigo* was no good, comparatively speaking.

He was a most *lamblike* young chap with fair wavy hair, and I *did* think it was a shame when everybody stampeded him and said "Rubbish!" "Get out." and all that.

After a while there was so much talk going on about silly little points that everyone got restive, for the opposite reason this time, and Jimmy said, "Come on, Phoebe, there's nothing to stay for," so we went, too.

To-morrow night I'm going to the Café de Paris to see Roy Fox's band. Of course I've heard them on the radio but never met them yet, and I know they have to play *drastically* pianissimo nowadays, but I hear they have the world's most *divine-looking* brass section, so I know I shall be thrilled to death.

5.5.34.
The Diary of
PHOEBE the FAN

TUESDAY.

THIS afternoon I was with my cousin Beta and some other girl fans. We were arguing about Mike's views on dear Reggie Foresythe and his queer but rather unique music. Cousin Beta—she calls herself that, she says, "after Alpha"—said that the *Berceuse for an Unwanted Child* is deeply psychological. Well, I don't know about that, but whatever it all means, it is definitely one of the *unique* things he has ever done.

When we had finished arguing, we all sat thinking of some new titles for Reggie to use. I thought of *Pastoral for an Unmilked Cow*; then Beta came out with *Scherzo for a Hunted Financier*, and somebody suggested *Requiem for a Repressed Radio Critic*. All pretty daring, don't you think? And then Beta said how about *Antidisestablish-*

mentarianism, which, after all, she explained, is much longer than *Chromolithograph*, and could be every bit as programmatic.

Sometimes I think Beta is trying to pull my leg.

WEDNESDAY.

I had the most extraordinary letter to-day from a Dutch fan who must have seen my name in the *MELODY MAKER*. There are ten big pages of closely-written handwriting, and although I haven't been able to finish reading it yet, I am beginning to know what the expression *Double Dutch* really signifies. The main point this silly boy has made, so far as I've read, is that the *MELODY MAKER* is *all wrong* every time, and that people like Eddie Condon and Milton Mesrow mean much more to modern music than Miff Mole or Venuti or Rollini.

Of course, there's no reason why they shouldn't love the Chicago style in Holland, but why should we English be expected to have the same point of view? And why write to all the English celebrities, making such shatteringly long discussions out of such stupidly small points?

I hope it won't take me too much Dutch courage to wade through the rest of that letter.

21.4.37
The Diary of
PHOEBE
the FAN

THURSDAY.

TO-DAY I was in bed with the ghastliest cold, so I just sat listening to records and reading dozens of papers and magazines.

Well, I came across some record review columns in several daily papers, and honestly, there was one thing that made me sicker than ever. Without taking the *slightest* notice of the *stupendous* new records by Carter, and Ellington, and Goodman, they pounce on a record by Frankie (Half-pint) Jaxon and his Hot Shots, and talk about it as if it were *the* hot disc of the month.

Just because the band's got a name that tickles them! Well, I mean, if the public rushes to buy that sort of thing thinking that it represents hot music, where are we? And *whatever* will happen to the Great Cause?

This is enough to set one thinking, even with the *ghastliest* cold.

In the evening I listened-in to an outside broadcast. Well, I don't want to encroach on "Detector," as you might say, but I must make one comment.

When people hear the words of some of those songs, what must they think dance music is coming to? Darlings, you may not have stopped to consider it, but some of it is . . . well! words fail me.

Funnily enough, Shakespeare has something to say about the same subject, which relieves me of the job. Look at these lines from Part I of "Henry IV":—

I had rather be a kitten and cry mew

Than one of these same-metre ballad-mongers.

Well, of course, that last line is the *cunningest* slam at Tin Pan Alley, etcetera. And as for the first line, if you look at it carefully you'll see that it's just Shakespeare's way of saying "Swing, you Cats!"

Which proves, when you come to think of it, that this Shakespeare really was rather a darling.

"MIKE" (26.5.34)

* Phoebe the Fan Says a Mouthful

THURSDAY.

A funny thing struck me to-day. People are always grumbling that there are no coloured violinists, and I could swear I've found a proof—a very ancient proof—to the contrary.

Mind you, I haven't been to school for years now, and history was never my strong point, but I'm sure I remember reading somewhere about a Negro who fiddled while Rome burned.

He must have played an *exquisitely* hot fiddle to set a big town like that on fire.

The alto is fine. So good indeed, that I am hoping that our voluminous Dutch correspondents might possibly enlighten me as to the player's identity. (I was very pleased to read Phoebe the Fan's comments about those letters from Holland. I tolerate them, though I never answer them. There is never anything to answer anyway

5.5.34.

At its last meeting, the Alpha Rhythm Club, No. 19, was entertained by Leonard G. Feather, who illustrated an interesting lecture with records from his extensive collection.

PROGRAMME OF "HOT" RECORDS.

The Ealing and District Rhythm Club (The Melodians) hold another of their successful meetings on Tuesday last, at 19, Mattock-lane, when a fine programme of unissted "hot" records by Mr. Leonard G. Feather, the well-known writer and authority on this class of music, was enthusiastically received by the members. The next meeting is on Tuesday next, at 8.15 p.m. Anyone interested should get in touch with the hon. secretary, Mr. Desmond Carmody, 66, Mattock-lane, Ealing.

12.5.34

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

SUNDAY.

I HAD a row with Jimmy today. We started arguing about whether it was Goodman or Dorsey in one of those old Red Nichols' records, and Jimmy said it was Goodman when I know perfectly well it was Dorsey.

Of course we rang up "Mike" and Edgar Jackson and all that, but they were very un-committal, and Jimmy still says it must be Goodman because it doesn't sound like Dorsey, and I'm sure it's Dorsey because it's not a bit like Goodman.

Anyway, somehow the row took a personal turn, and when Jimmy started on my clothes and my face and my ancestry I said I'd had enough and went out with Dave for the evening.

Dave doesn't know anything about hot music, which is a change. Some people have one-track minds. So we went to see the film of George White's *Scandals*, in which there was a girl called Alice Faye, who sang a song which she called *Aw, You Natrsty Mairn*, very stylishly, too. Dave said she sounded as if she'd swallowed a Klaxon, but as I told you, Dave is Outside the Pail.

WEDNESDAY.

You know that row I had with Jimmy, about Goodman and Dorsey, when I said it was Dorsey and he said it was Goodman? Well, I looked it up in an old *Melody Maker* this morning and it seems it was Pee-Wee Russell.

Anyhow, I knew all along it couldn't possibly be Goodman.

THURSDAY.

I've met him! Oh, diary, I'm dying of thrill. This evening I met Coleman himself, in Hylton's dressing-room—and I declare I was within an *inch* of passing out!

Coleman was so different from that very tough-looking photograph they used to publish of him. Much pleasanter-looking, not too tall, and the richest golden-brown skin. Of

course, he does lack Louis' utterly unique profile; but he talks with the most adorably modulated accent, and says "I guess so" with the intriguingest sincerity!

In fact, the best thing I can say about Coleman is that he is every bit as devastating as his film name-sake.

26.5.34

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

SATURDAY.

DARLINGS, I've just read the strangest article in the *Royal Pictorial*, a monthly magazine. The author is F. E. Baily, the novelist, and he says to beware of hot rhythm, because it is acting as a "dope to youth." In fact, he treats the whole subject as a matter of morals, not music. Isn't that just *gaunt*? Then he ends off apologetically by saying that he owns and enjoys records by Teagarden, McKinney, and so on, but people attach too much importance to them.

But talking about "dope to youth," isn't it funny how many well-known records have had titles connected with dope and all that? I mean, *Texas Tea Party*, and *Hop Head*, and *Star Dust*, and *Muggles*, and *Reefer Man*, and *Chant of the Weeds*, and *Garden of Weed*, and lots of others. I can quite understand this, because drugs are such a fascinating subject, isn't it?

SUNDAY.

I HAD a grand time this evening. I went with Jimmy and a party of rather queer people to a little club in some side street where the London coloured people play billiards and eat. There was no music or dancing or anything, but the most exquisite fried chicken, with all sorts of mysterious Harlem vegetables, done by a coloured chef.

MONDAY.

THIS morning Jimmy lent me some copies of *De Jazzwereld*, a Dutch music magazine he'd borrowed. He's taken them back now—in any case, Dutch is all Greek to me; but there was one line in the April issue that even an Eskimo could laugh at. Quite calmly and seriously, it said:—

Reginald Foresight's New Music.

Now is that sarcastic or just plain dumb? I ask you!

TUESDAY.

I HEARD something funny when I was at a small local rhythm club this evening. There were two dismal-looking young semi-pros talking shop to one another. It seemed one of them had been reaching for the moon—trying to fix his band up for a big dance date at a large hall. He was obviously an out-and-out nobody. Looked rather like Billy Plonkit come to life.

"Nothing doing, Pete," he said to the other fellow. "They booked Lew Stone for that date."

So the other chap looked at him very sympathetically, and tried to cheer him up.

"Never you mind, Bill," he said. "It's lousy luck. This undercutting's the ruination of the business."

26.5.34.

Leonard G. Feather gave a recital at the first meeting of the Uxbridge Rhythm Club, No. 45. He played records to illustrate the "Chicago" style of hot playing dealt with in an article in the "M.M." recently. The next meeting will be held at the King's Arms, High Street, Uxbridge, on Tuesday, May 29.

Clinton French has consented to be one of the Vice-Presidents of the Club.

2.6.34

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

WENT with Cousin Beta to see the Mills Brothers. Of course, I loved the act, and they're quite a lamblike bunch of boys. Even their Mike looks every inch a gentleman.

Sometimes I wish the fellow who makes the tuba noises would start doubling on a string bass, because the rhythm section isn't very colossal at the moment. However, Beta says there's supposed to be a fifth brother, and he's still at school, but they say he can give the most *flabbergasting* vocal imitation of a piano!

If Beta is really serious, those boys certainly *will* have something to sing about!

Sunday.

More photographs of Lily Pons in all the Sunday papers.

Isn't it queer—when I was young, I always connected twenty-stone women with opera-singing and all that. But nowadays the *legitimate* singers seem to be too divinely tiny, like Lily Pons; whereas the *ill*—I mean the *other* singers, like Kate Smith and Mildred Bailey, and Sophie Tucker, and so forth, are all what journalists call "built on generous lines." In fact, they look much more like cholera-turas than the cholera-turas themselves!

If I had a voice like Mildred Bailey and a figure like Lily Pons, I wouldn't be just a Fan any longer.

I'd be Phoebe the Performer, God's gift to the Hot-Music-Hall.

Monday.

Did you hear the Segovia guitar recital the other day? I was specially interested, because I remembered reading that Eddie Lang used to worship him.

I had to switch off half-way through, though; he was so marvellous it made me feel quite ill. I mean, *who* is there in hot music that's really such a perfect artist on *any* instrument? It's too disheartening, but I can't think of a soul!

Can you mention any hot man who's never, never been heard to play a single wrong note?

Of course you can't: and if you can I don't believe you.

It all makes me so dejected, I begin to believe people like Constant Lambert, who say jazz is only a minor art. And if all we fans start thinking that way, wherever will it get us?

Oh, I *do* wish I hadn't listened to Segovia. . . . *

23.6.34 * What Readers Think 34 . . Segovia and Phoebe . .

No Disrespect

I have no doubt that the sentiments expressed by "Phoebe the Fan" are intended in all good faith as the natural reactions on an average fem-fan. Yet, though I can understand any fan, fem or otherwise, being overwhelmed by the

Segovia recital, I cannot credit this mythical lady's reacting as though she had never heard real guitar-playing before—the more especially since she brackets Eddie Lang's name with that of Segovia, mentioning the little Italian's admiration for the Spanish maestro.

I wonder what Phoebe would have done had she been present when, in America, Segovia went along to Eddie's bungalow to play duets with him? I feel reasonably confident that, on these occasions, Segovia went to admire as much as to be admired.

I would recommend anyone of Phoebe's mental calibre to study the work of Eddie Lang—not merely his better-known solos and duets, etc., but his early beginnings, from Ray Miller, via the Mound City Blue Blowers, and (more particularly) the Redheads, Miff's Mollers, the Five Pennies, etc., to his better-known recordings with the Blue Four, Trumbauer, etc., and even some of his exquisite work as accompanist with Bing Crosby, Ruth Etting, the Boswells, the Ponce Sisters, etc., leaving no phase of his admirable work neglected. To grasp, even incompletely, the magic of his supreme artistry is to know guitar-playing at its best; for Eddie had a "rhythmagic" that no other musician could ever eclipse.

Anybody who has really "experienced" Eddie's playing in this sense could get the maximum of enjoyment out of Segovia's art without experiencing any mental heartburn at the wonder of it all. MARY LYTTON. *

The Opera House, Belfast.

7.7.34

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

SUNDAY.

Jimmy rang up this evening, and I asked him where he'd been all day.

"At a rhythm club," he said, a bit sort of shiftily.

"Oh," I said. "And where do I come in?"

"You don't. You couldn't. You see, women weren't allowed in."

Well, you can imagine how *wild* I was! Of course when Jimmy said it was the most interested and least talkative audience he'd ever known, I simply said impossible, and it's a public scandal that such things are allowed, after Suffragettes and all that; and, as I told Beta later, we girls must get together and *act*, quickly. How about an all-fem-fan club. Positively No Men? That'd show them!

Anyhow, it's an outrage. Write and tell your M.P. about it.

MONDAY.

Dear Miss Lytton,

Thanks for your letter that the M.M. published; but if you look at my diary again, dear, you'll find that all I said was, there aren't people in Jazz who play their instrument *quite* as perfectly as Segovia plays the guitar. I didn't say Segovia was more of a genius than Eddie or that Eddie was a non-genius.

Perhaps we are arguing about a Nothing, though, because I have just heard that there is *no such thing* as hot guitar playing, anyway! Oh, yes, I have! Beta read me some bits from the new issue of a French hot magazine, and there's a Mr. Panassié in it who says that "guitar solos have nothing to do with hot music."

So I suppose I'd better throw all my Lang records away. And all my Nicholises and my Trumbauers and my Dorseys and my Miff Moles, because it seems *they* can't play hot, either. I know that for a fact, because there's an article in the same issue, by the same man, about Nichols and Co., which talks for *pages* about all their old records, and then ends up by saying they were All Wrong anyway, and Nichols was wrongest of the lot, so why worry?

I expect next we'll hear that Duke and Louis and Venuti and Benny Goodman don't know anything about hot music, either. I do hope they don't understand French, else their ears are going to burn like *fury*!

Sorry to have wandered off the subject; but the point is, we do live and learn, don't we, dear?

Rhythmically yours,

Phoebe the Fan.

2.6.34

At its last meeting the members of the Melodians' Rhythm Club, No. 12, were treated to a recital of unissued hot records by Leonard Feather, which was greatly appreciated.

Armstrong Through the Ages

A Discological Survey by

LEONARD G. FEATHER

Group.	Period.	Titles Issued In England Up To June, 1934
1. Pre-Hines.	Up to 1928.	Candy Lips, Cushion Foot Stomp, Nobody But My Baby, Wild Man Blues (also Butterbeans and Susie), Mama Stayed Out, Mama Why Do You Treat Me So?, That's When I'll Come Back.
2. Hines: (a) Hot Five.	From Nov. 1928.	Muggles, No Papa No, West End Blues.
(b) Savoy Ballroom Five.	From Feb. 1929.	Basin St. Blues, Heah Me Talkin', No One Else But You, Save It Pretty Mama, St. James' Infirmary, Tight Like This.
3. Half-White Group.	Sept. 1929.	Knockin' A Jug.
4. Carroll Dickerson's Orchestra.	From Oct. 1929.	After You've Gone, Ain't Misbehavin', Black And Blue, Some Of These Days, Sweet Savannah Sue, When You're Smiling.
5. Luis Russell's Orch.	1929-1930.	Bessie Couldn't Help It, Blue Turning Grey, Dallas Blues, I Ain't Got Nobody, I Can't Give You, Mahogany Hall, Rockin' Chair, St. Louis Blues, Song Of The Islands.
6. Coconut Orchestra.	Mid-1930.	Dinah, I Can't Believe, My Sweet, Tiger Rag.
7. Les Hite's Orchestra.	1930-1931.	Body And Soul, Confessin', If I Could Be With You, I'm A Ding Dong Daddy, I'm In The Market, Memories Of You, Peanut Vendor, Shine, You're Driving Me Crazy, You're Lucky To Me.
8. Chicago Group.	1931-1932.	Between The Devil, Chinatown, Georgia, I Got Rhythm, Keepin' Out Of Mischief, Kickin' The Gong, Lawd You Made, Lazy River, Little Joe, Love You Funny Thing, Them There Eyes, When It's Sleepy Time, When Your Lover, You Can Depend On Me, You Rascal You.
9. Chick Webb's Orch.	Late 1932.	Hobo, I Hate To Leave You Now, That's My Home. (H.M.V.)
10. New Chicago Group.	1933.	Dusky Stevedore, High Society, I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues, I Got The World On A String, Mahogany Hall, Mighty River, Mississippi Basin, Snowball, Armstrong Favourites. (12in.) (H.M.V.)
SOLOS.		Dear Old Southland (with Buck), Weather Bird (with Hines), both recorded in 1930.

phone studio for eighteen months."

Now you know what caused this article.

Louis' records have, for a variety of reasons, been issued in this country hopelessly out of order, so I am trying to straighten out the confusion. The trumpet king has had no less than ten main groups working for him since his name first appeared on the Okeh labels 'way back in the days of *Gut Bucket Blues*, *Heebie Jeebie*, and other epics from the Dark Days of '25 and '26.

The Beginning

This first combination featured Lily (First Wife) Armstrong at the piano, Ory on trombone, and Johnny Dobbs on clarinet. Buddy Sincere plucked a banjo. *Candy Lips*, *Nobody But My Baby*, and *Cushion Foot Stomp* reached English Parlophone under the name of the Original Washboard Beaters, and other titles were accredited to "Butterbeans and Susie," the lady being vocalist May Altz.

Louis alone made these early works stand out; for he has never been known to play a corny note—not even when he was playing with King Oliver twelve years ago. Whereas Ory and Johnny Dodds... Well, let's pass over Group 1 (there were dozens of titles, all very much the same and hardly worth listing in full), and come to the halcyon days of Earl Hines.

Gut-Bucketting

Only three of the original Hot Five discs have been issued here: *West End Blues*, *Muggles* and *No. These records were just grand all-out busks, though the old raggedness had gone owing to the pre-*

sence of superior artists: Jimmy Strong on clarinet, Fred Robinson on trombone and Hines at his greatest.

Zut! Singleton occasionally let the proceedings down in the fast numbers with some rather crude tap-box clicking, but the slow tunes were perfect expressions of the real low-down blues idiom.

When Don Redman joined the group during its period at the Savoy Ballroom, New York, early in 1929, there was a further improvement in the shape of some arranging. Don saw to it that the discs now achieved some sort of form, and through his efforts came *Basin St. Blues*, *No One Else But You*, *Save It Pretty Mama*, *St. James' Infirmary*, *Tight Like This* and *Heah Me Talking to Ya*. Denying a silly story to the contrary, Louis assures me that Hines definitely played in all these titles.

At His Best

Louis himself was impeccable then; brilliant tone helped by improved recording, and a sense of proportion and restraint which was one of his greatest virtues.

The personnel puzzle of *Knockin' A Jug*, the sole title made by Group 3, has caused many headaches. The following list was given me by Louis, which relieves me of all responsibility:—

Happy Caldwell (tenor).

Jack Teagarden.

Eddie Lang.

Frank Signorelli.

Kaiser Marshall (Chief Jug-Knocker).

Louis' first large band, the Carroll Dickerson outfit, produced mixed results on records, but evidenced a good sax section, which was heard to advantage in *Some Of These Days* and *Sweet Savannah Sue*. At this stage Louis was turning out some of his most memor-

Titles Not Yet Released In England		
Group	Period.	Titles
1. Pre-Hines.	Up to 1928.	Wild Man, Gully Low, Keyhole, Melancholy, Potato Head, Put 'em Down, Weary and Savoy Blues, etc., etc.
2. Hines: (a) Hot Five.	From Nov. 1928.	Monday Date, Sugar Foot Strut, Squeeze Me, Two Deuces, Knee Drops, Skip The Gutter, Fireworks. Also, Melancholy, Wild Man Blues (Brunswick, under name of Jack Wynn).
(b) Savoy Ballroom Five.	From Feb. 1929.	Beau Koo Jack.
3. Half-White Group.	Sept. 1929.	
4. Carroll Dickerson's Orchestra.	From Oct. 1929.	That Rhythm Man.
5. Luis Russell's Orch.	1929-1930.	
6. Coconut Orchestra.	Mid-1930.	Exactly Like You, Indian Cradle Song.
7. Les Hite's Orchestra.	1930-1931.	Just A Gigolo.
8. Chicago Group.	1931-1932.	I Surrender Dear, Walkin' My Baby, Home, All Of Me, Wrap Your Troubles, Lonesome Road, New Tiger Rag, Blue Again, Sweethearts On Parade.
9. Chick Webb's Orch.	Late 1932.	You'll Wish You'd Never Been Born (Victor).
10. New Chicago Group.	1933.	Basin St., Hustlin' And Bustlin', Sittin' In The Dark, Honey, Don't You Love Me, Cabin In The Pines, Some Sweet Day, Son Of The South, etc. (Victor).

able vocal choruses, notably *Black and Blue*, *When You're Smiling*, and the prizewinner for odd diction, *After You've Gone*.

In the remaining record by this band, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, there was a short passage by fiddle. Violin work was also a feature in two titles made during Louis' year at the head of the Russell group, *Blue Turning Grey* and *Song Of The Islands*.

These fiddles were white players, imported for the season from a local musical show. They characterized the essential refinement of the Armstrong work of this era. Louis had started to become commercial, though not offensively so. Besides, this band made plenty of

out-and-out hot performances as well.

If only Louis had always possessed a rhythm section like this! Russell himself, Will Johnson on guitar, Barbarin and Pop Forster aided in *Mahogany* and *I Can't Give You* by Eddie Condon.

And Louis was not the only star to shine, with soloists behind him like Higgy, Henry Allen, Albert Nichols, Charles Holmes and Theo Hill. This group made *I Ain't Got Nobody*, *Bessie Couldn't Help It*, and *Rockin' Chair*, as well as the inspired *St. Louis* and *Dallas Blues*.

Group 6 was hardly less exciting. You probably have four of their six numbers—*My Sweet*, *I Can't* (Please turn to page 11)

HAVE you heard that new Armstrong record?" inquired the young man enthusiastically. "He isn't half good in what new one?" I ventured.

"Why, *No, Papa, No.*" replied the young man. "It's a new issue on Parlophone. Hasn't he come on lately!"

"That record," I said gently, "is precisely five years old. And Louis hasn't been near a gramo-

16.6.34.

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

Monday.

ON Saturday I saw a big band act at a music-hall, and as the great sensation of the act the leader introduced a very small and nervous young chap who was claimed to have been "discovered" in Wales. Then the small boy took three paces forward, and warbled in the *shakiest* soprano about his Irish mother.

The audience didn't mind it a bit; in fact, when he forgot the words they could almost have eaten him!

Then on the radio this evening there was another small boy with another dance band, who did *exactly* the same thing. My dears! And I hear that lots of other orchestra leaders are catching this same ghastly disease of putting on turns of that sort.

Well, my sweets, *nobody* is fonder of babies than I am—in their right place, that is—but this sudden epidemic of Infants Terribles (as the French say) simply gets me down (as the Americans say). I mean, what on earth has it all got to do with dance music? And why not at least discover some children who really can sing? Every one I've heard up till now's been a pretty sad case.

In fact, I think the only cure for cases like that would be to give those poor kids a vocal anaesthetic.

Tuesday.

Angels, good news! I've got a birthday on Saturday, and I'm get-

ting up a big party and inviting lots of musicians so that we can have the *superbest* collection of stars to get together and play choruses.

This morning I started on the job of getting people along. I 'phoned every famous musician in London, some of them quite a dozen times, but somehow they all seemed to be out when I rang. There was one very big drummer who must have been given a wrong message, because I distinctly heard him say, "If it's that ——— again, tell her I'm not in." He must have thought it was a creditor!

Even the ones who did speak to me seemed to be too busy to come to my party; but perhaps some of them'll come along out of sheer curiosity, because there are lots of simply dumbfounding rumours in Archer Street about who I am! In the last fortnight I've been accused of being Ennis Hylton, Mike, Alpha, the Carlyle Cousins, the Gertler Sisters, and Mrs. Borrett.

But let me warn you—if you do come, you'll be expected to play. All the musicians'll have to swing and swing and swing, until they're so tired that they'll simply kick the gut-bucket.

In fact, it's going to be a peach of a party.

Wednesday.

Andre Ache writes to say that he's too busy with law exams. to write reports for a while. I think it's *awful* to let things like that interfere, don't you? Besides, there are enough lawyers already.

If any hot rhythm fans have records of "Babbling", "Blowing and Twisting", and "Jubilee", by Frankie Trumbauer's Orchestra, which they would like to dispose of, still they get in touch with our good friend Leonard G. Peckler, 21, D'Arville-st., London, W.

By CECIL HADLEY
(The Sports Editor)

HERE: THERE: & ANY
OLD: WHERE

"THE PEOPLE", 10.6.34

ARMSTRONG Through the Ages

Continued from page 8

Believe, *Tiger Rag*, and *Dinah*, featuring Hix on trombone, Castor McCord (tenor), and Joe Turner at the piano. The ensemble greatly resembled that of Luis Russell. Louis began to assert himself more prominently, but still allowed others to take solos.

It was when Les Hite's group joined him in Los Angeles that he started to develop unmistakably into a one-man attraction instead of the leader of a band.

At this time, too, he almost completely renounced the "good ol' good ones" in favour of current commercials such as *Memories Of You*, *You're Lucky To Me*, *Body And Soul*, and *The Peanut Vendor*. But his own playing was still superb, particularly in the two solos, *Weather Bird* with Hines and *Southland* with Buck, recorded late in 1930.

The trombonist in *Confessin'* and *If I Could Be With You* was Lawrence Brown; the drummer who provided the sole accompaniment in that famous ending to *Shine* was a youth named Lionel Hampton. This combination also played in *Ding Dong Daddy*, *I'm In The Market* and *You're Driving Me Crazy*. Hite himself played alto.

If you want the personnel of Louis' next band, formed a year later in Chicago, listen to *I Got Rhythm*, wherein he introduces each of the boys by name. With the exception of Al Washington, tenor, they were hardly a distinguished bunch. Louis, however, now began to occupy such a vast proportion of the wax that the band had nothing of importance to do.

Here are the English issues made by this aggregation: *Between The Devil, Chinatown, Georgia, Keepin' Out, Kickin' The Gong, Lawd You Made, Lazy River, Little Joe, Love, You Funny Thing, Them There Eyes, When It's Sleepy Time, When Your Lover, You Can Depend*, and *You Rascal*.

The last two are the most interesting: the former because Louis plays the lead line of a printed arrangement—and makes

a very pleasant sound out of it—and *Rascal* because it set the seal on his reputation with the public, who looked to this amusing morsel of Harlem backchat for local (and vocal) colour. The number was thus a harbinger of Louis' initial triumph in London in June, 1932.

Returning to the States after this first visit, he took over Chick Webb's Band for a while and recorded four titles. *Hobo*, *That's My Home*, and *I Hate To Leave* are issued here. The first of these shows that the bad might have suited Louis well had they been given some more good arrangements.

The last group, formed just before Louis' second trip to Europe, is about the weakest he has ever used for recording. The saxes, in the 12-inch selection of *Louis Armstrong Favourites*, for instance, are shown to be lamentable.

Some titles, such as *I Gotta Right*, are better, especially when Ted Wilson swings at the keys; but *High Society*, the new *Mahogany*, *Snowball*, and *Mighty River* almost make one wish Louis back with the very first group he ever used. If Ory and Dodds were not exactly trained musicians, they at least had some gusto and sincerity which "sent" Louis more easily than these booming, pretentious orchestrations of 1933.

It is certainly tragic that, during his whole year in Europe, he has been unable to record at the St. John's Wood studios owing to the difficulties of coming to an agreement with Victor.

At one time there was talk of his getting together with a famous English house band for some platters, but this beautiful bubble soon burst, and for 18 long months we have been without any fresh wax evidence of Louis' undiminished greatness.

All I can hope is that the companies will notice the appended list of unissued titles and will reflect that many of them are still worth putting out. Then you can all amuse yourselves crossing off the titles one by one.

23.6.34.

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

MONDAY.

Oh, diary, diary, what a birthday party I had!

It all seems very hazy to me now, although my headache has nearly passed off, but the main point I remember is that by ten in the evening the room was packed with fans, fem-fans, musicians, and critics, all talking and playing at once.

The ones who made most noise were the critics. And I say, isn't it just too odd that the folks who are always pulling other people's work to bits are all so hopelessly incapable of doing the work themselves? I mean, three of these writer boys tried piano, drums, and string bass, and I hate to think what they'd've said about a record of the sort of noise they made!

Still, they didn't come to play. They didn't come to eat, either. Not that I actually encouraged all that drinking, but you'd be surprised how little encouragement they needed. At midnight a violinist ran off with my birthday cake and tried to play it on the portable gramophone. Then when he felt hungry afterwards he started spreading butter on a new record by his own band. Beta saved him just as he was going to take a bite, which was a pity, I thought, because I do like to see people swallowing their own medicine.

About two o'clock we started playing a new game. All the lights were put out, and some musician would start to play a solo, and everybody had to guess who it was.

Well, you'd've thought that English players simply haven't got any personal style, judging by the hundreds of wrong guesses. But it was very dark, and I don't think it was easy to concentrate on the game.

When they got sick of it, everyone formed a procession and marched into the street, wearing golden-plated bowler hats, and playing to their hearts' content. That was the last I saw of my guests, and I spent all of yesterday clearing up.

Anyway, as far as they were concerned, I'm sure it was a peach of a party, as I promised, but I've made one very important decision for my next birthday.

They can all make themselves at home in my drawing-room same as this time—but I'm going out with Beta for a nice, quiet evening at the pictures.

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

SUNDAY.

Went to that new musical film, "Moulin Rouge," this evening, to see the Boswells. Imagine my dumbfoundment when they appeared on the screen and sang just one-and-a-half choruses and then vanished!

As the newspapers say, is this a record?

If it is, who's going to beat it? Why doesn't some clever company sign up, say, the Casa Loma, and use them for twenty-four bars? Or couldn't some British producer snap up the Mills Brothers for five bars of *Goodbye Blues*—one bar each and one for a guitar solo? Or why not do without the artists altogether and just pay to use their names in the advertisements?

After all, it's the name-value that counts, not the music itself. I know that, because Jimmy's in the film business and he explained it to me.

Poor Martha! Poor Connie! Poor Vet! And poor, poor public!

MONDAY.

The queerest thing happened to me to-day. Beta and I were walking along a side-street when we saw a musician standing in the gutter. He was very ragged and hard-up looking, and he was playing a frightfully dilapidated violin. But the amazing part was that—he was playing hot choruses!

We stopped and asked him how he came to be in such Sorry Straights (as the saying goes). He told us quite a sad tale about not having had a job since the talkies, and he couldn't read music or play commercial, so nobody wanted him, and all he could do was play like this.

Mind you, he had a pretty terrible tone and technique (and a very red nose); but when I heard him busking choruses of *Tiger Rag* I began to see what the French mean when they talk about having a soul for hot music—what they call *l'esprit hot*.

Anyhow, it was quite a change to hear this sort of thing out-of-doors; I mean, the only music one usually gets in the open air nowadays is these dreadful military bands, and, as Beta points out, the only *esprit* they seem to have is *esprit de corps anglais*.

TUESDAY.

Help! I've just been to see a film where somebody plays *Sophisticated Lady* as a special solo on a mouth-organ.

You see, Duke—even your sins will find you out sooner or later....

30.6.34.

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

FRIDAY.

This is going to be the tiresomest week. Jimmy has bet me that I can't go on a musical fast for a week. That's to say, cut myself right off from hot music and everything to do with it! Jimmy says that when you live your whole life completely obsessed by a hobby, it's refreshing when you pause for breath. I see what he means, but he has a funny way of putting it. Anyhow, he's bet me a flapjack against six cigars that I can't do it, and he's got the whole household in his pay to spy on me. So goodbye, hot music, for seven days.

SATURDAY.

Struggled through to-day all right by putting my mind on other things. Felt a slight pang when I saw Ambrose's name in the radio programmes, but otherwise quite well. I've locked my record case up and hidden the key, but I haven't forgotten where I put it.

SUNDAY.

Somebody rang up in a foreign accent and asked me to go to the Gig Club. I'm positive it was Jimmy, trying me out. Anyway, I said "No" with a sort of lump in my throat. Mummy asked me why I looked pale this evening. I didn't answer.

TUESDAY.

Mummy and Daddy suggested going to

screen. Mummy took my temperature. All this agony to win a flapjack!

WEDNESDAY.

I stayed in bed all the morning, then spent the whole afternoon staring at my record cabinet. For five and a half days I haven't heard a note of hot music! Then Jimmy called in and nearly caught me reading Percy Brooks's gramophone notes in the *Daily Herald*. I turned over quickly to Spike Hughes' gossip column. We spent a long time arguing whether that was against the bet or not; after all, you couldn't say anything if I read Hanneh Swaffer, I told him. Anyway, that passed off, and Jimmy left me alone, playing patience on the top of the radiogram. One more day to go, and if Jimmy wins his cigars I'm weaker than I thought I was.

THURSDAY.

What a day! Right off my food, and a sort of vague feeling in my head. I was still feeling sort of dazed when there was a 'phone call about six o'clock. It was Dave, and he wanted me to go with him to the Monseigneur. I haven't been to the Monseigneur for ages. He wants me to meet him there an hour from now... I can feel myself weakening... and on the last day of the bet...

By the way, where does one get those

30.6.34.

SOPH SCREENED

A Beaconsfield Cameo

A GOLDEN-HAIRED, golden-clad figure bathed in streaming yellow light, exchanging gags with an imaginary pit-band, singing in a synthetic theatre....

This was the scene witnessed by an audience of film technicians and "extras" when Sophie Tucker made her appearance at the British Lion Studios last week.

America's Red-Hot Mamma was at the top of her form. Her four numbers were accompanied by Ted Shapiro, with Howard Jacobs' *Café de Paris* band, and the "rushes" of the day's work indicate that this combination will provide a rare treat for cinemagoers.

During a break between shots, Shapiro and some of Howard's boys amused themselves with an impromptu program of hot music. In particular, the fiddle-duet versions of *Them There Eyes* and *After You've Gone*, by Eric Siday and Hugo Rignold, with Bert Thomas on guitar, must be heard to be believed.

L. G. F.

"But what I wanna know is why they let a guy like that in to start with?"



4.8.34.

Leonard G. Feather, well known to MELODY MAKER readers, has been responsible for the selection of a programme of hot records to be broadcast from Radio Normandie on Friday, August 10, at 11 p.m.

The recital, which is sponsored by the Southend-on-Sea Rhythm Club, will consist of the following items:—*Moon Over Dixie* (Ellington); *Room 1411* (Goodman); *I Wanna Count Sheep* (Henderson); *Blue Drag* (Hines); *Black And Tan Fantasy* (Earl Jackson); *Blues In My Heart* (Chick Webb); *Wild Man Blues* (Armstrong - Hines); and *Business In Q* (Rhythm Boys).

An intimate glimpse of
 band work in a
 film studio

In Camera

by
 LEONARD G.
 FEATHER

A SCORE of glaring suns beat down cruelly on to the bustling masses below. The whirring of a fan, struggling feebly to dispel the merciless heat, clashes with the shuffle of feet as a myriad of workers scurry busily past the thickly concentrated crowds on a shiny black expanse of flooring.

"Ready for a take? O.K., cameras? O.K., sound? Now... QUIET!"

The raucous shriek of the klaxon scares a hundred whispers, a hundred footsteps, into a sudden and eerie silence.

"Turn 'em over!"

"Mark it!"

"ACTION, PLEASE!"

As the band strikes up, the dancers drift automatically past the cameras into the great, gaudy, three-walled dance floor. On the bandstand twelve musicians in torturing evening dress work like Trojans. This is not their first picture: the vagaries of studio work are familiar to them all by now. All save Joe, the new trumpet player.

*
 * *

Joe is experiencing his first day's film work. Never before has he had to get up at five in the morning to catch the first train out of town to arrive at the studio and be shepherded into a stuffy dressing room with a crowd of others; to have his face smeared with cloying grease-paint: all this is part of an extraordinary new adventure. And now, at ten in the morning, here he is working away on the stand at a number he feels he has been rehearsing all his life.

*
 * *

Before the take there were a dozen, perhaps a score of rough try-outs and rehearsals. Regardless of the band's exhaustion, the director will probably have the shot taken again and again. So many factors can spoil a take, from faulty instrumental balance to the fluffing of a line of dialogue, from a wrong change of focus to an accidental noise off.

The sound-man's ideas on

balance, on tempo, on the treatment of a number, may be at variance with the conductor's. He may dislike a hot chorus here, object to an obligato there. Perhaps the star will find suddenly that an accompaniment does not suit her. She wants it tried out at a moment's notice in a different key. Joe will have to transpose his complicated parts at sight, whilst the lights beat against the perspiration that oozes through his make-up.

*
 * *

No, it is not pleasant work for these musicians who sit compressed on this small bandstand at the side of the set. Sometimes the noise of technicians shouting orders, and the ceaseless gabble of guinea-a-day extras, make their music inaudible to themselves. Yet, if anything goes amiss, there looms the dismal prospect of additional work later on: for it may be decided that the artist shall sing the number unaccompanied, and the accompaniment be recorded and fitted in at some future date.

But such an emergency will seldom arise. The boys refuse to get stale. On the tenth take they will sound as polished and well-balanced as they did during the final rehearsal. For when an odd moment arises, during one of the long intervals for lighting or setting the scene, they will refresh themselves on the stand. Perhaps Joe will try out an old Bix chorus with the pianist. The fiddle and guitar will get together and recall memories of Venuti and Lang. Whenever there are a guitar and violin in a film band, there will be these little duets between shots. By such devices alone can the boys keep their spirits alive, remind themselves that music does not begin and end with the monotony of an endlessly-repeated theme-song. . . .

*
 * *

Occasionally, Joe finds he can dash outside for a furtive cigarette in the corridor. On the set, though, the gleam of a gasper is a magnet for an infuriated fireman: **Positively No Smoking!** Drinking, too, is denied to the parched throats of

these thirsty unfortunates. Only in the fleeting hour at lunch-time comes a real respite from the virtual incarceration of the padded studio walls.

So the day winds on, broken only by ten minutes for a hasty gulp of tea. Then the band is sent to a projection room where it has to post-synchronize a previous musical sequence. Joe finds to his relief that he can at last remove the starchy make-up from his face; but gloom descends on him again with the realization that his new task is going to be the most intricate and exacting of the day. On the screen the boys see and hear an artist performing his number, unaccompanied. They are to record the accompaniment; everything must be timed to the fraction of a second, so that the orchestral sound track can be matched up from beginning to end with the track of the singer's voice.

*
 * *

It is dusk. At last the band is released, and the trek back to town gives them a brief rest in the train before the regular job starts in the restaurant at ten o'clock. They must not sound off-form or tired to-night, for it is their broadcasting evening. So Joe, accustomed like all musicians to irregular hours, happily snatches an hour's welcome sleep in the train.

*
 * *

"Say, I had a hard day's work today, Joe," someone remarks. "Rehearsed at eleven, and busy on some arrangements all afternoon."

"Hard day's work, eh?" Joe gives a little laugh. "Huh! You oughta be in pictures!"

And with the self-confidence born of content and pride, he takes up his trumpet again to play the most brilliant, impassioned chorus of his life. . . .

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

WEDNESDAY

This afternoon Beta decided that she couldn't go on without that certain Bing, so we went to see "She Loves Me Not."

I must say Bing is frightfully good-looking in an un-handsome sort of way, don't you think?

I've got five of his autographed photographs now. Only three more and I shall be able to exchange them with Beta for her picture of Jack Teagarden. I think that's rather mean of Beta, because she'll find the most colossal market for the eight Bings.

By the way, how many Henry Allens to one Benny Carter? And would someone like to print that photo of "Mike" round back to front for me, so that I can see who he really is?

Can anyone beat my record for signed pictures of Louis? I'm not sure if it's forty-seven or forty-eight, but I should think I've got a pretty safe lead.

I shall be seeing Louis again before he leaves the country. Must ask him to make it up to the fifty for me. I do believe in round figures, don't you?

THURSDAY

Well, I said good-bye to Louis this afternoon. It was six o'clock. He'd just got up. He was listening to opera on his portable. Then he started to tidy himself up to go out to the pictures, so I just sat there and admired Alpha's smooth, wavy, black hair, and wished I wasn't a blonde.

I think Louis and Alpha must be the most confirmed film fans ever. Never a new picture do they miss, and this week, since they've been out of town such an age, they've just spent their days going straight from one cinema to another.

I asked Louis what was the best time he's had during his year in England.

"Ma'am, it's been pretty swell all the time! . . . well, maybe last week, down in Southport. There was Jack Hylton's boys, and I played in with 'em in the show . . . sure was good, swingin' down with them boys!"

Would he come to England again, I said, on his way back to the States from his Continental tour?

"Sure, I'll be here again . . . passin' through London in 'bout six months' time. 'Sides, I ain't in America yet!"

They play commercial arrangements with all the intros and bridge passages and codas and middle and end choruses cut out so that they are left with just the first chorus to repeat ad infinitum.

That's what I'm landed with, or rather oached with, for a fortnight—although I know of an easy way of getting rid of the problem.

Perhaps you remember reading about it—there was a report in the newspapers a week or two ago about nine Chinese girls who'd all been disappointed in love. It seems these nine girls tied themselves together with a rope, and then they jumped into a river, and all died together.

Well, there are just nine men in this band, and there's tons of rope on board, and it's a very big ocean.

TENERIFFE, TUESDAY.

Just going on shore for an excursion. Shall be glad to, after all, because you know that joke I made about the band, well, there's many a true word spoken in jest. And this is really getting beyond a joke.

Still, I did get a bit of fun out of them the other evening with a special old gag of mine. I went up to the leader very timidly and asked him to play *Sugar* next as it had sentimental associations for me and all that. He fell perfectly, and told the boys to go straight into *Sugar* at the end of the chorus they were playing.

Well, as you may know, there are at least two numbers called *Sugar*—the one Red Nichols made on H.M.V., and the one Fletcher Henderson did on Rhythm Style. So half the band started playing one number and the rest of them went into the other.

My sweets, I simply can't tell you which was funnier, the noise they were making or the looks on their faces. It was all too superb!

Try it out on your local band sometime. It never fails to work.

Buenos noches!

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

FRIDAY.

Would you like to hear a true story?

It seems there was a society lady whose nasty little son was taking trumpet lessons with a well-known musician. He got on frightfully. The mother blamed the teacher, and refused to pay him. Then, to add insult to injury, she asked him to play some solos at a dance she was giving, without being paid.

At the dance, of course, he was simply deluged with requests.

"Give us an Armstrong number," said the nasty little boy.

"Well," said the trumpeter, "would you like me to play *Exactly Like You*?"

"That'll do," said the nasty little boy.

"All right then," said the trumpeter. "I will."

And he proceeded to break everybody's eardrums and wreck the entire party with the most incredible torrent of queer noises and cracked notes you ever heard in your life!

(P.S. Read it again if you don't see it.)

SUNDAY.

What a day!

I'd heard a lot about Freddy Bretherton and his marvellous programme of Ellington arrangements, so I suggested to Jimmy that we ought to pop along to the Spider's Web and hear it.

When we got half-way there it

suddenly struck me that it was Sunday, and on Sundays Ellington Isn't Quite Decent in restaurants, even if he is in clubs and concert halls. So we eventually landed at some swimming pool where they had a boys' brass band, led by a very beery-looking grown-up. The poor kids looked as if their uniform was going to suffocate them, and sounded as if it already had.

While we were splashing about in the pool they played *Land of Hope and Glory*. Just as Jimmy was diving off the top board, they burst into *The Man On The Flying Trapeze*. Was that appropriate or just sarcastic? Anyway, they went on playing it for quite twenty minutes, and every chorus had more wrong notes than the last one, until there was nothing left at all but the oom-pom-pom of the drum, because all the others had got completely lost and given up hope and gone for a swim.

Who says you can't get any fun on a British Sunday?

MONDAY.

Well, good-bye, London; and good-bye, jazz! I'm off to-day on one of these sweltering hot cruises, and I've made up my mind—no, seriously this time—to divorce myself for two weeks from everything to do with hot music.

I wonder if there'll be any decent record shops in Madeira?

August 18, 1934

The DIARY of PHOEBE THE FAN

NEAR MADEIRA, SATURDAY.

Well, angels, here I am on board, with no portable radio and no gramophone and a party of friends who don't know the first thing about hot music. In spite of which I'm having the hottest time of my life! I mean as regards the weather, of course.

We are just getting near the Canary Isles. I shall be almost sorry to land, because after a few days on board one gets a sort of shuffleboard-cum-deck-tennis-cum-ping-pong complex which grips you like—well, like an infectious disease. In fact, when I get to Southampton after my fourteen days' quarantine, so to speak, I don't think even Lew Stone's boys dragging me in at the docks would drag me away from the middle of a match.

So at the moment I don't even feel like landing at Madeira tomorrow, because if the island is full of those awful cheeping canaries they will only remind me of crooners, and what good is that to anyone?

Of course, there is lots of music on board, actually, and people who get tired of sitting round the bar all evening can go and dance to the band. I must tell you about the ship's band.

25.8.34

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

TANGIER, N. AFRICA, SUNDAY.

WELL, here I am amongst the donkeys and dirty bazaars and an utterly sultry heat. And even here I can't get away from music! Sweets, I simply must tell you about the African orchestra of Arabs—that I heard here, in a little ante-room in the Sultan's palace.

There were two violins, which were held and played like double basses, and two very inflated-looking sorts of mandoline things with about eight strings each, and also a tambourine. That was all. I should call them the "Five Penny Dreadfuls." They were squatting down on cushions, dressed very natively, and the mandolines sat facing the other three as if they were advancing for a pitched battle. Then the battle—I mean the music—commenced.

My darlings, this is something you have never heard in your life. I can't say whether they were playing in a major or minor key, or who was taking the melody—they all seemed to be taking a different one, and yet they knew every time exactly when to start, and stop, and when to begin the vocal choruses together (which is more than some O.B. bands I could mention)—in fact, they played as if they knew just what they were doing, but the result was the weirdest, most indescribably new experience I've had in my life. It made me feel that I must either know an enormous lot about music, or else that I didn't know anything at all.

Anyway, it just goes to show that gut-bucket playing doesn't start and finish in Harlem, doesn't it? Or does it?

And another thing it goes to show is something I've often wondered about, that is, why all the native women go about with enormous cloths swathed over their heads.

It must be to keep their ears covered.

LISBON, TUESDAY.

Well, darlings, I've just come back on board from our last port of call after losing all my next month's record money in the Casino at Estoril. I don't know why that roulette wheel was so irresistible. I suppose anything circular that goes round at about 78 turns a minute has a fatal fascination for me.

Never mind, though—next week I shall be back in town again, looking rather like a Black and Tan Fantasy. And after two weeks of broiling sun, I shall have the Snow to herald my arrival—on her trumpet, at the Coliseum.

21.7.34

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

FRIDAY.

This evening I saw—don't faint!—a film with the Mills Brothers in it! It's over a fortnight since their last picture, though, so this "Spy 13" was just about in time to fill the awful gap.

You know, when I was listening to the good-looking one who does that divine scat singing, I started thinking why can't vocals like that be done in a foreign language? Shouldn't it be possible to invent new phrases with a French accent, or German diction, or anything? Yet Continental scattling always sounds corny. And it can't be that they don't understand hot music—after all, look at France, for instance: the oldest and biggest Rhythm Club of all, and the most terrifyingly learned critics—but if you can lead me to a stylish scat chorus sung by a Frenchman, I'll eat my sound-box.

What a frightfully noble and musical death that would be. . . .

SATURDAY.

Quite an amusing evening—at the Bag o' Nails. Went along with a crowd, about midnight, and by about three, every musician in town seemed to be there for his usual "buskman's holiday."

Of course, it is a thrill to hear people like Nat and Don Barrigo and Joe Crossman and Freddy Gardner and Max Bacon and Arthur Young all playing together, and one does get some too stupendous solos; but I've just two tiny comments. One is, I do wish they'd

take away the number they first thought of, which is *Dinah*.

I mean, when they come back to it every ten minutes because they can't think of another number, it is just the wee-est trifle monotonous. It all sounded amazingly like the New Orleans style of Bix's Gang come to life again; Eight-Notes-Per-Bar-or-Out-You-Go, know what I mean?

I got home at five a.m. (or twenty-nine hours, I think, on the new calendar), just in time to try and tune in the Casa Loma on short waves. I got a sort of long, loud, repeated brassy note, and thought it must be that climax chorus of *Wild Goose Chase*, but it turned out to be just a super-heterodyne or something, so I switched off and went to bed.

28.7.34

The Diary of PHOEBE THE FAN

WEDNESDAY.

Sweets, did you hear the sensational broadcasting innovation?

Last night I switched on to about the biggest O.B. band in the country. They were playing a selection. Nothing very strange about that, of course, but something else definitely was. The band was playing one number in one key, and the vocalist was singing quite a different number in a different key!

Naturally, that's the quickest way of getting through a selection, and I do approve of economy. But somehow I'm afraid the public may be obstinate, same as they are about the twenty-four hour clock. It's a pity, because novelties like that make life worth living, don't you think?

SUNDAY.

Took a portable, twelve Saint Louis Blueses, and a thermos flask, and went out with Jimmy and some other boys for a day on the river.

After a while I exhausted all the records and found I had no more Handy. (See 117) Luckily one of the boys had brought Stanley Nelson's book along, so I filled up the rest of the day learning *All About Jazz*.

It really is a simply divine book, and most frightfully erudite. Of course, it ought to have been called *All About Whitemen*, though Mr. Nelson does give almost half a page to Ellington and over three lines to Hawkins. He doesn't mention the Casa Loma and their influence on arranging, or the Jewish race and their influence on the whole of jazz, but I suppose one can't find time to bring in everything.

What I did like was his fascinating habit of doubling letters, such as Red Nicholls for Nichols, Nat Gonnella for Gonella, and so on. I mean, you could have such a grand time carrying the idea a bit further; say, for instance, Reginald Foresythe. Those two small 's' look so much more distinguished.

Book Review

First English Book on "Jazz"

Mr. Stanley R. Nelson's *All About Jazz* (Heath Cranton Ltd., 2s. 6d.) is to be welcomed as the first volume of its kind published in this country. The author deals comprehensively with the history, the instrumentation and composition, the personalities and the probable future of jazz.

Unfortunately, there is much in this convincingly written work that will, to the uninitiated, prove misleading. The disproportionate treatment of the leading figures in the world of jazz to-day, together with, to cite an instance, the totally inaccurate definition of a "hot chorus" as a chorus intended to increase its suitability for dancing, may well have a meretricious effect on the general comprehension of this modern musical idiom. If Mr. Nelson really thinks jazz an utilitarian art, irrevocably linked with the primitive exercise of dancing, then why does he devote such an immense quota of space to inordinate praise of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*?

The *Rhapsody* was a concert work, an attempt to place jazz on the same level as standard music. Mr. Nelson ignores the fact that the backbone of this minor art which we call jazz, modern rhythm, or what you will, is extemporisation for the most part on simple harmonies. This is where the more initiated reader will find fault with the book.

Thousands of unwary souls will be led to believe that Gershwin represents the pinnacle of jazz composition; that Whiteman, whose name appears on almost every other page, has the finest band in the world to-day; that the coloured bands are of minor importance, and that improvisation or "gut-bucket" playing is an obscure and unimportant factor.

Actually the trend of advanced jazz to-day shows two important influences. One is

that of Ellington, to whom Mr. Nelson devotes less than a page. The other is the Casa Loma Orchestra's influence on arranging and ensemble playing. This band is not even mentioned throughout the whole book!

Thus the friend or enemy of jazz who reads *All About Jazz*: in the hope of adding to his knowledge of the subject, must be careful to sift the wheat from the chaff in this interesting volume on an intriguing and inexhaustible subject. L. G. F.

SEPT. 1934
The GRAMOPHONE

19.34

The Diary of PHOEBE the FAN

HOME, SWEET HOME, SUNDAY.

So this is London!

WHAT with Valaida and Castor McCord and all the other blackbirds and Venuti and everyone to greet me, and Bennies Goodman and Carter and Jack Teagarden and Hines liable to bob up at any moment, I thought I must have landed on the wrong side of the Atlantic.

I should think by the end of the year almost Everyone who is Anyone in jazz will have come across. In fact, there ought to be a simpler way of arranging things, and being cruise-minded at the moment, I've thought of a good idea.

Instead of bringing all these musicians over, which must put them to a lot of bother, why not transport the whole of the British hot public on a super-cruise to the States, like Mohammedans going to a mountain? That'd serve the same purpose, only much better, because you'd hear them play in their natural surroundings.

And if you think there are more than a boatful of *real* fans in England, just you listen to the level of conversation at the average rhythm club. . . .

TUESDAY.

Well, I spent the whole of yesterday and to-day getting back into my stride. It took me 1 day, 19 hours and 47½ minutes, but it was worth it. I played every record I've ever bought. Not that I wanted to, of course, but Jimmy bet me five Red Heads to a Mole that I wouldn't.

So I haven't slept since Sunday, and I must admit that by this afternoon I was feeling just the *wee-est* bit bored. So Jimmy made me go to a film this evening—to take the taste away, he said—and I saw Sophie Tucker in "Gay Love."

Funny how popular Soph is with the fans, although she's nothing to do with hot music really, I mean she may call herself a Red-Hot Momma, but she doesn't mean what *we* mean.

I asked Jimmy what those funny little jumps were while she was singing *My Extraordinary Man*. Jimmy knows all about films, and he said perhaps the Censor could tell me. So I suppose "Red-Hot Momma" does apply to a certain extent. And I thoughtt Mr. Shortt was a sport!

