



I JUST
ADORE

OL' TIME
RADIO

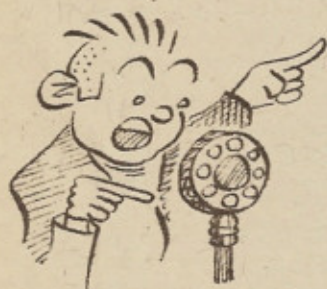
EPILOGUE

3

BRALOCK

OFF MIKE

..Muttering.....



This is EPILOGUE #3, hereafter published on an attempted monthly schedule from 7605 Sandra Drive in Little Rock, Arkansas (ZIP 72209). Cost of each copy is 25¢, and henceforth complimentary copies will be sent only to those with whom I trade either tapes or fanzines. There is also a postage charge of 6¢ per copy, but you can send stamps instead of cash if you wish. A limited supply of number one is still available, and will be sent to those first to request them for the cost of postage only. EPILOGUE is a non profit, hobby publication.

Written or art material gratefully accepted...so sit down at that typewriter now and pound out a masterpiece for the next issue. Deadline is...more or less the first week in April.

"Aha!," said many of you as the opening of March came and went. "Aha! I suspected that Jennings would never comply with a one month deadline for EPILOGUE 3!" Had you uttered that prophetic pronouncement, you would have joined with Jennings himself, who is filled with self-recrimination and vows to face the east at least three times daily in penance (but only if he can listen to Lum and Abner to help pass the time).

One of the reasons for this edition being sort of bi-monthly at this particular point in time is the fact that mail from number two was extremely slow in coming in. It's apparent to me now that the U.S POST OFFICE must have some sort of system by which magazines of this type are routed through Alaska before wending their way to a destination. I mailed out #2 on the first two weekends in January...and I would be most interested in hearing comment on when the copies arrived in various parts of the country. It must have been a delay of some sort ..because the eventual quantity of response was better than from the first issue...but it is still coming in.

There will be a much larger run of number three than there was of number two. I managed to circulate only a bare 150 copies last time, and found that I had to disappoint a fairly large list of individuals. If you requested an EPILOGUE two and did not receive it, the only reason is that I have but two left, and certainly don't wish to part with them. By the way, anyone who has written with questions or requests should turn to the new section, CROSS TALK. Since it is a virtual impossibility for me to carry on correspondence on the level necessary to communicate adequately, I decided that it would be best simply to expand the scope of EPILOGUE.

I assume that everyone within reading range has partaken of a copy of the Feb. 19, 1971 edition of LIFE magazine. It caught me quite unawares one rainy Sunday afternoon at the neighborhood 7-11 store, and although the cover gave no hint that old radio would be a topic within, I became more than slightly suspicious upon spotting the cover bearing photos of Rita Hayworth; Ruby Keeler, Paulette Goddard, Myrna Loy, Joan Blondell, and Betty...who? But, alas, there is only one page devoted to our interests, and it covers very, very little. As usual in such pieces, the apparently disinterested writer took the cliché method out,

and stayed primarily with the one piece of radio history which is familiar... though only through decades of hearsay. This mulled-over episode is of course the, "look Ma, it's the Martians" bit which should have been forgotten (mercifully) following the network tone. It's not that I have anything against Orson Welles, or even his forlorn creation of that October night. I do tire, though, of the one comment that always follows a disclosure that I am an old radio collector/buff/nut: "Yes, indeed! then you must know all about the thing they did back in 1938. What was it? Oh yeah...War of the Worlds..or something like that. Say, I had an uncle who told me about that night, and d'ja ever believe it, but...?" To the general public, old-time radio is three things -- War of the Worlds; the Squeaking Door ("Yes indeed, then you must know all about that door that used to...hmmm...now what did it do?"); and maybe, if you're lucky enough to run into a real self-tought expert, the sirens on Gangbusters.

The LIFE article does contain one redeeming feature...an excellent characture (sic?) of Welles on attack night, as rendered by former EC artist Jack Davis (EC was the absolute pinnacle of comic book publishing, which flourished and died in the early and mid-fifties). The artistic pun is suitable for framing and hanging, with a little shellac applied here and there.

In the LIFE piece, there is a line about, "rebroadcasts that radio stations are increasingly airing from...collections." This brings out into the open an area of potential future difficulty which we all are aware of...the fact that some of the shows running around the country are simply from collections..... and have no clearance whatsoever. In recent months, I've come across numerous squibs in broadcasting trade journals concerning the possible gathering of legal storm clouds on the matter of what are going so far as to label "piracy". One instance which comes to mind (primarily because I saved this clipping).. was a brief item in a business newsletter sent to various station managers... which said, "...while the supply of nostalgic material is extensive, a radio station that wants to use some of the old shows should be sure not only that the tapes are technically ok, but also that they are cleared for broadcast... that payments have been made to artists, producers, and music writers. Growing piracy of old dramas is tempting rights holders to take legal action." The piece then goes on to list an AFTRA (American Federation of Radio and Television Artists) agent on each coast, and closes with the following: "By mid-1971 the National Association of Broadcasters will have a Broadcast Pioneers Information Registry; right now a copyright lawyer can check networks and composers quickest."

They have a point. There was work done, and it was earning a living for the people who created old time radio just as much as it is for those who labor in the Video industry of today. But, let's examine the following: why is it that today, in the second year of the fast-paced and ultra-hip Seventies.... why is it that now we have a certain amount of this alleged "piracy"? How can this be...for didn't radio breathe its last dramatic gasp when Johnny Dollar solved his curtain call case on the night of the Oxford, Mississippi crisis in 1962? (Theatre 5 doesn't count)

Certainly, no one could credit the networks with inspiring the minor league rebirth. For when it was all over, they closed their doors and minds forever to dramatic, creative radio...and in most cases either discarded all recorded material, or stored it in a dank, dusty corner of their vast edifices...perhaps leaving it guarded by the surliest of bulldog types who was under orders to draw a bead on anyone who looked remotely interested in that corner's contents.

And it probably will not be the networks who eventually wield the legal and economic axe which halts all but the most tightly licensed airings. It will, of course, be the above mentioned unions more than anyone else...for they'll have the opportunity to cease an issue and champion the rights of the varied members involved. This is, I guess, their legitimate function.

My point is this: with an apparent rhubarb in the wind over rights and lack of them, one wonders why these concerned parties have not been working lo these many years for the legitimate broadcasting...paid for...of the properties which they now so vehemently protect? Isn't it becoming painfully obvious that 1971 is a bit late to show sympathetic kinship with performers of broadcasting's "golden age". If the "guardians" had done their job, the airwaves would abound with the many, many hours of fine material we all know to physically exist. You can't dispute their "legal" claims even at this late date..but you can speculate on how different things might have been if there had been as much forethought as there now seems afterthought.

As I mentioned elsewhere, I'm extremely disappointed in the letter pull from the last issue. It's not necessarily that enough people did not send me a note ...a large amount did. But 97% of those missives were mere one-liners saying that the fanzine had been received...keep up the good work, etc. Now, I'm the last person to turn down encouragement...and I appreciate any kind of reply at all. EPILOGUE must, however, become a forum if it is to survive. It is not my purpose in writing editorials or commentary to dictate my ideas on readers ...only to stimulate them to some sort of reaction. I want to hear your ideas on our hobby...its future...its applications..its problems. Certainly, if I can hack out the publication with any kind of regularity, it isn't too much to ask you to compose a half a page (hopefully more) of your own thoughts. Please...don't just send me a postcard or note about this issue. Send me a few of your own notions. Let's breathe a little life into the next edition.

Digressing for a moment to that other subject which is a bit of a side-hobby with me...VideoTapeRecording. While there have been no startling new developments since I last brought it up, there has developed a most unusual magazine which should be investigated by anyone even remotely interested in VTR. It is aptly titled VIDEORECORD WORLD, and it is anything but an amateur publication. VW is a slick, professionally put together trade magazine...the first of its kind. Issue one was mailed on a complimentary basis to potential subscribers in the broadcasting world. Aside from what small amount of "hard news" is available, it contains background articles on just about every phase you can imagine of the growing industry of home videotape. VW is available from: Box A-Z; Irvine, California 92664. One year subscription is \$18.

Although there will most probably be a further word from me later in these pages, I'd like to take this brief space to thank a few folks. First, repeated appreciation to Bill Blalock, who is responsible for almost every single non-typed item in these pages. Either he created the material himself, or dug it up. Then, I'm most pleased with the review given EPILOGUE #1 by a fan magazine titled (appropriately enough), GEORGE (why, I never found out). Because of it, I've found that the scope of my mailing list is broadening into areas where new converts might be lurking.



FEEDBACK

AND BACKGROUND NOISE?

Richard Hayes --- 59 Myrtle Ave. --- Cranston, R.I.

