

BARRITEAU, HALL, AND JACKSON FOR FRANCE

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COINCIDENT with the news of the great offensives taking place on Continental soil comes news inside our own profession of a real spate of dance band entertainment being prepared for the future enjoyment of Allied Forces over on the other side.

It has already been announced that Eric Winstone, with his full broadcasting/recording combination, is all set to go over shortly. Now follows the exciting information that clarinet-ace Carl Barriteau with his Band; Henry Hall and his Orchestra; and, later on, ex-May Fair Hotel trumpet-maestro Jack Jackson, are due to make the trip.

Many of the personnel to be taken across by Eric Winstone have already been announced. A new member who has just "signed on" however, is tenor sax-arranger Harry Gold.

It will be remembered that, during his days in Gerald's Band, Harry Gold was prevented, for reasons that have never been made clear, from accompanying Gerry on his Middle East travels. Determined, nevertheless, to make an E.N.S.A. trip to the war-zones, Harry has hastened to seize this new opportunity to get across with the Winstone group.

At the time of writing, Eric is still urgently needing a first-class trumpet player to complete his entourage.

Carl Barriteau will be taking his full band, as it stands at present, with the exception of "Ziggy" Goddings (tpt.). Bert Barron (tpt.) and Edwin Mordue (tenor sax).

Goddings was terminating his contract with the band before the Continental trip started, in any case; Bert Barron and Edwin Mordue are under age, and have thus had a very unlucky break.

Remaining personnel, with Carl himself leading and playing clarinet, is Ernie Loton (1st trumpet); Eddie Jepson (trombone); Jack Forbes, Jimmy Paul (saxes); Ken Overton (piano); Reg. Beavis (bass); and Jimmy Benson (drums). Well-known singer Helen McKay is making the trip with the band.

A new member has just joined up in the person of Jimmy McCormack (tenor sax).

For the trip, Carl still requires immediately two trumpets; an additional trombone; a tenor sax; one guitar player; and one male vocalist.

Those who would like the chance to fill these positions apply to Carl Barriteau, c/o Jock Jacobsen, J.P. Productions, Ltd., 7 Park Lane, London, W. (Grosvenor 2074).

Henry Hall will, of course, be taking his full Orchestra, which is so extremely popular on the stage, together with vocalists Eva Beynon and Maureen Farrell.

RADIO RHYTHM CLUB: WHAT YOU WILL HEAR

ON Friday, March 9, the B.B.C.'s Radio Rhythm Club programme was resumed over the General Forces wavelength at 5 p.m. The second airing took place last Friday at the same time, but from next week onwards the programme will be heard at 6 p.m., because of the introduction of Double Summer Time in Britain. This will undoubtedly enable a great many more fans to listen-in than has been the case during the first two shows.

As this paper announced last month, Charles Chilton was expected to take charge of the new R.R.C. series. But Charles's R.A.F. duties have made it impossible for him to do so at present, and the programme will continue in the hands of B.B.C. producer Sheila Fryer. Denis Preston, well-known writer and jazz critic, is helping to compile programmes, and advising generally.

FORTNIGHTLY DETAILS

To open the new series a brief outline of the first six recitals planned was given. Then, last Friday, R.R.C. presented part one of its "Foundations of Jazz." The next programme, on April 6, will be devoted to the music of the Dixieland Jazz Band, and an interesting feature of this show should be the reminiscences of Billy Jones, who played piano with the band while it was in this country twenty-five years ago.

The next four programmes planned are as follows: "Foundations of Jazz"—No. 2—"Blues," which takes listeners from the early primitive folksongs to the modern blues scored for big bands.

That will be followed by a special "live" band show designed to spotlight Duke Ellington as composer.

After that comes number three in the Foundations series, this time devoted to work songs and "race" blues, and the sixth recital is to be built around the records of Bob Crosby's late band.

These programmes are scheduled at fortnightly intervals, and they will alternate with Spike Hughes' "Swing Club," which will also be broadcast at 6 p.m. D.S.T.

BERT FELDMAN PASSES

G.O.M. of British Popular Music

WE DEEPLY REGRET TO RECORD THE DEATH, IN BLACKPOOL LAST SUNDAY (25th), OF BERT FELDMAN, FOUNDER OF THE FAMOUS FIRM OF B. FELDMAN AND CO., AND THE G.O.M. OF BRITISH POPULAR MUSIC. HE WAS 70 YEARS OF AGE, AND HAD BEEN ILL FOR A WEEK.

THE FUNERAL TAKES PLACE AT WILLESDEN CEMETERY TO-DAY (WEDNESDAY, 28th).

Stanley Nelson writes this appreciation of him:

So never again will I hear that slow Yorkshire drawl telling me, with fascinating asides, absorbing stories of how he published some of the world's greatest popular songs!

In the passing of Bert Feldman in Blackpool last Sunday at the age of 70 I feel that I have lost more than a mere business acquaintance—I have lost a friend.

A personal friend. For Bert Feldman was the sort of man to whom you could talk as an equal, no matter how humble your own position.

And he was more than a mere music publisher, too. He might be called, with some justice, the "Father of England's Tin Pan Alley."

When he first came to London from Hull, where his father had a music shop in Savile Street, so modest were the beginnings of the great Feldman business that his first "premises" were the landing of a friend's office!

But it wasn't very long before London's music industry became very much aware of this shrewd Yorkshireman with the vivid red moustache.

He believed in ragtime when everybody else was dubious. He published the first songs of Irving Berlin over here. People didn't understand songs like "Everybody's Doin' It" but Bert Feldman did.

And it wasn't very long before they saw that he was right. He began to be a power. Then came the last war and with it the publication of what is perhaps the greatest popular song of all time—"Tipperary."

This was written by a Black Country team of Vaudeville artists, Jack Judge and Harry Williams.

"TIPPERARY"

They sold it outright to the Feldman Company. They little realised what a hit they had. Bert Feldman believed it, though. But he still had to fight to get it sung. He once told me how he had to threaten Florrie Forde that he would never speak to her again if she didn't sing it.

Then she very reluctantly put in a chorus as an encore one night, and although she didn't like the number herself at first, the public reaction soon became such that she simply had to make it part of her act. What happened after that is history.

Although Bert Feldman was not under any liability to do so, he arranged for an annuity to be paid to both Jack Judge and Harry Williams for the period of their own and their dependents' lives. That is the sort of man Bert Feldman was, and it was a gesture which was repeated many, many times.

It is a commonplace in Charing Cross Road that once you get a job at Feldman's you are there for life. Felix Slavin, Dave Comer, Norton Greenop, Percy Hiron, Johnny Firman—the firm wouldn't be the same without them. They've all been there so long that they are practically the Feldman firm.

I said "practically" for the

Guy'nor was the King Pin of it all. He simply knew how to pick good assistants.

Perhaps Guy's greatest asset was his appreciation of anything new. Despite the air of tremendous respectability of those fine premises in Shaftesbury Avenue, Bert was one of the most alive men in the game. He was up to every move in it.

Ragtime, jazz, swing—you'll find it all in the Feldman catalogue. What would the swingsters do without it? I need only mention "Dinah" for a start from the Feldman list.

Then there's the "straight" music. You will find Sibelius and all the masters published from the Feldman building, too.

Every Friday night before the war Bert used to preside over the Song Parliament to consider new numbers. It is sad to think that he'll never be there again after the war. Nobody could "smell" a song like the Guy'nor will be widely mourned and sadly missed.

NAT ALLEN'S NEW PLANS

WELL-KNOWN radio and variety bandleader Nat Allen has just signed up with Elliott Direction, Ltd., and Bill Elliott will personally manage all Nat's activities in the future.

Plans are being laid for a big programme of variety and one-night stands. In the meanwhile, a large number of Sunday concerts have been booked for Nat and his Orchestra.

These kick off on April 8 with two concerts—an afternoon one at Swindon and an evening performance at Bath. The following Sunday (16th) Nat and his outfit are at Wigan; the Sunday after that (22nd) they visit Southsea; on April 29 they are at Bristol; on May 6 at Cardiff, and on May 13, Newcastle. A fortnight of one-night stands has been booked, to commence on May 14.

Nat Allen has been concentrating mainly on broadcasting since he returned from his last Variety tour a few weeks ago.

Besides Nat Allen, Elliott Direction is now handling Harry Parry (booked with Variety, plus broadcasting, etc., for some time ahead); Phil Green and his Band (similarly booked with Variety work, plus his new broadcasting series); and Edmunds Ros, who is also full up with his work at the London Bagatelle Restaurant and Astor Club, plus broadcasting, etc.