FIVE DOZEN PENNIES

by
Leonard G. Feather

RED NICHOLS is in the news again. Every rhythm fan in the country is talking about the sensational re-issue of a dozen old titles by the original Five Pennies; so here are a few facts about the part played by these particular records in the story of the Pennies' historic rise and fall.

The artists in question were Jim Dorsey, Ed. Lang, Arthur Schutt, Vic Burton and Nichols, also (except in the first two titles) Miff Mole. The third pair originally issued, *Bugle Call Rag* and *Back Beats*, featured Joe Venuti.

In the intros and codas you will notice a frequent hint of the bugle-

name "Five Pennies" was just a habit by now. There were usually more like a dozen men, including such stars as Benny Goodman, Babe Rusin on tenor, and Jack Teagarden. In *Dinah*, already re-issued, you can hear Jack, also Pee-Wee Russell's grand clarinet work. Dorsey reappeared frequently. He was featured in *I Want to be Happy*, *After You've Gone*, and *I'm Just Wild About Harry*; but it is Benny on clarinet in *Shim-me-Sha* and *The Sheik*.

Some of the best titles from this "revival" period were made as early as 1928 and 1929. Amongst them were *Roses of Picardy*, *Chinatown* and *Alice Blue Gown*. The third and last Nichols era lasted from 1930 until his ignominious fade-out eighteen months

"THE NICHOLS FAN SEES RED"

SING a Song of Six Pence—Red Nichols and his Five,
Giving lots of genius and getting lots of "five."
One-track-minded bright young things delivering the kicks:
"Who's Red Nichols anyway? He's not as good as Bix."

Red Nichols played a trumpet (my children, please believe)
As accurate as blue-prints, as original as Eve.
Red Nichols was a pioneer; ideas, ideals had he.
He got the boys together and so made Jazz history.

There was Schutt at the piano, from whom solid rhythm sprang,
And on guitar the well-beloved, immortal Eddie Lang.
Vic Burton, with his drums and traps and tings and everything,
And you can bet that was a set to get behind the swing!

Jim Dorsey, Miff, Rollini, too, and others played their part,
Creating masterpieces made from notes—plus brains and heart.
They STOMPED through ALABAMA and they RAGGED a BUGLE
They vaunted BUDDY'S HABITS—but nobody cared at all!

The Six Pence go ECCENTRIC—someone murmurs "Bix is best!"
They jazz a BONEYARD SHUFFLE—but nobody is impressed.
They BLUE to HONOLULU, reinforced by Joe Venuti!
BACK BEATS the strain through HURRICANE—but no one gives a hoot!

Sing a Song of Six Pence whose courage stood the test.
They sought for self-expression and, ye gods, what they expressed!
Neglected by the many and extolled by just a few,
And now at last they've made their mark with You—and You—and You!

For now at last you've scrubbed your ears and learnt to realise
These NINETEEN-TWENTY-SEVEN discs are something you should
You tap your feet, and clap your hands, and shout aloud for more. . . .

But you won't get an encore.

Dear Kids, wake up and realise

IT'S NINETEEN-THIRTY-FOUR!

call effect, as in *Buddy's Habits* and *Hurricane*, which began to be associated inseparably with the personality of the Pennies.

On the fifth couple, *Mean Dog Blues*, the group started to enlarge. Then gradually a full band, able to do justice to more elaborate arrangements, was built up, with Adrian Rollini and Fud Livingston completing the sax section, Manny Klein on second trumpet and Dudley Fosdick on mellophone.

If you've forgotten what that instrument sounded like, try to get hold of *Feelin' No Pain* and *Margie*.

As there is a likelihood that some later Nichols titles will also be re-issued, I will add a word or two about the second and third Five Pennies periods. The former, lasting until 1930, gave great prominence to revivals of old favourites, played by a large band—for the

ago. It was punctuated by semi-comedy numbers with copious vocalisms. Some of the better musicians heard about this time were Glenn Miller, second trombone and arranger, who took a solo in *You Rascal You*; Wingy Manone, the one-armed trumpet-player and singer of *Corrine Corrina*; Jack Rusin, pianist (*Fan It*, etc.); Arthur Bernstein on bass (*Clarinet Marmalade*) and another fine pianist, Fulton McGrath (*Get Cannibal*).

After this the Pennies' product gradually degenerated. *Our Home Town Mountain Band*, *Goofus*, and similar tragedies were preludes to the final curtain late in 1932, when the name of the Five Pennies was abandoned—forever, one fears. Red Nichols is currently leading an uninteresting band in an uninteresting hotel, somewhere in the States.

DO RECORDS RESTRICT JAZZ?

Discussed by REGINALD FORESYTHE

in an interview with
LEONARD G. FEATHER

Has it ever struck you what an enormous influence the gramophone must have had on the form modern rhythmic music is taking?

It struck me, rather violently, when I was listening to a new orchestral record by Reginald Foresythe, England's apostle of advanced rhythmic music.

I tackled the urbane Mr. Foresythe on the subject, shortly after hearing the disc in question. Here is the conversation that ensued:—

Foresythe: Do you like my new record?

Feather: I like your new music. What I mean is, on records you often sound as if you have had to cut the composition down to fit into the customary ten inches. And that's half the trouble with jazz to-day. Nobody can write a great work for it when he has to keep the record-buying public in mind all the time.

Foresythe: But I compose nearly all my numbers for records. Are you suggesting that there aren't any worthwhile compositions in jazz, just because they are all three minutes long?

Feather: There are very few that have time to develop a definite series of themes or moods. Standard music isn't affected by the record limitations, of course; it has the concert hall, as well as a public that doesn't object to the splitting up of a work into several records. But the best jazz is too esoteric for public performance. It depends on record sales for its commercial success, so the composers have to kow-tow to jazz gramophiles, who for some reason demand this dreadful three-minute time limit.

Foresythe: You're forgetting something. The average popular hot record consists of the same thirty-two bars over and over again, with improvised melodic variations on a set of very simple harmonies. That's your idea of hot music, isn't it?

Feather: I'm afraid so.



REG. FORESYTHE

Foresythe: Exactly. And anything over three minutes of that would obviously become monotonous.

Feather: Oh, but you could introduce more advanced harmonies.

Foresythe: So that your poor soloists would be hopelessly out of their depth for "busking" purposes.

Feather: What I mean is, not all the movements need be busked! Ellington's **Creole Rhapsody** lasted ten minutes as played on the stage: almost every note of it was scored, and it is much more valuable than most of his three-minute records.

Foresythe: I don't think it sustained the audience's interest. The fact is, there is great scope in jazz for miniatures of the "Rude Interlude" or "Lightnin'" class—in fact, Constant Lambert has called Ellington a master of the "ten-inch" form. But anything longer than that will probably not be genuine hot music at all; it will have to have a more mental and less purely physical appeal.

Feather: But supposing a violin sonata were written for Venuti, or a piano concerto for Hines? With a series of movements in different tempi, and openings for improvisation here and there, to give variety? Don't you think the hot fans would encourage an experiment of that nature?

Foresythe: Well, you can't say the recording companies haven't given them an opportunity to spread their wings—Victor, in America, gave Ellington a place in their catalogue of special long-playing discs, which last ten minutes: but Ellington just allowed three of his old composition to be fitted together, so that the result was entirely formless. So you see, the duration of the disc isn't necessarily the deciding factor.

Feather: I still hope you're wrong.

(Continued on page 5).

DO RECORDS RESTRICT JAZZ ?

Continued.

Foresythe: I hope so myself, as I happen to be busy on a suite at the moment! There'll be none of your beloved busking, but it'll include movements that will most definitely be in the jazz idiom, and they just as definitely won't all compress into one ten-inch side! It is a "Gastronomic Suite." The first two movements, "Breakfast in Bed" and "Country Luncheon," offer no difficulties, but the final rather terrific "Dinner With a Rich Relation," is of a much more prolonged nature. It would be upset by omitting a course and one could never expect to be forgiven for hurrying over the 1811 brandy!

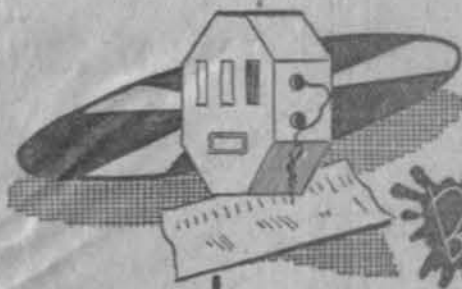
Feather: Well, I sincerely hope you'll be able to record it. That will put paid to my side of the argument, I suppose, but it'll be worth losing my point if it means a chance of hearing your—er—Foresythe Saga.

Foresythe: Oh, incidentally, keep those details to yourself. I want it to be a surprise.

Feather: We journalists are as silent as the grave, Reggie. I won't breathe a word to a soul!

Home

Illustrated by R. Empson



Cooking

Leonard G Feather

I'M not blaming George for what happened on our home recording session. Oh, far from it. It was my fault for reading out that wretched advertisement.

"George," I said, "Listen to this. *Know Thyself—on Wax Records. Make Them and Bake Them in Your Own Home.*"

George, who has what he calls a flair (I call it a kink) concerning technical matters, flapped his ears eagerly. So, as the proverb says, we made our own disc and we must lie about it.

Even George mightn't have taken this job on so readily, though, if he'd seen his old home recording apparatus as it was when we raked it out the following Sunday afternoon. First of all there was the microphone. I always thought these were just glorified walking-sticks—like the Mills Bros. model—but this one looked and behaved rather like a miniature Chinese gong—and a very sensitive one at that: when you hit it, it gave a sort of groan of agony.

Next we raked out the tracker—a sort of metal sugar-stick which, God being willing, helps the pick-up to cut out a career



...first there was the microphone...

mystified by this paraphernalia. I kept mum and obediently plugged the mike into the portable radio whilst George fixed up the gramophone. Then the fun started.

"Hallo!" I said to the mike. "Hallo! Hello! Hallo! Can you hear me?"

This was what they call a rhetorical question. All we heard from the loud speaker was a loud, continuous whistle. Good for Boy Scout effects or American police pictures, but not quite what we were after.

"Take the mike further away from the set," commanded George (who knows).

I edged backwards. "Further still," said George. I went on edging back, finally reaching a pedestal on which a large china elephant must have been standing. I say "must have been" advisedly, because when we packed up the set they were just below the pedestal.

Still the sneaking continued—a

enough to squeeze through the door with no damage—well, not much damage—to the paint. It was a shame the cat got in the way whilst I was struggling backwards down the passage, because I am fond of animals and didn't really mean to step on it.

Having moved the piano and worked ourselves into an indecently clammy condition to boot, we proceeded to extend the wires along the corridor for the mike. At this moment the maid elected to come along the passage carrying a pot of tea. How could I help it if she didn't look where she was going? I never wanted her to trip. Anyway, I hope she had a good time clearing the tea-stains off the carpet.

As our tea was not much use to us now, we fortified ourselves with something a trifle stronger before proceeding to the final sound tests.

Whilst George tested, I played the scale of C major. I played the National Anthem. I played Chopsticks. For thirty long minutes I played everything that came into my head, except Patience. And all because George was testing. First of all he said it was too loud, and there were a lot of queer crackling effects. In the loud-speaker it all sounded like a volcano. The crackles were the molten lava running down. Then George said it was too quiet, and it sounded like a

...over the mountain. Eventually he got the volume right; so by the time my hands were sore with playing, and George's back was aching from carrying the piano, and both of us were clammy with overwork, George said the time had come for us to make the record.

I sat at the piano whilst George got the disc ready and yelled out instructions from the other room. At last he shrieked out "Go!" and I went.

After an agonising period of 10½ seconds (official time), during which I tremulously started bawling some twelve-bar blues, George called out "Stop!"

"What's the matter?" I moaned weakly.

"Motor's stopped. Pressure of the pickup on the wax surface... overloaded."

Has it ever struck you how similar home recording is to gold mining? The only difference is that

here, if you dig too deep, you find you're up against the wrong metal—the aluminium base of the disc—and when that happens (George tells me) you're done for. The disc just slows down gradually and then dies on you.

"Bang goes half-an-inch of wax," I bellowed despairingly—you see, I was the one that paid for the disc. ... "Better get the mike a bit nearer the piano," George roared out. So



...shame about the cat...

I tugged at the wire and brought it six inches nearer me. Suddenly I heard a crash from along the corridor.

"Bang goes ten guineas of radio," yelled George.

It was all George's fault for not explaining there was a

radio set on the other end of the wire. In falling on the floor, it had dragged the tablecloth with it. Also on the tablecloth were a large and valuable vase and an egg-timer for timing the record. Both these, like Jill, came tumbling after. ...

When we had got the radio working again, with the help of two new valves, it was nearly sixteen o'clock (very official time). Wandering back to the piano, I started to play like a man in a dream. George, thinking he'd better catch up with me, set the record going. Shortly after this there was a loud sneeze from the passage, where the maid was still

...even that didn't increase my nervousness. Nothing could. At last I thought my time must be up. But when I stopped, George came rushing in and whispered in my ear to the effect that I still had some room to spare.

I decided to struggle through twelve more bars. By the time I had got to the tenth, however, there was a loud scratching sound from inside. George came running in apologetically.

"Sorry," he said with a sheepish grin, "there wasn't as much room

left as I thought. Afraid I didn't get your last two bars."

Now came the job of baking the record. It seems that these discs can't be played until they have taken a three hours' rest cure in an oven. Gingerly we slipped our precious wax pancake into the kitchen cooker and retired to the sitting-room to recuperate.

Did you ever hear a storm talking? Well, we did. The first half-inch, up to our sudden halt, was the best part of the record, because apparently George had forgotten to switch the mike on... but after that most of it sounded like getting America at 4 a.m. George said it wasn't his fault, because this sort of thing needed experience, and besides, the radio was damaged, so you couldn't expect much, could you?

Halfway through the disc there was a different kind of noise: a loud, swishing sound. This was just an attack of housemaid's sneeze. Later on, things got a bit clearer, and George's face brightened visibly. My piano-playing became painfully distinct. And wait a minute! What was this queer sort of exaggerated Earl Hines tremolo I kept using? Surely I had never employed this trick before?

Suddenly I guessed what the cause was. They say that Johnny Dodds, the clarinettist, acquired the peculiar vibrato of his recording tone through sheer nervousness... well, that's how I got my t!rill!

Towards the end the piano stopped. This was where George had come tearing in to tell me to go on for a bit. Straining our ears into the loud-speaker we heard a voice, unmistakably George's. And the voice said huskily:—

"Carry on, you — —; there's plenty of room yet."

Clearly not a "family" record!

So we came to my last few bars. The motor must have slowed down here, because I suddenly rattled off like a whirlwind into a higher and higher key, until at the end I was playing more notes to the second than Art Tatum can ever hope for.

And that was all.

Suddenly an awful thought struck me. We'd forgotten to record on the other side!

"You ought to have thought of that before we baked it, nitwit," said George mercilessly. "Anyway, we've had a lot of fun for your money."

We certainly had. At a mere cost



...not a "family" record...

the disc, two radio valves, one china elephant, one tea-pot, one stained carpet, one large vase, one injured cat, one bruised housemaid and an egg-timer, we had had a full afternoon's amusement and I had found out (a) what sort of a pianist I was, and (b) how

much I know about home recording.

In future I think I shall stick to journalism.

Oh, by the way, when I wrote my article in *The First Progress* in the August of 1934, there were some critics in the middle. Lots of people wrote congratulating me on them— which was very kind, but I can't take the credit, as I didn't write them. Miss Mary Lysons was the bright—Leonard G. Feather.

A CRAFTSMAN'S JOB

MARTIN HANDCRAFT

That MARTIN'S will remain at their Current Prices for a few days

THE ALTO

Current Price £27 : 15 : 0
Shortly to become £30 : 0 : 0



all there was the microphone. I always thought these were just glorified walking-sticks—like the Mills Bros. model—but this one looked and behaved rather like a miniature Chinese gong—and a very sensitive one at that: when you hit it, it gave a sort of groan of agony.

Next we raked out the tracker—a sort of metal sugar-stick which, God being willing, helps the pick-up to cut out a current



...first there was the microphone...

mystified by this paraphernalia. I kept mum and obediently plugged the mike into the portable radio whilst George fixed up the gramophone. Then the fun started.

"Hallo!" I said to the mike. "Hallo! Hello! Hallo! Can you hear me?"

This was what they call a rhetorical question. All we heard from the loud speaker was a loud, continuous whistle. Good for Boy Scout effects or American police pictures, but not quite what we were after.

"Take the mike further away from the set," commanded George (who knows).

I edged backwards. "Further still," said George. I went on edging back, finally reaching a pedestal on which a large china elephant must have been standing. I say "must have been" advisedly, because when we picked up the bits they were just below the pedestal.

Still the squeaking continued—a sort of nightmare of Boyd Senter.

"Of course!" exclaimed George. "It's the juxtaposition of the input and the output stages which... of course, George's technical talk goes right over my head, but I gathered the sound waves were going round and round in a disgracefully vicious circle, and the only solution was to have the voice in a different room from the speaker and pick-up.

"But we can't move the radio," I complained, "there's no plug for it next door."

"Then," said George grimly, "we'll have to move whatever it is we're going to record. The input frequencies—"

"Yes, yes, George," I soothed. "Then we shall have to move the piano. Nothing shall stop me from recording my celebrated solo, *Bug-house Blues*."

Well, that brought us to the next item on the programme: Piano, Removal Of. We must thank our stars it was an upright, just small

something a trifle stronger before proceeding to the final sound tests.

Whilst George tested, I played the scale of C major. I played the National Anthem. I played Chopsticks. For thirty long minutes I played everything that came into my head, except Patience. And all because George was testing. First of all he said it was too loud, and there were a lot of queer crackling effects. In the loud-speaker it all sounded like a volcano. The crackling were the molten lava running down. Then George said it was too quiet, and it sounded like

...over the mountain. Eventually he got the volume right; so by the time my hands were sore with playing, and George's back was aching from carrying the piano, and both of us were clammy with overwork, George said the time had come for us to make the record.

I sat at the piano whilst George got the disc ready and yelled out instructions from the other room. At last he shrieked out "Go!" and I went.

After an agonising period of 10 seconds (official time), during which I tremulously started busking some twelve-bar blues, George called out "Stop!"

"What's the matter?" I moaned weakly.

"Motor's stopped. Pressure of the pick-up on the wax surface... overloaded."

Has it ever struck you how similar home recording is to gold mining? The only difference is that

also on the tablecloth were a large and valuable vase and an egg-timer for timing the record. Both these, like Jill, came tumbling after...

When we had got the radio working again, with the help of two new valves, it was nearly sixteen o'clock (very official time). Wandering back to the piano, I started to play like a man in a dream. George, thinking he'd better catch up with me, set the record going. Shortly after this there was a loud thence from the passage, where the maid was still

...even that didn't increase my nervousness. Nothing could.

At last I thought my time must be up. But when I stopped, George came rushing in and whispered in my ear to the effect that I still had some room to spare.

I decided to struggle through twelve more bars. By the time I had got to the tenth, however, there was a loud scratching sound from inside. George came running in apologetically.

"Sorry," he said with a sheepish grin, "there wasn't as much room

here, because I suddenly rattled off like a whirlwind into a higher and higher key, until at the end I was playing more notes to the second than Art Tatum can ever hope for.

And that was all. Suddenly an awful thought struck me. We'd forgotten to record on the other side!

"You ought to have thought of that before we baked it, pituit," said George mercilessly. "Anyway, we've had a lot of fun for your money."

We certainly had. At a mere cost

of £100, we had a set of radio valves, one china elephant, one tea-pot, one stained carpet, one large vase, one injured cat, one bruised housemaid and an egg-timer. We had had a full afternoon's amusement and I had found out (a) what sort of a pianist I was, and (b) how



...not a "family" record...

much I know about home recording.

In future I think I shall stick to journalism.

Oh, by the way, when I wrote my article on The Five Pianos in the August issue, there were some errors in the article. Lots of people wrote congratulating me on them—which was very nice, but I can't take the credit, as I didn't write them. Miss Mary Lytton was the tyrist.—Leonard G. Feather.

A CRAFTSMAN'S JOB



THE TENOR
Current Pro Price £31 : 15 : 0
Shortly to become £34 : 0 : 0

MARTIN HANDCRAFT

== *Announce* ==

That MARTIN'S will remain at their Current Prices for a few days more.

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0.3.34
The Diary of
PHEBE THE FAN

EARLY SUNDAY MORNING

I say, you'll have to excuse me ... feeling a bit dazed ... just got home from the Nest Club, and haven't got the time or the energy to put down everyone and everything I saw there. ... simply colossal crowded, anyway ... half the *Stackbirds* flew in from the Coliseum. ... Valaida looking gloriously chic in canary yellow ... wrong colour bird, but frightfully smart. ... Beatie Dudley "snakes" her hips just the same even for an ordinary foxtrot. ... I've been trying to snake mine at the mirror, but somehow they keep going the wrong way. ...

Garland Wilson standing by, looking very exclusive in a monocle ... good idea for Reggie Foresythe, that ... Reggie only turned up for about five minutes and walked out ... doesn't like crowds, I s'pose ... Rudolph Dunbar's a much better clarinettist than dancer ... still, he doesn't give dancing lessons, so there's nothing wrong with that. ... Ike Hatch having to turn people away at the door ... and managing to keep everybody dead quiet while he sang ... what a Master of Ceremonies! ... Ike said he's opening in variety ... good luck to him ... and his club. ...

There, now! Who said I'll never make a good gossip writer?

MONDAY.

Went to the Palladium with Jimmy this evening. Outside the door I noticed it said "Frank

Viggiano, strumming the bluest of tunes on his guitar." Then when we went into the foyer there was another poster which said "Frank Viggiano, strumming the bluest of tunes on his guitar." When we opened our programmes we noticed an item called "Frank Victor, strumming the bluest of tunes on his guitar."

I wish they'd make up their minds!

Anyway, whatever he calls himself, he plays very nicely for Joe Venuti, and Joe did three numbers into a microphone, but the band kept butting in at the end of the items, and it was all much too un-intimate.

Talking about Joyce's Band, one man was put down in the personnel as playing "Tynpiny, etc." Would anybody like to show me what a tynpiny is? Jimmy said it's one of these new rumba instruments, but I never know when Jimmy's kidding.

Another thing Jimmy said was, "Venuti looks more like Something in the City than a dance musician." He's quite right; Joe is a change from most hot players. He has a comfortable, tubby figure and short, round hands and fingers and a very sweet and blonde and American wife. And next time I hear him I want it to be in a small restaurant or somebody's drawing room, with no microphone and no band, and playing whatever numbers he wants to.

You see, I like my hot music 100 per cent. pure.

13.9.34
The Diary of
PHEBE
the
FAN

SUNDAY.

Girls, I've got the most stunning idea for something new in band acts. It came to me to-day when Jimmy took me out for a drive. He didn't tell me where we were going, so I just settled down in the corner of the seat for a dose.

Well, the next thing I knew was that Jimmy told me to get out and follow him. We were in a sort of wood, right off the main roads, and Jimmy led me to a kind of private park, where I could hear some music.

In the centre of this park there was a big bandstand, and when I looked at it I suddenly realised where he'd brought me. I was at a nudist society's annual meeting, and I was listening to the world's first nudist band!

Of course, I will admit they were playing under unusual difficulties, so you can't blame them for the sounds they were producing. The alto was so cold that his fingers had gone stiff, so all he could do was blow C sharp, whenever it happened to fit in with the harmonies (if any).

Then there was a trumpet player who got into trouble with the committee when he came to some printed parts marked "in hat." They told him that'd be a breach of the society's regulations, so he had to play open. And in the next number he was doubling on violin, which was positive agony, so he said, because his fiddle gave him a cold shoulder.

Apart from the audience of nudist dancers, the only person who seemed to be enjoying himself was the drummer. In fact, the drummer was the only one you could really hear properly. He kept on and on with a steady four in a bar, louder and louder and louder, and he seemed to be coming closer until the beating was an absolute deafening roar and then there was a sudden cymbal crash and I found Jimmy had landed us in a ditch and we had to walk to the nearest garage for help, which was a pretty tiresome ending to a very exciting dream.



THE DIARY OF
PHEBE
the FAN



TUESDAY.

WELL, I've been trying to make a start at getting a band together after my Big Decision last week. First of all, I happened to get introduced this morning to a fellow who's supposed to be a band manager.

He has horn-rimmed glasses and loads of that awful stuff called "pep," which means that he once spent a few weeks in New York and came back with a habit of spitting and a very false Yankee accent.

His name is Cecil, but his business friends call him Bill, because, however little value you've had, you always have to pay your bill.

"What?" he said. "You wanna run a band? Swell idea. Let's hear 'em."

Well, I didn't have time to point out that I didn't want to conduct the band, only manage them, and also that I hadn't got any band to manage yet, anyway. But he thought the nudist idea was quite amusing, so this afternoon I got half-a-dozen people together from Archer Street and told them about it.

I feel so excited I've almost got stage-fright already!

WEDNESDAY.

Well, we played for Bill to-day in a little rehearsal room, but it wasn't a full (undress rehearsal).

It must have been a very good piano they had in this room, because people had apparently chipped bits of ivory off the keys to take away as souvenirs of it. Even some of the strings were missing. But we found that if we played everything in E flat it worked out all right, more or less.

When we'd struggled through a few numbers Bill jumped three feet into the air and said: "Magnificent! You'll sweep the country!"

"Yes, I think novelty always pays," I said.

"What novelty?" he said.

"Why, the nudist idea."

"Oh, that! Say, we can cut that right out. You'll knock 'em so cold they'll feel nood themselves."

So instead of being manager of a nudist orchestra, I've found myself conductor of a fully-clothed band that's no use to me with a manager that's no use to anyone.

If it's true that fools rush in where angels fear to tread, I'm quite certain I'm no angel!

18.9.34

It is important that all rhythm fans should note that Leonard G. Feather has been appointed as the official representative in England of the Hot Club de France, and in that capacity he places his services at the disposal of any fans or musicians passing between France and England or vice versa.

Anyone desiring assistance or information is cordially invited to write to him at 32, Davies Street, W.

18.2. TAVO-DANCING, Sept. 1934

Dans un même ordre d'idées le Hot Club vient d'ajouter deux nouveaux correspondants à son effectif :

M. Leonard G. Feather, un des principaux collaborateurs du *Melody Maker*, pour l'Angleterre et Miss Helen Oakley pour Chicago.



THE DIARY OF PHEBE the FAN



Went to a frightfully dull party to-night, where somebody played rumbas and waltzes on the piano until I thought I should die. And there wasn't a soul there to sympathise with me.

Then I heard a fellow say "Come on, give us a hot number!"

"Oh!" I said, all excited, "so you like hot music too, eh?"

"You bet I do!" he said. "Give me a hot number every time. Never miss a Harry Roy broadcast. Heard those Tiger-Ragamuffins of his? They're hot stuff!"

My excitement began to kind of wear off. Then he began telling me that Charlie Kunz's piano records were "hotter still," and that the Moderniques were "not quite as hot" as the Mills Brothers. In fact, he apparently listens to his records with a thermometer instead of two ears.

"Do you like Duke Ellington?" I said, as a sort of last hope.

"Oh, not bad, not bad at all," he said, airily. "But of course Cab Calloway's got the hottest nigger band. Ellington's all right, but he can't hold a candle to Calloway."

Well, I mean to say! Have you ever met this type of person? And

are there thousands of people like him who call themselves hot fans and have to be catered for by the gramophone companies?

Now I suppose I shall go to bed and dream of Duke Ellington running around after Cab Calloway, trying to hold a candle to him. What a nightmare!

MONDAY.

More news about my band to-day. Bill, my manager, made me sign a contract, in which he was the party of the first part and I was the artiste of some other part.

It was thousands of words long and *terrifyingly* legal, but Bill says it means he can get all the bookings for me and just take a small commission; and if anything goes wrong "by reason of strikes, lock-outs, war, civil disturbance, royal demise, pestilence, national calamity or any act of God" (I never imagined Bill was religious!)—then the whole contract is null and void and unaffected, or something.

So if I get sick of Bill, all I have to do is organise a pestilence and tell him he is ineffective and kick him out. But at the moment I'm just waiting for the bookings to stream in.



THE DIARY OF PHEBE the FAN



MONDAY.

GIRLS. I simply must tell you about the most *stunning* Winter Creation which I saw in a dress shop to-day. It had a cowl neck of ripe tomato, with a large twisted sash and multi-coloured epaulettes falling down onto a scooped—

(*Hey, hold on! This is still supposed to be a musical paper, not a Girl Guide's Fashion Gazette.—Ed.*)

Wait for it—I'm coming to the point. You see, the dress was all done in a mass of vivid, loud colours. And just because of that, the shopkeeper had had the utter cheek to label it Jazz.

Of all the *disgusting* insults to a noble art!

I didn't buy the dress. It wasn't the money, of course; it was the principle of the thing.

WEDNESDAY.

Did a solo act this evening, on the one instrument I can play really well. I gave a record recital at a suburban rhythm club. I played them a programme of Chicago style records, and do you know, they've hardly even heard of the Chicagoans in the Suburbs! Still, if it comes to that, I suppose it's doubtful whether they've ever heard of the Suburbs in Chicago.

Anyway, there are lots of good Chicago records that shouldn't have been held back in England, like that queer and quite exciting Bud Freeman one called *The Eel*. Now why hasn't *The Eel* been issued here?

There's something almost fishy about that.

Talking about eels, did you know that Mr. A. Fraser-Brunner knows more about eels than almost anyone else in the country? He can

draw them and dissect them and put them in glass cases and tell you all their life histories. He's a curator of the British Sea Anglers' Society.

(*Might I remind you again. . . . ? —Ed.*)

All right, all right! What I was coming to was that Mr. Fraser-Brunner, in his spare time from eels, also happens to run a Rhythm Club. He is also a very clever artist, and he drew the cute little sketch of me at the top of my column. And his Rhythm Club is decorated with big paintings he has done of the Duke and Hawkins and Spike and cetera. So he really is a rather versatile young man. I must give him a copy of Bud Freeman's *Eel* for his collection.

I hope he has a good time stuffing it.



THE DIARY OF PHEBE the FAN



FRIDAY.

FEELING thoroughly irritable to-day. First of all, this *Black-birds* broadcast last night made me crotchety—what with Valaida conducting instead of playing trumpet, and de Lloyd McKaye having to crash out Gershwin when she ought to be busy swinging—I *do* think these male producers should be made to give a poor girl a chance!

Then, secondly, I'm crotchety because my pickup's got imbecile paralysis or something, so I can't play any records, and, thirdly, because I heard the sad news about Higginbotham (or is it bottom?) not being out of prison in time to come to England with the Black-and-White Band, and, fourthly, because my own band's got its first booking to-morrow night (yes, honestly!) and I'm sure we shall make the *utmost* mess of it.

So what with those four reasons for being crotchety, you can imagine that I'm more than that, I'm positively *semibreve*!

SUNDAY.

The booking came off last night. It was a village dance in a place called Much Burpington, twenty miles out of town. Anyhow, after deducting our fares and expenses and Bill's fifty per cent. commission (that was in the contract I told you about, it seems), and not counting the damage done to our instruments when that chandelier fell down on us, we showed a net loss of only three and ninepence per person on the evening, which, as Bill says, is not at all bad considering the experience it gave us.

"Just think of it!" I said to Bill afterwards, all excited. "Some day we may even be *making* money out of the band business!"

"Yeah," Bill said, "out of it; but not in it."

Of course, he was only joking, but it does make you think, doesn't it?

TUESDAY.

Do you ever read "Variety"? Sometimes Beta comes round and translates bits of it into English for me. Here's a good bit from the record review:—

"Kelsman's style is said to have

inspired the much-talked-about Ray Noble technique which that London maestro has evidenced on His MAJESTY'S Voice recordings."

Anyway, that solves one question for Ray Noble—he can use *God Save the King* as his signature tune!

The Diary of PHEBE THE FAN

SATURDAY

JIMMY took me to the Motor Show to-day. I found so many familiar faces wandering around that at first I thought I must be in Archer Street. It reminded me of a fairy story Beta told me: Once upon a time there was a dance musician who was more interested in music than in motor-cars. . . .

Incidentally, what a lot of cars there are with radios fitted in this year. Not that that's much use, really; when my band starts to make money and I can afford a two-seater I shall fit it up with a super-radiogram and a record cabinet. That'd be a good idea for motorists at Brooklands. Even if they ended up a race with a smash they could be positive of breaking all records.

SUNDAY

I heard something at the Gig Club to-night which made my flesh creep. While I was dancing with Jimmy we passed a particularly goofy-looking couple and I heard the girl say to the boy: "I say! I believe that's *Phoby the Fan* over there!"

In case some of you aren't old Roedean and Girton girls like me, can I just point out that I am Feeby, rhyming with *Hæbe-Jæbe*?

WEDNESDAY

Here's another of those mysteries that keep giving me sleepless nights. Perhaps you can explain it.

There's a Claude Hopkins' record out which is called *I Can't Dance, I Got Ants In My Pants*. So far, so good. But when I heard Will Mahoney at the Palladium a few weeks back he sang a different song with a different tune, and the words went *I Gotta Dance, I Got Ants In My Pants*.

Now who's right—Mahoney or Hopkins?

I asked Jimmy to try it out on his own pants and see what happened, but he hasn't been able to so far, because he doesn't know where one can buy an ant!

Can you help him?

THURSDAY

My manager, Bill, rang me up to-day. He says he wants to raise his commission on the gigs he gets me from 50 per cent. to 75, because, he says, we aren't good enough to get many gigs, and unless he makes something out of the few we do get he will be destitute, with no roof to his mouth, and I wouldn't like to see him like that, would I?

27.10.34

At the last meeting of the Alpha Rhythm Club No. 19, members were entertained by a recital of Chicago discs played by Leonard G. Feather, doyen of discology.

No. 19

ONLY FIVE YEARS AGO

WHAT were the hot fans talking about five years ago? Way back in September, 1929, when Ellington was just a misprint for the Iron Duke, Fred Elizalde was the first name on rhythmic lips.

After his sensational departure from the Savoy, they all predicted a brilliant future for him in this country . . . now, five years later, some of the older fans have recollections of Fred's musical show, which ran for just one night; of his group's ultimate disbandment and his virtual retirement from the forefront of dance music.

If only Fred's luck had changed he might have altered the whole history of jazz.

In the record world the collapse of British Brunswick, Ltd., spelt disaster for jazz discophiles . . . for eighteen long months. Until the Warner-Brunswick era began fans were starved of Nichols, the Cotton Pickers, the Jungle Band.

But the Duke had just bobbed up as "Joe Turner" on Columbia, un-

recognised by the critics. Rhythm Styles were unheard of. . . . On Decca Phil Lewis monopolised the interest in hot music with his house band's renderings of *Tight Like That* and all the old favourites, whilst Spike Hughes was an obscure string bassist with a band of Cambridge youths, still unknown to fame and the recording studios. . . .

And the musicians themselves—what were they talking about? Only one topic mattered. The talkies. The plague was spreading . . . the projected *King of Jazz* aroused an unprecedented buzz of excitement.

Paul Whiteman at the top of the tree; Jack Payne at the B.B.C.; Armstrong at work on his greatest records, yet almost unknown in England; hot music an obscure and struggling movement, with the commercial songsmiths flourishing indomitably as England whistled to the strains of *I'm Just In the Mood To-night* and *Is Izzy Azzy Wozzy*. . . .

Five years! So near and yet so far!

10.11.34



THE DIARY OF PHOEBE the FAN



MONDAY.

Quite a tiresome week-end. Stayed in specially on Saturday night to hear Noël Coward on the radio with Henry Hall, and ended up by wishing I'd gone to the Lyric Theatre to see his play instead, because all he did was sing two numbers rather weakly.

Still, as long as he doesn't sing weekly I suppose that's nothing to worry about.

Yesterday was much more irritating. A country cousin of mine who is classical-crazy came up to town and promised to take me to hear Yehudi Menuhin.

He said it was about time somebody tried to uplift me and jazz was all very well and so forth; so I specially gave up a Rhythm Club meeting to go to the Albert Hall, and would you believe it, when we got there we found the Menuhin concert had been on in the afternoon and we'd missed it, and at the moment the Hall was full of Black-shirts having a meeting!

Well, it was too late to do anything else; so, as I'm vaguely interested in political matters (I have an uncle who writes letters to the *Times*, you see) I went in to the meeting. It was all rather monotonous, though, and I began to think I could get just as much noise at home with more point to it by playing a few Armstrong records.

I suppose I'd better not say any more or people'll think I'm trying to turn this into a political column. That'd be silly, of course, because I'm much too busy to have time for scolding things like politics.

THURSDAY.

I feel better now. Valaida got her break on the radio when they broadcast that *Saint James' Infirmary* act, and Nina Mae's back in harness at the Alhambra; both of them keeping up the honour of us fem-fans, so to speak.

But I don't think the girls in hot music get a chance—I mean, from the publicity point of view. Look at the way these female film stars are shoved in front of the public. What I want to see is the same sort of treatment for our art; something on these lines:—

NINA MAE MCKINNEY

recommends

CREAMO complexion powder.

Listen to her latest record on

Burnidick 5757

"MUX TOILET SOAP made me what I am to-day."

declares

VALAIDA,

now tearing off top notes at Coliseum.

"I am confident that my voice would not sound the same if I did not drink a daily glass of BOOGIE WOOGIE HEALTH ESSENCE. My housemaid also finds it invaluable for polishing silver. Signed, ELIZABETH WELCH."

Now then! Who says hot music can't be commercial?

P.S.—Edgar Jackson says in this month's "Gramophone" that "hot music isn't all a matter of arranging and interpreting."

Of course not. It's a matter of composing and inventing.



THE DIARY OF PHOEBE the FAN



SATURDAY

Last night was a big date in my life: personal appearance of Phoebe the Fan and her little Fannies at the Badminton Club Dance in the Drill Hall, Little Wiggling. This may sound quite an ordinary sort of gig to you, but the reception we got! My dears, the club secretary told us afterwards that he'd never heard anything quite like us. And I mean, after an opinion like that there's no telling where one may end up, is there?

Our only trouble was that everybody kept coming up and asking us to play *Sally*, or *Sweet Sue*, or *Rose Marie*, and so on, because they had a girl friend of that name. Now, why doesn't somebody write a special super-love-song bringing in every girl's name ever invented, so that we could please everybody at once?

Anyway, next time Bill gets us a date I shall know what to do; just stick to sentimental songs and waltzes, and steer clear of any numbers less than two years old, because they wouldn't know them. People are very peculiar in Little Wiggling.

TUESDAY

Went to the local pictures last night and saw a film called "Lazy River."

Isn't it funny how back-to-front things are nowadays? They used to write the songs to fit in with the

film titles, but the latest fashion is to write a film around a song title and sometimes not even bring in the song! I mean, apart from *Lazy River*, there's *Wagon Wheels* and *Cabin In The Cotton* and *Last Round-Up* and *I Cover The Water-Front*, and dozens of others that were all produced long after the songs were popular.

You could easily carry that idea a bit further; for instance, Anna May Wong in "Limehouse Blues," or Mae West in "Shim-me-Sha-Wobble"; and how would this look?

MARY PICKFORD

in

I'M NOBODY'S SWEETHEART NOW

—or a propaganda film, like this?—

ADOLF HITLER

in

OH, YOU NAZI MAN

17.11.34

The Man With a Load of Records

THOSE who fondly imagine that Germany is a hot-bed of brass band fanatics would receive a rude shock on meeting Rudi Fehr, who is currently on a short visit to London. This quiet young man of 24 is probably unique in several respects.

Firstly, he has one of the most amazing collections of hot records you are ever likely to find in Europe. When the figure was last computed he had over a thousand records in his music room in Berlin, and the number is steadily going up.

Now Rudi says that if you played his entire library through without a single stop, it would take five days and five nights!

His second claim to fame is that, unlike so many hot fans, he has extended his interest to all forms of standard music. Thirdly, he is not just an "armchair critic."

A brilliant exponent of all saxophones, clarinet and mellophone, he once ran one of Berlin's most popular amateur orchestras. Then Hitler came; and Rudi Fehr is not an Aryan.

Rudi is greatly impressed by our outside dance music broadcasts; by the organisation of our Rhythm Clubs; by Joe Crossman; by Garland Wilson, and by the abundance of hot stuff in our gramophone catalogues.

Nowadays, he says, there are no hot records issued on the German lists. But the small coterie of enthusiasts are catered for at one special store, where a surprising variety of new and old material is available.

3.11.34

At the next meeting of the No. 1 Club, Leonard Feather is giving a recital from his unique collection of rare discs, and he will be pleased to discuss with anyone a scheme he has evolved for the exchange of French and British hot records.

Fans who are unable to meet Leonard personally should get in touch with him at 32, Davis Street, W.1.

No. 1

NOVEMBER THE FIFTH

A Bonfire of Musicians' Pet Aversions Set Alight by GEOFFREY MARNE

NEXT Monday is November the Fifth. All good patriots will burn the effigy of Guy Fawkes, who tried to blow up Parliament.

What would all good musicians burn? Here are some miscellaneous contributions for the musical bonfire. They ought to make a fine blaze.

Stanley Black says:

How would you like some celluloid for your bonfire? It's highly inflammable, they tell me, so perhaps you could do with an old photograph of mine. It's the first one I ever had published, and it's been constantly used in evidence against me ever since. You can guess the one I mean; and you can guess why I want to burn it. So don't start your fire till I've got hold of that negative!

Garland Wilson says:

Man, if there's one thing just brings me down, it's the folks that go to a dance and dance. No, I ain't jivin'! When there's some real swing music goin' on, I mean, an' everybody else is dancin' around and takin' no notice, I just stand right by that bandstand and watch

the boys swing. When they hit a high note I'm all up in the air—then when there's a low one I'm down with 'em; and when one of them cats holds on a long, long note—man, I'm just tremblin' till he finishes, and my eyes are mighty near poppin' out of my head!

Yow sub, I sure would like to do something to them cold guys that never gets excited. I'd



NAT GONELLA

Nat Gonella says:

Well, wax is supposed to burn pretty easily, so I could start the fire off beautifully with the first test of my first solo record which I made last year. False modesty? Don't you believe it! I don't think I've ever been quite so worried and bet up as I was on that awful day when I was due to bear myself for the first time as a one-man attraction.

If you could bear that original test pressing perhaps you'd want to lend a hand in starting the fire!

Reginald Foresythe says:

With all due respect to the incorrigible gentlemen of the Press, I should take great pleasure in starting the fire with a collection of certain newspapers. I refer to the papers which have contained every pompous, didactic and ignorant condemnation of jazz since jazz was born.

How I should love to see the faces of those glib "music-lovers" and the authors of all the articles entitled "Jazz is Dead" as they watched their ill-informed outpourings going up in flame!

Another type of journalist I should like to see the last of is the sort of fellow who comes round asking ridiculous questions about Musical Bonfires.

Present company excepted, of course. . . .

Howard Jacobs says:

The surest bet I can imagine for that bonfire is the next guy that asks me for "Little Man, You've Had A Busy Day," . . .



PAT HYDE (Photo: Marnell, London)



HOWARD JACOBS (Photo Marnell, London)

put 'em on a big fire and they'd get hot for the first time in their natural lives!

Pat Hyde says:

My vote goes to straight hands when they try to play hot accompaniments. I've often had to sing with them myself, and you can take it from me that Guy Fawkes was a peace-loving citizen compared with them.

Scrutineer says:

Frankly, I can envisage no more delightful sight on Guy Fawkes' day than a colossal heap of all the soi-disant crooners on earth, stewing gently in their own juice.

However, there might be some difficulty in putting a light to them, as doubtless many of them would be disconcertingly sticky and damp.

One appropriate display that I should be genuinely glad to see on the Fifth would be the Fireworks of Louis Armstrong's Hot Five, with Hines. As the title indicates, it would be a better treat than any bonfire; yet it has never been issued in this country.

How about it, gramophone moguls?

Well, there is the material for the fire. It remains for some destructive soul to put a match to it. But perhaps, on second thoughts, it would be best to leave things as they are; for, after all, without these little personal grievances musicians would have nothing to grumble about. And that, for a good musician, would never, never do.



REG FORESYTHE

HALLOWE'EN MAGIC

THURSDAY, as none of you probably noticed, was All Saints' Day.

By consulting an almanac (or a Scotsman, to whom the date October 31 will always signify much fun and games) you will find that the preceding evening was one known as Hallowe'en. Ghostly, traditional Hallowe'en, when witches take you for magic rides on broomsticks, and all sorts of supernatural influences are abroad.

Following a rather gay and rather liquid Hallowe'en celebration, I myself was taken, during a subsequent nightmare the night before last, on one of these magic journeys.

When my broomstick landed, I found myself in Archer Street. My witch invited me into a small automatic restaurant, where I found all sorts of food available in tablets for pennies in the slot.

Red Letter Day

On the wall was a calendar marked "October, 1984."

I began to understand. My broomstick, like Mr. Wells' Time Machine, had cut through the years like a razor and deposited me in the Musicians' Mecca of 50 years ahead!

"Why is the fiftieth marked in red letters?" I inquired on a further scrutiny of the calendar.

"Ah," said my witch with a toothless grin, "that marks the day when the first British musician was allowed to enter the United States with his band. Let me see now, was it 1976 or 1977?"

"Why did the Americans allow that?" I demanded. "Reciprocity?"

"Reciprocity my foot. This is what happened: in 1950 they passed that special law enforcing all the American musicians left in the States to take up residence in Great Britain, because they were afraid American music was becoming disintegrated with only three-quarters of them working over here. So after that there was no room left for English musicians in England, and something had to be done about it. In any case, what with television and visual recording there's only work left for a handful of people."

Sound and Seen

"Play me a visual record," I said, intrigued.

My witch produced a minute black box consisting of a few spindles and a ground glass screen. Into it she placed what looked like a reel of thin black cotton.

"This is rather a short record," she apologised, "—only runs for twenty minutes. In any case, there's very little jazz recorded these days. The average listener feels that five minutes at a time is more than enough. It takes somebody like Frank Furter and his Hot Dogs to fill a whole record and not make it tiresome. Listen to them."

She set the reel in motion. On

Leonard G. Feather rides into 1984 on a broomstick

the small screen appeared a picture of the band as it played.

The music sounded like Ellington gone crazy. I said so.

"Who is Ellington?" she asked.

After a long argument I got her as far as admitting that the name did seem vaguely familiar; but Nichols, Trumbauer, Hughes and Foresythe meant nothing to her. In order to avoid any further embarrassments of this sort I quickly changed the subject, and remarked on the queer instrumentation of the band whose record I was seeing and hearing. There were simply three clarinets, five bugles and a motor-horn. Nothing else. The rhythm seemed to come from nowhere.

"Why bugles? And where's the rhythm section?"

"Well, there was a man named Armstrong who showed how easy it was to play a trumpet solo entirely on one or two notes; so when everybody adopted that style, they found it wasn't worth their while to learn such a difficult instrument. Nowadays they just blow arpeggi on the bugle, and it sounds every bit as good. And, of course, the rhythm's produced by one of the latest model Mutzberger Metronomes—Make More Din than a Dozen Drummers. Rhythm has been automatic for years now. It's a labour-saving idea, you see."

"Oh . . . and why do they use a motor-horn?"

The Perfect Tone

"To replace the old-fashioned instruments called tenor saxophones. The best-known players in the 'thirties got very near to the same tone on tenor, but to-day we use genuine motor-horns and make sure of it."

Humble in my ignorance, I listened quiescently to the caprices of Frank Furter and his very enthusiastic if not very musical Hot Dogs. I asked whether it were a commercial number that was being played.

"Heavens, no. This is 1984—nowadays everything that can possibly be machine-made is machine-made. If you want commercial stuff you simply put a penny in the slot, and a new song hit comes out at the other end and sweeps the country."

"Who are the other popular white bands? And can you show me any good coloured combinations?"

Still Going Strong

"Now then, keep it clean . . . oh, you mean bands? Well, I don't think there are any all-Negro units existing. They've mixed in with the ofays and lost their individuality. There isn't anything darker than a mulatto left, anyway. Now come along with me to Hylton Hall. That's where all the big concerts take place. Jack Hylton, the founder, gave a show himself last

week. Absolutely unqualified success—except for one awkward moment when his baton got tangled up in his beard. But Jack's still at the top of the tree, and feeling younger every day."

An instant later I found myself fantastically transported into an enormous arena, in the centre of which was a bandstand swathed all round in huge black velvet curtains. Hylton Hall was packed, and from the stand came sounds of a sort of hurricane in four-four rhythm.

Dirty Shirt Concert

"We've arrived in the middle of a concert," I was told.

"Then why all the curtains? Doesn't the audience want to see whom they're listening to?"

"It would spoil the amplification. All this is the result of the gradual perfection of microphone technique on the stage."

"Then what's the point of coming to a concert at all? Why not stay at home with one's radio—I mean, television?"

"Just the old thrill of hearing the artists in the flesh. The personal touch, you know."

After that I kept my mouth shut. These sorceresses seem to know all the answers. But before I left I asked just one final question.

"Tell me, is there any dance music of 50 years ago that you can still listen to without taking it as a joke?"

"Only one band," came the answer. "The Casa Loma."

Knows the Answers

"Why on earth . . .?"

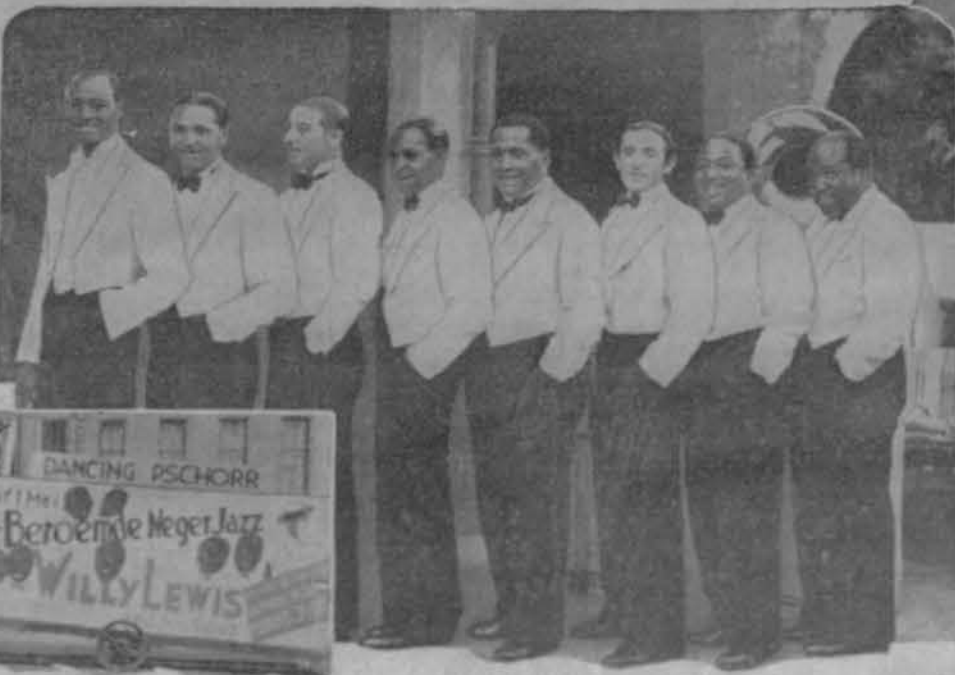
"Because they inspired us with the idea of metronomic rhythm, through coming so near to the automatic effect on ordinary instruments; and because they supplied the theory on which every modern composer bases his works: If a Phrase is Worth Playing Once, It's Worth Playing Sixteen Times. And that is what makes Jazz of 1984 the great creative art that it is!"

At this point it seemed that the hag gave me a stunning blow on the skull with her broomstick, and I awoke to find myself back in Aberdeen with a Hallowe'en headache and a nasty taste in my mouth.

Next Hallowe'en I think I shall cut out the celebrations and dine with a set of sensible, sober Sassenachs. . . .

VIVE LE HOT!

Snapshots of Paris and its Dance Music



Above: Willy Lewis, the star sax - leader of Paris.

Centre: Willy and his boys.

Left: How they put over Willy in a street parade.



PARISIAN music! Vivid words, conjuring up pictures of grinding accordions, of lusty washerwomen singing on rooftops, of swarthy apaches and exotic cocottes swaying to the tune of a turgid tango. . . . Beautiful visions, these—but ten years behind the times. For Paris is fast becoming a hotbed of hot music!

Within an hour of my arrival I was in the midst of a veritable aural orgy. By my side was Pierre Nourry, whose Hot Club de France flourished long before the English Rhythm Circle movement ever began.

I was hustled along to the maisonette of Henri Bernard. An amazing young man, this. With typical Gallic enthusiasm he has amassed a library of records that could hardly be rivaled in the States. Yet he cannot speak a word of English; has never been to England or America, and started collecting less than six years ago!

Chibout, a fine trumpet player, can be heard in one or two Maurice Chevalier records. An embryonic Dix, still waiting for his big break. . .

Then there is a brilliant young guitarist, Junjo Reinhart. He wanders through France in a caravan: a true gypsy genius. When they can reach him they sometimes bring him to a recording studio. . . . recently he made several titles with an orchestra formed for Columbia by André Ekyan, the great French clarinetist.

But Reinhart cares little for the vagaries of city life. On he roams through the woodlands of France, perhaps playing some favourite Lang masterpiece on his ancient portable, or improvising on his own guitar to a silent world.

Back in Paris the musical em-

tingent does not share this precious freedom. The fetters of commercialism have even gripped Spencer Williams. This great coloured veteran of jazz, famous composer of *Basin St. Blues*, *Shim-me-Sha Wabble*, *I Ain't Got Nobody*, and innumerable hits of the last thirty years, is now resident in Paris, where I found him hard at work on some new popular songs for the English masses. . . .

Arthur Briggs, another Parisian Harlemite, doughtily hits his top

alto, is Jerry Blake, an elegant tenor and clarinetist, who told me about the discs he had made recently with Bennie Moten's band across the pond. Listen to him in *Lafayette*.

