

Melody Maker

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THREEPENCE

JACK NATHAN TO LEAD AT CHURCHILLS

Star Pianist Gets Big Niterie Break With Own Band

PREDICTING Jack Jackson's successor at the exclusive Churchills' niterie in Bond Street, W., has given London's dance band circles their biggest topic of discussion for months. With speculation at its height, and many noted outfits auditioning for the job, official news breaks this week that dispels all rumours about this coveted position.

TELEPHONING THE "MELODY MAKER"—MANAGER BRUCE BRACE, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF CHURCHILLS' OWNER, HARRY MEADOWS, TOLD US THAT FAMOUS PIANIST-ARRANGER AND LONG-ESTABLISHED LONDON DANCE BAND CELEBRITY JACK NATHAN HAD BEEN APPOINTED TO TAKE OVER AT THE NITERIE WITH HIS OWN BAND ON JULY 21.

Hard at work getting together his extremely workmanlike band, rehearsing the boys, and preparing many special arrangements for the all-important opening night, Jack Nathan nevertheless found time to visit the "M.M." offices and give us full details of his very interesting line-up.

Instrumentation he has chosen for the outfit which he is building around himself on piano, consists of trumpet, four saxes, and three rhythm, with Leo Wright (trumpet); Fred Dachtler, Bob Deeks, Reg Briggs, and Ray Gibson (reeds); Billy Lonsdale (drums); and Hank Hobson (bass).

NINE-PIECE

Leo Wright needs no introduction. One of London's most solid stylists, he was with Harry Hayes's Band, and has since distinguished himself by some exceptionally fine work in the television studios, and elsewhere.

Fred Dachtler and Bob Deeks are up-and-coming young saxists at present with Eric Siddons at the Regency niterie. Reg Briggs is the well-known tenorist-arranger currently with Frank Weir; whilst Ray Gibson is another first-class tenor-sax playing just now with Paul Adam at the Milroy.

Billy Lonsdale is the young drum stylist late of Oscar Rabin and Harry Parry; whilst Hank Hobson, the very solid rhythmic bassist, has been associated for a long time with Harry Parry, and will be well known to fans from his many appearances on the "Jazz Club" broadcasts, etc.

NATURAL CHOICE

Extremely popular personally with both patrons and management at Churchills from his stays there with Harry Hayes' Band, Jack Nathan, both for this reason and for his great all-round abilities, was a natural choice for the job.

Since leaving the RAF at the end of 1945, after distinguished service in India and elsewhere in the East, Jack has arranged extensively for Geraldo, Harry Roy, Leslie Hutchinson, etc.; played two separate periods at Churchills with Harry Hayes; and been pianist and deputy leader with his old M.D., Roy Fox. Since these engagements he has also been with Lew Stone's fine orchestra in the Coliseum theatre hit "Annie Get Your Gun."

Before the war Jack starred with Roy Fox and Billy Bissett (at the Café de Paris), later taking his own outfit into the exclusive "Le Sulvi" before going into the RAF in 1940.

Jack Nathan has the ideal type of personality and band-experience for the important job which he has secured. He should do well.

New Air-Series for Edmundo Ros

COMFORTABLY settled back at the Astor niterie, doubling the Bagatelle Restaurant, Edmundo Ros and his Rumba Band are taking a fortnight's holiday from July 20, and will start an important new radio series on their return.

Edmundo himself will again be spending his holiday in Spain, listening to the music and rhythms which he has so largely helped to popularise over here, and his return will be the signal for the commencement of a new series of airings featuring Latin-American music in the dance idiom.

As yet unentitled, the broadcasts start on Saturday, August 9, from noon to 12.30 p.m. in the Home Service.

While the Ros boys are on holiday, Jimmy Cummins and his Band will be deputising for them at the Bagatelle Restaurant and the Astor.

To-day (Thursday) Edmundo broadcasts at 3 p.m. (Home), and then this evening has been given leave of absence from both his nightly resident jobs in order to play at Camberley for the super-party being given by the Royal Military Academy.

MECCA TO REOPEN CAFE DE PARIS

DURING the past few days, a major topic of conversation in the West End has been the prospect of the famous restaurant, the Café de Paris, re-opening.

Now owned by Mecca, Ltd., the Café de Paris, which will be remembered by Londoners as one of the capital's most exclusive restaurants before it was blitzed in 1941, is to be de-requisitioned on February 28 next year, and it is hoped to reopen it a month or so later.

Approached by the MELODY MAKER for a statement as to policy, Mecca's publicity chief, John O'Keil, could say little except that the Café will be run, as in the past, on absolutely first-class West End lines.

