

The Jot 'Em Down Journal

Official Publication of
the National Lum and Abner® Society

December 1998

ROSWELL B. ROGERS

1910-1998



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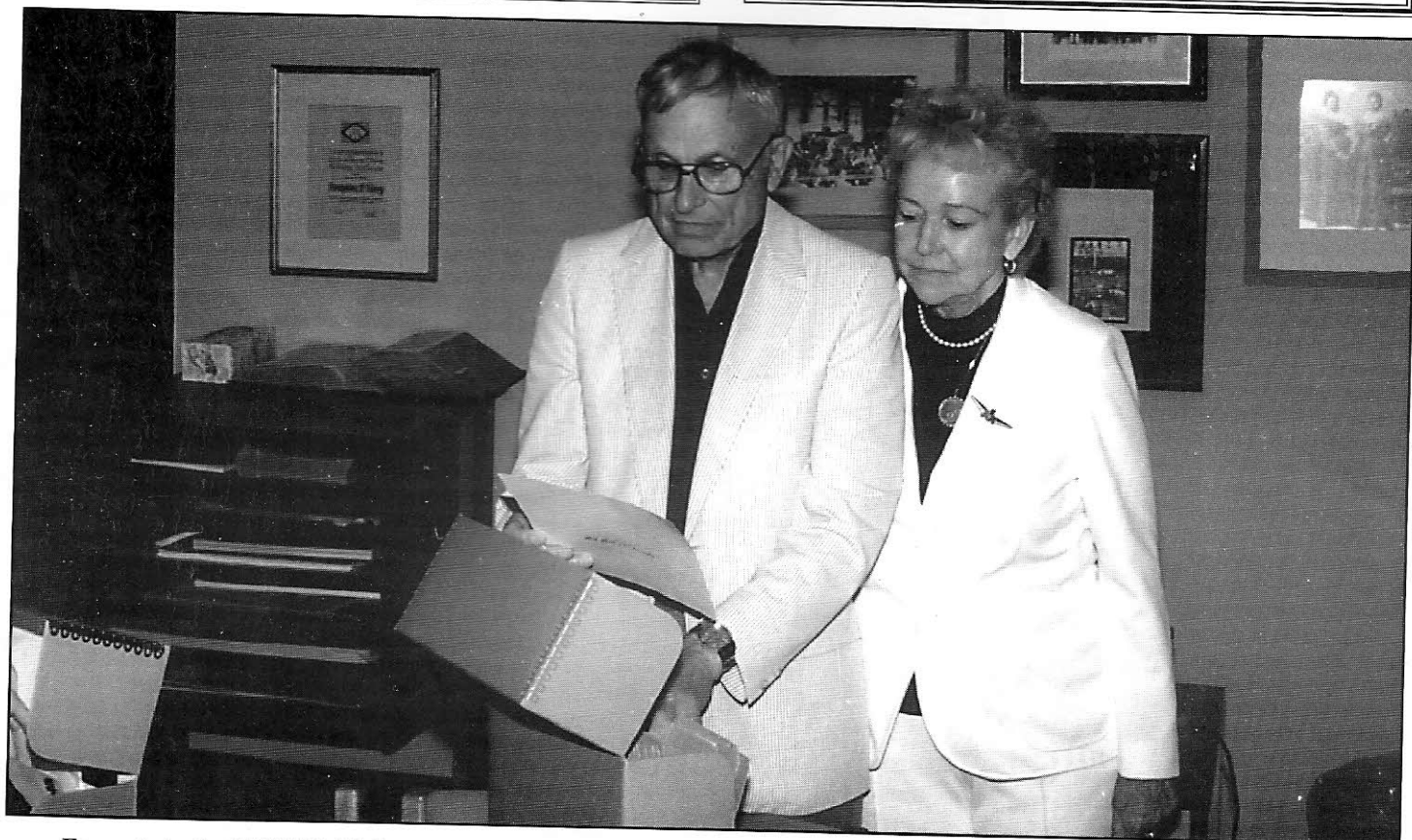
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En route to the 1985 NLAS Convention, Roz and Dorie Rogers stopped off to view the Lum & Abner Collection at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. They are seen here helping the archivists identify some rare photos from L&A history.

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THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

December 1998

**THE NATIONAL
 LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY**

Zekatif Ossifers

PRESIDENT
 Donnie Pitchford

VICE-PRESIDENT
 Sam Brown

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
 Tim Hollis

Cover: The late Roz Rogers, *Lum and Abner* scriptwriter. From September to December 1941, Roz provided gags and story situations for the show; he began writing the actual scripts full time on January 1, 1942. He is seen here at work in his office in Hollywood, circa 1957. Photo courtesy of Laurie Rogers Rooney.

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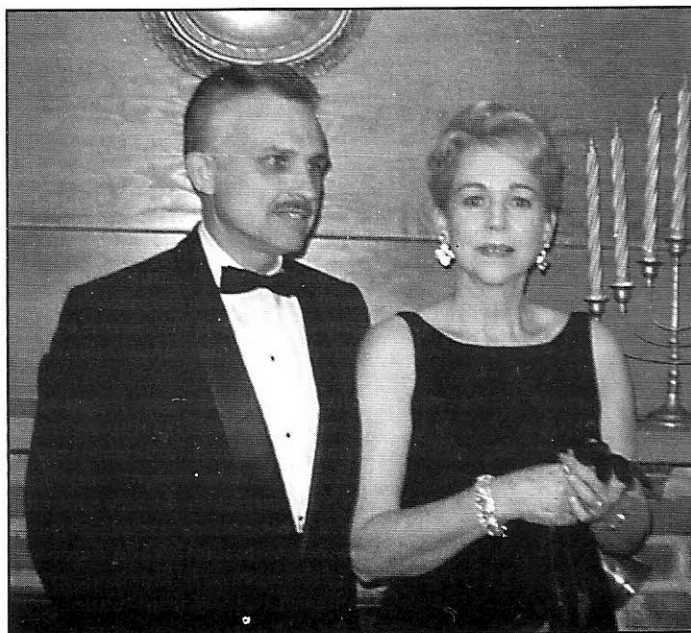
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*Roz Rogers and wife Dorie, 1964.
 This issue of the JOURNAL is dedicated to Roz's
 career as a radio and television scriptwriter.*

ROZ ROGERS: A Tribute

When asked recently to compose a commentary on Roswell B. Rogers and his importance to the National Lum and Abner Society, I must confess that I felt much like Cedric Weehunt being assigned an essay in school. I felt inadequate, as if I could not find the proper words. "Roz," the name he preferred, had tremendous impact on the NLAS as an organization and the "ossifers" and members individually. Perhaps it would be best to briefly recount his contributions.

Personally, I became aware of the name Roswell Rogers from the end credits of the television series *Father Knows Best*. I was unable to read the first time I viewed episodes of the program, but caught them again in reruns some 20 years ago. Those black and white gems brightened many early afternoon breaks in an otherwise crowded college schedule. I (as many others) knew this Roswell Rogers was a gifted writer. After all, hadn't he scripted a couple of entertaining films for the Disney studio?

Lum and Abner entered my dreary college routine a bit later, and the recordings I made from an AM radio signal would accompany me on countless commutes. Fellow *Father Knows Best* / L&A fan David Miller's research yielded the coincidental fact that Roswell Rogers had scripted both programs!

Enter Sam Brown, Tim Hollis and the early planning of the National Lum and Abner Society in 1983. Before long, Roz Rogers (and his "good womern" Dorie) were actually honorary members of the then-tiny group! We obtained his address while assembling the first issue of *The Jot 'Em Down Journal*, and sent him a letter outlining our plans. Executive Secretary Tim Hollis recalls that Roz immediately wrote back, but was so excited that he could not wait for the NLAS to receive his letter, so Roz called Tim on the phone to let him know how much the formation of such a group meant to him. That says a lot about the sincerity of his enthusiasm!