This first-class swing man, one-time member of Redman's outfit, shares the general Harlem admiration for the great little Don.

At the back there, almost hidden by his string bass and his sousaphone, is June Cole, who told me of the good old days he spent with

by
LEONARD G. FEATHER

C's at the Chantilly, whilst his former partner, Freddy Johnson, scores new triumphs far away in Holland. And most important of all, there has been a coloured band playing in Paris which has excited audiences all over Europe—Willy Lewis and his Entertainers, who, at the time of which I am writing, played nightly *Chat Florence*.

This place lies in a side turning of the Montmartre district. The entrance promises nothing more than a typical Paris *boite de nuit*, with its neon letters and the low-roofed, over-smart decorations. Inside, a languid crowd shuffles round the dance floor.

But in an instant this dull preliminary atmosphere is forgotten. Your attention is fixed on the bandstand. There stands a giant figure, very dark-skinned and grave of face, playing a saxophone. You are introduced. So this is Willy Lewis, the charming and polite *chef d'orchestre* of Europe's leading coloured unit.

A word whispered in Willy Lewis's ear, and the dry routine of commercial numbers will be forsaken. Choruses of the "good of good ones" follow each other hell-for-leather; the strong rhythm section swings out. Already you can almost believe yourself in Harlem. . .

There, in the corner, is fat Bobby Martin, the trumpet player with a Bubber Miley style and a boisterous personality that stirs even this tame crowd from its lethargy. John Mitchell and Ted Fields work vigorously on the guitar and the drums.

Next to Nelson Kinzold, the first

Henderson's band, back in 1928 and '29. Cole is still as great a bachi as ever. Then there was an outstanding pianist, Herman Chittison.

After an hour of super-swinging, the boys lay down their instruments to go through their speciality act; for not only are they fine instrumentalists, but clever harmony singers and comedians as well.

The jaded Parisian crowd, to whom the music was of little importance, were at once captivated by this novelty act. If only the fans could frequent this expensive establishment nightly, there would be applause for the swinging as well as the singing. . . .

But one mustn't despair. Willy Lewis has an increasing circle of admirers in this gay city, for rhythmic music is in greater demand than ever before.

And that is the Paris I have found in this year of grace, 1934. Hot records swarming in the catalogues; and fans swarming to the Hot Club with one increasing purpose—the propagation of the newest musical art in a country where accordions, washerwomen and tangos are fast losing their hold. . . .

Vive le Hot!

December 1.

SKER Goes To TOWN

panied by LEON GOODMAN

American band made up of orchestra leaders, which he says can't be beaten. His string section includes Victor Young, Joe Venuti, George Hall and Eddie South, with Paul Whiteman holding down the viola assignment.

For his saxophone line-up Grier has Glenn Gray, Isham Jones, Jimmy Dorsey and Adrian Rollini. The trumpeters are Henry Busse, Ray Fox, Red Nichols and B. A. Rolfe; the trombonists Tommy Dorsey, Jack Teagarden and Slim Martin; and the bass pool is headed by Don Bestor by the coast band-leader.

At the piano, Duke Ellington

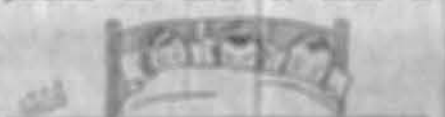


and Eddie Duchin would hold forth. Abe Lyman is assigned the drums, and Eddie Sabady is given the banjo spot. The quarterback

is Ben Bernie, and the vocalist is Rudy Vallee!

I like to contemplate the salary list!

The Howell Sisters have rented a home in Beverly Hills and installed in it a bed of extra width which permits all three of them to



smuggle under the same coverlet. They feel safer three in a bed.

But at midnight of their second night in the house Vet phoned Harry Leedy, their personal manager, and in anguished tones implored him to hurry over. Someone was in the house.

Harry and two cops he picked up on the way searched the house thoroughly, and found, on the bedroom window-sill, half a pint of Mexican jumping beans in a glass bowl!

RUDE INTERVIEW

me, and even "that'll be plenty to start. I wasn't Obviously a fine and dis-
Not that there Not that there Not that there
r me out. You r me out. You r me out. You
n two, as Duke n two, as Duke n two, as Duke
Band did, and Band did, and Band did, and
alive." alive." alive."
s that followed s that followed s that followed

TIGER RAG
1917-1934 not out

LEONARD G. FEATHER

very rashly beards the celebrated Tiger in his den and receives a

RIDDLE INTERVIEW

"Go away," growled the Tiger; "I'm tired."

Cautiously I approached the bars of the massive iron cage. The swarthy stripes on the handsome beast's back seemed to quiver with seething anger.

"Just a short statement, please," I begged. "To what do you attribute your tremendous popularity and your tremendous old age? What do you think of our modern girls?"

At last the tiger roused itself. Four sturdy limbs straightened and the creature turned slowly round to face me.

Coming In Through the Verse

"Come in through the verse," said the tiger; for there were two main gates confining it to its narrow limits of movement; the front, or verse, with its fifty-six bars, and the back, or chorus, with thirty-two.

Lately I tripped in and repeated my questions. "Popularity?" said the tiger.

"Aw, that's nothing. I happen to be a particularly well-formed specimen on not too elaborate lines—something that anyone can play about with in an odd moment. Whenever they're hard up for anything to do it's always 'Come on, boys, how about *The Tiger*'?—and there I am being worked to the bone again; and I can tell you here and now, I've had enough of it."

Creature of Wide Variety

I mumbled a few words of sympathy. A strange creature, this: one of ever-changing moods, of infinite variety. Perhaps that is the secret of its success: adaptability to all circumstances. There cannot be a musician in the whole of Great Britain who has not at some time employed this amazing veteran of the jazz game. Yet the facts of its history and origin are little known.

Coming from the same stable as *Sensation*, *Ostrich Walk*, *Clarinet Mambo*, and all the other war horses of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, the tiger was given to the world by D. J. La Rocca, the trumpeter of this famous group of pioneers. (He is said to have bought a large orange grove in California out of the royalties his pet has brought him in.)

Shy About His Birthday

Though shy about his precise birth date, the tiger confesses to having first visited England in 1917. I have a copy of the original piano solo. The cover shows the band of five, in very tight collars and very short trousers, peering out of the middle of a piano (by an epoch-making effort in trick photography). Underneath this are sketches of every animal from a cow to a donkey—with one exception. There is no tiger!

After this inauspicious war-time debut, the tiger languished in obscurity until 1919, when the Dixielanders performed it during their historic visit to the London Hippodrome.

It was not until 1922, however, that the young cub first enjoyed a real vogue. In that year the publishers boosted it rather like any commercial number (although it has never had any words), and after a while it lapsed into obscurity again.

man did that on me, and even Louis on his second visit. I want's born to be funny. Not that there isn't plenty of life in me—it takes a helluva lot to wear me out. You can even split me in two, as Duke Ellington's Jungle Band did, and still bring me back alive."

During the pause that followed

TIGER RAG 1917-1934 not out

BRUNSWICK: Elsader's O. Jungle B. (Parts I, II). Mills Bros. (vocal). Mound City Blue Blowers. Patti (banjo). Phillips Louisville Art Tatum (piano). Whistlers Jug Band.	DECCA: Jim Dorsey (sax, char.). Len Mills (banjo). Spike Hughes' O. Freddie Johnson's O. Phillip Lewis's O. Ramblers O. Lew Stone's O	ORIOLE: Harry Roy's Bat Club O. Roland Smith's Basecats PARLOPHONE: Armstrong's O. Tom Dorsey (trumpet). Moderniques (vocal). Harry Roy's O. Sam Wooding's O. PATHE: Lard Glasnik's O.
CAMEO: Cotton Pickers.	DOMINO: Missouri Jazz B.	DUOPHONE: Home Towners.
COLUMBIA: Dixieland Jazz B. (12in.). Gregor et ses Gregoriens Ted Lewis's O. Eddie Peabody (banjo). Red Davis. Paul Whiteman's O.	EDISON BELL: Midnight Stompers. GENNETT: Fifers Society O. H.M.V.: Dixieland Jazz B. Chas. Dornerberger's O. Hyllton's O. Ray Noble's O. Washboard Em. Boys.	REGAL & REGAL-ZONO: Billy Cotton's O. (New). Billy Cotton's O. (Super). Billy Cotton's O. (Third). Six Keyboard Kings (pianos). REX: Jack Payne's O. Washboard Novelty Quartet.
CROWNS: Fletcher Henderson's O. Joel Shaw.	HOMOCHORD: Orle. Eccentric Jazz B. LUMBERX: Orle. Harmonics.	WINNER: Southern Rag-a-Jazz B. ZONOPHONE: Orle. Capitol O.

I seemed to hear a quiet, almost feline purr of justifiable pride from this vicerey of the jungle. I asked for a justification of that statement about having made seventeen years of history.

"Easy. In the first place, my name's associated with the greatest hot chorus ever played: Jimmy Dorsey's also chorus in the Home Towners' version, which he repeated in Nichols' *That's for Big Gain* and Whiteman's *Whiteman Stomp*.

"In the second place, I was responsible for the only case of a band using the same subject on three different occasions on the same make of record—Billy Cotton on Regal.

First and Worst Mills

"And thirdly, for the first and worst Mills Bros. record ever made. And fourthly, for using more rums-de-plume than any other tune except *St. Louis Blues*. I've disguised myself as *Lion Rag*, *Stripping the Blues* and *Charley's Idea*; and, for the chorus only, as *High Life*, *Meinberg Jags*, *Fire*, and scores of other names. And fifthly—"

"That'll be plenty to go on with. Obviously a fine and distinguished career. In fact," I declared as I put away my notebook and prepared to leave, "I don't see what on earth you've got to be so fed up about."

"Plenty," retorted the tiger, with a touch of the old viciousness re-

turning again. "Here I am lapsing into senility, and nobody knows the real me! Nobody has ever read between the stripes, to see what I'm really like!"

How absurdly, astoundingly true. Of the thousands who have been acquainted with this poor beast, hardly a soul could whistle a single bar of the original melody that La Rocca gave to jazz!

Fed Up With All Musicians

"Well, now you know," said the tiger, "and perhaps you can leave me to a bit of peace and quiet for once. I'm fed up with musicians and everything to do with them. Close the gate quietly as you go."

Hastily I collected my hat, my coat, and my senses.

"And another thing," snapped the stenorian voice as I departed. "If you were a tiger, how would you like to have to live for seventeen years masquerading as a for trout?"

"There was no answer to that. My Rude Interview was over . . ."

The *Feet*, 2, V. 34.



Golden Era of



THE DIARY OF
PHOEBE
the FAN



I SAY, I say! All this talk about having an official censor at the B.B.C. may not be so stupid, you know. I was listening to the late dance music last night, and at a quarter-to-twelve they started to play a children's fairy story number.

Keeping the kiddies up till that hour of night is going to have a dreadful effect on the future of the nation, don't you think? So somebody ought to be appointed to tell Mr. Dare Lea he is being a bit too daring.

MONDAY

Quite a busy day digesting the contents of Leonard Hibbs's Short Survey of Modern Rhythm. On the first page there is Spike, being frightfully bashful about having to write an Introduction. In the middle page there is a long article by an American gentleman about Duke Ellington in words of not less than five syllables. It took me till lunch-time to get through that, and by tea-time I still hadn't fathomed out what it was all about, and I'm sure if Duke read it he would be just as mystified. Still, I suppose it impresses some people, so it's all to the good.

The best parts were the biographies and Edgar Jackson's discussions on the records in the survey, and I did particularly admire their frankness. I mean to say,

they didn't mind admitting that one or two of the records weren't altogether perfect.

It would be funny if that sort of thing went any farther and advertisers really did tell the truth. Imagine what the record catalogues would have to say! Something like this, I should think:—

"This month Paradox present another recent recording by King Fisher and his Fish. Note particularly the fluffy recording, the weakness of the reed section and the fact that the string bass rolled in bottled. Altogether this is one of Fisher's weakest performances, far inferior to his other version of the same number on Mecca."

"Here is another superlative performance by the Biscuit Breakers. Our American office has not the faintest idea when it was made. The soloists are Snodgrass, Postlethwaite, and 'Boo.' We are not certain of this, but nobody can contradict us. We believe this may be a white band, but we had better say it is coloured as this may improve our sales."

"Growlophone takes no pleasure in presenting a solo by 'Prince' Corn. This is at least seven years old and twelve years out of date, but we are short of material and the public is short-sighted, so what the hell?"

Silly, isn't it?

November 24, 1934



THE DIARY OF
PHOEBE
the FAN



MONDAY.

Sensational news! I've been making some changes in my band. That article in the "M.M.," about all the girls who run female bands in Gibraltar, sort of worried my conscience, so I put an advertisement in a daily paper for "one alto saxophonist; good-looking, sober, feminine."

Of course, there were one or two misunderstandings about the last bit, but several girls did turn up for auditions, and eventually I let one of them join the band.

I didn't kick my male sax out, because he has lent me several old Armstrongs and might want them back if there were any trouble; but

I don't mind having one extra in the band as long as it improves the results.

So far, I'm afraid it hasn't. This girl alto, whose name is Queenie, has been a lot of trouble so far. At her first date with us on Saturday night she said that her lipstick would keep coming off on the reed and clogging it. I told her that if it made her play the way she was playing she'd better give up lipstick, but she said she'd rather give up the saxophone.

This led to a bit of an impasse, as the French say. If there's much trouble of this sort I shall have to retire from the band business. Too old at twenty!

TUESDAY.

A French boy came along with Jimmy this evening and brought some interesting records with him that haven't been issued in England. Have you ever heard Louis Armstrong's *Lonesome Road*, for instance? It's really frightfully intriguing. There's hardly any music in it at all, except for background, and not even any singing; just dialogue from beginning to end. And after a little while you begin to realise that it's a sort of running commentary on a Harlem tea-party!

I think some of our English fans ought to hear *Lonesome Road*. Some of the details might rather surprise them — but then, that would do them good. Anyway, talking like this makes me feel awfully superior, because I know there are lots of people who don't know what a tea-party is.

WEDNESDAY.

What a funny coincidence! Today Jimmy received a copy of the programme of the big Armstrong concert they held in Paris last week. Louis sent it to him himself. And it seems that Louis has written a number called *Song of the Vipers*.

Now write and tell me you don't know what a viper is either, and I shall get the greatest superiority complex in history.

THURSDAY.

We did another date with Queenie to-night. She wore kiss-proof lipstick, and I think the situation is saved.

By the way, somebody came up to me and made a request for *Moon Indigloo*. Can you beat that?

1.12.34
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The next meeting of the Southend-on-Sea Rhythm Club No. 35 will be held on Sunday, December 2, at 3 p.m., in the Hotel Victoria, when Leonard Feather, the Vice-President, will entertain members with a record recital.

1923
 "Wolverines" Band formed. Recorded "Fres Wheeling" (Riverboat Shuffle) for Gannett.
 Mound City Blue Blowers recorded "Arkansas Blues" and "San" for Brunswick.
 Ellington toured as pianist with Wilbur Sweatman's Band.
 Goldkette recorded for Victor; band included Bill Rank.
 Trumbauer recorded for Brunswick with Gene Rodemich's Band.

1924
 Original Memphis Five played at Balconnes in 56th St., New York.
 Wolverines at Roseland Ballroom, N.Y. Band include Vic Burton and Eddie Lang. Before this, Lang was with first Dorsey Band named Scranton Syrens.
 Bix left Wolverines.
 Mound City B.B. absorbed in Ray Miller's Orchestra and featured as separate attraction. The B.B.'s alone visited England, with Eddie Lang leading on Banjo. Played Holborn Empire and Piccadilly Hotel. Recorded "Wigwam Blues" and "Blues in F" over here for Chappell's—issued on Brunswick.

First Ellington band formed in Washington; with Duke, Whetsel, Bigard, Greer and Hardwick. Between now and the end of 1927, Duke recorded for Brunswick, Vocalion, Perfect, Harmony, Columbia, Victor and Okeh. Many disc names were used such as "Washingtonians," "Whoopie Makers," "Harlem Footwarmers," etc., and some under his own name. Notable compositions of this period include "Black and Tan Fantasy," "East St. Louis," "Parlour Social Stomp," "Jubilee Stomp," "The Mooche," "Take It Easy," "Creole Love Call" and "Hot and Bothered."

1925
 Armstrong reaches New York, via Chicago (he was brought to the Windy City by King Oliver), and joins Henderson. Impossible to trace Henderson records featuring Armstrong. But Louis recorded "Gut Bucket Blues" with Hot Five this year. Between this date and 1928 Armstrong recorded as follows: "Georgia-Bo-Bo" and "Drop That Sack" for Brunswick; "Candy Lips," "Wild Man Blues," "Savoy Blues" and many others for Okeh. Band included Lily Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, Ory and Buddy Sincere.

1926
 Venuti, Lang, Bix, Trumbauer and Don Murray with Goldkette.
 Ellington at Kentucky Club, New York. Later the band was augmented to 12 pieces and installed at Cotton Club by Irving Mills.
 First "Blue Four" record for Okeh. Venuti, Lang, Schutt and Rollini in "Kicking the Cat" and "Beating the Dog."

1927
 "Red Nichols' Five Pennies" formed. First record "Washboard Blues" and "That's No Bargain." Issued on British Brunswick.

Bix-Trumbauer era opens with "Singin' the Blues"; band includes Lang. Subsequently Rollini, Schutt and Venuti.
 Venuti formed "New Yorkers" with above mentioned members of Goldkette's band, plus Rollini, Bob Davis, Morehouse, Signorelli and Sylvester Ahola.

DATA IN DATE FORM

I would like to acknowledge, with gratitude, the help of Miss Bettie Edwards and Mr. Leonard Feather in the compilation of these columns.

LEONARD HIBBS.

Rank and Trumbauer joined White man.
 Later in year, Venuti and Lang joined Roger Wolfe Kahn.
 Rollini, Chelsea Quealey and Fud Livingstone in Elizalde band at Savoy (London).
 Jack Teagarden in Bennie Pollack's Band.
 Henderson records (with Colman Hawkins and Don Redman) in this and following year include: "Sensation," "Fidgety Feet" and "Hot Mustard" for Brunswick, and "I'm Coming Virginia" (Columbia).

1928
 Teagarden and Sullivan replace Mole and Schutt in Five Pennies.
 Death of Don Murray.
 Venuti and Lang join Whiteman.
 "King of Jazz" made. Prominent in film are Venuti, Lang, Trumbauer, Charlie Margulis, Matt Malneck, Bing Crosby and other members of all-star contingent.
 Casa Loma Band formed.
 Many famous musicians record with Red Mackenzie (Venuti, Lang, Hawkins, etc.).
 Earl Hines joins Armstrong.
 Records made: Muggles, West End Blues, Monday Date, Knees Drops, Fireworks, Melancholy and Wild Man Blues. (Last two for Brunswick.)

1929
 Trumbauer recorded as "Mason-Dixon Orchestra."
 Bix leaves Whiteman.
 Ellington's "Jungle Band" series starts with Brunswick. "Tiger Rag," "Harlem Flat Blues," etc., are of this period. Also records for Columbia as "Joe Turner's Memphis Men" and as "Sonny Greer and his men." Also recorded for Victor such numbers as "Flaming Youth," "Doing the Voom Voom" and "Stevadore Stomp."
 Armstrong records: With Savoy Five-Basin St. Blues, Save it Pretty Mama, Tight like this, etc.; With Teagarden, Lang, Happy Cauldwell and Signorelli—Knocking a Jug; With Carroll Dickerson Orch.—After you've gone, Ain't Misbehaving, Black and Blue, etc.
 England begins to become aware of Hot Music.

1930
 Langham Radio organised Hot Record Concert in London.
 Bix makes his last records with Carmichael Disc Band for Victor.
 Red Nicholswich commercial band in Broadway Musical Comedies, notably "Good News."
 Armstrong makes many good records with Luis Russell's band and Coconut Orchestra, but his output is marred by some frankly commercial records. A period from which he has shown no improvement.

Even Ellington recorded many inferior numbers in this, the first year after the big slump in the States. His com-

positions of this year, however, included such masterpieces as "Mood Indigo," and "Rockin' in Rhythm."
 Jimmy Dorsey in London with Ted Lewis' Band. Records for Decca with Spike Hughes' Orchestra.

1931
 Bix died August 7th.
 Trumbauer recorded on Brunswick with part of Whiteman band.
 Henderson recorded for Brunswick as "Connie's Inn Orchestra"—Just Blues, House of David Blues; also some titles for Victor, Columbia and Parlophone belong to this period. Higginbotham supplanted Benny Morton this year.
 Armstrong records include: Body and Soul, Confessin', etc.
 Ellington compositions include: Creole Rhapsody, Mystery Song. It don't mean a thing, etc.

1932
 Venuti-Lang All Star band makes four sides. Released on Panachord in England.
 First Mills Brothers record on Brunswick "Tiger Rag" and "Nobody's Sweetheart."
 First Boswell Sisters record on Parlophone—later they become exclusively Brunswick.
 Don Redman on Brunswick: "Chant of the Woods" and "Shakin' the Africann."

Bubber Miley died (about May).
 Eddie Lang and Carl Kress make two duets for Brunswick, "Picking my Way" and "Feeling my Way."
 "Big Broadcast" film made with many Brunswick stars: Bing Crosby, Mills Bros., Boswell Sisters, Eddie Lang.
 Armstrong records—with Chicago group such titles as "Georgia" and "You Rascal you;" later for Victor "That's my Home" and others. Louis first visits England this year also.
 Ellington compositions include: Lazy Rhapsody, Blue Tune, Blue Ramble, Blue Harlem, Best Wishes, Swing Low, Ducky Wucky, and Lightnin'. All for Brunswick.

1933
 Eddie Lang died March 26th.
 Armstrong's records include: Snowball, Dusky Stevedore, etc. No further recordings by Louis since his second visit to Europe this year.
 Dorsey Brothers have only outstanding White band. "Shim-sham-shimmy," etc., recorded for Brunswick.
 Spike Hughes completes fourteen sides for Decca with all star Negro band.
 Current style of hot playing reaches apex in many discs by Allen-Hawkins Orchestra.
 Ellington visits Europe. Records for Brunswick before trip, Decca in London, and Victor on return to States.
 Notable compositions include: Jive Stomp, Harlem Speaks, Ev'ry Tub (Hyde Park), Dragon Blues, Slippery Horn, etc.

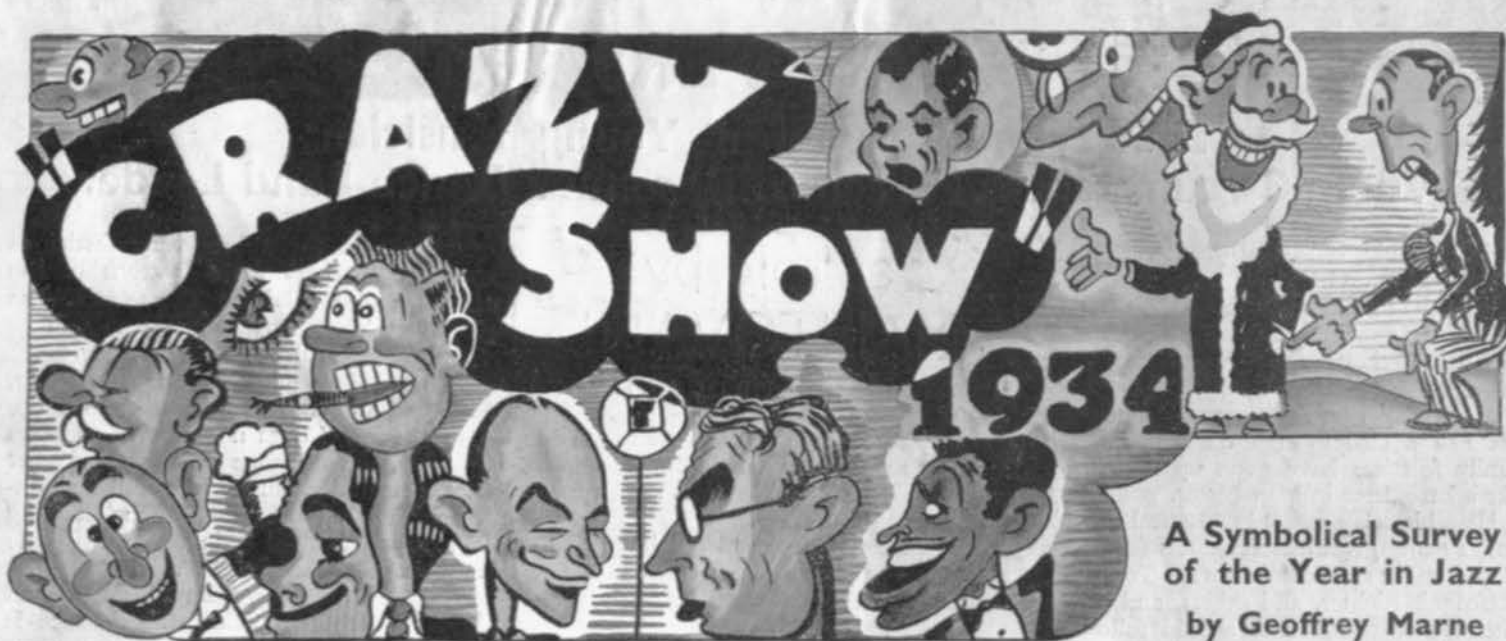
1934
 Fletcher Henderson's band reaches zenith immediately prior to Hawkins' visit to Europe.
 Venuti in Europe.
 First attempt to bring all-star Black and White band to Europe fails.
 Ellington compositions include: Day-break Express, Sompny Jones, Blue Feeling, Solitude, Saddest Tale, Sumpn'bout Rhythm, etc.

A - SHORT - SURVEY OF MODERN RHYTHM ON BRUNSWICK RECORDS

EDITED BY
LEONARD HIBBS

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PRICE : : : : : ONE SHILLING



A Symbolical Survey of the Year in Jazz by Geoffrey Marne

(NOTE.—The author claims no responsibility in connection with the events described below. They have been set down exactly as they occurred to him in a somewhat kaleidoscopic dream. All dreams being products of the subconscious mind, any complaints arising out of this article should therefore be addressed, not to the author, but to his subconscious self.)

It was a dark and stormy night.

Slithering to a gradual halt in the lush, crisp snow, the bevy of reindeers pulled up in front of the massive stone building. Santa Claus dropped the reins, turned round and beckoned to me.

"Here's where we get out."

I followed my white-bearded host through the icicle-clad entrance hall. The strange sight that then met my eyes can best be described as a sort of cross between Radio-lympia and the Agricultural Society's Cattle Show.

"May I present," said Santa Claus, with a flourish, "my special Christmas attraction—the Musical Crazy Show of 1934?"

I blinked and looked again. Something particular attracted my attention on this second glance. Stretched across the entire length of the building was a long, narrow white carpet, apparently made of paper.

"Why?" I demanded.

"Somebody wanted to know what would happen if all the 1934 song hits that rhymed June with Moon and Dawn with Gone were stretched end to end. So you see what we did. All those numbers are supposed to have 'cleaned up'; now the visitors' footprints are helping to dirty them down."

Passing further along the array of stands we came to a small cell with rubber-padded walls. Entering gingerly, I found a wild-eyed young man bathing in a veritable mountain of manuscript paper.

"That," explained Santa, "is the poor devil who tried to transcribe, note for note, Ellington's record of *Daybreak Express*."

Muttering a few words of sympathy, I moved on. Next we came to a small—oh, very small!—glass case containing some queer-looking pipes and reeds, like relics of some mediæval music.

"In this cabinet," said Santa, "are the instruments which Teddy Joyce doesn't even claim he can play! . . .

Ah, and now we come to a speciality—a mechanical marvel. Examine it closely."

We were standing before an extraordinary gadget consisting of a movable armchair and a number of pedals and levers.

"This is a special machine for settling Reggie Forsythe in his job at the Café de la Paix and then taking him out again. Press this lever and he leaves. Press the other one and his successor departs; then in goes Reggie again. This saves a great deal of time and trouble. I believe the management are going to adopt it permanently as



"The poor devil who tried to transcribe *'Daybreak Express'* . . ."



"Press this lever and he leaves. Press the other one and his successor departs . . ."

soon as Reggie comes back from the States."

"Next we have—no, we'll leave that. Just a cross-talk comedy act."

"But who are the two comedians?" I asked, gazing at the platform on the very crowded stall we had now reached.

"Oh, one's a dance-band leader who says the B.B.C. ought to pay him to broadcast. The other's a B.B.C. official (mogul to you) who says he ought to be thankful for the publicity and leave filthy lucre out of it. We can come back here later, as it's a continuous performance—they've been at it all the year, ever since the exhibition opened."

Again we moved. Another glass case on a pedestal attracted our gaze. In it was a small urn, and in the urn a few sad grey cinders. Once more Santa obliged with an explanation.

"Those are the ashes of the Armstrong-Hawkins concert which never came off. Bean, as you may remember, ran off and left Louis in the lurch."

"A sort of runner Bean," I commented.

"Precisely. Next we come to one of the big attractions—the Scales of Musical Justice. There, you see, on one side is Mildred Bailey; and weighed against her are all the other leading female vocalists. The scales are tipped heavily down on Mildred's side, showing that—"

"I know," I interrupted. "She weighs 250 lb. So what?"

"Actual avoirdupois is ignored by these scales," replied Santa. "The indications are not physical but metaphysical. Similarly, I have divided all the 1934 records from the English lists into two groups—those that were actually made this year and those that weren't. Put them on the scales."

I obeyed. Imagine my consternation when I found the older records weighing down the scales with considerable force. The 1934 productions did not seem to carry any weight at all besides the mass of

Ellington, Trumbauer and Red Nichols re-issues.

"And now that we are on the subject of records," added Father Christmas, "let me take you to the biggest side-show of the lot—the boxing match. The fight is called The Disc Scales Championship of Great Britain, and all the big record firms have entered contestants. A new round is fought every fortnight."

"Who are the couple fighting now?"
 "There we have the most exciting battle of the year—Hot versus Hot-Cha. On the side of Hot you have Duke, the Dorseys, Venuti and scores of others: the Hot-Cha contingent is represented by Calloway, Lunceford, Harry Roy, Charley Kunz and

one or two more. But it's a one-sided fight. The public are the referees, and they give Hot-Cha the verdict every time. That's the way it's been all the time in 1934. And the winner takes all."

"All what?"
 "Why, the

royalties from the record sales. Incidentally, you see those four boys in the showcase just by the exit?"

I said I did.

"They," I was told, "are the vocal quartet who don't imitate the Mills Brothers. One of the rarest and most sensational attractions in the whole show. And you observe that pot on the other side of them? It contains all the ink that was spilt on the Black-and-White Band plan which ended in smoke. Still, 's'no use crying over spilt ink. Oi! Are you listening?"

I pulled myself together with a start. Drinking in all the details of this amazing merry-go-round must have set my brain in a whirl. Realising that the time had arrived for drinking in something less abstract, mine host now led me to the restaurant, where he joined me in a quick one. Then he subjected me to a volley of questions as to how I had enjoyed the show.

"Extraordinary—unparalleled, and all that," I murmured, feeling that no words would be quite adequate.

"But," said he, with a smile, "you ain't seen nothin' yet. The biggest show of all is here in this restaurant. You see all the

folks around you—these rather lachrymose looking specimens?"

"These are all the West-End musicians who lost their regular work through night clubs and restaurants closing down during the course of the year. And the folks on the bandstand are just members of the general public. You see, the two factions have changed places . . . Well, I told you this was a Crazy Show."

"Look at those two statues across there. One represents Jack Hylton, in honour of his efforts to break down the barriers of the A.F.M. The other is of Ray Noble, who wanted to be a conductor in New York and landed as a song-writer in Hollywood. They took away his baton, but they couldn't rob him of his pen. Oh, and that reminds me—

you must wait here to see the cabaret."

"Who on earth," I spluttered, "is giving that? More laymen?"

"On the contrary. It'll be a benefit performance for these poor English musicians in the audience, organised and performed by Calloway and his Band, Hawkins, the Mills Brothers, Sophie Tucker, Armstrong, Howard Jacobs, Ben Blue and all the other American artistes who've been working in this country during the year."

"And what," I asked weakly, "what good will the money do them? Will it get them back their jobs?"

"Oh, no! You see the idea is to provide them with their fares to America, so that they can try to earn a living out there the same as all these Americans have over here."

"But how can they? The regulations in the States . . ."

"I know, I know. The idea's theoretical, not practical. And don't keep asking awkward questions, anyway. You can't expect straight answers in a Crazy Show."

So saying, Santa Claus grabbed me by the wrist and dragged me out into the darkness to commence the long reindeer journey home.



"Hot versus Hot-Cha . . ."



"Those two statues across there . . ."



"Set my brain in a whirl . . ."



15.12.34

The next meeting of the Southend-on-Sea Rhythm Club No. 35 will be held on Sunday, December 16, at the Hotel Victoria, when Leonard Feather and Bert Read will be the guests of honour.

No. 35

THE DIARY OF PHOEBE the FAN

THURSDAY.

Quite a marvellous evening yesterday; a whole hour of Louis in person from Paris. At least, it was supposed to be a whole hour, but it started off with somebody talking for ten minutes in French, which Beta translated for me. It seems the gist of it was that playing hot is the art of making silk purses out of cows' ears, or something equally complicated. After this talk Louis

played three numbers and then a girl called Arita Day started singing.

Then everything stopped and there were some advertisements for furniture. The next quarter of an hour must have had a different sponsor, because he kept on interrupting with advertisements for silk stockings. I thought for one awful moment he was going to make Louis come to the mike and give them a testimonial.

Still, it was enough of him to show that he still knows how to play a trumpet, whatever anyone says. In fact, I've only got one complaint, and that is, when Hermal Chitison played a piano solo of Heat Wave it wasn't quite fair to follow it up by announcing that "that was Louis Armstrong and his Band playing Honeysuckle Rose." A tiny bit far-fetched, don't you think?

MONDAY.

When Jimmy was at Cambridge he always used to write and tell me what a hotbed of hot music it was. Although I think "hotbed" is a peculiar word, I quite agreed with him, because he proved it by sending me copies of a University paper called "The Granta," which had a page of record reviews every week by a chap named Wiltz, who wrote once or twice in the "M.M."

Of course, Wiltz has left Cambridge now, and Jimmy was kicked out long ago; but another boy friend of mine has just sent me some new "Grantas," and you really ought to get hold of them.

They still have hot record criticisms—and how! There is a frightfully dogmatic sort of gent who signs himself "M.M." (how odd!) and writes in that superior, you-can't-tell-me-anything sort of way that makes so many things about Cambridge quite mildly amusing. He thinks *Imagination* is a tune with no imagination, and has some strange ideas about personnels.

Which reminds me. I must try to rake up a boy friend at Oxford and get him to send me all the magazines that are published there. For all I know, Oxford and Cambridge may be twin hotbeds.

18.12.34

THE DIARY OF PHOEBE the FAN

TUESDAY.

Have you ever studied animal life at close quarters?

Last night at a Rhythm Club I saw a lot of bent figures huddled around a box of records. They snatched at them like squirrels at a nut, and made funny throat noises rather like an owl, only they called it "bargaining"; and when they had got what they wanted they'd run off with their prey and gloat over it at home like vultures. And that's what goes on at a hot record market.

Funny to think that there are people who'd rather pay ten bob for a worn-out 1923 Original Memphis Five than give half-a-crown for a brand new super sixteen-piece arrangement of the latest hit from Charing Cross Road.

Not that I blame them. Matter of fact, I'm one of them myself. . . .

WEDNESDAY.

This afternoon I had an extraordinary general meeting of my band. Very extraordinary. Gigs are getting so scarce that I'm beginning to wonder if a woman's place isn't in the home after all.

I still want more girls in the band; in fact, I'm trying to get my cousin Beta to join. She doesn't play anything, but I've got hold of an old guitar with the first two strings missing, so she can play it

like a ukulele and everything will be fine.

THURSDAY.

Another tragedy! My drummer can't come to the only gig we've got this week because he's going to have some offspring any moment.

He says he's going to teach it to say Daddy-Mummy (Joke for drummers.)

FRIDAY.

Good news! Beta's joined up. She says it'll take her mind off her worries. She's been awfully depressed the last few months; you see, she'd been collecting some very rare records from all over the world, and getting lots of fun out of playing them to people who couldn't get hold of them; but now most of the records have been issued and re-issued in England, so that anyone can buy them, and she doesn't get any kick out of playing them at all. Of course, they're just as good music as they ever were, but that part of it doesn't seem to have struck Beta at all.

Spent this evening answering fan mail. Some awfully stupid questions. One girl wanted to know if the coloured pianist, Clarence Profit, is any relation to Joe Loss. I wrote back and said the answer is Larry Gains.



THE DIARY OF PHOEBE the FAN



SATURDAY.

It had to happen!

When I wrote about Cambridge and "The Grants" and its hot record reviews I dropped a pretty heavy hint that I wanted to find out whether Oxford had anything like that, too. And some kind friend has sent me a copy of "The Isis," and low and behold, there is a feature called "Rhythm," which is every bit as good as its name!

This fellow signs himself "String Bass." Now that's really odd. Can

it be Spike Hughes up to his old tricks?

Oh! Now I've dropped the most awful brick. Fancy mentioning Spike and Oxford in the same breath. Next time he sees me he's sure to cut me dead.

MONDAY.

Had an awful row to-day with Jimmy. He started getting temperamental and saying he was beyond hot music. I suppose there comes a time when that happens to all of us, but when Jimmy began to challenge me to produce an absolutely faultless Armstrong record I must say I lost my temper.

Mind you, I must say I was surprised how hard it was to answer the challenge. It was hours before I could find a record without the tiniest hesitation or suspicion of a wrong note, and even when I did manage to, Jimmy generally proved I was wrong. And the fact that I really *was* wrong naturally made me all the more annoyed.

So Jimmy and I have reached the Parting of the Ways, and Jimmy has gone to Higher Things, and I'm busy coaching a boy named Philip, who's only just getting past the Harry Roy stage at the moment, but ought to be quite good company after I've given him a few months' education.

I say, excuse all these personal details. I shall soon have to call this diary "The Private Life of Phoebe the Fan."

THURSDAY.

Well, I suppose it's time to start wishing you wishes, what with Christmas so near and New Year not much further. By the way, did I ever tell you my idea of an ideal Christmas? Here it is, in four easy instalments:—

CHAPTER I.

Harlem Bound.

CHAPTER II

Drop Me Off At Harlem

CHAPTER III

Christmas Night In Harlem

CHAPTER IV

Fare Thee Well To Harlem

—but after a night like that it would be a bad case of Harlem On My Mind!

Anyway, a rhythmic Christmas and a swing New Year to you all.

22.12.34

23.12.34



THE DIARY OF PHOEBE the FAN



TUESDAY.

Oh, dear! I shall never forget this Christmas. First of all, the miserable job of buying records for a party. Have you ever been in that awful position when you know that lots of corny people are coming to your dance, and they won't stand for your hot records? And you have to buy something that'll suit them without being too utterly unbearable to listen to yourself?

I've had to go through that this

Christmas, and you've no idea what agony it was. The Mills Brothers and the Boswells are always safe, of course; and I got hold of a record by Hoagy Carmichael's Orchestra of *Barnacle-Bill The Sailor* (of all things!) which was bound to go down well because it had a little bit of bad language in it.

But as for the rest of the records I had to endure listening to, the bad language was entirely mine. . . .

WEDNESDAY.

Spent the morning in bed preparing my New Year resolutions, which I am going to have inscribed on my radiogram in gold paint to stare at me all through 1935.

Here are the ones I've thought of so far:—

(1) To give up hot music for evermoremen.

(2) To be frightfully cynical about everything and never admit liking anything or anybody. If Stanley Nelson can get away with it, why can't I?

(3) To give up my habit of playing records to boy friends over the telephone. I know the operators listen in, and one day I'll be reported, and the Board of Trade or somebody will swoop down on me for Entertainment Tax, and I'm broke enough already.

(4) To give up price-cutting for my gigs—if everyone else gives up price-cutting first.

(5) To keep up my good record in this diary of not making a single joke about Bellshah beacons.

How's that for a start?

THURSDAY.

Well, I'm having a grand final fling before my Resolutions start working. Yesterday I played the whole Super Rhythm Style Series by telephone to a boy in hospital.

Anyway, I'm safe there—they can't take Entertainment Tax for a charity performance!

And I've made just one more resolution:—

(6) Not to take the slightest notice of any of my resolutions—except this one!—

Happy New Year!

It is against the rules of journalistic etiquette to reveal pen-names, so I mustn't start describing too accurately those people you know as "Mike the Fan," "you and "The Busker." Take him anywhere, take him out to Tudor Street. If you do you will be accompanied by a searthy-looking bloke with a greasy face, sticky hair, and a plumpness that suggests his hobbies are indoor ones. As we pass through the office we shall probably see "Pick-Up," playing one of his pet Whitesman's on the office radiogram, thus disturbing the peace of everyone within earshot. If you tell him to stop that damned noise he'll "stop" his rhythmic humming and look up with a pained but resigned expression. "But, old man," he'll say, "this is a Whitesman record!" As if that justified kicking him brutally on the shin. We pass on to where Leonard Feather, a slim, quietly-spoken young fellow who looks about sixteen volumes of the *Muzoey Maxx* in search of those impressive statistical surveys of his.

A Strange Girl

Quite close to him is "Phoebe the Fan," that feminine Peggy, who is not so dumb as she makes out. Charming. You'd be surprised. You ought to meet her.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Shakespeare and the Gramophone Companies Agree that it is of No Consequence

THE best hot records are divided into three classes: (a) those made by the big stars under their own names; (b) those made by star artists, but under assumed names; (c) those made by artists whose names are not usually associated with good hot music.

Having dilated in these pages upon the respective recordings, mostly in class (a), of the leading American bands, I intend to deal here with the various *noms de disque* that have, to the utter confusion of the collector, been employed during the last few years.

The accompanying table of records in class (b) does not pretend to be entirely comprehensive. Most of the leading musicians of the Golden Era of jazz were so much in demand by recording companies that their copious activities with varying combinations for different firms are impossible to trace with complete accuracy. But this list covers all the pseudonyms that are likely to have puzzled the average English fan.

One or two cases, however, still remain shrouded in doubt. For example, any old 1927 MELODY MAKER will tell you that the "Red Heads" featured a trumpet player called Ted Shilling, reputed at that time to be a great favourite in the States. But the style is unmistakably that of Nichols, and all the evidence seems to point to him.

Incidentally, Red, like so many other stars in their early days, was often heard in the rôle of accompanist. You can hear him with Ed Lang behind the warblings of one Peggy English in an Oriole release entitled *High, High, High Up In The Hills*.

Louis, too, played in several vocal race records on Okeh, accompanying Baby Mack, Nolan Welsh, and other artists. There are a couple of titles by Little Deik Christian,

one of which is our old friend, *Was It A Dream*. Imagine Louis battling with a waltz!

Ed Lang also accompanied innumerable vocalists, amongst whom were Gene Austin and Russell Douglas. This brings up my point about section (c)—the records which, from the name on the label, promise nothing exciting.

It is a typical weakness of the record fan that he is apt to rely too much on names. On seeing a record with the magic words "Duke Ellington" or "Louis Armstrong" on the label he immediately assumes that the disc must be worth buying.

In the same way, if he sees Ted Lewis's name, or Boyd Senter's, he automatically recoils in horror. Wrong again! Some of Eddie Lang's greatest work was featured in accompaniment to the outpourings of Senter on Parlophone.

Furthermore, there was at least one excellent orchestral record issued under the same much-despised name, "Original Chinese Blues," in which Tram, Biz, and many of the old gang are heard, very little solo space being devoted to Senter himself. And around the same period famous soloists

such as Biz, Lang and Venuti bobbed up in certain titles by the Denza Dance Band on Columbia and Sam Lanin's and Fred Hall's groups on Parlophone.

Many of the more recent Ted Lewis Columbias, dating from 1931 and '32, also contain some good stuff. Muggsy Spanier makes quite a delightful job of *Lonesome Road*. In *Royal Garden Blues* and *Dallas Blues* there are Muggsy, Fats Waller singing at the piano, and Benny Goodman. One or two other titles feature good work by Dorsey.

All these records contain little or nothing that is out of date or unmusical. Yet Ted Lewis's band is often assumed to epitomize all that is corniest in jazz!

This year, at least two parallel cases have arisen.

The first is that of Jimmy Lunceford. Because of the weakness of some of his earlier titles, his very pleasing *Nanz* was most inadequately welcomed.

Secondly, Isham Jones, whose

ROSES—UNDER OTHER NAMES

Baltimore Bellhops, Blind Willie Dunn's Gin Bottle Four, Blue Racketeers.	Parlophone, Okeh "race records." Decca.	Henderson's Orchestra. Ed Lang and Lonnie Johnson's quartet. "Clarinet Marmalade" and "Old Apple Tree" were Casa Loma Orch.; "Scat Song" was Blue Rhythm Band.
Buddy's Brigade.	Parlophone ("Kiss by Kiss" and "Buddy's Wednesday Outing").	Spike Hughes and his Orch.
Chocolate Dandies.	(a) Parlo. pre-Rhythm Style titles. (b) 1st and 2nd Rm. Style Series titles. (c) Super-Rm. Style Series titles. (d) Vocalion and Brunswick titles.	(a) McKinney's Cotton Pickers, dir. by Don Redman. (b) Benny Carter and Hawkins' group. (c) John Hammond session, with Carter and Choo (1933). (d) "Levee Lowdown," "Straddle the Fence," etc.: Chick Webb's Orch.
Charleston Chasers.	(a) Early Columbias. (b) "Moanin' Low," "Sing You Sinners," "Lovable and Sweet," etc. (c) "Basin St." and "Beale St. Blues." Brunswick, Victor. Parlophone.	(a) Red Nichols' group. (b) Red Mackenzie group. (c) Benny Goodman group. Henderson's Orch. Henderson's Orch.
Connie's Inn Orch. Duke of Harlem and his Flunkeys. Fenton's Rainbows.	Filmophone: "Farewell Blues" and "Mood Indigo." Amer. Columbia: "Saturday Night Function," "Beggars Blues." Parlophone. "House Hop," Panachord, "Red Devil," etc., Brunswick. Brunswick.	Cab Calloway's Orch. Ellington's Orch. Ellington's Orch. Blue Rhythm Band.
Greer's, Sonny, Memphis Men.	Amer. Columbia: "What A Day," "Alabama Snow." Victor. Parlophone. Parlophone: "When You're Smiling." Pathe Actuelle.	Ellington's Orch. in all titles except "Dog Bottom," "Jungle Mama." These were by Chick Webb's Orch. Don Redman's Orch. Blue Rhythm Band. Red Nichols' Orch.
Harlem Footwarmers. Jackson, Earl and Orch. Jungle Band.	Parlophone. Parlophone. Parlophone: "When You're Smiling." Pathe Actuelle.	Frank Trumbauer's Orch. Cab Calloway's Orch. Casa Loma Orch. Armstrong's Orch.
Lattimore, Harlan and his Connie's Inn Orch. Lee, Baron and Orch. Louisiana Rhythm Kings. Mason Dixon Orch.	Amer. Columbia: "What A Day," "Alabama Snow." Victor. Parlophone. Parlophone: "When You're Smiling." Pathe Actuelle.	Red Nichols (?) and Orch. Red Nichols' Orch.
Missourians. O.K. Rhythm Kings. Philadelphia Melodians.	Domino: "Memphis Blues," "Saint Louis Blues." Parlophone. Amer. Columbia: "Freeze an' Melt," "Mississippi Moan." Brunswick, Vocalion. Perfect, etc. "Melancholy," "Wild Man Blues," Brunswick.	Henderson's Orch. Ellington's Orch. Ellington's Orch. Ellington's Orch. Armstrong's Hot Five.
Red Heads.	Domino: "Memphis Blues," "Saint Louis Blues." Parlophone. Amer. Columbia: "Freeze an' Melt," "Mississippi Moan." Brunswick, Vocalion. Perfect, etc. "Melancholy," "Wild Man Blues," Brunswick.	Red Nichols (?) and Orch. Red Nichols' Orch.
Six Hottentots.	Domino: "Memphis Blues," "Saint Louis Blues." Parlophone. Amer. Columbia: "Freeze an' Melt," "Mississippi Moan." Brunswick, Vocalion. Perfect, etc. "Melancholy," "Wild Man Blues," Brunswick.	Henderson's Orch. Ellington's Orch.
Stokers of Hades. Turner, Joe, and his Memphis Men.	Parlophone. Amer. Columbia: "Freeze an' Melt," "Mississippi Moan." Brunswick, Vocalion. Perfect, etc. "Melancholy," "Wild Man Blues," Brunswick.	Ellington's Orch. Ellington's Orch. Armstrong's Hot Five.
Washingtonians. Whoopee Makers. Wynn, Jack and his Orch.	Parlophone. Amer. Columbia: "Freeze an' Melt," "Mississippi Moan." Brunswick, Vocalion. Perfect, etc. "Melancholy," "Wild Man Blues," Brunswick.	Ellington's Orch. Ellington's Orch. Armstrong's Hot Five.

name one usually connects with the straightest of sweet society styles, produced some excellent hot soloists in *I've Found A New Baby*. And so on, and so on.

In short, if you want your collection to assume any vestige of com-

pleteness, you must remember that records, like old coins, cannot be assessed by their face value.

Now look at the list of Roses by Other Names and observe how sweet they smell.

Shakespeare had the right idea.

by
**LEONARD
G.
FEATHER**

FAREWELL TO 1934!

LEONARD G. FEATHER

surveys the past twelve months and finds that

Jazz Has Progressed But Little in 1934

Dorsey Brothers, and Benny Goodman.

Consider that list of names—and then look at this selection of some of the old records put out in England this year:—

Armstrong's *Dear Old Southland*, My Sweet, Tram's *Singing The Blues*, Carmichael's *Lazy River*, Bix's *In A Mist*, Duke's *Baby*, When You Ain't There, Venuti's *Pretty Triz*, and twenty-eight titles by the Five Pennies!

Need I go any further? Counterbalancing this, you have Henderson's *Happy Feet*, Duke's *Rude Interlude* and *Saddest Tale*, and some frustrated efforts by Foresythe; for these are the only 1934 band records that can honestly be called *progressive*. The comparison is odious.

Let us, then, console ourselves with the suggestion that this has been a soloists' year. *Dance Of The Octopus* and Norvo's other numbers were progressive; so were Carl Kress's *Danson* and Tatum's *After You've Gone*.

England Doesn't Do Badly

And what of English music? Quite apart from Foresythe, who has already been mentioned, the year has been a fruitful one altogether. Hylton's excellent *Black And Blue Rhythm*; several good

Gonellas and some brilliant hot records by Lew Stone's Band; two or three others by Roy Fox and Billy Cotton; an English Blue Four led by Venuti; another hot quartet, under Hawkins, and finally the Six Swingers, who show once and for all that British buskology can sound just as sincere as the craziest Chicago gut-bucketing, and twice as musical.

By and large, then, the outlook for 1935 is fair, with many bright patches. Ellington's recommencement on Brunswick portends many gems which will probably lead the field in advanced rhythmic thought. But the future does not necessarily lie in Harlem. The Dorsey Brothers or Benny Goodman may turn up with some new sensation at any moment, and perhaps Foresythe may at last find a suitable medium for the expression of his talents.

Who knows? We may live to see not only a big white revival, but a parallel with the situation in the film industry, where Britain is challenging America's long-guarded monopoly. It may not be in 1935, or even in 1936, or '37; but however far ahead it lies, it can only be reached through the spirit of enthusiasm and fierce competition that has made this year of grace a memorable one in the history of hot music.

Welcome to 1935—and may a good year be had by all!

evident how usefully they have subscribed towards the progressive musical policy for which the "M.M." stands. Admittedly, if the members of these societies would condescend to discuss the records that are played to them instead of listening dumbly and evolving no personal opinions, the value of these meetings would be greater still. However, the rhythm clubs appear to be well on the way to establishing themselves as a permanent and considerable factor in increasing the commercial potentialities of hot music.

This brings up the question of hot records. For the fans, as I said, it has been a bumper year. No less than 130 records issued during the year come roughly into the category of "hot rhythm" music.

The average successful hot record sells about 5,000 copies. This figure, unlike those for all other classes of records, does not show any decrease on corresponding figures for the previous two or three years. In fact, the hot record is running a pretty close race with the average straight dance record, which does not usually touch more than 6,000 to 7,000.

Issues From the Shelves

But, on a second glance, is this situation so very sound? Look what an enormous proportion of these 130 records are belated issues of works originally recorded years ago! And of the minority that were actually made in 1934, how many represent any significant advance in the technique and style of hot music?

To answer that question it is best to determine which bands have been recording most recently and regularly. There are the Fletcher and Herace Henderson outfits on Parlophone, Brunswick, Columbia, and H.M.V.

Ellington has been heard frequently enough on H.M.V., but on Brunswick everything prior to *Moonglow* was an old master from previous years.

Benny Carter was featured on Columbia, Parlophone (*Chocolate Dandies*), Brunswick (*Mezz Mezzrow*) and Decca (*Spike Hughes*), all of which, at a pinch, can come under the 1934 heading.

The only other regular names were Hines and Redman, whose material was second-rate, and three white bands: Casa Loma, the

NINETEEN - THIRTY - FOUR has been, in this country, a rich and encouraging year in dance music—not so much from the musician's point of view as from that of the layman.

Yes, the consumers have been luckier than the producers. Restaurants have been closing down; there have been restless comings and goings amongst the leading bands; gods of English jazz have been swaying, if not actually tottering, on Olympus. But in the meantime semi-pro bands have been advancing, hot records teeming in the catalogues, and Rhythm Clubs multiplying like Chinamen.

As for the rhythm clubs, it is very

TO LIFT OR NOT TO LIFT

That is the Question Geoffrey Marne Put to Freddy Bretherton



HAVE you ever been to a rhythm club concert and heard a group of enthusiastic semi-pros performing, with great gusto, a programme of Ellington and Casa Loma arrangements lifted deftly from the records?

