

Melody Maker

3d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

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BEN EDWARDS TURNS BANDLEADER AT LANSDOWNE

AFTER FOURTEEN YEARS IN THE "RANKS" OF THE PROFESSION, DURING WHICH HE HAS PLAYED DRUMS IN MANY STAR LONDON BANDS, AND ALSO SOLO PIANO AT A NUMBER OF WEST END NITRIES, FAMOUS MUSICIAN, RACONTEUR, AND WELL-KNOWN "CHARACTER" OF THE WEST END MUSICAL WORLD, BEN EDWARDS, IS AT LAST TO ASSUME THE MANTLE OF LEADERSHIP AND FRONT HIS OWN BAND IN TOWN.

Ben will take over the leadership at London's Lansdowne House Restaurant as from August 20. His five-piece band will be sensational in that it will bring back to West End restaurant life, after a very long time, famous saxist and multi-instrumentalist E. O. Pogson, who is joining up to play virtually all reeds in the Lansdowne House Band.

Thus an association of a great many years will be continued, since "Poggy" and Ben Edwards have been together in the past in many London bands, including Jack Jackson's, Arthur Young's, Reginald Forsythe's, Carroll Gibbons, Victor Silvester's, etc., etc. In addition, both being prolific "sessioneers," they have met on a weekly broadcasting and recording sessions for years.

Third member of the Edwards Band will be Dennis Noonan. Originally coming into prominence many years ago as leader of the "Cambridge Night Watchman" at the Cafe de Paris, Dennis subsequently led at Hatched's Restaurant, and later had a long spell as a member of Jack Payne's Band. He will be playing violin, viola, and baritone saxophone, and also arranging for the band.

DRUMMER-PIANIST

Remaining members of the outfit will need no introduction. They are Eddie Macaulay (piano); a very popular figure in the pre-war swing world who has been on aircraft construction work for some years; and Bob Roberts, the noted bassist, from the May Fair Hotel and all over the West End, and more recently identified with the British Band of the A.E.F.

It will be seen that on this date Ben Edwards himself is playing drums. His "first love," professionally speaking, has always been piano, and he started his career as a pianist. Ben, however, suffers from exceptionally bad eyesight, and sight-reading difficulties have made it a little awkward for him to play regularly as a big band pianist.

In the meanwhile, however, he has made a big reputation as a solo pianist, and for years his ingenious piano choruses have been much appreciated around the night clubs. His habit of "dodging" from one instrument to another—"sessioneer-

ing" on drums all day, and then playing piano in night club and restaurant in the evening—has always caused confusion, but indirectly, it was the reason Ben clicked for his present post. Playing piano with the band led by talented guitarist Harry Sherman—who took over after Tim Clayton left Lansdowne House—Ben Edwards has become popular with patrons of the resort and, when Harry had finished his contract there, Ben was asked by the management to take over.

Injured Altoist Back to the Fold

HIS many friends in the profession will hasten to join us in congratulating Carl Barreiteau saxist Jimmy Paul on a remarkable recovery following his very serious accident at Ostend a few weeks ago.

It will be remembered that on the way back from their E.N.S.A. tour of the Continent early last June, Carl Barreiteau and the members of his band spent a few hours in Ostend, during which Jimmy Paul fell from a high wall whilst inspecting beach defences, sustaining a fractured skull and innumerable smaller injuries.

Just how well Jimmy has recovered can best be demonstrated by the fact that he is resuming with the band next week (commencing Monday, August 13), when Carl Barreiteau is the B.B.C. "Band of the Week." Although still suffering from shock, of which a distressing deafness is one temporary symptom, Jimmy reckons to be quite well enough to resume his professional life without restriction.

Going back to his accident, Jimmy emphasises the great debt which he feels he owes to Eddie Jepson, the band's trombonist, who ran more than a mile to bring the promptest assistance to Jimmy as he lay injured, and whom the doctors warmly congratulated on his action, saying that had immediate medical assistance not been forthcoming, Jimmy might never have recovered from his injuries.

JOE KAYE'S S.O.S.

BANDLEADER Joe Kaye, of the Norfolk Hotel, Brighton, urgently requires a first-class trumpeter and alto sax doubling clarinet.

With only evening work in a very smart hotel plus all the appeal of the seaside, here's a really good job.

Those interested should write at once to Joe, at the Norfolk Hotel, Brighton, 1.

NEARLY £10,000 FOR MUSICIANS' CHARITIES!

M.S.B.C.s Magnificent War-time Record

WITH ALL OUR READERS AGOG FOR FURTHER NEWS OF THE GREAT ANNUAL JAZZ JAMBOREE, DUE TO TAKE PLACE IN SEPTEMBER, ITS ORGANISERS—THE MUSICIANS' SOCIAL AND BENEVOLENT COUNCIL—HAVE THIS WEEK ANNOUNCED SOME INTERESTING NEWS WHICH COMES AT A MOST APPROPRIATE MOMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT, FROM 1939 TO 1944, THEY HAVE PASSED OVER TO THE MUSICIANS' UNION BENEVOLENT FUND THE SENSATIONAL TOTAL OF £9,566.

The two splendidly conceived and splendidly executed methods which have made the collection of this grand amount possible are, of course, the world-famous Jamboree, and the extensive collecting-box scheme, which is so magnificently supported by the rank-and-file musician everywhere.

TRIBUTE TO "M.M."

Writing of the great success of the Jazz Jamboree, the Council says:—

"... Special mention must be made of the generous-hearted assistance given by the 'Melody Maker.' Difficulties in publication were there, but the paper always came to the forefront with its prominent displays. One could safely say that Jazz Jamboree was sold to 'Melody Maker' readers, and to musicians and their friends. There was little need to go to the general public, thanks to the prominence given by the 'M.M.' to the Concert. All this saved us considerable expense, and enabled us to pass over larger amounts than we could otherwise have done."

We are gratified at the Council's appreciation, and, to carry on the good work, will next week announce full details of this year's Jamboree.

Changes have taken place in the personnel of the Council, chief of these being the return, as Secretary on a full-time basis, of Captain Fred Stone. Fred launched the first Jamboree before joining the Army, and has just been discharged after over five years' service. His many friends will welcome him back to the civilian fold, and will be glad to know he is taking up the good work of the M.S.B.C. again.

Another change is that, at the end of seven years of splendid leadership, Van Phillips has retired from the position of Chairman of the M.S.B.C., owing to the pressure of professional work. His successor is notably

Charles Bohm, who has been an officer of the Council since its inception, first as Trustee, then Hon. Acting Secretary, and then Vice-Chairman.

Pat Dodd has also been elected to join George Hurley as Vice-Chairman; Paul Fenouillet and Dave Fish remain the Trustees; and Alfred Morgan has been re-elected as Hon. Treasurer.

"A number of post-war projects," reports the Council, "all with the object of improving the standards of life and amenities of the professional musician, and the alleviation of distress among musicians and their dependants, are already on the Council's agenda, but without the whole-hearted support of all musicians and those interested in the profession, any efforts of the Council will be nullified."

Fortunately, the Council seems well assured of the all-time future support of both musicians and fans everywhere.

BARRETO AT BLACKPOOL

FAMOUS rumba exponent Don Marino Barreto and his Band, from the London Embassy and Giro's Clubs, will be making a special Variety appearance next week (commencing Monday, August 13) at the Palace Theatre, Blackpool.