As the first issues of *The Jot 'Em Down Journal* began circulating in 1984, Roz was quick to dig into his files of original scripts to research our many questions. "Who created Mousey Gray?" "Who wrote his poems?" "Who played Diogenes Smith?" "Who..." "What..." "When..." "Where..." "Why..." Roz diligently, and patiently, answered them all!

In 1985, the NLAS held its first convention in Pine

Ridge, Arkansas. None other than Roz and Dorie Rogers volunteered to be the first half of our quartet of special guests. They were to be joined by equally dear friends Clarence and Helen Hartzell. The three NLAS founders, joined by the fourth "ossifer" Rex Riffle, were like kids at Christmas! Many times we have reflected on just how blessed we were that June. Never again would it be possible for us to reunite those wonderful people, since Roz became ill the following year, and Clarence passed away in 1988.

At first, we were unaware of Roz's dry wit, and were often caught off-guard! Roz to Sam and me in Little Rock the first evening: "See you fellows in the morning for breakfast. Oh, and try to dress up a little, will you?" Roz to me in Pine Ridge: "Well, I'm glad I came. Now I know what kinda spaven-legged varmints I'm dealin' with." It soon became apparent that Roz had tongue-in-cheek, and warmth-in-heart: "I'm glad I met you fellows - You seem like a bunch of nephews to me now."

Apparently, we passed the test in Roz's book! His appearance at our first convention and his efforts in our research helped "legitimize" the NLAS. By that I mean that Roz

lent credibility and authority to the facts we presented, and he opened the door to countless honorary members and convention guests. Roz gave us our first real "boost!"

Even following the onset of his illness in 1986, Roz continued to contribute to the NLAS. His newly-written script was the highlight of the Pine Ridge 50th Anniversary celebration during our second convention. Whenever he was able, he mailed a special greeting on tape or typed a humorous letter to be read to the members.

His dedication continued into more recent years. During the "Lum and Abner Go to War" series of articles (1991-95), I referred to a missing script or program. Roz's daughter Laurie Rooney related to Sam Brown that her father attempted to recreate that script for us, and labored valiantly, though he was to ill to complete it. That very effort illustrates better than any other the depth and spirit of dedication and contribution put forth by Roswell B. Rogers. The National Lum and Abner Society will always carry the influence of this gifted man, and Chet and Tuffy - Lum and Abner - will never run out of things to say!

- Uncle Donnie Pitchford



A LUM & ABNER script conference, 1948: Clarence Hartzell, Chet Lauck, Betty Boyle, producer Bill Gay, Tuffy Goff, and Roz Rogers.

READING THE SIGNS

The Autobiography of Roswell Rogers (1985)

If a body has his head screwed on frontwards, as he ort to, he can easily read the early signs that eventual shape up a feller's destiny.

Take the case of Lum & Abner's writer, feller named Roswell Rogers... better known as Old Roz. When he was born in 1910 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, he weighed a mighty scant four pounds, and back in them days it was debatable whether a four-pounder was a keeper. But the Doc went ahead and give him a shot of brandy to sorta "jump-start" him. So then his mama said, "Okay, we'll keep him." But his papa wasn't so sure. "The kid's all wrinkled," he said. "He looks like an old man already. What does that mean?"

What it meant was simple enough, it meant young Roz would have a deep insight into the problems of old men because he was born old. The sign couldn't be clearer.

Young Roz gained weight and by the time he was in the third reader (later to become Cedric's favorite grade), he was ready to make his debut as a actor in a school play about *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Roz was Dwarf #7. His mama made him a humdinger of a beard and a old man costume, but he nearly ruirnt the play because he diskivered he could git laughs by hobbling around and making old man faces at the audience. They could hardly git the little varmint off the stage.

Well, there's your second sign right there. Those old men Roz'd be mixed up with would be comical ones. And when it comes to comical old men, ain't nobody could outcap Lum and Abner.

High school come next, and that's where Old Roz diskivered those strange critters called "girls." He could recanize them because they was the ones who danced backwards. Not realizing what tortures he was being drawed into, he tried dating a few of them critters, but he had about as much success with 'em as Cedric would have years later with Clarabelle Seestrunk.

That too was a sign. It prepared him to write those love pangs Lum would go through ever time a new schoolmarm came to Pine Ridge.

A big honor came to Roz his senior year. He was lect-ed Marshal of the big Homecoming Day parade. He hadn't never been on a horse in his life, and that ornery critter takened advantage of poor Roz by rollin' over on top of him a few times... which is a uncommon hard way to lead a parade. But, being of sturdy stuff, Roz got through it, even though he did cut the parade short because he had to git to a bathroom.

Through no fault of his, the Great Depression struck about the time he graduated, but he was lucky enough to git hissef a job as a bookkeeper for a insurance company. And that is where he caught his distrust of adding machines. Another sign? You bet! That laid the groundwork for the distrust Abner would one day feel for that dadblamed second-hand adding machine old Lum would drag into the Jot 'Em Down Store.

Hit didn't take no brick house to fall on Roz to tell him the insurance game weren't his cup of cocoa. So he saved ever penny he could git his paws on, and fore he knowed it, he was on his way to the University of Missouri. Why Missouri? The signs decreeded it. He was being drawed closer to Arkansas... and... to Lum and Abner.

He jined a fraternity called Delta Tau Delta, whatever that means, and he enjoyed setting around with his "brothers" having these high class discussions, and if you have ever heard of the GOLDEN ERA DISCUSSION CLUB, right there is where that idy come from.

One year of that fast campus life left him flat broke, so he went home. By now jobs had sank from not-hardly-any to not-hardly-even-none, so he went to school right there at Sioux Falls College. This turned out to be the best one idy he had ever stum-bled into... because here he started writin' little plays and skits (like old Lum was always tryin' to do). In addition, Old Roz became editor of both the college newspaper and the alumni publication. Also he started a college magazine and became publicity director for the school. What this meant was that he graduated with the college owin' him money, stidda vicey-versey.

His mama sewed that money into his underwear, and Old Roz struck out for Hollywood, California. Unbeknownst to him, that was zactly where Lum and Abner would eventual wind up. A sure sign if they ever was one.

Life weren't easy in Glitter City. Old Roz'd strap hissef into a chair and set there day and night writing these great radio scripts, of which he'd go out and try to sell. They'd take his scripts okay, but usually they'd lose 'em. They was good at that.

About the time Old Roz was considerin' cashin' in his chips, he got this job of which they called it a "staff writer" for CBS. Him being the only comical writer on the staff at the time, they loaded him with so many shows to write, the only way he could get 'em all wrote was to set there all night long. Facts is, he worked so many nights, there was them who thought he was the night watchman. And they was times he wisht that's



Roz Rogers (with glasses) and his co-writers for the JOE PENNER SHOW, 1937;

Penner is seen at far right.

what he was.

But it weren't all bad. The job gave him his chance to write stuff for big-time comedians when they would come on as guests on different CBS sustaining shows. (Sustaining meaning "hardly no money.") Amongst these comical fellers was such as Jack Benny, Bob Hope, George Jessel, W. C. Fields, Victor Moore, Edward Everett Horton, Ben Blue, Benny Rubin, and etc.