Sometimes this sort of job is done so well that it is a downright shame. Seven-piece combinations struggle manfully to sound like Duke's group of fourteen men, and occasionally they very nearly get there.

But when they have got there what good does it all do?

This is the challenge I threw at the feet of Freddy Bretherton, who with his now disbanded Spider's Web group has lifted Duke's, Baron Lee's and the Dorseys' orchestrations with almost uncanny accuracy. And when I asked him why he did it, this is the conversation that ensued:—

Bretherton: So you think I oughtn't to lift?

Marne: I certainly think it would be better if you devoted your energies to writing original material.

Bretherton: That is like going to dine at the Trocadero and taking a packet of sandwiches with you. How can I possibly improve on Ellington? I can do no harm—and plenty of good—by following in the footsteps of such an acknowledged master of rhythmic music.

Marne: If everybody worked on that theory Ellington would be the only composer in the whole profession.

Bretherton: So he would.

Marne: And that, I presume, would be O.K. by you?

Bretherton: Oh, of course not! I'm not saying everybody *should* work on my theory. But in my case I was only using this particular hot policy as a sort of hobby. For a time it turned out to be quite a popular one, too.

Marne: If it did you were very lucky. After all, what public were you aiming at? All the fans had bought the original records already, so your performances, however good they were, could hardly seem like anything more than a pale shadow of the discs.

Bretherton: I've three very good answers to that. Firstly, I had the right type of boys with me in that little band—enthusiastic and fully appreciative of what is best in hot music. Secondly, the fans very seldom have a chance of hearing these numbers performed by the composers and their bands in the flesh; so we helped to make up for that by combining the merit in the music with a personal touch, which always goes down well. Thirdly, nearly all hot numbers are based on the same simple old harmonic routine, anyway, so by composing "original" numbers I should merely be writing something very similar with another name tacked on to it. Then why not use stuff that at least has some previous reputation and name value?

Marne: Brother Bretherton, your arguments stagger me. But I beg to differ on that last point. Take some of Hughes' work, such as *Siesta* or *Sirocco* and *Arabesque*. They are advanced and individual. Con Lamprecht's *Lazy Rhythm* is certainly not just another tonic-and-dominant affair. Alec Templeton, of Hylton's band, has written one or two good hot numbers, and Billy Ternent, another Hylton boy, produced a brilliant piece of work in *Black and Blue Rhythm*. And then—

Bretherton: Yes, yes. I admire them all as much as you do. But all those pieces have something of Ellington in them. You can't deny it! *Black and Blue Rhythm* owes an enormous amount to *The Mystery Song*.

Marne: True.

Bretherton: Why, Jack Hylton himself appreciated that the Duke is worth lifting. Look at his selection *Ellingtonia*. It's a real favourite with the lay public as well as the fans. Why shouldn't Hylton do it?

Would you object to a concert at the Queen's Hall on the grounds that the composers weren't playing in the orchestra? At that rate you'd soon find that half the standard music in use to-day would have to be dropped, because the composers are dead.

Marne: Now you're not playing fair. You know that the same rules don't apply in jazz as in standard music. Jazz relies far more on the personality of a particular band or soloist: composition and interpretation are much more closely linked. Well, then, if a jazz work is written to suit the personality of one particular band, both the arrangements and the solos lose all that personality when they are plagiarised.

Bretherton: Well, I suppose there's something in that. But the fact remains that the hot fans liked my Ellington programme well enough, and it would have involved considerably more time and trouble to compose special numbers. Besides, the special numbers would have had a hard time getting by. You know how sceptical the fans are about British compositions.

Marne: They'll change their minds soon enough if the good work started by people like Foresythe and Templeton is carried on. Originality pays in the end.

Bretherton: I never denied it! If there is a British composer who can achieve complete originality, good luck to him. But there'll always be room for "lifting" as well, to keep up the hot fans' interest—

Marne: But that's just the point I got to before—I say that it *doesn't* cater for their interest properly at all!

Bretherton: Then we're back where we started.

Marne: It looks like it.

* * *
We still both think we're right.



5.1.35

As might be expected, the entry of the No. 1 Club into its new premises at 16, Little Denmark Street, on Monday, January 7, will be signalled by a specially attractive programme.

No. 1

The opening ceremony will be performed by P. Mathison Brooks, Editor of the "M.M.," and the famous Cavendish Band will give a recital, while the latest singing sensations, the Four Aces, have also promised to turn up.

As the record side of the evening is in the capable hands of Leonard Feather, no member should need urging to be present on an evening which can only be regarded as another important landmark in the history of the rhythm club movement.

↑
BALLROOM & BAND,

Jan. 1935
↓

The No. 1 Rhythm Club's meetings are still drawing large attendances. Recent recitals have been given by several members. Leonard G. Feather, for instance, brought along a fine selection of rare records, while Jeff Aldam also earned praise for his programme illustrating the art of Adrian Rollini.



Two o'clock in the morning at a diminutive night club. The weary musicians have run through all the latest hits ad nauseam, and their brains refuse to function. Puzzle: What shall they play?

manage to edge their way into every impromptu programme. Now and again they bob up on records, on the radio, at concerts. They never grow old. And the object of this series of "Evergreens" will be to provide a useful reference guide to the tunes in question and to all the most interesting recordings.

No. 1. THAT'S A PLENTY.

TIGER RAG having already been dealt with in a special article on December 1 last, I feel that *That's A Plenty* makes an ideal opening tune for the series. It has a typically odd history; began as a military march as far back as 1904, and was adapted some ten years ago for dance purposes by Benny Pollack, the famous conductor, who played drums with the old Red Heads.

both on Decca; one by the Rhythm Maniacs (December, 1929), a house band which played rather raggedly, and the other a brand-new interpretation by Lew Stone's Band. Like all Stanley Black arrangements, this is a polished, very musical and swinging production, superbly played. Its only fault is that the tempo should be a trifle faster; fifty bars per minute is not too fast for this number.

And still they come: Earl Hines and His Orchestra have just brought out a new one on Brunswick. Even if it does not do justice to the number, it helps to show that old soldiers never die.

That's A Plenty is a grand old warrior; one of the real immortals of hot music.

Next Week: CLARINET MARMALADE.

Best Known Disc

The best-known record is that of Miff Mole's famous Molers on Parlophone (early 1928). Here the verse consists of a minor movement of sixteen bars, a major movement of sixteen bars, and a repeat of the minor movement. The chorus is a very straightforward sixteen-bar affair, and is followed by a little military movement which reminds one forcibly of the number's origin.

Most arrangers, with their tongues in their cheeks, introduce the Sousa-march effect here as if they meant it quite seriously; but Benny Goodman, in his clarinet solo on Panachord, takes advantage of this piece to introduce some delightful two-bar breaks. Benny doubles both the first and the second verse movements to thirty-two bars, so that by the time he comes to the chorus the disc is nearly over!

A Great Version

One of the greatest versions of the number was made by the Louisiana Rhythm Kings on Vocalion, with Red Nichols, Fud Livingston, Schutt and a gang of stars. There was a grand arrangement (probably Fud's) and some swell mellophone work by Dudley Fosdick. The record is seven years old, but has dated in nothing but its rhythm section.

There is another grand *That's A Plenty* from this period, on Victor under the name of Slim's Hot Shots, of whom I know exactly nothing. This boasts a nice Fud-dish clarinet, a Reddish trumpet, and a scattish vocal.

There are two English versions,

5.1.35

Le Jazz Hot

French Omnibus of Rhythm

HUGUES PANASSIE, the provocative young Frenchman whose name has occasionally appeared in these columns, is the author of an interesting book entitled *Le Jazz Hot*, which has just been published by Editions Corréa of Paris. No more violent contrast with Stanley Nelson's *All About Jazz* can possibly be imagined, and this point alone makes it interesting to dip into the newer work.

On the credit side of M. Panassie's book there is much that is worthy of mention. Firstly, an amusing and characteristic introduction written by Louis Armstrong. Secondly, a praiseworthy attempt, in the opening chapter, to explain to the uninitiated just why there is a profound intrinsic value in the more advanced forms of hot music.

Ellington

There is, too, an excellent chapter on Ellington and his records and another chapter dealing with the other principal arrangers. The personnels and histories of all the leading orchestras, past and present, are also given as fully as possible, and the volume closes with a handy list of hot records classified under instrumentalists.

On the debit side there is the obvious disadvantage that M. Panassie is writing on a remote subject; most of his knowledge of it has reached him at second hand. He has never heard in person the majority of the musicians he discusses; some of them he has not heard at all, even on records. His information regarding musicians and their records is based largely on hearsay, and he is frequently tempted to draw momentous conclusions from a few insignificant facts.



No. 2. CLARINET MARMALADE

THOSE of you who are old enough will remember that one of the first thrills for jazz hounds in this country was the visit of the Original Dixielanders to the London Hippodrome, way back in 1919.

As you know, this band was the first to put any sort of form into dance music; they indulged in collective busking, with very few solos, and their tunes were of the type that were worked out more by accident than design.

Typical of their product was *Clarinet Marmalade*, that oddly-named opus that has lived on for so many years after the band's demise. Larry Shields, the clarinetist, and Henry Ragas, who played piano with them around 1919, put this piece together, and the combination recorded the title on Victor early that year.

Terms of Food

Odd, isn't it, how jazz was thought of in terms of rather rich food in those days—jam, sugar, marmalade, and so on—where to-day we think largely of "gut-buckets" and "dirt" playing.

Though the form of *Clarinet Marmalade* has varied considerably, there are two main movements which are easily recognised. One, the verse, is the usual wartime idea of a simple blue tune in fast tempo. This is followed by a four-bar lead-in to a 32-bar chorus, consisting of two sixteen-bar phrases which are almost identical to the chorus of *That's A Plenty*, discussed last week. After the first chorus or two there is a twelve-bar interruption, mostly in a minor key, before the executants rush into a string of choruses again.

Elizalde's Own

This is roughly the routine of all the principal records, excepting Fred Elizalde's version on old Brunswick, which is really not *Clarinet Marmalade* at all as it was originally conceived.

There are many old recordings, of

Chicago Style

Then there is his Chicago complex. He devotes an entire chapter to this alleged "Chicago Style" music, which, according to "Mike" and others, does not even exist! In fact, he is passing through a stage where the "gut-bucketeers" are his idols, and is attributing to them musical value which they themselves would be the first to refute. So the book is liberally spattered with such names as Teschmaker, Mesirov, Jess Stacy, and George Wettling, which convey practically nothing (and quite rightly) to the average English hot fan.

In his chapter on Armstrong Hugues is inclined to be a little fulsome: "Not only a genius in his art, but one of the most amazing creators ever known to music," and so on. Louis is great enough to send any fan into rhapsodies, but there is a border-line between enthusiasm and hysteria.

Somebody should translate this book into English. It would give our Rhythm Clubs enough food for thought—and argument—to last them a year or more. Congratulations to Hugues Panassie on a courageous job of work.

course, amongst which was one by Jim Europe's Hell Fighters, featuring a coloured drummer named Battleaxe, said to be the world's greatest ever. The most famous disc is, of course, Frankie Trumbauer's on Parlophone, the original backing of *Singing the Blues* (1927). This is a slightly wild performance, very much in the spirit of the number, and featuring some grand solo and ensemble work by Bix. Fletcher Henderson, who seems fond of copying white arrangements, followed this routine exactly in his Columbia record some four years later.

Record Pseudonym

Two other white versions call for special mention. One was issued here under the pseudonym "Blue Racketeers." This was actually the Casa Loma Orchestra playing one of their smartest arrangements. Rather mechanical, of course; but there was one particular chorus (fourth from the end, I believe) which deserves your attention. A queer effect is achieved by a continual stressing of the mediant by both sax and brass sections; this note constitutes the entire melody for that chorus, bringing out properly what harmonic value there is in the number. Play the record and you will get the idea.

The Ideal Tempo

The other version is by Red Nichols' Five Pennies on Brunswick, which takes the number at the ideal tempo and contains two or three good solos. There is also a record by Phil Napoleon's Orchestra on H.M.V. and another version on Vocalion.

Night club busking does not lend itself to verses and lead-ins, so if *Clarinet Marmalade* is to continue its already lengthy career, its success will depend on the demand for the commercial orchestration by Billy Moore. And, whether it lives or dies, the least you can say for it will be that it has provided several records well worth a place in your collection.

Next Week: Alexander's Ragtime Band.

12.135

No. 1 RHYTHM CLUB MAKES ITS MOVE

THE Hon. Secretary of the No. 1 Rhythm Club, W. Elliott, together with his stalwart helpers, surpassed themselves in providing an evening's entertainment worthy of the inauguration of the new premises of the Club at 16, Little Denmark Street, on Monday night, and a crowd which extended to the very doors gave ample testimony of its appreciation.

Following an excellent introductory speech by Mr. P. Mathison Brooks (the President), Leonard Feather gave a short but very interesting recital of records. Then came the Cavendish Band, giving a sparkling performance.

AN EVENING AT No. 1 RHYTHM CLUB

Described by LEONARD G. FEATHER

Is jazz in decline? Must a hot number be played fast to be popular? Is the Ellington vogue waning? Do English fans care for the Chicago style? Does the public know what it wants?

These and other questions can at last be answered as a result of a remarkable ballot conducted at the No. 1 Rhythm Club last month to determine current popular tastes in rhythmic music.

The Club meeting was the last of the year, and was really representative of the dozens of enthusiastic gatherings that have taken place all over the country in the past twelve months. The high spot of the evening was Mr. Edgar Jackson's recital, with his own inimitable running commentary, of the entire Brunswick Survey of Modern Rhythm, which was written jointly by himself and the Editor of this journal.

After the fourteen titles had been played through to an engrossed audience, each member was invited to write

down, in order of merit, the three which had interested him most. The first, second and third choices were awarded three points, two points and one point respectively, with the following aggregate result:—

1. Ellington's *Solitude*: 142 points.
2. Condon's *The Eel*: 124 points.
3. Ellington's *Harlem Speaks*: 74 points.

The runners-up were Armstrong's *Melancholy* with 58, the Blue Rhythm Band's *Moanin'* with 57, and Ellington's *Harlem Flat Blues* with 34, the other eight sides being well out of the running.

The main point that strikes one is that all the first three titles are of recent origin; yet the fans sentimentalise about the good old days! The high placing of Condon's very advanced and intricate Chicago record is a tribute to the good taste of the voters. This tune and *Solitude* polled more points than all the other records together!

Another encouraging indication is that three of the first five numbers are

(Continued on page 5.)

A SHORT SURVEY OF MODERN RHYTHM ON BRUNSWICK RECORDS.

As these records were not officially issued until last mid-month, we are reprinting the numbers, etc., below.

This is the first History of Hot Rhythm presented in the ideal way. That is, by means of records and the written word. There are eight 10-inch records (2/6 each) and a Booklet which contains contributions from Spike Hughes, Edgar Jackson and Leonard Hibbs and

much useful independent data. (Price 1/-). The whole set forms a reference work that has no parallel in Jazz. A handsome Album to contain the records and the Booklet is given free with every set.

(Complete, £1 1s. 0d.)

THE RECORDS

- | | |
|---|--|
| O2000 Example Records Pts. 1 and 2 | O2004 Harlem Speaks (Ellington's Orchestra) |
| O2001 Hot Mustard (Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra) | Moaning (Blue Rhythm Band) |
| Melancholy (Louis Armstrong, with Jack Wynn's Band) | O2005 River's Taking Care of Me (Allen-Hawkins' Orchestra) |
| O2002 Case on Dawn (Luis Russell's Band) | Home Cooking (Eddie Condon's Band) |
| Straddle the Fence (The Chocolate Dandies) | O2006 The Eel (Eddie Condon's Band) |
| O2003 Harlem Flat Blues | Judy (Dorsey Brothers' Orchestra) |
| Pedacah (Both Ellington's Orchestras) | O2007 Send Me (Wingy Manbone's Band) |
| | Solitude (Ellington's Orchestra) |

THE MYSTERY OF "HOME-COOKING"!

LEONARD FEATHER

continues from page 4

in slow tempo. The "hell-for-leather-jazz-age" fetish is dying. Furthermore, those records which were encumbered by a vocal chorus came low in the voting.

You may have wondered why I included amongst the questions in the opening paragraph: "Does the public know what it wants?" This query was introduced for a very definite reason.

Take the case of *The Eel*. Also in the series is an almost equally exciting record called *Home Cooking*, made on the same day by the same musicians in a similar style. Yet this was the only title not to gain a solitary point in the voting!

Perhaps the best explanation of this anomaly is that the voters were baffled by the uniform brilliance of everything contained in this splendid Survey, which explores the whole history and origin of present-day jazz in forty-two minutes.

Those who visited the Rhythm Club on this unique occasion will, when they buy the album, have a suitable souvenir of a most entertaining evening. Seven years of rhythm; forty-two minutes of music; one more year of congregated fervour brought to an appropriate close.

Rhythm records and Rhythm Clubs can count on each other's staunch support in 1935. Good luck to them both!

In an article in our next issue the better prospects for dance and popular bands will be described by a contributor who is fully qualified to deal with the subject. Here I want to talk about the Music which is usually meant when spelled with a capital letter.

2. 35-36 ERA

HAS JAZZ BECOME MUSIC?

SYNCOPATION HOT & COLD

By LEONARD G. FEATHER

NINETEEN - THIRTY - FOUR has been a bumper year in jazz. Of course, it is vain to talk of returning prosperity and a coming Golden Harvest in a profession where nobody is satisfied unless they have something to complain about. But things, as the astronomer might put it, are looking up.

Despite the constant shuffling of the ace cards in London's ever-changing West End, there has been no lack of varied work for our leading dance bands. The Monseigneur, Ciro's and the Kit-Cat may have closed; but the gates of variety are wide open. Dance band acts have found their salvation in touring the country's music halls and cinemas, and interspersing amongst these visits the "one-night stands" organised by C. L. Heimann. The latter's important scheme, founded last February, enabled provincial towns to dance to all the best bands in person during the so-called "Blue Star Flying Visits," which have proved so successful both for their organiser and for the artists involved.

The undercutting of band fees reached an alarming pitch during the first few months of the year. In June, however, an impressive attack on price-cutting was launched—in printer's ink. Many associations were formed and meetings held to agitate against the menace. By these methods a certain amount of good was done.

Price-slashing is a problem that affects the semi-professional musician as much as anyone; and it is this class of musician, who forms a band to play "gigs" in his spare time, whose interests have been best catered for during the year. For instance, in London a "Gig Club" was formed in January by Mr. Sidney Raymond at which these enthusiastic youths met every Sunday night to exchange offers of jobs and to listen to the music of famous guests who visited them. Recently the club has acquired permanent premises in the West End, so that musicians may now indulge in social intercourse at any time of day in agreeable surroundings.

Other important semi-professional events of the year were the all-England dance band contest held in April, which provoked an intense wave of enthusiasm, and an international contest attended in Holland last August by orchestras from all over Europe. Here a Belgian group just beat the English candidates to first place.

The year ended in a fine spurt of increased activity, engendered first by the Royal wedding and then by an exceptionally big Christmas rush.

Preceding this smooth finish, though, was a year crammed with fits and starts. Going right back to January, we have the sudden decision of the Kit-Cat to part with Roy Fox. He was replaced by Teddy Joyce, a Canadian, with a British band, which was later succeeded by Joe Loss, prior to the closing of the restaurant's doors.

It was also in January that Rudolph Dunbar opened in the West End with the first all-British

coloured band of note. This unusual move proved a happy one, for Dunbar and his English Negroes have been establishing a big reputation at Prince's and the Cossack Restaurant. The experiment of another coloured Englishman, Reginald Foresythe, in daring to devise an entirely new type of Jazz idiom, did not receive much encouragement at the Café de la Paix; but we may expect great things yet from this gifted young man.

The second West End sensation of the year was the return of Lew Stone to the Monseigneur in February. Then, in June, Stone lost his corner man, Nat Gonella, who wanted to make good on his own, but soon returned to the fold. When the Monseigneur was sold in September Lew took to the music-halls.

What of Jack Hylton? The English Jazz Monarch has kept himself well in the headlines. In February he announced that he was through with Decca, since when he has not fixed any recording contract. In the same month his wife's band followed in hubby's footsteps by undertaking a long tour of the Continent. In March he celebrated the completion of his tenth year on the stage, in a memorable programme at the Holborn Empire. In April his band was augmented by the great Coleman Hawkins, coloured tenor sax, whom Jack brought over from America. "Hawk" has since been transferred to the Mrs. Hylton outfit.

In September Hylton paid a mystery visit to the States, returning in October with the Three Gaylords and the Four Ink Spots, sensational singing acts. Jack and his boys finished the year at the Rex Theatre in Paris, where they have met with a sensationally big reception.

A word about the spate of foreign artists who invaded this friendly isle in 1934. As you all know, many American favourites such as Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong, and Joe Venuti have been brought over here. Many have been paid large salaries. Some—the Mills Brothers and Sophie Tucker in particular—were even honoured by being included in the Royal Command Variety Performance last May, alongside of such English musical acts as Hylton's and Henry Hall's bands.

Yet when Ray Noble sailed for the States with Bill Harty, his manager-drummer, and Al Bowly, his guitarist-crooner, they could not persuade the American Federation of Musicians to allow them to form an all-American band!

This situation has become intolerable. The solution does not lie with us; for, although we can take an eye for an eye and ban all American artists from entering England, it is far better to hope for reciprocity so that both countries may enjoy the performances of one another's finest performers.

So far, however, nothing has happened to ameliorate these conditions. In October Ray Noble secured a contract to write music for films in Hollywood, whilst Al Bowly was left in New York to croon for American radio. Meantime Ellington was refused a permit to re-enter England. Armstrong has left the country and opened up with a big act in Paris. British audiences will eagerly await his return: they have acquired a taste for Negro acts, whether they really appreciate them or not. Calloway's band was the attraction at a big Sunday concert given in March. In April it was proposed to team Armstrong and Coleman Hawkins in a similar concert for Jazz connoisseurs; but Louis threw a bombshell by abandoning the scheme at the eleventh hour when all the tickets had been sold.

The final proof of the popularity of coloured artists came with the "Blackbirds" show, which opened at the Coliseum in August for a six-weeks run only, and is currently going stronger than ever in a second edition!

So much for the imports and exports. Now a word about the year in dance records.

In the field of popular stuff the publishers can certainly slap each other's backs and cry "Little Man, You've Had a Busy Year." The improvement is not so marked as that noted this winter in the American gramophone industry; but, then, the Americans have had a bigger slump to recover from. "Little Man" sold hundreds of thousands of records, and enough sheet music to stretch I don't know how many times along Charing Cross-road.

"The Isle of Capri" has also done itself proud, whilst "Hill-Billy" numbers of "Old Faithful" and "Last Round-Up" type have sprung into fashion.

"Dance records" being a fairly comprehensive term, it is fair to mention here that Harry Roy's Tiger-Ragamuffins and Charles Kunz and his piano have worked miracles with the public's pockets.

As a final filip to the future of dance musicians, musical films have come into their own again. Both here and in Hollywood, lavish spectacles involving large orchestras are being produced with incredible fecundity. It is useless to mention all the famous combinations that have been filming in California. In this country Roy Fox, Ray Noble, Teddy Joyce, Howard Jacobs, Debroy Somers, Carroll Gibbons, and a host of others have been engaged with their all-British bands for work in British musicals. A film currently in production bears the intriguing title of "Dance Band"; "Radio Parade" and "In Town To-night" are crammed full of musical acts; and now both Jack Hylton and Henry Hall are reported to be making film plans.

It would be inexcusable to close this short survey without a tribute to three beloved figures who were tragically lost to the public during 1934. "Pa" Braham, composer of "Limehouse Blues" and perhaps the greatest of all British song-smiths, passed away in May. In August Raie da Costa, whose piano records gave happiness to millions, died of peritonitis. A few weeks later Russ Columbo, second only to Bing Crosby amongst American crooners, was killed in a tragic accident.

But let us look, too, at the brighter side of the "Births, Marriages, and Deaths" dossier. Elizabeth Handy, daughter of W. C. Handy, of "St. Louis Blues" fame, married one of Cab Calloway's bandmen. Jack Jackson became a father. Bing Crosby's wife had twins. Bert Read, Henry Hall's pianist, was married amid much pomp and circumstance. And so on.

May there be many such happy events, both domestic and professional, in the year to come. 1935 has only to continue along the high road of success where 1934 left off. I feel sure it will not disappoint us.

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EVERGREENS of JAZZ

Some of the Old, Old Numbers Which Form the Foundation of Buskology

No. 4—"NAGASAKI"

WHEN Mort Dixon and Harry Warren wrote *Nagasaki* they certainly had no idea that it was going to become a standard favourite for hot recording. Strictly speaking, this is a pure nonsense number without any pretensions to immortality. And that is exactly the way it was treated when England first became aware of it as a featured number in the Jack Hulbert revue, *Clowns In Clover*. The number was written in 1928, but only in the last couple of years have the recording groups taken much notice of it.

The words of the chorus are—to an Englishman at least—so meaningless that even the Mills Brothers' record, which is their best ever from the point of view of diction, will not enable you to decipher them. For the benefit of those who have often wondered about that middle part, here it is—

Oh! Fujiyama, you get a mommer, and then your troubles increase;

In some pagoda she orders soda; the earth shakes, milk shakes, ten cents a piece.

Now is all that clear? After the chorus there is a "patter," a piece, eight bars in length, with low

comedy lines and a sort of mock-hornpipe melody. And there is your evergreen of hot music!

From the musical aspect the number is no more complicated. The simple harmonic routine of the main chorus phrase has been used times out of number for popular dance stuff. Two beats each on the following harmonies: C, G dim., G7, G7, C, G dim., G7, G7, C, C7, F, F min., C, G7, C, C. And to that string of chords you can equally well hum *We're In The Money*, *Old Yazoo*, Ellington's *Doing The Voom Voom* or Henderson's *Hot And Anxious* without a single clash. In *Walkin' The Chalk Line* even the middle eight bars are the same!

Well, there is the straw, and here are some of the bricks that a few famous artists made from it: Don Redman's Brunswick record (June, 1933), which Louis Armstrong chose as one of the four he would take with him to the South Pole.

RECORD EFFORTS

Fletcher Henderson's Columbia version, with a vocal and two trumpet choruses, all by Henry Allen. Another Brunswick, by the Mills Brothers—this, despite numerous quotations from *The Peanut Vendor* and other sources, is their best disc to date; they even all sing in tune!

There are also records by the Three Keys, who made a few good titles on Brunswick and then faded out; and by the duettists, Williams and Browning on Parlophone. One of the best large-band arrangements is that used by Lew Stone. The current commercial orchestration is written by Jack Mason.

Next week: *I Can't Give You Anything But Love*.

LEONARD G. FEATHER writes on

EVERGREENS of JAZZ

Some of the Old, Old Numbers Which Form the Foundation of Buskology

No. 7. The Sheik

COMPOSED by Ted Snyder in 1921, with words by Harry B. Smith and Francis Wheeler, *The Sheik* developed into a more than averagely popular hit. It was featured by Ambrose Parker and Peggy Wynne, and all the music-hall favourites of the time. The original sheet music shows an ex-cruciatingly funny picture of a Sheik With Girl Friend, and both the words and the music of the verse are in keeping with the drawing; Orientalism for the masses! Not that the masses minded: they took it all very seriously, and the early records were a great success.

Amongst these primitive discs were versions by the Club Royal Orchestra on H.M.V. in March, 1922, and by Ray Miller's Black and

White Melody Boys—Ray's very first record, on Columbia.

It was not for some years that the hot musicians discovered this number. Spike Hughes suddenly resuscitated the melody in his "Classics of Jazz" Series in 1930. Unfortunately, he missed the most important and individual point about the tune, namely, its particular suitability for teaching people what hot music is all about.

If you study the chorus you will find that, amazing to relate, there are never more than two notes in any bar, generally one on the fourth beat and one on the first. In fact, the entire chorus consists of this two-note phrase repeated twenty-four times, the second note being held for an extra bar in every third phrase to make up the thirty-two bars. Surely this is the simplest dance tune ever written!

Now take Red Nichols' record on Brunswick with the Five Pennies. In all three choruses you can hear the straight melody behind a succession of brilliant hot solos. Here is the ideal record for learning—or teaching—what hot music really means.

In Duke Ellington's arrangement there is an equally instructive, though totally different, treatment when, in the second chorus, the perfectly straight saxophone solo nevertheless contrives to be genuinely thrilling to the connoisseur.

These two versions by Nichols and the Duke should be in every collection. Pianists should also hear Spike's rendering for the interesting solo in the last chorus. In fact, *The Sheik* has given rise to a trio of important hot records. These Arabs certainly can swing!

Next week: *Honeysuckle Rose*.



No. 3. ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND.

ISADORE BALINE was known to the patrons of the little Bowers saloon as the Singing Walter—a sobriquet that is self-explanatory. Music, though of a very different nature, ran in his family. In the Southern Russian town where he was born in 1892, his father was a Cauler. But the son was soon to know fame as only New York could offer it.

When he wrote a song in conjunction with the pianist at the saloon, and actually succeeded in selling it, his career as a Singing Walter was already condemned to die. Within a year he had a stage job with the Ted Snyder Music Co., and a second song that he had written was an established success. The world knew it as *Marie From Sunny Italy*—by Irving Berlin.

International Hit

In 1911 this same writer hit upon the song which came to be the first international favourite in the history of jazz. The number was published in 1912, and to this day the whole world remembers the famous strains of *Alexander's Ragtime Band*.

Ragtime was the right word for it in those days. Read the words in the verse of this song and you will realise how well that expression described the struggling infant's cries of new-born jazz. "There's a fiddle with notes that screeches like a chicken . . . and the clarinet is a coloured pet. . . ." The whole number is written in the typical white man's conception of Negro patter. "That's just the bestest band that sm!"

All the Old Tricks

And yet, so far as the music is concerned, there is every little trick that is used to-day: the dotted quavers and semiquavers, the same dear-old simple harmonies, the sub-conscious "invitation to swing" that has kept the tune alive for twenty-two years.

All through the War its popularity hardly flagged. In the years

Memorable Disc

Three years passed. Then, in 1927, came the memorable record by Miff Mole's Mollers on Parlophone. From Ed Lang's four-bar introduction to the final cymbal-crash, here was a disc that was destined to be remembered for years after its contemporary: a suitable parallel, in fact, to the history of the tune itself.

But this is not the version you want to play for those who like to revive Wartime memories. The O.K. Rhythm Kings (Casa Loma Orchestra) produced a record, also on Parlophone, which offers a chorus, verse and vocal chorus that are played in dead straight melody, though all are the quintessence of modern style. Later there is some hot solo work on tenor and trombone, but again in the final chorus the melody is easily followed.

Monia On the Keys

The Casa Loma Orchestra also recorded this number on Brunswick. There is, however, another Brunswick version which was made more recently, and particularly deserves your attention. This is the piano solo by Monia Litter. Excellent construction, a crisp but musical touch, very modern style, and an almost complete avoidance of the original melody are the main features.

Alexander's Ragtime Band will live on when Berlin's recent efforts of the *Heat Wave* class will be forgotten. Yet *Heat Wave* is as up-to-date to-day as his ragtime melodies were in 1912. Irving Berlin, in his way, is a bit of an evergreen himself!

Next week: *NAGASAKI*.



No. 5—I Can't Give You Anything But Love

THOUGH the names of Dorothy Fields and Jimmy McHugh may not convey very much to the average fan, you would be surprised how invaluable their work has been in the matter of hot records.

Between them they produced *Dixie, Diga Diga Doo, Porgy, I Must Have That Man, Doin' The New Lowdown* and—greatest of all, perhaps—*I Can't Give You Anything But Love*.

Cottoning On

It was around 1929 that Fields and McHugh were writing the score of the *Cotton Club* show in Harlem. Consequently you will find that many Duke Ellington discs recorded at this stage, under the name of "his Cotton Club Orchestra," feature their compositions, both straight and hot.

Notable amongst these are *Japanese Dream, Hot Feet, Harlemania, Arabian Lover, and Harlem River Quiver*. Then, in the Brunswick "Blackbirds" album, issued some eighteen months ago, Duke and his boys were heard featuring *I Can't Give You* in the medley and also in the accompaniment to Ethel Waters.

Original Blackbirds

When Lew Leslie produced his *Blackbirds* of 1934, instead of featuring original numbers he re-introduced several of the hits of 1928, and the 1935 edition incorporates a particularly interesting scene built round *I Can't Give You*. In this act Valaida plays the famous last trumpet chorus from Armstrong's version; and she makes an even better job of it than Ethel Waters made of copying Louis's vocal chorus; for where Louis unfortunately cracked a couple of notes at the end of his record, Valaida mostly manages to hit them quite successfully, with really moving results.

I Can't Give You is a number that no band need be afraid to feature. It can be taken as slowly as you like, and there is no need to weave any intricate elaborations on the original melody; as Louis shows in his nearly-straight opening half-chorus, the tune has its own intrinsic value, and is not, like so

many evergreens, a mere basis for busking.

The recordings are innumerable. Amongst the vocals there are the Mills Brothers on Brunswick; Gene Austin and Grace Hayes, both on Victor; Layton and Johnstone on Columbia; Parlophone have Pat Hyde, Gladdy Sewell, and a very odd rendering by Larry Gains, the boxer, with his trainer, Snowy Buckingham.

Then there are Johnny Hamp's *Serenaders* on Victor, Harry Roy's Orchestra, Parlophone; and the celebrated Whiteman twelve-inch speciality arrangement, still available on Columbia. Fred Elizalde also used the tune in his twelve-inch survey, *From Jazz to Rhythm*, and shows how to use it as a stylish piano solo.

Next week: *Whispering*.



No. 6. "WHISPERING"

WHISPERING, like so many of the Evergreens, is a product of the period immediately after the War when popular tunes were popular tunes. First published in 1920, it caught on very quickly and gained in popularity throughout this country entirely on its own merit as a melody number.

This was, of course, in the days before numbers had to depend on broadcasting: it had an ordinary commercial orchestration suitable to the bands of that age, and held its position for about two years as a "best seller." It is estimated that the universal sheet-music sales on the number mounted to well over 1,500,000.

This particular tune makes a good example case for the question: Why have such simple tunes as this one become classics of jazz? The answer is simple though not obvious. In those days it was impossible for a number to be done to death in a couple of weeks by excessive radio plugging.

Life of a Hit

The average life of a hit was well over a year; consequently a limited number of songs became firmly planted in the public's memory and have stayed there ever since, to the exclusion of the ephemeral successes of to-day.

This is certainly the case with *Whispering*, for there is nothing about it that particularly lends it to a hot interpretation. It is just an easily-played melody in C Major, rather lacking in harmonic variation, and the last four bars in particular (D, E, F, G, A, C, C) somehow seem very awkward for an extemporised solo. See if you can play around satisfactorily with those bars. You will be surprised how clumsy they seem.

The composition is another of those family affairs, by the way—words by John Schönberger, music

by Malvin Schönberger. One of the original artists who performed and recorded it way back in 1921 was Art Hickman with his (for those days) sensationally big brass section of three men!

Then, of course, there was a Paul Whiteman recording, and the two contrasted orchestrations: in his famous concert at the Aeolian Hall on February 12, 1924, Whiteman played up the old "legitimate versus jazz" trick by playing *Whispering* as a "Selection in True Form" and then following it with "Same with Jazz Treatment." The latter movement would sound to-day like a very weak argument for jazz treatment!

The Treatment

Red Nichols' modernised version with his Five Pennies on Brunswick in 1928, gave a pretty good idea of "Same with Jazz Treatment," as the treaters included Fud Livingstone, Dudiey Fosdick and Joe Venuti.

When Roy Fox was being billed as "the whispering cornettist," he adopted *Whispering* as his signature tune, and uses it to this day. He has recorded it on Decca; you can hear it not only in the ordinary 10in. record, but in a special 12in. version, and again in a Paul Jones' selection.

It has also been included in a selection by Harry Roy's Tiger-Ragamuffins, and was played by Richard Philpott, pianist of the old Cambridge Quint Band, as a piano solo. Both these versions are on Parlophone.

Two years ago a modern dance orchestration by Jack Mason was issued, bringing the number once again to the forefront of popular comebacks. In fact, it is still being whistled and sung all over the world. Quite a large disturbance, all from one little whisper!

Next Week: *The Sheik of Araby*.



No. 8. HONEYSUCKLE ROSE

HONEYSUCKLE ROSE was destined from the start to be a big success. How could any number fail to score if it was written by "Fats" Waller and Andy Razaf? This must be one of the most successful commercial combinations since Freeman, Hardy and Willis. The names of Razaf and Waller are linked up in such sensational money-makers as *Ain't Misbehavin', Black and Blue, Keepin' Out Of Mischief, My Fate Is In Your Hands*, and so ad infinitum.

Thomas "Fats" Waller you should all know by now. He is a coloured pianist and organist who also tries to sing. He is also a great favourite on American radio; listeners know him as "Radio's Harmful Little Armful." I think he weighs somewhere near twenty stone. As for Andy Razaf, he is descended from the Royal Family of Madagascar; the late Queen Ranavalona was his great-aunt, and his real name is Andrea Razafikerifeo, which should be enough for anybody.

The Wolds

Andy writes the words. He did not make a very striking job of *Honeysuckle Rose*, but Fats engineered a tune which, though harmonically elementary, happens to be carefully without being monotonous. There is a verse which is

pretty conventional, and is very seldom heard.

Nobody in England took much notice of *Honeysuckle Rose* until late in 1931. Fletcher Henderson's Columbia version, which was little more than a studio-arranged semi-busk, caused a great stir amongst the hot fans.

Speeds Vary

However, Fletcher certainly made this Waller-Razaf opus sound just right, whereas Joe Sullivan's Parlophone solo of the same tune is clearly too slow, and the Herman Chittison piano solo is too fast and sounds rather like a musical box.

Recently *Honeysuckle Rose* has come into great prominence; there is a special orchestration issued, written by Gordon Jenkins; then a month or two ago there was the two-part version by the Dorsey Brothers Band on Brunswick, which turned out to be a great disappointment.

The only other currently available record is the Brunswick one by Frank Trumbauer's Orchestra, which is none too good. But Hawkins made a solo of *Honeysuckle Rose* recently, accompanied by Stanley Black only, and Parlophone will be putting it out, I believe, next week. Look out for this version. It's a good *Honeysuckle Rose* as well as a good Hawkins. Quite a perfect combination.

Next week: *BUGLE CALL RAG*.

March 2, 1935

LEONARD G. FEATHER writes on

EVERGREENS of JAZZ

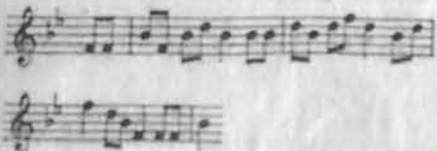
Some of the Old, Old Numbers Which Form
the Foundation of Buskology

No. 9; BUGLE CALL RAG.

THOUGH there was another *Bugle Call Rag* as far back as 1916, the present number of that name was issued here in June, 1923. It was composed by Jack Pettis (who for years played tenor with Ben Bernie's Band, and has since become famous on alto) in collaboration with Billy Meyers and Elmer Schoebel, pianist of the Old New Orleans Rhythm Kings. The name of Mills on the labels indicates that he published the number, but actually he did none of the writing.

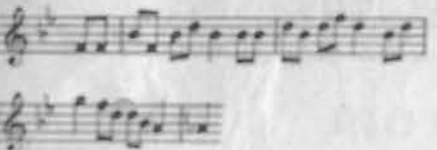
The tune succeeded in tickling the public with the idea that anything, be it even so unromantic as a bugle call, could be "jazzed up" to make good ragtime. The main movement consisted of the ordinary twelve-bar blues harmonies, but with the first four bars given over to a solo break based on the bugle call:—

Ex. 1



In the *Bugle Call Blues* version (such as Jack Pettis' own on H.M.V.) the tail of this was twisted neatly into a "blue seventh":—

Ex. 2



After four of these 12-bar phrases it is usual to break into a 16-bar chorus and then revert to the break business again for 12 bars, closing with another chorus or two. But the routine is elastic, as was proved by Fletcher Henderson in his historic show at the Empire Ballroom a year or two back when he featured it for over ten minutes without a pause!

During the last three years the number has suddenly soared to fame in England in the guise of a signature tune for Harry Roy's Band, and also owing to an excellent commercial arrangement featured by Roy, Lew Stone and most of the leading bands.

Most of the recordings, too, date from 1930 or later. One of the earliest was a *Bugle Call Blues* on Brunswick by Reuben Reeves, the trumpet player. By the way, there is another version known as *Bugle Blues* in Harlem, which bears little resemblance to the original composition, as you can hear on the Parlophone disc by the Chocolate Dandies, who followed this formula. For your delectation here is a list of recordings labelled *Bugle Call Rag*:—

Billy Banks' Orchestra, Brunswick.
Cab Calloway's Orchestra, Brunswick.

Cambridge Univ. Quinq. Band, Parlo.

Cannon's Jug Stompers, Victor.
Chittison (piano), Brunswick.
Chocolate Dandies, Parlo.
Cotton, Billy, Regal-Zono.
Ellington, H.M.V. (very unorthodox!).

Goodman's, Benny, Orchestra, Columbia.

Hughes' Negro Orchestra, Decca.

Hyde, Pat (vocal), Parlo.

Lang's, Ed, Orchestra, Parlo.

Lewis's, Ted, Orchestra, Columbia.

Mills Bros. (vocal), Brunswick.

Nichols' Five Pennies, Brunswick.

Piano Maniacs, Broadcast.

Roy's, Harry, Orchestra, Parlo.

Roy's, Harry, Orchestra in Roy Medley, Parlo.

Six Swingers in "Hot Pie" Medley, Regal-Zono.

There have also been various *noms-de-disque*, naturally, such as *Feeling Gay*, by Baron Lee on Brunswick, and *Wake 'Em Up*, by the Chicago Hot Five on Victor.

And there are new versions constantly springing up. In fact, to judge by this number's career so far, the day may yet come when the fans who listen to it will ask what the word "bugle" means, anyway!



No. 10. Darktown Strutters' Ball

SHELTON BROOKS, the coloured composer of *Darktown Strutters' Ball*, is one of the real pioneers of ragtime. He has composed scores of melodies with the real old-fashioned "darkie" tang, and, more recently, has collaborated with Fats Waller and Andy Razaf in *That Rhythm Man* and other hits. He himself has made records, singing and playing the piano, and featuring his own numbers, such as *When You're Really Blue* and the ancient *Walkin' The Dog*, familiar through Ed Lang's recording. There is also an old Okeh race record called *Darktown Court Room*, in which he and some others speak the dialogue.

Twenty Years Old

Darktown Strutters' Ball is approximately twenty years old. The earliest recording I can trace is on Emerson, issued in 1917. Then H.M.V. issued a version by the Savoy Quartet in January, 1919, and some months later Pathé put out one by Jim Europe's Hell Fighters, a coloured band.

However, the first version of real importance to hot fans appeared in 1927 on Okeh, played by Miff Mole and his Moleers. Though it has dated badly now—that souzaphone solo is a particularly violent pain in the ear—it contains several bright spots. Slightly previous to this there was a Chicago Style

version by the Jungle Kings on Paramount.

Next came a version by Ellzalde's Hot Music on Brunswick, and one on Victor by the Coon Sanders Orchestra (1930). In November, 1931, came an excellent arrangement by Spike Hughes on Decca, featuring Buddy Featherstonhaugh and Billy Amstell.

The Woids

About the same time Red McKenzie recorded the tune on Okeh with an all-star cast: Hawkins, Joe Sullivan, Muggay, Jimmy Dorsey, Eddie Condon, et al. If you want to know the lyrics of the number, here is a version with a vocal; though I doubt whether McKenzie's diction will help you much.

Lastly came Chick Webb's record on Columbia; a typical 1934 Negro opus: grand swing, some good solos but too many hot licks by the ensemble. And personally I should say this tune is best suited to a slower tempo, around 40 bars a minute. The verse is worth including, and in a busk it is amusing to leave the 14th and 16th bars open as solo breaks in the old-fashioned style.

Darktown Strutters' Ball is good stuff for "jam" playing; the twenty-bar chorus makes a welcome change from the eternal variants of *Tiger Rag*. See what you can do with it.

Next Week: Chinatown, My Chinatown.



No. 11. CHINATOWN, MY CHINATOWN

THIS Evergreen is a genuine veteran. It was published just a quarter of a century ago, at the very dawn of rat-tune. By modern standards the music has little relation to popular dance music as we know it.

Chinatown was virtually discovered in England by the great revue producer, Albert de Courville, who incorporated it in his enormously successful show at the Hippodrome, *Push and Go*, in which it was sung by Shirley Keilok, a famous old-time musical-comedy artist.

A curious point about Chinatown is the striking similarity of the chorus, except in the second eight bars, to that of *Tiger Rag*, written seven years later. Listen to the second piano duet chorus of Harry Roy's *Tiger Rag* (Parlo. R1505). One of the pianists plays the melody of Chinatown with very few changes, and it fits in perfectly with the harmonic routine of the *Tiger*. Chinatown has given rise to three

heatedly discussed recordings. It was Red Nichols' Brunswick version with the Five Pennies in 1929, which really precipitated the number's new burst of popularity.

Then, in 1930, Fletcher Henderson made his Columbia (Ametran) version with the much-discussed out-of-tune trumpet chorus which caused the disc to be held up for years before it was decided to release it on English Rhythm Style.

And, thirdly, there was Louis Armstrong's Parlophone, made late in 1931, which treated the tune as a mere novelty and was declared by many to be Louis's worst record ever.

There are other Parlophone recordings by the Quintessential Ramblers, Harry Roy's Orchestra, the Moderniques, and again Harry Roy in a selection. On Brunswick there are the Mills Brothers and Borah Minevitch's Harmonious Victor have Roane's Pennysylvanians. Hydon is at present using Chinatown (not a very bright arrangement, be it added) as one of his stock "hot" numbers. The inverted commas are mine.

Next Week: Farewell Blues.

EVERGREENS of JAZZ

Some of the Old, Old Numbers of Buskology

No. 13. Heebie Jeebies

HEEBIE JEEBIES is one Evergreen that should have died an early death many years ago. After all, how often is it that a "sensational new dance," or the tune designed to introduce it, manages to gain the enduring approval of the public? Yet the "Heebie Jeebie Dance" was described as an eccentric dance creation, originated by Floyd du Pont, and was intended primarily as a stage attraction, being featured by a dancer named Miss Tina Tweedie (Danseuse Supreme)!

Dance Accompaniment

And Boyd Atkins wrote his *Heebie Jeebies* as an accompaniment to the dance. Soon it was adapted for ballroom purposes, but I think you will guess the reason for the premature death of the dance when you see the list of the steps. It consisted of the Get-Off, the Stomp-Off, the Fling-Off, the Heebie-Off, the Jeebie-Off and the Blow-Off!

This extraordinary dance was created in Chicago in 1926, and the music was published, of course, at the same time. In view of this, a special record of the tune was recommended to ambitious Heebie Jeebie-ites as a model background for their contortions.

Louis' Most Primitive

And the disc in question—naturally a Chicago-made version—was played by Louis Armstrong's Hot Five—one of the first and most primitive discs our Louis ever put to wax. In the piano song copy is a reproduction of the "Skat Chorus" (*sic*) which he sings in this record. It is curious to see his vocal acrobatics translated into terms such as "Skeep, skipe, breep ber der dar dee dip dop dee," but that was as near as they could get to it on paper!

The other principal recording at the time of publication was by Red Nichols and the famous Red Heads on Pathé. Soon everything from the Get-Off to the Blow-Off were forgotten; but in the nine long years that have passed *Heebie*

Jeebies has continued to be one of the most popular dance numbers since the War!

The Boswell Sisters sang it for their very first record, on Parlophone, made in 1930. Benny Carter made a splendid arrangement which was played by Chick Webb's Band on Panachord, 1931 (recently re-issued on Brunswick), and by Mills' Blue Rhythm Band on H.M.V.

Several Versions

The Boswell girls made a second recording, this time with full orchestral accompaniment, on Brunswick, who also have a rendering by the Three Keys. There is another version by Paddy's Jazz on Odéon, and the tune is included in one of the selections by Harry Roy's Tiger-Ragamuffins.

Heebie Jeebies, this simple 18-bar melody of 1926, was certainly something to make a song and dance about. At least, if it didn't make much of a dance it certainly was one helluva song!

Next Week: I GOT RHYTHM.

EVERGREENS of HOT MUSIC

No. 12.—"Farewell Blues"

FAREWELL BLUES is a number with a tragic history behind its composition. It was written by Schoebel, Mares and Rappolo, three members of the Friars Society Orchestra, who later became celebrated as part of the New Orleans Rhythm Kings unit.

Paul Mares was the trumpet player. Elmer Schoebel, the pianist, was part composer of *Bugle Call Rag*, *Nobody's Sweetheart*, *The Roof Blues*, and many of the other principal Evergreens which were to earn him a fortune in royalties. But Leon Rappolo, one of the most brilliant clarinetists known to early hot music, never reached the fame he deserved; his career was cut short years ago when he became insane.

Lucid Intervals

An American musician who visited him some years ago described how magnificently Rappolo still played during his more lucid moments, whilst on other occasions he would indulge in crazy and meaningless busking in a most pitiful manner.

The original record of *Farewell Blues* was made on Gennett in 1922 by the Friars Society Orchestra. The tune was so simple that the most elementary of musical minds could improvise a three-part harmonised chorus with perfect success; for this reason I would recommend the number to this day for those who wish to indulge in collective improvisation.

The chorus is only sixteen bars long, and is sometimes varied by the introduction of another sixteen-bar movement with the addition of a "blue seventh" harmonic effect in the principal phrase. This is introduced into a version released here under the name of Fenton's Rainbows on one of those flexible Filmophone records, and actually played by Cab Calloway's Orchestra.

Frank Teschmaker

Farewell Blues was one of the better-class records made by Ted Lewis. Recorded in 1929, it featured the late Frank Teschmaker on clarinet. The best version of all was that made in 1931 by Venuti, Lang, Dorsey, Goodman, Teegarden and an all-star support, released here on Panachord. The old Charleston Chasers' treatment on Columbia, in 1928, is not to be sniffed at either, as it also has Dorsey, Schutte and other stars.

In addition to these versions, there are others by The Goodfins Five (Rollin) on OKeh, the Regal Dance Orchestra on Regal, the Rhythm Kings on Stern, Waring's Pennysylvanians on Victor, Abe Lyman's Sharps and Flats on Brunswick and, recently, the Dutch Ramblers on Decca.

The current commercial orchestration is written by Jimmy Dale. Into this can be inserted a hot chorus for two clarinets and trumpet, written by Stanley Black and published in the "M.M." on January 6, 1934.

L. G. F.



EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

by
Leonard G. Feather

No. 14: I GOT RHYTHM.

GEORGE GERSHWIN, who wrote the music of *I Got Rhythm*, was born in Brooklyn in 1898. He studied harmony at Columbia University, and was later on the stage as accompanist to Nora Bayes and Louise Dresser; he appeared as a soloist with the New York and other Philharmonic Orchestras. In spite of the reputation he has built up on *Rhapsody in Blue*, he has shone especially as a writer of popular songs, and composed the entire music for George White's Scandals from 1920 to 1924. He also wrote the tunes in "Tip Toes," "Funny Face," "Oh Kay," "Lady Be Good," and other shows.

Ira Gershwin, George's elder brother by two years, began writing songs when he was 22. He is, I understand, devoted to verse, sketching, and collecting old books. Ira collaborated with George on *I Got Rhythm*, and the result was a different type of popular number built up on one clever "syncopated" phrase of four notes. The harmonies are just the usual ones. I have never heard the verse, if any.

Nichols' Pit Band

The tune was originally incorporated in the show, "Girl Crazy" (from which the Wheeler and Woolsey film was adapted). This musical comedy had a pit band under the direction of Red Nichols, and Red, with Benny Goodman and other stars, recorded the number immediately on Brunswick. That was in 1930, so you see that *I Got Rhythm* is one of the very youngest of the Evergreens. As a matter of fact, it was not published over here until April, 1932, and the

I Got Rhythm is one of the very release of a veritable flood of recordings. Many of these were backed by *Sweet and Hot*, which is the companion number from the same show.

The most remarkable part about the survival of this number is that the novelty rhythm which made it a success is practically never employed by those who busk it. They merely use the very conventional harmonies and build up their own figures and phrases, so that it might really be any old tune. But that four-note phrase itself has edged its way into the minds of so many composers and buskers that it is constantly cropping up in some shape or form.

Chief Recordings

Principal recordings are as follows:—

Broadcasts.—Blue Mountaineers, Brunswick.—Five Spirits of Rhythm, Adelaide Hall, Red Nichols' Orch., Don Redman's Orch. **Columbia.**—Carroll Gibbons' Orch. (in Gershwin Medley), Bobby Howes, Fred Rich's Orch., Ethel Waters.

Decca.—Roy Fox's Orch., Freddy Johnson's Orch.

Eclipse.—Totentots.

H.M.V.—Arden-Ohman's Orch.

Homophone.—Ray Starita's Orch.

Parlophone.—Armstrong's Orch., Roy's Tiger-Ragamuffins (in Medley).

Sterno.—Twelve Rhythm Monarchs.

Now buy all of these and find out how many of them really have got rhythm. You'll be surprised!

Next Week: MILENBERG JOYS.

No. 16: I AIN'T GOT NOBODY.

OF all the famous coloured song-writers there can be few who have more big successes to their name than Spencer Williams; and of all his numbers none was more popular than the first he ever wrote—*I Ain't Got Nobody*.

Born in October, 1880, in New Orleans, Spencer had his earliest inspirations from Tony Jackson, pianist and composer of *Some Sweet Day*. After leaving school in Birmingham, Alabama, he went to Chicago, where he heard at work such famous old-timers as Wilbur Sweatman, Jelly-Roll Morton and Shelton (*Some Of These Days*) Brooks. The last-named was partly responsible for Spencer's starting his career as a song-writer, and in 1908 *I Ain't Got Nobody* was given to the world.

