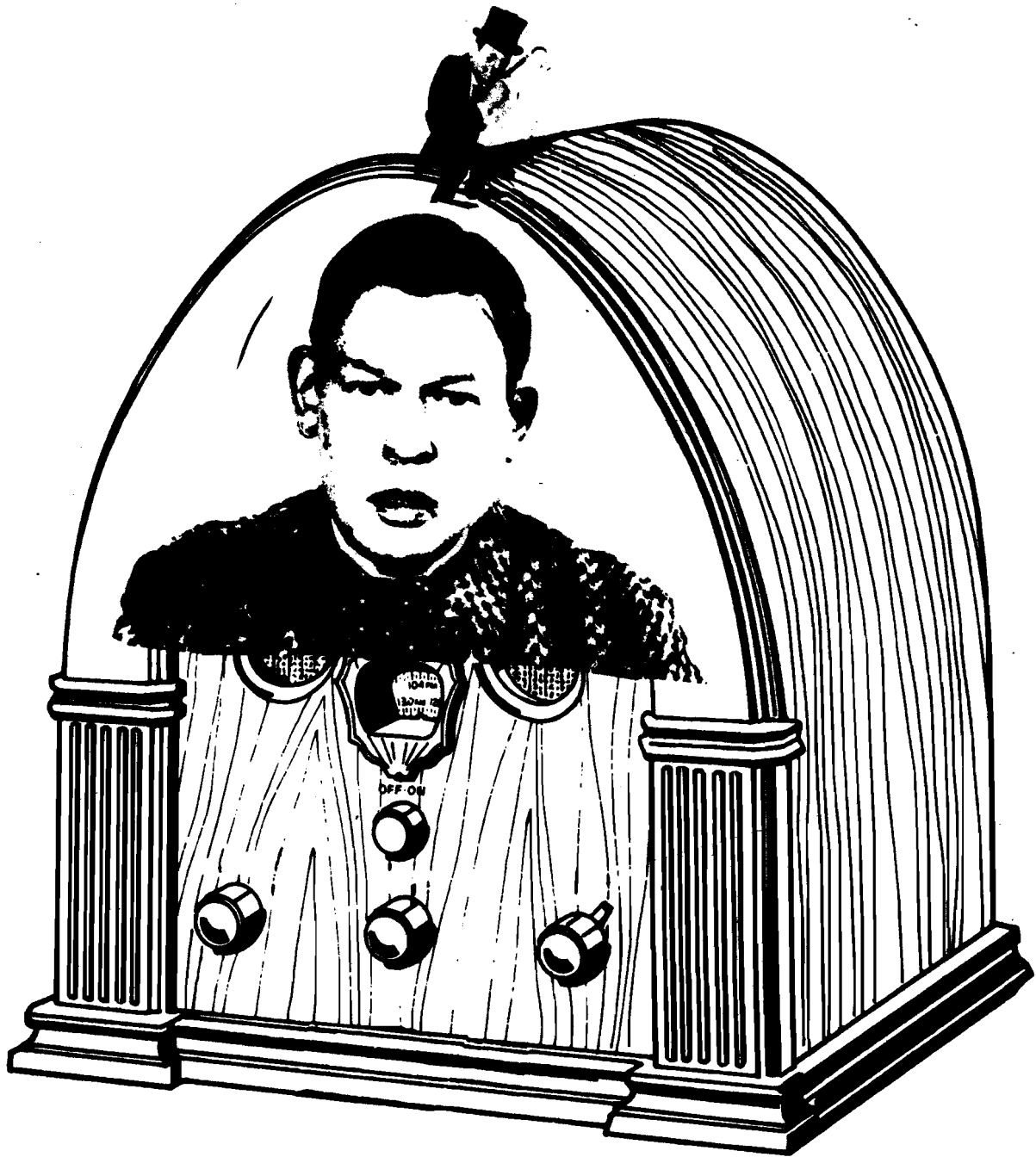


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MEMORIES

Old Time Radio Club Of Buffalo



Vol. 1 No. 5

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This issue of MEMORIES is dedicated to everyone who has contributed to the first volume of the magazine. Thanks for your efforts in making it as well received as it is. The next issue will be Volume 2, Number 1.