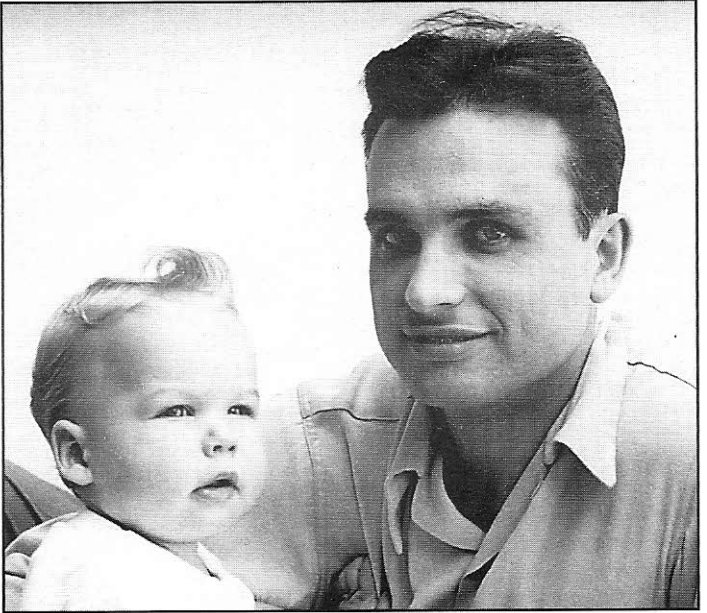
In 1937, Old Roz left CBS's apron strings to write for a feller named Joe Penner, who kept askin' everybody, "Wanna buy a duck?" Nobody ever seemed to want to buy Penner's duck, so Old Roz moved on to write for the *Texaco Star Theatre* starring Ken Murray. After that came the Al Pearce show, which weren't no world beater, but it was the biggest sign yet! The Al Pearce show had a office in the Columbia Square Building right next door to the office of a couple fellows named Chet Lauck and Tuffy Goff... who anyone with any sense knows is Lum and Abner!

Them and him didn't meet right away, but when they did, hit was like a marriage made in heaven. As Old Roz often said, for him hit was a labors of love. And hit must have been good, because hit lasted for near a decade. Facts is, the friendship lasted for the rest of their lives.

As all good things must, the *Lum and Abner* show come to an end, and Old Roz had to move on to write for other shows, now mostly on the "tube," which is what us "old pros" called television. He final settled down to writing a majority of the scripts for *Father Knows Best*, which won him a passel of awards, such as the Sylvania Award, the U. S. Treasury Award, a Christopher Award, four TV Academy nominations, and two Writers Guild nominations.

Writing for another half dozen TV shows convinced Old Roz that it was time to move on again; this time to Walt Disney Studios where he wrote *The Million Dollar Duck* and *Charlie and the Angel*. He enjoyed that tolably well, but enuff is enuff, so he retired hisself from that kind of writing and turned out a comical book called *How to Play Golf Without a Complete Collapse of Character, Health, and Sanity*.

Today he is working on other book idys, and on Saturdays he vacuum cleans the rugs (even though that is womern's work). He does it because he got hisself a good womern, of whom they got married clean back in 1937. Her name's Dorie and she's a dedicated hospital volunteer worker so she knows how to take care of him. And she still knows how to cook Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners for all the offsprings, of which include a humdinger of a boy, Michael, two humdingers of girls, Rosalind



Roz with son Michael in 1942, the year he began writing the full time writing of the LUM AND ABNER scripts. This photo, by the way, was taken by frequent L&A supporting player Jerry Hausner.

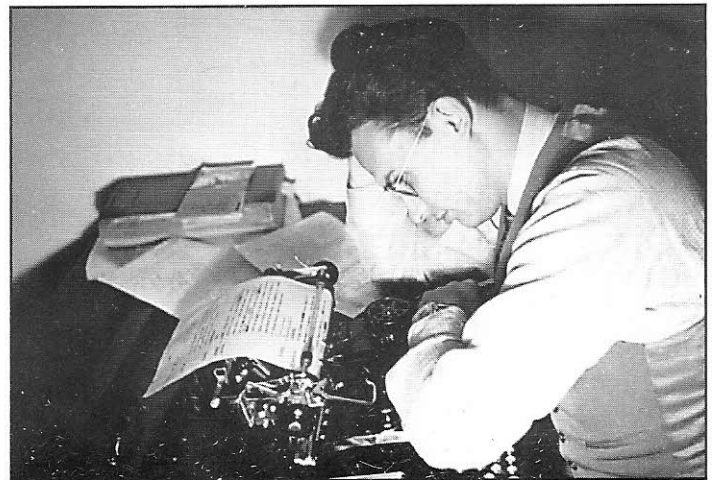
and Laurie, and their youngins Laura, Susan, Hunter, Becky and Andy. (Kids like to git their names in print.)

A final sign that the influence of Lum and Abner is still uponst Old Roz is the fact that he ain't lost touch with his roots and old friends in the Midwest. Facts is he and his womern have went back to Sioux Falls three times in the last few years for big doings: once to give a speech to his 50th High School Anniversary banquet honorin' native SD sons and daughters who had went out in the world and got knowed; and last to give the commencement address at his old school, Sioux Falls College. Sort of a nice way to round out his life.

Roz says he misses those old Lum & Abner days, and that's why he was tickled to death when some fellers named Donnie Pitchford, Sam Brown, and Tim Hollis come up with the idy of forming the National Lum & Abner Society, of which whose' purpose is to presarve the traditions, the legends, the good humor and the spirit of Lum & Abner not only for us old codgers who remember, but for future generations as well. And if that ain't a good sign, I'll eat the pigeon-toed checker board.

- Roswell B. Rogers

Roz titled this ca. 1939 series of photos "A Script Is Born." They humorously demonstrate the creative process familiar to anyone who attempts to write anything intended for others to read!



THE REST OF THE STORY



The **FATHER KNOWS BEST** series receives the Sylvania Award, 1954. Accepting are (L to R) Robert Young; unknown; Jane Wyatt; and the show's writers, Roz Rogers and Dorothy Cooper.

That was where Roz ended his story for the August 1985 issue of the *Journal*, but his activities with the NLAS would continue. As the 1986 convention rolled around, plans were being made to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the changing of Waters, Arkansas, to Pine Ridge. For the occasion, Roz turned out his first completely new *Lum and Abner* script since 1953. It was performed at the convention that year to a great reception. Unfortunately, the week before the convention, Roz had to undergo open heart surgery. A special get-well card was mailed to him from Pine Ridge, and while still in the hospital he responded with a humorous thank you letter that proved his comic sense was still intact.

In many ways, Roz never quite recovered from the strain of undergoing heart surgery at the age of 76. He was noticeably feeble when interviewed later that summer for the AETN television documentary *Lum and Abner: Laughter Never Dies*. For the 1987 convention, he did not provide a script but did send a recorded greeting to the members.

He continued to contribute short pieces to the *Journal*, but his health was deteriorating. Parkinson's Disease gave him a tremor in his hands, and while his mind was not impaired this made it difficult for him to write. He was unable to provide a script for the 1988 convention, but did send messages to several of the following years' events. The last of these was in 1991, when he was still in fine form as he created a letter commemorating the 50th anniversary of his joining the *Lum and Abner* staff.

The Parkinson's Disease which had ravaged his body for so long was beginning to affect him mentally by that time, and after

his annual Christmas greeting of 1991 the NLAS did not hear from him any more. In January 1994, he suffered a total collapse and had to be transferred to a nursing home in Long Beach, near his son Michael. Later that year, Roz and Dorie were moved to the home of their daughter Laurie to live out their years. (Dorie was by then suffering from Alzheimer's Disease, a condition she is still fighting as of this writing.) The NLAS continued to check in on Roz's condition through Laurie.