Hung Fire

Roger Graham, a lyric-writer from Providence, Rhode Island, wrote the words. The number hung fire until 1918, when it was sold to the McKinley Music Company. Graham was subsequently to become a publisher himself.

It was Marion Harris who started *I Ain't Got Nobody* on the path to fame. Her original record of it, with Phil Goldberg at the piano, was a sensation, and she featured the number on the stage for four years continuously. Later on Sophie Tucker also made a speciality of it, and recorded it with Miff Mole's

Molers on Parlophone. Any number of girl vocalists used this tune in shows and cabaret, amongst them Annette Hanshaw, Ada Banks, "Aunt Jemima" Ruth Etting, Libby Holman and Bessie Smith.

Eleven Years Later

Not until 1927, however, did this Williams opus catch on in England. It was then published and featured as a Yale Blues speciality. Elizalde played it frequently at the Savoy and recorded it on Brunswick as a solo. In December, 1927 H.M.V. put out a version by Coon Sanders Orchestra. Since that year this simple and charming little "blues in G" has been in constant demand, and there are many great recordings available.

You can hear it as an organ solo by Fats Waller on Victor, a piano solo by Hines or Art Tatum, tenor solo by Hawkins, or by Armstrong's Orchestra on Parlophone, Stanley Black's with Nat Gonella on Oriole, Lew Stone on Regal-Zono; as a clarinet solo by Boyd Senter with Ed Lang; vocally, by Emmett Miller; by Smith's Melodians on Victor, the Varsity Four on Filmophone, Ray Miller's Hotel Gibson Orchestra on Brunswick, or even in Charlie Kunz's Medley, No. 7. Take your choice.

While we are on the subject of Spencer Williams, I will pass on next week to another of his best-selling compositions, the *Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble*.

Leonard Feather's EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

No. 15
MILENBERG JOYS

IHAVE in my possession an orchestration, published by a well-known Chicago music company. It is entitled *Milenberg Joys*, and is a commercial hot arrangement by Dave Rose. I believe Lew Stone used it as a basis for his Decca record of this name.

It is curious how band leaders still resort to *Milenberg Joys* as a

stock hot number, for after an introduction and about thirty-six bars of verse it merely slips into a succession of *Tiger Rag* choruses which might just as well be called *Tiger Rag*.

Yet it took three men to put *Milenberg Joys* together. One was Paul Mares, the trumpeter of the old New Orleans Rhythm Kings, who made the first record of the number. (Mares recently came to light with some brand new gut-bucket records by a band of his own, supervised by Irving Mills.) The second composer was, according to the outside cover of the printed parts, L. Ropollo. They spell him Rappolo on the inside cover. I mentioned this great clarinetist when I dealt with his *Farewell Blues*. The third composer is (to quote the outside cover) a Mr. F. Morton. Turning to the inside cover, we find him spelt J. R. Morton, which makes him the famous "Jelly Roll," whose piano solos and band records on Victor earned him great notoriety.

This commercial orchestration is claimed to contain solos arranged by Frank Trumbauer, Benny Good-

man and Louis Armstrong. "To thousands of musicians," states the back cover, "Armstrong is known as the world's hottest and most eccentric cornettist . . ." And his chorus is claimed to be "hotter than the devil's kitchen."

Well!

Milenberg Joys has been recorded, since its inception some thirteen years ago, by the original Cotton Pickers, Abe Lyman's Orchestra and the Casa Loma Orchestra on Brunswick; Jack Hylton's Kit-Cat Band on H.M.V.; Benny Moten's Orchestra and McKinney's Cotton Pickers on Victor; Lew Stone, Decca; Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra on Crown, and the New Dorsey Brothers' Orchestra on American Decca.

Probably the best recording, however, is the couple of choruses included in Nichols' *New Orleans Selection* on a twelve-inch Brunswick, played by Venuti-Lang and other stars.

Oh, and I nearly forgot to tell you—they spell it *Milenberg Joys* on the inside cover!

Next Week: *I Ain't Got Nobody*.

JAZZ GEOGRAPHY

Round the World In Rhythm

by LEONARD G. FEATHER

HOW is your geography to-day?

Last time I subjected you to a musical exam., *mes enfants*, you were too clever for me. The questions were too restricted in scope to puzzle those incredibly avid fanatics amongst you who read your musical bible like a solemn incantation over the breakfast bacon every Friday morning.

So this time I am taking you farther afield, teasing you with little items that may have escaped your attention if you have subordinated active research to passive perusal. Well, anyway, here's the paper—and, mind, no cribs under the desk, please!

CHICAGO

- (1) Who was the director of a number of recording bands in Chicago, mostly under the name of the Chicago Rhythm Kings? What instrument does he play?
- (2) Which of the following Armstrong records were made in the Windy City?—(a) *West End Blues*; (b) *High Society*; (c) *You Rascal, You*; and (d) *Muggles*.
- (3) Who is Dick Voynow?
- (4) Name the famous coloured Chicago clarinetist who is currently leading a band at a night club in that city.
- (5) Who is Zutie? What is his other name, if any?

CHARING CROSS ROAD

- (1) Who composed (a) *Limehouse Blues*; (b) *Let's All Sing Like The Birdies Sing*; (c) *Love Is The Sweetest Thing*; (d) *Lazy Rhythm*; and (e) *Lazy Day*?
- (2) In what year did (a) *Makin' Whoopee*, (b) *Goodnight, Sweetheart*, (c) *Alice Blue Gown* reach the height of their popularity in this country?
- (3) What two numbers, published within a year or so of each other, had the identical eight-word title?
- (4) Under what pseudonyms do these music publishers write songs? (a) Irwin Dash; (b) Lawrence Wright.
- (5) Two big-hit numbers, recorded by many leading artists, were stated to come from a certain film. The picture was eventually never produced! Name the tunes and the film.

MAYFAIR

- (1) Why does Nat Gonella play the trumpet on one side of his mouth?
- (2) A noted bass-player, tenor player and drummer all have the same three-letter Christian name. Who are they?
- (3) Has Ambrose ever recorded any hot numbers?
- (4) Who are (a) Syd Roy; (b) The Tiger-Ragamuffins?

MONTMARTRE

- (1) What is the French for scat singing?
- (2) Whose band is playing at Chez Florence? Who is their pianist?
- (3) Who were the Harlemites?
- (4) Who is Michel Warlop?
- (5) What famous trumpet player, now with Jack Hylton's Band, is of French nationality? And what ex-Hyltonian hot clarinetist is now leading an orchestra of his own in a Paris night club?

HOLLYWOOD

- (1) In what film did Duke Ellington's orchestra play *Ebony Rhapsody*? Upon what standard composition was this based?
- (2) In what production did Ethel Waters make her screen debut?
- (3) What is the title of Eddie Cantor's new musical, recently completed?
- (4) What company recently produced a short entitled "Hi-de-Ho"? Who was the star?
- (5) Has Jack Teagarden ever been seen on the screen?

HARLEM

- (1) Who are (or were) the following:—(a) Blind Willie Dunn's Gin Bottle Four; (b) The Jungle Band; (c) Buck?
- (2) What celebrated coloured composer recorded *St. Louis Blues* as an organ solo?
- (3) What coloured pianist has been assigned to play with a new white recording band? Who is the leader of this group?
- (4) Which is the celebrated dance hall, formerly the home of Armstrong, Hines and Don Redman, where Chick Webb's bunch has lately been playing?
- (5) What, if anything, do you understand by the following Harlemaesque Ellington titles?—(a) *Big House Blues*; (b) *Jig Walk*; (c) *Jive Stomp*; (d) *Hop Head*; and (e) *Rent Party Blues*.

* * *

Well, that's that—and if you got fourteen of these twenty-four questions completely right you can face the world with a smile—and consider yourself a qualified student of the rhythmic art!

(Answers will be found on page 6.)

JAZZ GEOGRAPHY

Answers to the Questions which appear on page 7.

CHICAGO

- (1) Eddie Condon (banjo).
- (2) All of them.
- (3) Former pianist of the Wolverines; now manager of the Decca studios in Chicago.
- (4) Jimmy Noone.
- (5) Zutie Singleton drummed with Louis and Hines years ago, and is still playing in Chicago.

CHARING CROSS ROAD

- (1)—(a) Philip Braham; (b) Tolchard Evans; (c) Ray Noble; (d) Con Lamprecht; (e) George Posford.
- (2)—(a) 1929; (b) 1931; (c) 1920.
- (3) *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*.
- (4)—(a) Lewis Ilda; (b) Horatio Nicholls.
- (5) *Great Day* and *Without A Song* from a projected Joan Crawford film, "Great Day."

MAYFAIR

- (1) In the days before he could afford to rest, Nat developed a split lip and was obliged to shift his embouchure in order to go on playing. When the lip healed, he found it easier to continue on his "new" embouchure than go back to the old way.
- (2) Don Stutely; Don Barrigo; Don Whitelaw.
- (3) Yes, *Piccaninny* on Brunswick; also some titles years ago for Decca, which unfortunately, were never released.
- (4)—(a) Brother, ex-band-mate and now manager of Harry Roy. (b) Roy on clarinet, Ivor Moreton and Dave Kay on pianos, Joe Daniels on drums, and Arthur Calkin, bass. This unit of Harry Roy's band has been used for several records.

MONTMARTRE

- (1) *Chant en vocalises*.
- (2) Willy Lewis and his Entertainers, with Hermann Chittison at the piano.
- (3) A coloured recording group in Paris, led by Freddie Johnson (piano) and Arthur Briggs (trumpet).
- (4) A French hot violinist, whose band made two titles not long ago for H.M.V.
- (5)—(a) Philippe Brun; (b) André Ekyan.

HOLLYWOOD

- (1) Ellington adapted the Liszt work to his own ends in "Murder At The Vanities."
- (2) "On With The Show."
- (3) "Kid Millions."
- (4) Paramount, with Cab Calloway.
- (5) Yes; playing and singing with Estelle Brody in a short called *Me And The Boys*, in 1929.

HARLEM

- (1)—(a) A recording group on OKeh, with Ed Lang and Lonnie Johnson (guitars), trumpet and piano; (b) Duke Ellington's Orchestra; (c) Floyd Lee Washington, who has furnished piano accompaniments in Armstrong and Hawkins' solo records.
- (2) Fats Waller.
- (3) Art Tatum.
- (4) The Savoy Ballroom.
- (5)—(a) *Big House* means prison; (b) *Jig*, like *Spade, Shine* and *Spanginy*, is a Harlem term for a coloured man; (c) To *five* is to swank, strut or kid ("You're jivin'," an expression of incredulity); (d) A man who takes cocaine; (e) A party organised in Harlem for the benefit of some tenant who is in danger of being thrown out by an unpaid landlord.

RESULT OF THE BIG FIGHT

MANTOVANI versus GEORGE SCOTT-WOOD

Our Radio Critic, "Detector," takes a Ringside Seat and Counts Up the Points

THE Scott-Wood-Mantovani match on January 18 (National Stadium, 8.45 p.m.) was a sensational one from many points of view. "Scottie" was hardly in fighting form, having risen from a sick bed in time for only a couple of hours' training.

Not only that, but his seconds had let him down—Ambrose's boys were obliged to call off, and of the original Six Swingers only Scottie and Freddy Gardner remained, aided now by Sam Acres, trombone; Dick Escott, bass;

was planted to disturb Mantovani is hotly denied.

ROUND 2

Mantovani still cool, despite his team's disturbingly tight-necked tunics. Scottie's outfit already removing coats. Scottie makes a solo attack, but sounds a little weak in his left and too full of thirds in his right.

Monty delivers sudden right to the jaw with a Rumba, showing that he's got rhythm too. Amazing collection of odd-looking percussion instruments brings Scott-Wood down for count of five.

ROUND 3

Scott-Wood resorts to old stuff,



"George . . . comes back smiling . . ."

recorded arrangements. Fairly confident, but trombone lacks inspiration; there's only one Lew Davis.

Mantovani replies with smashing body-blow by featuring three violins this time instead of one. Scott-Wood still keeps his feet.

ROUND 6

Scott-Wood resorts to more evergreens; after pleasing but not very original *St. Louis Blues*, steals Monty's stuff with straight and sweet Freddy Gardner solo of *Poor Butterfly*. "So!" mutters Monty, returning to waltz tactics. Excitement becoming intense.

ROUND 7

Nora Williams sings solo, then rushes out to sound-control room; obvious signs of anxiety. Comes back smiling. Mantovani takes a leaf out of Scottie's book and lands a neat one to the jaw by using a current popular number (*Tina*). Billy Farrell keeps desperately calm by reading newspaper.

ROUND 8

Scottie brings on special trump

with sensational series of drum breaks by Max Abrams. These Maxes certainly do know their percussion! Monty serves another fox-trot, featuring Pat O'Malley, who scores over Gerry FitzGerald on personality.

Hasty consultation around Scott-Wood piano, clearing up points on next arrangement. Billy Farrell reads newspaper.

ROUND 9

Mantovani disturbed by sudden display of fast, hard punching from opponent, *Bagle Calls* and all; Nora Williams nearly fluffs words in *Some Of These Days*, but band redeems slip with splendid care-free busking in *After You've Gone*, Freddy Gardner being as fresh as ever. Freddy is a hero of the evening; his solos, on all three instruments, are really inspired.

Mantovani now replies with rhythmic Rumba; heavy string bass makes rhythm section a little mushy, but general effect sounds very Tipica. Monty's round.

ROUND 10

Grand all-in climax. Scott-Wood opens with chorus of *Dames*; Monty bursts into second chorus of same number; even the accordion acquires a certain swing.

On third chorus both teams join in together; Mantovani is rather drowned in the ensemble through the superabundance of strings; but scarcely any damage is done to either party, and both leaders seem little the worse for the experience.

The decision went to Scott-Wood, on points; but only just. Monty was a game loser, and had the admiration of the public with him all the time. "Anyway," said Scottie to me as he left the ring to return to his bed of sickness, "it was a grand fight. And I'll bet I made the public dance. That's what they want from hot music."

"It was a splendid match," declared Mantovani. "We enjoyed every minute of it."

So did we. And so did everyone who listened in. Let's hope the A.B.C. will fix up a return contest very, very soon.



"Mantovani . . . a neat one to the jaw"

featuring a bunch of "Evergreens" that would warm Leonard Feather's heart. Mantovani decides to call in extra forces, produces his sister, dazzlingly attractive vocalist with captivating voice.

ROUND 4

Scott - Wood retains fighting spirit; retaliates with his own female vocalist, Nora Williams, no less attractive and very stylish. Monty, undaunted, forces the pace with his own violin solo.

Scottie's seconds start cleaning instruments; first signs of perturbation.

ROUND 5

Monty's fiddle solo attack has temporarily weakened Scott-Wood, who uses up the last of his four

Billy Farrell, trumpet; and Max Abrams, drums.

Outnumbered by six to ten, the Boys nevertheless seemed very calm up to the last moment when the fatal red light appeared.

ROUND 1

Scott-Wood opened cautiously with a recorded arrangement, but soon delivered some colossal swings to the left. Mantovani already on the defensive; handicapped by only three beats to the bar in his first round against Scottie's four, he had also to contend with the flashlight explosions of a camera in the middle of a chorus.

The rumour that the camera

"LE JAZZ HOT"

WHEN a Frenchman is enthusiastic, he is enthusiastic with a vengeance. And when Hugues Panassié, doyen of French hot music fans, wrote his book *Le Jazz Hot*, just published by Editions R.-A. Corrêa, of Paris, he was fired by that ardent love of his subject which typifies the Gallic attitude.

The volume opens with an introduction by Louis Armstrong, written in English (Louis's English). "Mr. Panassié never misses," declares Louis, "when it comes to judging a hot record or its player. And knows them all. I have been asked hundreds of times if I thought hot music would die out. I said NO, INDEED . . . there'll probably be new names for it, that's all. Here's hoping you will enjoy Mr. Panassié's book as I did. He will tell you all about it."

And Mr. Panassié, for a period of four hundred and twenty-three pages, proceeds to do so. The primary advantage of this book over others of its kind is that it is written by a non-performing layman who nevertheless knows his subject inside-out, and does not hesitate to go into the most elaborate details. The author makes a serious attempt to explain just what hot music really is, and why. The chapter on "hot style" leads naturally to a complete chapter on Louis, whom he calls "hot style incarnate"—the very essence, in fact, of hot playing. A masterly description.

Then follow a number of essays on the other leading soloists; a chapter on the Chicago style, for which these Frenchmen have an extraordinary *penchant*; a study of Ellington's orchestra, of Duke as an arranger, of the other arrangers, and finally some rather high falutin' metaphysical reflections on jazz in general.

It is difficult to imagine what public Mr. Panassié has aimed at in this volume. Certainly the initiated lover of hot music will find much here to entertain him, though the introductory chapters will bore him at times. As for the general public who may dip into the book out of sheer curiosity, they will find much of it completely above their heads, in spite of the excellent explanations; and there are scores of pages which, to them, will merely appear to comprise a string of meaningless names. Another point: the copious references to records are not as useful as one might imagine; for the beginner cannot be expected to go out and buy himself an entire library of the discs referred to, especially as many of them are unobtainable in the whole of Europe!

Still, there is something in the book for everybody; even for those who do not read French. The appendix consists of an enormous list of hot records of all ages, as well as a guide to the best-known instrumentalists and their principal recordings; all of which is a positive goldmine for the insatiable "gramophans," whose ranks are ever increasing.

G. M.

A FRENCHMAN LOOKS AT JAZZ

By MAURICE GRAHAME

THE average layman, and the average student of classical music, both of whom generally consider jazz too flimsy and trivial a subject for close examination, will be staggered by the news that a book entitled "Le Jazz Hot," published recently by Editions Corrêa of Paris, contains over four hundred closely-printed pages on this provocative branch of modern music.

The author, a young Frenchman named Hugues Panassié, is already well known to readers of *Ballroom and Band*, many of whom will doubtless rush to secure this jazz saga, which is practically the first really good book of its kind. They may skip the parts where the French becomes too involved for them, but one and all will spend many an odd moment poring over the long list of old and rare hot records with which the book closes.

A point that must, however, be particularly stressed, is that M. Panassié's views cannot be regarded as final and conclusive, however interesting you may find them. The reader must occasionally debate the accuracy of certain statements made, and of the author's general attitude towards hot music.

For instance, M. Panassié's idol is Louis Armstrong, who, one gathers, is

worth all the other hot musicians put together. Now Louis is a temperamental artist—by which gentle euphemism I mean that he is highly fallible—and to indicate that he never makes the slightest mistake in technique or in taste is to mislead one's public dangerously. M. Panassié excuses any imperfection of Louis' by conveniently shifting the blame on to the trumpeter's manager, who joined him in 1931; but this leaves a multitude of previous lapses to be accounted for.

Another curious habit of the author's is his insistence that nearly every musician imitates the style of some other one. Armstrong emulates Oliver, Muggsy imitated Armstrong, Berrigan imitated Muggsy; Earl Hines, Teagarden and Hawkins all underwent the Armstrong influence, whilst the "mediocre but celebrated" Red Nichols "tried desperately to copy Bix"! These arguments are most misleading, for in many cases the "influence" on the styles in question has been almost imperceptible.

As to Hugues' contempt for the Red Nichols school, one can explain it by pointing out that these players employed an idiom of hot playing which differed considerably from that of Bix, Armstrong and the Chicagoans;

(Turn to page 34)

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"LE JAZZ HOT"

(Continued from page 31)

and M. Panassié cannot cope with the idea that two such widely different styles should both be acceptable. He finds that Nichols and Schutt lack passion, fire, the "negro vibrato" and so on. Precisely; and that is why they furnish such an agreeable contrast.

Mention of the Chicagoans brings me to the most important question of all. M. Panassié's whole book is founded on the theme that in hot playing arrangements serve only as a utility, the ideal jazz being almost entirely improvised.

There is a good answer to this. Which are the great hot records, the ones that will endure the test of time and have already had a definite influence in the advancement of hot music? Without hesitation I submit Ellington's "Creole Rhapsody," his "Lightnin'," Don Redman's records with McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Ed Lang's records with Hoagy Carmichael (particularly "Walking the Dog"), and some of the music of Hughes and Elizalde.

In every one of these records the arrangement is as important as the busking; in many cases it takes priority. While this proves the case for orchestration, I do not want to deny that Hugues' beloved "collective improvisation" cannot be great fun at times. In a gin-mill, or even in London at one or two night-clubs around 4 a.m., music can be heard which represents very good hot playing and causes infinite pleasure both to performers and to listeners; but "atmosphere" counts largely in the enjoyment of this type of jazz, and in most cases the musicians themselves will admit that it don't mean a thing to Art.

If Hugues Panassié had more of a first-hand knowledge of American jazz and the various conditions in which it is produced, perhaps his views would enlarge, and he would realize that hot music needs a larger canvas than he grants it, if a really beautiful and valuable picture is to be created.

However, despite the fact that his book is devoted to an art whose spiritual home lies three thousand miles away from him, he has made a thoroughly entertaining job of the volume, and packs it with a great deal of sound commonsense. So when you read "Le Jazz Hot," do not be led by the nose. Form ideas of your own, and perhaps one day you will write a book on jazz yourself and contradict everything he says. Who knows?



GEOFFREY MARNE

Argues it Out with JACK JACKSON

A FEW years ago—just before the Henry Hall regime—listeners switched on to the B.B.C. Dance Orchestra every afternoon and got a lot of fun for their Paynes through the effervescent microphone personality of a young man named Jack Jackson. The young gent's accomplishments were diverse: he shone with equal brilliance in the rôles of trumpet player, vocalist and comedian.

Since that era Jack Jackson has soared to—yes, you guessed it—dizzy heights. From the grey austerity of a Savoy Hill studio to the gilded luxury of the Dorchester Hotel. So since he has always been identified with a keen sense of humour you can gather why I felt that there, within the walls of that super-hyper-hotel, was my ideal interview-ee on the subject of humour in hot music.

"And when I say hot music," I explained, "I mean just that. As far as comedy in popular dance music's concerned we all know what Jack Hylton's done in that field—to say nothing of his tribe of imitators."

Jack Jackson nodded pensively. For the benefit of our fairer fans (both of 'em) I might add that Jack is tall, slim, handsome, and—believe it or not—modest.

"The point," I continued, "is this: I've often heard folks object to hot music on the grounds that the fans take themselves much too seriously. They listen solemnly to every record that's issued, and talk about it in a pseudo-highbrow tone. But they won't let their hobby be treated flippantly—in fact, they just haven't got the sense of humour to be able to enjoy a spot of light relief."

We seated ourselves in the awe-inspiring lounge hall, dotted with affluent Americans and frigid-faced flunkies.

"Well, of course, you're exaggerating a bit," said Jack, "though there's a certain amount of truth in it. But the question is, can you introduce actual comicality into genuine hot music? And if so, how? Seems a bit of a tough problem."

"There are ways and means," said I. "It can be done vocally, of course. Do you know the record by Hoagy Carmichael's Orchestra of *Barnaby Rill the Sailor*? It's never been issued over here—perhaps the Censor didn't take to it or something. But, generally speaking, it was fairly good, clean fun with some good hot solos to keep the fans' interest up."

"I remember the record you mean," said Jack, "but it's not quite what you

could call a comedy hot record. I mean the hot stuff is quite independent of the vocals, and it ends off more like a march than a dance record. There's no real musical indication of humour there."

With the utmost care I lifted a glass of beer in a super-chromium mug. "Ah, well," I replied, "if you want comedy by means of musical expression I can think of some instances, too. Remember that extraordinary moment at the end of Henry Allen's solo in the first chorus of *Underneath the Harlem Moon*, by Henderson? Where Higginbottom comments on the situation by means of a very expressive effort on the trombone?"

Harry Roy

"That," said Jack Jackson, not without reason, "was neither funny nor clever. It was crude, and probably even unintentional. Coloured players are much too sincere as a rule to have to indulge in horseplay. If you knock over that Venetian glass beer bottle you'll be sorry."

I edged away from the diamond-studded table. "Would you call Harry Roy's stuff humorous hot music?" I asked.

"In a way, yes. If you listen to Harry in the right spirit you can enjoy him; he's a personality, and he deals with hot numbers like *Tiger Rag* and *Bugle Call Rag* very originally; gives them little comedy twists that interest the general public and eventually gets them to pay attention to the musical side of the performance, too. But audiences don't necessarily have to be attracted by showmanship. Take a parallel case in standard music: imagine Sir Henry Wood trying to pull the public in by dressing all his boys in paper hats."

"It's a pretty thought."

"What I mean is, Sir Henry earns big money without having to do that. And in the same way I'm not sure that musical fooling can really be a part of out-and-out hot music."

Suddenly I seized on a point that had unaccountably escaped us both so far: Armstrong! "Are you going to tell me," I protested, "that Louis's isn't out-and-out hot music just because he entertains his audience, because he's got a grand sense of humour and a sense of showmanship?"

"No; but on the other hand, I do think it's had a detrimental effect on his performances in general, all this comedy business. I thought it a pity when people started to refer to him as the 'Great Fun Man'

of jazz; it sounded as though it must be meant sarcastically when one stopped to consider what a great musician Louis really is. One only has to compare some of his recent records with the 'good ol' good ones' like *Muggles* and *West End Blues* to see what's happened through his pandering to the public. Take a record like *Chinatown*, for instance. Doesn't compare! And there's that *New Tiger Rag* of his—it's not a patch on his original version, mainly because it starts off with a lot of patter about a trip through the jungle which hasn't any bearing on the music that follows, except to a very unsophisticated public."

Pause for breath, as Jack sank back into the gorgeous neo-Georgian chair.

"Quite true," I conceded, "but you've forgotten something very important. That previous *Tiger Rag* was full of comedy, too, but in a more skilful and musical way. Louis took phrases from *Pagliacci* and *Singin' in the Rain* and elsewhere, and quoted them in his solo, but gave them ingenious little turns that made them fit properly into the harmonic structure of the number he was playing. There was humour in that all right, and very clever humour, too."

"Gosh, so there was!" Jack Jackson thumped his fist on a solid and disinterested Louis XIX table. "That's the solution to your whole problem, then—the best way to go about getting a fine and subtle laugh in a hot performance. Not necessarily by quotations, I don't mean, but definitely by weaving skilful effects into the melodic line itself. Yes, that's how to do it, if it must be done at all. In any case, though, the public has become so much more sophisticated recently that the need for extraneous comedy attractions is starting to die out, and one can appeal much more directly to the audience's musical senses."

"All to the good," I agreed. "It wouldn't do for hot music and comedy to become too closely associated. Otherwise we might live to see the clowns at Olympia, say, playing the *Tiger* as a single-string solo on a tight-rope. Which we simply couldn't allow!"

"Quate," said Jack Jackson with a grin. "Dignity Above All Things. Well, I'll be seeing you!"

As I rose to leave I inadvertently dropped a cigarette stub on the ultra-extra five-pile carpet. My solicitor tells me the damages will probably amount to some £1,100.

I always said a journalist's life is not all jam.



"... dressed in paper hats"

CAN Europe Make HOT MUSIC?

An Interview with
 **LOUIS DE VRIES**

A TUBBY little man, fair of hair and complexion, peered round the corner of his dressing-room door and beckoned with diminutive fingers.

"Come in," said Louis de Vries. I entered the Dutch trumpet wizard's sanctum in a maze of awe mingled with apprehension. Something not unlike the sensation when I first met Louis Armstrong. Perhaps there was a reason for the parallel, for I had seen de Vries' name side by side with Louis's in the extravagant advance Press reports which heralded his arrival.

Louis (the Dutch Louis) was the first to contradict these stories. "Please do not believe I be greater than Armstrong! Nobody can teach Louis anything. I know that as well as you."

There was no false modesty behind this; just a plain statement of fact and honest admiration for a genuine master of the rhythmic art. And Louis the Second gladly admitted that he had learnt much from Louis the First. Provided you know how much is worth learning and how much isn't, he declared, it is up to every European instrumentalist to glean every possible advantage from the visits of American virtuosi.

Europe Centre of Hot Music?

"Do you think," I asked, "that, working on those lines, we shall ever manage to make Europe a second centre of hot music?"

Louis II's bright blue eyes opened wide. He answered slowly in his imperfect but fluent English: "To-day there is only one centre of hot music. America, of course. But there is plenty of talent in my country and all over Europe. You know, Holland is Europe's 'hottest' country, in spite of what they say about Denmark. We have Melle

Weersma, a brilliant pianist and arranger, and several other great soloists."

"But," I demanded, "what is there to prevent Europe as a whole from producing hot music the same as, say, France produces champagne? In other words, why can't we turn out vintage stuff instead of a synthetic brew?"

Rhythm Sections No Support

"Several important reasons," came the answer. "One thing is the rhythm sections; they are weaker over here than the melody men; and also in most countries you find two or three good hot men in each band and the rest no good; so they never have a chance of getting together. What the European musician needs is inspiration, atmosphere. If fine players like Billy Amstell or Eddie Brunner, the Dutch tenor, went to America and played with Teagarden and Goodman, it would improve them 100 per cent. If I had a chance I would spend a month in New York as second trumpet in an orchestra like the Dorsey Brothers—learning all the time, you see."

With delightful enthusiasm he

--- by ---
LEONARD G. FEATHER

went on to tell me of the most exciting week he has ever had in his life—when he swung with Hawkins during the latter's recent tour.

"That is what we need in Europe," he concluded. "Contact with the American musicians will start us off—and then perhaps we will one day produce a vintage of our own, and have our hot music with a character of its own."

Work As A Hobby

Well, if every musician were as keen to improve and as happy at his work as Louis de Vries, it would certainly be a good beginning. A happy and benevolent fellow if ever there were one. Here's wishing him a lot of luck and many, many postponements of his return to his native land.

February, 1935 *Time*

GOING ON RECORD I.—H. G. SARTON

MEET H. G. Sarton, the Man Behind the Records. The youngest veteran in the gramophone world, he has had twelve years' experience in the business, and now occupies the important position of record-selector-in-chief for the English catalogues of Decca, Brunswick and Panachord.

Picture him: thirty years old, but looks about twenty-two; tall, dark, horn-rimmed, enthusiastic, chatting eagerly about selling

angles and sales. It's the star name that sells a record, he will tell you. *Tiger Rag* and a couple of others may have title value; but nearly always the artiste counts more than the item. Duke Ellington is a certain bet for high sales, as are the Mills Brothers



[Photo: Ava Studios]
 H. G. SARTON

and the Boswell Sisters. A Foresythe tune, no matter who plays it, always sells well. Sometimes, though, a record will catch on by dint of a novelty angle, as did the two "race" titles by Frankie Half-pint Jaxon, which was regarded by many as mere intoxicated negro nonsense.

A good average sale for a hot dance record is 5,000 copies. Ellington generally goes above this figure. The value of names was most forcibly demonstrated when Venuti, Lang, Benny Goodman, Jack Teagarden and Jimmy Dorsey all made four titles together. Issued on Panachord, these proved the best ever of their kind, both pairs topping the 10,000 mark.

Incidentally, it seems that Teagarden should stick to the trombone if he wants to maintain his popularity. His vocal efforts have not widened his public as one might have expected.

I asked with considerable interest what is the present attitude of the British public towards the "Chicago style" music practised by Eddie Condon's tribe, and other such brands of slapdash music. I was not surprised, and not a little relieved, to find that they are by no means successful.

Mr. Sarton relates an amusing story of the old Al Jolson days. Through an accident certain copies of *Sonny Boy* were pressed wrongly, and *Sonny Boy* came out on both sides. Shortly after its release came a letter from a fervent gramophile: "Dear Sir,—I have played your record of *Sonny Boy* so often that I have worn it right through to the other side—but it still plays the same tune!"

★ **FLINT ATHLETIC CLUB** ★
 643 HARRISON STREET
 PRESENTS
DANNY POLO and His Orchestra
 FEATURING — DOTIE KAY — Vocalist

1944

"TOO, TOO UTTERLY DIVINE!"

Phoebe the Fan Returns and Visits the Gig Club

THE Editor was sure it would be all right. "All you have to do," he said, "is take her along and see what she says and does."

The Editor is one of those imperturbable blokes. If he had sent me to Whipnade, I feel sure he would have said all I had to do was to enter the lion's cage and see what they said and did. Anyway, the idea was to take Phoebe the Fan along to the new premises of the Gig Club. Phoebe, too, was sure the idea was all right.

"My dear, if there's anything a girl likes more than anything, it's a real musical evening listening to musicians—and in such nice homely surroundings, too. I'm simply dying to go!"

No Such Luck

Die she didn't, but go she did. At eight-thirty we found ourselves in that forest of little Dutch valleys, little grey churches, and dear old homesteads that adorn the music-windows of Charing Cross Road.

In a little side street, we observed a sign.

"There you are!" said Phoebe. "Jig Club."

I gritted my teeth. If only school-teachers would point out to their pupils that the G in "Gig" is hard (as in "gut-bucket"), many a long-suffering dance musician would be able to say that education had done something for him at last. . . .

We climbed the narrow wooden stairs and entered the low-roofed green room with its two thin black pillars and resplendently shiny little dance floor. Sydney Raymond's perpetual worried look vanished like magic as his gaze lit on Phoebe's dazzling smile.

Celebrity Hunting

"Any celebrities around?" I asked, remembering that Phoebe was here as a musical fan first and foremost.

No answer was needed. The corner which sheltered the piano was hidden by a mass of excited onlookers as a famous coloured pianist, hidden by the crush but easily recognizable by his style, tore the very skin and bone off *The Tiger*.

Phoebe rushed forward eagerly, but from behind the sea of shoulders she naturally couldn't see a thing.

"If only," she wailed, "I were one

of those giraffe-necked women!"

Eventually she edged her way through and whispered something in the ear of the Harlem music man. A few moments later, he was sitting at our table chatting earnestly . . . or rather, Phoebe was doing the chatting and he was her not-very-competent "yes-man."

"Why did you stop playing?" I asked him, disappointed.

Jest Talking

"Who on earth wants to hear him play," whispered Phoebe frantically in my ear, "when he's actually sitting here *talking* to us? My dear, this is the thrill of my life!"

And, turning her back on me, she kept the artist busily saying "Yes" and "No" and "Is that so?" for another half-hour. Thirty minutes of his monosyllabic mutterings when we might have been enjoying his grand swinging, in person, for the first time. . . .

There was a very elegant young man seated at the drums now with

the scratch band. Clearly a Society youth, indulging his interest in jazz to the extent of slumming with us humble musical folk. With a very Eton and Oxford air of boredom on his distinguished features, he was tapping out a steady four-in-a-bar when Phoebe, before I could stop her, went rushing up to him.

"Oh!" she cried excitedly, "I know you! Aren't you working for Sloppy Sam down at the Yellow Peril in Hambone Street?"

There was an awful pause. With admirable control I tried to save the situation.

"I'm afraid my friend is a little overwrought," I explained. "The heat, you know . . ."

But there was no stopping Phoebe. Snatching the sticks from the outraged young social butterfly's manicured hands, she yelled excitedly, "Oh! Do let me try these darling drums!" and, in a second, was sitting in with the boys.

The less I say about our Queen Fem-Fan's drumming the better for her reputation. Oh! Those off-beats! Ahh! That thunderstorm break at the fifteenth bar! Grrh! That thudding two-in-a-bar bass drum! And worst of all, those

revoltingly pseudo-Harlem shrieks of "YEAH, MAN!" at every possible opportunity!

Blithely, she carried on. There was a celebrated West-end sax now busking in with the group. Not having been introduced, she turned to him with a benignant smile: "Do you get many gigs? You're not at all bad on slow numbers, you know."

Dutch Courage

I turned slightly pale and resorted to a large glass of Dutch courage.

One of England's three best drummers strolled in. He would gladly have taken Phoebe's place, as she well knew; but nothing would induce her to give up her seat.

"Nice to see people enjoying themselves when they're playing," commented Sydney Raymond tactfully. . . .

England's third-best drummer had come and gone by the time la Femme-Fanne gave up her hold on the kit. So had the famous col-

oured pianist whom I had been longing to hear. And so had nearly all the drinks which I had ordered to ease my mental anguish. Finally, the tiger-woman dashed up and joined me in one as I tried desperately to pretend I had nothing to do with her.

"Oh, do look at that! How sweet!" "That" was an autographed photograph of a celebrity. There were several such pictures along the back of the bar behind the battery of bottles. Intrigued, Phoebe stretched out her arm to pick up the photograph for closer inspection. There was a mighty crash and a Niagara splash as eleven beers, thirteen bottles of whisky and a salt-cellar went hurtling to the floor. . . .

Mind you, I'm not complaining. I shall charge it all up to the Editor.

But my one impression of the visit that will never wear off is that when Phoebe goes out to have a real "hot musical evening, listening to musicians," she evidently doesn't mean what I mean, because what I mean is *Ars Gratia Artis*. And I wouldn't dare to let Phoebe try her translating powers on that! "PLUME"

16-2-35

FORESYTHE RETURNS

AN INTERVIEW BY LEONARD FEATHER.

REGINALD FORESYTHE 76—
 R turned last Saturday from New York, where he has spent fine hectic weeks, and during which time he had cause to modify several of his views.

"Where are the new men to represent an advance?" I asked, quoting from an article he had written, "and how many did you discover on your trip?"

"Perhaps there are scores of them," said Reggie, "but I was too busy recording with Paul Whiteman, broadcasting and so on to bother much about finding them. There are still plenty of boys though, who enjoy playing for its own sake and are skilled musicians into the bargain."

JOE HAYMES O.K.

"Joe Haymes has one of the best bands in New York. Bud Freeman is with him on tenor. Earl Hines is still touring with his so-so band, and McKinney, the drummer, is conducting the Cotton Pickers."

"The general standard of bands is not high, but that does not apply to individual instrumentalists, as you can hear from the discs I made over there."

He had an all-star bunch for these sessions, and here are the boys:—John Kirby, bass; Gene Krupa, drums; Benny Goodman, and Johnny Mitchell, clarinet; Toots Moon, alto; Dick Clark, tenor; Sol Schoenbach, bassoon; and Hymie Schacter, 2nd alto.

GOING ON RECORD

II.—Charles Delaunay

MEET Charles Delaunay, of 19 Bd. Malesherbes, Paris. Charles was a painter; then he heard of hot music. Now he ain't a painter any more.

All his life—almost since his birth in January, 1911—Charles cared for painting. In 1929 he decided to devote himself exclusively to painting and publicity. Then one day he was asked to paint a sign for the owner of a gramophone shop. He came inside and heard a few records. Hot records. He liked them.

Five short years ago. Now he not only has an enormous collection, not only does sketches of the hot musicians he meets, not only had an exhibition of the sketches last November, but conducts unaided an international service of rare hot records.

From Holland, from Belgium, from Rumania, from all over Europe come the supply and demand for those cut-from-the-catalogue gems that we had feared to be gone beyond recovery. Hundreds of discs, classics of jazz, pass through his hands monthly. Yet Charles does not make a penny out of the exchanges and sales. He does it all for sheer love of the research work involved.

He has even brought out a special catalogue in which he has tried to enumerate all the hot records ever made. A gigantic task, and one which can never properly be completed, least of all outside America; but the job has been handled as efficiently as possible, and the lucky few who are in possession of the typewritten copies of the

list treasure them almost as dearly as the records themselves.

The "exchange and research department" began modestly in Paris as an offspring of the Hot Club de France. As a result of judicious advertising it gradually spread all over the country and then abroad. In most cases the records pass through Delaunay's hands on their journey from



CHARLES DELAUNAY

one district to another.

His opinions on records are held in high esteem.

Amongst his selected favourites are

Louis's *Tight Like This*, Duke's *Mooche*, Spike's *Sweet Sue*, Luis Russell's *Panama*.

Charles is waiting to hear from English fans who are interested in his service. Give him a break; he deserves one. Exchange is no robbery with Charles Delaunay.



A portrait of COLEMAN HAWKINS

June 21st - March '35

WANTED—
A HOT FILM GALAGEOFFREY MARNE
has a bright idea

I HOPE the cinema proprietors will see this column.

Their business is one which wields immense power over the unlimited public it commands. They can sway the layman's opinions, create new fads, popularize new arts. Yet what have they done for hot music?

Since the talkies began, scores of famous hot musicians, white and coloured, have made their picture debut. True, they have often been filmed and screened with such a minimum of showmanship that the musical public has either found the films disappointing or else failed to find them at all.

However, a search among the annals of all the American musicals made to date would reveal quite enough material to provide a solid three hours' programme with a direct appeal both to the hot fans and to the general public.

How many thousands of enthusiasts there must be who yearn for a revival of *King of Jazz*, even if they have seen it before. The appearance of Venuti and Lang is in itself sufficient justification. And what a vast proportion of fans are not even aware that Louis Armstrong once made a short called *I'll be Glad When You're Dead, You Rascal You*.

There are plenty of other similar gems: Claude Hopkins and his Orchestra in *Barber Shop Blues*; one or two Duke Ellington shorts (or his original feature film *Check and Double Check*); a Betty Boop cartoon synchronised by Calloway or the Mills Brothers; the brand new single-reeler entitled *Don Redman and His Orchestra*; a short speciality made by Bessie Smith, the famous coloured blues singer. With these items it would be the easiest thing in the world to concoct a whole film show representing every aspect of hot music from Venuti to Cooty.

Something of this sort has already been carried out abroad, in the shape of a single gala performance, and the evening was both an artistic and a financial success. Over here, if a "gala" is impracticable, surely some enterprising manager of one of the "specialised" cinemas (such as the Academy or Polytechnic) in London or the provinces, could, with a little judicious publicity, attract just as large an audience for one week with the above-mentioned musical items as he does with his travel films and foreign language programmes.

Let us hope that if any such plan ever blossoms into being, TUNE TIMES readers will give it their very fullest support; for the public success of a show of this sort would represent a new and important conquest of the rhythmic art.

The GRAMOPHONE

March 1935

* * *

Valaida (N.) with Billy Mason and His Orchestra

I can't dance (Williams and Gains) (v by Valaida)

I wish I were twins (de Lange, Loesser and Meyer) (v by Valaida)

(Parlophone F118—1s. 6d.).

(Reviewed by L.F.)

Valaida, coloured star of the all-coloured revue "Blackbirds of 1935" at the London Coliseum, makes her English recording debut as a trumpet soloist and singer in the above.

Oddly enough she sounds even better on the wax than she does over the footlights.

She is yet another disciple of the great Louis. Her phrases are simple, but she has a strong personality and there is a swing in her playing. Perhaps these are her greatest assets, for although she undoubtedly has technique, it is not always quite up to all she attempts. I am afraid she must plead guilty to more than one cracked note, and an unsuccessful attempt to reach a high one for the last chord of *I wish I were twins* can hardly be said to have added to the effectiveness of its ending. Still, in spite of these minor blemishes the charming Valaida is a trumpet player to be reckoned with, just as she is a singer who should very soon become a real attraction on records.

The accompanying orchestra has a more than passable swing. George Elrick, the drummer, opens both records with a solo vamp that at once establishes the tempo (a good stunt this), and there are Buddy Featherstonehaugh with some acceptable tenor playing and a second trumpet in the

person of a young Scots boy named Duncan White of whom we should hear a great deal more as soon as the profession realises his capabilities.

Ants is the better side chiefly because *Twins* ends very coarsely and suggests a rather lamentable lack of rehearsal.

Note for the curious: (1) "Nyas" at the end of the second vocal of *Twins* is Mr. Berry of the "Blackbirds" show. (2) "Tea" in the reverse is not the kind you drink.

THE HISTORY OF RHYTHM

By MAURICE GRAHAME

WRONG again! This is not going to be an attempt to rivalize our worthy editor's historical survey. All I intend to do here is deal with the actual rhythm section and how it has progressed even faster than Jazz itself.

I propose to skip over the early years pretty lightly, in view of the wealth of information already provided in "Dixieland to the Duke." Rhythm was a crude thing in the early days of Jazz, though it certainly seemed to predominate over melody. The popular conception of ragtime, and of the music from which it originated, consists of the spectacle of an old nigger minstrel strumming on a cheap banjo and yodelling to his piccaninny. This is not so far wrong, for rhythm sections really did begin with this instrument.

When ragtime was taken up by the white men and was being played in saloons and cheap dance halls, it was only natural that the piano and drums, both common commodities, should take their place in the band; though whether they constituted any sort of a section is doubtful, as there was no question of balance between the instruments; everyone did more or less as he pleased, and there was no attempt to make the rhythm instruments a sort of allied but integral faction on their own.

Apart from this, the essential four-in-a-bar that has now become the stock-in-trade of hot music was then unrecognised. The one-step, the two-step and other dances featured jerky down-beat rhythms which could easily be accentuated by the entire band. In this way the trombone, which could never play a satisfactory rhythmic four-in-a-bar, took its place in the rhythm section in the years after the War. Or rather, it hovered undecided, sometimes taking melodies and sometimes thumping out the two beats per bar with ludicrously over-emphatic results.

That was the trouble with rhythm in those days; there was no attempt to blend the rhythm instruments into one united subconscious effect. Instead of making you feel that the rhythm was

there, they hit you in the ear with it. The explanation is a simple scientific one: a question of frequencies. The notes that we feel rather than hear are those at the extreme ends of the frequency scale; the very high pitch of the tap-box or the lowest bass notes of an organ. Now, clearly, if you want to convey a sense of rhythm and thus avoid drowning the melody, you will come nearer the low organ frequencies with a sousaphone or string bass than with the far higher-pitched trombone. Thus the groans and growls of the latter were hopelessly out of place, as you will realize on listening to any of the old discs by the Dixieland Jazz Band and other combinations of the 1920 period.

As for the banjo, it is an unmusical instrument with a *timbre* or tone quality that is hardly pleasant even in the deftest of hands, so it is hardly to be wondered that its place in dance music has now largely been taken over by the guitar. But even as late as 1928, when Louis and Hines recorded on Okeh with an atrociously elementary Negro strummer, the banjo persisted in certain circles.

The other main fault with rhythm sections before they became unified was the fact that they followed the trick effects of the melody men. For instance, in Louis' "Weary Blues" they play off-beats only for a whole chorus; and the Fletcher Henderson records, of which "Have It Ready" is a typical example, had the rhythm and melody instruments playing the same "syncopated" effects, as one man, or sustaining chords for two bars at a time. Nowadays the rhythm section's main duty is to give the maximum variety or "swing" to its constant four-beats-in-a-bar, from which it seldom diverges.

It was about 1924 that the sousaphone, a cumbersome instrument with great possibilities for providing material for jokes in the comic papers, started to come into its own in the dance band. Whiteman used a sousaphonist for rhythm with great effect, and other bands followed suit. Soon every important band counted one amongst its rhythm instruments, and the addi-

tion appeared to be permanent. Yet it took a great artiste to force any interesting effects from its unpliant tones. If you compare the Brunswick "Black and Tan Fantasie" with "Slippery Horn" on the reverse, you will find that the latter, made in 1933 with a string bass, shows up perfectly the shortcomings of the sousaphone heard in the backing.

An instrument which, though it defies my frequency law, achieved great things in the hands of one particular artiste, was the bass saxophone, slightly higher-pitched but considerably more adaptable to a less monotonous performance. I shall have more to say later about Adrian Rollini's work on the bass sax as a rhythm instrument.

Round about 1927, when Lang, Dick McDonough and Joe Tarto were rapidly climbing to fame, the guitar and string bass both helped considerably towards the refinement of the rhythm section, which thereafter definitely assumed a personality and character of its own and became partially segregated from the rest of the orchestra. It was only to be expected that the guitar and string bass should together come to the forefront, for their tone colours combine ideally, and there is no more melodic and rhythmic thing in hot music than the famous duet in Tom Dorsey's "Tiger Rag" by Lang on guitar and Tarto on bass, or the similar chorus by Ellington's bass and guitar in "Hot and Bothered" (1927). With one joyous bound the new-style rhythm section changed Jazz music into swing music. In fact, you will notice that the only records you can still play without any feeling that they have dated are those made since the emancipation of the rhythm section.

And that reminds me. There is one important exception; one group of records which, though weak in rhythm, have still survived. They are the early Nichols titles, and their excuse is that they were so sensationally new, so far ahead of their times from the melodic aspect, that they overcame the handicap of a section in which the piano was not very strong and the bass was

THE HISTORY OF RHYTHM

(Continued from page 33)

supplied by the tympani or kettle-drums. Vic Berton's kettle-drums, out of which he, at least, managed to get recognisable and perfectly-pitched harmonic backgrounds, were the natural forerunner to the string bass, which sounds slightly similar but ten times more powerful.

From 1928 onwards it was all plain sailing. At one time it was thought that the tuba, which sounds like a more refined version of a sousaphone, might rob the string bass of its new-found popularity; but the latter instrument still provides the bass rhythm in most of the famous bands and piano, drums and guitar complete the section.

Other instruments have been used, of course; Dave Apollon's band show what can be done in the way of rhythm with bandurias, bass guitars and other exotic instruments; and a whole new school of rhythm was started by the Rumba craze. The harmonium has been found suitable for a certain class of blues number, but, in faster tempo, as with the accordion, the very nature of the instrument militates against the possibility of smooth, "subconscious" rhythm. The use of a string bass with the orthodox bow is also well suited to some slow numbers.

Next month, if the Editor happens to feel that way, I hope to tell you about some famous artistes on rhythm instruments and famous rhythm sections in record history.

(To be concluded.)

25.7.35. WHAT OUR READERS THINK

PANASSIE'S BOOK DEFENDED

Leonard Feather's Review Is "Patronising"

—declares S. F. Dance

THE criticism of M. Panassie's review "Le Jazz Hot" by Leonard Feather, which appeared in the "M.M." recently, was so pointed a bit of writing as it has been my misfortune to read for a very long time.

We are told of M. Panassie that "he has never heard to permit the mastery of the musician he discusses; some of them he has not heard at all, even on records."

Now, where does Mr. Feather's knowledge that M. Panassie discusses musicians that "he has not heard at all, even on records" come from? I have read the book through twice and cannot remember anything to support that assertion. Where the author has not heard a musician on records, or in person, he himself offers no criticism, but has very justly cited the opinion of authoritative Americans, such as John Hammond and Murray Close, for example. (Can Jerry Miller really be heard in any of Panassie's records, by the way?)

Then there is the paragraph about Chicago music. "Chicago style" is as good a way as any of describing a very particular style of swing-music-making. One can do nothing but sorrowfully sympathise with those who deny its existence.

No, writing of the Chicagoans, Panassie attributes to them musical values which they themselves would be the first to refuse. A revealing suggestion, especially when one knows that one of the greatest of the Chicagoans, one whose jazz has been revolutionised by them.

That the pages of Panassie's work should be "spattered" with such names as Teichgraber, Mendow, Macy and Weisinger is wholly understandable, but that the articles should be full of such

be practically ignorant of them is very lamentable and most unfortunate. Teichgraber is unquestionably one of the greatest clarinetists that ever played swing music.

The importance of Mendow can be readily assumed, to take just one example, by looking to George the Vipers and M.M. and Cabaret by his orchestra, on H.M.V. It is the exquisite clarinet-playing. Moreover, one must realise that here is a man of rare taste, of such personality that he has gathered together such nobles as Jerome Carter, Bill Pymant, Chick Webb, Willie Smith, Floyd O'Brien and Max Kammerly to make some of the great swing records of all time.

It is curious to know about the "musical virtuosity" drawn from "A Few Indisputable Facts." One can, to know whether the chapter on Latin is considered in England, with anything like accuracy, to be "light-hearted." One can, to know whether the majority of hot fans, hearing read this book, will not think that it is a badge of the performance of the best swinging groups in all of very considerable importance, and that "Mickey" did so first when he departed up of them in the "M.M."

Robert Allen, with some amusement, that Nichols and Vercel are still very decidedly major goals in jazz. In my opinion—Le Jazz Hot—is very really the greatest book that has yet been written about jazz. I know of no other European capable of producing anything approaching it in execution.

THING

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED "SWING"?

LEONARD G. FEATHER SEEKS ENLIGHTENMENT FROM NAT GONELLA

SOME years ago Duke Ellington, who ought to know, wrote *It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing*.

Was he right?

Nat Gonella, England's Young Pretender to the throne of hot music, has very emphatic views on the subject.

"Of course he's right," he said unhesitatingly, when I fired the question at him. "No matter how good a soloist may be, he can't sound so effective without an encouraging swing accompaniment. In fact, without it, he can't really play at his best."

Is "Swinging" A Justification?

I pointed out that nowadays the swing mania has gone so far amongst the fans that it is common to regard the phrases "swing music" and "good music" as synonymous!

"Why," I demanded, "should music that is sometimes thoroughly unsatisfactory from the melodic point of view be excused on the grounds that it has a good swing behind it? That's what happens in the case of some of the inferior records by coloured bands."

Four-in-a-Bar On A Cigar Box

"That's not quite the point," said Nat. "You must admit that the basic difference between jazz and standard music is that jazz is played in rigid tempo from start to finish. If that tempo were maintained merely by thumping four beats in a bar on a cigar box, the monotony would be unbearable. By giving as much variation as possible to the four-in-a-bar rhythms the necessary light and shade is produced; and that's what is commonly known as swing. So you see that it is essential to real hot music."

"I'm not so sure," I ventured,

A PROPHET IN HIS OWN COUNTRY?

Nat sings to Mrs. Betty Gonella and Miss Natalie, but they don't seem particularly interested. In fact, Miss Nat seems to be more concerned with Bill Harty, who just managed to get into the picture.



"take those old Red Nichols records that have been re-issued recently. By present-day standards, they are hopelessly deficient in their rhythm section: no bass, weak piano, and faint guitar. Yet they represent the greatest hot music, and are just as enjoyable as any 1935 swing playing. So you see swing *isn't* essential!"

Rhythm Essential To Hot Soloists

This brought us to one of those very sudden deadlocks. I sucked my pencil. Nat licked his lips. Then he suggested that the Nichols records would have been better still with the additional advantage of strong rhythm.

"H'm," I said, dubiously.

Nat proceeded to point out how even the greatest soloists fall down—as Hawkins did in his solo

Rhythm Style discs—when they have only a piano to accompany them.