AFTER being for many years on the exploitation side of Messrs. Chappell's, well-known figure of music publishing, Dick Royle has temporarily resigned, owing to ill-health. He hopes, however, to be back in the business again in two months or so. We join with his many friends in wishing him a quick recovery and a speedy return to Tin Pan Alley.

BRADLEY'S 22, Dundas Place, Glasgow	Duke Ellington's classic	YARDLEY'S 69, Snow Hill, Birmingham
DON'T YOU KNOW I CARE		
Famous Standards		
Waltzes		
LIMEHOUSE BLUES	LOVE HERE IS MY HEART	
WHEN YOU WORE A TULIP	DREAMING	
TRES MOUTARDE	SKATERS	
JUNGLE JITTERS	REQUEST (Pomone)	
WALTZING MATILDA	SPEAK TO ME OF LOVE	
SIESTA	TIME TO SAY GOODNIGHT	
TRANSATLANTIC LULLABY	INTIMATE (Dolores)	
BRON'S 13-19, Oxford St., London, W.1 Ger. 3993	ASCHERBERG'S 16, Mortimer St., London, W.1 Museum 3562	HARTLEY'S 79, Vicar Lane, Leeds

DANCE BANDS ON THE STAGE

Paul Raye's Bentall's Double

PAUL RAYE and his Band, from Oddenino's Restaurant, Piccadilly, London, have embarked on a new afternoon venture this week, starting on Monday, March 25, on a fortnight's engagement at Bentall's Restaurant, Kingston-on-Thames. Paul is fronting a nine-piece outfit there, and the programme being played is of a very varied nature, including both dance music, selections, popular classical stuff, etc.

Conducting and playing trumpet, Paul has with him at Kingston Harry White (piano); Jimmy Barraclough (bass); Maurice Zafer (drums); Benny Farrell (guitar and vocalist); Les Howe (alto sax and violin); Sten Falcke (alto sax, clarinet and flute); and Sonny Lee (tenor sax, clarinet and violin).

Carrying the vocal side is a new soprano from the South Coast, Joyce Reave.

There have been one or two changes lately in Paul Raye's Oddenino's outfit. Full line-up there now is Paul himself (tpt.); Harry White (pno.); Sten Falcke (saxes); Ronnie Fisher (guitar and vocalist); and Tony Williams (drums).

Kimbrell's Bumper Wolverhampton Dance

WELL-KNOWN Midlands dance promoter Arthur Kimbrell is staging a big attraction to-night (Wednesday) at the Civic Hall, Wolverhampton.

On behalf of the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children, he presents a special "Guest Night Ball," with music provided by Stan Fielding and his Orchestra, winners of many MELODY MAKER contests.

During the evening the first heats of the "Central Britain Open Crooning Contest" are to be held. These heats concern the Wolverhampton area, later contests being staged in the week commencing April 30, when Oscar Rabin and his Band carry out a number of one-night engagements in the Midlands. Entrants are competing for the Oscar Rabin Silver Cup and medals.

Judging will be in the hands of various famous personalities who will appear as guests during the evening. Tickets are obtainable at the door (4s. 6d., Forces 3s.), and visitors will be assured of an enjoyable evening while at the same time giving their support to a very worthy cause.

18.—Wolverton. For Easter Monday Dance, services secured of fine Dixieland outfit, Harry Gold's Pieces of Eight, together with England's No. 1 jazz singer, Benny Lee. Included in the "Eight" are clarinetist Harry Conn, boogie-woogie pianist Matt Hett, and a terrific new guitarist, Alan Mindel, under leadership of Harry Gold.

NEED PRODUCTION

Jack Marshall reviews the Band Shows

A GLIMPSE at the various dance-band shows running in Variety around London in the past fortnight brings home to the critic an outstanding fact—if the theatrical world possessed just one good producer with a real knowledge of dance-band shows, then he would indeed be worth his weight in gold.

These remarks are prompted after seeing the following bands on the stage: Leslie ("Jiver") Hutchinson and his All-Star Band; Roy Marsh-Jack Filmer and their outfit in the "Winnetka Whirligig" show; Nat Gonella's recent stage offering; and Ivy Benson and her Girls' Band.

Every one of these bands contributed something of real interest to the critic and fan, and each of them had evolved a stage presentation in which one could scarcely fail to find plenty of merit.

In every case, however—with the sole exception of Ivy Benson's show—there was such a marked lack of production sense that some part of the show always misfired.

Through muddled timing, obvious lack of rehearsal and general fiasco, or one thing and another, the presentations registered only to a fraction of the degree which, with the musicianship and material available, they could have done.

The most interesting outfit from the fans' point of view was undoubtedly Leslie ("Jiver") Hutchinson and his All-Star Band.

LESLIE HUTCHINSON

As seen at the Grand Theatre, Clapham Junction, last week, Leslie's show, in spite of the short time which he had to produce it, was of such a type that fans were able to get a good idea of the band's first-class qualities, while there was also a certain amount of commercial stuff to help the presentation to "get over" with the less sophisticated public. The band was well dressed and nicely set out on the stage.

Leslie has to offer a superlatively good band; some of the greatest individual soloists playing in any dance combination to-day; plus the added attributes of two terrific showmen in Dave Wilkins and Yorke de Sousa; plus his own trumpets and his unusual, whimsical, but always attractive manner of announcing the programme.

Almost anyone should be able to make something out of all this; but there is no gainsaying the fact that far, far more could have been done with the material available than was done at Clapham.

The band, whilst undeniably playing well, fell between the two stools of being neither ultra-modernistic enough to please the fans nor sufficiently commercial to intrigue the general public—although, to be sure, Dave Wilkins sang the inevitable "Ants in My Pants," and did his comedy stuff in great style; while Dick Boothroyd fell off the rostrum altogether in his efforts to provide comic diversion of the most slapstick kind.

Yorke de Sousa made more serious obeisances to the gods of commercialism by playing some of the most delightful and effortless piano selections it has ever been our good fortune to hear.

However, with all this the show didn't quite "come off." The last number, a very disjointed arrangement of "Honey-suckle Rose," in which Dave Wilkins and "Jiver" himself seemed to be vying with each other to see who could play the most top notes, was meaningless to the fan and thoroughly bad from the point of view of the uninitiated public.

Solo vocalism for the week was by a guest star in the person of well-known West End crooner Julie Dawn, whilst for one number the band drew from its ranks its own effective vocal quartette.

In some ways a bit disappointing. However, the forthcoming "Tribute to Swing" Stoll concert on April 8 will, we feel sure, demonstrate to all the fans that this is, after all, one of the very finest bands we possess for playing a programme of out-and-out swing.

NAT GONELLA

It is a long time since the husky tones of Maestro Nat Gonella singing "Georgia on My Mind" have been heard in London. During his show last week at Chiswick Empire, Nat proved to the many fans who assembled to hear him that during his spell in the Army he must have been playing plenty trumpet.

His style, attack, execution, and everything else which Gonella fans remember from the old days are as strongly in evidence as ever. Nat's very considerable powers of showmanship are also well to the fore these days, and his renowned vocalists are put over with as much artistry as of old.

It was unfortunate that, in making arrangements for his stage show, Nat had no opportunity to get together even a small band.

As it was, his efforts were supported just by Al Delaware (piano) and Carlo Krahmer (drums). Although both these artists did exceptionally well (Al's swing piano transcription of "In a Persian Market" was particularly attractive), Nat is essentially the type of performer who is at his best with a small swing combo behind him.

Anyway, we join his fans in wishing him a speedy and more permanent return to Variety soon.

MARSH . . . BENSON

The Eric Winstone-sponsored presentation "Winnetka Whirligig," which centres round a small combo with Jack Filmer (bass and leader), Roy Marsh (vibes), Jimmy Skidmore (tenor), Syd Raymond (drums), and Charles Burton (piano), and which at times also features the new and much-discussed vocal quintette, the "Modernaires," was seen the week before last at the Bedford Theatre, Camden Town (London).

(Please turn to page 3)

Sam Ramsden's Loss

WE announce with deepest regret the death of Mrs. Florrie Ramsden, wife of Sam Ramsden, famous in danceland as the proprietor of the Plaza Ballroom at Derby.