Offering will feature Don, fronting his usual Club outfit, somewhat augmented for the occasion, with some special vocalising in Cuban style by Gloria Avory, in addition to the vocal specialities of Marino himself.

Show will endeavour, as much as possible, to present the Band in its usual intimate Club setting, and many new numbers will be played. Date is being undertaken as part of the Barreto Band's regular summer holiday from the Embassy Club. Outfit resumes, at both the Embassy and Giro's Clubs, on August 20.

Embassy Club, by the way, is not closing during its holiday season. Stanley Carter and his Band, from Bates' Club, are playing in a "relief" capacity there. During this current week, and next week, they are playing rumba music in the absence of Marino Barreto.

For the two weeks commencing August 20, Stanley Carter will also arrange the Band to deputise for Jack Wallace and his outfit during their annual vacation from the Embassy.

FELDMAN'S THE HOUSE OF HITS

LEAD WITH SHE BROKE MY HEART IN THREE PLACES

I DON'T CARE IF I NEVER DREAM AGAIN

SWEET DREAMS SWEETHEART

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HERMAN'S NEW BAND IS A SENSATION!

Latest News From New York by LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK MUSICIANS AND JAZZ-LOVERS ARE ALL AGOG THIS WEEK AT THE SENSATION CREATED BY WOODY HERMAN'S BAND ON ITS OPENING NIGHT AT THE PENNSYLVANIA HOTEL. RISING STEADILY IN THE PAST YEAR SINCE ITS COMPLETE CONVERSION TO THE MOST MODERN BRAND OF JAZZ, THE BAND IS NOW WITHOUT QUESTION THE FINEST WHITE GROUP IN THE COUNTRY, AND IS EVEN GIVING THE GREAT HAMPTON BAND STIFF COMPETITION.

Woody almost blew the roof off the place, but there is so much method in his loudness that both management and customers loved it. Frank Sinatra, just back from his European jaunt, dropped in and, between raves about the Herman band, told me that he expects to record two sides with Woody for Columbia next month.

Praise for the Herman stars was divided between Ralph Burns, brilliant young arranger, who is doing so much to shape the band's style; Flip Phillips, truly one of the all-time great men on tenor; Bill Harris, whose trombone style is as unique and compelling as Higgy's; Pete Candoli, a phenomenal trumpeter, part of an altogether amazing brass octet; Chubby ("the Beard") Jackson, who with the impeccable Dave Tough lays the foundation for a perfect rhythm section, aided by guitarist Billy Bauer and a good, newly added pianist, Tony Aless.

KRUPA'S NEW BAND

Woody's own Hodges-like alto, his fine clarinet and hep singing, plus the superior ballad chanting by Frances Wayne, contribute plenty to the band's success. Many of the greatest arrangements, aside from Burns', are "heads" such as only a truly happy and integrated band can dream up.

Among these are "Apple Honey," "North-West Passage," "Flyin' Home" and "Father's Moustache," most of which will be cut (and also, alas! cut down to three minutes) on Columbia.

There was another opening the same night as Woody's. Gene Krupa moved into the Astor. His band, though by no means as exciting as Woody's, is far better and smaller than the one he had six months ago. The string section is gone, as are the vocal quartet and the ersatz drummer; Gene stays on the tubs all the time; and, best of all, Anita O'Day is back, singing as wonderfully as ever. Charlie Venturo's terrific tenor and Tommy Pederson's trombone are the next biggest kicks after Anita.

Along 52nd Street, still crammed with the best music in town, another great new star made his bandiending debut this week when Charlie Parker, a frantic alto man whose style is the exact equivalent of his former partner, Dizzy Gillespie, started with a small group at the Three Deuces, in which Charlie and tenor-man Dan Byas are the only horns, aided by a good rhythm section.

Parker and Byas play some of the same weird and advanced original tunes featured by Dizzy, almost entirely in very fast and fluent unison.

STACY'S NEW BAND

The first record by the new Jess Stacy band was released this week. It is pleasant, very much on the commercial side, and played by a pick-up bunch instead of his new organised group. Mrs. Stacy sings on one side, "Paper Moon."

Also out recently is the first record release in several years by Red McKenzie, in a couple of ballads with Ernie Caceres leading a ten-piece accompanying band and arrangements written by Bobby Hackett (that's right—not Haggart!). Ben Pollack's new record label, Jewell, will have its first release on the market very shortly, featuring Kay Starr, the one ex-Barnet and Venuti singer, in a session under her own name, accompanied by six strings, three horns and four rhythm. The indomitable Irving Mills has not announced any further plans since the preliminary one, a few weeks back, that he would plunge yet again into the recording business.

Timme Rosenkrantz, the Danish "barrelhouse baron" who has spent most of the past decade on this side of the Atlantic, may return very shortly to his native land. He recently organised a fine concert held at Town Hall, featuring Red Norvo and Teddy Wilson.

Phil Moore, playing his first theatre date this week at Loew's State, is quite a big hit commercially. Musically, the best thing in his quintet is the extraordinary guitar work of a young white ex-soldier, Chuck Wayne, formerly with Joe Marsala and originally with the late Clarence Profit.

Across the street from Phil's show, June Christy is breaking up the show with Stan Kenton at the Paramount. You'll hear plenty more about her!

DARROWLAND, Glasgow, is in the news again, the band being fixed for another airing on the evening of Friday, August 17, when they will broadcast an "old-time" programme. Billy McGregor and the boys have all plenty of experience in this brand of music and can be relied on to supply the right atmosphere.

Eddie Shaw's Band had a holiday last week from their duties at the Locarno, Glasgow, their places being taken by a band led by Billy Lambert, well-known local alto man.

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing August 13)

Nat ALLEN and Orchestra.
Hippodrome, Dudley.

Carl BARRITEAU and Band.
Band of the Week, B.B.C.
E.N.S.A. Overseas.

Ivy BENSON and Girls' Band.
Hippodrome, Bristol.

George ELRICK and Band.
Hippodrome, Norwich.

Gloria GAYE and Band.
Coliseum, Portsmouth.

Leslie ("Diver") HUTCHINSON and Band.
Dome, Brighton.

Jack JACKSON and Band.
Hippodrome, Norwich.

Joe LOSS and Band.
Empire, Liverpool.

Vera LYNN
Palace Theatre, Blackpool.

Freddy MIRFIELD and Band.
One-Night Stands, Weston-super-Mare.

Ronnie MUNRO and Orchestra.
Palace, Plymouth.

Harry PARRY and Orchestra.
Hippodrome, Manchester.

Monte REY.
Empire, Newcastle.

Harry ROY and Band.
Hippodrome, Croydon.

Anne SHELTON.
Empire, Wood Green.

Jack SIMPSON and Sextette.
Palace, Dundee.

TROISE and his Mandoliers.
Palace, Reading.

Maurice WINNICK and Orchestra.
Empire, Edinburgh.

Eric WINSTONE and Orchestra.
Palace, East Ham.

HOEY BUSY

STILL going very strong at the "Samson and Hercules" Ballroom, Norwich, is saxist-leader and honoured old-timer of the business, Jerry Hoey, who reports that he has an extremely promising band nowadays, whilst business at the Ballroom is excellent.

Included in Jerry's present band are Tommy Hinsby (piano, accordion and arranger); Ernie Cowell, Stan Alexander, Ivan Gray and Jay Green (reeds); Dave Bruce, "Butch" Rome (the "Finger" trumpets); Frank Bully (trombone), etc.