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The Old Time Radio Club of Buffalo meets on the second Monday of every month at St. Matthew's Church, 1182 Seneca Street, Buffalo, NY. Anyone interested in the old time radio programs of the past is welcome to attend a meeting and observe or participate. Meetings begin at 7:30PM.

The purpose of both the OTRCOB and MEMORIES is the regeneration of interest in old time radio. If the contents of this magazine stimulates your interest, then we are justified. We welcome comments, which may be sent to the address given below.

Membership in the OTRCOB is \$6.00 per year before January 1, 1977, and \$10.00 per thereafter, Membership runs for 12 consecutive months. Members receive a membership card, a monthly newsletter, and MEMORIES. Comments, memberships, and contributions can be sent to this address:

OTRCOB
P.O.BOX 119
KENMORE, NY 14217

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MEMORIES Staff: Editors: Chuck Seeley & Peter Bellanca
Production Manager: Mill Dunworth

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FROM BAGS TO RICHES:

THE ONE AND ONLY

FRED ALLEN

by Dom P. Parisi

"He traveled into this world carrying his own 'bags': not under his arms, but under his eyes."

Fred Allen was born on May 31, 1894 in Boston's Irish district. When he was four years old, his mother passed away and his father's sister became his second mother. James Henry Sullivan, the father of the man who would later be known as Fred Allen, was a Boston bookbinder. He didn't earn much money, but he was a fun loving man. Allen often remarked that he thought he inherited his father's wit, but would then add: "Of course, I may only be fifty percent correct."

Before he became a comedian, Allen tried his hand at juggling. He got into juggling quite by accident. While attending the Boston High School of Commerce, a school geared to mold students into useful citizens of industry, Allen took a part-time job at the local public library. He read books and then tried juggling them. I would guess that quite a few books were stacked on the shelves in a slightly battered condition!

One day Allen decided that he was good enough to try out his act in a local amateur vaudeville show. Allen discovered that he performed somewhat better at the library than on the stage! Nonetheless, with the help of Mr. Sol Cohen, a theatrical booking agent who took the young Allen under his wing, Fred slowly made it to the big time.

The young Allen assumed many names during his climb up the ladder to fame. He was called Young Sullivan, Paul Huckle, Freddy James, and, in the end, settled for Fred Allen.

His big break came in 1922, the year that established him as a comedian of importance. That was the year he appeared in the Shubert musical, "The Passing Show of 1922." It was while performing in this show that he met a pretty dancer named Portland Hoffa. Of her name, Allen remarked, "That's a ridiculous name, Portland Hoffa!" The young girl replied, "You should meet my sisters Lebanon, Period, and Lastone." After a brief romance, ridiculous name and all, they were married, went into radio in 1932, and stayed there to become a big success.

The medium of radio was perfect for Fred Allen. His skill was the use of words. He wrote a number of the radio scripts himself, and he had a knack for pulling words out of the air. For example, when Jack Benny's name came up, Allen once remarked: "Benny couldn't ad-lib a belch at a Hungarian banquet." If a joke from a script failed to go over, perhaps gaining only one guffaw from the audience, Fred would remark: "As that one lone laugh goes ricocheting around the studio, we move to a selection by Al Goodman and the orchestra."

"Allen's Alley" was an immediate success on the Allen show. There were characters such as Senator Claghorn (Kenny Delmar): "Somebody, Ah say somebody's knockin' on mah door"; Mrs. Nussbaum (Minerva Pious): "You were expecting maybe the Fink Spots?"; Titus Moody (Parker Fennelly): "Howdy, Bub"; Falstaff Openshaw (Alan Reed): "Take your feet off the table, mother, or you'll get a sock in the mush"; Ajax Cassidy (Peter Donald); and Socrates Mulligan, who was portrayed by Charles Cantor (no relation to Eddie). I think it would be safe to mention that Cantor's Socrates did not compare with the Greek Socrates, not by a long shot. In fact, Cantor was a most un-Socratic Socrates. Mr. Cantor later moved to DUFFY'S TAVERN, where he played the dull-witted Finnigan: "Duhhh, chee, t'anks, Arch!" Now, that's Charles Cantor!

