

'Death Valley's' Spot Booking Gets Results

By DOROTHY B. McCANN
Vice-President,
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McCann-Erickson late in 1952 faced a unique problem. We were producing "Death Valley Days" on film for our sponsor, Pacific Coast Borax, and had then to decide how to expose the show to video audiences. We decided to go against current practices, and to spot schedule nationally the show ourselves on local stations instead of using a network. And we also decided to

available to other TV programs. We also had the services of a writer, Ruth Woodman, who had been with the radio show for many years.

Proved Success

After a full season on TV with this video film series, we feel we have proved that both regular weekly slotting and networking are not always necessary to the advertiser to get results. Many broadcasters, of course, have maintained that both practices are necessary for the advertiser. But this is not so in other media such as magazines and newspapers.

And we have found with our dramatic show that not only can choice time periods be bought for alternate week programing, but that such scheduling will also bring excellent ratings. There has been a variation of, at most, only 10 points between our summer and winter ratings. For example, our September Nielsen was 28.1; our June Nielsen was 24.5.

We have also learned that the early evening hours for the average family are generally given over to children. Consequently, we have discarded many of the 7:30-8 p.m. time periods we had last season and acquired more later in the evening, between 9 and 10:30. And as time has opened up, the local stations have co-operated and given us first choice at these select time periods. We originally started out with 64 stations, but this season we will be on 73.

One Problem

The only trouble we have had with scheduling "Death Valley Days" has been in one and two-station markets, where time has not been too readily available. Cities like St. Louis, Minneapolis, Milwaukee and Buffalo were difficult to buy, but after a time many of them, too, accepted our program.

In New York City we did not get quite the exposure we wished, because the two stations owned by the larger networks seem to dominate the metropolitan area, and could not clear the time we desired.

Our first year's experience has led to the formation of a policy on re-runs. "Death Valley Days" was re-run six times during the summer months, after it had been on 39 weeks. Because of the enormous turnover in audiences, we believe that re-running is worthwhile for sponsors.

Big Results

In the face of the rising costs of our show, Pacific Coast Borax is extremely happy over the reception it has met from the public. The sales figures on 20 Mule Team Borax, one of the products made by Pacific, have demonstrated the show's impact on consumers. And there has been a tremendous rise in the bulk busi-

ness done by Pacific Coast Borax, a market we were not trying to reach directly with this program, but which we seem to have reached just the same.

Strangely enough, the program seems to have had another tangential result. The advertiser's resort hotel, Furnace Creek Inn in Death Valley, has had an increase in the number of visitors from 235,000 in 1952 to about 370,000 in 1953.

We realize that the resort business has generally been better this year than last, but we feel that the great increase in the number of visitors can be attributed in part to the film program.

WXYZ-TV

Det. Station Runs Movies Sun. Morns

DETROIT, Nov. 28. — John Pival, WXYZ-TV's station manager, is giving some competition to the familiar Saturday midnight show at the movies by running late movies from 1:00 to 3:00 a.m., Sunday mornings.

Formerly a theater manager himself, Pival understands popular show trends here and decided that many people do not have the time to see good film offerings during the week. Hence, he will program only the top films available for this period. Typical films set for early programs are "High Conquest" and "Great Flamarion."

A spokesman for the station predicted that, with the film business releasing better films for the air, "this should prove to be one of the most popular shows on television." The time has been bought by TV Buyers Guild.

Lakeside Gets 'Adventure' Pix

NEW YORK, Nov. 28.—Lakeside TV Company has acquired syndication rights to "Adventure Is My Job," a 15-minute color series, filmed and narrated by free-lance writer-photographer Hal H. Harrison. Black and white prints will be made available for the current market.

Harrison has already filmed 13 quarter hours on location here and abroad, with 52 planned overall. His photo-story yarns have appeared in Life, Saturday Evening Post, Colliers and other top-grade magazines.