Asked whether the current vogue of using two bands would be a part of the policy, Mr. O'Keil said: "It is much too early to make a statement on this subject. It is not possible to say at this stage how many bands we shall use, nor have we yet considered who will be chosen to supply the music."

The fact remains, however, that the Café de Paris will reopen early next year, will provide at least one first-class band with a resident berth, and will add considerably to dining and dancing facilities in the West End.

As to who will be the lucky leader or leaders—your guess is as good as ours. That there will be considerable competition amongst West End bandleaders, is a foregone conclusion, as the Café always was—and can be again—one of the best shop-windows in London.

PEACHEY'S CANADIAN HOLIDAY

ABLE to take five weeks off, due to the generosity of the management of the Mayfair Hotel, skilled French-Canadian electric-guitarist-leader, Roland Peachey, sets off on July 22 for his home town of Montreal, to see his relatives for the first time for ten years.

Roland, who completes three years at the Mayfair in September, originally came to London to see the Coronation, but after meeting and marrying an Englishwoman, made the Metropolitan his home and has achieved a big musical success here.

Flying to Montreal and back with him will be his wife and three children, while at the Mayfair, for the first three weeks of his absence, Roland leaves the leadership of his excellent band to his 1st tenor and violinist, Syd Kaye, with Arnold Bailey deputising for Syd.

As a special feature, Roland is also bringing in well-known vocalist, Ken Crossley.

On August 11, Roland's band commences a fortnight's holiday, whereupon, West End trumpeter Jimmy Edwards takes over, with a ten-piece outfit which for ten months he has been leading on big society dates.

Roland, who is passing through New York before he comes home, will be back in London on August 22, ready to resume at the Mayfair.

Music Artistes, Ltd.

AS from July 1, Ted Heath and George Melachrino have jointly acquired a controlling interest in Music Artistes, Ltd., from the board of which company, managing director Charles Bohm has resigned.

Assisting Ted and George will be ex-Blue Rockets leader, Eric Robinson, and the three principals will continue the original policy of Music Artistes in furthering the international promotion of British artistes and British music.



JACK NATHAN

JIVER FOR CZECHO

THE MELODY MAKER learns that arrangements are just being completed for Leslie ("Jiver") Hutchinson to fly over for a five weeks' concert tour in Czechoslovakia, following the trail so admirably blazed by Eric Winstone a few months ago.

Jiver, who will be leaving quite shortly, taking his complete band across, plans to play seven concerts each week, visiting all the principal towns in Czechoslovakia. Fuller details of Jiver's big new enterprise will be given the moment they become available.

Meanwhile, his agent, Tommy Jack, tells us that negotiations are in a very advanced stage, and that it only remains for the necessary passports, visas, etc., to be fixed before the band can travel.

DECCA'S JACK KAPP IS HERE

JUST prior to closing for press, the MELODY MAKER obtained a brief statement from Mr. Jack Kapp, President of Decca Records, Incorporated, the associate American firm of Britain's Decca Record Co., who arrived in England on Monday (7th).

Mr. Kapp said: "I'm certainly glad to be here after eleven years, to get a clear picture of Britain, and to renew old contacts."

"Talent-scouting? Well, the line of demarcation between business and pleasure is very thinly defined. Naturally, if I spot anything worthwhile, it might well prove a good thing for both British and American Decca."

WEIR-GELLER AIR-SHARE!

CONSEQUENT upon the cessation of the B.B.C. Dancing Club airing each Monday night from 10.15 to 11 p.m., this weekly spot is currently being filled by the bands of Frank Weir from the Lansdowne Restaurant (10.15 to 10.40), and Harold Geller from Fischer's Restaurant (10.40 to 11 p.m.)—the latter thus transferring from his usual Tuesday night fixture.

Currently playing with the Geller band is drummer Phil Watts, who since he left Joe Loss a few weeks ago, has lost little time in re-establishing himself in the West End.

Benny Goodman on the Third Programme

BENNY GOODMAN admires in general, and students of the clarinet, in particular, will be interested to know that on Saturday (12th), at 10.40 p.m., Benny will be featured in a programme of music by Bartok in the B.B.C. Third Programme.

An accomplished classical performer, as was revealed in Peter Tanner's informative article in last week's issue, Benny will fully demonstrate his mastery of the clarinet in this ambitious recorded programme.

SKYROCKETS AT GOLF.—After a battle royal round the Infield Golf Course last Sunday (6th), alto-sax Bill Apps and tenor-sax Pat Smuts tied for the title in the open golf championship organised by the Skyrockets Orchestra.