Another feature of "Allen's Alley" was the weekly important question (I never did find out to whom the questions were important!). As the question was asked to the various denizens of the Alley, the old Atwater Kent and Philco radio speakers shot out the hilarious responses:

Allen: "What is the modern invention you most dislike?"

Mrs. Nussbaum: "Well...present company excluded..."

Allen: "Thank you."

Mrs. Nussbaum: "Excluding present company, I would venture I most dislike the telephone."

Allen: "The telephone?!"

Mrs. Nussbaum: "I am remarking that it is remarkable...."

Mrs. Nussbaum went on to tell a straightforward story of how a telephone call interrupted her cooking. In a fit of anger, she had thrown her telephone out the window as far as the cord would let it go. She continued....

Mrs. Nussbaum: "Then I am hearing from the patio beneath the window, 'Sorry, your time is up on the Pot O' Gold twenty-five thousand dollar question!' Ay-yi-yi!"

Allen: "That does seem a good reason to hate the telephone."

Mrs. Nussbaum: "Yes, most of all I hate the telephone because it is always ringing while I have my head in the oven cooking."

And on and on it went, week after week.

In 1952, a tribute of kindness to Fred Allen took place. Members of his old radio show cast, along with his long time friend Jack Benny, gathered together to help the then retired Allen re-create his program on the television show, OMNIBUS. Benny remarked: "A lot of people never realized that the feud between Allen and myself was a joke. Unfortunately, one of the people who never realized it was Fred!"

On the OMNIBUS broadcast, Allen strolled down his re-created "Alley" for the last time. I did not see the OMNIBUS show, but I would be willing to bet that it was a real warm send-off to a great comedian.

A heart condition had put the damper on Allen ever doing a full-scale comedy show on television. He was, however, a panelist on WHAT'S MY LINE for a good many years. Allen would never perform again with his old cast from radio. He passed away in 1956.

Fred Allen radio data

Debut: October 23, 1932 (CBS) as THE LINIT SHOW, also known as THE LINIT BATH CLUB. Subsequently known as THE SALAD BOWL REVUE (sponsored by Hellman's Mayonnaise), THE SAL HEPATICA REVUE (THE HOUR OF SMILES), TOWN HALL TONIGHT, THE TEXACO STAR THEATER, and finally THE FRED ALLEN SHOW. Ran as an hour show thirty-nine weeks a year for eight years. Was the last full hour comedy show on radio. Changed to half-hour format after program of June 28, 1942, and ran another seven years. "Allen's Alley" first appeared on December 13, 1942.