On August 7 of this year, the NLAS received the following account from Laurie:

In June we transferred both Roz and Dorie up to a private home near my sister. Early this week Roswell began to refuse food, water and his medications. Over the next few days he began to drift into a coma. My sister Rosalind went and saw him on Monday, and then again on Wednesday. She then called me and told me to get up here ASAP. So my son, Terrence and I left early on Thursday morning and got up here about 12:40. My sister immediately took us up to the home in North San Juan, about a half hour from Rosalind's house.

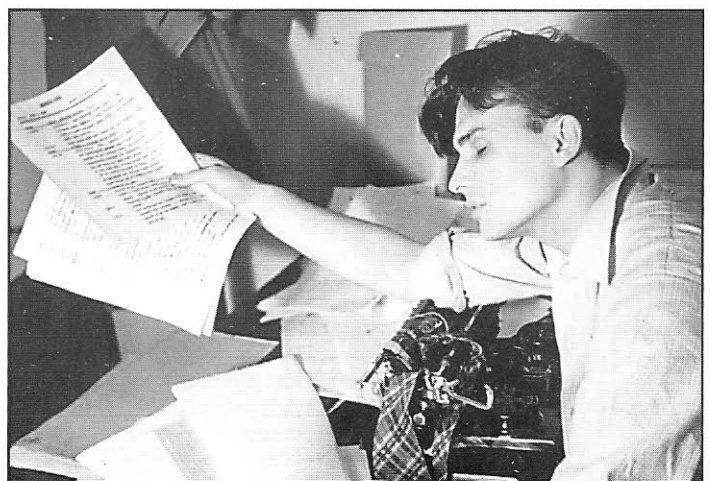
I was able to say my good-byes, and inform him that I had gotten an A in my calculus class. Even though he did not respond, I sense that he knew I was there. My sister and I sat on the bed next to Roswell's and for about two hours we watched him take his last breaths. He was calm and very peaceful. A nurse from Hospice arrived and could tell that Roswell was at peace, and had a good life, without even knowing him at all. Her words were very comforting to my sister and me.

I decided that my son needed a change of atmosphere, so I left and he and I went out into the yard and played with the six dogs, looked at the birds, and the three peacocks that live on the property. About 10 minutes later I went back in. I looked at my sister and she motioned to me to remain still. I sat down next to her and we waited for the next breath, which never came. He died on August 6 at 3:50 p.m. We briefly cried, but had been preparing for this moment for quite some time now. I am so glad for Roswell, as he was quite ready to leave this world.

My mother is completely unaware of the events that have transpired, and we have decided that if she should ask "Where is Roz?" a simple answer like he is in the next room, should work out fine. She truly needs no more agitation as she has more that she can handle as it stands now.

The NLAS was truly fortunate to have had a friend like Roz, who was such a vital part of *Lum and Abner* for so many years. It is still hard to believe that he was a guest at the very first convention; the NLAS was formed in August 1984, and Roz's heart surgery took place in June 1986, so that one 1985 convention was the only chance we would have had. We are glad we did not miss it, but it is certain that we will miss Roz.

- Tim Hollis



A Note to All and Sundry Philologists, Linguists, Etymologists, and Sociologists Who May Endeavor to Uncover the Language and Culture of the LUM AND ABNER Period by Roswell B. Rogers

When the University of Arkansas at Little Rock began assembling its vast collection of LUM AND ABNER material just prior to the death of Chet Lauck, Roz Rogers agreed to provide the University with copies of the complete run of his L&A scripts. Along with the script collection, he penned the following humorous analysis of the scripts, which reveals much about his writing methods as concerns L&A's dialect and general style. Roz sent this piece to the NLAS archives many years ago, but it has never before appeared in print.

Dear To Whom It May Concern:

The ancient documents you are about to delve into, and attempt to decipher, have been known variously as the PINE RIDGE PARCHMENTS and the LUM & ABNER SCROLLS. There are a few scholars who have mistaken these scrolls for old Sanskrit documents, but that is obviously an error inasmuch as the Sanskrit language dates back to 1500 B.C., while the LUM & ABNER SCROLLS cover a period roughly from 1930 A.D. to 1950 A.D.

During that period, the actual word in common use for such documents was neither *scroll* nor *parchment*; it was *script*... in particular *radio script*. It was probably the similarity of the words *script* and *skrit* that led those few scholars to their erroneous conclusion.

Another small group of scholars, because of what they thought was a system of hieroglyphics in the scripts of a three month period in the spring of 1945 A.D., concluded that the LUM & ABNER SCROLLS belonged to an early Egyptian period. Again this was an error. The strange markings in the scripts were not hieroglyphics at all; they were merely the result of the fact that the *typewriter* used by the *writer* (that's what writers were called in those days.. *writers*) developed trouble in the letter "t". It printed only the top half of the lower case "t", while at the same time it printed the bottom half of the capital "t" somewhere above the line. It did make for an odd looking page. It was suggested in some quarters that this was some insidious plan to do away with the letter "t", but that was not true. It was simply a combination of a busted key and an occupational disease among writers of the period called *procrastination*. Nearly every morning when the writer sat down to work, he was overheard to say, "I gotta get this #@%! typewriter fixed... sometime." And three or four months later, he did.

The one bad part of this matter was that, in order to make those scripts suitable for copying by the University of Arkansas Library for its Lum and Abner archive, it was necessary to bring in a special T-man to fill in the bottoms of all those lower case "t"s. Or *T-person*, I should say. (By the year 1979 A.D., we had pretty well done away with the word *man*.) In fact the T-person I called in was a woman... my wife... who, I am happy to report, was willing to work quite cheap.

In your research, you will also come across some scripts that look as though they were nearly all hand-lettered. This led at least one scholar to the notion that these scripts were laboriously hand-lettered by a little old monk, sitting alone in his tiny cubicle in ancient Italy in the days before Mr. Gutenberg invented his printing press. This too is wrong. The hand-lettering was done by a little old writer (me) sitting in a tiny cubicle in California in 1979 A.D., desperately trying to salvage some old, lousy carbon copies. The facts of the matter are that the writer was too cheap to buy good carbon paper, and used this inferior product till death did it part. He is now paying for this false economy... which may be the best lesson to be learned from all this research.

The land occupied by the *LumandAbnerites* was roughly in the west central part of what was then known as *Arkansas*... and may still be. However, the language found in the scrolls in question does not purport

to be authentic Arkansas dialect. While it may indeed show some influences of the language of the aboriginal Arkansans, it claims only to be authentic *LUMANDABNERESE*. In fact, these are the only known documents to be written in pure *LUMANDABNERESE*.

Sometime around the early thirties of the twentieth century, two enterprising young men named *Lum Edards* and *Abner Peabody* (who frequently used the names of Chester Lauck and Norris Goff to throw off bill collectors) developed this language especially for themselves and their band of followers. Although at first reading it may appear baffling to even the most astute linguistic scholars, it is actually quite a simple and economic language, and one that can be mastered with a minimum of study and application.

One reason for its very individualistic style is that when Lum Edards and Abner Peabody decided to immortalize the tribe by turning it into what was then called a *radio show*, neither Lum nor Abner had ever seen a *radio script*. (This is understandable because during that period the fad of radio was confined pretty largely to New York, Chicago, and a western outpost called San Francisco.) Therefore, Lum and Abner were forced to make up their own form, a form which proved to be, among other things, a great paper saving device. Everything was single spaced, with absolutely no margins either at the top or bottom or the sides. Ofttimes words at the end of a line ran halfway off the page.

In the early forties of that same century, when I took over the writing of the scripts, I saw no reason to change the form. After all, that was what Lum and Abner were used to reading, and they were the only ones who ever saw the scripts. In later years, however, when the *radio networks* (as they were called) became more sophisticated, they got some fool notion that they would like to see our scripts before they were broadcast all over the land. They weren't exactly sure what Lum and Abner were up to and wanted to protect themselves from God knows what.