Mrs. Ramsden was a professional dancer, and once owned a school of dancing in her home town, Bolton. After marrying Sam Ramsden in Bolton, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsden were associated with dancing ventures in the Midlands for many years, running their affairs from Derby. They settled at Derby permanently about 15 years ago.

The funeral took place last Monday (26th) at Nottingham Road Cemetery, and the Plaza was closed for the day.

We join with their innumerable friends in the business in offering to Sam Ramsden, and to his sons and daughter, our very deepest condolences.

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing April 2)

Carl BARRITEAU and Band.
Palais de Danse, Hammersmith.
Ivy BENSON and her Girls Band.
New Theatre, Cardiff.
Johnnie CLAES and Clacipeons.
King's Theatre, Gloucester.
Gloria GAYE and Band.
Pavilion, Liverpool.
Phil GREEN and his Dixieland Band.
Empire, Wood Green.
Adelaide HALL.
Empire, Glasgow.
Henry HALL and Band.
Hippodrome, Golden Green.
Billy COTTON and Band.
Hippodrome, Coventry.
Joe LOSS and Band.
Empire, Newcastle.
Vera LYNN.
Hippodrome, Birmingham.
Felix MENDELSSOHN and his
Hawaiian Serenaders.
Green's Playhouse, Glasgow.
Ronnie MUNRO and Orchestra.
Empire, Chiswick.
Harry PARRY and his Radio Dance
Orchestra.
Palace, Chelsea.
Harry ROY and Band.
Empire, Edinburgh.
George SCOTT-WOOD and Band.
Palace, Newcastle.
Lew STONE and Band.
Court Royal Hotel, Southampton.
Billy TERNEN and Band.
Empire of the Week, B.C.
TROISE and his Mandolins.
Hippodrome, Lewisham.

SCOTTISH NOTES

MORE Scottish bands are scheduled for air dates shortly. Louis Freeman and his Band will be on the air from Green's Playhouse Ballroom on April 14 from 11.15 till 11.40 p.m., while Bertini will broadcast from the Palais, Edinburgh, on Saturday of this week, March 31.

A recent new recruit to the Bertini outfit is Duncan Bell (trumpet).

Singing with Jeanie McMeighan's outfit, which is playing E.N.S.A. dates around Glasgow, is Bill Allison, who first came to the fore in the Queen Mary Club, and who has since then appeared with Lew Stone and others during Green's dates.

Bill is proof that there is quite a bit of talent going about in the vocal line, and he may be on the air shortly.

Work on the decoration of Glasgow's new musicians' club proceeds, the boys having acquired quite a few nice bits of furniture. While it would be unwise to give a definite opening date, the venture should be well and truly launched by the last week in April.

To the list of generous Glasgow ballroom proprietors must be added the names of Sam Melver (Barrowland) and John Warren (Albert), the latter giving the boys a most welcome liver, the cheque taking the place of a furniture donation, which isn't always easy to give these days.

At the Galety Theatre, Ayr, last week, George Elrick's Glasgow contingent have now finished up, these being John and James McCormack (piano and trumpet) and Joe Elliott (alto).

U.S. HIT PARADE

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

1. DON'T FENCE ME IN (1-1-1-1-1-3-5).
 2. THERE GOES THAT SONG AGAIN (2-2-2-2-3-4-7-0-9).
 3. ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE (4-8).
 4. I DREAM OF YOU (3-4-4-4-8-7-0-8).
 5. I'M MAKING BELIEVE (5-3-5-3-5-3-4-2-3-6-7-9-0-0-9).
 6. EVELINA (6-0-0-9).
 7. SWEET DREAMS, SWEETHEART (6-0-0-9).
 8. SLEIGHRIDE IN JULY.
 9. MORE AND MORE.
- Figures in parentheses indicate previous placings. 0—Not in the first nine.

PLAYERS on all instruments interested in a resident job with congenial conditions and at good money are asked to contact band-leader Billy Smith at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2, as quickly as possible.

WRIGHT HITS

I'M GONNA LOVE THAT GUY

WHEN WE'RE
ALL TOGETHER AGAIN
THE BASIC LANGUAGE OF LOVE

JUNGLE JIVE

LAWRENCE WRIGHT
MUSIC COMPANY LTD.

WRIGHT HOUSE, DENMARK ST.,
LONDON, W.C.2. TEL. 214115

IT AIN'T WHAT WOODY PLAYS: IT'S THE WAY HE PLAYS IT

EDGAR JACKSON'S Record Reviews

WOODY HERMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA

***Basie's Basement (G. Sargent) (Am. Decca 71502). (Recorded November 8, 1943.)

***Who Dat Up Dere? (W. Kent, B. Russell) (V by Woody Herman) (Am. Decca 71503). (Recorded November 8, 1943.) (Brunswick 03556-5s, 4ld.)

As a tune, "Who Dat Up Dere?" is no more than just a lively swing novelty which, far from giving any answer to the question asked in its title, merely plics fuel on the fire by adding more equally inconsequent queries such as "Who dat down here?"

But don't let that worry you. This is another of those cases where what the piece is doesn't matter very much, because the main feature is what the band does with it.

The side opens with an introduction in which the brass borrowing as unashamedly from Chopin's "Funeral March" as did the introduction to Ellington's famous "Black and Tan Fantasy," growl with a tone that is none the less exciting because, like the rest of the performance, it has been so well recorded.

HERMAN'S VOCAL

This merges into a muted trumpet solo that swings as easily as does the rhythm behind it, and later there is some grand "dirty" tenor behind unison, chanting and hand-clapping by the ensemble, all supported again by a rhythm section that is none the less inspiring because it is so completely relaxed.

But perhaps the best parts of the side are Woody Herman's vocal contributions. Woody has a way of putting it over that is going to make this record a hit with the crowd.

More important, he has a style that is probably not only the best of any white swing vocalist of the moment, but about as good as that of any coloured singer. In fact, in this record Woody sounds more like a coloured man.

"Basie's Basement" is, as regards both composition and performance, a musical carbon of the Basie mode.

A typical modern swing opus drawn from the Basie pattern, it introduces quite early on, and repeats later, a passage by the ensemble, prominent behind which are some Basie-esque piano interjections. But the feature of this spot is the bass player.

Anything Basie's Walter Page has that this one hasn't got wouldn't seem to be worth having.

Other high-spots are the single-string electric guitar solo, a tenor solo as neat and tasteful as anything I've heard lately, and Herman's clarinet.

But the main charm of the side is the at once incisive and relaxed way in which at an easy tempo the band puts the piece over.

Without doubt, these are in the respective ways two of the best records the Herman band has turned out. And that's saying plenty.



PETE JOHNSON

(Piano Solos)

***Basement Boogie (Johnson) (Am. Decca 69157). (Recorded May 8, 1941.)

***Death Ray Boogie (Johnson, Dexter) (Am. Decca 69158). (Recorded May 8, 1941.) (Brunswick 03292-5s, 4ld.)

MAYBE Pete Johnson isn't really quite the equal of Jimmy Yancey or Albert Ammons, but he can certainly claim to be one of the outstanding of the surviving great boogie-woogie pianists when he is at his best.

I add those last half-dozen words because it is questionable whether he is at his best here.

Boogie-woogie was created by coloured piano-players in small halls and at rent parties, where they usually played on their own. It is piano music, and piano music only.

"TEAR-UP"

In these records Johnson is accompanied by bass and drums, and I doubt if any boogie-woogie can do justice to himself or the music except when playing unaccompanied. For one thing, the presence of a bass tends to obscure the left-hand piano work, which is one of the chief ingredients of boogie-woogie and is certainly one of the features of Pete Johnson's playing.

Moreover, I'm by no means sure that Mr. Johnson isn't putting on something of an act in "Death Ray Boogie." "Death Ray" is Harlequin for Killer Diller, and Killer Diller means a tear-up.

You'll realise that "Death Ray Boogie" is a tear-up when you hear the fast tempo at which Johnson plays it—a tempo that is no more suited to genuine boogie-woogie than it is characteristic of the music.

"Basement Boogie"—which doubtless gets its title from the rent parties, which were often held in basements—is better. The tempo is the real boogie tempo.

But for all the ingenuity of Johnson's right hand, with its incisive touch and perfect phrasing, I can't help feeling that the performance lacks the drive it might have had, had it been by, shall we say, Albert Ammons.

TONY WAYNE FILMING

TONY WAYNE and his Band, from the Stage Door Canteen in London, have been working in filmland recently, providing all the background music for a new production being made by Squire Films Productions and provisionally entitled "Soldiers Two." The band has been augmented to thirteen for the occasion.