GERALDO INSTALLS THREE BANDS ON THE "QUEEN MARY"

WHEN THE GIANT LINER "QUEEN MARY" LEAVES FOR NEW YORK ON HER FIRST POST-WAR VOYAGE AS A PASSENGER VESSEL ON JULY 31, THE TWO DANCE-BANDS AND ONE STRAIGHT ORCHESTRA ABOARD WILL HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY FAMOUS BANDLEADER GERALDO, WHO REGARDS HIS TASK AS A PARTICULARLY PLEASANT ONE, AS HE HIMSELF, WHEN A YOUNG MUSICIAN, WAS A PIANIST ABOARD THE LINER "AQUINIA."

Supervising all the music to be heard aboard the "Queen Mary," from the start of her trials up the Clyde on July 23, Gerry has handled everything with his usual thoroughness and has lined up two all-star dance-

bands, composed of front-rank musicians.

Besides the two dance-bands, both seven-piece outfits, Geraldo has engaged a first-class six-piece straight orchestra to play during lunch, dinner, etc.

Details of the straight orchestra are not yet to hand, but the two dance-bands will be under pianist Harold Fields and drummer Bobby Kevin respectively, both of whom should be able to tackle these grand jobs with every confidence.

Harold Fields, who was with Maurice Winnick for three years and was with Paul Adam at the Mirabelle, has not long returned from the South of France. Besides his tasteful piano playing he is doing well these days as a songwriter, having written, in collaboration with trumpeter Syd Berman, such hits as "Hurdy-Gurdy Man," etc.

His seven-piece, featuring three tenors and flute, and built around his own piano-playing, will comprise Syd Berman on trumpet, Bill Fovey, Zangwill Gilbert and Jack Fisher on tenors, clarinets, flutes and fiddles, Pat Reilly on bass, and Johnny Wise on drums and vibraphone.

The other dance-band, which will be managed by well-known ex-Rabin and Weir drummer Bobby Kevin and led by vibraphonist and accordionist Tommy Pollard (late Harry Parry and now with Tito Burns' Accordion Club Sextet) will comprise such notabilities as "Jazz Rally" tenor-sax Ronnie Scott, ex-Rabin pianist Ken Moule, sax-clarinetist Johnny Dankworth, trumpeter John Begley, and bassist George Garnett.

HARRY PARRY: MONTH'S VARIETY AT CASINO

FOLLOWING his long-term engagement at the Potomac Restaurant, Jermyn Street, W., clarinetist Harry Parry and his Sextet have secured a professional "plum" with a month's twice-nightly variety booking at the famous London Casino. They open there on Monday, August 4.

The first British band to appear in the current Anglo-American Variety shows, Harry will share the billing with such international artists as the Nicholas Brothers.

For this important event, Harry has been fortunate in obtaining, as star guest artist, radio and recording soloist Paula Green.

The personnel of the Sextet will comprise Harry, leading Alan Clarke (alto); Joe Riley (tnr.); Pat Barnett (tpt.); Dennis Wilson (pno.); Hank Hobson (bass); Dennis Neale (drms.); and Jean Bradbury (vcls.).

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INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

Member: Audit Bureau of Circulations
 6, CATHERINE ST., STRAND, LONDON, W.C.2
 Tel: Temple Bar 2468 Editor: RAY SOMN

Youth at the Helm...

There is significant news in the MELODY MAKER this week. An Edinburgh band, coming down to London for a B.B.C. audition, has set musicians' tongues wagging and is already being hailed as a great discovery; while, at the Harry Parry Jazz Club concert last Sunday, a young soldier came up from the audience and electrified everybody by his amazing piano-playing.

Add these two news-items to the impressive displays of the younger musicians at the recent Jazz Rally, and the result is sufficient indication of the fact that the dance band business in this country is in a very healthy state.

It was most interesting, at the Jazz Rally, to talk to visitors from what we can only call the more "conventional" realms of commercial dance music, and hear them rave about the performance of some of the post-war instrumental discoveries of whose names they freely confessed they had never heard.

That is as it should be. New names and new faces must come into any business if it is not to stagnate, and there can be little wrong with a profession that breeds its own stars in successive generations.

If dance bands and dance music were to remain always in the hands of a selected few who are becoming older and consequently staid in their musical tastes, the signs for the future would be disturbing, but we are breeding a race of young musicians who are starting where the older men left off, and the results are satisfying in the extreme.

Whatever economic doldrums may confront the British dance music profession, one salient fact emerges—the business is being kept wholesomely alive by the progressiveness and enthusiasm of the up-and-coming players and bands.

The MELODY MAKER is convinced that there is still plenty of untapped musical talent in Britain waiting to be discovered. It is the bounden duty of all of us to discover it and encourage it, for in that way lies progress and the future well-being of the whole profession.