So we agreed to make an extra carbon copy for them. But they seemed to be confused by both the form and the language of *LumandAbnerese* in the original and rather strongly insisted that we let them put our scripts through a process known as *mimeographing* (a primitive mechanical method of making many copies of a single original). This of course robbed the scripts of their old typographical charm, but they said that was Progress. It also meant that the writer would now have to write the scripts at least one day in advance of the broadcast day, which robbed the writer of the daily thrill of racing to the radio studio, hoping to get the script there before air time.

There are several marks by which a researcher can readily identify an original Lum and Abner scroll. One of them is the use of *sound effects*. The phrase *sound effect* almost never appears. There are sound effects indicated however, but they are thrown right into the dialogue, distinguished only by a whole lot of parentheses.

LUM: I grannies, Abner, if we don't sell (((TELEPHONE))) all this curlycue candy fore Christmas, we ain't never goin to git shud of it.

Several speeches later they decide to answer the phone. Generally speaking, there were only four basic sound effects: (1) (((DOOR))), (2) (((TELEPHONE))) (for incoming calls), (3) (((RING PHONE))) for outgoing calls, and (4) (((CLICK))) meaning hang up the phone. And Lum, being the taller of the two, handled all these operations himself.

A second distinguishing mark of an original Lum and Abner is the fact that all the characters spoke in CAPITAL letters whenever they talked on the telephone. It is not known whether the people at the other end of

the line also spoke in UPPER CASE because we never got to hear them talk.

Probably the outstanding characteristic of LumandAbnerese is its economical use of words, letters and punctuation. For example, on all words ending in *ing*, it did away completely with the final *g* as well as all apostrophes. And on such words as *there* and *where*, it eliminated the final *e*.

LUM: Dad blame it, Abner, *wher'd* you file that bill from the wholesale house?

ABNER: Right *ther wher* it blongs... under "H".

If you try pronouncing those two words without the final *e*, you will notice they come out sounding like *thur* and *whur*, which is the proper way to pronounce them in LumandAbnerese.

The language also eliminated all *ly* endings on adverbs. Witness the following examples:

"He'll do it *eventual*."

"He ain't *actual* sick."

"If you ast me that *confidential*, I'd say he was *complete* tetched in the head."

The article *an* was also done away with completely.

"Better take along *a* umbreller."

"A elephant never fergits."

The language also introduced new, shorter words for old ones: viz., *ort* for *ought*, and *ortent* for *ort not*. er, that is, for *ought not*. And it achieved a wealth of economy in combining words into single, shorter forms. *Good ones* became *gooderns*. *Young ones* became *youngins*. The supreme achievement here came with the cavalier tossing out of a lot of useless auxiliary verbs. One word could do the work of three. Compare "He *would not have gone* anyway" with "He *wouldnta went* noways." See how much simpler that is? And stronger too.

If Lum and Abner had written the lyrics for the musical *MY FAIR LADY*, Eliza Doolittle, instead of singing "I could have danced all night," would have sung "I *coulduv* danced all night." And, depending on how many choruses of that she sings in the play, that one sentence alone *coulduv* gotten the audience out of the theatre a good deal earlier.

A truly remarkable facet of LumandAbnerese was its introduction of *interchangeable nouns and verbs*. No other language has this feature. Take the noun *hermit*, for example. On more than one occasion, Lum threatened to go up into the hills and *hermit* hisself. Or, in more dire circumstances, to *suicide* hisself. In another situation, Abner was worried that they might *starvation* themselves to death. And in lighter moments, Cedric was known to *prank* his friends. On the other hand, perfectly good verbs wound up as nouns: viz., "That shore was a grand Fourth of July *celebrate*."

Lum and Abner sought to further simplify their language by disregarding the old notion that subject and predicates had to *agree in number*. The speaker was free to use whatever form of the verb (singular or plural) that happened to strike his fancy at the moment.

"We *was* both ther but Mose Moots *weren't*."

"I thought him and you *was* goin fishin."

"If you want my opinion, they *is* sompin mighty funny goin on ther."

They also reduced the worry over verb tenses. Any tense would work just fine in any situation. Furthermore there were some verbs, such as the verb *ast*, which could serve as both past and present tense right in the same sentence.

"Abner, I've *ast* you a hunnert times to hesh up, and I'm only goin to *ast* you one more time."

LumandAbnerese left the *personal pronouns* substantially intact, with two exceptions: the third person plural *them* shortened to *em* (with no apologetic apostrophe preceding it, please note); and the third person singular *it* was expanded to *hit*.

"*Hit* aint goin to do no good to learn *em*."

However, *hit* was used only in the *nominative* case. When you got into the *objective* (accusative) case, the *h* was dropped. You would never say, "Don't pick *hit* up." That is awkward to say, as well as being incorrect usage. Even Cedric wouldn't make that error.

Double negatives, which are pretty universally frowned upon rather sternly, were not only acceptable in LumandAbnerese, they were cherished. And they were handled with artful ease. A native could, without batting an eye, toss off such sentences as: "He caint hardly hear nuthin," or, "He don't never go nowhers no more." Do those sentences leave any doubt as to their true meaning? Of course not. They certainly fulfill the basic purpose of language, which is clear communication. So what's all this fuss about double negatives?

Lum and Abner also can be credited with introducing into the language such highly descriptive new words as *slaggard* and such new forms of old words as "He has got the *one-trackedest* mind I ever run up agin."

LumandAbnerese demonstrated a remarkable grasp of the *roots and derivations* of words. For example, if a man runs a *barber* shop (as Lum did, or attempted to do), it is certainly logical that he would be called the Head *Barbarian*. Likewise, it would be an obvious error to refer (as Squire Skimp did) to Lum's barber shop as a *tonsonial* palace. Any idiot would know that a *tonsonial* palace could only be a place where they take out your *tonsils*.

There was a nice intensity to the language. No one in Pine Ridge would simply *love* someone, or *hate* him, as the case may be. He would do nothing short of saying, "I *love and admire* him." Or, "I *hate and dispise* him." There were no lesser degrees. A Pine Ridgian would also never be guilty of making a flat statement such as, "I enjoyed that speaker." He would put it more like this: "I tell you ther's the best arry one out-loud talker I ever set under!" Now that has color.

Another advantage of the language is that it reduced the embarrassment over misspelled words. With its rigid system of inconsistent spellings, who could ever tell when a word was misspelled?

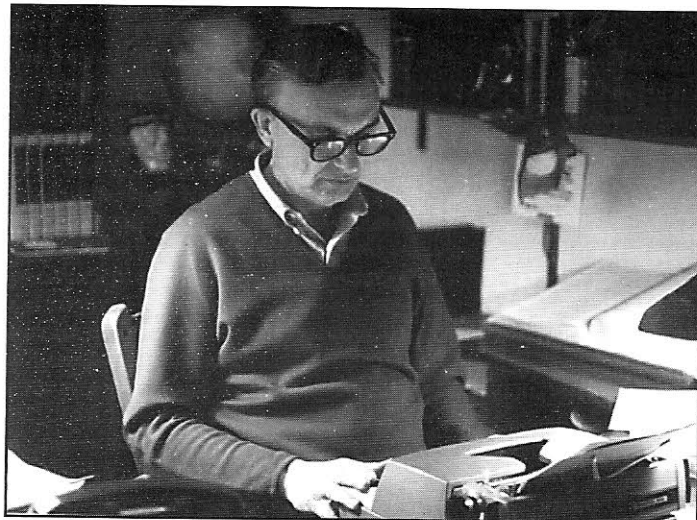
Possibly the greatest contribution of LumandAbnerese was its effort to bestow respectability on that bane of the existence of every high school grammar teacher... the dreaded *run-on sentence*. It was here that the *run-on sentence* came into its glory. Pine Ridge would have been lost without it. Try this one on for size:

"Abner, I wisht you'd listen to me when I keep tellin you fer goodness sakes don't wake up yer papa cause that's the only time I don't mind havin him around the store is when he's asleep."