You may be interested to know that I'm attempting an after-school course (actually more like a club, in fact there will be no tests or marks or credits) in OLD TIME RADIO. In fact, I made up two 2-minute "blurbs" to promote it and had the first broadcast over the P.A. system at school (high school) this morning. It was very well received. Twelve students have already signed up and half as many teachers have asked to sit in on it. The assistant principal made a special trip to my room just to express his interest. (And that's unusual in my school!). One of the boys who signed up (he's a senior) told me he has gone to broadcasting school and knows a few staff members at WPRO, in Providence. WPRO used to be the Providence affiliate of CBS. He told me they have lots of transcriptions there yet. I asked him about the possibility of taping them and he said there wouldn't be any problem. So maybe I'll be able to come up with a bonanza for us all, who knows?

GJ: I know only too well that there is a great potential among youth for our hobby. Using material free from license entanglements (FAMILY THEATRE, etc), I've had a number of shows aired on KAAY, my employer. The reaction has come primarily from college age individuals...discovering something completely new. The station is a 50,000 watt clear channel operation, and most of the time the programs were run after midnight. You'd be amazed at the near-reverence some of these kids have expressed for what we would consider to be a series of fairly pedestrian dramas.

Harry Warner, Jr. --- 423 Summit Ave. --- Hagerstown, Maryland

Your aquisition of the old Atwater-Kent reminded me of the Philco console sitting in the attic. It is about five years younger than your treasure, but it would still be quite a conversation piece if shined up and brought down where visitors could see it. When I was about ten years old, I won it, thereby using

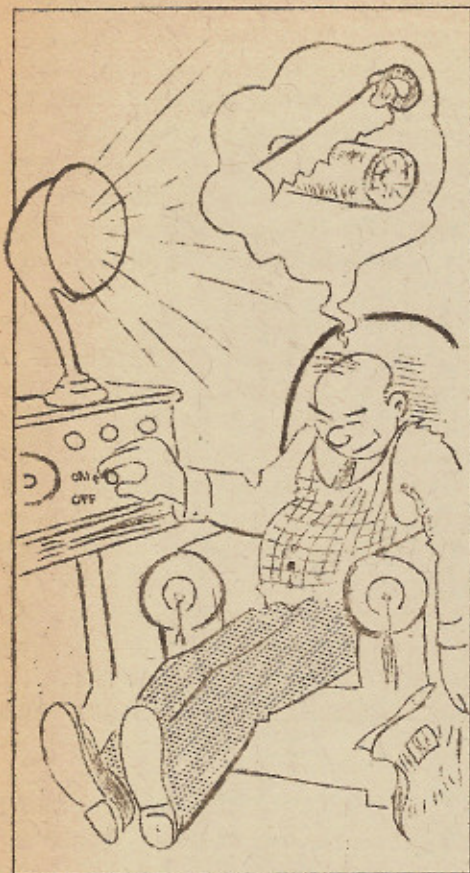
up my entire stock of luck, because I haven't won anything since. It was the most expensive model stocked by the local Philco dealer....five wavebands of fine tuning, a little gadget to show when you'd tuned to the exact center of a channel, a local-distant switch on the side which never did work, and the big feature that Philco was pushing that year, a slanted speaker which radiated upward at an angle. Strange thing: looking through the high fidelity magazines I see advertisements for speaker systems that throw out sound in 360-degree circles and upward through the top and downward against the floor and in a lot of other directions but I've never run across another speaker that was canted at an angle.

I don't agree with John Crosby's claim that radio ever catered to the lowest taste. When the eternal verities become known, maybe we'll discover that it was best radio did cater to the taste it chose, the great majority of people, not those with the lowest nor the highest brow tastes. As long as I could hear WQXR in New York when I wanted to listen to good music and the short wave broadcasts when I wanted a different viewpoint on things, I was happy, even though I was more of a snob in the great days of radio than I am today about music and drama and comedy. Incidentally, I did read somewhere recently a convincing argument that golden age radio's comedy standards could have been better without the studio audience. This writer argued that audiences were largely composed of dolts and freaks who weren't representative of the audience throughout the nation... but the comedians were forced to play down to the visible audience to keep the laughs coming.

You express amazement that Godfrey is still on the air. I'm the one who really ought to feel awe about that situation, because I was listening to him before he became a network star. He had an early morning talk show over WJSV, if I remember the call letters correctly, in Arlington or Alexandria, Va., a station which later became WTOP of Washington and has since shifted to an all news format. This was the period when Arthur was gaining regional fame for kidding the commercials as he read them. Two I remember most clearly were for Uncle Joe Cherner, a used-car dealer, and Zlotnik the Furrier who always mentioned his big clock along with his furs. I would hear a half-hour or more of Arthur before leaving for school, then as soon as I got home I'd turn on the same station again so I could hear the end of the Washington Senators game as described by Arch MacDonald, who got up a fake-feud with Arthur. Arch was an individualist ...the only baseball announcer in my memory who described events in the past tense when recreating the out-of-town games by telegraphic wire.



I don't see how you resisted commenting on the time rates given in the reprinted article. If I understand the current structure correctly, an advertiser pays more today for one minute on one network in certain prime time programming than the bill for an entire hour on all three networks when FDR was giving fireside talks. And can you imagine any newspaper or magazine today stating "the White House enjoys its prerogative by not abusing the privilege and the mutual good will resulting all around offsets the money considerations"?



GJ: I'm in partial agreement with the comments on studio audiences (and in total agreement where canned laughter is used). There were (and are) some shows which totally disintegrated with the interaction of an audience. A perfect case in point is my old favorite friends, Lum and Abner. As long as the two operated without spectators, the characters were perfect and well defined. But, when the program went to thirty minute length and added an audience, the appeal was completely destroyed. Lum and Abner were no longer intimate acquaintances of each listener; now they were just another pair of stand up comics reacting to the chuckles and guffaws of a few lucky viewers.

By the way...for those of you reading this who are not familiar with Harry... he is actually a member of science-fiction fandom, who has leanings in a nostalgic direction. I have hopes of converting him entirely in the near future....

As far as the attitude towards Washington and free time. This is, like much recalled fondly today...perhaps a reflection of a simpler time. More probably though, of a naive editor.

Earnest L.E. Hack --- 6 Perkins Street --- Bristol, Conn.

...Please mention in your magazine that I also am a collector of the old radio and movie magazines of the '30s and '40s and would be willing to trade radio programs for same if anyone wishes. I have over 1500 programs in my list and also have lots of tapes (which aren't listed) of LPs of vocalists and country and western music from the 40s and up. Also have many tapes of the Big Band Era such as Guy Lombardo, Sammy Kaye, Kay Kyser, Glenn Miller, etc. The only tapes listed in my catalog are the radio broadcasts which also have many big dance bands of the 30s and 40s.

GJ: There were other letters, but all were either extremely brief or were not of any interest for the magazine. One of the most important features of any successful publication on the amateur level is the letter column. Please...try to send me comments..about anything on your mind. And especially about EPILOGUE.

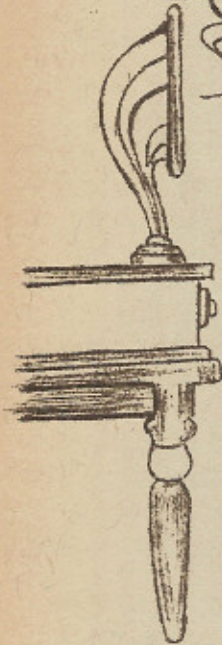
In the next issue of EPILOGUE, more of Bill Blalock's fabulous art of the "Golden Era"...excerpts from the "Pine Ridge News"...and what I hope will be the most absorbing letter column yet published (get the hint?). Remember, EPILOGUE is a non-profit, hobby publication...which takes money to put out...so any visible aid in this direction is always appreciated.

WRITE!

by
Richard
Gulla

HORROR ON RADIO

Chicago Style



"It still isn't right," Dick Thorne's voice came booming out of the intercom speaker from the control room, "You've got the interpretation all right, and the insane laughter is good... but...something's missing, Carl."

This was a rehearsal for one of the old "Hall of Fantasy" mystery shows aired by the Mutual Network during the early fifties. Thorne, producer, director, and writer of the series (also an actor in it), was always striving for perfection in his broadcasts. This week's script was an adaptation of Edgar Allen Poe's classic "The Tell Tale Heart," and he needed some kind of gimmick to add that extra special touch which marked all of his efforts as being the finest examples of aural terror on the airwaves.

Carl Greyson, playing the lead, sighed and shrugged his shoulders. He stepped out into the hall to light a cigarette. Thorne had left the control room and was now sitting in the studio with his feet propped up on a sound-effects cabinet. As he mulled over his problem, he could hear Greyson chatting with an engineer in the hallway. The technician had apparently told Carl a joke, and his deep, robust laugh echoed up and down the large corridor.

"That's it!", Thorne shouted, jumping to his feet and nearly toppling the cabinet in front of him. "Carl, come in here, will you? I want you to do those lines again where you murder the old man, and then go into hysterical laughter."