QUICK TAKES

President Morton W. Scott of Studio City TV Productions last week signed Richard Jaekel to play the title role in "Billy the Kid," third of the "Outlaws of the Century" series, with Jim Davis and Mary Castle heading the cast. Lyle Talbot also was set for a role in another in the telefilm series, "Quantrell and His Raiders," which currently is in production. . . . Stuart Reynolds, Sovereign Productions proxy, has added Nancy Hale, Lou Nova, Dale Van Sickle and Steve Conte to the cast of "Wild Luke's Boy," which Al Green is directing with Alan Young as star. Reynolds also signed Claudia Barrett and Jack Lomas for supporting roles opposite Zasu Pitts in "Oh, My Aunt." Both of the Sovereign films are for the "General Electric Theater" telefilm series. . . . Casts were completed last week for two "Cowboy G-Men" telefilms, "Chippewa Indians" and "Center Fire." Producer Henry Donovan signed Lyle Talbot, Rick Vallin, Bob Rice, Harry Hickox, Jay Brands, Phil Arnold and Hal Hopper. . . . Kenner Kemp has been appointed recording secretary of the Screen Extras' Guild, succeeding Beulah Parkington, who resigned because of ill health. Appointed to fill board of directors vacancies were Anna Mabry and Connie Conrad. . . . Philip Terry has been inked with Screen Gems to play the top supporting role to Ida Lupino and Jack Lemmon in "Marriageable Male" for "Ford Theater." . . . Also inked last week was Madge Meredith for the feminine lead in two of the "Cowboy G-Men" series which co-star Russell Hayden and Jackie Coogan.

BILLBOARD FILM GUIDE

Syndicated Pix ARB Multi-City Ratings

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KANSAS CITY 5 STATIONS			
China Smith	Adv.	WHD-T-7:00-7:30	6.0
Foreign Intrigue	Adv.	WDAF-W-10:00-10:30	15.6
Jackson and Jill	Comedy	KMBC-Su-5:30-6:00	7.4
Amos 'n' Andy	Comedy	KMBC-W-10:30-11:00	12.6
Life of Riley	Comedy	WDAF-Th-10:00-10:30	24.6
Victory at Sea	Docum.	WDAF-Su-5:30-6:00	15.4
Favorite Story	Drama	KCMO-T-10:00-10:30	11.6
Files of Jeffrey Jones	Mystery	WDAF-T-10:00-10:30	17.4
Boston Blackie	Mystery	WDAF-Th-9:30-10:00	28.4
City Detective	Mystery	KCMO-Th-9:30-10:00	7.2
Telemews Weekly	News	WDAF-Su-9:45-10:00	4.4
Telesports Digest	Sports	WHB-W-11:30-12:00	0.4
Big Play Back	Sports	KCMO-S-8:45-9:00	5.2
Madison Square Garden	Sports	KCMO-S-9:00-9:30	2.4
Cisco Kid	West.	WDAF-Su-5:00-5:30	41.8
Cowboy G-Men	West.	KCMO-Su-5:00-5:30	8.4
Hopalong Cassidy	West.	WDAF-S-11:30-12:00	15.2

MIAMI 1 STATION			
I Led Three Lives	Adv.	WTVJ-T-10:30-11:00	32.4
Foreign Intrigue	Adv.	WTVJ-S-10:00-10:30	49.5
Cisco Kid	West.	WTVJ-M-5:15-5:45	32.2

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL 3 STATIONS			
Foreign Intrigue	Adv.	KSTP-Su-9:30-10:00	18.9
I'm the Law	Adv.	KSTP-F-7:30-8:00	18.4
Life of Riley	Comedy	KSTP-Su-6:00-6:30	32.2
Favorite Story	Drama	WCCO-Su-9:00-9:30	23.9
Front Page Detective	Mystery	WMIN-W-9:30-10:00	5.4
Range Rider	West.	WCCO-M-5:00-5:30	11.1
Cisco Kid	West.	WCCO-W-5:00-5:30	8.5
Gene Autry	West.	WCCO-Th-5:00-5:30	5.8
Cowboy G-Men	West.	WCCO-S-4:30-5:00	8.5
Cisco Kid	West.	WCCO-S-5:00-5:30	14.1
Hopalong Cassidy	West.	WCCO-S-6:00-6:30	23.5