Let's see you grammar purists diagram that one.

Well, I think that is sufficient introduction to the ancient Culture and Language of the LumandAbnerological Age. From here on, you are strictly on your own, and I wish you the very best success in your philological and sociological studies and research.

Sincerely and academically yours,
Roswell Rogers



Roz at home, working on one of his screenplays for Walt Disney Studios, circa 1970.

LUM & ABNER: NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1948

Imagine it's a Sunday evening 50 years ago! The Columbia Broadcasting System is just about to beam their new half-hour version of *Lum and Abner* through the loudspeaker of your favorite radio! While not the same series we've grown accustomed to since 1931, these weekly visits still hold moments of humorous entertainment. In case you missed Tim's outstanding introductory articles last issue, be assured that Chet Lauck continues in his roles of Lum, Cedric, and (rarely) Grandpappy Spears, while Tuffy Goff retains his characterizations of Abner and Squire Skimp. New actors are introduced in these programs, and their names will be listed as we progress. Let's listen to the offerings for November and December...

NOVEMBER 7, 1948: "Ezry" Seestrunk (actor Horace Murphy) drives up in front of the Jot 'Em Down Store with a lady who catches Lum's eye! "Grannies, she's as purty as a speckled pup under a brand-new wagon!" Lum beams. Abner identifies her as "Ezry's wife's cousin from London... Ohio!" Ezra enters to buy a hair-net for the "society-type" woman, and explains that his cousin-in-law is "between husbands right now. She come out here to grieve over her last 'un. She lost him in a six-day bicycle race." (When the six days were up, the "lost" husband kept right on riding!)



Isabel Randolph

The eligible lady, Rowena (no last name is given), simply loves cowboys! As she (actress Isabel Randolph, primarily famed for her years as snooty Mrs. Uppington on *Fibber McGee and Molly*) enters the store, Lum becomes "Cactus Lum Eddards," greeting her with a broad, cowboy-flavored "Howdy, Ma'am!" He brags of the beautiful "Western" landscape around Pine Ridge, "with the yuccas howlin' in the underbush!" So impressed is "Miss Rowena," she enters the rugged cowpuncher in the upcoming Mount Ida Rodeo's bulldogging contest!

Squire Skimp, ever-mindful of an opportunity to profit, offers to sell

Lum additional hospitalization insurance. Meanwhile, Ben Withers (Clarence Hartzell), a former "Mount Idy" resident, has been in contact with old friend Howard K. Sutler (a mortician), the organizer of the rodeo. Lum is to report directly to the funer-al parlor the day of the event, an "arrangement" that is a bit unnerving to the nervous "bulldogger!" "That would save 'em from haulin' ya back over thar later," adds a somewhat callous Abner. Due to Lum's braggadocio, he eventually finds himself scheduled to bring down the wildest steer available!

Realizing he must go through with the dangerous doings, Lum devises a method to stay on the steer: He fills his oversized cowboy boots with stove bolts! ("I'm a little stove up," he complains, unable to walk with much agility!) Comes the event, and out rides "Cactus Lum," making rodeo history by riding his horse backwards!! The rodeo announcer (longtime *Lum and Abner* associate Charles Lyon) is astonished at the speed with which "Cactus" brings down the steer! Later, Lum explains to Abner the fact that his horse threw him so hard, his bolt-filled boots knocked the bull cold! Adding to the laughs generated by this situation, Chet Lauck stumbles over his lines, causing Tuffy/Abner to ad-lib, "Kinda e-fected both of ya, didn't it?" to which Lum replies, "It addled me a little!" "Well, I'll be a polka-dotted possum!" Abner adds.

NOVEMBER 14, 1948: The Felix Mills Orchestra segues from "Down on the Old Party Line" into a wonderful, but jarring (for *L&A*) jazzy break before announcer Niles ushers us into to the Jot 'Em Down Store. The "partners in time" are in familiar

territory this week, playing checkers, and fairly ignoring their customers! Ezra Seestrunk enters, complaining of "trouble in the home," and thinks Abner's checker-playing comments are directed to him in a very funny exchange:

EZRA: That woman o' mine is on the warpath agin. I don't know what to do!

ABNER: (to Lum) Go ahead an' MOVE!

EZRA: How kin I do that? Quick as I git in th' house, she locks me in th' upstairs bedroom!

ABNER: (to Lum) They's jist one thing ta do - JUMP!

EZRA: What if she ketches me a-leavin'?

ABNER: (having just jumped into Lum's king row) CROWN 'ER, BOY!

After having been unwittingly advised to "whop" his "womern," Ezra leaves the store with neither Lum nor Abner realizing he had been there! Commenting on the checker game, Abner opens the door for topical humor by declaring, "I doggies, it taken me a long time, but now I got me a king!" Lum adds, "Now you know how Princess Elizabeth feels!" (England's Prince Charles was born the day of this broadcast!)

What of "Ezry?" He did as Abner "suggested" - attempted to "move," got upstairs to "jump," and after he landed (on his "womern," who broke his fall!), he "crowned" his wife ("Whanged'er on the noggin with my valise!")! Mrs. Seestrunk now considers Ezra her "big, strong caveman," and all is peaceful! Thanks to Ezra, Abner's reputation as a counselor has spread around town, a fact made evident by a large group of folks gathering for advice. "Grannies, lookit that!" Lum jokes, "They're lined up outside the store there like Democrats outside the White House!" (Note: Harry S Truman had just been elected President the previous week!)

Abner becomes "OI' Doc Peabody," operating his "ad-vice bureau" in the store, just as he did in the *L&A* continuities of December 1944 - January 1945. Scriptwriter Roz Rogers was responsible for both versions, of course. Not present for the 1944 session was Ben Withers, who manages to confuse "OI' Doc Peabody" in 1948, reversing the roles of counselor and client in no time.

Within moments, Abner's newfound talents have attracted the attention of Fleegeley and Thornton (actors Joe Forte and Byron Kane respectively) of the "Colossal Broadcasting Company." Thornton insists Abner, the "rural Solomon," can be hired for nothing! Fleegeley phones Abner, who excitedly tells Lum, "Some feller's callin' me clean from New York!" "Oh shore, shore," Lum patronizes, "Mr. Dewey no doubt! Tell him hit's too late fer ad-vice now!" The laughter and applause that follow would mean nothing to a listener of today, unless he or she understood the political humor of the time: New York Governor Thomas Dewey was the defeated opponent of incumbent Truman.

Abner is to be the star of a national radio program, and *L&A* announcer Wendell Niles attempts to give "OI' Doc" some "ad-vice" by teaching him to do the commercial for their sponsor, Frigidaire. In a rare breaking of the "fourth wall," Abner asks, "When I get so I can give spiels like that on this Frigidaire show, what're you gonna do fer a job?" Abner practices his "electrocution" by reciting "how now, brown cow," even after he goes on the air. Cedric is his first client, and nearly wrecks the remote Pine Ridge studio by tripping over the microphone cables!

Lum assists "OI' Doc" on the air by reading correspondence. He chooses one as the "prize letter." It's from a lady who complains that her husband has developed a terrible ego due to his "new job," and has begun to ignore his family. She details her years of unselfish toil for the man, and how he now has cast her aside. Abner advises the woman to "whop some sense into that numb skull o' his." It turns out the author of the note is a certain E.P. - Elizabeth Peabody - and she follows "Doc's" advice, run-

ning him out of the store! Lum closes the "ad-vice" show, stating that Abner, "the homespun philosopher" has just been "spun home," as Maestro Mills' musicians spin into *There's No Place Like Home!*

The program closes with a final political gag:

LUM: (answering the phone) Hello? Wha-? No, I'm sorry, Abner ain't in th' ad-visitin' business no more. I know you need ad-vice bad, but he can't help ya. Goodbye.