As Greyson stood before the microphone, intoning the words of Poe's madman, Thorne instructed the audio mixer to wait for the laughter. Carl let loose a burst of psychotic chuckling that would have made the hairs on your neck rise without any special effects, but Thorne wasn't satisfied, so he shouted, "Now --quick--put his mike through an echo chamber filter!" The result was startling...here was the master's touch. The echo chamber was symbolic of the killer's hollow madness! Needless to say, when the program took to the network a short time later, it proved to be one of the most spine-tingling half-hours of that particular season.

For another program, the sound of a supernatural creature oozing and sloshing through a swamp was required. Several methods were utilized, none meeting with Thorne's approval. Finally, a large tub was filled with crumpled newspapers and flooded with water. The monster's footsteps were simulated by working two plumbers' plungers around and around in the soggy mess. "Beautiful!", Thorne grinned, "That's my monster!"

The most terrifying moment of any in the history of the series, however, had nothing to do with the horrors created by its author. It happened in the middle of an actual network broadcast. Thorne read a bit of dialogue consisting of

two or three words and waited for his fellow actor to reply. The man opened his mouth and nothing came out. He had lost his voice! There was a brief silence as Thorne's face turned white. He immediately started to ad-lib while pointing to a glass of water on a nearby table. The other actor dashed to the table, took a few gulps, and coughed into a handkerchief. He returned to the microphone and picked up where he'd left off. "That was the greatest moment of fear I've evr known", Thorne recalls.

The announcer on the show, George Bauer, under the hypnotic spell generated by the various tales of ghosts, witches, etc. developed a mental block and could not read the closing credits without fluffing. Instead of the phrase, "Musical Moods were created by Harold Turner", it kept coming out, "Moo-sical Mee-yoods"! After three weeks of this, Bauer took a brief hiatus from the program, and upon his return managed finally to speak the line without further difficulty.

For "The Dancing Dolls of Death", a multitude of tiny, elflike voices was to lend eerie emphasis to a certain sequence. Thorne appealed to the entire crew, actors, soundmen, musicians, to assist him in the execution of this effect. Figuring that they would sound like a bunch of gibbering idiots, most of them appeared reluctant to comply with his request. After begging and pleading, ranting and raving, Dick at last hit upon the proper approach. He invited them to the cocktail lounge next door to the studio and after a couple of rounds of drinks, had mellowed them enough to try anything!

While not as well known as "Inner Sanctum", "Lights Out", or "I Love a Mystery", H.O.F. should be included in the ranks of these all-time radio greats. It was typical of the Chicago school of dramatic presentation. The Windy City.. remember, was also the point of origin for such honored shows as "Tom Mix", "Captain Midnight", "Jack Armstrong" and "First Nighter".

The scripts for H.O.F., always extremely well written, covered a wide range of macabre subjects. There were adaptations of horror classics including "The Haunted and The Haunters", and "The Cask of Amontillado". Original science-fiction tales like "The Day Time Ended" and the "Meteor Storm", were offered.

"The Automaton" was a take-off on the old Frankenstein idea. In "The Man in Black", Thorne created a sinister vampire-type of character similar to Count Dracula. A resuscitated mummy stalked about in "The Curse of Amun Rah".

Thorne's favorite show, based upon the beliefs of the Cult of Satan Worshippers, was entitled "The River of the Moon". It concluded with ugly black shapes descending on the world from the skies, while the hero, trapped on a mountain top, watched in terror as fields of grass transformed into tangles of flaming human hair, and the water in the nearby River of the Moon became a torrent of blood! Many listeners, no doubt, lost a night's sleep after hearing that one.



The opening of the show, done to a background of measured footsteps, dirge-like drum beats, and mysterious organ music, was as memorable as The Shadow's laugh, or Raymond's Squeaking Door. Thorne, his Orson Welles-ish voice being fed through an echo chamber would say, "Welcome to the Hall of Fantasy. Welcome to the series of radio dramas dedicated to the super-natural, the unusual, and the unknown. Come with me, my friends. We shall descend to the world of the unknown and forbidden. Down to the depths where the veil of time is lifted and the super-natural reigns as king! Come with me and listen to the tale of....," and here was inserted the title of that week's story. It was an invitation to terror, and an opportunity to exercise the listeners' latent creative abilities ...what a shame the invitation is no longer open.

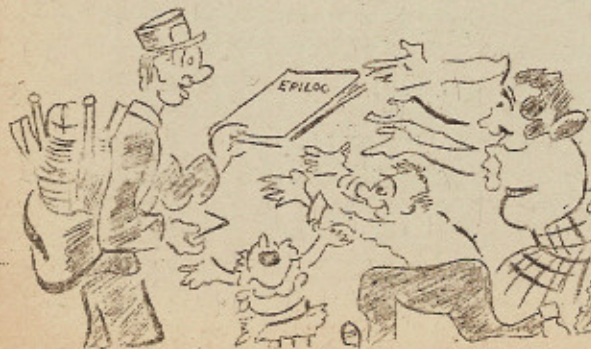
Thorne's brain-child started as a local program in Salt Lake City, Utah in the mid-forties. It moved to Chicago in the late forties and was picked up by the network in the early fifties, as mentioned previously. There were plans for a TV version, but these never materialized.

Many well known artists appeared on H.O.F. Jim Ameche (the original Jack Armstrong) starred in several episodes, as well as Charles Flynn, a later Jack Armstrong. Ken Nordine, of "Word Jazz" record fame, was a frequent guest. Others heard were: Paul Barnes (Captain Midnight), Maurice D. Copeland (at one time radio's "Answer Man"), Everett Clarke ("Crime Files of Flammond"), juvenile leads Jack Bivins and Beverly Younger, and Norman Gottschalk, the man of a Thousand Voices.

Now that radio drama is enjoying somewhat of a revival, is there any chance that "Hall of Fantasy" will return to the air? Not likely. Dick Thorne has turned his back on broadcasting. He is now in public relations work and recently bore the distinction of being the press secretary to the Governor of the state of Illinois. Broadcast rights to H.O.F. were sold to the Mutual Network many years ago, and apparently the network has no intention of ever making any use of these rights.

Thorne still has a few transcriptions and tapes of the series but these are for his own reference and amusement. No one can blame him for not wishing to part with them. To him they represent the product of his creative genius. To us, the members of his listening audience, they represent countless hours of thrills and entertainment.

Dick Thorne's contribution to broadcasting was considerable and we are all indebted to him for his fine efforts in bringing to us, what future historians of the audio medium will surely regard as - a classic of its kind!



One of my favorite games in recent years has been what could loosely be labelled, "Spot the Voice". In this manner, you come across such radio stars as Larry (now, Lawrence) Dobkin; Mandell Kramer; and many others. If you have a chance to see the new film, "Cold Turkey"...watch carefully for a scene filmed in a small town church. That fellow with the earphones turns out to be Jack Grimes, once of "Let's Pretend" and many other well known shows. Oddly enough, he's the first radio performer who looks like his voice.

HUGH CARLSON'S

CAUSTIC

COMMENT



Everyone seems to agree that creative radio is dead and we'll never be able to dial it in again. Tain't so McGee! If you live within range of the signal of WMF in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, you can hear Lum and Abner again. Dial 600 at 8:45 any weeknight and there they are...in the Jot 'Em Down Store. If you miss the 8:45 broadcast, tune in at 12:45 AM for the repeat. If you live in the Chicago area, the re-released Lights Out series (under the title of The Devil and Mr. O) can be heard Saturday nights at 11:30. The station is WLS-FM. Residents of Madison, Wisconsin can hear an old time radio hour each and every Sunday night on WMFM. The show is becoming extremely popular, especially among the college students. An old radio show comes on to them as a brand new art form. My purpose in telling you all this is that if you do some snooping around in the part of the country where you live, you should be able to turn up some very interesting program material. And it can be yours just by taping the shows off the air. Here are some more tips: Be sure to check your local educational and/or University stations. Most likely they are now running a BBC series called "The BBC World Theatre". These shows, usually about an hour and a half long, constitute what I feel is probably the best produced radio dramatic series on the air anywhere right now. It is high brow material. Greek tragedy, Shakespearean drama...and the like. Another BBC series many of us are already familiar with is "The Goon Show", starring Peter Sellers, Harry Secom, and Spike Milligan. I have about 75 Goon shows in my collection now. Most of them I have recorded from my local University station here in Milwaukee. There's a good chance that it is also on the air near you. So take some time to determine if radio is really dead around your area before writing of your AM/FM tuner as a worthless piece of equipment. Those of you who live near the Canadian border have an added plus

...the CBC. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is right up to date with contemporary broadcasting of dramatic shows like Theater 10:30 and comedy programs like The Immigrant. Do you know someone who lives in the British Isles, South Africa, or Australia? There's plenty of creative radio in the air in those countries, and if you know someone who lives there with a tape recorder, you're all set. Nope. Radio isn't quite dead yet. It does take some digging to find out if there is anything worthwhile on the air in your neck of the woods...but that's what the hobby is all about...right?