Film is a musical, and such noted stars as Ronald Frankau, Carlos Ames and Judy Allen are appearing in it. Several shots of the Stage Door Canteen in the full spate of its activities are seen in the production. Much of the music has been written by pianist Al Chinnery.

Tony Wayne has now been at this bustling Forces rendezvous seven months. With himself at the drums, his band nowadays includes Wally Dancy (first alto sax), Bob Allen (second alto), Norman Lawrence (tenor), Jack Wynne (trumpet), Calvert Ives (bass), Al Chinnery (piano), and Madge Welch and Ronnie Myatt (vocalists).

Here is a new picture of Buddy Featherstonhaugh and his R.R.C. Sextet, taken during a recent broadcast. L. to R.: Don Macaffer (tmb.); Alan Metcalfe (g'tr.); Reggie Beard (bass); Stanley Marshall (drums); Malcolm Lockyer (pno.); and Buddy.



DANCE BANDS ON THE STAGE

(Continued from page 2)

Let it be stated right away that much of the show was very enjoyable; but at the same time one had the impression that a really competent producer, if let loose on the production with carte blanche to do as he liked, would probably make some pretty drastic alterations.

As seen on this occasion, the show is far too long; it is loosely strung together, "bitty" and disjointed, and once or twice downright amateurish, as for example, when the most slapstick type of comedy is going on behind someone trying to put over a serious song or solo.

Now to the good points, which greatly outweigh the bad. The Filmer-Marsch Band is capable of playing some pretty lively stuff, with Marsh himself in positively sizzling form at the vibes; Jimmy Skidmore playing some great tenor nowadays; and Jack Filmer as the efficient bassist and compère.

The "Modernaires" consist of three girls and two men vocalists, with girl accompanist. They are attractive-looking, their average age is around sixteen—and how they sing! With a little more experience, this new vocal outfit will be a formidable proposition indeed. Already they have several broadcasts booked, and next week (commencing April 2) they are appearing "solo" in Variety at the London Camberwell Palace.

However, there is still one artiste with whom "Winnetka Whirligig" does big things. For a long time we have been aware of the latent humorous possibilities of drummer Syd Ray-

mond. Now, at last, he has emerged from the chrysalis stage and spread his wings—and the result is some new and really worth-while comedy.

And so, from the rather rough-and-ready production of this Bedford Theatre show to the polish and sophistication of the new Ivy Benson Girls' Band at Golders Green Hippodrome. Ivy's is one show upon which the efforts of a producer do not need to be lavished. Fighting against: lack of time, ill-health in the form of weakness following her recent severe operations, and a hundred-and-one difficulties, she has nevertheless already put together a remarkably good show that is slick, polished, well staged, and a real wow with the public.

Musically one of the biggest interests in her outfit is the efficiency of the six-piece brass section, which throughout the show and particularly during that eternal dance-band cliché, "In the Mood," shows its paces in surprisingly good style. Five-piece saxophone section is less good, mainly because the tone of these instruments still leaves something to be desired. Ivy's own sax solo of "Stardust" goes down well.

Vocally, the show is strong in having the services of the ever-reliable Doris Knight, ably supported in a slightly different style of singing by the youthful Joyce Clark.

Youth, anyway, is the keynote of Ivy's sparkling new show, which, with the material available, will easily be built up into one of the most novel, and colourful band-acts in Variety.

F. & D.'s TERRIFIC HITS!

THERE GOES THAT SONG AGAIN

AND

WE'LL BE WALKING TOGETHER

THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MEAN SO MUCH

AND

NO ONE MAKES LOVE LIKE YOU

SHINE ON HARVEST MOON

AND

SOME OTHER TIME

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CONCERNING the Wings Mannone Discography, compiled by Messrs. Venables and Tonks, which we concluded last week, reader Dave Carey has pointed out two or three small errors.

One concerns the misspelling of Wings name in a bit complicated this, but there it is, I don't think we need go further into the matter.

Two concerns the printing of a B.E. catalogue number three times instead of twice, which should have sorted itself out, we hope.

The third and most serious slip was the omission of English catalogue number, after the titles "Mannone Blues," "Royal Garden Blues." This should have read H.M.V. B-9145. Thanks, Dave. It was our mistake.

ASCH ACTIVITY

Alfred Griffiths, of Wakefield, Yorks, sends us news of the recent Meade Lewis solos for Asch. We have the company's throw-out on this session, but what was news to us was Alfred's reference to Asch as "Squirrel Aschcraft's label."

We had never seen this collector's name associated with the concern, most of whose leaflets appear to have been compiled by Charles Edward Smith. Can someone please verify?

Six sides of Meade's piano have been issued under "Boogie Tidal," album No. 352. The publicity sheet has this to say: "Yancey's Pride is a blues dedicated to 'Lux's' friend, Jim Yancey; 'Glendale Gilde' and 'Denapas Parade' (Pasadena) are definitely from California; and 'Randini's Boogie' and 'Lux's Boogie' complete the album in masterful style." The title piece, incidentally, is the sixth side.

The leaflet continues:

"The records in this album cover Lux's California period in his first recordings since 1940, illustrating the change in mood and tempo from his earlier pieces. They tell us quite a lot about him and the development of boogie-woogie from the cabaret era of prohibition days to present-day café life. Interesting are his handling of the various basses associated with the style—the walking bass, the fast Western or Texas roll. Charles Edward Smith supervised these recordings and wrote the accompanying booklet."

We haven't heard these discs, of course, or the new Blue Notes, BN-39 12 in., "Chicago Flyer," "Blues Whistle," which received favourable review from "Down Beat's" John Lucas. But we have heard most of the early Blue Notes—the four slow sides named "Blues," and "Solitude," "Melancholy" and "Twos and Fews," with Albert Ammons. They combine to prove that Lewis is much more than just a barrel-house performer.

On the four blues sides he develops a simple theme so that it grows into a splendid composition, full of light and shade, graced by beautifully controlled tremolo and unique tonal effects; an austere but intensely moving performance.

The other two solos are similar in vein, equally impressive. "Twos and Fews," on the other hand, spots Meade Lux in the rôle of accompanist. It is a rôle he fills admirably, his varied bass figures supplying rhythmic change to set off Ammons' melodies. "Six Wheel Chaser" and the rest of Lux's "Solo Art" discs each show

COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

us another side of this great pianist's musical make-up.

Perhaps he has carried the art of blues piano-playing farther than any other; it is certain his ideas will continue to develop. So we await with especial interest the opportunity of hearing the new Asch album.

TRIBUTE TO ROD CLESS

Since his untimely death last December, most of the U.S. jazz and swing papers have done "ill justice to the talents of clarinetist Rod Cless. Before then, regrettably, his work was largely ignored, although Bob Thiele (through the medium of his "Jazz" magazine) boosted Cless consistently.

In this country he got a better deal. As a result of his work on the Spanier and Hodess records, Cless earned some of the recognition he deserved.

Critics like John Vyse lauded him in print and by means of record recitals; articles about him appeared in several local magazines.

One, written by American Ralph Gleason while working here, showed how Rod was numbered among the few jazzmen who take the music seriously. To quote:—

"Earl Murphy, Cless, Bill Davison, Pip Vilani and others made up a group of musicians who were completely non-commercial, to the point of not caring where they worked, for how long or for what wages, as long as they could play their own way. . . . One more interesting point about these men is the fact that, as opposed to many jazz musicians, they listened to records. Wetting has always carried the Oliviers around with him, and Hodess, Cless and Murphy used to sit in (Gene) Williams' apartment in the Intermissions, listening to Jelly Roll's 'Dr. Jazz' and 'Black Bottom Stomp,' Louis's 'Willie The Weeper' and 'Georgia Bo Bo,' Bechet's 'Blues In Third' and the Elmes solos, by the hour."

"They knew what jazz was; aside from the music they themselves played, they were aware of what was good and bad in other musicians, and they all had excellent taste." This critical faculty is not often found among jazzmen. When it is, it has frequently been blunted by years of exposure to managerial advice or public indifference. Rod, though, was unusual for a musician. There is plenty more evidence of this. Said George Avakian, writing about Art Hodess' Childs' Quintet:—

"It sounded more like the Hot Five—without Armstrong. . . . As a concession to the regular and more conservative patrons, the boys would sometimes break into 'Say Si Si' or 'Down Argentine Way,' featuring Brunies and Cless on maracas and wood blocks."