Purchase Tax Must Go!

The June issue of "The Pianomaker," just to hand, contains a trenchant leading article by Editor Herbert Sinclair headed "No Hope for Pianoforte Industry—If Purchase Tax is Retained."

"If a Purchase Tax were levied on miners' tools, there would be such an outcry as would call for the immediate removal of the burden," writes Mr. Sinclair. "The professional musician, using his hands, sometimes with the aid of his lips, to earn his living must bear this intolerable burden on any new instrument he may have to buy. In this lack of discrimination in the imposition of the tax there is absolute unfairness to the professional musician. The Musicians' Union have tried to make Authority see things from the professional's viewpoint; without success. Music is not a luxury, and when war raged, the Art was not the Cinderella of the piece, but almost as important as the Fairy Queen—dispensing happiness all round. So does it do to-day.

"Purchase Tax must go!", he concluded. As we have proved in the past in these columns, we heartily agree, and add our voice strongly to the "Pianomaker's" well-expressed and justified complaint.

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IT'S A GOOD DAY

VICTORIA MUSIC PUBLISHING CO. LTD. 14, St. George St., Hanover Square, W.1. (Mayfair 7600)

Famous Stage Bandleaders give "Melody Maker" readers their considered opinions upon Felix Mendelssohn's article, "The Facts behind the Slump," in a special

SLUMP SYMPOSIUM

BILLY COTTON

"Solution lies with the condition of the country"

Why worry about the popularity of dance music? The solution lies with the condition of the country. When the public have read all the things that can happen to them from their newspapers every morning, it doesn't give them much encouragement to go out in the evenings and spend money. Regarding the loss of popularity of variety and stage bands, some never proved themselves to be popular. This was mostly the fault of the leaders themselves for allowing themselves to give a performance that was not in touch with British audiences.

HENRY HALL

"I remain an optimist"

I read the article entitled, "The Facts Behind the Slump," and, although I found it interesting, I am not sure that any useful purpose is served by harping too much on the subject. I have been on the road now solidly for ten years, and the present slump is by no means the first one experienced during that time.

I remember that business generally fell off badly in the summer before the outbreak of war, and, after a complete stoppage in September, 1939, began to pick up again just before Christmas. In the following summer of Dunkirk another slump not unnaturally occurred, and the bombing winter of 1940/1 was by no means good for theatrical business, to say the least. 1942/3 saw something of a boom; but, with the advent of flying bombs and rockets in 1944, business in the London area again suffered a setback. Having weathered all these ups and downs, I take the view that the well-being of our business is linked with that of the country as a whole. And on the score of the country's future well-being I remain an optimist.

NAT GONELLA

"I blame the bands"

I fully agree with Felix Mendelssohn when he says that bands in Variety have lost their appeal. My experience on the halls before and since the war fully confirms it. But I cannot go all the way with him in apportioning the blame. I do not blame the BBC; nor do I blame the bookers who, he says, force him to take on the responsibility of the supporting bill. I would never sign such a contract, and cannot see why he should have to.

I agree with him wholeheartedly in blaming the bands themselves for the slump in popular interest—primarily the musicians, and secondly the leaders themselves.

The early days of the war began a brief heyday for the second-rater, who grasped his opportunity with both hands—instead of using them to practise his instrument. Shortage of men enabled him to demand fantastic rates and virtually dictate to the leaders what he should play and how he should play it. On the air he flitted from band to band, grabbing the session money and playing the same old numbers in the same old way, so that every band sounded alike and equally mediocre.

Listeners inevitably lost interest—but perked up immediately Glenn Miller came on with his permanent line-up, playing first-class arrangements and not worrying about plugs.

When I returned to Civvy Street I found myself one of some thirty bands touring the halls, paying, again, top money for second-rate men who had their own ideas about how the music should sound, and appealing only to a few jive-crazy kids, to the dismay and disgust of the steady listening and Variety-going public.

But the leaders themselves, instead of taking a firm stand, did little to discourage this, and concerned themselves with plug money and risked nervous breakdowns to work as many dates in the week as possible. Felix suggests that they now get together to remedy matters. What a hope!

Mind you, the supporting bills these days are little help. The same old acts are going round the same old halls with the same old gags, and the audience has either retired to the bar or lapsed into a coma by the time the bands—usually last on the bill—make their appearance. No wonder people prefer the "dogs," where there is a chance of supplementing their earnings whilst getting something worth while for their money.

Meanwhile, I don't see why Felix should be complaining. I should think he had made enough money out of Variety to be able to retire gracefully now that there is a slump!