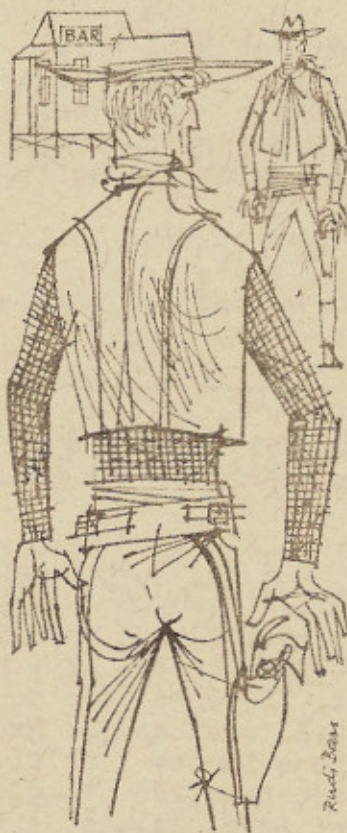
Transcribed.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lum and Abner are currently being aired on over 20 outlets around the country, with each one at pretty much a different point in the 1000 plus episodes available. An additional idea: Do you have any servicemen in the family who are serving in Japan, Germany, or the like? If you can interest them in old radio, the wealth of material on the Armed Forces Radio Service is fantastic. It might even behoove you to buy them an inexpensive recorder as a "gift".



Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar

He's busy cornering chiselers in a cool but tense war on fraud. His casual insurance sleuthing hides a hair-triggered wallop. Hear him every Sunday on CBS Radio.



Gunsmoke

Out of the restless Old West they come—the rough cattlemen, the desperados and homesteaders—to challenge U. S. Marshal Matt Dillon in his struggle to keep order. Thrill to a new conflict every Sunday on CBS Radio.



Have Gun, Will Travel

Meet Paladin — his trigger's for hire and the whole West is his trouble-ground. Ride the trail to swift-moving adventure Sunday on CBS Radio.

THE OLD OLD TIME RADIO

There is another group of collectors, hard at it, with whom most of us have had little or no contact, as far as I can tell. And considering the objects of their passion, this is indeed most odd.

I'm referring to those individuals who pass their spare time tinkering with, and repairing vintage radio receivers. According to an article in a very recent WALL STREET JOURNAL, the "Antique Wireless Association" now has more than 600 members...with most of them having joined in the past few years.

The JOURNAL says that most of the enthusiasts are engineers, or work in related fields...and there is some indication that a few of the members are making as much as a thousand dollars a year on the side by selling some of the sets which they recondition. One of the hottest items in collectors' circles is an Atwater Kent Model Five...manufactured in 1923, of which only ten are known to exist. Their value is placed at between \$300 and \$400...sometimes as high as \$600.

Let me quote briefly from the JOURNAL, "Today, when friends drop by, the enthusiast can tune in the local disc jockey and produce rock music that sounds as if it were being played through a megaphone. One Maryland man goes further... he buys commercial recordings of old radio programs, and plays them through the speaker of a 1924 Atwater Kent he rebuilt in his basement."

Anyway, that last comment shows one possibility -- maybe the two hobbies could be partially united. We could trade copies of old shows for refurbished radios. Or at least, we should be in contact or some sort with the association. Does anyone have a suggestion on the idea?

Editor's Note: The following brief article was first issued in the latest Jay Hickerson HELLO THERE. I am reprinting it at Jay's request for further circulation of the idea.

Convention?

I should like to propose an idea that I have been toying with for several years now, and believe that this is the time and the year for it. In order for the success of this project, it would have to be a joint venture with all the interested persons in the U.S. and Canada. As a cartoonist, I have been attending the comic book conventions in New York City since 1965 and it was then that I reasoned...why not a convention of golden radio buffs? I propose "The First Annual Eastern Convention of Golden Radio Buffs" to be held in New Haven, Conn. sometime during the month of July, consisting of a Friday-Sunday weekend, and held at one of the hotels or motor inns in the area. Rooms could be set up with antique radios for exhibition purposes, or for sale, depending on the owner. Collectors may bring recorders with them for copying. Also, blank tape would be on sale on the premises. The general public would be invited, as well as press and TV coverage. /What about radio? GJ/ If we begin now, we will arrange for golden radio personalities to be on hand as guests and later to address us with some interesting talk on the good old days of radio. The first night would also be ideal for a cocktail hour where we may all meet and get acquainted with one another. The hotel also would be ideal for out-of-towners.

Let me know what you think of my brain-child and if it deserves a good healthy effort. Remember, only you can make it a success.

GJ: And here I am again, to comment just as if this were a letter column. I do, however, have some specific thoughts on Sal's proposal. I've entertained thoughts of a national or regional convention in recent months, and I believe Sal's methods to be basically sound. I'm afraid, though, that he doesn't fully realize the amount of preparatory work that is necessary for even the smallest gathering among fans familiar with convention going. In most instances it takes well over a year to put together the arrangements and to get enough people signed up to make the thing worthwhile (and, as in the case of Science-Fiction Fandom, activity starts several years in advance). Also, what about the cash needed to bring in guest speakers, and the innumerable other expenses which will most certainly rear their ugly heads?

Potentially, we are reaching a stage of development in the collecting of old radio where there should be enough interested parties to support the convention theme. More than likely, a series of coordinated regional conventions could be held at the same general time...so that no one would be left out. Let's have some discussion within these pages...and perhaps eventually, these meetings...or something similar...could become a reality.

Last week, I received a question and answer sheet of sorts...sent by the College of Arts and Sciences at Memphis State University (located only 150 miles from Little Rock). It mentioned rather sketchily that the University was beginning a project involving the collecting of old radio material, and apparently was sent out to some 300 or so hobbyists.

I filled the paper in, and sent it to Memphis, along with copies of the first two issues of EPILOGUE...and a couple of additional notes. Yesterday, I received a reply...from Dr. Marvin R. Bensman, Director of Broadcasting at the school. I'd like to share certain portions with you.

"We are going to be getting a rather substantial amount of tape this summer from some budget within the University, and we already have a master and two slaves for duplicating plus the programs noted herin, and more.

We want to collect at least one excellent example of a complete program from every show that ran on the networks, plus any local stuff from any stations around the country. Plus, news, commercials, special events and special programming of a dramatic and interesting nature. This will be freely traded out for any contributions from the collectors we are contacting. We feel that since evryone just wants to obtain programs we can help by perhaps being a central clearinghouse for information and sources as well as some programs. We do not see the need to collect every episode of, say, the Lone Ranger--but certain representative episodes--different casts, techniques used over time, etc., for analysis and sholarly interest. But we will be taking all the catalogues from collectors and keying them to a programming list--so someone who wants a 1938 whatever, we'll have a record of all collectors who have such a program.

As you can tell, this is some project--in time and effort primarily--as well as postage and tape--but one that is close to the hearts of people who remember the

so called good old days. We want to preserve as much as possible before it is all lost or swallowed up by individual collectors who die and nothing is heard from their hard-won collections. We have received many returned questionnaires where collectors have passed on; and no information that their collections lasted after them. We hope to overcome this by institutionalizing our files and giving them the life of the institution."

The project, as Dr. Bensman has outlined it, seems most interesting...and most ambitious. Anyone who would like to aid in it may contact him at: Memphis State University; Memphis, Tenn. 38111.

DOPING OUT A HIT

For the purposes of this article, a hit show may be defined as one which is on top of the heap at the moment, causing comment, commanding attention, drawing a large audience. Not all advertisers want a hit show. Some are satisfied to draw a limited group of listeners for a smaller expenditure of money. But because the cost per listener decreases as the audience grows, since the charges for time and station facilities are the same whether a show is popular or unpopular, it is safe to say that when most producers put a show on the air, it is in hopes that it will become a really big hit.

A hit usually has its beginning when a sponsor goes to the advertising agency with the glad tidings that it has money to spend for a radio program. From that point on, actual production is usually in the hands of the agency with a sponsor's representative sitting in as adviser. The agency may aim at two types of shows...the "star" show, where success depends upon the drawing power of a star's name, perhaps a comic or comedy team, such as Eddie Cantor, Ed Wynn, Burns and Allen, Stoopnagle and Budd, a great artist like John McCormack, Albert Spalding or Lawrence Tibbett; or the "idea" show, such as "The March of Time" or the "Captain Henry's Show Boat" hour. In any case the most highly desirable requisites of a hit show are first, that it have an appeal for all the members of the family and second, that it have a framework capable of infinite repetition and variation, for radio chews up material faster than any other medium.