"The best real rhythm records," he continued, "are the busked type on the lines of those Billy Banks Chicago-style numbers, where Henry Allen and Pee-Wee Russell were the only melody instrumentalists, backed by a glorious five-piece rhythm section."

"Then you think swing is spontaneous?"

"Generally speaking, yes."

"But," I darted back, "why don't you practise what you preach? You've always said that you believe in preparing a hot solo chorus and having it off more or less pat. That suggests that you don't believe in spontaneous music or spontaneous swing or spontaneous anything!"

"On the contrary. I may prepare my solos when they come in complicated orchestrations with big bands like Lew's, because it makes the work run more smoothly. In

any case, the type of public I'm playing for doesn't like anything left to chance—and busking does mean leaving things to chance, doesn't it?"

"Go on," I urged.

"Well, you think back a bit. Remember how I played at the Gig Club and the Rhythm Club? Gut-bucketing, as you call it, for all I was worth. Now, that's the sort of music I should like to play all the time if only it were commercial, because it makes me swing my best."

He's Busy Telling Him!

"Ah," I cried, "makes you swing, does it? Now we're getting to the core of the matter."

"What is swing? Is it the work of the rhythm section pure and simple, or can the melody instruments swing a band by pure rhythmic sense, the way Henry Allen and Pee-Wee Russell did? I don't think it's necessarily a matter of playing about with the four beats in a bar: it may depend largely on the whole band, quite irrespective of the size of the rhythm section. See what I mean?"

Nat smiled enigmatically and said nothing.

"For instance," I went on, "take the old record of Venuti's *Cheese and Crackers* by the Blue Four, and compare it with the new version by his big band. The small group gives a perfect demonstration of how to play *with* swing, whereas the large band, with its four-piece rhythm section, is a complete contrast. The Blue Four sound twice as effective!"

I Hope He Swings For It!

Nat's grin broke into a broad smile. "Maybe you're right," he replied, "but you've lost your point. You admit that it's their swing that makes them sound better. No matter how the swing is produced, you do prefer it to be present in some shape or form, just as I do myself. So there you are!"

Yes, there I was. And if Nat Gonella continues to gain the public's approval as easily as he gained his point in our argument, he has a very successful career in front of him.

I hope he swings for it!

DISC-COVERED



A Child's Guide to Record Reviews Conducted by GEOFFREY MARNE

HOW many record reviews do you read?

Here are five criticisms of a purely imaginary disc as it might be dealt with by five of our leading scribes. Your job is to try to identify them. But the solutions are at the foot of the article anyway, so why bother?

Lord Smith and His Blacksmiths

STRATTON STREET STRUT
ABSINTHE BLUES

(Pornophone B.O. 1935)

(I) Sometimes I wonder why I don't give up record reviewing.

When I was brooding over a gin with John Hammond in a Harlem speak one night, the Dorsey Brothers, Chick Webb and Benny Goodman's band came up to me and entered into a heated argument on Brahms. Webb told me how many of his records have been inspired by the work of the nineteenth-century composers. By the time we had reached the eighteenth round (this one was on Jack Teagarden, if my memory serves me rightly, but who cares?) the conversation had turned to whether this jazz business is worth the hassle. I remember Benny Carter strolling in at that moment—it was about the time he was arranging to record Local Boy's latest opus—and telling us how, on his mother's knee, he had acquired an almost perverted reverence for Delius. We both sat wondering where the future was going to lead.

I felt exactly the same sensation when lunching with Yehudi Menuhin last Sunday. Yehudi is a charming, unaffected boy. He believes that automatic restaurants are doomed to failure. Perhaps he is right. I remember once, when I was with Sarge on the way back from a Philharmonic one day, I put a nickel in one of those machines that bring you out a sort of combination of fishpaste and axle-grease. When I pulled the slot I found there was nothing in it. But all my well-known eloquence could not persuade the tough Bowery proprietor to give me my nickel back. Since then I have always sworn by the human touch in buying food. Yehudi and I are of the same mind.

What was I talking about? Oh, yes, this Smith record. Well, there is nothing

to say about Smith. *Absinthe Blues* is typical Smith. Smith is always Smith, and always will be. If you like Smith you will like this record. This sort of absinthe makes the heart grow fonder—of Smith.

(II) ... before closing I should like to descend into the *demi-monde* of jazz. One good record has come to hand. This is Lord Smith's *Absinthe Blues* on Pornophone. After the synthetic nostalgia of most modernists, with whom *mal de siècle* is an *idée fixe*, I find Smith's Harlem tone colours richly *baroque*. In fact, this miniature *tour de force* removes the bad taste left by the *rebut* of Tin-Pan-Alley. It is Smith's executions in this genre which, with their naïve *elan* and indefatigable *verve*, stamp him *ipso facto* as a *petit maître*.

In short, a *chef d'œuvre*.

(III) Undoubtedly the sensation of the month, if only for the extraordinary work on clarinet (though I would not swear that this is not a soprano saxophone) which occurs approximately 1:57 inches from the middle of the disc, looking westward, to say nothing of the brilliant execution of the staccato *obligato* to the admittedly somewhat long and tediously uninspired vocal chorus (due, I believe, to Scat Kelly) is the new Lord Smith title, *Absinthe Blues*, on Pornophone B.O. 1935 (Am.N., v., N.b.g.) (backed by *Stratton Street Strut*, E.g., L.b.w.), which, while again demonstrating that characteristically dominant yet subtly subdued use of those intricate harmonic decorations and ingenious ornamentation of what might easily have been considered a banal melody, so invariably associated with the coloured gentleman whose name we see on the label, nevertheless provides yet another treat for those enthusiasts to whom the carefully exploited introduction of such richly colourful decorations may prove familiar, in so far as Smith's work has established for itself a standard of such incredible virtuosity that he has come to be regarded with insufficient admiration and appreciation by the public for whom his astounding experiments in advanced orchestration are unquestionably directed, and whose ardour he will, I feel confident in forecasting, regain with unprecedented certainty as a result of this

latest and perhaps most strikingly striking of all his works.

Buy it! * * *

(IV) For the "hot rhythm" fans there is *Stratton Street Strut* and *Absinthe Blues* by Lord Smith and his Blacksmiths. These exotic negro syncopations bring all the fever of the jungle into the ballroom, and will doubtless appeal to all those who like this sort of thing. Personally I prefer *Sickly Serenade* by Lumbago and his Saccharine Troubadors, which. . . .

Lord Smith et ses Blacksmiths

BLUES ABSINTHE
STRUT DE LA RUE STRATTON

V. These two titles were recorded in Smith's post-middle period—that is to say, before Hump Thomas replaced Dirty Dan, but a few months after the arrival of Gin-Mill Jones. I can recognise Jones in this disc by his brilliantly wheezy vibrato and highly clever insistence on one note. I would put this disc at about mid-December 1944.

The first side opens with a short introduction 4½ bars long, featuring five beats in a bar, ending with a formidable off-beat on the triangle, the style of which would appear to indicate Gut Bucket Winterbotham, though I understand Winterbotham was in Hong Kong at the time the disc was enregistered.

The other side contains many good things but it is a pity there is so much in it that is well-rehearsed and orchestrated. Still, since the disc was not made in Chicago I suppose this was inevitable. The result is that the artists, instead of all taking their solos at once, as in all the best records, proceed in an orderly manner and thus lack spontaneity.

After the first chorus (which is of no interest to anyone, since it introduces a tune) we come to a clarinet solo by O'Shea.

Mezzrow assures me that it was Bloomberg who played this solo, though at the time Smith was using O'Shea. Then again, O'Shea is said to have said that the solo was his. I am inclined to believe in this theory, for the disc was enregistered at a time when O'Shea was imitating Bloomberg, who, in turn, had been imitating O'Shea. But the lovely dirty brake-grinding tone which always delighted us in Bloomberg's work is again heard here. Also O'Shea never plays in anything but C major; though in this case I am inclined to believe he is playing in F.

In any case, far be it from me to waste time and space on footling personnel problems.

And now that you know the concerted opinions of these helpful gentlemen, you will all know what to do when the next Lord Smith record comes out and you are debating whether to buy it.

Go and hear it for yourself!

SOLUTIONS: (I) "Mike"; (II) Constant Lambert; (III) Edgar Jackson; (IV) Christopher Stone; (V) Hugues Panassié.

"Mike", 16.3.35

MR. GEOFFREY MARNE in an esteemed contemporary has devoted a page to a most subtle and not exaggerated burlesque of us scribes, us hacks, who, month after month, week after week, are paid a small sum by our papers, a considerable sum by band leaders, to churn out words of wisdom for an army of readers who obviously cannot know any better, otherwise they wouldn't read us, but instead would write us

Mr. Geoffrey Marne, in his excellent essay in the style of your present reviewer, makes a point of emphasizing that reviewer's eternal but not surprising world-weariness

TROUBLE about TITLES

Leonard G. Feather discusses some of the problems which have arisen through the same song titles being used twice

IF you are one of those people who will hesitate to buy two versions of the same tune, don't forget—there's no copy-right on titles!

Many composers in jazz have seen one of their titles seized for use with an entirely new composition, and the results have been confusing. Even in Louis's records you can find a case. Listen to his record of Fats Waller's *That Rhythm Man*. No connec-

tion at all with Gene Gifford's *Rhythm Man* by the Casa Loma Orchestra on Brunswick.

Similarly, *Black and Blue Rhythm*, by Billy Ternent, with Hylton's Orchestra on Decca, has nothing to do with Louis's disc of *Black and Blue* from another Waller - Razaf - Brooks composition.

You may say that these titles are similar but not identical. There are several good answers to that:

Earl Hines' *Take It Easy*, for instance, for you may remember that Ellington wrote a *Take It Easy*, too; and another Hines record, *Blue Drag*, does not seem to have much in common—beyond its minor key—with the Washboard Rhythm Band's *Blue Drag*, by Myrow.

The same misfortune has twice befallen Benny Carter. Four years ago he wrote a delightful *Goodbye Blues*, and recorded it with the Chocolate Dandies. Two years later, when

the Jimmy McHugh and Dorothy Fields' *Goodbye Blues* had been popularised, and recorded by Henderson, Art Jarrett and the Mills Brothers, Benny's far superior number was forgotten. And his *Blue Interlude*, written for the Dandies in 1933, was the title of a record by a French hot band under Michael Warlop, stated to be Warlop's own piece.

Then, of course, Mary Lou Williams' solo, *Night Life*, is quite unrelated to Will Hudson's arrangement on Fletcher Henderson's record of *Night Life*.

A more complicated case is that of *Sugar*, by Yellen and Ager, played by Red Nichols' Stompers on H.M.V. There is a disc named *Sugar* by Henderson on Rhythm Style, written by Young and Meyer.

THREE SUGARS

This, however, is exactly the same tune as an old record of *Someone* by the Night Club Kings on H.M.V., in which instance the composers were Bryan and Meyer; and the song was featured (as *Someone*, not *Sugar*) in an American talkie. Furthermore, there is yet a third *Sugar*, by Pinkard, Mitchell and Alexander, recorded by McKenzie-Condon's, Elizalde's and Rollini's Orchestras. See what you can make of all that!

More intricate still is the matter of Red Nichols' composition, *Junk Man's Blues*, which the Five Pennies played on Brunswick. Recently a *Junk Man*, by Loesser and Meyer, was played by Benny Goodman's Orchestra on Columbia and Teagarden's Orchestra on Brunswick, and now a disc, also called *Junk Man*, and sung by the Five Spirits of Rhythm, has been attributed on the Brunswick label to Loesser and Meyer. But in reality this is the old *Junk Man's Blues* number by Red Nichols!

There is no telling where situations like these may lead. I have just discovered that *Panama*, that hoary old favourite of hot music, is the title of a currently popular tango. After that, anything might happen!

9.3.35

ANOTHER LONDON HARLEM CLUB

Ike Hatch Starts The "Shim-Sham"

IKE HATCH, that genial spirit whose robust baritone you have often heard with the Kentucky Minstrels, has added a new string to his bow.

Formerly master of ceremonies at the Nest Club ("Harlem in London" to you), he has now found time, between stage and radio shows, to open a new club—the Shim-Sham—in Wardour Street, and to run it single-handed with every sign of complete success.

On the first night I went there with mixed feelings, expecting to find just another of these suffocating underground cellars. No greater surprise could have awaited me than this expansive and brilliantly lit room with its comfortable seating, its bandstand complete with two pianos and, above all, the striking mural decorations by Sanderson depicting Negro types.

YEAH, MAN!

On the stand Happy Blake and his Boys swung out with, perhaps, more percussion than discretion, whilst the ubiquitous Garland Wilson idly filled the rôle of second pianist. Gradually the walls of the room seemed to shrink as hundreds of people filed in, until I thought every spade and every fig-chaser in London must be among those present. Near-beer, weeds and lounge suits were the order of the night with many.

Eight hours for work, eight hours for sleep, and eight hours at the Shim-Sham. That will be the new daily round for these carefree coloured denizens of London.

L. G. F.

27.4.35

EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

by

Leonard G. Feather

No. 17:

SHIM-ME-SHA-WABBLE.

LIKE Heebie Jeebies, this is a number that was originally constructed around a new dance craze. "Original—unique—new dance" is the description on the music, and we have no reason to doubt the Shimmy, as performed in the dark days of the War when *Shim-me-Sha* was composed, had all these qualities.

Spencer Williams wrote the tune; it was one of his very first, and was published in 1916 by Roger Graham, who had collaborated with him in producing *I Ain't Got Nobody*. The Shimmy number was originally written and published as a piano solo, but later appeared with lyrics, written by Spencer himself—one of the rare cases when he has not had a collaborator for the words.

"Shimmy-Shaker Queen"

One of the first artists to popularize the *Wobble* was Miss Bee Palmer, better known to America as the "Shimmy Shaker Queen." Then Gilda Gray, dancer, film star and vice-Queen of the Shimmy, also danced to its strains, and it was also featured by the famous Dolly Sisters.

The earliest record in existence is on Emerson, played, I believe, by

Wilbur Sweatman. This dates from 1917. Then in 1922 the New Orleans Rhythm Kings played and recorded it.

In 1927 the copyright was transferred, and the new owners gave the number a fresh lease of life. It was played by the original Wolverines, McKirney's Cotton Pickers, Ted Lewis, Nichols' Five Pennies, Miff Mole's Molers (with Frank Teschmaker), all of whom recorded it.

Suitable for Busking

There is something strangely attractive about the progressions used in *Shim-me-Sha-Wobble* which make it eminently suitable for busking. After a four-bar intro come two movements of sixteen bars each, in C Minor; a suspenseful eight-bar lead-in, and then the chorus, in which the key switches to C Major—a favourite trick of Spencer's. The main strength of this 16-bar refrain lies in the unexpected harmony change in the sixth bar, to E Minor.

Altogether this number is well up to the standard of the long list of successes this composer has to his name. And by the way, when Arthur Young is short of a title for his next selection on Regal-Zono, may I venture to suggest *A Bouquet From Spencer Williams*?

Next Week: You Rascal You.

This CHICAGO BUSINESS

Leonard Feather sets out to discover
what it's all about and finds
much lamentable ignorance

THIS Chicago Style problem is becoming an international pivot of furious controversy. Panassié, in France, eulogises it to the detriment of the Red Nichols school; Ache, in Belgium, begs to differ; Dance, in England, ticks me off in the "M.M." for criticising Panassié; and the musicians in Chicago, wisely, lie low and say nuffin'.

In order to shed more light on the subject, I recently put two questions to members of the London and suburban Rhythm Clubs. An analysis of the results gave some interesting figures which, if they lead nowhere, will at least provide food for further argument.

Optimistic

Answers

The first question was: "Do you know exactly what is meant by the term Chicago Style music?"

Sixty-three hearties ventured a "Yes"; but seven of these qualified their affirmatives by giving totally wrong definitions. Net result: 56. And 57 people had the courage to say "No." They didn't know anything about this music, which, "Mike" would have us believe, is nothing but a myth anyway.

"Mike" is wrong. The style characterised by McKenzie and Condon and by Mezzrow, Bud Freeman and others, has a quality all

its own in hot music. Unfortunately, the Rhythm Clubbers were a trifle hazy as to what this quality really is.

"Essentially Negro," wrote one, which is essentially incorrect.

"B— awful row," was the verdict of three people. Distorted, but getting warmer.

"Gut-bucket," said one tersely, meaning just nothing at all.

Not Only

Grammar

"Using less notes as possible," was a sparkling effort. Quite apart from the grammar, this gent was incorrect in assuming that an economy of notes is an important factor in the Chicago Style. Naturally, in an all-out busk, it is safer to play fewer notes, as this will mean fewer clashes and ugly accidental discords; but in solos the Chicagoans sometimes use as many notes as the Easterners, if not more.

My second question went direct to the point. Those who professed to understand what Chicago Style meant were invited to vote for or against it. There were 19 "pros" and no less than 44 "cons," including one very emphatic soul who wrote "No, no, a thousand times, no!" In all fairness, however, I did not count this as a thousand votes. But the weight of opinion is obviously against Chicago music.

Personally, I would recommend a study of the better-class Chicago

records to all fans, particularly *The Eel*, *Makin' Friends*, and the celebrated *Craze-ology* by Bud Freeman's Orchestra, which should be issued in this country before it is too late.

My grumble is not against the Chicago Style itself, which has produced some very emotional, if somewhat uncultured, music, but against the importance that is attached to it as opposed to other styles. There is room in hot music for this form as well as the others, but it is the more refined types of buskology, garnished with the right proportion of arrangement, which will help to save hot music from the danger of decline.

Brickbats may be addressed to me at the "M.M." office. And if I know the "M.M.'s" public, 90 per cent. of them will come from abroad!

AMERICAN PIONEER PASSES

"BENNY MOTEN is dead" (so writes Warren Scholl, "Melody Maker's" New York correspondent). He passed away, in Chicago, a week ago after a short illness. This regrettable news coincides, strangely enough, with the appearance of a Moten record in R.C.A. Victor's Revival Series of standard recordings.

Benny Moten was for many years one of the best-known American coloured band leaders. Though he never registered any startling achievements from the artistic standpoint, his orchestra earned a wide-spread reputation from its frequent recordings for Victor, and startled the fans a couple of years ago by making three sides which

were so exceptionally good that H.M.V. issued them in England. These were "New Moten Swing," "Lafayette," and "Toby."

Benny himself, a large and portly figure, hailed from Kansas City, and was a member of a very musical family.

Buster Moten, his brother, was actually the leader of the band, which was known under Benny's name, and was also responsible for the accordion solos heard in many titles. Etta Moten, their sister, is a well-known and promising singer whose voice was heard in the "Caroca" sequence of the film "Flying Down To Rio."

In view of Benny's death it would seem probable that the directorship of the band will now be left in the hands of Buster Moten and that the group will continue to appear under his guidance.
L. G. F.

EVERGREENS of JAZZ

by

Leonard G. Feather

No. 20: SUGAR FOOT STOMP.

THE history of Sugar Foot Stomp dates back to 1922. Hot music was in its embryonic stage in Chicago, but the enthusiasm of the musicians themselves was limitless. Most of the good music could be heard on the river boats that plied between Chicago and the Grand Rapids.

One of these had secured the services of that pioneer of Negro trumpeters, Joe "King" Oliver. On another boat was a four-piece band of white youths who, at that time, really did play for the fun of the thing. One of them, a mere kid in short trousers, was Benny Goodman.

The others were: Dave Tuft, the drummer; Dick Vaynow, pianist (now manager of Decca's Chicago studios); and a cornettist, also in his teens, by the name of Bix Beiderbecke.

Admiration

Sometimes these two groups of musicians would foregather at the Sunset Café in Chicago, and the young white boys would sit and listen in admiration while "King" Oliver and his group swung out on the bandstand.

Most of the names will be familiar to you: Oliver had Louis Armstrong on second trumpet, Lily Armstrong at the piano; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; and Babe Dodds, drums; Ory, the trombonist,

and Buddy Sincere, banjo.

The routine of these performances was alarmingly simple. They took one tune, wrestled with it for dozens of choruses each, and did not give up for a whole hour. There was no "composing" to speak of, but one of the best numbers which Louis and King Oliver got together for one of these occasions was known as *Dipper Mouth*, and was recorded on Gennett under that name.

Early Master

Some while later Elmer Schoebel, one of the early masters of hot orchestration, made an arrangement of this number, and, under the title *Sugar Foot Stomp*, it was published in 1925, and has since been profusely played and recorded all over the place.

In particular, Fletcher Henderson has recorded it so many times, and on so many brands of disc, that it is impossible to keep track of every version. To add to the confusion there is a number called *Sugar Foot Strut* (no connection), and Louis Armstrong has recorded the *Strut* but not the *Stomp*, though it is the latter which is his own composition.

Next week: Limehouse Blues.

SWING MUSIC

24

SWING MUSIC

March, 1935

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES:

CARTER, BENNY "KING": Coloured instrumentalist and arranger. Benny is perhaps the only equal of Don Redman as an all-round musician. Born in New York in 1909, he was very young when he started devoting himself to musical studies. In 1930 he was already well-known as an alto saxophonist and clarinetist, appearing and recording with Fletcher Henderson's band, for whom he made such celebrated arrangements as *Chinatown* on Rhythm Style. He also recorded with Don Redman's two orchestras—McKinney's Cotton Pickers on Victor and the Chocolate Dandies on Parlophone. On leaving Henderson he joined Chick Webb's orchestra. With this band he recorded his own beautiful little piece, *Blue In My Heart*. In 1932 he formed a band of his own which has recorded for Columbia. He has also been associated with several bands of mixed colour, such as Mezz Mezzrow's on Victor and Brunswick and the newer Chocolate Dandies. He has written orchestrations for all the greatest bands, both white and coloured. Amongst his works are *Jazz Cocktail*, *Everybody Shuffle* and *Hot Toddy*, featured by Duke Ellington, Joe Venuti and Cab Calloway respectively. Incidentally the last-named once invited Benny to join his orchestra, but the alto wizard preferred to continue with his own combination. Recently he has achieved additional fame as a trumpeter. He also plays piano and many other instruments quite proficiently. Spike Hughes, during his New York visit, recorded fourteen titles with a band got together by Benny Carter. At present he is busy arranging for Fletcher Henderson's band again, and it seems that he may rejoin the orchestra permanently.

ROLLINI, ADRIAN: White instrumentalist. Another Jack-of-all-Trades, but master of each. Though officially registered with the American Federation of Musicians as a xylophonist, Rollini is best known for having glorified the bass saxophone to an important place in hot record history. From the old days, when he led the California Ramblers, to his Parlophone records with the Gooden Five, all his work on bass sax was endowed with a rich, warm tone and perfect musicianship. Particular's effective was his work in the early records of Trumbauer's Orchestra. Rollini is of Italian descent and a serious nationalist. In 1928 he



HENRY ALLEN, JR.

sensation of Fred Elizalde's Orchestra at the Savoy Hotel. At this time he composed and starred in one of the greatest jazz records ever made: *Dixie*, dedicated to his lovely wife of that name. Rollini is a brilliant exponent of the piano, vibraphone and countless other instruments. He is also the inventor of two novelty instruments that have often been heard in his records: the "hot fountain pen," which sounds like a miniature clarinet, and the "goofus," on which novel chordal effects can be played. The latter he featured with Red Nichols' Five Pennies, and the fountain pen with Joe Venuti's Blue Four. Rollini has also recorded with Jack Purvis and his Orchestra, Cornell's Orchestra and many others, including his own on Decca and Brunswick. He has now made music almost a sideline, for he is the owner of several New York restaurants, where many famous artistes, such as Willie Smith and Wingy Mannone, have been engaged to provide the swing music.

WALLER, THOMAS "FATS": Coloured composer, pianist, organist and violinist. Born New York City, 1904, the grandson of Adolph Waller, a celebrated German concert violinist. Fats (so called because of his enormous girth) was introduced for the church, but ran away from home and secured a calvary job. For some time he was featured as organ soloist in a New York theatre. From 1924 to

1926 he toured as accompanist to that favourite coloured blues singer, Bessie Smith. Later he began to become known as a composer, and in collaboration with Andy Razaf was responsible for such hits as *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Black and Blue*, *My Fate Is In Your Hands* and *Honeysuckle Rose*. It was in 1930 that he registered his greatest triumphs in this line, for he was responsible for the music of the entire *Hot Chocolates* show. In 1932 Fats visited Paris; it was intended that he should team up with Spencer Williams in an act for Paris and London; but he returned suddenly to the States, since when he has become a sensational radio success and is known as "Radio's Harmful Little Armful." He has recorded dozens of titles lately for Victor (H.M.V.), including several piano solos. As a singer he has great personality if little voice. He has recorded *I Ain't Got Nobody* and several others as organ solos. As a pianist, he shows off to greatest advantage, his technique, accuracy and stretch all being colossal. Married; has three children. Nearly six feet tall. Said to be one of the most likeable personalities in the show business, and is rapidly climbing from success to success.

ALLEN, HENRY "RED": Coloured trumpet player, said by many to be the logical successor to Louis Armstrong. First came into prominence in records on Okeh with Luis Russell's Orchestra, when his style was definitely based on Armstrong's. He also recorded a large number of titles on Victor under his own name with a similar combination. In 1932 and 1933 he did some excellent recording with coloured and mixed orchestras. By this time he had begun to evolve a personal style, as can be heard in the Eddie Condon discs: *Bugle Call Rag*, etc. When he joined Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra in 1933, it was becoming increasingly easy to recognise him as soon as he began to play. His best-known record with this group was *Nagasaki*, in which he played two fine trumpet choruses and sang the vocal in his rather rough and (unattractive) tones. Three months ago he left Henderson to join the Mills Blue Rhythm Band, in which he will be the most important asset. He was heard in the American records of Spike Hughes and in a series of Brunswick titles made by a small band which he conducted in 1934, in conjunction with Hawkins. The latter has the greatest admiration for "Red's" playing and hopes to bring him to Europe soon to prove his value in person. L.G.F.

ON THE LEVEL

Newsy Notes

by

"JUNKMAN"

• "Fats" Waller has formed a new band which he hopes to take to the Pacific coast in the near future. It is quite a large outfit; five brass, four reeds, four rhythm instruments, and two pianos. You know who plays one of them.

• Joe Haymes, whose band is generally regarded as one of the best white outfits in New York, is pretty sore at having lost his two sax, stars, Bud Freeman and Toots Mandel, to Ray Noble.

• Johnny Mercer has been tempted away from the Whiteman fold by a big money offer from Hollywood.

• Cab Calloway has now filled the vacancy created by the death of Edwin Swayze. Trumpeter Irving Randolph is the new man.

• Benny Goodman has been making many changes in his band; until now, I am told, it is one of the finest white bands ever. It certainly reads well enough on paper. Frankie Froba (piano), Gene Krupa (drums), Bunny Berigan (trumpet), Peewee Irwin (trumpet), Arthur Rollini (tenor sax), Jack Lacy (trombone), Benny on clarinet, of course, and with Helen Ward singing. Benny has the pick of the best arrangers in town. Benny Carter, Fletcher Henderson, Fud Livingston and Edgar Sampson are four who contribute their quota each week.

• The majority of fans will be as pleased as I am to hear that American Decca are releasing some of the early records made for Gennett by the Wolverine Orchestra. The first to be made available (we hope soon in England) is *Copenhagen*. This band must not be confused with a later group called The Original Wolverines. Bix Beiderbecke can be heard in the former, but in the latter outfit his place is taken by Jimmie McPartland.

• The last paragraph makes me wonder how many new fans can afford to buy all the many early recordings from the catalogues when there are so many good ones issued each month. Or how many can afford to buy the new ones when there are so many good old ones to be bought. The ideal way is to borrow them, of course. It may be news to the majority of you that The Recorded Music Library of 60, George Street, Baker Street, London, W.1, has opened a

section for students of "le Hot" from which you can borrow ten records a month at a cost which works out at less than one penny per week. Any records you want—packed free. It's a fact. If you don't believe me, write in to them about it.

• Two changes to note in Duke Ellington's band. Rex Stewart

FOREIGN WAXWORKS

Sensation on Strings—by L.G.F.

JUST how much these Frenchmen really know about hot music has, until recently, been a bit of a mystery. We were all aware that France has many distinguished critics of *le hot*, but there has always been some question as to whether the Frenchmen's knowledge of this subject was practical as well as academic. It is comparatively easy to write and talk about it; but playing it was another matter.

Four records have just come to light which prove incontestably that Frenchmen can produce first-class hot music. They are played by Django Reinhardt's Hot Club Quintet, an all-string outfit. And they are not only sensationally surprising in the highest degree, but represent something original, yet completely satisfying, in the art of hot rhythm.

Django Reinhardt is an astonishing person. He travels around in a caravan, accompanied by a brother, a gramophone, some Ed. Lang records and a guitar. When his caravan had rested in Paris for a while and he had been heard up at the Hot Club (together with his brother, who also plays guitar), it was decided that the time had come to record him before he wandered off again. A M. Vola was

comes in in place of Freddy Jenkins; and the band is increased by the addition of Bill Taylor on tuba.

• Levy's, of Regent Street, have always been to the front where swing music was concerned, and now they tell me that they would like to record some hot numbers by star British soloists, for release by limited subscription only. Just drop me a line to say the numbers and the artists you want recorded, and I will pass on the information.

• Cab Calloway's band has been strengthened by the addition of Keg Johnson and Claude Jones (trombones). Harry White is still on the sick list.

• An American radio critic finds fault with the Mills Brothers' singing "The Object of My Affection Has Changed My Complexion from White to Rosy Red."

• The Teagarden Brothers are both featured in Red Nichols' radio half-hour.

engaged to play string bass, and the violinist in the four titles recorded was Stephan Grapelly, a well-known French pianist, whose violin playing is said to be a second consideration with him. He must be an incredibly brilliant pianist.

The most remarkable thing about these French discs is that there is no aping of Venuti or of Lang. These boys have the style, the technique, the personality, the tone and attack, and above all the sense of hot playing, to enable them to dispense with all imitation. Every side is just grand swing music from start to finish. Even the weakest of the four, *Tiger Rag*, has many exciting moments, whilst *Dinah*, *Lady*, *Be Good* and *I Saw Stars* are a joy in every way.

Collectors should be sure to get hold of these records (made by Ultraphone), if only to see that my enthusiasm is warranted. I don't think my critical reputation stands in any danger. L.G.F.

The path of the collector has been made smoother by Levy's, of Regent Street, who announce that they will have supplies on sale by the middle of the month.—[Editor.]

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES:

By

LEONARD G. FEATHER

NICHOLS, LORING "RED":

White trumpet player. Born at San Jose, near San Francisco, some thirty-one years ago.



RED NICHOLS

Nichols played the trumpet from his early youth and was engaged to play with a small orchestra in his native town. His career proper began when he was engaged by George Olsen. From about 1924 his recording activities have been so profuse that it is impossible to trace them all. He formed the "Red Heads" on Pathé-Actuelle with Miff Mole, Arthur Schutt and Bennie Pollack; became one of Adrian Rollini's "California Ramblers," played with Jean Goldkette, Roger Wolfe Kahn, Don Vorrhees and their orchestras, and in 1927 commenced the famous series of Brunswick records under the name of "The Five Pennies," which lasted until late in 1932. He led the pit bands of "Girl Crazy," "The New Yorkers," and other successful shows. His trumpet playing has a calmness and assurance which offend the one-track minds of Armstrong fanatics, but there is undoubtedly great beauty in much of his work, notably in the 1928 and '29 period when he made, amongst others, the Charleston Chasers' version of *Five Pennies* on Columbia. Red also led the Louisiana Rhythm Kings, with whom his work in *That's a Plenty* was outstanding. Recently he has not made any hot recordings, but is touring the States with a fairly good commercial band. Last month he began a new series of broadcasts with Ruth Etting. Nichols has undoubtedly contributed invaluable to the history of hot music, and his efforts in that field should not be forgotten in spite of his regrettable decline. He was responsible for the "discovery" of many famous players, such as Teagarden, Arthur Bernstein, Fulton McGrath, the pianist, and many of the other "Pennies."

HOPKINS, CLAUDE: Coloured pianist and conductor. Hopkins came from Duke Ellington's town of Washington, and it is said that the natives of that city predicted a more brilliant future for him than for the Duke; Hopkins was considered a far superior pianist. He originally left Washington in 1924, and gradually made his way into big time in New York. By 1932 he was playing in the Roseland Ballroom, home of many famous coloured bands, and also at the famous Savoy Ballroom. Under the joint management of Irving Mills and Tommy Rockwell he was contracted to Columbia for several recordings. Many of these have appeared in England in the Parlophone Rhythm Style Series. After these first recordings he went on the road for some time, playing one-night concerts with great success. Returning to New York, he played again at the Roseland Ballroom. A few months later he was signed up by Brunswick to record exclusively for that company. The team work of the band was by now improving considerably, and more care was taken over the arrangements. An outstanding example is *Mystic Moan*, in which, curiously enough, the weakest feature was his own piano solo, with its feeble left hand and lack of assurance. Two months ago Hopkins returned to the Roseland, the scene of his earlier triumphs. He has made one short film entitled *Barber's Shop Blues*, which gives considerable prominence to the whole band.

STEWART, REX: Coloured trumpet player. Rex is now only twenty-six years of age, though it is over ten years since he started to make his name on the trumpet with well-known bands. Born in Philadelphia, he secured his first engagement in Washington, D.C., with the then obscure combination led by Duke Ellington. Later a bid for Rex's services was made by the Nest Club of New York, and he migrated to the capital. Shortly after his arrival there Louis Armstrong began to take an interest in his playing. He was so keen to help Rex that, on leaving Fletcher Henderson's band in order to form his own group, he recommended this youngster to fill his place. Henderson took his advice, and

Rex filled Louis's place with great success. He left Fletcher in 1926, but returned again a couple of years later. Then, when Don Redman left the band to assume leadership of McKinney's Cotton Pickers, he took Rex with him. When the McKinney orchestra temporarily disbanded, Rex returned to Fletcher, and later made an extensive tour of the R.K.O. vaudeville circuit. More recently he decided to fend out for himself, and whether he is successful as a leader or not you can find out for yourself by listening to the record issued on Decca this month.

A couple of months ago, when Freddy Jenkins was taken seriously ill, his place had to be taken in Ellington's band, and Rex qualified for the job. He is now settling down with the Duke's famous band.

HINES, EARL: Coloured pianist. Considered at one time to be the greatest of all rhythmic pianists, Hines is still at least one of the best if not as outstanding as he was in the old days. Hines has always played in Chicago, and it was only very recently that he made his Eastern debut. Attention was originally drawn to him by a series of remarkable records he made with Louis Armstrong's Hot Five in 1928. In the same period he recorded four solos, also for Okeh, which are still big sellers both here and in the States, where they have been re-issued on Columbia. After his association with Louis, Hines formed his own band, a mediocre outfit which recorded occasionally on Victor without any great success. Then about eighteen months ago he made some radical changes in the personnel of his band, which turned out greatly to his advantage, and with the signing of his new recording contract for Brunswick an enormous advance was shown. Unfortunately, even these records do not show Hines at his very best. Apart from the four solos there are a series of others he made on the defunct Q.R.S. make—amongst them *Stowaway*, *Chimes in Blues* and *Chicago High Life*—which are now almost impossible to obtain. He also recorded with Jimmy Noone's Orchestra on Vocalion. Hines collected a huge following of fans at the Grand Terrace Hotel, Chicago, where he played for many years. Last year he was featured with Valaida and Nyas Berry in the stage show with which his band was associated at the hotel. Recently Hines has been on the road, his place at the Grand Terrace being taken by Carroll Dickerson's Orchestra.

EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

No. 18—YOU RASCAL, YOU!

by

Leonard G. Feather

MANY years ago there was a newspaper boy in New Orleans who had time to write songs when he was not selling papers. One of his tunes was based on two popular phrases of the day—"I'll be glad when you're dead!" and "You rascal!" Some time later, after he had played the number extensively for the amusement of his acquaintances, it was bought for publication. In the summer of 1931 a record of it was issued over here, played by Red Nichols' Five Pennies.

Louis Finds It

It was not until Louis Armstrong hit on the number, though, that Sam Theard, the composer, really found himself in the limelight. Louis recorded it and has featured it in his act ever since he first discovered it. The difference between his version and Nichols' is that Red played the simple sixteen-bar chorus in a minor key, whereas Louis and many others later played it in the major. The lyric has, in fact, had no less than three different tunes fitted to it on records. In Luis Russell's version on Victor the key is major, but the middle four bars are different again, landing on the seventh of the mediant.

You Rascal, You has been perpetuated on the films in a Betty Hoop short of that title, wherein Armstrong sang and played the accompaniment. It has also been re-

sponsible for a vogue in numbers of this type, expressing some violent dislike for the person addressed. *Let Him Live* was a sort of sequel; *Aw You Dawg* and *I'm Gonna Wash My Hands of You* are both distinctly derivative. Recently Sam Theard himself has written another number that sounds very similar, entitled *I'm Going to Run You Down, You Hound*.

Hawkins has recorded it twice, once with Connies' Inn Orchestra on Brunswick, and once with the Mound City Blue Blowers on Okeh. Fats Waller sang it with Teagarden's Orchestra on Columbia and Cab Calloway warbled it on Brunswick.

Incredible Garland

There are also versions by Harry Roy's Bat Club Boys on Oriole, the Five Rhythm Kings on Victor, Howard Joyner on Columbia and the Seven Little Clouds of Joy on Brunswick.

Finally, a word of praise for the incredible Garland Wilson, who, in his piano solo version on Brunswick, managed to squeeze in seventeen choruses. Not only Evergreen, but almost everlasting.

NEXT WEEK: MEMPHIS BLUES

age. in 1927. The golden busking had arrived, and musicians found this simple set of harmonies eminently suited to their improvisatory designs.

New records began to spring up like mushrooms. New orchestrations were issued. By 1930 the tiger had established itself firmly as the musicians' darling.

In the following year the final stronghold was captured when Harry Roy started to interest the lay public in the animal. To-day, on the sheet music, the old faces of Shields, Emil Christian and their fellow-Dixielanders have given way to a picture of Hurricane Harry, and in place of the cow and hens and rabbits is a real, honest-to-goodness tiger!

Seventeen Years of History

"Yes," said the tiger dreamily, "I've made history—seventeen years of it! No two people have ever treated me exactly alike. Some of them like to take me out for a good romp, without bothering to prearrange things. Sometimes that works out well—with the Home Towers, for instance, or Louis's first effort; but sometimes it's disappointing that way, like Ray Noble's and Freddie Johnson's. But one thing I hate like poison: is being treated as a comedian. Fats White-

JUBILEE OF JAZZ

Vic Filmer Looks Back at Twenty-Five Years In The "Business"

In An Interview with Our Special Representative

NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TEN. . . . I suppose it seems like the dark ages to most of the present-day leaders in the world of rhythm; but to me it's as clear as yesterday. In fact, it makes me feel a real veteran to realise that I can tell you more about the dance music of Coronation Year than about this month's new record issues.

Still, I can console myself that at forty-one, after twenty-five years in the dance music profession, I still don't look a veteran. I started pretty young, of course. Began to learn the piano when I

they intrigued those who happened to overhear me playing them. One of these society hostesses thought that a novelty of this sort would make a good act at one of her parties. I was engaged to give half-an-hour's demonstration of this "ragtime," ostensibly to entertain some children; but the adults swallowed their pride and listened with considerable interest. For this thirty minutes' show I was paid a guinea—colossal money in those days, when one was lucky to receive 15s. for a gig lasting from 9 p.m. till 4 a.m., and more often had to be content with seven-and-six or five bob.

Soon I found myself in demand for these demonstrations. I remember sneaking out of Augener's one day into a taxi and hastening to the Duchess of Westminster's ball, where I played another com-

not a piano solo, but a "rag" with catchy words, something that could be the rage of the country. I had guessed right; within a few months it was firmly established in England.

The music was at first confined to voice and piano, but before long the violin, 'cello, flute and oboe, cornet and clarinets in A attempted to interpret ragtime for orchestral purposes. What little printed ragtime there was had to

be written in sharp keys to make the strings sound "bright," a state of affairs which was not rectified for many years.

It was about 1913 that the term "Fox Trot" came into use. I have a copy of the original *Fox Trot Hop*, by A. Kingston Stewart, with parts for fiddle, 'cello and organ. But neither the rag nor the foxtrot supplanted waltzes and mazurkas at the society balls. Jazz entered England more by way of the variety stage than in the dance hall, which, considering that it is essentially designed for dancing nowadays, is certainly strange.

The "blues" was quite late in coming to England. In 1910 this word was only known to a few lower-class Negroes in Kentucky and Missouri. W. C. Handy was at the very outset of his career, and the *Memphis Blues* had yet to be published. It was another twelve years before Philip Braham, with his *Limehouse* classic, was to set the whole country blues crazy.

No Pro

Jazzers!

In the first jazz era there were practically no professional players of ragtime. Everyone, with the exception of the few who toured in shows, was a semi-pro. The spare-time gigster is by no means a product of the nineteen-thirties!

I myself was a semi-pro, dividing my time between this and the music publishing shop, until Gaby Deslys arrived in London and searched



Above: Vic Filmer as he is to-day.

Below: Vic in 1910.



vainly for a pianist to accompany her in ragtime music. At last she did find somebody who, in her opinion, had the swing that made *Oh, You Beautiful Doll* sound just the way she wanted it. I gladly accepted the job, but when I later found that I had to go abroad, I decided to stay put, thereby missing a chance of £25 a week, and possibly a whole new career.

England was, nevertheless, soon rid of me. In 1913 I believe I can claim to have been the first white pianist to play jazz in Paris. At the

Café des Folies Bergère, where I played duets with a coloured pianist, we passed round the hat and shared the proceeds. I spent eleven months at this; and when I returned to England ragtime had taken a firm hand, largely owing to the success of three coloured men playing at Murray's Club—the Versatile Three, who, as the first Negroes to play jazz in this country, received no less than £200 a week between them.

Previous to this, coloured dance music had been completely unknown in Great Britain. It was only after the Versatile Three excitement that English writers began to wake up and adapt themselves to this new idiom. I collaborated with the first of them—Will E. Haines, who wrote *The Ragtime Dinner-time Band* in 1914.

The four years of war acted as a sort of dam to human emotions, and when that dam was broken in 1919 it was only natural that the music of the period should be more violently emotional and physical in its appeal than ever before.

Maximum

Noise

Piano, cornet, fiddle and drums vied with each other for the production of the maximum of notes and noise. There were still no printed parts written for the saxophone. Worse, there was still no journal to act as a common mouth-piece for dance musicians; not until the MELODY MAKER started in 1926 did law and order begin to reign in this new profession.

What happened after that is knowledge that you have probably picked up already in your researches; for everything since the Dixieland Jazz Band in 1920 has been consecrated to history by the gramophone record industry, and in any case it is the jazz of post-War times that still appeals to the connoisseur and collector of to-day.

This secret little oddity called ragtime that used to be my private delight in 1910 has become so sophisticated, grown so out of hand, that I feel almost too dazed to look on it to-day with complete impartiality. I have lived with it, grown up with it, seen a new generation arrive together with a new genus of the music itself.

It's good to look back on the old times and to think that I'm still in the heart of the business just as I was twenty-five years ago.

But it's not so good to hear Vic Filmer, Junior, coming through with a mighty break on the string bass or drums, and making me feel I'm no longer a dance musician, but just a dance musician's father.

Just another case of the younger generation knocking at the door—in a steady four-four rhythm!

EVERGREENS OF JAZZ by Leonard Feather

No. 23: SHINE.

SHINE, described as the story of a little coloured bootblack, is really the story of the whole coloured race. Listen to the words, interpreting "shine" as another Harlem synonym for a coloured man, and you will realize why it has become a perennial popular favourite amongst coloured performers.

Two veterans in the song-writing game put the number together. Cecil Mack, who wrote the lyrics, has a wide range of popular favourites to his name, ranging from *Please Go 'Way And Let Me Sleep* of many years back, down to such characteristic numbers as *Charleston* and *Old Fashioned Love* of more recent times.

Cecil is still at it, and has several coloured shows running as well as a picture in prospect. He has in his time produced many coloured extravaganzas, and also sponsored the Cecil Mack Choir in Lew Leslie's *Blackbirds* and *Rhapsody In Black*.

Ford Dabney, who wrote the music, was leader for Florenz Ziegfeld's "Midnight Frolic" on top of Ziegfeld's New Amsterdam Theatre, New York, for many years, and is now playing in Florida in the winter season and in New York in the summer.

Dabney and Mack got together on *Shine* as a special number for Alda Overton Walker, the star of the "Smart Set" Company, which was one of the foremost coloured entertainments of its day.

Then, in the late 'twenties, Herb Wiedoeft, an orchestra-leader on the Pacific Coast, made a sensational record of the tune for Brunswick, without lyrics. He had no idea of the words, and had simply taken down the melody after hearing it played by a coloured group who just knew its title and no more.

Other bands were so intrigued by this record that the tune became famous, and one music-publishing firm even started to get out copies of an unauthorised edition.

Finally the writers, who had recovered the copyright when the original publisher went out of business, made a very advantageous deal with the present publishers, and the story of the little coloured bootblack gradually worked its way up into the Evergreen standard.

Amongst the most famous records is one by Bing Crosby with the Mills Brothers and one by Louis Armstrong, who has featured the song for years in his stage act and recorded it with Les Hite's Band.

Next Week: Some Of These Days.

LEONARD G. FEATHER'S OF JAZZ EVERGREENS

No. 19: MEMPHIS BLUES

THE scene is Memphis in 1909, the time of the mayoral election. Three men are striving for the post: each of them engages a Negro band as part of the booster campaign. One of the candidates, a Mr. Crump, selects a street band under the direction of one W. C. Handy. The latter sets about a big campaign on behalf of Mr. Crump, and organises various bands to cover the entire Memphis territory.

To catch the public's imagination he writes a song named after his candidate, and plays it one day in a crowded thoroughfare. In an instant the Memphis public is entranced. Mr. Crump, the man, becomes mayor with flying colours; and Mr. Crump, the song, is the hit of the State.

Old, Old Story

From here on the story takes a sad twist. Handy went to New York to sell his song, and found that nobody wanted to take it. The twelve-bar chorus, music publishers explained gently, was four bars too short. Such unorthodoxy was intolerable.

In despair, Handy himself decided to publish this number, and in 1912 he brought out an edition of 1,000 copies without lyrics, and bearing the new title of *Memphis Blues*. Orders came slowly through,

and a white man named T. C. Bennett, in Memphis, resolved to seize his opportunity: he persuaded Handy to sell the number for 100 dollars. After this the number was taken to New York, where another white wrote lyrics for it, and it was generally developed into a popular song hit which has survived till to-day.

No Ha'pence

The ironic part of it is that Handy reaps the glory but none of the reward. In fact, when he published a blues anthology in 1924, permission was refused him to include the music of *Memphis Blues*!

Believed to be the first written blues of its kind in history, this tune is remembered by musicians as the earliest number ever to include a two-bar "break." The odd space at the end of each strain gives performers the chance to fill in at their own discretion—and that, it is said, is how "breaks" were born.

Memphis Blues was one of the featured numbers in Mae West's last film, *Belle Of The Nineties*, without apologies for the twenty-year anachronism. Handy is generally conceded to be the "Daddy of the Blues," but the producers evidently decided they might just as well make him the Grandpa!

Next week: SUGAR FOOT STOMP.

June 1, 1935

EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

No. 22: IF I COULD BE WITH
YOU (One Hour To-night).

HERE is one of those Evergreens which has not survived merely as a succession of chords on which to base one's hot choruses. The melody line is so unusually attractive, for a simple number of this class, that it can be featured to advantage in orchestrations of both high and low temperatures—so get that, you budding hot arrangers!

Though of comparatively recent origin, *If I Could Be With You* was written by two old hands at the song-writing game: Creamer and Johnson. You will find these names on a good many old record labels. *Alabama Stomp* was one of the other numbers on which they collaborated.

Henry Creamer was a coloured New Yorker; he died a few years

by
Leonard G. Feather

ago. Although a cripple, Creamer was one of the most live and active men in the business, and for a considerable period was responsible for a number of hits written in conjunction with J. Turner Layton, of Layton and Johnstone; *Dear Old Southland*, *Way Down Yonder In New Orleans*, and *After You've Gone* were three of the greatest.

Jimmy Johnson, Creamer's collaborator in *If I Could Be With You*, wrote *Charleston*, *Old Fashioned Love*, and the *Porter's Love Song To A Chambermaid*. To English fans he is better known as a pianist than as a composer. His solo, *Riffs*, was issued in the Rhythm Style series, and he can be heard accompanying Ethel

Waters in a number of her Columbia race recordings.

Jimmy was playing in Barrons Café, New York, as far back as 1914 and '15. Very recently he was at Smalls, New York. Johnson started Pats Waller on the road to success, and there are many points of similarity in their styles.

There are versions of *If I Could Be With You* by the Mound City Blue Blowers, Armstrong, Jack Teagarden with Bennie Pollack's Orchestra, McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Ambrose, Lee Sims (piano solo), Hurley Kaylor (piano solo), Ruth Etting (featuring Larry Adler, who was only seventeen at the time), and the Lazy Levee Loungers. Most of these include the verse, which is so good that it is best to consider it, unlike most verses, as an integral part of the number.

Next week: JAZZ ME BLUES.

A SELECTION OF REDMAN RECORDINGS

McKinney's Cotton Pickers (Victor, 1928-31). (Certain titles also issued on American Bluebird and on H.M.V.)	After All, You're All I'm After Baby Won't You Please Come Home? Beedle-Um-Bum Cherry Come A Little Closer Cotton Pickers Scat Do Something Do You Believe In Love At Sight? Four Or Five Times Gee, Ain't I Good To You? Hello Hushaloo I'd Love It If I Could Be With You I Found A New Baby I'll Make Fun For You I Miss A Little Miss I Want A Girl I Want Your Love It's A Lonesome Town Just A Shade Corn Laughing At Life Milesberg Joys	Miss Hannah Never Sate A Fly Okay Baby Peggy Plain Dirt Precious Little Thing Put It There Rocky Road Sare It, Pretty Mama, For Me Selling That Stuff She's My Passion Shim-Me-Sha Wobble Some Sweet Day Talk To Me Then Someone's In Love To Whom It May Concern Way I Feel To-Day Whenever There's A Will Will You, Won't You Be My Babe? Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams You're Driving Me Crazy Etc., etc.
Fletcher Henderson and his Orchestra (Columbia, 1927-8)	I'm Coming Virginia Whiteman Stomp Etc.	Henderson Stomp Tozo
Fletcher Henderson and his Orchestra (Brunswick, 1927-8)	Clarinet Marmalade Hot Mustard Fidgety Feet Sensation	
Chocolate Dandies (Okeh, 1928) (First 4 sides also on Engl. Parlophone)	Cherry Four Or Five Times Six Or Seven Times That's How I Feel To-Day Paducah	
Louis Armstrong's Savoy Ballroom Five (Okeh, Feb., 1929) (First 5 sides also on Engl. Parlophone)	Heah Me Talkin' To Ya No-One Else But You Save It Pretty Mama Saint James' Infirmary Tight Like This Beau Koo Jack	
Earl Harlan and his Orchestra (Melotone, 1932)	South In My Soul Etc.	
Harlan Lattimore and his Orchestra (Amer. Columbia, 1932) (First three sides also on Engl. Parlophone)	Got The South In My Soul I Heard Reefer Man Chant Of The Weeds	
Don Redman and his Orchestra (Brunswick)	(See current Brunswick lists)	

The SAX LIFE of DON REDMAN

by
LEONARD FEATHER

Five Fine Fellows—
and Don is all of them!



DON REDMAN,
saxophonist,
arranger,
composer,
vocalist and
conductor

Instrument he achieved a bright, clean tone which, combined with his gently modulated vibrato and attack and his innate sense of phrasing, made his work a sheer delight. Unfortunately, however, there was one characteristic which makes it difficult to point out his solos on records—no wit, his amazing resemblance in style to Benny Carter.

SIMILAR SAX STYLES

In the record *Peggy and I'd Love It* by McKinney's Cotton Pickers, for instance, there are two alto solos. Redman and Carter were both in the band at the time, but even Hawkins, who was also with them for a few records, finds it difficult to distinguish between them.

However, the alto work in *Cherry*, 4 or 5 and 6 or 7 times, the well-known *Chocolate Dandies* titles on Parlophone, is definitely Don's. A fourth title, *That's How I Feel To-day* (alias *The Way I Feel To-day* in the Victor version), featured Benny Carter, though Redman was also in the band.

Don is also heard at his best in the Armstrong titles, in which he plays clarinet as well as alto. The most exciting of these is *Tight Like That*, with a simple but most effective arrangement by Redman for this five-piece unit.

This brings us to Don's second

capacity. As an arranger, he has been recognised by many of the greatest white and coloured leaders. Paul Whiteman's *Whiteman Stomp*, like the Fletcher Henderson version, was Don's orchestration. From 1926 to 1928 he figured prominently in Henderson's Band, and arranged most of their discs, including *I'm Coming Virginia* and *Hot Mustard*.

On leaving Henderson he took Rex Stewart and Joe Smith (trumpets) and Escudero (bass) to join McKinney's Cotton Pickers, with himself as conductor. McKinney was still with the band, but only played banjo.

BRASS-AND-REEDS BATTLES

During his period with the Cotton Pickers, Redman's arrangements were simpler, generally based on straightforward commercial tunes, and frequently concluded with the type of brass-and-reeds battle that suited his band so well; he would take a simple phrase and repeat it several times (this was before the idea became hackneyed), interrupting this with a solo in the middle eight bars.

When he formed his own band, Don enlarged his scope, and his orchestrations tended to become too complicated. It is said that he wrote his arrangement of *Sophisticated Lady* while listening to Duke's Band from the wings. Very remarkable; but his simple swing numbers, like *Two Time Man*, are far more valuable.

The third rôle of Redman is that of composer. His only outstanding achievement in this line was the bizarre *Chant Of The Weeds*, which was honoured by inclusion in a concert when Whiteman's Band merged with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra in New York. This piece was so brilliant as to make one lament that Don has wasted so much time on trifles like *How'm I Doin'* and *I Heard*, which are hardly compositions at all.