Rod's face as he tapped two sticks together expressed completely the sadness of the ages, and, specifically, Rod's opinion of 'Frenesi' and all its relatives."

In case you wonder why he stuck the job, it must be explained that the band enjoyed the rest of the time

blowing out "Royal Garden Blues," "Shimmy Like My Sister Kate," "Apex Blues," "That's A Plenty," "Jazz Band Ball" and the like. Of all his jobs, Cless preferred one with Wild Bill's band, in which were James P. Johnson, Brunies, and Danny Alvln.

Of that he said: "It seemed that before we were on the stand we were off it again, and the next thing you knew it was time to go home. We hated to leave the place!"

Cless took lessons from Johnny Dodds—learned a lot from his wonderful playing. It seems he never tired of listening to Louie's records or Dodds' clarinet, and he rated the latter first rank, along with Omer Simeon and Jimmy Noone. About his own playing he was unassuming, but many of Chicago's top jazzmen were in the habit of saying: "If you want a good clarinet for a jazz band, Cless is your man."

This same Ralph Gleason, quoted above, had "Down Beat's" editorial to himself for issue January 1. He opened:—

"The second week in December the New York papers carried the obituary of the best white clarinetist since Larry Shields. . . . Rod never got a mention when he was alive, and the mention might have helped his records sell or have drawn more customers to the place he was playing."

Later he reminisces:— "When Muggsy brought that never-to-be-forgotten band of his to Nick's in 1938, Rod sat right there on the stand, solemn and self-possessed (they called him 'Professor' because he had had to take on a lot of pupils in Chicago to make ends meet), and played clarinet in a band; the way a clarinet is supposed to be played, with tone and imagination and as a part of a band."

"What really killed Rod Cless was New York and people who didn't know how a clarinet should sound in a band. People who were looking for another clown or another technician. Rod played his heart out in New York. And nobody listened."

This paper has already carried a short biography of Cless. In the Corner we have praised his work and his available records. Now that there is so much interest in his playing, we decided to print a full listing of Rod's record output. Ralph Venables compiled such a listing weeks ago, as it happened, and we give it below.

In fairness to Ralph, we must explain that this disco. has been in the office a long time. Since it was written, the U.S. "Jazz Record" has published one by Rita Temple. There are differences between the two, and Ralph claims that anything which doesn't appear in his disco (except for a couple of missing matrix numbers) can safely be forgotten as a Cless item.

Of the Hodess Chicagoans on Blue Note, Alf Griffiths sends some comments by Alfred Lion (of B.N. records):—

"These are some of the greatest records made in this vein, and Rod Cless finally got the chance to show how really great he was. But he didn't live long enough to enjoy the popularity these records would have brought him."

- COMPLETE DISCOGRAPHY OF ROD CLESS. . . . by R.G.V.V. Frank Teschemacher's Chicagoans with Tesch, Cless, Mezz, Sullivan, Gordon and Krupa, April, 1928:—"Singin' The Blues" (1905), unissued. "Jazz Mc Blues" (1906), U.F.C.A. 61. Muggsy Spanier's Ractime Band with Muggsy, Brunis, Cless, McKinstry, Zack, Casey, Pattison and Greenberg, July, 1930:—"Big Butter And Egg Man" (040260). Bd. B-10417, H.M.V. B-8033. "Soms Dav, Sweetheart" (040261), Bd. B-10384, H.M.V. B-8008. "Eccentric" (040262), Bd. B-10417, H.M.V. B-0047. "That Da-Da Strain" (040263), Bd. B-10384, H.M.V. B-8008. Muggsy, Brunis, Cless, Billings, Bushkin, Casey and Carter, Nov., 1939:—"At The Jazz Band Ball" (043375), Bd. B-10518, H.M.V. B-0042. "Sister Kate" (043376), Bd. B-10508, H.M.V. B-0047. "Dinner Mouth Blues" (043377),

- Bd. B-10506, H.M.V. B-9033. "Liver" State "Blues" (043378), Bd. B-10518, H.M.V. B-0042. Same personnel, with Calazza replacing Billings, Nov. 1939:—"Riverboat Shuffle" (043894), Bd. B-10532, H.M.V. B-9145. "Relaxin' At The Touro" (043895), Bd. B-10532, H.M.V. B-9145. "At Sundown" (043896), Bd. B-10719, H.M.V. B-9092. "Bluin' The Blues" (043897), Bd. B-10719, H.M.V. B-9092. Same personnel, with Sidell replacing Carter, Dec., 1939:—"Lonesome Road" (045745), Bd. B-10766, H.M.V. B-9103. "Dinah" (045746), Bd. B-10682, H.M.V. B-9067. "Black And Blue" (045747), Bd. B-10682, H.M.V. B-9067. "Mandy" (045748), Bd. B-10766, H.M.V. B-9103. Art Hodess' Blue Three with Cless, Hodess and Butts: 1940:—"I've Found A New Baby" (1600), Sl. 101. "Four Or Five Times" (1601), Sl. 101. "Tin Roof Blues" (1602), Sl. 102, Jazz 101. "Diga Diga Doo" (1603), Sl. 102, Jazz 101. Chicago Rhythm Kings with Marty Marsala, Cless, Hodess, Goss and Murphy: 1940:—"Song Of The Wanderer" (1604), Sl. 104. "There'll Be Some Changes Made" (1605), Sl. 104. "Sugar" (1606), Sl. 105. "Randolph Street Rag" (1607), Sl. 105. Art Hodess' Columbia Quintet with duVal, Brunis, Cless, Hodess and Grauso, December, 1940:—"103rd Street Boogie" (1200), J.R. 1001. "Royal Garden Blues" (1201), J.R. 1001. "At The Jazz Band Ball" (1204), J.R. 1003. "Farewell Blues" (1205), J.R. 1003. Art Hodess and his Orchestra with deParis, Gowans, Cless, Hodess, Condon, Murphy and Singleton, March, 1942:—"Georgia Cake Walk" (70510), De 18437, BrE. 03438. "Liberty Inn Drag" (70520), De. 18437, BrE. 03438. "Indiana" (70521), De. 18438, BrE. 03452. "Get Happy" (70522), De. 18438, BrE. 03452. Yank Lawson and his Band with Lawson, Mole, Cless, Johnson, Haggart and Wetting, Nov., 1943:—"Squeeze Me," Sl. 28-103. "The Sheik," Sl. 28-103. "Too Many Times," Sl. (to be released). "When I Grow Too Old To Dream," Sl. (to be released). Art Hodess' Chicagoans with Kaminsky, Coniff, Cless, Hodess, Bland, Haggart and Alvln, March, 1944:—"Maple Leaf Rag," B.N. 505. "Yellow Dog Blues," B.N. 505. "She's Cryin' For Me," B.N. 506. "Slow 'Em Down Blues," B.N. 506. Same personnel, with Jacobs replacing Haggart, March, 1944:—"Doctor Jazz," B.N. 507. "Shoe Shiner's Drag," B.N. 507. "There'll Be Some Changes Made," B.N. 508. "Clark And Randolph," B.N. 508. The Lion and his Cubs with Kaminsky, Orchard, Cless, Smith, Lessberg and McGrath, August, 1944:—"Let's Mop It," B. and W. 6. "How Could You Put Me Down," B. and W. 6. "Bugle Call Rag," B. and W. (to be released). "Muskrat Ramble," B. and W. (to be released). The Black and White Quartet with Bose, Cless, Johnson and Foster, Sept., 1944:—"Have You Ever Felt That Way?" B. and W. (to be released). "Make Me A Pallet On The Floor," B. and W. 8. "Froggy Moore," B. and W. (to be released). "I Know That You Know," B. and W. (to be released). Max Kaminsky and his Band with Kaminsky, Cless, Orchard, Lessberg, McGrath, Johnson: 1944:—"Love Nest," Com. (to be released). "Eccentric," Com. (to be released). "Everybody Loves My Baby," Com. (to be released). "Guess Who's In Town," Com. (to be released). Note.—Rod Cless is said to have recorded with the Seattle Harmony Kings on Victor, but, as in the case of Wild Bill Davison and Jess Stacy (who also played with this band), no records were made during this period.

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Saying Something Nice About the B.B.C.!

YOU may remember that a few weeks ago I ended up this column by asking: "And now will someone please try to write something in favour of the B.B.C. . . . it would make such a change."