Jerry Hoey has also formed a new Hawaiian Band, which he presented for the first time at a recent film ball in Norwich. Players include Tony Ranson, Len Argent and Syd Harlow (guitars); Geoffrey Keeley (piano); Ron Turner (accordion); John Peters (drums); Alex Lord (drums, etc.); and "Rosetta" (vocals).

KING AT TORQUAY

FRANK KING, noted clarinetist-leader from Glasgow, who has been making a name in London both at the "Au Bijou" Restaurant in Piccadilly and in films, has settled down for the summer season at the Palm Court Hotel, Torquay.

Enjoying the Devon sunshine with Frank, and forming the lively combination with which he dispenses evening music, are the following well-known boys from Town: Gerry Moore (piano); Les Moss (trumpet); Alan Levitt (tenor sax); R. Swain (drums); and G. Taylor (bass). Vocalising with the band is popular restaurant, club and film figure Geraldine Farrar.

In addition to running the band, Frank also puts over a big floor show at Torquay, with Geraldine Farrar and a number of artists. In the meanwhile, his band at the London "Au Bijou" Restaurant has been left in charge of well-known accordionist Bill Harrison.

U.S. HIT PARADE

Here is the latest available list of the dime most popular songs in America as assessed by the weekly nation-wide chart conducted by the American Tobacco Co. and broadcast in their "Your Hit Parade" programme over the CBS network:

1. DREAM (3-3-2-3-2-1-8-7-3)
2. SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY (1-1-1-1-3-4-3-0)
3. THE MORE I SEE YOU (6-7-8-9-9-0-0-7)
4. BELL BOTTOM TROUSERS (8-8-5-8)
5. GOTTA BE THIS OR THAT
6. YOU BELONG TO MY HEART (4-0-0-0)
7. LAURA (2-2-3-3-2-1-5-7-2-4-8-0)
8. A FRIEND OF YOURS
9. CAN'T YOU READ BETWEEN THE LINES?

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OXFORD M.U. BRANCH FORMING

VAN PHILLIPS, George Hurley and George Edmonds (S.W. District Organiser, M.U.) were distinguished guests at the open meeting just held in Oxford for the purpose of introducing new members to the cultural and financial aims of the Musicians' Union.

Harry Norman (chairman), one of the few members in Oxford, and himself an "ex-pro" (late Herman Darewski, Johnny Rosen, Hungarian Restaurant, etc.), first introduced George Edmonds, who expressed the opinion that a branch was very much overdue in Oxford. He said that he had been given to understand that price-cutting was becoming rampant in the city; there was no locally fixed rate on which a standard could be set, and with the imminent return of numbers of dance players to the district, a complete 100 per cent membership was the sole remedy.

Van Phillips was the next speaker, and, in the course of a highly informative address, discussed the correct attitude in which to approach membership of the Union. George Hurley then addressed the meeting.

Dan Piercy and Harry Morvan, members of the newly constituted Reading branch, told the assembly of their own town, which, regarding matters musical, was analogous to Oxford. They were glad to say that, since about 80 per cent of the dance players had joined the Union, a great improvement had been effected in rates, travelling time was now paid for, etc.

The meeting then closed with a cordial vote of thanks to the visitors. Many entrance forms were then taken by the musicians present, and upon these being received by Mr. Edmonds at Bristol, a meeting will be held to elect officials, band stewards, etc., but it must be emphasised that still more members are needed before the branch can start with the establishment of minimum rates, overtime, dealing with refractory promoters and leaders, etc. Prospective members should apply for an entrance form (the entrance fee is 10s., with a weekly subscription of one shilling) to Harry Norman, 5, Rymer's Lane, Cowley, Oxford. The first Sunday meeting will be advertised on the Wednesday previous in the "Oxford Mail."

ELLIOTT'S MOVE

BILL ELLIOTT announces that, owing to sudden requisitioning of his offices, he is at present carrying on business from his home address: 63, Matfield Court, Lancaster Terrace, W.2. Telephone: Paddington 5371.

Until December 15, when he will be occupying new premises, Bill should be contacted there in connection with his usual band enterprises. At the moment, the Harry Parry Band requires good first and second alto saxmen, a tenor player, and a first-class trombonist. Letters to Bill at the above address will be treated in confidence.

Bill's move has also affected the Jazz Record Shop, so that John Rowe will be continuing that side of the business from his home until suitable premises can be found in the West End. John's address is 39, Berkshire Gardens, N.13.

Oscar Rabin and the Band are back again at Green's Ballroom, Glasgow. Harry Davis composes as usual, and the featured talent includes Terry Devon, Roy Edwards, Bobbie Kevin, Jackie Bonser, and Bernie Fenton, without Novachord but playing piano. Bertie Tobias (tenor), starting off with the local band, he has played with four or five of the visiting big-timers. Bob Smith (bass) was at the Locarno not so long ago.

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Get Together (Paul Jones)
Kunz Medley of Strauss Waltzes
Irving Berlin's Waltz Medley
Ragtime Memories Selection
Dancing Time

Elegant 80's (Waltz Medley)
Merry-Go-Round (Paul Jones)
Kunz Medley of Popular Waltzes
Harry Lauder Songs Selection
Stars and Stripes Selection
Waltz Time

Price 3/- Per Set. Posted 3/2

The Voleta (Original)
Au Revoir (J'Attendrai)
Boston Two Step
Johnston Rag

Chloe (Song of the Swamp)
Deep Purple
Maxina (Original)
Don't Be Angry

AMERICAN HIT REVIVAL SERIES. Price 3/9 Per Set. Posted 3/11

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Anchor's Aweigh
One O'Clock Jump
Blue Skies
South Rampart St. Parade
Moonlight Sonatina
Chinatown, My Chinatown
Two O'Clock Jump

Dark Town Strutters Ball
My Blue Heaven
My Melancholy Baby
Remember
You Made Me Love You
Stampin' at the Savoy
Some of These Days
Somebody Stole My Gal

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THE NEW DUKE

EDDIE JACOBSON'S Record Reviews

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA

*** *"Ain't Got Nothin' But The Blues"* (Don George, Ellington) (V by Al Hibbler with Kay Davis) (Am. Victor D4-4531).
 *** *"I'm Beginning To See The Light"* (Harry James, Ellington, Hodges, Don George) (V by Joya Sherrill) (Am. Victor D4-4544).
 Ellington (pno.) with Jimmy Hamilton (clar.); Johnny Hodges, Otto Hardwick, Albert O. Sears, Harry Howell, Barney (reeds); Taff Jordan, Willis Raymond, "Ray" Nance, Shelton Humphill, William Alonzo Anderson (tpts.); Lawrence Brown, Joe Nanton, Claude B. Jones (lms.); Fred L. Guy (tr.); William A. Greer (dms.); and unidentified bass. Recorded December 1, 1944.

WHAT'S Duke Ellington been up to with his ork during the last three years? Most of you will have read in these columns from time to time of various changes that have taken place in the line-up. But what with the dispute between the A.P.M. and the U.S. recording companies, which commenced in 1942 holding up recording in the States for the better part of two years, and none of the new records made by the band since the dispute was settled having been issued over here—what these changes have meant, few of us have had any means of finding out.