DELIGHTFUL MELODY NUMBERS

But he has some delightful melody numbers to his credit, notably *Trouble*, *Why Pick On Me?* and *St. James' Infirmary*. Here again Redman's uncanny versatility shows up. He has composed and arranged every type of dance number from low comedy to complicated orchestral programme pieces.

Incidentally, *Chant Of The Weeds* was introduced as his radio signature tune over the Columbia network, and his listeners know him by the incredible nickname of "The Harlemaestro." Possibly this appellation is the brain-child of Tommy Rockwell, his manager.

In addition to radio and stage, Don has also done screen work; he synchronised a Betty Boop cartoon called *I Heard*, and Warner Brothers recently produced a short centred round his act.

DON AS A VOCALIST

Don Redman Number 4 is the vocalist. Don has no voice in the ordinary sense of the word; just a plaintive little whisper, but so full of personality that you can forgive him for talking the words, and censure him for letting Harlan Lattimore sing so often.

Amongst Don's best vocals are *Gee, Ain't I Good To You*, *Doin' What I Please*, and *Talk To Me*. He has proclivities, too, as a female impersonator; he was the "girl" in *Tight Like That*, and made similar falsetto noises in 4 or 5 and 6 or 7 and the Parlophone *I Heard*.

Finally, Redman No. 5—Don the conductor. Since forming his own band when he left the Cotton Pickers in 1931, Don has done more conducting than playing. To judge

by the results, he must have more authority over his boys than the average coloured leader, for this is an excellently trained bunch, though it seems that nothing can prevent the sax section from playing out of tune.

Don conducts left-handed, and is seldom seen without a fat cigar in his mouth. His personality, and his speaking voice, are rather like the voice you hear on his records: quiet, smooth, and friendly. He is

portly of build, and is not much over 5ft. in height.

Perhaps the biggest tribute to these five remarkable personalities called Don Redman is Armstrong's declaration of admiration for him in every respect. Louis is never without a stock of the latest Redman discs, and will not hear a word said against his old pal Don. "Listen to my boy swingin' there! Sure is the greatest of 'em all. Yes, sir!"

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No. 21: LIMEHOUSE BLUES.

A YEAR ago to-day—on May 25, 1934—there died a great and immortal figure in the world of popular music—Philip "Pa" Braham, whose unforgettable *Limehouse Blues* put English jazz composition on the map.

This memorable little pen-picture of Chinatown began life as a purely abstract melody. In fact, it bore a very trite lyric with the title *Breaker Of Hearts*. One day Pa Braham played his song to Douglas Furber, a veteran of the writing game, and suggested that what this number needed was something out of the ordinary in the way of words. Furber supplied them—the new version was published in May, 1922, and has since swept the world.

Braham and Furber collaborated on many song hits which, though not as famous as this, were very successful in their day. One was *Oh! Mr. Rubinstein*; then there was *Dancing Honeymoon* from the show "Battling Butler," and *Wild Thyme* from "Tails Up." *Limehouse Blues* was also a show number originally, being featured by Teddie Gerrard and Jack Buchanan in *A To Z*.

Taken to U.S.

Subsequently the song was taken to America with *Charlot's Revue*, in which Jack Buchanan, Beatrice Lillie and Gertrude Lawrence starred, and Braham conducted his own composition.

Philip Braham first attracted public attention in 1913 as the composer of "Alice Up To Date." His subsequent successes included "Sugar And Spice" and, in conjunction with Noel Coward, "On With The Dance."

Douglas Furber began lyric-writing as a clerk in a City office. In his first year as a professional lyric-

ist he earned a grand total of £16! However, that was amply atoned for when *The Bells Of St. Mary's* sold two million copies; and he has been writing for big shows ever since—amongst them *That's A Good Girl*, *Stand Up And Sing* and *Nice Goings On*.

Amongst the earliest recordings of *Limehouse Blues* were the original 1922 H.M.V. by Jack Hylton's Orchestra, and the Radio Dance Orchestra on Columbia in the same year. Later on, after taking America by storm, it achieved the unique distinction of being recorded by dozens of bands over there; and it is interesting to note that most of the versions have been hot recordings.

Different Treatments

It is interesting to contrast the different treatments in the versions by the Casa Loma, Ellington, Spike Hughes, Jack Hylton (in the newer version also on H.M.V.), Red Nichols' twelve-inch symphonic arrangement, Will Osborne's Orch., and Benny Carter's orchestration for Fletcher Henderson's Band quite recently.

The number was used by Venuti's Blue Four, thinly disguised as *A Mug Of Ale*. Then there have been numerous vocal versions, by Gertrude Lawrence, the Mills Brothers, and so on.

Recently a remarkable version, orchestrated by Eric Siday, was introduced in the "I've Got To Have Music" programme from the B.B.C. And Stanley Black's arrangement for Lew Stone is a constant favourite on the air.

Last year *Limehouse Blues* formed the inspiration for the title and theme of an American film, and was used as background music in the production. Just another tribute to "Pa" Braham, whose memory is being kept evergreen by this immortal success of his song-writing career.

Next week: IF I COULD BE WITH YOU.

IT'S THE JUBILEE OF JAZZ, TOO!

HOW SYNCOPATION STARTED 25 YEARS AGO

By LEONARD & FEATHER

IMAGINE a little café in a sequestered quarter of New York; the night haunt of cabaret artists after their evening's work. Ranged around the piano are a blind coloured trombonist and three other Negroes, performing a strange, fascinating music—all of them improvising crazily, unable to read a note of music. These boys are known as Razz's Band. What is this music they are playing? someone asks.

"Oh, I dunno. Just jazz."

And in this obscure fashion did the art of ragtime first visit New York City—twenty-five years ago, in the year of King George's coronation. How the word "jazz" achieved this particular significance has never been finally determined; but certainly the first to use the expression "Jazz Band" was Bert Kelly, of Chicago, who was responsible for the formation of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band.

In 1910 ragtime was completely unknown in England. A few copies of some American "rags" had filtered through to this country, and had attracted attention among an élite circle; but it was mostly regarded as a fad that would die in a day; a novelty rather like the Carioca or the Continental. Then Irving Berlin, the Singing Waiter of a Bowery saloon known as Nigger Mike's, took to song-writing in his spare time; and a year later "Alexander's Ragtime Band" radiated across the world. The birth of ragtime was officially recognised. Piano and banjo were joined by drums, trombone, and clarinet, as gradually the instrumentation of English jazz bands expanded.

The arrival of Irving Berlin's tune can be regarded as one of the

five great milestones in the history of jazz in this country. The other four are easily decided. In 1913 the Versatile Three, the first coloured men to enter this country with jazz in their hearts, opened at Murray's Club, and showed English boys just how it should be done.

The third milestone was the advent, in 1919, of the Dixieland Band, playing at Hammersmith and various London music-halls.

Do you remember that illustrious group of musical illiterates, so naturally gifted, so infinitely ahead of their time, so patently new in the tremendous verve and audacity of their performance?

This band achieved the miracle of an enthusiastic reception by the national Press, who rewarded them with columns of helpful publicity. In those days it was not easy to keep in touch with jazz, no musical journal officially recognised it, though you could sometimes find news in "The Era," lone supporter of the cause, dealing with the movements of the few ragtime orchestras then circulating in the United Kingdom.

Fourth of the landmarks was Paul Whiteman's arrival with his startling conceptions of symphonic jazz. Playing "Say it While Dancing," and the other hits of the day at the old Grafton Galleries, he became the talk of the town, although Jack Hylton's boys had already shown us something of the new style at the Queen's Hall Roof. Later they followed Whiteman at the Grafton Galleries.

This was in 1924. The situation saw a strange parallel two years ago, when every musician in England was agog with the news of Ellington's arrival. A tremendous impetus was given to the general interest in jazz, and at present the infant art is as healthy as ever it has been in its twenty-five years of existence. However, this state of affairs is, alas, purely temporary.

What the next milestone will be, or what progress will be made in the next twenty-five years, it is sur-

(Continued in next column.)

TUNE
TIMES,
May 1935. →

DON REDMAN— FILM STAR

FOR eleven minutes the other day I sat in a cinema listening to the finest swing music that has issued from the screen for months and months . . . the occasion was the unspooling of a First National short entitled "Don Redman and His Orchestra."

This film is a complete success. The commercial concessions that were bound to be made have affected the result comparatively little. Don and his band are introduced in a most attractive setting, described as the "Take-a-Chance Club," which he has opened on his winnings in a sweep-stake. Some of the coloured clientele of this club are given a spot of acting to do, together with Redman, in one sequence.

Don has just the quiet, charming personality you would expect from his records. He is short and plump, but is quite well built and looks very smart, though most of the band are, like Harlan Lattimore, shatteringly tall, moustachioed and handsome.

The opening number, *Yeab Man*, is the best. Everybody swings solidly; Edward Inge, that excellent clarinettist (also tall and not very dark), takes a fine solo in his own unusual style, and the solo trumpet does some good work. There are also eight bars of grand tenor playing. From this the boys go into *Ill Wind*, wherein Lattimore sings very pleasantly. Record reviewers will begin to like him when they have seen the film and can bear his personality in mind while playing future discs.

In *Nagasaki*, which follows, the orchestra accompanies two amusing song-and-dance merchants, Red and Streggie, who do some delightful burlesque scat singing.

The final number gives Don Redman an opportunity to recite. One cannot call it singing, but it is very likeable, and the number suits him ideally, for it is called *Why Should I Be Tall?* It is a pity Don did not play alto in the film. Still, his conducting at least gives the impression that, unlike so many dance band leaders, he does know how to wield a baton.

Congratulations to First National for giving the fans a long-wanted break, and to Joseph Henabery, the director, for knowing just how to handle his subject. If ever that "Hot Film Gala" blossoms into fact, this will have to be one of the principal items of the programme. GEOFFREY MARNE.

(Continued from previous column.)
prisingly hard to conjecture; but one thing is certain. It will have to be very, very different from the type of dance music that is popular today if jazz is ever to reach its golden jubilee.

MYSTERY MAN OF MODERN MUSIC

by
GEOFFREY
MARNE



The much discussed Reginald Foresythe is the subject of this story written from a new angle. The author is well acquainted with him.

THE Stormy Petrel of Modern Rhythm—the Man who is Going to Revolutionise Jazz—the Apostle of the New Music. Just three of the crazy cognomens frequently applied to Reginald Foresythe, a conversational and complaisant young man who has been the victim of more false and hasty judgments than anyone else in the recent years of jazz.

To dismiss the New Music as pretentious bilge is as foolish as to laud it unreservedly as the music of the future. The only real way one can examine the Foresythe brain-children is to probe the circumstances which led to their creation. In other words, to outline Reggie Foresythe's biography.

At the very beginning an important fact comes to light. Reggie was born in London, on May 28, 1907, and did not visit the United States until 1930. Furthermore, he started to play the piano (standard music only) at the age of eight, and never became interested in the possibilities of jazz until five or six years ago. His very first musical job, in 1923, playing Saturday night dances at the Reading Town Hall on holiday from his school at Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, brought him into contact, not with dance musicians, but with an ex-Army clarinetist and others with rather irregular ideas of dance music.

But Reggie knew even less about jazz than they did. Result: they decided to find another pianist!

On leaving school Reggie found a good job open to him in a translating bureau in the City. His polyglot parentage was probably the cause of a natural linguistic ability, for his father (who died when Reggie was twelve) was a West African barrister, and his mother is German. Reggie already knew French, German, Spanish, and other tongues, and was well equipped for the extensive travels he was destined to make in a few years' time. After hours at the office he would occasionally do a little semi-professional musical work as a very casual pastime.

Not until a telephone call came through from Paris, telling him that Zaidée Jackson was opening a night club there, and wondered whether he was busy that week-end, did music take its place in the Foresythe career. Taking a furtive Saturday morning off, he dashed across the Channel, and the work which resulted has been commemorated in one or two old records Zaidée made at the time—this was in 1929—in which he provides the accompaniment.

Next the vicissitudes of Foresythe, the wanderer, took him from Paris to Australia, accompanying a tenor named Walter Richardson; thence to Honolulu for a holiday, and from there to California, where he wrote musical scores for United Artists and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. It was also during his Los Angeles sojourn that he recorded several titles with a band led by Paul Howard, the coloured

saxophonist, but to this day he does not know whether they were ever issued.

Reggie had never arranged jazz until after his arrival in Chicago on Christmas Eve, 1930. The Windy City proved lucky to him; after being asked to write a signature tune for Earl Hines and his Orchestra, which he called *Deep Forest*, he became a sort of butt for any band leader who needed a signature tune. He did one called *Full Moon* for Eddie Moore, who succeeded Hines at the Grand Terrace; and another for the trumpeter, Bill Davidson, who, Chicago fans will be interested to know, drove the car in which Frank Teschmaker met his death. Davidson was forbidden to play following a Union indictment, and Reggie, who never wastes a bar of his music, saved up the shelved signature tune, and bestowed it on the world years later as *The Autocrat Before Breakfast*.

When Duke Ellington came to the Lincoln Inn Tavern, outside Chicago, and was in need of some commercial arrangements of current tunes to bolster up his repertoire, he called on Foresythe, whom he had met in Hollywood. Reggie's work for the Duke again stimulated his increasing interest and ambition as a writer of jazz.

Amongst Reggie's other Chicago activities were the writing of a show for presentation at the Grand Terrace, Earl Hines' famous seat of office, and also a satirical political revue, called

WASHINGTON WANDERER

IF you go back fifteen years into the wilds of Washington, you will find two young coloured pianists struggling for appreciation and fame—both promising musicians, both good-looking; but not both equally ambitious.

Claude Hopkins, the less ambitious of the two, was declared by local prophets to be the greater pianist by far, and the one who was destined to crash shortly into "big time."

The other, plodding along quietly at the keys in a little Washington café, was a certain Mr. Ellington. . . .

In 1924, Claude Hopkins left Washington for the capital, and, during the same year, Duke also tried out his fortunes in New York City. All the predictions of confident Washingtonians were reversed; within five years Ellington was under the wing of Irving Mills, comfortably established at the Cotton Club, and had already crossed the boundary to success.

It was another two years

before Hopkins began even to approach the universal popularity of Ellington, and strangely enough, he emulated Duke by succeeding rather as a band leader than on his merits as a pianist.

Insufficient Rehearsals

It is said that the truth behind this race to notoriety which Ellington won with such evident ease is that Hopkins did not take the trouble to rehearse his band sufficiently. Where Ellington would spend hours taking pains to polish and refine his arrangements and performance, Hopkins would adopt the rather slap-dash manner affected, unfortunately, by not a few leaders in his country.

Nevertheless, by 1932, Hopkins had gathered a more than interesting bunch of musicians around him, and was swinging to some purpose at the famous Roseland Ballroom, which, if not as salubrious as the May Fair, can at least claim to have been the urban seat of many a famous hot orchestra.

Hopkins left the Roseland in May, 1932. In that month, he took part in a terrific battle of music at the Savoy Ballroom, New York, being pitted against Don Redman's and Chick Webb's Orchestras. He survived the test remarkably well.

Shortly afterwards, under the aegis of Irving Mills and Tommy Rockwell—who were at that time jointly managing him—he landed a good recording contract with Columbia. Of his first four titles, three have been released here, by a special arrangement, on English Parlophone in the Rhythm Style Series.

These were: *How'm I Do'n'*, *Mush Mouth* and *Mad Moments*. The fourth was *I Can Do 'Most Anything For You*, composed by Alex Hill, the brilliant coloured arranger who has recently been recording for Brunswick with a fine band of his own. *Anything For You* was used as Claude Hopkins' signature tune.

The final set of Columbia recordings consisted of *Marie* and *Minor Mania*, *Harlem Rhythm Dance* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*. The first title is issued over here, and was, unfortunately, ruined by the vocal apoplexies of a Mr. Orlando Robison, who has since bobbed up to mar our pleasure in several other Hopkins records. The trouble appears to be that some audiences like him.

Hopkins' piano-playing is not one of the strongest points in these



Claude
Hopkins

—by—
Leonard
G.
Feather

How Claude Hopkins started scratch with Ellington and why Duke forged ahead

records. Although—as in *Mad Moments*—he has occasionally done some fine ornamental stuff with plenty of attack, some of his right-hand ideas are extremely monotonous, and his left hand is inclined to be weak almost to the point of collapse.

Left-Hand Weakness

This is particularly noticeable in the otherwise excellent orchestration entitled *Mystic Moan*, which was his first release on Brunswick after he signed a contract with that company in April, 1933. This was backed by *Washington Squabble*, a typically indolent composition with some good chorus work.

The next Brunswick pair was *Don't Let Your Love Go Wrong* and *Ants In My Pants*. In the former, Hopkins' right-hand weakness is apparent. Moreover, he seizes on a silly little phrase and repeats it to death. The reverse had rather too much singing to be an altogether satisfying record.

The next couple were *Margie*, with an orgy of Orlando, and Benny Carter's *Everybody's Shuffle*, another conglomeration of the usual hot licks. Hopkins had still to show up to full advantage on records, and those who had heard him in person were distinctly disappointed with his discs.

stabilising a good-class group which has before it a brilliant future. He is young, and still has a good way to go; but it is safe to predict an illustrious future for him if he continues to progress as he has done during these last two years.

All hail to another talented Washingtonian!

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Hopkins' first records on Decca-Brunswick were quite encouraging. The initial release was *King Porter Stomp* and *In The Shade Of The Old Apple Tree*; then came *Just You, Just Me*, and *Who?* followed by *Waikin' The Dog* and *Sweetheart Of Mine*.

Amongst the titles that have been released in this country, *Chasing All The Blues Away* gives a good idea of Claude Hopkins' real capabilities. Here all the leading soloists of the band are shown at their best, too.

Compliment to Duke?

The band's latest record release over here is, at the time of writing, an opus called *Monkey Business*, which owes most of its principal movement to *Jive Stomp* by the Duke. Is this a compliment to Claude's fellow-Washingtonian, or just plain ordinary plagiarism?

On the other side is a popular tune, *Mandy*, which has a vocal chorus by Orlando, but many attractive features.

The latest news of the band is that it has been put in at the Cotton Club during Cab Calloway's absence on tour, and will remain there until the end of July. So here, again, Claude is following in the wake of the Duke, on the scene of that maestro's earlier triumphs.

If you would like to see the band at work and can't afford the trip to the Cotton Club, may I recommend a short Warner Brothers' film entitled *Barber's Shop Blues*, which was built round the act of this orchestra.

Hopkins has now succeeded in

All hail to another talented Washingtonian!

The Harry Roy "Twins," Ivor Moreton (front) and Dave Kaye, with "Uncle Arthur" Calkin on the bass.



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT:
Regional, Wednesday, May 22.
10—10.30 p.m.

HOW can the B.B.C. help us to sell hot music to cold customers?

When this problem is raised at the Rhythm Clubs as a subject for heated debate, the answers seem to run in one pathetic groove. Apparently, according to the denizens of these Vicious Gramophonic Circles, the best solution would be to radiate hot music over the air for not less than twenty-four hours per day, thus materialising Utopia for the hot jazzists.

Not a Good Method

Unfortunately, the outcome of anything approaching such methods would actually be the complete abandonment of radio by hordes of suffering classicists, whilst the fans themselves would soon find that saturation point had long been exceeded, and that even with *le hot* you can have too much of a good thing.

No. In order to swell our ranks

with newcomers from the world of "good" music, our methods must be far subtler, far more oblique than this. As a step towards this goal, I think we can safely claim that a programme of records given last week by Spike Hughes certainly provided a guiding light. Spike at the microphone proved to be an interesting personality. All his invincible indolence, all his amusing affectations with which he has been popularly identified, came over with great success.

Successor to Stone?

Whether his languid tones will help to launch him as a successor to the equally nonchalant but far more robust-mannered Christopher Stone is a matter for speculation; but the point I wanted to discuss regarding this trial turn was the selection of items rather than the delivery of the commentary.

And what a selection! The theme of the half-hour being a study of virtuosity, Spike actually followed a Heifetz record with Venuti and Lang; and, jammed in between Maurice Rosenthal and Elisabeth Schumann, was a feller named Louis Armstrong.

Of the seven items played, only these two had anything to do with jazz: this helped to put over the more forcefully that Venuti can be taken just as seriously as his counterparts in standard music, and undoubtedly many of those

SPIKE HUGHES' RADIO DEBUT

Best Jazz for the Best People by "Soft Lights" Company

who listened to *Wild Cat* that night will have been brought, for the first time, to the realisation that jazz does bear a certain amount of close study, and can be associated with a talk on virtuosity.

But I have two grumbles against Spike. Firstly, his far too apologetic manner of presenting both hot records. Particularly before the Armstrong disc: "Now we're going to have some more jazz, I'm afraid" struck the wrong note altogether. And, secondly, why on earth choose such a poor example of Louis's virtuosity as the H.M.V.

cent. Mind you, the microphone is sometimes a little over-sensitive, and I felt we could have dispensed with the noise of the steel alighting on the strings of Len's guitar; but this is rather a quibble. Gershwin himself would have been more than delighted with this item.

Ann Lenner, replacing Elisabeth Welch, showed plenty of promise. Her diction is good, and though she obviously speaks pure, un-Americanised English, there is nothing ultra-Mayfair or affected about her; in short, we like her that way. D'you get the idea, girls?

* * *

A.V.R.O. DECIBLES:

Hilversum, Tuesday, May 21.
10.10 p.m.

Eddy Meenk's new radio orchestra is not one of the best things we have heard from Holland, though there were certain items in this programme which presented interest to the fans. The general ensemble tone lacks any very distinct personality, and it is only when they get going on those easy-to-play hot numbers (such as *White Heat*) that their work is really crisp and accurate.

Same Old

Shuffling

Meenk, you may remember, caused quite a surprise recently by lifting three good men from Jackie de Vries' Band. One of these, Nap van Ploeg, the tenor man, seemed to be present in this programme; the other two, Nick Derooy (piano) and Sammy Nyveen, may also have been there; anyway, there was nothing very distinctive about any of the performances, except that the vocalist (sex uncertain) seemed to be straining very hard after a distinctive English accent, without much success.

Incidentally, I wasn't very struck with the highly commercialised version of a tune announced as *Dooky Wooku*. Poor old Duke!

Recent
Radio
Reported
by
'DETECTOR'

version of *Mahogany Hall Stomp*? Surely the Parlophone rendering would have made a far greater impression?

If Spike were to look back at "Mike's" review of this newer *Stomp* he would blush at having played this as representative of Louis's art. "Louis's muted chorus in this disc is most sad," "Mike" said. "It is full of cracks and mistakes; laboured, uninspired playing."

If that is what a jazz critic said of the disc, then think what an opportunity you were giving, Spike, to the enemies of our brand of music!

* * *

SOFT LIGHTS AND SWEET MUSIC:

Regional, Thursday, May 23.
8.45—9.5 p.m.

Here is another, possibly even greater, way of presenting the best jazz to the best people. The penultimate programme in this

Food-Musicer!



...not music over the air for not less than twenty-four hours per day, thus materialising Utopia for the hot jazzists.

Not a Good Method

Unfortunately, the outcome of anything approaching such methods would actually be the complete abandonment of radio by hordes of suffering classicists, whilst the fans themselves would soon find that saturation point had long been exceeded, and that even with *le hot* you can have too much of a good thing.

No. In order to swell our ranks

for speculation; but the point I wanted to discuss regarding this trial turn was the selection of items rather than the delivery of the commentary.

And what a selection! The theme of the half-hour being a study of virtuosity, Spike actually followed a Heifetz record with Venuti and Lang; and, jammed in between Maurice Rosenthal and Elisabeth Schumann, was a feller named Louis Armstrong.

Of the seven items played, only these two had anything to do with jazz; this helped to put over the more forcefully that Venuti can be taken just as seriously as his counterparts in standard music, and undoubtedly many of those

* * * SOFT LIGHTS AND SWEET MUSIC:

Regional, Thursday, May 23.
8.45—9.5 p.m.

Here is another, possibly even greater, way of presenting the best jazz to the best people. The penultimate programme in this

...to be straining very hard after a distinctive English accent, without much success.

Incidentally, I wasn't very struck with the highly commercialised version of a tune announced as *Dooky Wooky*. Poor old Duke!

Food-Musicer!



Arthur Salisbury, one of the most popular of broadcasters. His lunch-time music has been a prominent feature over the air for a long time.

delightful series was sheer joy for the twenty short minutes of its duration.

One of the virtues that helps all these Croom-Johnson interludes to succeed is the lack of pretentiousness. Without indulging in symphonic balderdash, or what are known in the vernacular as "screwy harmonies," Eric Siday manages, in all his arrangements, to bring out the full value and melodic beauty of every number that is played.

This was particularly noticeable last week in *Honeysuckle Rose*, the first item, which I have never heard played to better advantage.

It was a pleasure to have Len Fillis back at the mike following his recent illness; the interpretation of *Lady Be Good*, with sterling support from Albert Harris on Spanish guitar, was just magnifi-



FANS AND FANCIES

A Statistical Survey of Rhythm Club Opinions

By

LEONARD G. FEATHER

THE average Rhythm Club member of to-day must find it exceedingly confusing to have any ideas of his own. In the jazz press he is faced with such a baffling diversity of contradictory opinions that it is hard for him to know his own mind, much less that of other people. Nevertheless, a study of other people's viewpoints and a few casual statistics can never fail to produce enlightening results.

With this thought in mind I have been spending many recent evenings touring the London and suburban Rhythm Clubs with a printed questionnaire. And before starting to review the results, may I thank all the participants for the care with which they filled in these forms? Several of them even went so far as to obey the request about writing in capitals only. Greater courtesy than that no man can expect.

In starting my catechism, a question about records seemed to be immediately called for; but "What is your favourite record?" is a poser that no sane being could answer with any finality. In order to give the entrants a little more scope I therefore asked: *What are your three favourite hot records?*

Strangely widespread were the selections. Though over 40 per cent. of the votes were cast in favour of some Ellington disc and 15 per cent. were Armstrong titles, there was no question of unanimity in respect to any particular record. However, the winner, as might have been expected, was *Mood Indigo*, mentioned twenty times in the despatches. The runner-up provided a surprise: *Louis's West End Blues* with seventeen. This is the first Rhythm Style record of all, and considering how little publicity it has received in the past few years it is a credit to the Rhythm Clubbers' taste that

they unearthed this from the recesses of their memories. Third came a far more recent candidate: *Solitude*, with sixteen mentions. No other Armstrong record secured more than five points, though *Creole Love Call* and *Black and Tan* had seven each and many others by Duke had six.

Venuti's Blue Four was the third most frequently mentioned band. Twenty-eight votes, including seven for *Man From the South*. Nichols secured twenty-five mentions. The only Casa Loma discs selected were *Wild Goose Chase* and *Alexander's Ragtime Band* twice. Trumbauer secured surprisingly few points.

Several of the records cited were amusingly non-existent. I liked *Poor Old Joe* by Armstrong almost as well as *Jazznochracy* by Ellington. And one simple soul wrote down *Tiger Rag* (band unspecified!) Perhaps he is equally partial to all fifty-seven versions.

Notice that my question asked for *hot* records. Amongst the answers were *La Cucaracha*, *Carioca*, *The Continental* and even a vote for the *Rhapsody in Blue*!

Which is your favourite band? was the next question. Here there was far less dissension. Ellington scored more than all the white bands put together, and cantered home with 102 votes; but the votes for the other coloured bands were negligible—six for Henderson and Armstrong (what band would this be?) and a couple each for Redman, Allen-Hawkins and Carter.

The most popular white band was (hold your breath!) Harry Roy's, with twenty-one. Ambrose was next, while Lew Stone and Red Nichols tied for third place. Ye gods! The Blue Four were conceded ten points. Benny Goodman was way below Roy Fox, Trumbauer, four. Dorsey's small band, one, equal with Whiteman, Hylton, Charles Kunz and Alan Green.

(Cont. on p. 59)

How Is Hot Music To Advance ?

Leonard Feather

conducts an enquiry and finds the most favoured methods are:

**PROPAGANDA,
IMPROVED
ORCHESTRATION,
CHEAPER
RECORDS**

IT is difficult to understand other people's point of view until we are quite certain of our own.

Strongly opposed though he is to the attacks on his creed, the average rhythm fan is remarkably backward in coming forward with any concrete views or ideas of his own.

"Have you any suggestions that could be used for the advancement of hot music?" Here is a question in answer to which any enthusiast might well let himself loose. Yet when this same query was put to a couple of hundred of them recently, less than half of them ventured any reply at all.

The remainder had some serious views of varying value. The three most popular bases for suggestions were: Propaganda by radio, 27; more advanced harmonies and tone-colour, 16; cheaper records, 13.

Mixed Ideas

"Join a Rhythm Club" was the motive of ten answers. Another ran: "Stop the Rhythm Clubs and have home playing or 'chamber music busking.'" Truly an ambitious and most heretical proposition, but there is a grain of common sense behind it.

Thirty per cent. of those who answered, incidentally, do not know how to spell the word "rhythm." But then, neither does Duke Ellington, so why worry?

There were two interesting points

for Wardour Street's consideration: "A film depicting the history of jazz, on 'King of Jazz' lines, but with attention to hot music," and "Talkie shorts of good outfits playing intelligent stuff, such as Foresythe's."

The first idea presents innumerable difficulties. In telling the whole history of this subject, it would be necessary to resort to authentic musical illustrations of earlier styles. But there were no sound films until 1927.

Similarly, it would not be easy to link up the evolution of jazz music with a purely non-technical and general appeal to the public.

Costly Business

As for the production of Foresythe's New Music as screen entertainment, this would not be an undertaking for a business man, but for a rich philanthropist.

Some of the miscellaneous ideas put forward for the worthy cause of advancing hot music bear repeating here.

"Teach swing in schools." (Why not have swinging cradles?)

"Don't commercialise it." (Foolish and paradoxical. If it can be popularized as an art it will automatically become commercial.)

"It doesn't advance, anyway!" (Cynical, but slightly sensible.)

"Star players should give lessons at reasonable prices." (They do.)

"Bring Don Redman's Orchestra to London." (By all means, but where does the advance come in? Europe didn't seem to have any improving effect on some of our previous visitors from the States.)

"Kill Cab Calloway, Harry Roy, and others of the same ilk. If their records must be issued, stop the companies and the critics from calling them 'hot.'" (What critics? The real ones would never make such a mistake; and as for the lay press critics, there is no stopping them.)

"Co-operation between the white and coloured races." (The American public would not countenance a mixed band; but there are plenty of white arrangers now orchestrating for coloured groups. On records, certainly, co-operation

could and should be carried much further.)

"A little less noise and more music." (Sacrilege!)

"White musicians should abandon their futile attempts to copy the Negro style . . . rhythm is not the be-all and end-all of hot music." (White musicians can never stop learning about style from the coloured bandsmen. They can adapt what they learn to suit their own purposes.)

"Have a board of record control who only let out really good records—and do away with Stanley Nelson, PLEASE!"

Some of these notions are idealistic. They grope at a dim and distant Utopia, but cannot be put into practice. In the same way, my own suggestion is, at present, totally impracticable; hot music should be treated as an art, and even hot musicians as artists. Like opera, this art should be subsidised by the Government, freed from the fetters of involuntary commercialization.

Young Idea

The reason why this cannot be done is simple. Hot music finds ninety-five per cent. of its enthusiasts amongst the youth of the nation. The persons in whose power it lies to make a grant of this kind—be it here or abroad—are of a generation that sees, hears and knows nothing about hot music beyond that it is a ghastly noise. Until Young England—or Young America—takes over the reins of office, conditions will stay as "sweet" as they are.

A more practical suggestion I should personally like to submit is one that was voiced largely in the consensus: explanatory talks from Broadcasting House, illustrated by records. Tredinnick and a couple of others have done their best occasionally, but the thing needs publicity and presentation before it can secure more than a meagre audience.

I mentioned before that fifty per cent. of the fans could not think of any ideas, and merely left a blank space on their papers. Let them console themselves; like the film public, the butcher's and baker's, and every other public in history, they simply do not know what they want. Perhaps they are right!

NEWS FROM THE RHYTHM CLUBS

Monday next will be an all-record night at the No. 1 Club, and there will be three programmes, including one by Leonard Feather consisting of special records brought over from the Commodore Shop in the States.

* * *

No. 1

High spots of the last meeting of the No. 1 Club were the singing of Kathleen Mason, with elegant swing accompaniment by Billy Mason and George Elrick, piano solos by Billy Mason, and a very interesting programme of American records by Leonard Feather.

No. 1

Which make better jazz . . .

SMALL BANDS

FOLLOWING IN SISTER'S FOOTSTEPS



LENNIE HAYTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA
Schenectady, W2XAF, 31.48M
Sunday, June 2, 1-2 a.m.

LAST week I listened to two well-known broadcasting bands, one on each side of the Atlantic. One was very large and the other, by normal standards, very small. The contrast was really quite enlightening.

Lennie Hayton, a 26-year-old pianist and bandleader with six years' radio experience, will be familiar to many of you for his work in some grand old Trumbauer and Blue Four records. He was associated for a long time with Paul Whiteman's band, and now has an orchestra of his own built on somewhat similar lines.

Forests of Fiddles

The band he conducted in this Lucky Strike hour was a veritable forest of fiddles and flutes, with the galaxy of vocalists that seems to be associated with every American radio band.

The orchestrations were certainly elaborate and displayed great technical skill, but my feeling throughout the programme was that the expense involved in maintaining such a large personnel was hardly justified. Mr. Hayton could have made better jazz with half as many people.

The occasional spots of piano to which we were treated were all too rare, for Hayton is a master of the keyboard.

Another feature that did not please me enormously was the habit of running one number straight into another with absolutely no interval. When you are playing commercial numbers like *Lullaby Of Broadway*, *I Won't Dance* and *Way Back Home*, as these boys did, it is only fair to give your audience a brief rest now and then, isn't it?

MAURICE WINNICK AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Regional, Monday, June 3, 10.5 p.m.

MAURICE WINNICK has quite a small band, by broadcasting standards. There is no string section, no flautist, and no symphonic ballyhoo about his stuff, but in its quiet and unpretentious way this combination is capable of producing results quite on a level with the work of many larger groups.

As a rule there is only one trum-

pet in the San Marco band, but for the broadcast Reg Conroy was added on second. Three reeds and four rhythm complete the personnel, making a modest total of nine.

The section whose work impressed me most in last week's showing was the rhythm department, which provides quite a nice solid background, and, in one or two numbers, such as *I'll Take the*

or BIG?

asks
'DETECTOR'
Recent Radio Reported

South and *Haunting Me*, was responsible for several novel "fill-in" effects.

Particularly happy is the co-operation between guitar and drums, played by Frank Watson and Bert Jackson respectively. Watson could be heard butting in quite pleasantly in some of the ensemble passages, but was never unnecessarily obtrusive; while Bert Jackson was a model of restraint, and would serve as an excellent example to the type of eager semi-pro who imagines that it is his duty to make as much noise as Gene Krupa, if not more. It takes an abnormal dose of ability to play in Krupa's style and get away with it.

Miss Judy Shirley, a new vocalist now permanently attached to the band, made a fair impression on her debut night; her intonation and diction are very good, but her vibrato is inclined to sound a little affected. However, she seems to have great assurance, and will doubtless settle down to become a perfect counterpart to Sam Costa, Winnick's male crooning candidate.

By the way, I believe Maurice Winnick struck the ultimate in topicality by playing *On The Night Of June 3* on the night of June 3! Quite a novel and amusing touch in an altogether satisfactory show.

Miss Judy Shirley, Maurice Winnick's new singer, is a sister of Ann Lenner, vocalist with Carroll Gibbons.

EVERGREENS

Hot Music

No. 24: SWEET GEORGIA BROWN.

MOST of the "Evergreens" I have discussed so far in this series have been the work of writers who are more or less unknown to English fans; some of them were musicians, but have faded out of the limelight in recent years. *Sweet Georgia Brown* is quite an exception: it was created and made famous by somebody who has since become, and still remains, a household name on both sides of the Pond—Ben Bernie, the "Old Maestro" himself.

At present one of the most popular band-leaders in the United States, Bernie can claim to have had twenty years of success with this song, for it was around 1916 or '17 that he originally made it popular.

His collaborator on the number was Maceo Pinkard, a coloured composer from Omaha, Nebraska, another of the old-timers. Pinkard wrote *Mammy O' Mine*, *Sugar, I Love To See The Evening Sun Go Down*, and the famous Armstrong speciality, *Them There Eyes*.

Sweet Georgia Brown has fol-

lowed in the old tradition of so many songs which have a girl's name for their title; it has proved a permanent success. *Sweet Sue*, *Margie*, *Dinah* and, of course, *Sweet Adeline* are amongst the other immortal maidens.

The number is best suited to a fairly snappy tempo, somewhere around fifty, chiefly because there are so many chords in it which last for four whole bars and it is best to get them over quickly. It is one of Gariand Wilson's preferred selections; I can remember him swinging anything up to twenty choruses of it straight off, up at the old Nest Club, at an increasingly furious pace of from seventy to a hundred bars a minute!

One of the best recordings was a recent one by Earl Hines and his Orchestra, on Brunswick. There are three other good versions, all on Brunswick, oddly enough: one by Nichols' Five Pennies, with Benny Goodman; one by the Mills Brothers, which will interest you if you want to know the words; and one, issued only in France, by Freddy Johnson, Arthur Briggs and their Orchestra.

Next Week: Shine.

EVERGREENS

Hot Music



by Leonard G. Feather

No. 26: SOME OF THESE DAYS.

SOME OF THESE DAYS is the most famous Evergreen written by any coloured composer. In its twenty years of popularity it has sold over a million-and-a-half sheet music copies!

Shelton Brooks, the writer of this fantastic money-maker, has already entered this series on the strength of *Darktown Strutters' Ball*. Well known in the States as an entertainer at the piano, he is a Canadian by birth, coming from Montreal, Quebec. He spent many years of his life in Cleveland, Ohio, then came to Chicago in 1910, and worked as a vaudeville team with Clarence Bowen under the name of Brooks and Bowen. *Some Of These Days*, which he wrote in 1915, was first published by a small Chicago firm, then sold to another company in the same city, whereupon it suddenly became the rage.

Sophie Tucker has featured the song for so long that it has become as closely identified with her name as the *Yiddisher Momma*. Other artists who have plugged it most frequently include Bee Palmer, Ray Samuels, Blossom Seely, Marion Harris, and the Hedges Brothers and Jacobson.

Although it is by far the biggest of Brooks' compositions, he has plenty of other successes to his

credit, notably *Walkin' The Dog* (remember Ed. Lang's record?), *Easy Rider*, *All Night Long* and *You Ain't Talking To Me*.

The recordings of *Some Of These Days* have been so numerous that it would be quite impossible to give anything like a complete list. The best-known versions are, of course, Sophie Tucker's, on H.M.V. and (with Ted Lewis's Band) on Columbia. Incidentally, you will be able to hear another red-hot Mamma sing it soon—Belle Baker features it in her first British film, "Charing Cross Road."

Other important recordings are as follows:—

- Armstrong, Parlophone.
- Calloway, Brunswick.
- Crosby, Brunswick.
- Eddie Edinborough's Wildcats, Col.
- French Hot Boys, Salabert.
- Hawkins and The Ramblers, Decca.
- Hughes' Orch., Decca.
- Hylton's Orch., Decca.
- McCoy, Clyde, Col.
- Mills Bros., Amer., Decca.
- Nichols' Orch., 12-inch Brunswick.
- Peabody, banjo, Col.
- Washboard Rhythm Boys, Perfect.
- Waters, Ethel, Col.

And, of course, it has been incorporated in countless selections; but you collectors are going to have an expensive time if you want to delve as deep as that!

Next week: **Royal Garden Blues.**

June 29, 1935

CRAZY QUESTIONNAIRE

Leonard Feather, overcome by the heat, sets the rhythm fans some questions

IF YOU KNOW THE ANSWERS YOU'LL SURPRISE HIM!

WHAT is the normal temperature of a hot record (allowing for Summer Time)? (b) How hot is boiling?

2. (a) Was Bix hotter than Nichols? (b) Would it be fair to describe Nichols as "the ice-cream cornet"?

3. (a) When did you first become interested in hot music? (b) Whose fault was it? (c) What would you do about the Chicago style fans? (Be merciful.)

4. Give the complete personnels of

- (a) Harry Roy Fox and his band.
- (b) Venuti and Lang in *Wild Cat*.
- (c) The Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra.

5. If you were asked to jump off the peak of Mount Everest in the middle of the night dressed in a parachute, what twelve hot records would you take with you? What would you use for needles? (Keep it clean.)

6. Answer "Yes" or "No" to the following:—

- (a) Have you given up smoking reefers? (b) Have you studied harmony, and, if so, how do you overcome this handicap when playing hot? (c) Would you describe Ostrich Walk as a Fox Trot? (d) How many Teagardens make one Tea Party?

7. Who composed

- (a) Wa-da-da; (b) Wa-de-da; (c) Ha-cha-cha; (d) Skip-ap-de-bip-ap-de-bip? If so, why?

8. What colour are the following:

- (a) Choo; (b) Bean; (c) Beet-root; (d) Shrimps before cooking; (e) Guinness before drinking; (f) Music publishers before washing?

9. Who played:

- (a) Flageolet in *Shake That Thing*; (b) Washboard in *Danse Rituelle Du Feu*?

(Continued in next column)

(Continued from previous column)

10. Is there a tune called *Bluesless Blues*, by W. C. Handy? Come to that, is there a Handy (W.C.)?

11. If it were your grandmother's birthday, which of the following records would you give her?

- (a) *Saturday Night Function*; (b) *Slippery Horn*; (c) *Mommy, I Don't Want To Go To Bed*?

12. Which of the following brothers are older?

- (a) Christopher Stone and Lew Stone; (b) Horatio Nicholls and Red Nichols; (c) Ray Noble and Noble Sissie?

For solutions, turn to page 57 of this issue.

THE ERA

3-7-35. ALL BRITISH JAZZ

AMBROSE AT COVENT GARDEN

BY LEONARD G. FEATHER

COVENT GARDEN OPERA HOUSE... a sweltering hot Sunday afternoon... outside, the playbills announce Russian Ballet at popular prices. Inside, the auditorium swarms with cognoscenti, and the hush of anticipation heralds the imminent rise of the curtain.

At last the strains of music are heard; the full stage is revealed, and ranged round it sit twenty-one musicians playing jazz!

Many interesting conclusions can be drawn from the choice of items. Of the twenty-six pieces played, only three were current popular dance tunes. Another instructive point is the unimportant part played by vocal interludes, which could have been dispensed with completely without any detrimental effect.

* * *

Of the individual sections, the brass deserve first mention. These three trombones and three trumpets, with their complete gallery (or scullery) of mutes and bowler hats, produced an amazing variety of tone-colours, and had a most satisfying crispness and attack.

But naturally all the resources of these fine artists would be wasted without suitable vehicles for their talents, and it was no surprise to

find that several of the numbers featured belonged to the class which is intended to impress without inspiring, to be pompous but not pungent.

Just as Gershwin's Rhapsodies come under this heading, so one must classify Arthur Young's piano concerto, "Thames Rhapsody," as a hybrid work, full of sound and fury. Mr. Young played the piano himself in this item, and was given a great reception. This does not shake my firm belief that a "Grand Concert in Rhythm" (as this was advertised) should live up to its appellation, and that all jazz is best when it remembers the elemental restriction of a rigid four-four tempo, which it has imposed on itself.

* * *

The long and dreary arrangement of "Swanee River," and the pretentious "Danse Fantastique" suffered similarly because they fell between the two stools of jazz and standard music. In fact, if I were asked to nominate the five best items in the programme—that is, the five most genuine pieces of good jazz—my decision would go to the following, all of which were played in strict rhythm: "Dodging a Divorcee," by our own Reginald Foresythe; Bert Barnes's arrangement of an old tune called "Hors d'Œuvres"; Gene Gifford's blues "Square Face"; Sid Phillips's fiery and flashing "B'Wanga"; and Lew Davis's "Three of a Kind," a speciality for three trombones.

As long as we can have music like these five numbers played to us by English musicians, and as long as we can find an intelligent audience to listen to them, we need have no fear for English jazz.

Leonard G. Feather's

EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

NO. 27: ROYAL GARDEN BLUES.

WHEN you are confronted with the words *Williams and Williams* on the record labels of *Royal Garden Blues*, don't lay the blame on either astigmatism or alcoholism, for it happens that the two writers of this tune, though unrelated, share the same surname.

Clarence Williams is a coloured composer, born in New Orleans, whose records with his "Jazz Kings" have been consistent favourites with a certain segment of the public for many years. He is a sort of American Harry Roy, or coloured Boyd Senter. Back in 1918, in Chicago, a new dance hall opened and became very popular, not only as a hang-out for coloured people, but as a rendezvous for all musicians from far and near.

Inspiration

Mr. Williams was commissioned to write some songs for the revue

at this resort, which was known as the Royal Garden Café. Sitting down one evening listening to the seven-piece band, consisting of King Oliver and Louis Armstrong, cornets, Mrs. Armstrong at the piano, Eddie Garland on bass, Johnny Dodds, clarinet, trombone and drums, he found the music of this group a source of inspiration, and wrote the *Royal Garden Blues*, in the lyrics of which you can read his description of the "wailing trombones and cornet moans" as he heard them there.

Much Criticised

Though he was criticised by many music publishers for his choice of title, Clarence Williams and his co-writer, Spencer Williams, eventually placed their tune with a Chicago firm, then later sold out to the Shapiro Bernstein Company for 1,500 dols.

Next week: *Somebody Stole My Gal.*

EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

by Leonard G. Feather

No. 30: I'VE FOUND A NEW BABY.

THIS is the Evergreen that generally gets the Chicago-style fans all worked up, owing to its having been used for the celebrated record by the Chicago Rhythm Kings. However, McKenzie and Condon never had any exclusive call on it, and there are equally interesting versions by Venuti's Blue Four, Isham Jones' Orchestra, and a lesser-known band under a Mr. Alphonse Trent, which made a remarkable version on Champion Records.

One Style

I wonder why it is that certain Evergreens become inseparably associated with one particular style of rendering? Some of them, for example, are always thought of as being entirely non-vocal numbers. *I've Found A New Baby* is an example; yet actually, fans may be surprised to hear, it has not one, but two, complete sets of lyrics, one male and one female! Evidently the Mills Brothers didn't know this when they made their record

of it, for the few words they do fit in are obviously busked, and suggest that they couldn't find a copy of the music from which to get the original lyric.

The lyricist was Jack Palmer, a white American song-writer from Memphis, Tennessee, now about thirty-two years of age. He started writing numbers about thirteen years ago, in collaboration with Spencer Williams, *I've Found A New Baby* being one of their joint efforts. Other Palmer hits are: *Everybody Loves My Baby*; *She's My Sheba*; *I'm Her Sheik*; *Sentimental Baby*; *Blue-Eyed Baby From Memphis*; and *Got Everything But You*. Recently he has scored a big hit with *Pu Take The South*.

Hot Writer

Spencer Williams, of course, you all know pretty thoroughly by now. Some day he must have a special article to himself on the unbelievably long list of successes he has written. It seems quite impossible to keep his name out of this series for more than three or four weeks at a time.

I've Found A New Baby is essentially a fast number, to be busked in large doses at small night-clubs. If you want to hear how some of the great men busk it on your own instrument, try the Chicago version for piano, clarinet and trumpet; Venuti's for violin and sax; Isham Jones' for trombone. Then mix them all together and you'll have some good music.

Next Week: *Nobody's Sweetheart.*

Leonard G. Feather's EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

No. 28: SOMEBODY STOLE MY GAL.

LEO WOOD was one of the finest men I've ever met. God rest his soul. Ever since I knew him he was always tribute to *Somebody Stole My Gal*. He was a Jewish American, was in by a for many years with the Leo Fein Company, leading New York publishers, and was also secretary and treasurer of the Song Writers' Association for some time.

Though the present publishers' record of this number only dates back to 1918, Leo Wood is said to have written *Somebody Stole My Gal* a year or two before the War. Certainly it has all the earmarks of the typical ragtime melody. One very characteristic phrase comes in bars 1, 2, and 3 of the chorus (in E flat), where the melody runs from D to C, B flat, A, A flat. You will find similar phrases (always on the harmonies of E flat, E flat Dim., and F Min.) in *You Made Me Love You* and several others of that time.

S.W.'s Night

However, since this isn't the technical section, I must move on and add that the tune was probably played in the old College Inn on 125th St., New York, where they used to have a special Song Writers' Night every Thursday, at which new material was tried out and candid criticism spread freely.

Leo Wood must have had a red-hot reception when he let them hear this one—that is, if they had the occult power, possessed by so few, of smelling a hit song in advance. Even to-day—particularly in this country since the revival by Harry Roy, who has made a prominent feature of it—*Somebody Stole* is a mighty big seller.

The routine of the chorus bears a striking resemblance to that of *Nobody's Sweetheart*, being split

up into five groups of eight bars each instead of the usual four groups. The pattern is thus a, b, a, c, d, which gives far more variety than the conventional a, a, b, a.

Though the modern recordings are numerous, a large proportion are by artists who actually haven't much to do with swing music, as you will see from the following list:—

and his Gang, Parlophone
Way, Imperial

Cotton, Billy, Regal
Egnos, Bertha (Piano), Imperial
Elizalde, Brunswick
Fox, Roy, Decca
Henderson, Fletcher, Crown
Lawrence, Brian, Panachord
Moten, Benny, H.M.V.
Roy, Syd, Eclipse
Roy, Harry, Parlophone

In fact, this is an Evergreen of Jazz rather than an Evergreen of hot music!

Next week: *Margie.*



by Leonard G. Feather

No. 29: MARGIE.

MARGIE is one of that eternal trilogy of mythical young ladies (the other two being *Dinah* and *Sweet Sue*) who will go down to posterity as having meant even more to hot rhythm than the Boswell Sisters.

Margie made her debut shortly after the War. She was the brain-child of Con Conrad, Benny Davis and J. Russell Robinson, all leaders in the song-writing field. Conrad composed *Moonlight, Lonesome and Sorry*, and a multitude of similar hits. He came over to this country to write some numbers for "All The Winners," a big show at the old Empire Theatre, collaborating on this with Max Darewski.

One of the First

Con was one of the earlier writers to grasp the opportunities presented by talking pictures, and has been making plenty of dough in Hollywood. The fact that he wrote *The Continental* should be adequate indication of that. Russell Robinson has also been attracted to the Los Angeles gold-mine of recent years. He began as an arranger, and was nicknamed "Rapid Left" on account of the amazing speed with which he jotted the stuff down and the fact that he was left-handed.

As for Benny Davis, he now runs

a very profitable variety show which tours America's music-halls. And in the meantime, for him and Con Conrad and Russell Robinson alike, the royalties on *Margie* continue to roll in.

Two of the original recordings in 1921 were played by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and by Ted Lewis's Orchestra, the latter being one of the most raucous affairs ever put to wax, while the former was years ahead of its time. Actually the greatest hot version of all was the Five Pennies' in August, 1923.

Spike's "Margie"

Spike Hughes included a fairly good *Margie* in his "Classics of Jazz" series on Decca. Here, at least, we were spared a vocal, whereas the singing was the ruination of three more recent versions, by Cab Calloway on Foreign H.M.V., and by Billy Banks and Claude Hopkins, both on Brunswick.

In October, 1932, Duke Ellington recorded the tune on Victor, but the result was never released. Which, of course, makes one all the more eager to get hold of it; but I strongly suspect that vocalist Sonny Greer had something to do with the blame. Just another good *Margie* gone wrong because somebody couldn't keep his mouth shut!

Next week: *I've Found A New Baby.*

RECOGNISABILITY

A Long Word With a Short Meaning

ONE of the most frequently employed yet least understood terms in hot music is the word "style." There are mighty few who can truly say that they not only know exactly what is meant by the expression, but why it is possible to discern, merely by listening closely to a record, the identity of the artist who is playing.

Only the very greatest artists, though, use their style as a help instead of a handicap. And only a few of these have impressed themselves sufficiently on the gramophone public's minds to acquire any high degree of recognisability.

Getting Curious

This, at least, is the conclusion to which I was forced when, recently, I played certain records, without announcing label details, at one or two rhythm clubs, and afterwards asked questions about the personnels.

Even the greatest record personalities' names were taken in vain. One number I played featured a trombone solo by Higginbotham and trumpet by Henry Allen, Jr. Asked afterwards who played these two solos, the fans wrote down some amazing replies.

Amongst the trumpeters, Arty Whetsol, Muggsy and Louis Armstrong were all mentioned several times, and there were even a few who mistook Allen for Nat Gonella! Lawrence Brown, Bill Rank, Dickie Wells and Teagarden were all confused with Higgy. So was Lew Davis—believe it or not!

Ellington seems to be the most recognisable of coloured artists. Playing his *East St. Louis* and asking for the band and the title, I received only a handful of mistakes for the first question, though many wrong titles were cited, including *March Of The Hoodlums*, *Black And Tan Fantasy*, and *Knocking A Jug*.

The white men of the Golden Era of hot music seem to have greater recognisability than coloured performers. In identifying the five soloists on a disc featuring Tram, Bix, Lang, Rollini and Don Murray, it was only on the last-named that the examinees stumbled. Pee-Wee Russell was most frequently men-

tioned, and Jimmy Dorsey's presence was also falsely scented.

Curiously enough, when Jimmy Dorsey was really playing, nobody realised it. A trumpet solo of his, with Venuti's Blue Four, was variously taken to be Red Nichols (28 times), Bix (12 times), Tom Dorsey (12 times), Red McKenzie (who doesn't play a trumpet anyway, 11 times), Muggsy (7 times), Charlie Teagarden, Jimmy McPartland,

Max Kaminsky, Phil Napoleon, Louis Armstrong and Nat Gonella—but not a solitary voter guessed right!

Incidentally, it was a pretty poor solo, unworthy of any of the men who were incorrectly held responsible.

But the biggest surprise of the whole style test was the playing of a very old unissued record by Fred Elizalde's Orchestra, featuring Al

Bowly, whose voice has changed and improved considerably since those days. Not only did eighty-five per cent. of the fans guess the orchestra's identity, but a large majority also recognised Al Bowly.