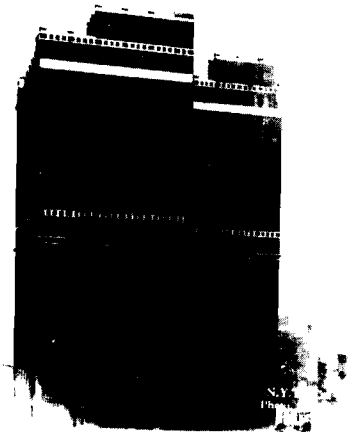
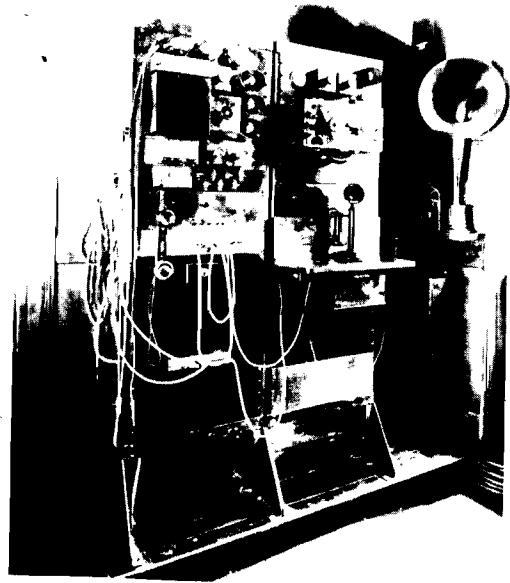
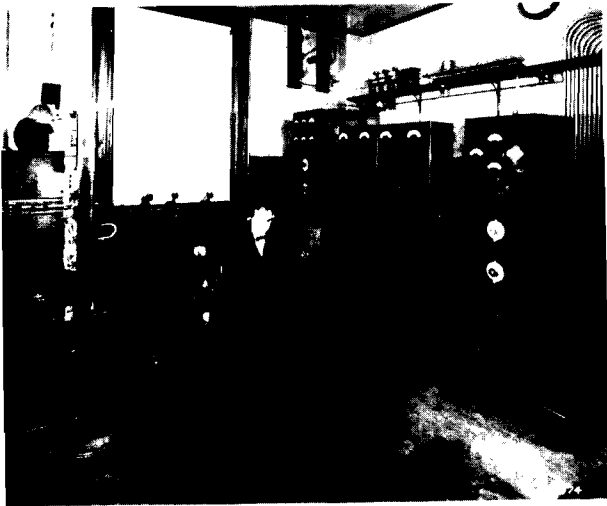
Final broadcast: June 26, 1949, with guest, Jack Benny.

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BACK ISSUE DEPARTMENT

The following issues of MEMORIES and the OTRCOB newsletter are available from the OTRCOB for \$1.00 each postpaid. All issues are in limited supply. Send all orders to: Back Issues, OTRCOB, PO BOX 119, Kenmore, New York 14217.

- MEMORIES Vol. 1 #2 = contains articles on Jack Benny, Bing Crosby, THE LONE RANGER, TARZAN, Humphrey Bogart, and others. Also contains a LONE RANGER show cross-index and Part 1 of "The Jack Armstrong Murder"
- MEMORIES Vol. 1 #3 = Special SHADOW issue, with an in-depth article on THE SHADOW in the media, a GOON SHOW log, and other features.
- MEMORIES Vol. 1 #4 = contains a Groucho Marx interview, HOLLYWOOD RADIO THEATER (ZERO HOUR) article and log, MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY article, and Part 2 of "The Jack Armstrong Murder"
- NEWSLETTER #2 (April, 1976) with script of 1000th show of LONE RANGER
- NEWSLETTER #3 (June, 1976) with script of THE SHADOW "The Ghost Building" from January 12, 1941
- NEWSLETTER #4 (August, 1976) with AMOS 'N' ANDY script "Amos' Wedding" from December 25, 1935
- NEWSLETTER #5 (October, 1976) with script of the stageplay "Sorry, Wrong Number"



DID YOU KNOW THAT....

by Dom P. Parisi

.... the YOUR HIT PARADE program at one time ran for forty-five minutes? Until I learned that, I thought that fifteen minutes had been chopped off the broadcasts I have in my collection.

.... Ted Mack, of the ORIGINAL AMATEUR HOUR program on radio and TV, once turned down Elvis Presley as a contestant for the show?

.... George Burns would go out on stage before curtain time to "test the wind" so that the smoke from his cigar would not blow in Gracie Allen's face? "You couldn't touch Gracie," Burns recalls. "She was tiny, beautiful, fragile, with wonderful blue-black hair. The audience would have been offended if the smoke had come near her."

.... the late Walt Disney portrayed his own creation, Mickey Mouse, on the MICKEY MOUSE THEATER OF THE AIR radio show? It was first heard over NBC in 1937.