As in other branches of show business, to the listener's misfortune, the most popular way of attaining a hit show is the "follow the leader" method. In other words, if one advertiser is winning a following with a show containing a comedian, blues singer and a dance orchestra, then eighteen other advertisers will immediately be convinced that the best way for them to get a hit is to build a show just like it. The shrewder and more imaginative among the agency production men, however, recognize the fallacy of this reasoning. They see that while it is a safe way to secure a moderate hit, it is an almost impossible way to secure a smash hit, because the first in the field always creates the biggest. To the innovator belongs the spoils. They say that no other comic will ever be as popular as Cantor when Cantor was at the peak, that no other script show will ever paralyze telephone service as Amos 'n' Andy did in their hey-day, that no other symphony orchestra will ever create the comment that the Philadelphia orchestra did in its fifteen minute spots for Chesterfield. Hence, the shrewder gentlemen run counter to the popular trend, try to devise a hit show something entirely different from that which has ever been tried before. It is far from easy to think of something entirely fresh and new, but far more productive of really big results.

(Continued after REMEMBER WHEN)

CROSS TALK

BY BLALOCK



I've found in these past couple of months that there is absolutely no way that I can properly give personal attention to the inquiries coming in about EPILOGUE.... especially those containing potential trading lists, and questions about my own collection. It is just a physical impossibility ...and I want to repeat that I'm not trying to snub anyone. I've already curtailed a fair percentage of my own trading in order to channel the effort into these pages..and a further reduction would put me out of the hobby almost entirely.

Which brings us to the creation of "CrossTalk" as a continuing feature. In this column, I'll try to keep communication open with all (or most) of you who have written, but whose letters were not really

appropriate for "FeedBack". In most cases, the one sided conversation will probably be of some interest to the rest of the readers, too. So...we're off and running (or at least crawling).

Donald Waggoner of Huntington, West Virginia began his letter to me in what I must admit is a most unusual style. "A couple of months ago I wrote to you about your magazine...and I was wondering why I haven't heard from you. When I went through my desk today to find your address, I found out the reason why: my original letter was still in its envelope unmailed." Congratulations, Don.... you have now applied to your hobby a process which I have successfully used in both my business life and my bill paying tactics for years. In the latter, it has admittedly caused me anxious moments...but it works very well in the former: I very seldom get replies to my letters...therefore eliminating more troublesome paperwork. I do get hungry every now and then, though. Anyway, thanks for the two bucks. EPILOGUE is yours.

A new collector...at least he hopes to become one..is Alex McFee of Banning, California. Alex says that he's about to purchase his first shows, and comments on the relative prices of a few dealers he's made contacts with. I've made a point before of putting down the individuals who place our hobby only one small step above the marketplace. However, I must admit that I am beginning to see a partial justification for the existence of some of them. They are probably the only way that someone like Alex can get started. I know from experience that it has become virtually impossible for a trader who has been around for awhile to help out everyone who wants to get involved in old radio these days. Things have mushroomed to an almost unbelievable extent. There was comment on this subject recently in the the second issue of STAY TUNED (a well done old radio fan mag published by Sound Tapes of the Past, 1250 La Baron Circle, Webster, New York). It goes, "Most of us get our start in collecting old radio shows by purchasing our first series of shows from some of the collectors like us that sell shows. After we have an initial supply which may total anyplace from 12 to 50 hours worth of shows, we devise our own catalogs and proceed to contact other collectors to trade with to obtain new shows." I must concede to



this line of logic in some degree. The real difficulty lies in two areas: a lot of the sellers are not in the least bit interested in helping anyone but themselves...as their prices show. The second problem is simply an attitude on the part of collectors such as myself who have been around for awhile. I resent someone making a profit off of material which they did not originate. What business does some huckster in Oklahoma have...clearing cash from a program that I dug up from oblivion? There have actually been situations where the indiscriminate sale of shows has endangered a source of future episodes.

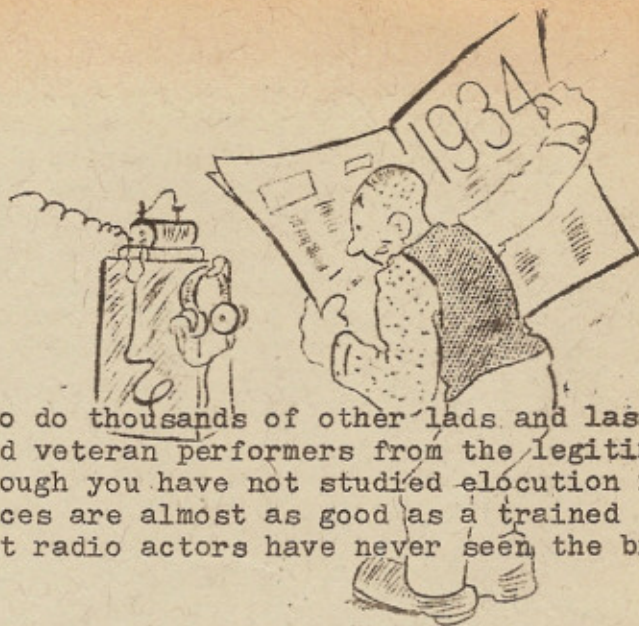
Donald Whyte of Buffalo, New York notes that his interests lie in off the air recordings of the swing bands of the late thirties and early forties...with certain periods of specific bands.

I received an interesting note from the man who most people acknowledge to own the largest collection in existence: Barry Brooks, D.D.S. The Doctor has the following to say, "I wish I had time to contribute material, but it's impossible right now. As you probably know, I have over 10,000 shows, plus side collections of comic books, premiums, etc. I also am a rock music freak, with thousands of LPs. Like you, I have varied interests in music, though I really dig heavy rock as well as the standard fare. My favorites include Hendrix, Joplin, Rod Stewart, Eric Clapton. My 'listening time' is divided between old radio and current rock. Since my busy dental practice and responsibilities at home (we have 6 children) allow me very little time for hobbies, I guess I've built up my collection at the expense of sleep, but that catches up with you after awhile, and lately I've found I can't stay up til 2am and function the next day." So comments Barry Brooks. I've decided to have that letter bronzed and hung over my tape machines and typewriter. Then every time I begin to tire in even the smallest degree, I'll simply scan it a couple of times for inspiration.

Mark Durenberger of Minneapolis offers to compose material for EPILOGUE...in the form of a "...doctoral thesis from the technical point of view concerning high-speed dubbing, care and feeding of machines, construction of a couple of dandy filters, and perhaps a few words on various tape oxides and bases." I'd certainly like to have this kind of article...perhaps a technical column... because I know each of us is almost as much a tape hobbyist as we are an old radio hobbyist. I've often suspected that one of the partial reasons I started collecting was to give myself an excuse to play with and buy more tape recorders.

Well, the majority of the other missives received at this address were simply requests for the fanzine...some of them containing cash, others not. Let me make this policy statement: if I have just heard from you for the first time (perhaps you read about me somewhere..or a friend showed you a copy of EPILOGUE), you are receiving this issue as a complimentary item. There will be no further copies sent on such a basis. I must hear back from you...with a quarter for every future issue you would like. This edition is being sent to all of those who requested back numbers...but, since I do have about thirty copies of number one (none of number two), I will send that out to anyone who wants to ask for it again, and who this time sends a quarter to cover expenses and effort.

REMEMBER WHEN?



So you want to be a radio actor? So do thousands of other lads and lassies, including some three or four thousand veteran performers from the legitimate theater. Strangely enough, even though you have not studied elocution nor have been to dramatic school, your chances are almost as good as a trained stage thespian. In fact, some of the best radio actors have never seen the brightest side of the footlights.

If you leave out the comedians who are actors, too, you can count the dramatic stars of radio on your fingers. In fact, radio has yet to develop a John Barrymore or a Helen Hayes. And its best known dramatic performers are not even known to the listeners by their real names. For every person familiar with Gertrude Berg, a hundred know Mollie Goldberg. And ask the first ten persons you meet the names of the two girls who portray Myrt and Marge.

But you still want to be a radio actor. Six or seven months ago, the outlook for fame and fortune on the radio stage was not so good for dramatic players. Today that situation has changed and by the time this is in print, the names of some of the best known Thespians will be seen regularly in radio columns. Among them, according to contracts now being negotiated for Helen Hayes, Judith Anderson, and Roland Young.

The network officials have become drama conscious in a big way and the advertising agencies which have more to do with your radio program than the networks, are also planning to use more and more drama. The comedians have told all the jokes but there is no apparent limit to the number of dramatic situations...hence the advertisers who use radio say there is wisdom in the development of radio drama. Already Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson and Fred Allen have set the style in mixing in brief sketches with comedy and other comedians are wondering if they aren't potential Hamlets. The dramatic cycle is upon us and there will be need for more and better radio actors. So...there is some reason for wanting to be a radio actor! Now, let's look at things as they are today. We'll dish up some facts now that we've tasted the theories.

The National Broadcasting Company, at this time, uses approximately one hundred actors a week on its sustaining programs. The average fee is \$18 a program. A total expenditure of \$1800 a week for all its sustaining dramatic performers. Almost as much money as is paid one fairly well-known comedian for ten or fifteen minutes of gags written by someone else.