NORFOLK 2 STATIONS			
Foreign Intrigue	Adv.	WTAR-T-9:00-9:30	39.5
Captured	Adv.	WVEC-F-7:00-7:30	1.7
Life of Riley	Comedy	WVEC-F-8:30-9:00	7.8
My Favorite Story	Drama	WTAR-Th-8:30-9:00	6.1
Boston Blackie	Mystery	WTAR-T-7:00-7:30	44.2
Cisco Kid	West.	WTAR-Th-6:00-6:30	37.0

QUAD-CITY 2 STATIONS			
Favorite Story	Drama	WHBF-Th-10:00-10:30	18.2
Boston Blackie	Mystery	WHBF-W-6:30-7:00	28.1
Gene Autry	West.	WHBF-Su-12:30-1:00	11.6
Range Rider	West.	WOC-Su-5:30-6:00	20.7
Wild Bill Hickock	West.	WOC-W-5:00-5:30	12.5

PROVIDENCE 1 STATION			
Foreign Intrigue	Adv.	WJAR-T-10:30-11:00	24.6
The Unexpected	Adv.	WJAR-Th-10:30-11:00	24.6
Life of Riley	Comedy	WJAR-F-8:30-9:00	57.3
Favorite Story	Drama	WJAR-Th-8:30-9:00	57.7
I'm the Law	Mystery	WJAR-M-10:30-11:00	31.7
Boston Blackie	Mystery	WJAR-W-10:30-11:00	28.6
Telemews	News	WJAR-M to F-7:00-7:15	14.9
Big Play Back	Sports	WJAR-M-7:30-7:45	22.6
Range Rider	West.	WJAR-Su-6:30-7:00	42.0
Gene Autry	West.	WJAR-M-6:00-6:30	39.3

SAN DIEGO 3 STATIONS			
I Am the Law	Adv.	XETV-M-7:30-8:00	21.4
Captured	Adv.	KFSD-T-7:00-7:30	5.2
Ramar of the Jungle	Adv.	XETV-Th-7:00-7:30	15.5
China Smith	Adv.	XETV-Th-7:30-8:00	17.4
Dangerous Assignment	Adv.	XETV-F-8:00-8:30	9.5
Big Game Hunt	Adv.	XETV-S-4:30-5:00	2.2
Life of Riley	Comedy	KFMB-T-9:00-9:30	15.2
Abbott and Costello	Comedy	XETV-W-7:00-7:30	17.4
Amos 'n' Andy	Comedy	KFMB-F-6:15-6:45	11.7
Counterpoint	Drama	XETV-M-8:00-8:30	16.7
My Favorite Story	Drama	KFMB-F-9:00-9:30	13.3
Files of Jeffrey Jones	Mystery	KFMB-Su-8:30-9:00	10.0
Heart of the City	Mystery	XETV-F-7:30-8:00	11.4
Professor Yes or No	Quiz	XETV-W-7:45-8:00	1.4
Gene Autry	West.	XETV-M-7:00-7:30	10.8
Cisco Kid	West.	KFMB-T-7:00-7:30	20.9
Range Rider	West.	KFMB-Th-7:00-7:30	26.8
Hopalong Cassidy	West.	XETV-F-7:00-7:30	15.2

SEATTLE-TACOMA 3 STATIONS			
Title of Show	Category	Station-Day-Time	October ARB Rtg.
Foreign Intrigue	Adv.	KING-W-9:30-10:00	28.7
Badge 714	Adv.	KING-W-10:30-11:00	14.0
Dick Tracy	Adv.	KMO-Th-7:00-7:30	1.3
Dangerous Assignment	Adv.	KING-S-9:00-9:30	33.6
Life of Riley	Comedy	KING-Th-8:30-9:00	56.6
Orient Express	Drama	KING-M-8:30-9:00	30.4
Favorite Story	Drama	KING-T-8:00-8:30	40.0
Counterpoint	Drama	KMO-T-9:00-9:30	12.5
Royal Playhouse	Drama	KMO-F-8:30-9:00	8.7
Old American Barn Dance	Musical	KMO-F-9:30-10:00	2.6
Hollywood Half Hour	Mystery	KMO-Su-10:00-10:30	3.8
Front Page Detective	Mystery	KMO-T-10:00-10:30	3.0
I'm the Law	Mystery	KTNT-Th-10:00-10:30	13.8
Heart of the City	Mystery	KMO-F-9:00-9:30	9.4
Boston Blackie	Mystery	KTNT-F-10:30-11:00	24.2
Big Play Back	Sports	KTNT-Su-10:30-10:45	4.5
Ringside With Rasslers	Sports	KMO-W-10:00-11:15	9.7
Range Rider	West.	KING-M-7:00-7:30	39.8
Cisco Kid	West.	KING-Th-7:00-7:30	49.8
Gene Autry	West.	KING-F-5:00-5:30	20.8