SF ON THE BBC

by Chuck Seeley

Radio, the theater of the mind, has presented a good amount of science fiction programming throughout the medium's history. During the Thirties and Forties, SF was represented on the radio by BUCK ROGERS, SPACE PATROL, et al, and some other "adult" SF stories which were aired over several of the anthology shows, such as FAVORITE STORY, ESCAPE, and SUSPENSE. But, in 1950, radio fell upon SF with a vengeance. Between March 15, 1950 (the first broadcast of 2000 PLUS) and June 13, 1958 (the last broadcast of EXPLORING TOMORROW), listeners were treated to five regularly scheduled American SF anthology series. They were, in order of appearance, 2000 PLUS, DIMENSION X, TALES OF TOMORROW, X MINUS ONE, and EXPLORING TOMORROW. Those eight years proved to be the hey-day of SF on American radio, with a regular supply of both original and adapted SF stories available to audiences. Those eight years also proved that SF is a form that can be very effectively presented on radio.

Unfortunately, dramatic radio was nearly dead in 1950 and when it was finally buried, the SF programs were interred with it. It has been eighteen years since an SF program has been a regular feature on an American radio network (aside from a once-monthly play of X MINUS ONE repeats on NBC MONITER in early 1976).

However, SF on radio still lives...in Britain! The BBC has presented a group of SF stories in serial form, usually in very excellent productions. Most of the programs are adaptations of stories in print. And the adaptations are often better than the original works that are presented.

Consider the BBC Radiophonic Workshop's version of Isaac Asimov's Foundation Trilogy. The three volumes, Foundation (1951), Foundation and Empire (1952), and Second Foundation (1953), encompass the scope of 400 years, the fall of a great galactic empire, and the final victory of the Second Foundation. The saga is presented on the radio in eight one-hour segments, intelligently divided almost exactly as the books are. In fact, the only section of the Trilogy not adapted is Part 4 of Foundation, the first book, entitled "The Traders," and its loss doesn't affect the story line adversely. A breakdown of the radio and book versions follows, the radio version on the left, the book on the right:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1) "Psychohistory & Encyclopedia" | <u>Foundation</u> , Part 1 "The Psychohistorians" & Part 2 "The Encyclopedists" |
| 2) "The Mayors" | <u>Foundation</u> , Part 3 "The Mayors" |
| 3) "The Merchant Princes" | <u>Foundation</u> , Part 5 "The Merchant Princes" |
| 4) "The General" | <u>Foundation and Empire</u> , Chapters 1-10 |
| 5) "The Mule" | <u>Foundation and Empire</u> , Chapters 11-18 |
| 6) "Flight From the Mule" | <u>Foundation and Empire</u> , Chapters 19-26 |
| 7) "The Mule Finds" | <u>Second Foundation</u> , Chapters 1-6 |
| 8) "Star's End" | <u>Second Foundation</u> , Chapters 7-22 |

The saga adapts surprisingly well to radio. Indeed, a more faithful adaptation would not be possible. Entire passages are lifted intact from the printed page and put into the mouths of the over 60 characters.

An interesting feature of the series is the "Encyclopedic Read-Out," a computer-like voice that periodically provides the listener with various excerpts from the Encyclopedia Galactica (116th edition).

It is well known that science fiction has a bad name ("Oh, you mean that crazy Buck Rogers stuff?"). Asimov's Foundation is an example of SF that doesn't rely on "space opera" techniques to make for a fascinating story. Asimov's concerns here are not grand, sweeping word-pictures of vast space fleets joined in battle or the chronicle of the bloody fall of a great empire, although these events happen in the saga. Asimov looks at these events through the eyes of a series of characters who are pivotal beings responsible in one way or another for causing the events. These people are important to their societies and some become heroes (or legends, as in the case of Hari Seldon), but we see them as individuals, as real people, with faults and weaknesses. Also, Asimov doesn't use a great deal of what film people call special effects; they are present, but the story does not depend on them. The major scientific advance postulated by Asimov is that of psychohistory, a social science being developed today, that enables one to predict the way large populations will act at given times. Accordingly, Asimov's story is concerned with people and the means by which they cope with various crises.

I can determine only one "major" change in the radio version from the printed story: Asimov's "Speakers" of the Second Foundation are termed "Guardians" in the broadcast. All in all, it's a truly enjoyable eight hours, whether or not one is familiar with the story.