CHANGES

At last, however, H.M.V. have issued two of the records made by the band in 1944, following the settlement of the dispute, and... But first of all let us have a look at the changes. First sensation is that Barney Bigard has gone, his place as clarinetist being taken by Jimmy Hamilton. Also gone is the great tenorman, Ben Webster, and in his place is the to me unknown Albert Sears. Missing, too, are the trumpetsmen, Rex Stewart (who moved into Cootie Williams's chair when Cootie left) and Wallace Jones. They are replaced by Taff Jordan (from the old Chick Webb Band), Shelton Humphill (from the early 1930's Mills Blue Rhythm Band), and "Cats" William Anderson. Yet another absentee is Juan Tizol, who is replaced on trombone by Claude Jones, of the original (1928) Chocolate Dandies and later with Fletcher Henderson.

I am but one of many who have felt that the unique character of the inimitable Ellington ensemble had for long been as much the outcome of a perfect understanding that had grown up between musicians out of years of co-operative effort as of the genius of the Duke himself or the supreme artistry of his men individually. These records, by an aggregation materially different from that which we had known for years as the practically unchanged Ellington ensemble, ought to show whether or not we were right in our opinion, but I don't think it can fairly be said that they do.

VOCALS

Frankly, neither side is up to the earlier Ellington standards. But my belief is that this may be due less to the changes that have taken place, and more to the rather questionably "commercial" aspects of the tunes and the way they have, in consequence, been treated.

Both sides are vocal. I have nothing against the singing of Al Hibbler, even though Joya Sherrill hasn't gone too well with me. She is coy almost to the point of affectation. But, whether the singers had been good or bad, their mere presence in an Ellington record inevitably arouses one's suspicions. Bands like Ellington's don't need singers, any more than I can believe that Ellington ever sincerely believed, or believes, that his music calls for, let alone is improved by, them; and I cannot refrain from suggesting that they are put in only for their box-office appeal to a public which has yet to appreciate all that the Ellington band can achieve without them.

If this is so, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the instrumental parts, too, have been designed with an eye on the sales ledger. Anyway, in "I'm Beginning To See The Light," which is none the more above suspicion as a tune because Harry James has had a finger in the pie, or because it has been a No. 1 hit in America, there are shortcomings of which one could seldom have accused the earlier Ellington line-up, even in its more "commercial" performances. After a typical piano introduction by the Duke and a bass player who is one of the highspots throughout the side, the saxes commence the first chorus. They are not perfectly together, and the wa-wa brass cues behind lack the richness of tone and ease of phrasing that one would have expected.

STILL "THE TOUCH"

Later, in the last eight bars of this same chorus, there is the same slightly uncomfortable feeling that the front line has lost something of its tone and its entrancingly convincing way of doing everything. Behind the aforementioned vocal by Joya Sherrill the accompaniment is all that the Ellington rhythm section ever achieved, but it is not until the very end of the record, where the whole band comes in for the last eight bars, that the ensemble reaches something approaching the Ellington brilliance. Much the same may be said of "I Ain't Got Nothin' But The Blues." The subdued but highly individual sax solo in the first chorus is something you should make a point of hearing and studying; but again the trumpet parts are not above suspicion. There is a tenseness—even an unsteadiness of tempo—about them. In the vocal that follows, Al Hibbler has a style that is none the less pleasing or genuine because he is anything but a shouter. But I can't quite see what Kay Davis's hummed replicatory comments are for, unless they are to enhance the purely "commercial" appeal. However, disturbing as these details are, they are only details. Looked at more broadly, the band still has the Ellington touch, and it may well be that in performances which make less of an attempt to compromise between fan and "commercial" appeal it will prove to be the equal of previous Ellington line-ups. Anyway, I am eagerly awaiting an opportunity to find out.

Jerry Dawson's Northern News THIS B.B.C. BUSINESS

THE war in Europe is ended, and the final disposition of the victors' initial peace plans are being decided, as I write, in Potsdam. The war in the Far East is rapidly reaching what can only be a victorious conclusion for the Allies. In this country the will of the people has brought about the downfall of one Government and substituted another which promises an entirely new order.

So we are gradually reaching the point when things generally can be described as "normal," and with this state of affairs it will become more and more possible—and necessary—for the MELODY MAKER to revert to its original function of being strongly critical of happenings in the world of dance music and light entertainment where these same happenings do not come up to the accepted standard of their kind. During the war years the editorial policy has been that we who write for the paper, be tolerant, knowing only too well the difficulties under which everyone has been working, owing to the calls of industry and the Armed Forces.

This outburst has its origin, as these things usually have, in a simple thing—I'm worried! Yes, I'm worried (not that, I suppose, anyone cares a hoot) about the future of the North of England Regional programme of the B.B.C.—at least as it will affect US. On the front page of the current issue of the "Radio Times," W. J. Haley, Director-General of the B.B.C., makes a statement that should be duly noted by all who expect to take their entertainment from the B.B.C.'s programmes. He says: "It will be the B.B.C.'s aim to make its six Regionalised Home Services alert, living things; steadily developing in strength and character, drawing on their native resources and taking the best from elsewhere. The regions will seek the widest development of technique and talent."

On Sunday, July 29, Mr. John Coatsman, B.B.C. North Regional Director, broadcasting on the inaugural day of the new regional programmes, inferred—as one "daily" headlined its report of his broadcast—that there is "plenty of talent in the North." "If anyone fears," said Mr. Coatsman, "that we'll broadcast just trivial and local appeal stuff, I'll reassure him. We've so much first-class material here that we'll have no time for anything trivial."

Well, Mr. Coatsman, I'll not deny that in the North we have lots of talent—good talent that requires developing. What I would like to know, however, is just exactly how you intend to find it. If the North of England programme is to become an "alert, living thing, steadily developing in strength, etc." it will not be achieved by harking back to pre-war days; and, from what I can gather, that is just what we are to be offered for the time being in the way of "light" entertainment.

This for the simple yet astounding reason that, so far as I can ascertain, there has not yet been appointed a Variety Assistant for the North Region, whose job it would be to arrange all dance music, Variety, and musical feature programmes, etc.; and at present the B.B.C. in the North is NOT holding any auditions.

Now I know only too well that Rome wasn't built in a day, nor can broadcasting jump directly from its important war-time function to that of providing entertainment for the people in one day or one month. But if the Regions are to "seek the widest development of talent and technique," surely it is high time that the staff was appointed to carry out this admirable objective. Even if it be six months before North of England Region settles down to anything like the function that will be expected of it, listeners are going to be very much disappointed with the quality of their local programme unless immediate steps are taken to set into motion the necessary machinery to recruit and develop the latent talent with which the North Country abounds.

The first two steps are obvious—someone must be appointed now to take over the department and be given power and facilities to audition, develop and produce that talent. Only if this is done at once can we Northerners hope to commence 1946 with a rota of bands and artists sufficient to our needs.

Bands in particular will have a strong claim to special consideration. Many will have been auditioned and turned down, in the past year or two, for obvious reasons of personnel difficulties. As the boys return from the Forces and the factories, so the standards of bands will quickly rise to something even better than pre-war levels—so much has the art of dance music progressed even under the supreme difficulties of the war years. Come along, Mr. B.B.C., give us a break! All that we ask is a "square deal"—NOW.

Outside broadcasts will be safe enough in the capable hands of Victor Smythe and his assistant, David Southwood—both tried and trusted—but the studio end does not as yet appear to be receiving any consideration.

The initial issue of the B.B.C. Bulletin to deal with the new Regional programme announced the return of the popular piano "Spot," "Flippant Fingers" (Norman Whiteley)—August 1—and on the same date airings in the "Light" programme for Rochdale's Freddie Platt and Mrs. Wilf Namer, from Liverpool.