IVY BENSON

"Make it more of a variety act"

I agree in principle with Felix Mendelssohn's article. But business has been good in Birkenhead and Nottingham. The bands must make their shows more of a Variety act and not a concert. Just sitting on a stage with a dull face and playing music is not sufficient. I am in a worse position than the male leaders—I spend at least £1,000 a year on the girls' dresses—but it improves the appearance.

As regards causes of the present "slump," I believe that towns had a false population during the war—imported labour—and lots of factories. Now the populations are shifting—hence the falling off of attendance. Cine-Variety will be of great assistance to us—but unfortunately the managements cannot afford to pay for every matinee. I played to utmost capacity every performance—but the theatre remained empty until an hour before our performance—then hundreds were turned away.

TROISE

"Due to five causes"

Speaking on behalf of Troise, his manager, Brian Finney, said: I agree with Felix. Of course there's a slump. It's due to many things—to bandleaders themselves, the sterile policy of managers, bad theatres, corny supporting acts, and to-day's general austerity.

Take item one. Bandleaders have got to realise that they can't just put an outfit on a stage and play forty minutes' undiluted dance music. The public won't take it. Fifteen years in Variety have taught me that. They want more for their money.

Music is usually secondary. They want smart presentation, loads of showmanship, good comedy. And by that I mean good.

That's where a badly-balanced bill doesn't help. Judging by the way managers still book the same old supporting acts, you'd think good talent was at a premium. The public doesn't get half a chance to find out that this isn't so.

The same comedians appear on the circuits week after week, and trot out the same ten-year-old gags. This is a poor prelude to a band act, which is usually presented last.

By this time the public is restless—and what do they get? In the case of experienced leaders like Billy Cotton and Henry Hall, plenty. But they are the exceptions.

Then the theatre itself isn't much help. About ninety per cent. of the seats are uncomfortable, and in the winter heating is inadequate (during the last one, especially, theatres were freezing—most people went to cinemas to keep warm).

Then the austerity part. This makes for a depression. Entertainment is bound to suffer when luxuries are so hard to get and so highly priced. The Tobacco Tax, for instance, has affected theatre takings.

I'd say, reduce this, remedy the other failings, and Variety would be back to its pre-war status.

JOE LOSS

"Quality before quantity"

First, let us decide whether there actually is a slump or not.

Whilst I am certainly not one of the "ostrich" type who smugly says that "everything in the garden is lovely" and promptly cashes his one and only endowment policy in order to meet next week's wages bill, the question of slump or no slump is one of comparison.

If you are going to compare present-day business in the variety theatres—and in the ballrooms, too—with the unprecedented boom of 1940/6, when the country was housing millions of troops, then there is a slump. On the other hand, if you will cast your minds back to the "bad old days" of 1934/35, then takings are now probably very much higher, even taking into consideration the decreased value of the £.

When I left the Astoria Ballroom to tour the halls my four-brass-four-sax line-up was adequate. Then came the big-band craze, and because of boom business I was able to keep up with the trend and increase my organisation and personnel—and my wage bill. Now that business, necessarily and not altogether unexpectedly, is reverting to something rather less than in the boom period, it is possible that big-band leaders will have to revise their ideas and be forced into reducing the size of their bands.

I am not referring to the person who leads a unit for odd broadcasts and sessions, or for short seasons of personal appearances, but to the established leader who offers permanent employment to musicians.

With regard to theatre managements, I must say that I wholeheartedly agree with my one-time manager, Charles Bohm, who, in a recent magazine article, said: "Managements are not anti-swing or anti-anything. They are merely pro-box office."

So long as a stage band offers the public entertainment, and what it offers is good of its kind, then that same public will support it. I have the greatest respect for the Henry Halls, Billy Cottons and Harry Royas who still manage to do good business in the theatres and for the Oscar Rabins and Lou Preagers who keep hammering away at the ballrooms. They know...

As to the question of whether or no bandleaders who "top" a variety bill should be called upon to carry—and pay for—the rest of the bill, this depends entirely upon the cost of the supporting acts and what percentage of the net takings the leader receives, as this varies according to the individual leader's drawing power and his—or his agent's—business ability.

If there is a slump, then bandleaders must use every means in their power to combat it by giving better quality in their own respective styles as distinct from quantity, and by putting just that little bit extra into it.

In conclusion—to all musicians and leaders, stop moaning about how well the next fellow is doing, or relating gleefully how badly he is flopping, but mind your own business!

As the posters on the hoardings tell us—"We Work or Want."