ABNER: Who was that?

LUM: Dr. Gallup.

(In the aforementioned Presidential election, Dr. George Gallup Sr. and other pollsters had predicted the victory of Dewey rather than Truman. The headline "Dewey Defeats Truman" was emblazoned across no less a source of current events than the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, while newscaster H. V. Kaltenborn's radio announcement of that information was mocked in a speech by Truman himself!)

NOVEMBER 21, 1948: Lum's "romance" of Miss Rowena, begun on the November 7 broadcast, begins to take on some semblance of a continuing storyline from the show's 15-minute days. This time, he determines to impress her by inviting her to a candlelight Thanksgiving dinner at his "mansion," complete with servants. It does not occur to him until later that he has neither a mansion nor any servants.

Walt Bates owns the largest house in town, and since the Bates family is going out of town for the holiday anyway, Lum arranges to "borrow" the house for Thanksgiving. He is unaware of the fact that Walt is having the place fumigated (the exterminator is played by Herb Vigran; we have been unable to determine who plays Walt), and there are strict orders not to light any matches on the premises due to the flammable nature of the insecticide.

For servants, Lum presses Abner into service as butler and Ben Withers (in ill-fitting dress) as maid. Cedric is to be the French chef, cueing a reprise of the famed and hilarious "garnish/varnish" gag from 1945. A good example of the absurdity of the situation (even for a comedy show) is that Miss Rowena immediately accepts Abner's and Ben's roles as butler and maid, even though she has met both of them before and should recognize them instantly!

The big slapstick finish could have been a little difficult to get past the censors: Miss Rowena declares her intention to give Lum a great big kiss, just as Abner is striking a match to light the candles. The resulting explosion is followed only by the sound of chirping crickets, and Lum's breathless declaration: "I grannies, Miss Rowena... DO THAT AGIN!!!"

NOVEMBER 28, 1948: Lum has received a telegram (was it delivered by Grandpappy Spears?) informing him of the demise of his "dear old Uncle" Phinus, a relative whose name he can't seem to remember. (He calls him "Silas," among other names.) Lum is due to inherit a FORTUNE of some kind, and claims his newfound wealth will not change his personality, although he answers the phone as "Diamont Lum Eddards!" Uncle Phinus, Lum says, "had the typical Eddards features." Abner cracks, "In that case, maybe he's better off dead!"

If Lum is truly about to become wealthy, perhaps he can afford a nice birthday gift for Miss Rowena - one that will reflect his personality. Abner suggests the inheritance can surely buy her something better than that! Ben Withers recalls a wonderful gift he once gave to a young lady of Mount Ida - a necklace made of "selected peach and prune pits" (with a large avocado seed in the center, bearing the inscription "I love you")! Squire Skimp encourages "Wealthy Playboy Eddards" to buy Rowena an expensive mink coat, and within no time the garment is on its way to her residence.

Finally, Lum's "FORTUNE" arrives, in a large crate - it's even labeled "FORTUNE!" It happens to be a large "Sam Bernard dog" named "FORTUNE!!!" "Now Lum," Abner encourages, "he might not be worth much, but that's the biggest one 'Fortune' you'll ever see!" This may be true, but it does little toward paying Squire for Rowena's mink.

The lady herself arrives at the store, bringing a letter to Lum from "the post office gentleman" (Dick Huddleston is not mentioned). The letter explains that Lum is to receive \$2,500, to be

used in caring for Fortune the dog! "Fine," as Ben would say, except Lum gave the dog to Abner! No problem - "Lizabeth" won't let Abner keep Fortune. (The dog slept with Abner, while his "good womern" was expected to bed down on the dining room floor!)

Lawyer Herbert Rawlinson arrives to pay the "Fortune" money to Lum, and proceeds to deduct the usual fees and taxes until Lum owes money! The story doesn't end there - Fortune becomes "MISS"-Fortune, giving birth to eight little "Fortunes!"

DECEMBER 5, 1948: Charlie Redfield is hospitalized in Mena! His problem? He is nearsighted. How does that land him in the hospital? Abner explains that Charlie flirted with "another womern" at a dance, not realizing she was his own wife! His "shortsightedness" got him "knocked subconscious" by Mrs. Redfield. "You mean unconscious," Lum clarifies, "Subconscious is your other mind."

"HUH?" Abner responds, launching into a variation of the tried and true "other mind" or "two heads are better than one routine." This time around, Abner names the "other mind" Chester rather than Frank, rattling along in a conversation with himself, as Lum phones Ben Withers for a ride into the County Seat.

Abner blames "Chester" for a sudden case of hiccups, which keeps him "hic"-ing for most of the program. Ben attempts an old Zinkafoose hiccup cure by tying Abner to the back of his car and driving down the road, forcing him to "run" his hiccups off! In a scene better suited for an episode of *The Flintstones*, Ben screeches his car to a stop, and the wildly running, leaping Abner smashes into the back!

Another Withers hiccup cure backfires, as Ben tries to frighten Abner by pretending to run the auto into a pole! Unfortunately, he forgets to miss, and the CBS sound effects department creates another collision!

Finally arriving at County Hospital, Abner is mistaken for a patient with a rare form of hiccups! Nurse Cooper (Gloria Blondell) prepares him for surgery by Dr. McNaughton (Rawlinson again). Abner thinks he is merely being taken to visit Charlie, and wonders why the nurse instructs, "Please take your clothes off!" So shocked is Abner, his hiccups vanish! Nonetheless, he continues to be prepared for his operation.

Lum discovers the mistake too late, and enlists an unwitting Ben Withers to pretend he is Abner's personal doctor. Thinking "Doc" Withers will be able to remove Abner from an unnecessary "hiccuptectomy," Lum assures Nurse Cooper that the bogus medicine man studied with the Mayo brothers - all three of them, in fact - "Manny, Moe and Jack!" Lum and Ben find Abner covered with a sheet, and believe him to be deceased, causing Lum to voice his regrets regarding his sometimes harsh treatment of his partner. Naturally, Abner interrupts Lum's soliloquy by returning to "life!" (The half-hour programs contain moments of morbid humor generally not found in the previous series - injuries and accidents played for laughs, jokes about death, Lum or Abner often expressing little concern over a life-threatening situation for the other, etc.)

The real doctor arrives to clear Abner, but now it is Lum with the hiccups! "Nurse!" the sawbones shouts, "Get this fellow to surgery right away! At last we've got the right man!" After Wendell Niles hawks a Frigidaire automatic washing machine (and pronounces lingerie as "LAN-jeer-EE" rather than LON-jeer-AY"), we are treated to a final scene, in which Ben also has the hiccups - and so does Wendell: "This is CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting -HIC- System!"

DECEMBER 12, 1948: Lum's infatuation with "Miss Rowena" progresses to the point that he is unable to write up a simple grocery list without including her name: "Miss Rowena, three cans o' hominy," Abner reads, "Miss Rowena, one solid-packed Rowena, one pickled Rowena..." Lum is thinking of matrimony, and coincidentally, so is Cedric, who approaches Abner for assistance in writing a note to Clarabelle. We hear some material from the quarter-hour series reprised, as Cedric explains his "new" arrangement with rival Gomer Bates - one week, Gomer dates Clarabelle, the next week, they allow Cedric to tag along! Now, Cedric wishes to elope with his dream girl!