Two other old favourites who are to appear in future editions of "Flippant Fingers" are Jack Jordan and Garry Chandler. As to new talent, none is announced and, so far, none appears to be under consideration—even there were someone to consider it!

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BRAND'S ESSENCE OF NEWS

THE week before Bank Holiday we met a man with a load of silver tankards—and a load of trouble. Man of the tankards was well-known Midlands promoter and figure of Neale's Coventry Ballroom, Tommy Beech. Story connected with these convivial articles of tableware is an interesting one.

During their sojourn in this country the Headquarters Command U.K. Base Dance Band (the sparkling outfit which, led by trumpet-ace Peter Lagl, contained altoist and arranging star Ray Ellis) played often at Neale's Ballroom, appearing there every Monday evening for some time, at the resort's special "G.I. and Forces Night."

This Band, in fact, broke all records for popularity figures at Neale's; the night before they left the City the Band held a concert, and realised over £400, which was given to the Mayor of Coventry. Band and bandstand with that heavy box of tankards—so to the explanations thereof. Well, in consideration of the Band's great services in Coventry, Tommy and the other directors of Neale's Ballroom arranged to present each man with a silver tankard, inscribed with his name and the words "Presented by the management of Neale's Ballroom, Coventry, England—and with the arms of the City prominently displayed on each piece of silverware."

A splendid idea; but Tommy Beech declined without present-day shortage of materials, and with the result that, despite all his frantic efforts, the tankards were not ready until just two days after the U.S. bandboys had sailed for home.

Now Tommy is rushing around trying to find a safe and sure way of getting a crate of silver tankards over the Pond; and it seems almost certain that the U.S. Army authorities will give him the necessary help towards completing his munificent gesture to this band of American stylists.

In the meanwhile (this is Jack Marshall writing) I went off myself and said "cheerio" to all these boys on their last night in England, and from W/O. Peter Blackwood, Pete Lagl, Ray Ellis, Mickey Orner, and the rest of the boys, brought back a message saying they would never forget their stay among the musicians of England.

IT is a far cry, as we write to-day, when the European war is over and the Allies are in Berlin, from the days when the African campaign first brought us to the attention of victory under General Montgomery. Under those Eastern skies a young Flying-Officer, Albert Arlen, wrote and dedicated a piano concerto to the men who fought and died at El Alamein.

Last year, this composition, "Alamein Concerto," had its first performance at Cairo at a concert given by the R.A.F. Command Orchestra, conducted by some of the boys before an audience amongst whom were many old desert hands. With acclamation it was received, records were flown to the B.B.C. in London, since when it has been on the air in Palestine, Egypt and Syria.

The first performance in London was a broadcast one, conducted by Reginald Burston, with the Combined Staff Orchestras, and was a great success. Peggy Boehrane, as solo pianist, was brilliant. This was repeated.

It was then broadcast by Jack Payne with his Light Symphony Orchestra, again with Peggy Boehrane as soloist, and this second performance, which was outstanding, has created tremendous interest in the work and in Payne's new orchestra. Incidentally, he has recorded the work for H.M.V. (May list) with the same orchestra (H.M.V. C3428), and Mantovani and his Orchestra, with Mona Lister as soloist, is also recording the "Concerto" for Decca. We are looking forward to Mantovani's first broadcast performance.

Young Albert Arlen is to be congratulated on this memorable work.

AFTER ten months' entertaining the troops in Italy, Greece and Malta, the Southern Sisters have just returned to this country, and are getting ready to go out again.

Sybil Jason, Vera Havell and Dorothy Wayne are the members of this very successful vocal act, and the

reason for their return is that Dorothy is leaving the Sisters to get married.

They would now like to hear from a soprano singer with experience who would care to join them for their next troop-entertaining tour, and they can be contacted at the Melody Maker.

POPULAR ex-Henry Hall vocalist Lee Sheridan has been invited out of the Army. After 31 years' service in the R.A.M.C. during the course of which he toured the Middle East, Persia and Iraq with the famous R.A.M.C. Band, Lee cracked up in health and has been discharged.

He is now taking a holiday, and as soon as he is fit again, intends to get back into the vocal side of the profession. Leaders interested can contact Jim at GLADstone 3513.

IN my "Northern Notes" recently (writes Jerry Dawson) I mentioned that Manchester trombonist Alf Worthington was with the British Forces that liberated the Channel Islands, and now from Stan comes detailed news of the various jobs operating in Jersey, where—as I said before—in spite of the Nazis' efforts to suppress all jazz as being Negroid, enthusiasts on the islands refused to be beaten and carried on their work in all sorts of odd holes and corners, getting some idea of current British styles by secret listening with crystal sets to our radio programmes.

Their difficulties were such that they at times became almost insurmountable—but not quite. Often the boys would travel ten to fifteen miles to a gig—towing their instruments on home-made trailers behind tyre-less bicycles. Often, to help make the journeys a little more comfortable, lengths of old hose-pipe or thick rope were tied on to the cycle wheels—which would look very funny in a Mack Sennett comedy, but wasn't so hot when it became part of everyday life.

Drummers in particular had a very difficult time, for added to the lack of transport was the complete inability to procure sticks, brushes and, in particular, drum-heads, and towards the end of the German occupation E. Lamy, one of the island's leading percussionists, was using home-cured rabbit skins on his drums.

Another grave difficulty was that of keeping what dress-shirts they had clean, as laundry facilities were non-existent, there being little or no soap about, and cotton thread for repairs was also unobtainable.

When one thinks of all these trials and hardships one must have one's head to those who daily fought against it all and managed to keep the flag flying, tattered though it may have been.

What dances and entertainments were allowed by the Hun were strictly censored and live music was completely forbidden under threats of extreme penalties, and so secret jam sessions in cellars and secluded spots became a feature of the jazz lover's life.

One of the few concessions made in the name of humanity was a series of broadcasts over the island's telephone system which were relayed to hospitals and various institutions. Featured once per week on this programme was the Aces Dance Band, led—on trumpet this time—by the aforementioned E. Lamy, along with Eric Harrison (alto clar.); K. Webb (tenor); Mary Amy (piano); W. Stevens (drums); and H. Gordon (bass) with vocalists E. Hassell, S. Corfield and Marjorie Alier.

Currently playing at the Chelsea Ballroom are the Chelsea Rhythm Aces," directed by Eric Harrison on tenor and clarinet; with M. Harper (trumpet); E. Lamy (drums) and trumpet; W. Stevens (bass); and female pianist Julia Harvey.

At the Plaza Ballroom we find altoist Syd Britton leading the following: C. Dingle (tenor); W. Ferrand (drums); B. E. Marinel (trumpet); and Amy Le Crestey (piano).

Most private dances on the island are held at the Sports Stadium, which boasts a four-piece band, again under the leadership of Eric Harrison, with friend Lamy also in the band on trumpet, and a Kirby (piano) and M. Foster (drums).

A glance at these various personell will show the versatility of these boys, two of whom in particular deserve "honourable mention" for the grand work they have done for the "cause" during the five long, miserable years. I refer, of course to Eric Harrison and E. Lamy. Though their efforts were only directed to that much-maligned field of music, there is the stuff that empires are built of. May the future years bring them and their fellow-musicians the success that they so richly deserve!