I am glad to say that quite a number of readers took advantage of my invitation.

They paid tribute to the "dispassionateness" and "reliability" of the B.B.C.'s "excellent News service," to the admirable showing it has made in all spheres of serious music, to some fine contributions by the Drama department, and to such lighter programmes as "Tuesday Night Serenade," the "always entertaining if not always so erudite Brains Trust," and, of course, the "unbeatable I.T.M.A."

With all of which I heartily agree. I have more than once made my own humble salutations to the B.B.C. for these or like programmes.

DAMNING INDICTMENT

But the "M.M." is a modern "popular" music paper, therefore this is a modern "popular" music column, and when I invited bouquets for the B.B.C. as a welcome change from the continual brickbats, I was naturally hoping for bouquets for its efforts in the field of "dance" music in all its various forms.

And there was not a single one! Even those who are best disposed towards the B.B.C. apparently could find nothing complimentary to say about any one of its dance, swing or jazz programmes. They had to go right outside these spheres before they could discover anything worthy of their bouquets.

I hope the B.B.C. will take serious note of this.

It certainly does not mean that every "dance" music programme the B.B.C. puts on is bad all through. Such bands as Harry Hayes's, Frankie Weir's, Buddy Featherstonhaugh's and the all too seldom heard R.A.F., "Squadrons" and "Sky-rockets," not to mention some of the better chosen gramophone record recitals, would probably evoke little but praise if the comparing were even half as good as the music.

But it is the most damning indictment I can imagine of the B.B.C.'s general handling of dance music as a whole.

It shows not only that they have no idea how to present a good band or record programme when they do get hold of one, but also that for the few good bands which get occasional airings far too many weak ones are given far too many broadcasts.

by "DETECTOR"

What we want is a dance music department that knows its job and is not hampered by the dictates of high-ups who have no more knowledge of the subject than they have any sympathy with it.

And not until we get one can the B.B.C. hope to be freed from the mire of abuse which "M.M." readers are not alone in rightly hurling at it.

AFTER its long absence I listened to the B.B.C. Radio Rhythm Club with considerable interest last Friday, and to its reopening two weeks previously.

I was unable to comment on the new programme then, as this feature didn't appear in the issue of March 17, but there are a few observations which I still want to make.

On the whole it was all that an introductory programme should be. That is to say, it gave listeners a clear idea of what they were to expect for the next six shows, announcing titles and illustrating the subjects by means of records presumably chosen from those shows.

As a list of the programmes appears elsewhere in the paper [on the front page.—Ed.] I need only say that they seem to be well chosen and varied.

What marred the opening half-hour for me was the unsatisfactory reading of the script by, I believe, Peter Madden. How many times I've taken the B.B.C. to task for allowing people unfamiliar with the subject to tackle jazz scripts I can't now say. It must run into dozens, though.

And I find it necessary to repeat that criticism. No matter how good a speaker may happen to be in other respects, he is not suited to this very specialised programme if he is not at home with the often extraordinary names of places and people connected with jazz and swing—and with the proper pronunciation of them.

It simply isn't good enough to have the announcer stumble over such names as "Willy the Lion Smith" or to say (as Peter Madden said) "that much-neglected of big bands—McKinley's Cotton Pickers." No doubt McKinley is not known to many outside jazz followers, and no doubt Ray McKinley's name is familiar to every radio listener.

The mistake is easy to understand, but it is one of those errors no jazz man would ever make. Even in his sleep the expert would never confuse the two.

There are lots more small points like that which combine to rob the listener of the full pleasure he expects to gain from R.R.C. It is not a show which needs the false air of gaiety the B.B.C. so loves to inject into most of its programmes.

We don't ask for its announcer to be chummy; just that he will read his script carefully and naturally, giving evidence thereby that he knows what he is talking about, and that names like "Jelly Roll Morton" or "Pine Top Smith" are familiar to him, no matter how odd they may seem to the uninitiated.

Last Friday we heard Part I of the Foundations of Jazz—a series which aims at presenting jazz origins to the public, perhaps for the first time in B.B.C. history.

A number of people have collaborated on the scripts, this first show being written by Charles Willford and called "Piano Ragtime." Others seem to be the work of Charles Chilton and Denis Preston.

If the rest of the series maintains the standard set by "Piano Ragtime," this series really looks fair to achieve something in the way of educating listeners on that obscure subject—jazz derivations.

No trouble has been spared by the author to make his short exposition interesting and authoritative. A recording of a pianola roll (dating back to 1915 or earlier) was played, and where no records could give a true impression of the rags of the 1890's, British pianist Pat Dodd, of the R.A.P. "Skvrocks," illustrated them from the studio.

His reproduction of the style of such rag hits as "Maple Leaf," "Whipped Cream," and Arthur Marshall's "Ham And" was faithful to the point of sounding "right corny," as one musician put it to me.

Apart from that, the programme gave interesting details of ragtime composers and told the story of the style's decline and amalgamation with jazz piano style. Records by the Lu Watters Band were used, one by Jelly Morton, one by James P. Johnson, and a fine solo of Fats Waller's entitled "Carolina Shout."

Both the scriptwriter and producer are to be complimented for their part in this programme. The introduction of Pat Dodd's "live" piano was probably the highspot of the show. For once a rhythm-club producer has shown he (or she, in this case!) knows how to handle live and recorded material so it can be blended to give really satisfactory results.

A MOST auspicious debut to broadcasting and also to the public—for this was their first appearance anywhere—was the performance of "The Peanut Vendors" in "Music Hall" last Saturday.

These four-boys-and-a-girl sing songs in harmony, accompanying themselves on piano and guitar, and the best compliment I can pay them is to say that they sounded absolutely American. Their voices blend exceptionally well, and the general effect is that of deepness and richness.

They will have to watch their choice of numbers—"Just A Little Fond Affection," for instance, was not their type of song; and they must be careful not to fall into the easy habit of getting too much like the Ink Spots.

But, unquestionably, this quintet has got something, and is clearly destined to go places. I shall watch its career with a great deal of interest, and while wishing it the best of luck in the future, congratulate all concerned on a great start.

LETTERS about the anti-live campaign as disclosed by the "Star," which has recently been the subject of this column, continue to constitute the bulk of my postbag.

Having dealt full with the projectors it seems only fair that I should give some space to the opposition.

Their outlook is summed up very nicely by Mr. Jack Walford, of Goole (Yorks), who writes: "No one appreciates a good swing outfit more than myself."

"But who is it that is ruining swing and jazz in the eyes of the layman and even the more sensible fan? I say definitely the Jitterbug himself."

At most dances in my home town I usually sit-out the quicksteps for two reasons—firstly, because I like to devote my whole attention to the band, but secondly (and mainly) because as soon as a bit of swing is heard the dance floor is turned into something akin to a circus arena.

"Silly couples (usually, I notice,



HARRY KAYE, vocalist with Joe Loss and his Band, who is climbing up and up in the radio popularity stakes.

composed of girls dancing together) begin prancing about, wagging their fingers like an angry mother scolding her child, and kicking everyone unfortunate enough to come within their range. This kills any appreciation of swing music that may have sparked in the minds of those we are trying to convert.

"Let me make it quite clear that I consider live dancing when properly performed not only quite a treat to watch but definitely an art. But these rhythmless kids who persist in skipping, stamping and galloping around only make sane people wonder whether Darwin was not right after all."

"The reactions of the home-made Jitterbug to swing music are ruining everybody else's enjoyment in dance halls. Let us have swing music and good live dancing by all means, but for heaven's sake stop the so-called Jitterbug."

165.—Southall, Birthday mtg. Mon., Apr. 9, Hamborough Tavern, Hayes Bridge, Uxbridge Rd., 7-8 p.m. Members' records and J.S. with Freddie Mirfield's Dixieland Band. Don't miss this terrific mtg!

Plymouth, Mtgs at Embassy, Milehouse, Suns, 7.30 p.m., Apr. 1, full J.S.; Apr. 8, "Orchestrated Jazz," by W. Macavoy, and Members' Choice, by G. Burch. New members welcomed. Write: Sec. H. W. Cude, 31, Sturdee Rd., Milehouse, Plymouth.

Birmingham University Club has reopened. Club has been lucky in obtaining services of Allan Ayres and his Band as club band. Rhythm Club dance at the Ritz Ballroom, Edmund St., Birmingham, on Thurs., May 3. All details, S. H. Fletcher, (Publicity Manager), Birmingham University R.C., The Beches, Selly Oak Rd., Bourneville, Birmingham.