Personal Points:

George SHEARING



Born August 13, 1919, in Battersea, London, he went to a local school, and at sixteen was playing the piano in a public-house. In 1937 he joined the all-blind band organised for the NIB by Claud Hampton, and toured with this outfit for a considerable time. In 1940 he went to the St. Regis Hotel in Mayfair, where he joined the co-operative sextet organised by Frederick Hargreaves. About the same time Harry Parry, also a member of the sextet, asked him to join his newly formed Radio Rhythm Club Sextet for broadcasts and recordings. A year later George went to Hatchett's with Dennis Moonan and Stéphane Grappelly; he also led his own quartet at this restaurant at a later date. He has played with almost every band in the country, and has toured with the Ambrose Octet and Stéphane Grappelly. He is featured on many Decca recordings as a soloist, and has written many numbers. He arranges for many well-known bands, notably Cyril Stapleton and Ted Heath, and is currently featured with Frank Weir on accordion and piano at the Lansdowne. He is a Re-bop fan. Benny Goodman and Dizzy

- Favourite Musicians: Art Tatum, Gillespie.
- Favourite Bands: Boyd Raeburn, Stan Kenton.
- Favourite Records: "Sure Nuff," by Dizzy Gillespie; "Body and Soul," by Boyd Raeburn.
- Favourite Composers: Debussy, J. S. Bach.
- Favourite Arrangers: Eddie Sauter, Sy Oliver.
- Favourite Food: Steak, chips, and fried onions.
- Hobby: Rowing and playing cards.
- Ambition: To be able to play real, honest-to-goodness Corn.

EDINBURGH BAND CREATES A SENSATION IN LONDON

Tommy Sampson and his 18-Piece Impress West End and B.B.C.

FOR months past, stories have been percolating through to London of the existence of a sensational large band working in Scotland. Touring musicians whose travels took them through Edinburgh were well in the forefront of the eulogisers, and told us that this band, if it ever came to London, would shake the Southerners.

Last week the band did come to London, and it did shake us.

The outfit is Tommy Sampson and his Orchestra, whose resident job is at the Eldorado Ballroom, Leith, Edinburgh, and it is one of the largest bands in the country, consisting as it does of eighteen men—five saxes, eight brass, four rhythm, and a trumpet-playing leader.

The story starts a couple of weeks ago, when 29-year-old Tommy Sampson walked into the Melody Maker offices to tell us something about his band. With a quiet confidence that was most impressive, he assured us that he thought his band was as good as anything he had in England, and, although we have heard this story often before, we allied his claims with those of London musicians whose opinions we respected, and felt that maybe we were on the eve of discovering something new.

Tommy informed us he was fixing a tour for his band in August, and wanted us to put him in touch with a reliable agent who could not only get him some Southern dates, but could get the band an audition for the BBC.

Accordingly, we put him in touch with Bill Elliott, of Elliott Direction, Ltd., and the next development was not long in coming.

NIGHT-RIDE

Bill was sufficiently impressed to get in touch with the BBC and arrange for the band to be auditioned in London, and the eighteen boys piled into their special coach after their evening's work at Edinburgh, travelled throughout the night to London, and gave an audition on the following day.

Without indulging in too many eulogies at this stage, we can only report that the audition created nothing short of a sensation among those who heard it.

The band is unquestionably first class. It has its own resident arranger—Edwin Holland—who turns out modernistic and most interesting big band scores, and the boys are well-drilled, first-class musicians, and thoroughly stylish.

Tommy Sampson and his Orchestra will know their B.B.C. "fate" very shortly, and unquestionably they deserve to air in a good spot. The French broadcasting representative who was present at the audition was so impressed that he at once gave them a forty-five-minute studio date over Radio Diffusion Française to Paris on August 14, from 11.15 to midnight. The only orchestra ever to have done a studio broadcast to Paris in this series before is Gerald; all the other bands come from resident night clubs and restaurants.

After the BBC audition, the Sampson boys went on to Levy's Studios to make some private recordings, and the news circulated around town so quickly that musicians from all over the West End came in during the session to hear what was going on.

The consensus of opinion is that the band undoubtedly "has something," and is quite likely to be as important a big band discovery as this country has known in recent years.

On what they played they are unquestionably outstanding, but,

naturally, these were special arrangements well rehearsed for their London debut. Whether they can maintain this standard throughout a half-hour's broadcast, and whether their general style of playing is as first class as that which we heard when they were "on show," remains to be seen.

Suffice it to say that Edinburgh has given London a band of extreme promise, and one of which the British swing public will unquestionably be hearing a great deal in the future.

LINE-UP

Tommy Sampson himself took up the cornet at the age of 41, and, when he joined the Army in 1939, played in the RAOC Band in Scotland prior to getting a commission. He was taken prisoner by the Italians at Tobruk in 1942, and during his three years of captivity formed and led a P.O.W. dance band. Repatriated in 1945, he formed the Scottish Command Dance Orchestra, which played together until his demobilisation in June, 1946.