In conclusion, may I suggest that E.N.S.A. make some efforts—and strong ones—to send some top-line entertainment to the Channel Isles? There may not be many uniformed soldiers

SAVED BY A SHAVING BRUSH



You needn't strain your eyesight, it is an ordinary shaving-brush—but it saved the life of Bill Butler, violinist and guitarist, brother of well-known London clarinetist (now Radio-Officer) Teddy Cutler. Bill is showing the fateful brush to Teddy, in the picture above.

His fiddle laid aside, and khaki donned, Bill saw stirring service in Wavell's Army; was captured in Crete, escaped, and lived for nearly a year as a guerrilla fighter among Greek patriots.

In German hands at last, he spent the rest of the war in various P.O.W. camps—but you're all waiting to know about that shaving-brush. Well, after several short-lived escapes, Bill was liberated by the Russians.

On a day of great confusion, he stole a German car to get away. Knowing, however, that the Russians would naturally fire on such a vehicle, he broke into a paint store, and, using his shaving-brush, roughly painted a Union Jack on the bonnet of the vehicle. It apparently worked, because Bill got right through to the American lines, and was flown back to England for much-needed medical attention—of which the replacement of teeth knocked out by a brutal German rifle-butt was just one item—in a matter of nine hours.

Bill's life as a guerilla reads like the stuff of which novels are made; how later he played the guitar to a music-mad German guard's violin, so that companions could listen, on a portable radio, for the B.B.C. news that would mean Germany was collapsing, sounds also the breath of purest romance. Now Bill and Ted Butler are looking forward to nothing so much as getting back to "civvies," and resuming their musical life all over again.

on the islands, but the people who so bravely fought the enemy with all its passive resources surely rank as high in priority as do factory workers over here.

Here is a chance for the Entertainments National Service Association to live up to its name—and a chance for popular bands and artists to do some lasting good for the future of their profession in a spot that surely deserves some practical sympathy.

"BACK HOME," the revue put on by air crew ex-prisoners of war from Stalag Luft 3, which has attracted so much attention in the Press, will be back next week at the Stoll Theatre last Saturday. The revue has to come off to make way for Jack Hylton's new crazy show, "For Crying Out Loud," which opened at the Stoll last Monday (August 6), and will run until the end of the week.

A new home has been found for the Stalag Luft 3 boys, however, for one week only. That is at His Majesty's Theatre, where the revue played from August 6 until the end of this week.

The show itself, which is sponsored by Jack Hylton, gave an interesting sample of the kind of entertainment which the boys had to make their own amusement during the long stay in camp, and it is not the kind of thing people usually picture when the term "amateur theatricals" is used!

The programme was composed largely of satirical sketches, pulled up by musical interludes, both serious and burlesque. An exceedingly well-designed ballet sequence featured a modern interpretation of "Pine Top Smithe's Boogie Woogie," while a more than competent vocal quartet obliged with "Knock-Kneed Sal" in broken Anglo-American dialect, and a swing version of "Little Red Riding Hood" sung in Polish!

Swing appeal was supplied by Johnny Fender's Band, conducted by Ron Bush, details of which outfit were given in this paper some weeks back.

After the promise shown at rehearsal, the band disappointed musically—sounding, paradoxically, under-rehearsed. They took "Southampton and Cambridge" at much too fast a tempo so that the brass got bogged down a little, despite which

the band went over well enough, their act being lively and pleasing to look at.

In fact, the whole revue was a triumph for amateur talent, and it was received with great enthusiasm. It should do well if it goes on tour.

THE weather favoured Riverboat Shufflers last Sunday week, when the West London Rhythm Club held its second Shuffle of the year on the good ship "Britannia."

There were one or two alarming patches of cloudy weather, but soon the sun broke through and became so hot during the early afternoon that an epidemic of stripping ensued which bared the jazz-worthy torsos of such notabilities as Ralph Venables, Percy Pring, Rex Harris and a few more.

There were rather less passengers than on former excursions, and therefore more room on the boat and none of the chaos usually to be found in the region of the bar. In view of this, the bright sunshine, and the George Webb's Dixielanders' inspiring music, the trip was probably the most pleasant of the Shuffles so far held.

Of course, things were not so good for the organisers, who expected better support and really deserved it. Amplification was provided throughout the boat, there were attractive lunch boxes, and the trip was better planned than last time. First stop was Chertsey, where the boat pulled up for an hour to allow legs to be stretched, and where the Webb boys played to a large and admiring audience on the river bank.

The return journey was made without official stops, but at one of the many locks, where a temporary halt was inevitable, Rex Harris and Percy Pring divested themselves of their shirt and pants and dived into the river for a swim.

Eventually the boat pulled in at Richmond with the band blowing hard, whereupon an anxious pier-master approached and signified that music-making was definitely not permitted at that landing-stage.

An enjoyable day was had by all present. It is to be hoped that Rex, and Geoff Armstrong, will continue to organise these affairs in 1946 and onwards.

SOUTHAMPTON AND CAMBRIDGE CONTESTS

1945 CAMBRIDGESHIRE CHAMPIONSHIP
Wednesday, August 1, at The Guildhall, Cambridge.

Winners: THE DOWN BEAT (tenor, trumpet, piano, guitar, bass, drums). All coms: Les Baker, 113, Milton Road, Cambridge. (Phone: Cambridge 324.)

Individualists' awards for Tenor Percy Seely, Guitar (Gordon Dann), Drums (Brian Lister). Hon. mention for Trumpet (Colin Stuart). Special cup for Best Small Band competing.

Second: HARRY CHESHIRE'S "CATS" (tenor, piano, bass, drums). 7, Hamilton Road, Colchester, Essex.

Individualists' awards for Piano Guy H. Walker, Bass (Leonard F. Nash). Hon. mention for Tenor (Roy F. Matthews).

The Cambridge Rhythm Club Quintet were placed third. They won the individualists' awards for Alto (Ronald Bowman) and Trumpet (Raymond J. Edgworth), and an hon. mention for Piano (Timothy Moore).

A PROPOS: our remark in the "M.M." for July 28 that at the 1945 South Yorks Championship at Sheffield on July 18 "the competing bands may not have been of a very high standard," we have received a letter from J. E. Stowcroft of the Astorians Orchestra, Doncaster, in which he writes:

"May I point out that there are at least half a dozen good bands in this town, and that goes for Leeds, Sheffield, and other surrounding towns."

Most of these bands would like to enter a "M.M." contest. The reason they don't is because they either have or prefer to play "Palais" style, and they feel that no matter how well they do so they do not stand a chance against the little swing-tette outfits whose style you seem to favour.

If Mr. Stowcroft is right in his opinion of the outlook of the larger bands in his district, we can only repeat once again how wrong they are.

As we have pointed out more than once, even if "M.M." contest judges have any personal partialities for any particular style (which is doubtful), they have no opportunities to indulge in them.

All contests are judged on the same standardised system. Marks up to carefully proportioned maximums, are allotted for such features as Tuning, Intonation, Balance, Tone, Expression, Accuracy, Rhythm, Style, General Sense of Interpretation, etc.

All these features apply equally to the larger Palais-style bands and smaller swing groups, and it is less what a band does and much more how it does it on which contests are won and lost.

Moreover, to suggest that small swing bands in most contests is entirely incorrect.

Of the 4 dance (as distinct from

swing) band championships so far held this season—
2 were won by 12-piece bands.
4 11-piece ..
5 10-piece ..
4 9-piece ..
5 8-piece ..
Of was won by a 7-piece band
10 were won by 6-piece bands
7 5-piece ..
2 4-piece ..