The crudely Abner-scrawled note (with nicknames "Turtledove" for her and "Goofus" for him) is soon read by

Rowena, who decides she must help the lad rewrite it. She leaves the new and improved elopement note (replete with the aforementioned nicknames!) with Abner. Additionally, Rowena leaves a verbal message for Lum, instructing him to bring a ladder to the Seestrunks' home! (She wants him to install a lock and burglar alarm on her upstairs window, due to the activities of prowlers.) Naturally, the note and message become confused, and Lum now believes Miss Rowena ("Goofus") wants to elope with him ("Turtledove")! PLOP! Lum faints! "Git up off the floor," Abner admonishes, "you got ta elope in that suit!!"

Miss Rowena invites Lum to bring his ladder to her window "tonight," and Romeo Edwards is on his way! Lum is left hanging (literally!) as his ladder falls, and Abner sneaks into the house to try to help pull him in, only to be stopped by Ezra, on guard for prowlers. Both Ben Withers and Rowena spot Lum, who is still hanging onto the window sill - but not for long! Rowena pounds him with a lamp until he drops! When she learns it was Lum, wishing to elope, she and the cast rush to assist him. After he comes to, Rowena admits she is perfectly willing to elope, but Lum decides marriage is too dangerous!

Before the program closes, Lum and Abner make a plea to the public to support public education. "Recollect," Lum emphasizes, "our teachers mold our nation's future!" Niles, apparently ill, quips during his closing, "Good night, for Frigidaire, with a very bad cold - America's number one refrigerator!" (The juxtaposition of "very bad cold" and "Frigidaire" could easily have been misunderstood by the sponsor - it caught me off guard!)

DECEMBER 19, 1948: With apologies to our NLAS members who prefer the half-hour L&A series, this writer finds them less enjoyable than those of the 15-minute format. Years before the reintroduction of these 1948 recordings, the "ossifers" of the NLAS jokingly suggested that a 30-minute adaptation of the annual Christmas classic might have been a disaster! We imagined the insertion of gags and slapstick, suggesting there might be scenes of Abner or Grandpap falling on their faces in the snow - or perhaps the wailing cry of our friend Jerry Hausner as the baby, breaking up the live audience with his appearance on stage! Instead of venerable old Doc Miller greeting the three bearers of gifts, imagine the surprise utterance of "fine!" as Ben Withers pops out of the barn door to announce the baby boy's birth!

It was with great relief that we "ossifers" finally listened to the 1948 Christmas program! Mr. Niles informs the audience that no commercial interruption will mar the evening (we feared our heroes might meet him en route to the barn, standing by his faithful Frigidaire, surrounded by snow). No unwanted material was added to the "traditional" story we've all grown to love. Instead, as a prologue of sorts, we are gently guided by Niles into the parlor of Abner's home, where Lum, Ben Withers and Ezra Seestrunk (Horace Murphy) are enjoying the singing of carolers (the Mitchell Boys Choir), and decide afterward to hold their own sing-along session, with Sister Simpson (Vivian Lasswell) accompanying them on organ.

All concerned deserve immense praise for the handling of the singing sequence. What could have become an audience snicker-festival (with comical singing and wailing by this Pine Ridge quartet) is instead handled with believable dignity, as the characters perform beloved Christmas hymns. As a matter of fact, the studio audience seems rather reserved, and the humor is toned down considerably, quite befitting the season.

For the first time, the listeners were able to hear the receiving of the oft-mentioned phone call from Grandpappy Spears, requesting the assistance of Lum and Abner to tend to a "real Christmas mission." Thus we neatly weave into the beloved Christmas script, by that time celebrating the 15th anniversary of its original 1933 broadcast.

No doubt the studio audience was asked to remain silent during this segment (certainly no house microphone was open, as was usually the case to "sweeten" the laughter). Lauck and Goff once again present this holiday classic with all the warmth we have come to expect. ("Classic" has become an overused word, but in this case is more than appropriate.) Praise is due the cast and crew of this particular program for keeping it in the spirit of the earlier renditions!

DECEMBER 26, 1948: It's back to the "brand new comedy

show" format for this closing edition of 1948, with studio audience reactions back to their former sound levels. Ben Withers' Yuletide offering to Abner is an "iron dog" (actually a paper-weight), whereas Lum has received six "founting pens" from a variety of friends. Not even a distracting visit from the generous gift-giver Ben keeps L&A from hopping into their "dec-liver" truck and heading for the Mena Emporium to exchange these items for more useful objects.

Their rattling vehicle konks out somewhere down Highway 88, forcing the Pine Ridge duo to "hike-hitch." A rather "extinguished" gentleman offers the boys a lift, but before long Abner accidentally "whops" him while gesturing with his troublesome "iron dog!" The auto careening out of control, it is brought suddenly to a stop after Abner slams the brakes, which sends Lum crashing through the windshield! (Unlike the 15-minute series, in which Abner would have expressed concern for his friend's safety, here the accident is played for laughs.) The battered driver regains consciousness and tears off to Mena, leaving L&A stranded. Lum has accidentally kept the man's watch, supposedly a valuable heirloom. ("I thought it was a Ingersoll!" Abner comments.)

Meanwhile, Cedric is minding the Jot 'Em Down Store, and advises Clarabelle to put something on the back porch to allow it to cool off. "Windy Wendell" Niles interrupts to insist that Miss Seestrunk invest in a Frigidaire, and avoid trusting foods to the winter weather for safekeeping. Fine and dandy, but it just so happens it is a hound-dog suffering tantrums that needs to "cool off!"

Fussy floorwalker Peter Leeds as well as clerk (and credit manager) Bea Benaderet engage in mutual confusion with L&A as they attempt to return the bothersome "iron dog." Eventually,

they argue with the store manager (Joseph Kearns), but get shuttled from department to department and floor to floor. Kearns had appeared previously on the half-hour *Lum and Abner* (October 10), but Benaderet and Leeds were newcomers. Benaderet is well-remembered for her role as one of Jack Benny's telephone operators, as well as the original Granny to the animated Tweety Pie. She featured prominently in two L&A "descendants" - "Cousin Pearl" of the early *The Beverly Hillbillies* and Kate Bradley in *Petticoat Junction*. (And who could forget *The Flintstones*' Betty Rubble?) Leeds' radio credits are extensive, and he will never be forgotten for his "too piercing, man..." work with satirist Stan Freberg.

After unexpectedly bumping into Ben Withers, L&A are mistaken for a pair of shoplifters by the store detective (Mr. Leeds again, using his familiar "tough guy" tones). It's back to manager Kearns' office, with Ben in tow! In addition to the many "founting pens" and a letter opener (intended to be exchanged for the "iron dog"), Lum still has the pocket watch belonging to their "hike-hitch" driver! It looks like jail for this desperate gang, until Lum demands to see the president of the company, a Mr. Smith (Francis X. Bushman), who turns out to be the very man they "hike-hitched" with earlier! Luckily, he is also an old buddy of Ben Withers, formerly known as "Spitball" Smith of Mount Idy! Cleared by Ben, the old fellows return home, only to receive the "iron dog" in the mail a few days later, with a C.O.D. bill! "Happy New Year!" L&A chime in over the closing theme at the close of the program.

Announcer Niles encourages us to "stay tuned for *Cabin B-13*, which follows immediately over most of these same stations. This is CBS, where 99 million people gather every week, the Columbia Broadcasting System." We encourage you to "stay tuned" for the 1949 episodes of *Lum and Abner*, right here in *The Jot 'Em Down Journal*, where 99 million people read about *Lum and Abner* every two months! (Well, maybe not that many folks, but...)



Bea Benaderet

- "Uncle Donnie" Pitchford