The picture is a bit brighter when you look at the commercial programs on NBC. Last Winter there was work for approximately one hundred and thirty actors every week on NBC sponsored broadcasts. And the average fee for an actor on a commercial program is \$30 a program. Multiply that and you have a total of \$3900 a week for dramatic talent paid for by advertisers and a grand total of \$5700 for services of two hundred and thirty players. Ed Wynn receives more than that for a single broadcast, according to reliable reports.

Now, let's go over to Columbia Broadcasting Company's studios on Madison Ave. in Manhattan. CBS uses comparatively few players on sustaining programs. At the time this is written, fifty players a week is about average, and the average fee is about \$20. Which means there's a thousand dollars of Columbia's money for performers. Commercial programs on CBS use approximately the same number of players as those on NBC. The figures are about the same...in other words, less than \$6,000 a week is divided between more than two hundred performers. The best paid actors on the air are probably heard every Thursday night on the Rudy Valee variety show. Dramatic stars, recruited from Broadway successes, are presented in brief excerpts from current plays and the actors' checks are written in three figures. These performers, however, are not really radio actors.

Some of the actors who devote their entire talents to radio do rather well. It isn't unusual for a player to be in five or six broadcasts a week and that means an average income of \$150 a week, which is a small fortune to almost any Broadway actor these days.

A very few players are stepping to the front as stars. There are Nick Dawson and Elsie Hitz in "Dangerous Paradise" and there is Don Carney in "Main Street" sketches. Little Nancy Kelly in "The Wizard of Oz" is becoming well known and Spencer Dean of the Eno Crime Club is a familiar name. The Goodman Aces of "Easy Aces" are very well known by their own names, for they had the good judgement to incorporate their actual names in the sketch title.

Now for the honest lowdown on how to go about being a radio actor. It may sound cynical, but knowing the right people is a tremendous advantage. It is, indeed, half the battle. If you know a network executive or an executive of an advertising agency, it is not difficult to get over the first hurdle of an audition. And if your Uncle William is head of Canned Foods, Inc., and Canned Foods has radio programs...well, things are decidedly bright for you.

There are other connections that are possible, too. Sometimes a newspaper man can introduce you to the right person in an advertising agency or in a radio studio. Never forget the advantages of a "friend of a friend." Three or four years ago, anyone could get an audition. Today, unless you have some advance information or have some sort of name in the theatrical world, you may have to wait weeks and even months for a chance to prove that yours is the voice with a soul. Now, let us take a different case. Let us assume that Margaret Miles, who lives in Springfield, Illinois, has decided she is the future Ethel Barrymore of the air. And Miss Miles doesn't know anybody in radio nor has she any friends who know the right people. All she has is the firm conviction that if she ever gets a chance, she will be a success. And that firm conviction is something worth having!

She should have practically no trouble in getting on programs broadcast by the Springfield radio stations but is extremely doubtful that she will be paid for her efforts. However, two or three months experience on a home town station is decidedly worth having. There is no time like the present to get acquainted with Old Man Microphone.

With the background of two or three months experience in Springfield and with the "firm conviction" shining brightly, Chicago is the next step. Almost as many programs are cast in Chicago as in New York. Margaret Miles, with sufficient funds to live in Chicago at least a month, goes there. A Chicago telephone directory gives her the address of the National Broadcasting Company, the Columbia Broadcasting System and the important independent stations. Her next step is to apply for auditions.

If, after a month or six weeks, Miss Miles finds her funds are low and she has not been on the air, she had better go home to Springfield....thereby saving herself any amount of future grief and hard labor. If, on the other hand, she does find she is on a radio program, there is nothing more to tell her. She has made the grade and, if she is clever enough to do that, she will get along all right.

May I inject a few warnings? I will, anyway. Do not be too much afraid of the Big Bad Wolf sponsor or executive who wants a nice girl to give all in return for a part on a program. There may be a few of them, but they are humorless creatures who are not nearly important as they think they are.

When you get your audition, do not lose sleep if you are terribly nervous. All good actors and actresses are nervous at auditions. Performers who are not a little shakey are regarded with suspicion. Do not count on any radio job unless you are called back for a second audition. The bright people who get their jobs after one audition are found in stories only. And, when you get on the air, do not expect to be famous overnight. It takes time to learn radio technique and it takes time to build a reputation. If you are paid enough to live on, it is worth sticking around for a few years.

It is just a rough estimate, but this writer believes there will be jobs for a thousand more actors in radio by the end of 1934. Naturally, there will be twenty thousand applicants, but a twenty to one gamble in show business is not bad at all. Perhaps you are one of the twenty. I hope so. Only please do not ask me to introduce you to the radio casting directors I know. I have a girl friend of my own. I married her.



To me, the prime interest in the above article is that it focuses in on the guts of the now deceased radio era when entertainment was created spontaneously and with gusto...and not packaged in a Hollywood Film factory. The radio actor has no equivalent in modern times...for there certainly is little of the profession's inherent immediacy and intimacy in the work of those who perform in recorded commercials of today. And they are the only dramatic actors at all now in the audio art.

At the bottom of the last page of the above article is a small "Radio Gossip" section designed to fill space. The most interesting item: "In New York, Harriet Hilliard has annulled her marriage to Roy Smedley, the comedian. Radio Row picks Ozzie Nelson, the bandman for whom she has been warbling, as Harriet's second hubby. But the lady says, 'Never again...henceforth I am wedded only to my art.' Time will tell."

That last is quite a prophetic statement. And, how many of you knew that Ozzie was Harriet's second husband?

(DOPING OUT A HIT continued)

Mysterious to the listener likewise is the suddenness with which a new star appears upon the horizon with all the attendant ballyhoo and fanfare. Where did he come from? Who knew that he would be good on the air? There is more here than meets the eye. It is fun to be fooled but it is more fun to know.

As a matter of fact every important star on the air today has been watched for a year or two before even being given an audition. Right now, there are at least forty potential Radio stars around the country, being constantly watched by the leading agencies who are waiting until their time is ripe.

Joe Penner is a case in point. To the listener in North Dakota, Joe Penner is probably a funny man who walked into a radio office with a duck, absolutely unheard of, and had everybody rolling on the floor, proving so funny that they just had to put him on the air. But every listener in Altoona, Scranton, Baltimore, Washington, or any other cities where Joe Penner has played in vaudeville or the movie houses, knows that he has been a household by-word for ten years.

Their past blotted out by the blinding glare the spotlight of fame throws on their present, people are apt to forget that the renowned Amos 'n' Andy were for years the only moderately well-known team of Sam 'n' Henry over a local station in Chicago. Even Cantor was on the air for a while in a short series and didn't create any great stir until Chase and Sanborn put him in a Sunday night one hour show and he became a household institution.