It will thus be seen that even if every winning band of seven or less was a swing band, they won only 20 contests, whereas the larger bands of 8 and more, which are always more or less Palais type bands, have won 25.

And even this does not give an accurate picture of the position.

For every five bands of less than nine which have competed in contests, there has been only one of nine or more players, and bands of ten, or at any rate eleven, and over are conspicuous by their rarity. If only because there are so many more of them, on the law of average smaller bands must be expected to win more contests than larger bands.

Actually, taking into consideration few contests the larger bands with small bands, large bands have won more than their share of contests.

The truth of this will be realised all the more when we add that quite a few contests the larger bands do not have been won by a large or even medium sized band for the simple reason that there was not one in the events.

This was the position at the 1945 Cambridgeshire Championship, presented on Wednesday of last week (August 1) by Mr. Harry Bradford at the Guildhall, Cambridge.

Of the five coms. judged by Johnnie Marks and Edgar Jackson, not one was larger than six strong. But anything they lacked in size they certainly made up for in enterprise.

The Down Beat, which won the event, consisted entirely of youngsters. They may yet have to acquire the experience and fine musicianship which spell class, but they have the right idea and imagination.

Their young trumpet player is only 15 years old and entirely self-taught. He needs finishing training by a first-class dance professional (any offers from any of our big-timers?) but we hope there is every chance that he may become a top-flight star.

Much the same may be said of the young tenor, who already has one of the finest hot tones and sense of swing we have heard across in a contest.

The A.R.P. limit on the hall (still in existence, although most people are already on the way to forgetting what A.R.P. stood for) is 500.

This number was reached quite early in the evening.

And by the time the contest started the hall was full to capacity.

CONTEST FIXTURES

NEW BRIGHTON.—To-morrow, Friday, August 10, at the Tower Ballroom (7 to 11.45 p.m.). The 1945 Wirral Championship. Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. (Phone: Ainsdale 78238.)

LONG EATON.—Thursday, August 30, at the Rialto Ballroom 8 p.m. to midnight. The 1945 Trent Valley Championship. Organiser: Mr. Basil A. Halliday, 82, Wiltshire Road, Long Eaton, Notts. (Phones: Long Eaton 243 and 597.)

MANCHESTER.—Friday, August 31, at the Lovenshulmo Palais de Danse (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Northern Counties Championship. Organiser: Mr. Philip Moss-Vernon, 17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: TEMPLE Bar 8140.)

LINCOLN.—Friday, next week, August 17, at the Drill Hall (8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Lincolnshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Len Marshall, "Arcadia," Hallam Grove, Lincoln. (Phone: Lincs 8302.)

GOVENTRY.—Thursday, August 23, at the Gaiety Ballroom (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Warwickshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leics. (Phone: Hinckley 210.)

LANGLY.—Friday, August 24, at the Ritz Ballroom (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 West Wales Championship. Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. (Phone: Ainsdale 78238.)



They look happy, don't they? And they ought to be happy, seeing that they are Ivy Benson and her Girls' Band, off at last on their long-awaited Continental tour, previously delayed by the severe illness of their leader. Girls probably looked (temporarily) less happy during the actual journey to their first Belgian port of call, which took them over 20 hours, during which trumpet-ace Norma Birch unluckily became ill and had to be taken to hospital in Ostend. Girls have now commenced the first of the shows in which they will play to thousands of Service personnel on their hectic tour.

U.S. Jive Jottings

READERS might be interested to learn that Shep Fields and his Orchestra are now on the Continent. They were heard over the A.F.N. from 10.30-11 p.m. on July 26, relayed from the Olympia Theatre in Paris. Shep, as is well known, has a "Rippling Rhythm" outfit. There is no brass section, just reeds, rhythm section, plus a harp.

On the programme, swing numbers such as "Stomping at the Savoy" were played, solos being taken in various numbers by tenor sax, clarinet and electric guitar.

Billy Eckstine continues his record-breaking sweep through the Southern States. Last month the band barnstormed through Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana, and for August they start off with a number of one-night stands in Texas.

RKO pictures are reported to be considering Billy for male lead opposite Lena Horne in their long-delayed musical production, "Sweet Georgia Brown," which is slated to begin shooting this summer after numerous postponements.

But with Eckstine—known nationally as "The Sepia Sinatra"—it is a case of "My band goes with me," and he is not prepared to abandon such a promising outfit for a film deal. Said Billy: "I'm not interested in any deal, whether for movies or radio, unless the band is included."

Count Basie, who currently has two of his records among the nation's best-selling ten—namely, "Red Bank Boogie" and "That Old Feeling"—took his band to the Columbia studios recently to wax six new sides.

Among the titles were "On Basie Street," penned by "New York Daily Mirror" columnist, Nick Kenny, and "Jumpin' Jim," which is a typical Basie jump piece written by the Count and his Press agent, Jim McCarthy.

On July 12 Columbia announced the release of a Basie coupling—"Jimmy's Blues," the latest Little Jimmy Rushing effort, and "Taps Miller," the latter being once again typical Basie jumberoo, written by the Count in conjunction with trumpet star Buck Clayton.

Paul Baron, C.B.S. staff conductor, who is heard over the air three nights weekly on a lot of hit recordings lately, recently made an album of discs with singer Mildred Bailey.

They recorded a set of standards, most of which have become identified with Mildred over the period of years during which she has rated as a top-flight singer. Incidentally, it was Baron who conducted and scored all the music on last summer's C.B.S. network feature, "Mildred Bailey and Company."

After an absence of four years, the Hot Record Society has returned to the recording field with the release of two Django Reinhardt sides, made with the Rex Stewart Big Four when Ellington's orchestra was in Paris before the war.

The titles are "Django's Jump" and "Low Cotton," both written by Rex, and the line-up is Rex on cornet, Django guitar, and Barney Bigard and Billy Taylor on clarinet and bass, respectively.

There are still innumerable recording sessions taking place each month. Among the most interesting of recent dates have been those: George Zack, pianist on some of the Muggsy Spanier Ragtime sides, for Commodore label, four piano solos, accompanied by Danny Alvin on drums; "Blue and Sentimental," "Black and Blue," "Everybody Loves My Baby" and an untitled blues. . . . Miff Mole's, with Muggsy, Pee-Wee and the Nick's gang, for Manhattan label: six sides, including "Livery Stable Blues" and "Original Dixieland One-step." . . . The Barney Bigard Quintet, with Joe Thomas (trumpet) and John Guarneri (piano), for Kennote: "Rose Room" and "Beaumont's Quette" and "Borobudor." . . . Joe Marsala's Band, for Musicraft: "Southern Comfort" and "Don't Let It End," "Lover" and "It's Gotta Be This and That."

Oning to the number of bands and members of the public out of town on holiday, the London Counties Championship, due to have been held on Saturday (11th) at Wealdstone, has been cancelled.

COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

MAX'S MONTHLY RECOMMENDATION

MY last selection—Bechet's "Maple Leaf Rag"—Sweetie Dear—covered the month of April. For May we had the unexpected pleasure of two really important releases, both of which must be recommended without reservation. The first was Morton's "King Porter Stomp," and the other the Mezz-Ladner coupling.

I have made it a point to devote a good deal of space to these selections in order to explain why I think them good jazz. And the policy seems to have met with success, judging from letters written by "novices" who thank me for assisting them towards an appreciation of jazz.