His present orchestra—which includes a nucleus of his Scottish Command men—was formed in December, 1946, and, after only one month's rehearsal, took up residence at the Eldorado Ballroom on January 23 of this year.

With Tommy Sampson playing trumpet and leading, the full personnel is as follows: George Hunter, Jimmy Paxton (altos); Henry MacKenzie, Alan Davis (tenors); Jimmy Walsh (baritone); Stan Reynolds, Duncan Campbell, Frank Webb, and Alex. Macgregor (trumpets); Johnny Kirkwood, Ralph Hutchinson, Bill Paxton and Andy Young (trombones); Sam Harding (piano); Sammy Stokes (bass); Terry Walsh (guitar); Dougie Cooper (drums); and Edwin Holland (arranger).

LADBROOKE'S LINE-UP

ALL set for his long-awaited London debut, Midland's maestro Vincent Labrooke has chosen well for his opening at Hammersmith Palais de Danse on Sunday (13th), where he will remain for five weeks (one week longer than was originally arranged) during Lou Preager's absence.

Featured vocalist will be Vincent's latest singing discovery, Phil Fowler, who, like his chief, hails from Birmingham.

The complete line-up of the band which Vincent will conduct will be: Ken Hewitt (piano); Tommy Webster (drums); Vic Mortiboys (bass); Oscar Birch and Jerry Cane (altos); Stan Poole and Les Broad (tenors); and Maurice Perry, Dave Usden and Tony Bourne (trumpets).

In addition to fronting the band, Vincent will also feature his own pianistics.

GRIEFF BOOKS HIS EX-BOSS!

THIS Friday (11th) at the Muswell Hill Palais, London, resident bandleader Ken Grieff, one-time member of the brass section in Nat Gonella's Band, presents a special late night dance at which the attraction will be Nat Gonella and his Swing Quartet, which is Nat's current Variety offering, plus an extra tenor sax.

During the evening a beauty competition will be held, the winner of which will represent North London at the Margate "Miss Merrie England" finals to be staged at the ballroom of that name.

JOHNNY LESTER'S LEADING BREAK AT BRIGHTON

TAKING over from Jack Wallace at the exclusive Duffy's Tavern in Brighton today (Thursday), is pianist-band-leader Johnny Lester who gets the biggest break of his career.

Johnny and his band have been put in by the Harry Roy office and Johnny Lester will be leading a five-piece outfit including Emilio (accordion); Len Kane (bass); Bill Collins (alto clarinet, flute); and Harry Benson (drums and vocals).

The band will appear under the title of Harry Roy's "Melody Makers," directed by Johnny Lester.

Since Johnny came out of the Army, he has been playing around Town, and his experience should stand him in good stead for this high-class job.

LESLIE ("JIVER") HUTCHINSON, whose excellent band is making the fans thoroughly happy everywhere it goes, has two more broadcasts. To-day (10th) he and his outfit will be heard on the General Overseas Service (11.15-12 noon); and on Monday (14th) he is airing on the Home Service at 9 a.m.

DANIELS TOURS AGAIN

ABSENT from the dance band scene for several weeks owing, at least in part, to a severe attack of hay fever, "Hot Shots" maestro Joe Daniels is now going strong again.

With a re-formed outfit and a determination to bring lots of modern live to holiday-makers, Joe embarks next Monday (14th) on a tour largely of the holiday spots.

His itinerary actually kicks off at Sunderland, where he will play a week at the Seaburn Hall, but after this Joe is dated for a week at the Pier Hall, Bedcar (week commencing July 21); a week at the Pavilion, Cleethorpes from July 28; and the week of August 4 at Yarmouth (Floral Hall). In the course of this busy itinerary, Joe will also be playing Sunday concerts at the Odeon, Newcastle (20th) and the Rialto, York (27th).

The re-formed "Hot Shots," with the drum virtuoso, of course, in his usual rôle of leader-comper-percussion, comprise Dan Foster (piano); Stan Tomlin (trumpet); Denny Lang (trumpet); Don Lusher (trombone); Ernie Bazan (clarinet); and Tony Wayne (guitar).

Vocal spot gives a fine chance to Anita Dee, up-and-coming young London vocalist, who has been making a name on one-night dates, and now steps more permanently into the limelight.

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"See? Fivepence-halfpenny! Now will you believe there's slump in the profession?"

Burman's Swiss Move

LATEST news of Maurice Burman, still convalescing in Switzerland following his serious breakdown in health, is that he is making excellent progress and has now returned to the Lindenhof Clinic at Berne. This information will benefit the many friends and fans who frequently write to him.