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JERRY DAWSON'S NORTHERN NEWS

AFTER a successful career as one of the most popular semi-pro. outfits in the Midlands, Arthur Rowberry and his Orchestra, some eighteen months ago, changed their status to that of fully fledged professional.

Now there has come along their biggest break to date in the news that on Saturday, May 19, Arthur and his boys take over from Billy Bevan and his band at the Cambridge Hall, Southport.

In informing the "M.M." of this grand break, Arthur Rowberry expresses the opinion that one of the chief reasons for the band's popularity has been its successes in "M.M." dance-band contests.

With Arthur conducting, the current line-up of the band is: Norman Stevens (piano); Len Rowberry (bass); Tom Webster (drums); Charlie Williams, Maurice Bell and Denis Vowles (trumpets); Bill Furlley, Les Watkins and Alex. Alexandra (saxes); and vocalist Dennis Williams.

Midlands fans of the Rowberry organisation will have several opportunities of hearing the band before it leaves for the North-West, and the dates booked for the immediate future include an appearance at the Dudley Town Hall (March 31) and on April 6 at the Civic Hall, Wolverhampton at a dance presented by noted Midlands promoter and contest organiser Arthur Kimbrell.

If any reader happens to know the current whereabouts of drummer Frank Sherry, perhaps they would be good enough to ask him to contact Billy Bevan, pianist Bert Moss at 45, Gosforth Road, Southport, Lancs.

Still busy around Altrincham and district, Wally Bates and his Band are doing quite a lot of work at the Stamford Hall, Altrincham, and have, on a number of occasions recently, played shows for the wounded at various military hospitals around.

With Wally leading from piano, the boys are: Tom Steele (drums); Ron Vine (bass); Eddie Gibson and Arthur Malam (altos); Horace Spiller (tenor); and Jimmie Saynor (trumpet).

Amongst the bands appearing in the 1945 Central Lancs Championship at the Carlton Ballroom, Rochdale, organised by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Buckley, will be a local band, the Blue Rhythm Swingtet.

This band has only recently been formed and consists mostly of ex-members of Freddie Platt's Band, who have been obliged to leave the Carlton job as it now requires the services of purely professional musicians.

The full line-up of the band is: Dennis Butterworth (piano); Bud Bowarth (bass); "Spike" Milton (drums); and Harry Kenyon (brother to Billy Cotton's Frank Kenyon), Ernest Forbes, and Chas. Nuttall (saxes).

These boys will no doubt be all out for any kudos there may be going on April 6.

Have received a long and interesting letter from ex-Gerald sax and cellist Ted Holmes, now a lance-bombardier in the Royal Artillery, serving with the B.L.A. in Europe.

In the same unit as himself are also pianist Jack Walker, who, in better days, led his own band in the Isle of Wight and Jersey, and London drummer Charlie Hart.

Needless to say, these three boys have found themselves with very little spare time since they landed in Europe, as they are in great demand for music-making when they are not on Ack-Ack duties.

At a little place called Pont-de-l'arches they were called upon to play in a huge mansion, and as this was the first dance to be held in the district for over four years, you can well imagine the time that everybody had.

The boys also played the Liberation Dance at a little place in Belgium, and later in Nijmegen they were able to sit in with Theo Kuypers and his Band at the Winter Gardens, which is now run by N.A.A.P.I. for the benefit of the troops.

In common with most other Dutch outfits, the Kuypers crew spend a lot of time busking the good old ones, which, in fact, they are often obliged to do owing to the lack of printed parts of current hits.

It is a great pity that either N.A.A.P.I., E.N.S.A. or the War Office do not do something about this matter of "Dots." So many musi-

clans and dance leaders doing their best to help entertain the boys in the front lines write to me in this strain. Cannot something be done?

Charlie Hart wishes to be remembered to Eddie Clark, Les Hamball and Roy Ellis, whilst Ted Holmes would very much like to hear from the R.E.M.E. trumpet player who played with him at Ware in June last. I will be pleased to forward any correspondence.

Heard again from ex-Campbell Connolly song-plugger, now F.Lt. Frank Patten, R.A.F., who is currently stationed in the Levant.

When I last wrote about Frank he was stationed in Cairo, but has since moved around quite a bit, visiting in turn Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus and Trans-Jordania.

Frank tells me that in the Levant every little cafe has its band—but not a swiny one amongst them, which is surprising, inasmuch as some offer big money as bait to musicians there.

Almost any instrumentalist can quite easily earn £80 per month, whilst £100 per month is not by any means unusual.

Frank particularly asks me to pass his salutations to his many friends in the business, and in particular those in the provinces.

On a couple of occasions recently I have written of the activities of the "Divisionnaires," led by noted Midland drummer, Jack Burrows, presently with the B.L.A. in Europe.

New comes news of still another "Divisionnaires" Band which is with the 4th British Division serving in the Italian theatre.

This is a large-sized Band led by noted Hastings piano-arranger Jack Tester, the members of which are drawn from all parts of this country.

With Jack are: Billy Carr, Wally Hammond and Sam Nelson (trumpets); Steve Body and Fred Mellier (trombone); Tony White and George Goad (altos); Bob Kaye and Gus Jack (tenors); Leo Neal (drums); Charlie Jessop (bass); and Norman Vaughan (guitar); vocalists—Ray Ashdown, Harry Goldman and Vic Mackay, and this band, rather better off than most Services bands, has quite an extensive library of modern arrangements—thanks to the generosity of a number of British and American publishers.

Often, playing in a ploughed field, sometimes a bar and occasionally in a theatre, these boys are welcome wherever they appear, and they recently shared the bill at a large opera house in Italy with West End nightclub star Gabrielle Brune, who was carrying out an E.N.S.A. tour along with pianist Lee James.

Also serving in Italy with the Entertainment Unit of a North Midland Division is violinist-dancer Vic Reynolds, who, London born, was at one time with the late Al Davidson and his Band at the Grand, Olpham.

This band, too, does not have to worry under what conditions it is called upon to play, and the boys even play for church services.

Many of the boys fall from the Midlands and the North, and the full line-up of the band is: John Fitzsimons from Worlington and Douglas Bradley from Chesterfield (piano); Maurice Lovell (bass); three boys from Bradford, Yorkshire, Ken Bateson (alto), his brother, Jack Bateson (tenor) and Jack Bakes (drums); and Johnnie Davies, from Crewe (trumpet).

Also with the unit are: Norman Pickering (comedian); Tom Hancock (tenor singer); Arthur Leatherland (female impersonator); and magician Billy Beresford.

The vocalist with the band and also carrying out the many duties of stage manager is Pat Payne, whilst the show is produced by Lt. John Sykes.

THE MELODY MAKER joins with his innumerable friends in the profession in offering our sincere condolences to famous West End drummer and drum manufacturer Len Hunt on the death, last Thursday (22nd) of his mother, Mrs. Mary Ethel Hunt, who passed away, after a trying illness, at the Wallace Nursing Home in London.

Taking a very active interest in the business, Mrs. Hunt was the friend of a large number of musicians. The funeral took place at Finchley Crematorium on Tuesday, (27th).

EXCITING WIMBLEDON AND CREWE CONTESTS

1945 WESTERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP
Town Hall, Crewe
Tuesday, March 20, 1945
—and—
1945 SOUTH LONDON CHAMPIONSHIP
Baths Hall, Wimbledon
Thursday, March 22, 1945

THE 1945 Western Counties Championship, presented on Tuesday of last week (20th) at the Town Hall, Crewe, and the 1945 South London Championship, which was held last Thursday (22nd) at the Baths Hall, Wimbledon, continued uninterrupted the list of successes which is the story of "M.M." sponsored contests again this season.

The Crewe event was in every way a semi-pro's affair. It was organised by well-known Crewe semi-pro bandleader **Edgar Harrison**: it was Edgar Harrison's semi-pro band (even better now than it was last season) that acted as house band, semi-pro bandleader **Billy Lawrence**, an ex-"All-Britain" championship winner, more than capably performed the double rôle of band steward and M.C.; and noted St. Dunstan's blinded musicians' coach, **Claude Bampton**, who persists in describing himself, in memory of his "Bandits," as "still a semi-pro," managed to get away from his heavy St. Dunstan's duties to arrive in time to help with the presentation of the prizes.

Because, it was stated, of the number of dances now held almost nightly at the hall, the attendance was down to under 600 as against last year's over 700.