TV Film Guest of the Week



DOROTHY B. McCANN

Veepee of the McCann-Erickson agency, Dorothy McCann, has an extensive background in the creative side of broadcasting. A writer, director and producer, Miss McCann edited and produced the radio version of "Death Valley Days" from 1930 to 1944. Before that she originated and produced some of radio's top programs, including "Dr. Christian," "Five Star Theater," "Big Time" and "The Sheriff." She has worked closely with important talent. Such names as the Marx Brothers, Benny Goodman and Xavier Cugat were given their first starts in radio thru her faith in them. Married to H. K. McCann, chairman of the board of McCann-Erickson, the agency executive manages to find time to write articles and short stories in addition to her close supervision of "Death Valley Days."

present the show on alternate weeks instead of every week.

Thus, we were by-passing two of the most entrenched concepts in broadcasting up to that time—weekly exposure for impact and networking to get choice time periods.

But our agency was working with a property which it had developed over a long period of years on radio and with which it was very familiar. Because of "Death Valley Days" 14 years on the air, we had a backlog of scripts and of material not readily

TV Station Film Buyers Pick

A weekly survey of station film buyers' selections of the most outstanding theatrical and non-theatrical films shown on their stations last week. Theatrical distributors and original release date of the film has been added where available. For address of television distributor write The Billboard, TV Film Department.

THEATRICAL

DRAMA	THEATRICAL	TV FILM
ARMY GIRL (Republic 1938)		Hollywood TV
CAUGHT IN THE ACT (Producers Releasing Corporation, 1941)		Hyco TV Films
COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO (United Artists 1934)		Peerless
INTERRUPTED JOURNEY		Combined TV Pictures
MAN OF CONQUEST (Republic 1939)		Hollywood TV Service
MOON AND SIXPENCE (United Artists 1942)		Standard TV
QUICKSAND (United Artists 1950)		PRC
SOFIA (Film Classics 1948)		TV Exploitation
STRONGHOLD (Lippert Productions 1952)		Tele-Pictures
THEY CAME BY NIGHT (Fox Film Corporation, 1940)		Argyle
TOMORROW THE WORLD (United Artists 1944)		Quality TV
TREASUR' OF MONTE CRISTO		Tele-Pictures
WRECKING CREW (Paramount 1942)		Specialty
COMEDY		
ABIE'S IRISH ROSE (United Artists 1946)		George Bagnall
GHOSTS OF BERKLEY SQUARE		M & A Alexander Company
MEET ME AT DAWN (Fox Film Corporation, 1948)		Unity TV Corporation
MYSTERY		
FALL OF HOUSE OF USHER		American British TV
HJACKED (Lippert Productions 1950)		Telepix
HOUSE ACROSS THE BAY (United Artists 1940)		MPTV
VAMPIRE'S GHOSTS (Republic 1945)		Hollywood TV
WESTERN		
BUCKSKIN FRONTIER (United Artists 1943)		MPTV

Non-Theatrical Free Films

INDUSTRIAL	RELIGIOUS
STEEL FINGERS AND GREEN THUMBS	Modern Talking Pictures, New York
DAWN OF AMERICA	Family Theater, 7201 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood
THIS IS THE LIFE	Luthen TV Prod., 3558 S. Jefferson, St. Louis

CBC-TV Sets Film Procurer

TORONTO, Nov. 28.—Torchy Coatsworth has been named film procurer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation TV operation. Coatsworth, at one time associated with the J. Arthur Rank Film Distributors, has

been press and information officer for CBLT, local TV outlet of the CBC, since its opening a little over a year ago.

He will look after the procurement of film for the CBC network film service, and will advise the program directors of the CBC operations of the availabilities and prices of film. His immediate superior will be O. C. Wilson, who heads the CBC's TV department.