But, with two discs to cover, space won't allow a full write-up over the qualities of "Royal Garden Blues" and Mezzrow's "Comin' On With The Come On"—many of which could well apply to the present sides.

The main distinction here is that the record presents a two-piece front line instead of the usual trio, with consequent loss of fullness in the ensemble passages.

But Ladner and Mezz do very well together—the latter can scarcely be beaten for backing up a trumpet lead—and their breaks in "Royal Garden" are a sheer delight.

Once again, special note should be made by all aspiring jazz drummers of the wonderful playing of Manzie Johnson on these sides. Throughout "Royal Garden" he lays down a beat which would inspire anyone to swing. For me, this is the better side of the two. It is to be found on R.M.V. B9416.

For the second of the recommendations we are able to print a short review by Charles Willford, who is well known as jazz critic and R.R.C. script writer. Charles wrote this before the B.H.R.S. announced its impending releases, of course, so that last week's "Corner" gave answer to the appeal in his final sentence.

Charles Willford writes on "KING PORTER STOMP" and "THE PEARLS."

Composed and played by Jelly Roll Morton (Brunswick 03584).

"The British Hot Record Society, for their first release, chose the best available piano solo by Jelly Roll Morton. These sides may indeed be the best of all examples of Jelly's style. They give us two of his most notable compositions, played at the peak of his early or knock-em-out form; they are more typical of Morton's particular contribution to jazz than the brilliant and sensitive but carefully studied playing in his famous documentary album for General.

"The British Hot Record Society were right. There are just two of the many types of jazz that are entirely unavailable in the British catalogues: early piano records of near-ragtime music, and the blues singing of race artists. It was right to choose a raggy example of Jelly

Roll, both because of the importance of this music in the development of jazz and because of the revival of interest in ragtime that now seems to be evincing itself.

"King Porter Stomp" and "The Pearls" are well-known compositions of Jelly Roll in rather differing styles. "King Porter" is one of his earliest pieces, and is the most typical example of his musical ideas in their fundamental form, which, of course, means jazzed-up ragtime. It is constructed exactly in the pattern of a rag, with four separate strains, each of 16 bars, and to the accompaniment throughout of the unvarying ragtime left-hand rhythm.

Yet on a closer examination it is seen that the points of difference from ragtime are as many as the points of similarity; and, in fact, at first hearing it is evident that this is unmistakably a piece of jazz.

"Obvious differences from a rag are the introduction of so-called 'blue notes' (minor thirds stressed and repeated above a major chord in the bass—a harmonic clash which would have appalled a straight ragman), a reliance on the impact of repetitive rhythms rather than on melodic interest, and the more Negroid, more crudely physical atmosphere of the music.

"King Porter Stomp" is true jazz, but it is jazz at an embryonic stage at which its evolution from ragtime is still clearly visible, together with the first admixture of blues influences in the presence of blue harmonies; and it is in this that the interest and value of the record lies.

"Jelly Roll claimed to have written 'King Porter Stomp' as early as 1906. But it is inconceivable that this piece could have made a sudden appearance in the middle of a decade of genteel ragtime, and it cannot have reached its final form till about fifteen years later.

"It is possible, however, that the number was invented or collected by Jelly Roll in his youth as a straight rag, and that its development into jazz took place slowly over the intervening years in the course of the many hundreds of performances he undoubtedly gave of it.

"The Pearls" is a prettier and distinctly less Negroid composition than "King Porter." The first two strains are in typical 16-bar form, and resemble fairly closely a rag of about 1908. The first strain might even pass unnoticed in a late Joplin rag—it has some resemblances to the third strain of "Fig Leaf Rag."

"Jelly seems uncomfortably aware of the fact in this particular version of the number, for he uses the theme of the first strain for his introduction only, and abandons the melody when he comes to the strain proper in favour of a rather indecisive improvisation on the underlying chords.

The third and last strain of "The Pearls" is very different in form; it is a steady one-two tonic-and-dominant marching bass. It therefore adds to the instructive

value of the record by demonstrating yet another source of embryo jazz! "It is to be hoped the B.H.R.S. will follow this important record with other examples of this type of early jazz piano, and also of that other notable absentee from the company's lists, the Negro blues singer."

PERSONNEL QUERIES

D. McLean points out to us that at the Joo Venuti session which produced "My Dancing Lady" (14255) and "Everything I Have Is Yours" (14256)—see page 207, "H.D." 1943 edition—there may have been several more titles made. "Build A Little Home" (14253), which was released here on Rex 8169B, is obviously one, and '54 must be another. We'd like particulars.

H. Stein, of Hackney, writes that he has just acquired two of the Syncopated Band records—Actuelle 10619, "The New S.J.B. playing 'Land Of Cotton Blues'" and "Do Doodle Dum"; and 10527, labelled Syncopated Band, playing "I've Got The Wonder Where He Went Blues"/"Liza." Both records sound like five- or six-piece groups with trumpet, trombone, clarinet, and rhythm.

These discs have long been the subject of contention. Can anyone now throw light on them?

Alan Hare recently raised a query concerning the possibility of a second trumpet on the Molers' "Moaning Low" (Parlo. R-849). Ralph Venables has been going into the question of the Moler trumpeters recently, with useful assistance from Mannie Klein, Leo McConville, Red Niehois, and Mill himself. Here seems to be the situation: Every session up to and including "New Twister" and "Nichols" "Shim-me-sha-wabble" and "You Took Advantage" sessions—McConville, "Wild Out Joe" session—McConville and Klein, "That's A Plenty" session—McConville and Klein, "Moaning Low" session—Napoleon and Klein, "After You've Gone" session—Napoleon, "Navy Blues" session—Napoleon.

CONTEST REPORT

(Continued from page 5)

Bass (Robert Cook) and Drums (Leslie Edgington). Judges were Ronnie Chamberlain, Vic Lewis and Edgar Jackson (President).

The 1945 East Hampshire Championship, presented last Friday (3rd) by Philip Moss-Vernon, in Southampton's magnificent Guildhall, differed from many contests in that of the eight entries no fewer than four came in the category of big bands.

There was one 8-piecer, two 10-piecers and one 11-piecer, and those who still feel that big bands have less chance of winning than the smaller ones will be interested to learn not only that the winning band—Bill Cole and his Clubmen—are an 8-piece combination, but that Phil Tate and his Orchestra, who came third, are a 10-piece outfit.

It was a tough fight for the first two places, Cole's Clubmen just beating the smaller swing Woodchoppers on better treatment of their numbers and more colour and character in their playing.

The larger bands failed to beat them not because they played a more conventional "Palais" style, but because their performances, in addition to being rhythmically somewhat less inspired (the phraseology was seldom more than rather trite), also lacked the same standard of musicianship.

The heat did not prevent an attendance of little short of 800 at what was just about top price for any special attraction at the hall of about double the charge for ordinary dances.

The standard was unusually high. Not only were the first two bands good enough to have won nine out of any ten championships, but the tail end didn't fall away to anything like the extent it usually does.

But this wasn't all the customers had to give them what was without doubt a grand evening.

Acting as house band were none other than Freddie Mitchell and his Garbage Men—those grand, noisy, Dixieland heroes of many contests. They got even hard-bolled judges Vic Lewis, Ronnie Chamberlain and Edgar Jackson so excited that all three of them—including irrepressible Edgar Jackson, who hasn't touched a set of drums for over a year—joined up with the Garbage Men in a terrific last-minute bash.

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