But both the audience and the six competing bands seemed keener than ever, and their enthusiasm reached its height when famous West End tenor saxist **Reggie Dare**, who had been judging with **Edgar Jackson**, joined up with **Edgar Harrison's** rhythm section in an impromptu jam session which brought forth an explosion, the heatiness of which can seldom, if ever, have been equalled in Crewe's civic headquarters.

"WESTERN COUNTIES" JUDGES' REPORT

Adjudicators: **Reginald Dare** and **Edgar Jackson**.
Winners: **REG BARTLAM'S "WINDSOR" BAND** (three saxes, two trumpets, two trombones, piano, bass, drums). All cons.: 25, Honor Avenue, Wolverhampton. (Phone: Penn 3855.)

Individualists' awards for tenor (**Les Bayley**), trombone (**Jock Macfarlane**), drums (**Ron Bayliss**).
In the report on its playing at Birmingham earlier this month, when it came second, this band was commended for being "reasonably musicianly," but criticised for being "dull and uninspired."

In connection with these failings it was pointed out by the Birmingham judges that "much of the trouble was due to the musicians having to concentrate so heavily on reading parts with which they seemed insouciantly familiar that they had no time to put any feeling into their playing."

The band won here at Crewe—and here is a lesson for all competing bands to study carefully—because the extra rehearsal it had obviously undertaken caused it to play with a confidence that not only enabled its musicianship to display itself, but produced a robust drive that must have been as inspiring to the dancers as it was pleasing to listen to.

The band is not yet a world-beater. Although it wisely took time to tune up after each number, the saxophones were not always perfectly in tune. Also, while the tone and balance were generally above average, the former was not helped by the tendency of the bass to let his strings slap back on his fingerboard; and there were traces of raggedness in the ensemble at times.

Nevertheless, this was a performance which deserved to win a contest, and it was a real treat to realise what a great improvement can be made in no more than two weeks by bands which are ready to profit by the well-meant criticisms made in these reports.

Second: **R.A.F. DANCE BAND (CHESHIRE)** (four saxes, two trum-

pets, piano, bass, drums, sax-conductor). All cons.: **Flight-Lieut. Beckingham, R.A.F. Band** (Cheshire), c/o **MELODY MAKER**, 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

Individualists' awards for alto and clarinet (**L.A.C. Derek Maclean**), piano (**Cpl. William Williams**).
Although in the waltz the saxophone intonation was not always perfect and the articulation at times a little "smearly," this band proved, particularly in its slow foxtrot "Moonlight Serenade," that it is an unusually musicianly, polished and seemingly well-rehearsed unit. Its light and shade in the slow foxtrot helped to make the number a treat to listen to.

But music for listening and music for dancing are two different things, and the band just lost the contest because it was not until its quickstep "One O'Clock Jump" that it produced anything that could fairly be described as a dance urge.

The Downbeaters, of Crewe, were placed third, and won the individualist's award for trumpet (**Dennis Pritchard**) and special prize for best "small" band.

Charlie Thompson's Band, from **Newton-le-Willows (Lancs)**, came fourth, and their cassisst (**John Jarret**) won his individualist's award.

Not the least exciting thing about the Wimbledon contest was that it resulted in the hot favourites, **Fred Hedley's Band**, being beaten by a dark horse in the person of **Ron Goodwin's Orchestra**, now augmented to eleven.

This says nothing against **Hedley's** outfit, which, in spite of the loss of **Derek Hawkins's** outstanding solo contributions, is, as an ensemble, even better than it was last year. It was due solely to the fact that, while at Wimbledon, the contests of this year in which the entry lists have been much larger have sometimes been won by only average bands because they have not had any serious competition to face, this South London Championship, in which only four bands took part because illness had reduced the original six entries by two, boasted three which were good enough to win four out of any five contests.

The third one was **Johnny Dankworth's Swing Quartet**. It is hoped that both they and **Hedley's band** will try again. There can be little that can stop them from winning before long.

The contest attracted a gathering of just about 800—over three times the normal attendance at the hall on a week night, and it is not surprising that the keen fight that ensued for the winning place created an enthusiasm that has seldom been equalled at a London contest.

But the attractions for the customers didn't end with the contest. After it was over, the West End notabilities, tenor saxman **Harry Gold** and drummer **Johnny Marks**, who had been judging with "Peggie" and **Edgar Jackson**, joined up with the winning soloists to put on a jam session which would probably be going on still if the listeners packed solid round the stand had not been forced to disperse by the hallkeeper calling "Time."

These improvised jam sessions are still a furore, and contest organisers would be well advised to limit their entries so that, wherever possible, time can be found for them.

"SOUTH LONDON" JUDGES' REPORT

Adjudicators: **Harry Gold**, **Johnny Marks**, **Edward Posson**, and **Edgar Jackson** (president).

Winners: **RON GOODWIN AND HIS ORCHESTRA** (four saxes, three trumpets, piano, guitar, bass, drums). All cons.: **W. Moschini**, 49, Lonsley Ave., Alnerton, Middlesex. (Phone: PERIVALE 1998.)

Individualists' awards for tenor (**Dennis Hughes**), guitar (**Alfred Hookham**). Hon. mention for trumpet (**Ronald A. Goodwin**), piano (**Kenneth Mare**).

An excellent swing "original" called **Ron's Idea** and a special quickstep arrangement of "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea," both by **Ron Goodwin** himself, provided this band with material that

was not only good enough to win any contest, but which marks **Ron Goodwin** as all set to become one of our best arrangers.

And this band did justice to his outstandingly good scores. It played the swing numbers with style and drive, and its light and shade in the waltz gave a colour and feeling seldom achieved outside the best pro-combination.

The tone of the band was slightly deadened by the lead alto being consistently a shade flat. Also in both the quickstep and the foxtrot the tempo tended to quicken, for which mainly to blame, if only because it is the drummer's duty to see that the tempo is held.

But these faults could not conceal the fact that this is a tidy, well-balanced, well-rehearsed band that has the unusual ability of being able to make an equally attractive showing in swing numbers calling for good phrasing and rhythm, and such more melodious items as waltzes.

Second: **FRED HEDLEY AND HIS BAND** (four saxes, three trumpets, trombone, piano, bass, drums, conductor). 50, Lavenham Road, Southfields, London, S.W.18. (Phone: PUTNEY 763.)

Individualists' awards for alto (**Fred Laycock**), trumpet (**Bob Evans**), trombone (**Dick Lloyd**). Hon. mention for piano (**Wally Locke**).

This band had everything that **Ron Goodwin's** had in the matter of arrangements and ability to play them, and, good as the **Goodwin** band was in its waltz and slow foxtrot, in these two numbers this band of **Hedley's** had them beaten.

But it failed in its quickstep. It started off very raggedly and never quite managed to get together, and the discomfort this lack of precision appeared to cause so put some of the men off their stroke that other troubles, including faulty intonation and a lack of repose which resulted in clipping and snatching, developed.

If the band can bring its quicksteps up to the standard of its slow foxtrots and waltzes, it may well prove to be unbeatable.

Third: **THE JOHNNY DANKWORTH QUARTET** (clar./alto, piano, bass, drums). 140, Westward Road, South Chingford, London, E.4. (Phone: LARKSWOOD 4132.)

Individualists' awards for clarinet (**John Dankworth**), piano (**Kenneth Moule**), bass (**Peter Huxcourt**), drums (**Jack Davenport**). Special award for best "small" band.

War-time shortage of paper has forced the new procedure this season of reporting only the performances of first and second bands at contests.

But we beg leave to make an exception in this case, firstly because this quartet is worthy of more than a bare mention, and secondly because it is necessary to reply to those who may rightly ask how a combination in which every man not only won, but thoroughly deserved, his individualist's award was not placed higher than third.

The answer is that, good as the musicians were individually, and understandably as they used their instrumentation in the way such limited instrumentation can best be used, the ensemble effect didn't quite get home.

Possibly this was because the young alto clarinet, who being the only "front-line" instrument, had so often to carry the lead, has yet to develop a strong enough personality (musically speaking) for the job.

But we hope this comment will not make him try to overtax his strength. He already has nice style and taste and the promise of a lovely clarinet tone, and steady, unforced development is all that is necessary to make him a brilliant swing exponent. **Charles Grimble**, of **Billie** and her **Roy Friends** (who need not feel disgraced in having come fourth in such company), was given a hon. mention for bass.

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