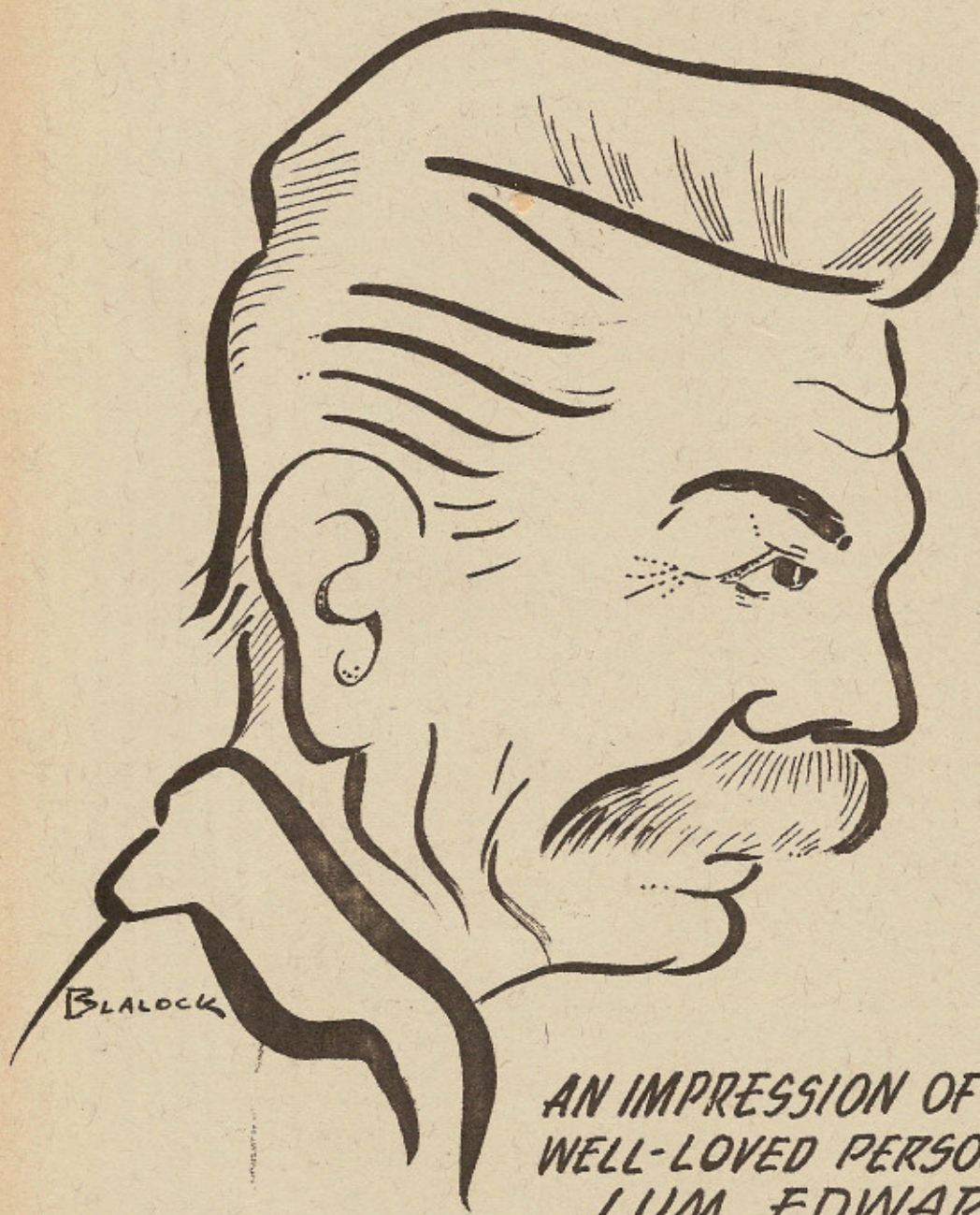
People forget that the "March of Time" program was sent out to local stations on records as a test for a year before the response justified the financing of a network show, that Jack Pearl was a well known dialect comedian on the stage for years and was carefully tried out in a number of spot broadcasts before the mantle of Baron Munchausen was dropped on his shoulders; that Burns and Allen were a popular vaudeville team sure of drawing a crowd to any house before they were given cautious trials on the air; that Stoopnagle and Budd were the handy men of a little station in Buffalo until their clowning began to attract attention and a sponsor brought them to the networks.

So much for picking talent and shaping a show. But once the show is on the air, lacking the box office barometer, how can the sponsor tell if the show is clicking? First, there is fan mail: Advertisers don't take much stock in fan mail anymore. They have found that fan mail can be juggled, a performer can produce volumes of mail by answering the letters that come in to him, putting a "teaser" question in his reply that will draw another letter. Dealer Reaction: Every sponsor has a network of dealers spread over the country, sensitive to the reactions of customers. Gossip in the Street: The office boy, the elevator operator, the scrub woman, the waitress, the people next door...all make up the listening audience. Individually their reactions mean nothing, but strike an average and they are pretty good straws in the wind. And above all is the transcending sense of showmanship, rarest...but most valuable guide of all. As radio develops, it is producing trained radio showmen who know from instinct and experience what a hit show needs.

So when you ask one of these showmen, "How do you know a show is going to be a hit?" And he answers, "Why, I just know, that's all."

Chances are he's right.

(June, 1934)



THAT'S AN
OL' EDWARD'S
SAYIN' O' MINN
..... I THINK.....

AN IMPRESSION OF THE
WELL-LOVED PERSONALITY...
... LUM EDWARDS.....

CHET LAUCK

AY DOGGIES,
LUM, I
BELIEVE
YOU'RE
RIGHT!



AN IMPRESSION
OF THE WELL -
LOVED PERSONALITY..... ABNER PEABODY....

NORRIS GOFF

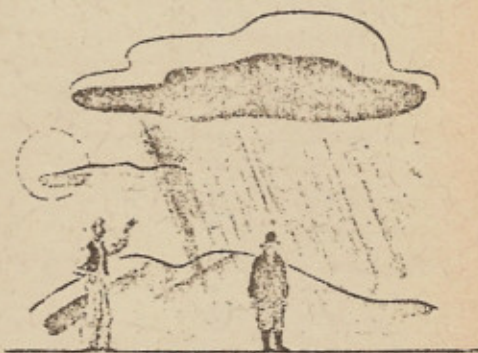
LUM AND ABNER IN HOLLYWOOD

WE NEVER reckoned that Hollywood was a sure enough real place, and we never thought we'd ever git to see it, but I-grannies, here we are. And it is the most mixeduptest place we ever seen in all our life. Special the way they name things—jist backards you might say. Fer eggexamples, they's a place here called Beverly Hills. We went out there to look 'em over, but all we seen was lots of houses and palm trees. There warn't nary a hill around there. The hills is all off in the mountains. Awful purty though. Then we took a ride through a place called Cold Water Canyon, but we couldn't see no water at all. And we was awful surprised to hear that many of the movin' pitcher studios ain't in Hollywood, like we allus thought. Some is in Culver City, and one is in Burbank, and one is in Universal City, and all them places is miles away from Hollywood.

Bein' interested in agricultures, we couldn't figger out how fokes could raise crops in such hilly country. Seems to us, if a man tried to do any farmin' on the side of a mountain, he'd be takin' a awful chance of fallin' right out of his farm. But we found out that all the crops is raised in San Fernando's Valley. Right purty place. The principal produce is citrus, and lemons and oranges. Seems awful funny to see oranges growin' on trees thataway, just like apples. Even though they do a right smart job of growin' things out here, they ain't got no farms. Leastways, fokes here don't call 'em farms. They call 'em Ranches. Now, down home, if a feller has fruit trees on his place, he's got a orchard, but out here it's a grove. And another thing we can't figger is how they grow anything.

because it never rains . . . 'Course, sometimes it gits a little foggy, and damp and the streets gits a little flooded, and people say it's jist mist. But we ain't never seen mist pour the way it did last night.

The streets is mostly called Boo-le-wards. Now, take Hollywood Boo-le-ward, fer incidence . . . Some of the nicest lookin' stores, and some of the purtiest clothes in the windows, but most of the people we seen around town was wearin' pajamas and shorts. Everything in Hollywood is a heap different from things in Pine Ridge. Down home we got Luke Spears Lunch Room, and the T-Bone Tooter, but in Hollywood it's awful



SO THIS IS THET CALIFORNY "MIST"

hard to find a place to eat. We figgered the best place to git vittles was the Hollywood Bowl, so we went there, but there warn't no food. Jist a big place out in the open, with a lady singin' in it and a lot of other fokes sittin' 'round on the grass listenin' to her. Some of 'em looked like they was goin' to spend the nite there, because they had blankets . . . Er maybe they was jist Indians . . . We didn't stay to find out. We was awful hongry, so ast somebody where we could git some nice home cookin' and they

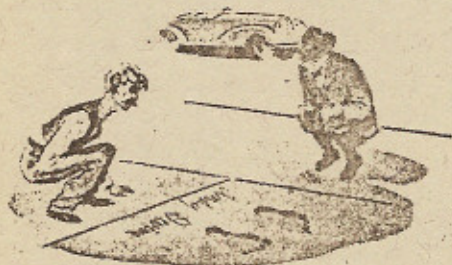
tried to send us to a hat store. A place called the Brown Derby . . . I-grannies,



KIN YOU BEAT THET—A LUNCH ROOM IN A HAT!

we've wore 'em, but we got better sense than to try to eat out of one. Then we heerd that Clara Bow and Rex Bell the movie stars has a lunch room, called the "It" Cafe. We went in and sat down at a table and ordered some of "It", but we never got none. Facts is, we never even found out what "It" was, but we specks "It" must of been the good food. I-grannies, it shore is a fancy place.

One day we was walkin' down Hollywood Boo-le-ward, and we come to a the-ayter that looked like a Chinese Pagody. Would have been awful purty, but the front of it was spiled by somebody walkin' around in the cement 'fore it got dry. The foot prints is still there, and it's a shame, too, 'cause they tell us that's the place they hold the Pre-views . . . A Pre-view is somethin' we can't quite figger out. A new movin' pitcher is run



TSKI TSKI! FOOTPRINTS IN THE CE-MENT

off so's the producer kin git the public's reaction, but the public can't git in to see it. They all stand outside while the actors go in to see themselves on the screen, and there's more smart hand-clappin' goes on. All the men fokes is dressed in long black coats, like undertakers, but the women looks like fairy-tale princesses right outen a story book.

Purtiest we ever seen. Not very strong lookin' though. Not one of em that looked like she might be much of a hand at milkin' er churnin' er choppin' wood. . . . The fokes that cain't git in the the-ayter all waits outside 'till the show is over. And when the actors and the movie stars comes out everybody rushes up to em with papers and pencils and note-books to git em to sign their names. . . . Autygrafs they calls it. Some fokes is so anxious to git autygrafs they let em write on their shirt fronts, or their cuffs.