Maurice will be under the care of a very eminent Swiss specialist back at the clinic, and there is a very bright chance that he will be in England again inside a twelvemonth.

Meanwhile, nothing could be more clearly indicative of how closely Maurice still follows the dance-band news in England than the experience of his old friend Jack Nathan.

Telephoning Maurice to acquaint him with the fact that he was to be bandleader at Churchills, Jack was greeted with "Congratulations on the new job." Asked how on earth the news could have reached him already in distant Switzerland, Maurice modestly replied, "The Burman news service knows everything!"

LOSS'S GRAND I.O.M. OPENING

JOE LOSS and his Band, with Elizabeth Batey, Howard Jones and Don Rivers, successfully opened on June 27 at the Villa Marina, Douglas, Isle of Man, and were accorded a grand welcome by the early holiday-makers.

Playing in the band in place of Phil Watts, who is now with Harold Geiler at Fischers' Restaurant, W. is Glasgow drum notable Dave King, whilst trumpeter-arranger Fred Evans has left to join Eric Winstone at Butlin's Camp, Pwllheli.

At the end of the Loss band's first week on the Island, the "House Full" board had to be displayed at the Villa Marina on Saturday last (5th).

As we close for press, saxist Bob Layzell is recovering from an attack of bronchial trouble and is temporarily out of the band. He hopes to resume playing in a day or two.

Bill Treacey, Joe Loss's energetic manager for many years past, starts his holiday to-day (10th), when he sails on the "Queen Elizabeth" for New York, where he will spend a combined business and pleasure vacation.



Caught by the "M.M." camera as they emerged from Holy Trinity Church, Marylebone, after their wedding last Saturday (5th), Roy Serry, manager of New World Publishing Co., and charming vocalist Joyce Frazer, of the Ray Martin Singers, are seen surrounded by well-wishers, including musical celebrities, Len Camber and Pat Dodd and noted Tin Pan Alley figures, Jimmy Henney, Pat Halpin, Les Paul, Noel Rogers, etc.

PARRY "JAZZ CLUB" CONCERT FINDS A STAR

LEWIS BUSY ON THE AIR

VIC LEWIS and his Orchestra, currently at the Pier Pavilion, Cleethorpes, have a busy time in the broadcasting studios just ahead.

Next Monday (14th) the outfit is featured on "Band Parade," opposite Billy Munn and his Orchestra. On Thursday of next week (17th) the band has an overseas broadcast (11.15 p.m.-midnight); and the following day (18th) will be heard again (5.15-5.45 p.m. Light).

On July 21, Vic Lewis and his boys commence their first resident season at Green's Playhouse Ballroom, Glasgow.

Tenorist-vocalist Charlie Granville has left the band, although he will be heard singing with Lewis on "Band Parade." His place has been taken by Derek Knight, the young ex-Hutchinson, ex-Barriteau stylist.

Cyril's Radio Week

AT present somewhat hidden from his legion of radio fans, due to the lateness of his working hours at the Embassy Club, Cyril Stapleton emerged last week to play an extremely satisfying "On The Sweeter Side" broadcast on Saturday (5th), followed by a most polished performance in "Band Parade" opposite Stéphane Grappelli's Quintet on Monday last (7th).

TAKING part in an amateur talent contest, a 22-year-old semi-pro pianist stole the major musical honours at Harry Parry's "Jazz Club" concert, which was presented to an enthusiastic audience at the St. Pancras Town Hall on Sunday last (6th).

Possessed of an outstanding technique and a musical conception rivalling a George Shearing's, young John Pearson, now with the R.A. at Woolwich, virtually hypnotised both the audience and Harry's musicians with his superb improvisations on "I'm Beginning to See the Light" and "Body and Soul."

The efforts of 13-year-old clarinetist John Danser, who had a brave stab at Goodman's "Slipped Disc" and Harry's own recorded composition, "Parry Opus," plus the boogie-styled piano playing of Lewis Bob, also deserve a mention.

The general presentation, in critic Rex Harris's words: "The best swing concert yet staged," was also notable for the immaculate musical contributions by Harry Parry himself (clt.); Harry Hayes (alto); Reggie Dare (tnr.); Duncan Whyte (tpt.); Geoff Love (tnb.); Billy Munn (pno.); Hank Hobson (bass); Dave Fullerton (dms.); and Doreen Henry (vcl.).

Harry's plans for concerts in the immediate future have, however, been temporarily shelved, since the St. Pancras Arts and Civic Council suggested that, owing to possible bus strikes and the summer season, the projected series should be discontinued until September.

Then the "Jazz Club" concerts will reopen to run throughout the winter.

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