There was only one nasty slip made. Somebody innocently alleged that the vocalist was—Mildred Bailey.

L. G. F.

At least, this is the conclusion to be drawn from a recent census taken at a number of the Rhythm Clubs. According to these figures it would appear

that the average present-day fan has only been interested in hot music for four years.

Four short years! Then this mythical "average fan," beginning his jazz education in 1931, came in at a time when the golden dawn had disappeared; when Tram, Bix, Nichols and Armstrong had already passed the peak of their greatness.

Instead of these idols, the average fan has been fed on the more sophisticated side of Ellington, on the Casa Loma, the Dorsey Brothers and Benny Goodman.

To him, in fact, the great names of Trumbauer and Company are

probably associated with more recent and inferior output, and he cannot understand the enthusiasm of us old-timers, us relics of a past era, who have studied our hot music for such an immense expanse of time as seven or eight years!

Out of two hundred and fifty people who were questioned, the census revealed only twenty-eight people who have been interested in hot music for eight years or more—that is, since 1927, the year which produced *Singing The Blues* and the first Five Pennies records. Of this small minority, only one was a girl.

At the top of the list, two veterans claimed fifteen years of interest. Yet one of these was unable to give a definition of the Chicago Style!

One candidate was too cautious to answer the question directly. "It dawned gradually," he wrote.

The reason for the shortness of the generation of hot music is quite clear. Most of the fans are young people between eighteen and twenty-five. It is unusual to find anyone older than this starting to cultivate an appreciation of hot music.

But jazz is such a young art that its devotees will grow up with it and, providing they do not lose touch, there will be far more old-timers in ten years' time than there are to-day, and the general level of understanding of this music will be far higher.

But I doubt whether jazz will ever measure up to the human race in the matter of generations. Thirty years is a long, long time!

L. G. F.

FEATHER ON THE WING

LEONARD G. FEATHER, popular hot music critic and contributor to the *MELODY MAKER*, is shortly to make his first visit to his spiritual home—the United States. He sails on Wednesday next, July 24, in the *Normandie*, and will spend a short holiday in New York, during which much of his time will be devoted to the study at first hand of all the great swing artists whom most English fans only know from records.

American fans who wish to get in touch with Leonard Feather during his New York trip are advised to communicate with our New York correspondent, Warren Scholl, of 108 217th Place, Queen's Village, New York, who will be in touch with him shortly after his arrival.

20.7.35



13.7.35

As Old as Jazz Itself, is the

16-BAR SWING

Second Hardy Annual of Buskology

IT is almost as old as jazz itself.

It has more aliases than an escaped prisoner.

I tried to nail it down to the "Evergreens" series, but it grew far too big to handle.

It is the second favourite in all the hardy annuals of buskology. Second only to the twelve-bar blues.

For no other reason than that I like alliteration, I have decided to call it the "Sixteen-Bar Swing."

When I drew attention a year ago to the existence of the "twelve-bar blues" as a formula for slow-tempo hot music, some of the more casual listeners became aware of it for the first time. It will be the same with this younger brother of the blues formula, which, by way of contrast, is more frequently associated with a faster tempo.

In case you've no idea what I mean by "Sixteen-Bar Swing," Ex. 1 is the usual pattern, in one of the most popular keys, as followed by all the best people.

There is an alternative simplified version in which the main four-bar phrase is built entirely on two chords.

Does the idea begin to become familiar?

Let's delve back into the history

of jazz and prove just how useful this recipe has been for longer than we care to remember. We can start with the Daddy of all jazz compositions—W. C. Handy. In *Loveless Love* he had a 16-bar chorus based on Ex. 2 above. Handy founded his ideas on the musical phraseology of the lower-caste Negroes of the Southern States, and found that this compact prescription for telling their tales of joy and sorrow had a logic of form that made it unflinchingly popular. The first four bars express the main sentiment; the next four generally repeat it, landing on the dominant to indicate that the development is coming. In the middle phrase the harmonies suggest a slight crescendo; the climax is reached, the point of the lyric is generally brought out, and in the final four bars comes a repetition of the first phrase.

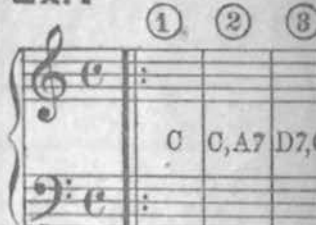
Thus did the sixteen-bar chorus come to be established as a standard basis for improvisation, both vocal and orchestral. Probably the purely orchestral use came in later, and the first great jazz group to take advantage of it was, of course, the Original Dixieland Band with *Ostrich Walk*, composed amongst themselves and attributed to Larry Shields and Nick (Tiger Rag) La Rocca. Here they introduced the novelty, still popular to-day, of breaking up the rhythm on the

9th, 10th, 11th and 12th bars in order to allow the melody instruments to take solo breaks.

Another of the great old bands to play a number of this type was the Original Memphis Five, with Elmer Schoebel's *House Of David Blues*. A variation on the theme, perhaps, but still pretty nearly the same in principle. They recorded this in 1923, and eight years later Fletcher Henderson used this title on Brunswick.

A little later, the next white band to cause a sensation on gramophone

Ex. 1



Ex. 2



amounted to the same thing.

It seems to have been around since that the coloured artists took hold of the sixteen-bar chorus and began to exploit it in their own manner. First there was strong, who plugged *Ding-Daddy* (v. 1 of the mule) on n. h. a. l. l. s. records, on he made even gr. sensation v. number on Ex. 2. *Rascal Yo*

which there are at least a good recordings.

Ellington, never content with banality, built the sixteen-bar swing into something with and frills by including it in his position *Ring Dem Bells*. Evidently he likes this theme, too, for years later he wrote it again this time called it *Stompy Jon*.

Don Redman, too, was not to capitalise on the fact that is a tune which never fails to *How'm I Doin'*, which is a pure typical Ex. 1, has almost edged itself into the Evergreen class of own persistent popularity. Obviously enough, in choosing this he recalled memories of another

by
Leonard G. Feather

records the world over, known to fame as the Red Heads, made use of the sixteen-bar tune for part of their number, *T'Ain't Cold*, recorded some ten years ago. The theme was holding its own very largely amongst white musicians, as a sort of downtown counterpart to the Harlemese twelve-bar tradition.

The next band to make a famous record of it was also composed of famous whites: Trumbauer's Orchestra, who not only made a new version of *Ostrich Walk* in 1928, but also recorded a "rhythmic theme in advanced harmony," entitled *Three Blind Mice*. The foundation of the opus to which this pretentious sub-heading was given

24.8.35

EVERGREENS OF HOT MUSIC . . . by . . .

No. 34: CHINA BOY.

A STRANGE, Ripleyesque fact has struck me. Play yourself the first eight bars of *China Boy*. You will find they consist of two notes, used alternatively, viz., the mediant and dominant, or, in tonic sol-fa notation, *mi* and *sol*. And everything that this combination touches turns to gold!

Take last week's Evergreen—*Japanese Sandman*. The first four bars are composed of a rapid succession of these same two notes—and the tune made a fortune. The same pair of notes can be heard, repeated three times, at the beginning of another sensational hit, *I Want To Be Happy*. *Narpie*, one of the biggest-money-makers of them all, started almost the same way.

Even in more recent times there

have been popular successes starting on very similar lines. *Wagon Wheels*, for example, was a top-liner a couple of seasons ago, and had the familiar combination at the commencement of the chorus, while *Hands Across The Table* bears such a strong resemblance to *China Boy* that it brings me tight back to the subject from which I seem to have wandered.

Strangely enough, there are no piano or orchestral parts of *China Boy* published in England, and it is through recordings that the number has become famous over here. All the best-known versions have been without vocals, but you will be able to hear the lyrics in Buddy Rogers' first British film, *Dance Band*, in which the Chinese Syncopators feature it as a "local colour" speciality number—though it must be admitted

Leonard G. Feather

that, despite the lyrics, there can be few numbers less Oriental-sounding than this one.

Certainly there is no strong flavour of the Far East about the recordings on Brunswick by Henry Lange's Orchestra, Clyde McCoy's Orchestra, Nichols' Five Pennies, Trumbauer's Orchestra, and Garland Wilson (piano solo); Whiteman's Band on Columbia, McKenzie-Condon on Parlophone, the French Hot Boys on Salabert, and Isham Jones' and Gene Kardos' Orchestras on Victor. Our *China Boy* has obviously gone Occidental with a vengeance—and we like him that way!

Next week: *Baby Won't You Please Come Home*.

IN THE STUDIO

WITH RAY

LEEDS M.U. MEETING

Voluntary Organising Committee Formed

DANCE MEN'S APATHY

DESPITE the fact that there was only a handful of really well-known dance musicians at the mass meeting organised by the Leeds branch of the M.U. on Sunday, important business was carried out satisfactorily.

Mr. Sidney Dean, the secretary, outlined the benefits of organisation and spoke of the seriousness of undercutting in Leeds.

Mr. B. Newton Brook, who had travelled from Manchester to address the meeting, said that trade unionism had greatly helped those who were employed in other trades and professions, and only by unionism could dance musicians hope to secure decent rates of pay and better conditions.

He hoped that the musicians of Leeds would get together.

UNANIMOUS RESOLUTION

A resolution was passed unanimously "That this meeting, mainly consisting of dance musicians, welcome the campaign for the organisation of dance musicians, and urges all to join the Union forthwith."

The motion was proposed by Mr. Eddie Mack and seconded by Mr. Ernest Findlay.

A temporary voluntary organising committee was formed, the members elected being Messrs. Findlay, Mack, Brooks, Wood, Orange, Thompson, and Smith, and it was suggested that Mr. Charlie Steel, the Leeds band leader, be co-opted. The committee was to meet on Wednesday, June 5, to discuss proper methods of organisation.

LEADER'S EXAMPLE

During the proceedings a letter was read from Charlie Steel, in which he said that he was sorry he could not attend the meeting but would give all his support to the union, and furthermore said that in future he would not employ musicians unless they were members of the union.

The secretary said that the entrance fee for new members could be as formerly—10s. 6d.—with weekly subscriptions of sixpence.

Another general meeting is to be called soon, when it is hoped that more dance musicians will attend and give their support.

MEDWAY PROS

REG SMITH'S Puck-a-pu Band is still going strong around Maidstone and is now doing quite a bit of work at the Phoenix Club.

Incidentally, these boys are all pros, and as our Correspondent's recent remarks about Eddie Shaw's Band being the first professional outfit in the Medway area were not correct.

Warren Scholl Gives the Lay-Out and Details of Noble's Great "Five Hours Back" Broadcast

ALAN AT 'ASTINGS



Alan Green, who successfully launched the summer dancing season at Hastings on Derby night.

1s. 9d. For a Five-Hour Gig!

EVIDENTLY fired by the "get-together" spirit so prevalent amongst musicians at the moment, the North Notts dance musicians added their quota to the movement when, at a meeting held at Mansfield last Sunday, they decided to go forward with the formation of a "Gig Club."

The meeting had been convened by Eric Pilkington, late manager of the Victoria Ballroom, Nottingham, who recently became dismissed at Mansfield, and, in outlining the reasons of the club, he laid special stress on the need for all local musicians to stand to a value of their worth in the entertainment world, and to work hard to win a high standard of efficiency and a decent return for their labours.

In passing, he emphasised the extreme low state into which the business in the district had descended, and the subsequent discussion brought to light many facts which bear out his assertions.

In this discussion, many respectful disclosures were made, but the highlight of the meeting undoubtedly came from a trampet player who said that he had been recently approached by a leader in the area who had offered him a "gig" of five hours for one-and-sixpence.

On the paper refusing the offer, the leader put up the price to "two and six."

While this example is not illustrative of the general work in the district, it certainly emphasises the depth to which some leaders will descend, and the need for the necessary organisation to combat the evil.



Radio Poll Among Colleges Already Includes Ray's Outfit In Ten Leading U.S.A. Bands

ON Saturday, May 18, both England and America had the privilege of hearing Ray Noble play one of the finest programmes he has presented since he has been on the air. This particular "Five Hours Back" N.B.C. and B.B.C. broadcast emanated from studio 3E of the N.B.C. New York studios in Radio City.

Although most radio programmes are open to the general public, this one was reserved only for friends of Ray Noble and his musicians, with the result that less than a dozen guests were the sole witnesses to this special international broadcast.

British musicians who heard the programme probably have wondered what the set-up of the band was, so here is a rough sketch of the Noble lay-out.

WHERE THEY SAT

Only one microphone is used to pick up the music of the orchestra, this being placed in front of the studio, within a few feet of the violins and guitar. In back of the string section sits the four-piece woodwind section, which in turn is followed by the four-piece brass division. The entire band plays on the same level, instead of sitting on graduated raised platforms (most American orchestras use raised platforms when broadcasting).

To the left and rear of the orchestra sits drummer Bill Harty, and directly ahead of him sits the pianist. To the right of these two players stands the string bass player, located between the saxes and brasses.

Al Bouilly stands on a platform facing the orchestra whenever he takes a vocal chorus, and Ray Noble directs from the right side of the orchestra, several feet from the mike.

GENEROUS LEADER

Now that the band opened at the Rainbow Room last week, all members of the orchestra have been signed up to appear exclusively with Ray Noble in the future. This means that George Van Epps and Pee Wee Irwin will cease playing with Bennie Goodman on the Saturday evening "Let's Dance" programme (by the time you read this, incidentally, the "Let's Dance" broadcast series will have been completed).

However, Ray Noble is very generous about allowing his men occasional record dates of their own. Last week, Glenn Miller and an all-star hot group made four sides for American record

company, and sometime shortly Bud Saxophone numbers for the same firm.

The bulk of the distinctive arrangements played on Noble's programme were done by Noble himself. However, Glenn Miller has been making a number of hot arrangements for Noble, one of which was played on May 18, namely, "Way Down Yonder in New Orleans."

This has been recorded for Victor by the Noble orchestra, and will more than likely be coupled with *Chinatown* (Noble's arrangement), which was made at the same session. The latter selection features some fine hot work by Johnny Mintz (erstwhile Johnny Munsenberger), Bud Freeman, and Pee Wee Irwin, so don't miss it.

ALREADY NEAR THE TOP

The present personnel of the orchestra is the same as it was originally with two exceptions—Milton Yaner, a marvellous alto sax player, has replaced Toots Mondello (also a marvellous alto man), and a new trombone player (whose name I have forgotten) has been acquired in the place of the original second trombonist (not Glenn Miller).

It is difficult to imagine what degree of popularity Noble will have attained one year from now. In a recent radio poll conducted by American colleges, Noble's name was to be found among the leading ten orchestras of the country. In view of the fact that Noble was in America only a few months when the poll was taken, we may rest assured that shortly he will be outclassing many standard American orchestra leaders.

HOT SCOTCH!



They Will Fill the Bill At Rhyl





by Leonard G. Feather

No. 35.—BABY WON'T YOU PLEASE COME HOME.

THIS is not one of the more famous "Evergreens," but merits its inclusion in the series on the strength of an amusing story concerning its inception.

The song was written back in 1917 in Chicago, by Clarence ("Jazz King") Williams and Charles Warfield. At that time, Williams had already entered the music publishing business, and was also running a chain of retail music stores. One day, while he was trying to hatch out a couple of ideas with Mr. Warfield, a man came into the store and asked if he might use the 'phone.

Clarence Williams gave him permission, and, as he was standing quite near the booth, he makes no apology for having heard the subsequent conversation. The agitated gentleman at the telephone was pleading very earnestly with someone at the other end of the wire. It seemed that he had been separated from his light o' love and was begging her to take him back. Inspiration came upon Williams like a blue sky from behind a cloud, and in a few

minutes (most song-writers work fast) he and Warfield had the whole thing completed, the lyrics being based entirely on the stranger's conversation at the telephone!

Clarence Williams is one of the most remarkable people in show business. Only 37 years old, he has been song-writing for 23 years. As a boy he got a job playing in a cabaret, though, unknown to the boss, he only knew three tunes. He sang, played, did dramatics and comedy, tried to dance, and actually learnt to play the piano, all on that job. To-day he claims to be the only coloured man to have written, scored and produced a show on Broadway; that was called "Bottomland." He and his band played with Louis Armstrong in the latter's first Okeh records. He is married to Eva Taylor (N.B.C.'s Dixie Nightingale), and has three children; one daughter was married only last month.

If that isn't a sufficiently lengthy record for a youngster of 37, tell me yours when you get to that age!

Next week: St. Louis Blues.

7. 9. 36.

Evergreens
of Jazz
by
Leonard G. Feather

No. 36. ST. LOUIS BLUES.

THIS Daddy of all the twelve-bar blues tunes ever written has had three careers: the first as a Negro semi-spiritual, in which the lyrics were of primary importance; the second as a popular ragtime or jazz tune; and the third as a hot number, for which its simple harmonies are still employed to-day.

The first orchestration ever to be recorded, following the publication in 1914, was by Prince's Band on Columbia. Victor put out one version by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, but would not allow a vocal version, several objections being made to the lyrics. This was, it is said, the original reason why Marion Harris went over from Victor to Columbia, where she recorded this and all W. C. Handy's other blues numbers.

Eventually, in 1919, Victor thought better of the decision, and Al Bernard recorded the number,

not only on Victor, but on Edison, Emerson, Pathé, Cardinal, and every recording company then in existence.

Mr. Handy, who still plays trumpet on occasion, made two versions himself on Banner and Paramount records. After this, he declares, things went wrong for him. Anybody who had a voice at all—unknown writers, bootblacks, kitchenmaids—could make what they called a blues, and Handy, who had originated the whole idea of the twelve-bar blues, found himself pushed right out of the limelight.

Seventy Recordings

There are at least 70 recordings of *St. Louis Blues*, and even Mr. Handy himself cannot recall the names of all the artists concerned. Principal amongst the earlier recordings are those of Esther Bigeou and Lillian Brown, both on Okeh; Rudy Wiedoeft, Brunswick; Willard Robison and Jim Europe, on Pathé; Ruth Etting on Columbia. Louis Armstrong has made it three times, on Okeh, Brunswick and Victor, the first being by far the best.

At present the piano song-copy is being published by Handy's own company in 13 different editions, each cover portraying one of the artists now featuring it. Handy, a very active and affable gentleman in his sixties, has two sons working in his office and is himself as enthusiastically busy as ever in running the firm. Truly one of the grand old men of modern music.

Next Week: Rockin' Chair.

Leonard G. Feather's

EVERGREENS OF JAZZ

No. 32: AVALON.

YOU may have noticed that the majority of Evergreens mentioned so far in this series have been the work of men who, so far as the general public is concerned, are no longer very actively in the limelight. Some are song-writers or band-leaders who have since died or gone into retirement; very few are as famous to-day as the tunes they created.

Avalon introduces one striking exception to this rule. It is associated with the name of no less august a personality than Mr. Al ("Singing Fool") Jolson, the one and only stage and screen star. His is the name you will see, bracketed with that of Vincent Rose, on the record labels of this stubbornly popular ditty.

Though he has not had much time of recent years for such occupations as song-writing, you will find him credited with the authorship of one or two other old tunes which have survived through the years, notably *California, Here I Come* (written in conjunction with Buddy de Sylva).

First published in 1920, *Avalon* was one of the post-war hits which

had every opportunity of surviving, for this was the pre-radio golden era of popular songs. Vincent Rose, Jolson's collaborator on the number, is an Italian-American who led an orchestra in Chicago.

Amongst the earliest recordings of the tune was one by Paul Biese, issued on Columbia in February, 1921, another by Paul Whiteman, and a third by the Diplomat Orchestra on Winner. The first notable hot recording was, of course, Red Nichols' classic on Brunswick (1928), with that unique and unforgettable chorus on celeste, and several other solos which, even to-day, would serve as perfect models of hot playing.

The success of the Five Pennies' version resulted, as was the case with many of the numbers they revived, in a general movement towards the use of this number for busking purposes. Amongst the other renderings since waxed are those of Cab Calloway, the Casa Loma Orchestra, Billy Cotton's Band, the KXYZ Novelty Band, George Monkhouse's Quinquaginta Ramblers, and the Piano Maniacs; also, in a medley, the Six Swingers.

All we need now is a red-hot recording of *Sonny Boy*, and Mr. Jolson will go down to posterity as a patron saint of swing music!

Next Week: Japanese Sandman.



By Leonard G. Feather

No. 38: STAR DUST

STAR DUST represents a case that is unique amongst the Evergreens. It is a ballad; a number that lends itself to flowery presentation; a melody that it is almost impossible to play hot. Yet it has remained popular for the best part of ten years, and is still in constant use for straight interpretations by swing bands.

Actually this was the second important number Hoagy Carmichael ever wrote. His early musical training came largely from his association with the Wolverines when they visited Indianapolis, his home town. Later on came the visit of Paul Whiteman, which resulted in the twelve-inch recording of *Washboard Blues* with Hoagy singing at the piano.

Soon Hoagy found himself giving more and more attention to music and less to law, for which he was originally intended. As arranger with Jean Goldkette's orchestra, he scored out a pleasant and unusual melody which the band featured with great success. They called it *Star Dust*, which is a Harlem expres-

sion signifying cocaine. However, since this was not the construction which Mitchell Parish put on the title when he subsequently added lyrics in order to popularise the melody, it is difficult to say whether this was actually the inspiration or not.

The next leader to give *Star Dust* a big hand after Goldkette was Isham Jones. At last the number, which for years had been rejected and neglected by song publishers, came into its own. It achieved such popularity on the radio that, even during the last few months, it has generally been impossible to roam the dial in the States without picking up its strains from some station or other. Lucky Millinder and his Mills Blue Rhythm Band now use it as their signature tune.

Last month, at the No. 1 Rhythm Club, Bill Elliott gave a programme entitled "Star Dust Variations," in which no less than nine of the many versions were played. That this recital managed to hold the attention of the audience from beginning to end is certainly no mean tribute to Hoagy's former brilliance.

But imagine trying to hold them with nine versions of *Mr. Bluebird*, one of Hoagy's current pop tunes. How are the mighty fallen!

Next Week: After You've Gone.

Melody Maker

AUGUST 17, 1935

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NEITHER RHYM NOR REASON

A Saga of Songwriting

— by —
**Geoffrey
Marne**



"I've hit
it!"
said
George

BUSINESS being business, I'm not going to tell you the name of the prominent sensational weekly that wanted me to devote my time to a Great Exposure of the Tennis Racket. However, the fact is that I've put the job aside because I think this Song Writing Racket calls for more urgent inspection, and the Melody

salt," you conjure up mental pictures of errand boys the country over singing *Pass me the Salt, Because I'm in Love with You*, in A flat (jig tempo).

Later on, in the final stages, this thing grips you so that you refuse to let anyone talk to you at all, for fear they will unwittingly provide you with another song-title to work on.

The Sheik Of Araby, so we gave up the music for a while and came to the words.

Staring moodily at George's framed legend on the wall, which reads, "June-Moon, Love-Above, Dream-Scheme, Dawn-Gone," and which George recites every night before going to bed, we called on the Muse; but for eight minutes there was no reply. Then George sprang up and hit the table excitedly.

At least, he would have hit the table if that glass of beer hadn't been in the way. Clumsy beggar, George

the subject. So we got back to thinking out a melody again, and, as George said, it's quite as big a mystery as the chicken and the egg—which comes first?

When you get the music first, later on you find your word accents all wrong, such as the word "jealousy" with the accent on the "lousy"; but when you write the words first, you discover afterwards that one bar has five beats and the next has two, and the one after that is lucky if it keeps down to seven and a-half.

Anyway, somehow or other we managed to keep *The Sheik Of Araby* out of our scheme of things, and got some sort of an original song together, based on the old pattern which goes a-a-b-a. Of course, the middle, or b, part was, to use George's description, a b nuisance; but, we understand, no great song-writers bother about middle parts.

After all, look what a hit somebody made with a tune called *Ay-Ay-Ay*. If he'd happened to call it *Ay-Ay-Be-Ay*, it might have been a complete flop.



NEXT in our programme came the business of making Charing Cross Road smash-conscious, with a view to eventual country-

went round to some of the fatter and more rubicund music publishers, who listened to our brain-child with infinite patience.

"It's too English," said one. "What the public wants to-day is American stuff in an English way, if you know what I mean."

"It's too American," said another. "What the public wants to-day. . ."

"It's so hard to remember," said a third, "but easy to forget."

"Don't come bringing me comedy numbers," said a fourth, "the public's fed up with them."

"It's too — miserable," complained No. 5. "What we want is a comedy number."

"The whole thing's too high-brow," whined No. 6. "For instance, *I'm Not In Love With You* makes a lousy title for a start. Make it *I Ain't In Love With You* and you'll be getting somewhere."

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LOCAL RECORD REVIEW

By LEONARD FEATHER

ALBERT HARRIS AND IVOR MAIRANTS (Guitar Duets) Brunswick 02034—2/6
 Dedication (to Eddie Lang) .. Marks 75%
 Spring Fever Marks 80%

THE FOUR ACES Decca F5597—1/6
 Rhythm is Our Business Marks 35%
 Rain Marks 45%

A MONTH or two ago in these pages I pointed out that Albert Harris, most brilliant of English instrumentalists, should stop hiding his light behind a bushel and start making some solo records.

My plea was not in vain, and there will be nobody who can feel anything but delighted that the suggestion was followed up. These two guitar duets are the first records of this kind that Britain has produced, and it is no exaggeration to say that any two American guitarists would be proud to have made them.

Mairants of Roy Fox's Band reveals surprising ability and agility, supplying a nice light rhythmic accompaniment throughout *Dedication* (except for the octave jumps in the half-tempo movement, where he takes over the melody line briefly); and in *Spring Fever*, his own composition, he plays the lead from start to finish.

There is no need to grow sentimental about the title of the first side, which in any case was not Albert's idea (Austen Croom-Johnson suggested it when the item was introduced in an *I've Got to Have Music* broadcast), but it is clear that the great and immortal Eddie has been the source of the Harris inspiration in the music itself. Inspiration without imitation: that is the secret of this disc's success.

Every bar is musical and could offend nobody. The understanding between the two artistes is really wonderful. The fact that there are numerous tempo changes and *rallentandi* does not hamper the swing or the purity of the jazz produced, which is in itself a great achievement.

If there is anything to choose between the two pieces *Spring Fever* has a slight lead, if only for the brilliance of the bridge passage into the slow movement and for Albert's glorious bass-note commentary during that movement. Neither of the musicians has the depth of tone or the rich fullness contrived by Lang, but the tone colour is none the less a delightful one.

Congratulations to the artistes, the recording engineers and everybody concerned. If they can keep me writing about the same record for four hundred words without a stop something exceptional must have happened. And exceptional it certainly is.

BY way of contrast with Albert Harris's record, here we have an illustration of the converse system: imitation without inspiration.

Rain is the more original of the two sides, though the last chorus is not well arranged and tends to be corny. *Rhythm is our Business* is not much more than a rehash of the Mills' *How'm I Doin'*; in one or two instances complete breaks are lifted note for note. The recording doesn't quite seem to get there on either side, balance being a little variable.

NAT GONELLA AND HIS GEORGIANS Parlophone F192—1/6

Fascinating Rhythm Marks 55%
 Hesitation Blues Marks 65%
 SAME BAND Parlophone F193—1/6
 Hot Lips Marks 50%
 Blow, Gabriel Blow,.. .. Marks 55%

NAT has taken me severely to task for my review of his *Tiger Rag* session, declaring that I should give British musicians a chance. Personally, I still hold that giving them a chance does not involve praising them fulsomely just because they are British. I set my standards by the American records which Nat himself uses as the model for his style.

In view of all of which I am glad to report that a superior choice of tunes and tempos has resulted in some much better efforts this month. The boys are obviously more at ease with such suitable material as *Hesitation Blues*, a straightforward twelve-bar variant played at a moderate tempo.

Nat sings and scats with some agreeable rhythm behind him in this side, then plays with remarkable ease and control on the old horn, not forgetting the fashionable trills that are being worn everywhere this season, my dear.

On the reverse it is a pleasure to find Harold Hood's name mentioned as featured soloist. His chorus after the vocal, with organ harmony from the band, reveals him as a real star of the future. Here is one of the few English boys who know all about it, and have listened intelligently to records. Harold bobs up again in the coda, stealing a lick from Teddy Wilson and clearly enjoying himself no end.

One of the strongest features of the whole four sides is Pat Smuts' tenor chorus in *Hot Lips*—a really excellent solo, intelligently accompanied. In fact, his work in both records makes it quite clear that there are no flies on Smuts!

THE SIX SWINGERS Regal-Zonophone MRI771—1/-

Stardust Marks 50%
 Rhythm is Our Business Marks 50%

THERE is some splendid trombone playing in both sides, and sixteen bars of beautiful melody alto by Freddy Gardner in *Star Dust*. George Scott-Wood plays a piano chorus on the reverse.

Next time, we want the Swingers to shake off these commercial inhibitions and give us a record that has more swinging than singing.

RHYTHM RECORDS

English and Continental

Write for lists and particulars of our most efficient service for sending records to all parts of the World.

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"THE HOTTEST PLACE IN TOWN"

LEONARD FEATHER DUE HERE ON SPECIAL VISIT

England is sending an ambassador to the colored theatrical profession in the person of Leonard G. Feather of the Melody Maker, a British publication which has devoted a great part of its pages to the doings of Negro bands in this country and when they are abroad. This will be Mr. Feather's first visit to the United States.

He is coming direct to New York and expects to arrive here on Monday, July 29, on the Normandie, pride of the French merchant marine. The chief object of Mr. Feather's visit will be to collect material for articles in Melody Maker, from which this paper has made quotations from time to time.

He also hopes to make some deals with some of his song numbers, among them one called "They Laughed When I Sat at the Piano," a very popular song at this time in England.

N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS

3/8/35

"TROUBLESOME TRUMPET . . ."

The Story of NAT GONELLA, Britain's Leading Trumpeter, told to you by Leonard G. Feather



Like it hot? Then Nat's your man. Here he's hitting that top note—and how!

NATHANIEL CHARLES GONELLA, Trumpet-Player Extraordinary to the Great British Public. . . . Leader of an up-and-coming little orchestra of his own—the Georgians—with which he is currently assailing the nation's greatest music-halls.

Nat is frequently hailed during his wanderings as the "Pocket Genius" of jazz, chiefly because the idea of such a little man playing such a powerful instrument makes him seem smaller still. Actually, though, the history of his career as a miniature marvel goes back to the time when he was nearly two feet shorter than he is now!

Yes, Nat Gonella was almost an infant prodigy! It seems to run in his family; he and his brother, "Bruts," both started learning during their schooldays, and both of them owe much of their success to a long and vigorous period of training in a boys' band.

That he even got as far as that is a credit to Nat's determination to make his own career for himself, for when he was fourteen he contracted rheumatic fever, and was advised by his doctor never to play any wind or brass instrument again!

One of his first jobs, then, after leaving school was an apprenticeship at a tailor's shop; this lasted just three days! Later he became an errand-boy at a furrier's, but kept on practicing his trumpet in his spare time.

His patience was rewarded. Seeing an advertisement for a boys' band required to accompany a new show, he applied for a job—and from this small beginning came four years of steady work! Perhaps some of you who saw Gracie Fields in "Mr. Towey of London," or any of Archie Pitt's other revues which toured the country in the Nineteen-Twenties, may remember a cherub-faced, fair-haired youngster featured with the Army-uniformed "Busby Boys' Band" on the stage. That was Nat, in his 'teens—and with him was brother Bruts, a mere infant! The conductor in those days was Bertini, now of Blackpool.

NAT'S next venture was an orchestra led by Bob Dryden, his pal with whom he has recently renewed his association. Bob is at the drums of the Georgians. The Dryden band played in Manchester, in Ireland, and then at Margate for a while. Accustomed to plenty of travel, and more particularly to the tang of the seaside, Nat soon found himself a good niche in Archie Alexander's Band at the Regent Ball-room, Brighton.

After this came his first really important break, and the one which brought him to the notice of musical fans and record students—Billy Cotton took him on as trumpet-player and featured vocalist.

Vocalist—with a difference. Nat had heard some of the early records of a gent named Louis Armstrong, who, so they said, was considered quite good in America by one or two people in the know. And this Armstrong, besides playing a pretty mean trumpet, had a funny frog-in-the-throat manner of delivering vocal choruses which many people found quite fascinating.

While the name of Armstrong still meant next to nothing in this country, Nat Gonella assiduously devoted himself to a study of the great negro artist's methods. As a result came a record which was a turning-point in the Gonella career—"Bessie Couldn't Help It," issued in December, 1930, by Billy Cotton on Regal. In an instant the diminutive, lithe little Englishman was no longer just another trumpet player in another band, but had established himself as a Personality Man.

When Roy Fox was engaged to organise an all-English band for the brand-new Moneigneur Restaurant, just four years ago, Billy Cotton suffered a severe loss. His entire brass section went over to Roy Fox. Including, of course, "Personality Nat."

From this point onwards it was all plain sailing for Nat. He became a featured artist with the Fox band; then, when Roy Fox left and Lew Stone took over direction of the orchestra, he was given even further prominence. Finally, by 1934, he had become such an important adjunct of Lew Stone's organisation that his name was given a separate billing, and Decca signed him to make several solo records under the name, "Nat Gonella and his Trumpet."

In July, 1934, he teamed up on the stage with Brian Lawrence, the English jazz violin virtuoso and singer, and the Quaglino's Quartette. Life then for Nat was one mad rush of work, fan-mail and adulation.

The inevitable split resulted—he and Lew Stone parted company. After a few weeks, however, there was a happy reunion, and once again Gonella was the star attraction of Lew's band, leading a special contingent which he called the Georgians (named after his famous featured number, "Georgis," by Hoagy Carmichael). The original Georgians included two special additions to the band, brought in for Nat's benefit—Don Barrigo, the tenor sax man, and "old faithful" Bob Dryden on drums.



Off-duty snapshot of Nat Gonella, trumpeter, and leader of The Georgians, now touring the country.

Early this year, during Lew Stone's sojourn at the Hollywood Restaurant, Nat again began to strain at the leash. Recordings were taking up an important section of his time—he had moved from Decca to Parlophone, and introduced the Georgians as an individual recording band—apart from which the demands for him to do music-hall work with his own act became more and more pressing. The final break with Stone arrived, and since then the Georgians, with an altered personnel, have been touring the country with unvarying success.

The band now includes another of those brilliant lads who can be glad they started young; Harold Hood, the pianist, is only seventeen, but has been playing professionally in small night-clubs for nearly two years! The remaining Georgians are Bob Dryden; Jimmy Messini, guitar and vocalist; Charles Winters, double bass, and Pat Smuts, tenor sax. On

records you can often also hear Bruts Gonella, who comes in specially as second trumpet.

So much for the historical side of Nat's progress—and now for the artistic side. Instead of being content to remain a mere imitator of Armstrong, he was bright enough to use his study of the American's work as a foundation on which to build up his own personal style. His trumpet-playing to-day is characteristically Gonella, not just second-hand Louis Armstrong.

His singing is even more different from Armstrong's. It lacks the depth and perhaps the sincerity of the swarthy trumpet king's warblings, but it is of a type that goes direct to the British public's heart; he is as natively London as Louis is natively American.

His records sell like the hot cakes they really are, and fans in France, Belgium and Holland will sit up eagerly waiting for his National broadcasts. I need hardly mention that he receives hundreds of fan letters per week from all over Europe, but I must add that his youngest and keenest fan is a Miss Natalie Gonella, aged four-and-a-half, who thinks Daddy is just the cleverest man ever.

DURING one of his increasingly rare weeks in London you may find Nat with Betty, his pretty and charming wife, spending a busman's holiday at his Shaftesbury Avenue flat with his collection of over a thousand gramophone records. Nat likes 'em "hot," and seldom buys the more hackneyed and popular specimens. And his admiration for Louis Armstrong knows no bounds.

When Louis arrived in England Nat could not find out his private address. However, he had heard that the coloured wonder had placed his instrument in the hands of a London dealer for repair. Unasked, he enrolled as a special member of the instrument firm. His first (and last) job for them consisted of delivering the repaired trumpet to the address given him, where Armstrong was staying. And that's how this humble subject was first presented at the Court of His Majesty the Trumpet King!

During Louis's subsequent long stay in this country they were often together, chatting about music and indulging in an orgy of mutual admiration. Back in the States now, you can bet that Louis is acting as a grand publicity man for Nat, for he is always eager to tell everyone just what a grand tooter Britain has to her credit. The Gonella sitting-room is plastered with signed photographs from Louis, records and mementoes of all kinds recalling the friendship of these two masters of their instrument.

Nat is crazy about golf and riding, and is a keen spectator at all the big wrestling matches—but music is his greatest hobby; his whole life is wrapped up in it. He is one of the few musical stars who have retained a genuine interest in music for its own sake—in fact, he is a fan like the rest of us, and gets a real "kick" out of playing.

If he enjoys it half as much on the stage as we do in the audience, he should be a very contented young man!

Those Boswells...

Almost Too Clever To Succeed!

says Leonard G. FEATHER

when he has an exclusive interview with these famous radio stars on behalf of "Radio Pictorial." Have you seen their page portrait and personal message to you on page 3?

"HOW 'bout that routine, Connie?" said Martha Boswell. Connie looked up from the mass of orchestral parts that littered the dressing-room table. "Yeah, I guess we'd better change it round. Too many slow numbers. Now I think if we started off with *Rock and Roll* and put in *St. Louis Blues* at the end. . . ."

She trailed off and turned round to me suddenly. "Say, did you hear our new record of *St. Louis Blues*? We made it just before we came over here."

I said I had, and I liked it. I like all their records. I like all the Boswell sisters themselves, for you will go a long way before finding another trio in the music business so charmingly friendly and so animatedly conversational.

The Boswells, as you know, came on their second visit to England, and fates were kind to them this time. There was no illness to pack them off unexpectedly to the States, as was their unfortunate lot in 1933. Except for that day when Connie went to photograph the Changing of the Guard and then found there hadn't been any film in the camera, everything has gone smoothly.

Only one thing would have completed their happiness—something that will probably give you a big surprise. They wanted to bring their instruments with them!

Yes, that story about their musical ability is a true one. Connie had half a mind to bring her saxophone over with her this year, and Vet would have got a real thrill out of transporting her violin and her banjo to this side of the Atlantic for a little private off-stage amusement. But, afraid of being cajoled into playing publicly, they changed their minds.

These instruments played a big part in the girls' lives. Way down in New Orleans, where they spent their whole time until six years ago, it is part of your normal education to study music. Jazz first originated in the Southern States, and everybody there spent a vast amount of time either performing it or listening to it. So perhaps it was not unnatural that Mr. Boswell's three children should band together as a trio for the delectation, both aural and visual, of the local folks.

In the sweet numbers Connie would play 'cello and Vet violin with Martha at the piano; for the hotter items the sax and banjo would come out. And sometimes Vet would do a little tap-dance.

Oh, yes, they could sing too: they were quite versatile, you see. So when a local newspaper decided to run a radio talent competition at the small and primitive New Orleans studios, Connie and Martha entered—twice. Once as an instrumental act, and once as vocalists. Vet was too young and too shy to join in with them at that time: even Martha, the eldest, was barely out of her 'teens, and oh, the trouble she used to have with that kid sister! When they once appeared locally on the stage she had to bribe Vet with a barbecue sandwich (pork to you) to come on the stage at all, and even then she would park her diminutive figure right behind the piano and remain heard but not seen!

Anyhow, to get back to that competition broadcast: Connie and Martha sang *Pick Me up and Lay Me Down in Dear Old Dixieland*, one of the good old jazz tunes; then, in the instrumental act, came Martha's favourite solos at that time—one was *Caprice Espagnole* and the other *Kitten on the Keys*.

They never expected anything much to result from the broadcast. Even the publicity was denied them, for instead of being announced by name they were just "Number so-and-so," all the turns being kept anonymous. So imagine their surprise when the public's votes rolled into the local paper and the two most popular acts turned out to be their own. And imagine the general embarrassment when it was revealed that both acts were one and the same and that the Boswell duo had collared both the prizes!

Their double success led to an engagement at the Palace Theatre in New Orleans, for which they received the magnificent sum of fifty dollars. All this was in 1925; and for several more years the lasses stayed in their home town, winning the unbridled enthusiasm of the locals and yokels. "In fact," as Martha said, "although our first record was only released in and around Louisiana, it sold twenty-five thousand copies! That's more than an average sale for the whole of England, isn't it? . . . Gosh, it was fun making that record. We did two of my own compositions—*Nights When I'm Lonely* and *I'm Gonna Cry*. Remember, Connie?"

"Say," said Connie, "maybe we'd better get going on that routine now. I guess if we take out *Dinah* and I put in a fast number instead of *Farwell to Arms*—"

"And then," said Martha, "in 1929 we left New Orleans and played the act in California. Still with all the instruments. Then someone decided our act was too clever, so we changed it and made a hit!"

Too clever! It sounds absurd, but Martha's explanation was very logical. The girls simply decided that their versatility would never bring them to the top of the bill. They were doing too much of too many things ever to become famous at any one thing—in fact, they realised that the public appreciates a specialised act, so they resolved to specialise, and thereupon



The Boswells—Connie, Martha, and Vet—photographed by the cameraman on their arrival in this country

gave up everything except just plain singing. And from that moment onwards, paradoxical as it may seem, nothing has blocked their path to fame!

"It was just after that," added Martha, "that we made our first really important record—the Okeh version of *Heebie Jeebies*, with no orchestral accompaniment. It was a sensation at the time, but gee, it does sound kinda funny to-day. You know, we used to sing nearly a yard away from the mike, until one day Connie had a bad cold and had to go within a couple of inches of it. It wasn't till then that she found out how much better it sounds to sing right up close with a softer voice. One of those lucky accidents!"

"Tell you what," interrupted Vet, "supposing we put in *Dinah* and cut out *Rock and Roll*—"

"After that," continued Martha, "we were in New York, and got a long-term record contract and lots of radio and stage work, and—well, everything's happened just right ever since."

And that is the harmoniously concerted story of the three brunettes from New Orleans. Now meet them individually. Martha, the most talkative and dynamic of the three—a clever business-girl, a smiling and friendly personality. Constance, she of the marked and attractive Southern drawl; frail but cheerful, and eternally engaged in fierce encounters at backgammon and other games of her own invention. Helvetia, still the most shy and reserved, with lovely dark complexion and dazzling smile; in some ways quite a contrast in character with sister Martha, who is less than five years her senior. All the girls are unmarried, to which circumstance we probably owe the continued existence of the act. And they don't fight or use separate dressing-rooms backstage. The close harmony that exists between them is not merely musical.

"Well," Connie was saying as I rose to go, "I guess we might as well leave the whole routine exactly as it was."

General expressions of assent greeted her proposal. But before I was even outside the dressing-room door I heard voices.

"How 'bout *Practise What You Preach* before *St. Louis Blues*?"

"No, maybe we should leave out *St. Louis Blues* after all and put in. . . ."

"I guess we need another slow number. . . ."

I don't know how the discussion finished, but I've a good suggestion. The way to choose their "routines" is to put all the songs in a hat and simply sing whatever they pull out.

But they couldn't help giving a grand show, anyhow. It's a habit these Boswells have!

RADIO PICTORIAL, Sept. 6th. 1935. "

To -
 Radio Pictorial
 Readers
 Sincere good wishes
 The Boswell Sisters
 Connie Natcha + Vet.



The
BOSWELL SISTERS

Famous vocal trio who have achieved world popularity by their American broadcasts and gramophone records. Now they have paid their second flying visit to this country and an exclusive interview with them appears on page 11.

POPULAR MUSIC

6/7/35

Introducing



Here's Billy tackling the morning's mail. Look's like a new contract?

Merrin activities. One day last year he had to dash up to London during the morning, record six titles for Regal-Zonophone—quite a colossal total for a single day's work—and then rehearse the band in the train on their way back to Nottingham for a broadcast the same evening.

Even this panic, though, was nothing beside the occasion when five of his men suddenly left the band four days before Billy was due to open at the new Victoria Ballroom in Nottingham. Four days in which to fix up five new men and get them note-perfect on dozens of complicated routines—the musicians Billy wanted were scattered all over the place.

He flew over to Scotland for two of them, then flew to London to recruit a couple more Commanders, who had to be dragged out of bed at 2 a.m.; and the last man to arrive made his appearance in Nottingham just half an hour before the opening was timed to start!

Billy is constantly on the lookout for possible improvements in his band. Recently a new trombonist has been added, and there are two newcomers in the sax. section. "And," says Billy, "you should hear my new trumpet player, who's just joined; a British coloured boy named Leslie Thompson. He's

going to be a sensation."

It was Billy who first introduced the "Guest

Alice Dey, his own dancing and singing discovery, has often stopped the show.

"It's funny," he relates, "how audiences' tastes vary in different cities. On the whole, they like their music sweet and straight up North; but some of the big cities, particularly Leeds and Manchester, are crazy about hot music, too."

"Crooners! What about them?" I asked.

"Crooning's as popular as it ever was anywhere. But perhaps there's a difference—Ken Crossley, our vocal star, is a singer as well as a crooner. That helps. I discovered Ken at a crooning contest in Nottingham; he was a brick-layer before I heard him. He's a permanent attachment to the Commanders now."

Taken For a Ride.

Billy receives some amusing letters from listeners-in. Some are technical, but there are more that are human and personal. One of the best was a bill from an irate North-country housewife, who claimed that, in his anxiety to switch on to Billy's broadcast, her small son had upset some cocoa over the dining-room tablecloth. Apparently if Billy didn't pay the cleaners' bill she threatened not to listen-in to him any more.

One very touching letter came from an old lady who had been listening to one of his Old Time dance music programmes. She and her husband had been so excited at hearing these favourite tunes of their youth that they had got up and danced around together. This was the first time she had danced since, years before, she had become totally blind.

If you are one of those people who like a nice, quiet, sedentary life, don't be a dance musician.

"Big Bill" Merrin, the burly North-countryman who has made a national name for himself through Regional broadcasts, is a typical example of triumphant tirelessness in band-leaders. He and his Little Men have had some Busy Days—with a vengeance.

It will be a long time, for instance, before they forget their first experience of film work. Dashing from the Futurist Theatre in Birmingham one evening, they were taken by coach to play at a dance in Bradford from 7.30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Immediately after the dance they left for London, taking a coach at 7 a.m. to bring them to Beaconsfield, where they were to be featured in the film revue, "In Town To-night."

Work began at 8.30 a.m. and carried on until midnight. Up again at 7 a.m. for another half-day's work at Beaconsfield, following which they had to dash from the studios for a dance in Cirencester from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Oh, yes, it's grand fun being a band-leader!

On His Old Banjo.

But Billy Merrin's signature tune is "Troubles are Like Bubbles"—and he always bears that philosophy in mind. Without that spirit of optimism he might still be a clerk in a lace warehouse, for that is the humble position he occupied not long after leaving school in his native town of Nottingham.

This was back in 1915, when Billy was fifteen years old. Two years later he was in the Royal Naval Air Service as a Boy Operator and Wireless Instructor. Even at this stage, you see, radio was taking an important part in his life.

Broadcasting was responsible for the next turning point, for, back in Nottingham again in 1921, he wrote a musical play called "Cupid the Pilot," which was accepted and performed at the old Nottingham Studios, then known as 5 N.G. Billy formed a dance band to accompany the artistes, and himself played banjo.

Billy the Banjoist soon made his appearance in London, and for nearly a year he was strumming and arranging for the Royal Opera House Dance Band at Covent Garder.

Not until he returned to Nottingham, though, did Billy the Banjoist become Billy the Band-leader with an orchestra all his own. Since then the name of "Billy Merrin and his Commanders" has become more and more important.

He is married; no children, but one cat, which he calls Paddy—the next best thing! He is very fond of tennis, and is a teetotaler and a non-smoker.

Recording naturally looms large amongst the

"TOP-of-the-BILL"— MERRIN

By
Leonard G. Feather

Night" idea into radio dance music. In January, 1934, he was in the same show with the late Raie da Costa and the Nesbitt Brothers, and persuaded them to join in a broadcast with him from Nottingham.

Most of Billy's recent broadcasts have come from the band's own special studio in the Futurist Theatre building in Birmingham. Sometimes, when they cannot reach Birmingham in time, they are heard from the particular music-hall where the band is performing. Their recent work "on the halls" has been so successful that Billy would not now consider a resident dance hall job.

This summer, though, they will be in Rams-gate for eight weeks, playing in the public band-stands and all the spots from which you might expect to hear military music.

The most popular part of his act is generally his old-time music; valetas, gavottes and old-fashioned waltzes bring in the major portion of his enormous fan-mail.

But his hot music pleases the connoisseurs. He can tear off a "Tiger Rag" with the best of them, and his "Saint Louis Blues," featuring

Billy Merrin will do anything within reason for sweet charity. Once he risked his reputation in that cause. He was asked to play at a concert organised by the Nottingham police.

As there was no suitable conveyance to take the whole band to the hall, some innocent soul provided the prison van. Shortly afterwards, astonished passers-by witnessed the spectacle of the Commanders trooping out of a Black Maria.

Still, it will take more than that to tarnish a reputation as illustrious as Billy Merrin's. In the words of his own song, "Troubles are Like Bubbles" to this smiling personality. Here's hoping he'll never have bubbles to burst!

NEXT WEEK
Down T'Uncle Bill's.
Meet Doris Arnold and Harry Pepper.
Gossip : News : Pictures.



Billy and his Commanders on the stand at Rams-gate where they have just opened their season.

"SLOT-MACHINE" RECORDS

Profitable Sideline for the Gramophone People

By LEONARD G. FEATHER

THE ERA

BROADCASTING NEW YORK. has not killed the sales of gramophone records down to a small and sober level, but, having found their limited field left to them, are fighting a stern battle in the average sale of a popular type of record in the U.S. to-day amounts to, roughly, the same as the sales in Great Britain; which, as they have two and a half times our population, is not very promising. But the strange part is that a new market is creeping in and already established itself as one of definite importance to the producers of discs.

This may be described, roughly, as the "slot-machine market"; it represents the countless thousands of purchasers who do not turn the discs to private use, but insert them in machines such as you may have seen on Brighton Pier. A selection of some twenty records is made available, the slot, music is provided in small restaurants, beer-houses, amusement parks, and public places of (almost) every description.

These machines, then, constitute an important sales factor, and involve the production of many records of a certain type. The sort of thing generally preferred, and now being turned out in large quantities by the American companies, consists of jazz played by white or coloured bands, and more or less improvised, particularly the big ones to which names like Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and others, who have been accustomed to concerting on radio, but the trumpet player who is covering more ground than Louis Armstrong ever did, and his fame ever did, are particularly prominent.

Both these artists are with a number of other big names, who have been marketing a large number of records of this type with success, in addition to their own. The latter price is charged by Decca, who, on the formation of their American company, a year or so ago, ignited the whole industry by offering the product of the Mills Brothers, Bing Crosby, Guy Lombardo and Ted Lewis at this price. They are now up against the big combine represented by Brunswick, Columbia, Vocalion, Melotone, Perfect and others.

These three units are the only ones of any significance in the business, and the rivalry among them is particularly healthy. America generally can boast at least five recording studios over England, but a glimpse of some of our Transatlantic engineer with commensurate equipment would fill us with admiration. The record stamping machines were content to let things slide, and the slapdash fashion in which the discs were produced naturally resulted in a great deal of inefficiency.

Ray Noble, at first, had infinite trouble in securing the tone and arrangements required for reproducing the delicate subtleties of his thing short of turning the studio upside down, he has now, he told me, got a little nearer the required result, but is still far from satisfied.

As for the effect of this American revival on the English market, it is clear that it will help to provide us with no end of first-class material which should be sure of a good sale among the British public. No, as long as radio in this country remains Government-controlled, let us not kill our gramophonic golden eggs before they are laid.

Some coloured instrumentalists found that the spasmodic excitement that the plant in-

SUNDAY GRAPHIC

25.8.35.

MENACE OF A NEW DRUG

A basement room, filled mostly with coloured people, in a little alley in the heart of London's West End. . . .

A strange aroma hangs over the little tables and smoke curls sinuously towards the ceiling. At each table are four or five people. One holds a cigarette, slightly smaller than the usual size. . . .

We takes a couple of quick puffs and hands it to the man or woman next to him. The cigarette travels quickly round the table until it is smoked. A drowsiness followed by a strange exaltation seizes the company. . . .

This is a reefer club. It marks the beginning in London of a strange vice which has gripped certain sections of New York's population. Reefer is a drug.

Some coloured instrumentalists found that the spasmodic excitement that the plant in-

duced brought more passion and violent facility to their playing.

As the white musicians' link with Harlem became stronger through the bond of jazz they came to know the dangerous lure of the drug's curving fumes.

The use of the drug is illegal, but a widespread organization sends supplies to addicts secretly.

If they barter well, people can obtain a cigarette for ninepence or a shilling.

In America the drug is beginning to become fashionable in society.

"The drug is identical with Indian hemp or hashish," said a medical authority to the Sunday Graphic yesterday. "It gives rise to hallucination and all sense of time and space is lost. Small things become big and big things small."

"To take the drug is highly dangerous and harmful."

Not Second Fiddle

People in this country have come to believe that America is far ahead of us in everything concerned with dance music. A talk with a friend who has just come back from New York has modified my own inferiority complex in this matter.

I knew that New York's "ace" band-leader of the moment was an Englishman—Ray Noble, the 31-year-old son of a London nerve specialist, who plays at the fashionable Rainbow Room.

And Noble, I now find, has discovered that there are directions in which we can teach the Americans something about "putting over" popular music.

No More Records?

Noble's reputation was made in England by his gramophone records. Wireless listeners hardly ever heard him; he never had a stage band or night-club orchestra.

Yet he told my friend, "I am considering the possibility of giving up recording altogether and concentrating on radio."

The reason is that the technical standard of recording in America is far below the British level.

Old Church as Studio

"Over here," said Noble, "radio means so much more than the gramophone that it has not been worth while for the recording companies to keep pace with the very advanced developments in Britain."

"The other day we even tried recording in a disused church in New Jersey because we heard the acoustics were better than in the studio."