IMAGINE GETTIN' A AUTYGRAPH ON YORE SHIRT

. . . They say that's quite a fad out here, puttin' things on the cuff. . . . Must be awful hard on the laundry, though.

We kin allus tell when there's a Pre-view, by lookin' out of our hotel winder. They's big lights flashin' in the sky. Everybody starts rushin fer em jist like moths. We warn't no different from the rest. We started out one evening . . . walked fer four miles and when we finally got to the place where the lights was at, all we saw was a flock of airypalanes. The man told us we was in the wrong place, so we started back and come to a place where there was more spot lights, but there warn't no movie stars, jist a lot of fruits and vegetables. It was a new market bein' Pre-viewed. Fokes must have bad eyesights hereabouts, they use spot-lights for might nigh everything. We'd like to take one home fer Cedric to shine Possums with.

Natcher! . . . bein' strangers out here, we wanted to look up some old friends, and we tried fer days to call up one of the Arkansas movie stars on the telephone. He's from down home, and he's got hisself a good job movie actin in Hollywood. First off we looked up his name in the telephone book, but it

(Lum and Abner in Hollywood - continued)

warn't there, so we asked the operator to git it fer us, but she said she couldn't. Seems like everybody keeps their phone numbers a secret. We finally met him on the street one day and he said he'd been trying to call us. He wanted our phone number but we didn't know what it was, offhand, on account of we never called ourselves up. So we asked the operator, but she wouldn't give it us neither. Seems like fokes here gits chased by salesmen a lot, and that's why they ain't given to lettin' fokes have their phone numbers. Which ain't a bad idy at that. We're goin' to change our ring at the Jot 'Em Down store and hide it, too. Then we can play checkers in peace, and not have Sister Simpson callin' up botherin' us fer groceries.

The Coconut Grove is sure different than anything we got in Pine Ridge. Now take down home, when we build a house, we clear away the trees first, but at the Coconut Grove there's trees growin' right inside...they build the house over them. We were told we could eat there, but we didn't care much fer coconuts. Inside, a man in a Prince Albert coat asked us if we had reserved a table. We couldn't figger out what he meant at first, but we explained to him that we wasn't regular members of the club...we was just visitin', so he set us down at a front row table. Most of the fokes we saw was havin' trouble gettin' fed... cause as soon as the food was served to them, the band would start playin' and everybody had to git up and dance. They had what they called a floor show.... girls singin' and elocutin'...the whole thing put us a mind of a box social and literary.

One of the most peculiar things about Hollywood is that we ain't met nobody that was actual born here. Seems that most fokes livin' here comes from Iowa or New York and after awhile of talkin' to the New Yorkers, they turn out to be from Iowa, too. There was a old settlers reunion the other day, but we couldn't go cause you got to be a residence fer six months to be a old settler. We did meet one old man who says he's been here fer nigh on to three years, but we only got his word fer it.

Back home, we ain't got no oceans, but it's real handy here, so one afternoon, we went down to a place called Santa Monica, where they got a Beach Club. We didn't have no idys what this was, but it turned out to be a place where people changed into their bathin' suits. We figger'd we'd see a lot of fokes swimmin' but there warn't nary a one in the water...they was all on the beach, lyin' under big colored umbrellers. And it warn't rainin' none neither. Seems like they don't come to the ocean to git washed--they jist want to git burned by the sun. Another one of them Hollywood ways of bein' differunt. And that's jist the trouble with our whole trip out here. We know blamed well, there ain't ary a soul in Pine Ridge that's ever goin' to believe us when we tell 'em what we seen here. Facts is, there's sech strange goins on round here, when we get back home, we doubt if we'll be able ter believe all the things we seen ourselves!

EDITOR'S SPARKLING NOTE: The above article, authored by Lum Edwards (or Eddards) ...is from Lum and Abner's "Adventures in Hollywood", which was their 1938 Family Almanac. It is rich in material of great interest to the variety of L&A nuts who populate the countryside. I plan to reprint more of it as we progress along EPILOGUE's merry way. I'd like your comment, pro or con.

By the way, the first two pages were actually reproduced using a photocopy for masters. Unfortunately, this last page was too dim to register...hence the retyping. In the future, I'll use as much of the original as I can.

final mutterings 4-71

On the first page of this magnificent issue, there's a statement to the effect that the deadline for the next issue would be around the first of April. Since I am typing this final commentary on April 4th, it is apparent that a few revisions are in order. It is equally apparent that I did not succeed in keeping the size of EPILOGUE within the bounds necessary for a monthly...or even six-weekly publication.

My only explanation is that it just seemed to grow on its own....and as I began each time to wrap things up, something else would pop up that seemed worthwhile to print. Not that each item herein is "priceless"...but each one helps to round out the edition. The two pieces from 1934 are examples. Their place, I believe, is to set the mood of the era we are dealing with.

HOWEVER, this will not happen again. EP. #4 will be much smaller...for I refuse to let it take command on its own once more. After all, I am the pilot of this vessel...as cockeyed as it sometimes seems.

EXTRANEIOUS SIDE COMMENTS OF NO PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE

I notice that I have once again managed to print an article without mentioning the name of the author. In this case, I refer to the short piece on the "Golden Radio Convention"...which was reprinted from Jay Hickerson's "Hello There". It was written by Sal Trapani of Box 377, Seymour, Conn. 06483. If you have any ideas which might interest Sal, you can contact him at that address.

Agnes Moorehead will be in Little Rock later this week, appearing in what is billed as a "One Woman Show". If I am not out of town (Easter is coming up), I plan to interview her for EPILOGUE on her experiences in dramatic radio. There probably is no one better qualified to explain what it was really like to be behind the mike in the days of excellence. Who knows...she might even have some tapes which are not in circulation.

Jay has an interesting summation on the subject of tapes...and various qualities of same in his current issue. He covers some very oblique areas which have needed discussion for some time, and comes to a few fascinating conclusions. "From what I have been able to gather, almost any tape that is close to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in width and somewhere near the proper length is packaged under the CONCERT name for the RADIO SHACK chain. I had one reel that was seven minutes short of its claimed time. I also can produce tape users who have received CONCERT tape which had one or more splices despite RADIO SHACK claims that it is 'splice free'. Other problems with CONCERT tape have been oxide that shed so badly that it could be scraped off the heads with a knife. Also, tape that was jagged on one edge and even tape that did not contain oxide on the full width of the tape. Also, tape that was too wide and would not pass through machines made to certain exacting standards."

I have personally come up against almost every problem mentioned therein when dealing with CONCERT. I also found several reels with horizontal blank stripes (no oxide) through the entire length of the tape. However, I still continue to use CONCERT...and probably will do so for some time to come. The reason is simple: I dub in such quantities that a more expensive tape would put me out of action...and really, CONCERT has ruined very few of my recordings. With a fair degree of diligence, it's quite easy to weed out the relatively small number of

bad spools one comes across. Then, too...there is word out in professional circles (radio stations, etc.) that RADIO SHACK will soon be the only company at all dealing in lower priced bulk tape. You've all noticed the escalation of price in recent months of SHAMROCK, which used to be almost exactly the same as CONCERT. This is due to a new process which cuts down the amount of reject tape ...and it already has resulted in the total closing down of the MELODY brand name. As long as CONCERT can hold the price line, I'll use it.

By the way, the article from which I quote was written by Mel Schlank...whom I hope to be able to induce to compose a masterful commentary of similar sorts one of these days.

Next issue will feature, among other things, a marvelous cover by Bill Blalock. I came very close to using it this time...but decided to hold off. I am working on an article which will tie in with it...and I just can't afford to expand this issue any further.

By the way...I came close to making an attempt at switching over to offset press. That is to say, I did make the attempt. A friend of mine owns such a device, and gave me full permission to use it. So, I purchased metal plates...had some negatives made...and spent one of the most ruinous Saturdays in my life trying to run off just one page. It took me three days to revive my nerves and clean the goo from various parts of my body. Never again! My Rex may be hell to operate...but at least it's a devil I have control of!

Well, this is my last opportunity to comment in any direction, and also my first opportunity to try out the stencil cutting powers of a brand new REMINGTON typewriter. As you will note, the typeface is quite a bit larger...which might be a boon for the less-than-perfect sighted. Most likely I'll use both machines in future issues, depending on space available.

The mailing list for this issue is coming from a great many sources...including the Radio Historial Society (to which I am most grateful). To all of you who have aided, in fact...my thanks.

An item of interest was reported a few days ago by a national news service: "A live, non-commercial radio network will begin operation May 3 with the hook-up of 90 stations across the country." The article goes on to explain this network is financed by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting...and although it will start primarily with news, it will eventually develop a "full day of cultural attractions, including dramas, symphony orchestras and operas."

Perhaps there is some hope after all...though I fear that the average man probably will be overlooked in the "cultural" process. But, the step is in the right direction.

See you soon....and let me once again repeat my plea that you write... more than just a postcard.