Another excellent BBC adaptation is another Asimov tale, The Naked Sun (1957), which is presented in one hour. Basically a detective story, although the plot hinges on a science-fictional element, the treatment is again very faithful. The only character change is the alteration of the Earth Undersecretary of the Justice Department from a woman (in the book) to a man and, while the change is really unnecessary, it doesn't affect the story because the character's personality remains the same. The ending is the same in concept but, while the book ends on a downbeat-yet-hopeful note, the broadcast concludes much more forcefully.

Interestingly, only two of the characters are Earthmen, who speak an Americanized English, while the other characters, inhabitants of the planet Solaria and considered to be aristocratic, speak with a very proper English accent.

The main character is Police Detective Elijah Baley, and he is paired with R. Daneel Olivaw, a highly advanced robot constructed to appear human. Daneel could have been the prototype for the Spock character on STAR TREK, making use as he does of cold, emotionless logic tempered with an un-robotic loyal friendship with Baley.

The Solarians have progressed to a stage in which they cannot bear bodily contact with one another and must interact socially by using trimensional viewers. Baley's problems are compounded by this, as he comes from a terribly over-crowded Earth.

Baley finally solves the murder of Rikane Delmarre, a prominent Solarian scientist, and in the process uncovers a scheme to literally conquer the galaxy with warships equipped with robotic brains. The plot turns on Baley's interpretation of Asimov's First Law of Robotics: A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm (Handbook of Robotics, 56th edition, 2058 AD).

This production is as well done as the FOUNDATION TRILOGY, but the weird electronic music is somewhat over-used in spots. However, that's only a minor complaint. On the whole, it is a fine job (and R. Daneel Olivaw sounded exactly as I thought he would).

Still another fine adaptation by the BBC is John Wyndham's The Day of the Triffids (1951), in six half-hour installments. It is adapted with the faithfulness that appears to be the BBC SF team's trademark, with only slight changes. It should be noted that the film of the novel, released in 1963, is not very faithful to the book. The radio serial, on the other hand, uses passages of dialog from the book.

There is a suggestion of a "frame" device in the book; it is written as the diary of Bill Masen, the main character. The "frame" is more fully developed in the radio serial, with Masen telling his tale to a tape recorder. My only complaint is the lack of a synopsis at the beginnings of the segments. Someone coming in on, say, the third segment would have to infer the events of the first two. This couldn't happen in the FOUNDATION TRILOGY, since each segment is actually a self-contained story.

Briefly, THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS is concerned with the efforts of a small group of people attempting to build a new life in the midst of a world literally gone blind, and menaced by ambulatory, semi-intelligent, homicidal plants. It's not nearly as silly as that brief, simple description sounds; it is quite good.

The BBC doesn't confine itself to the tales of contemporary authors. An adaptation of Jules Verne's A Journey to the Center of the Earth was presented in eight half-hour segments. Once again, the BBC's usual faithfulness in adaptation is seen (heard?), but a good deal of Verne's excess verbiage and digressions are eliminated (to no loss to the story). The only character change, and a necessary one for English radio play, is to allow Hans Bjelke, the Icelander guide, to speak English instead of Danish.

The first twenty or so chapters of the book, which deal with the discovery of the passage to the Earth's center and preparations for the journey, are easily compressed into the first two radio segments. After that, each radio segment adapts three or four of the book's chapters.

A nice touch is the use of the X MINUS ONE theme (which was itself taken from a record called EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN) to accompany the ascension of the travellers' raft up the chimney of a volcano in the final chapter.

This serial was presented on BBC-4 at 5:25 PM as part of a show called STORYTIME, however it does not appear to have been written as a

children's program. Even so, British school-children needn't scurry around for Classics Illustrated comics to help do a book report on this story. All they have to do is listen to the radio!

Besides the excellent adaptations already discussed, the BBC has produced some equally excellent original SF programs. One of these, ORBITER X, is set somewhere in the near future, possibly the late 1980s or early 1990s. The title of this six hour serial refers to Earth's first manned space station, Orbiter X, which is under construction as the tale begins. The fly in the ointment is the Unity Organisation, a league of scientists devoted to "making the world safe through a world government," a familiar SF device. Unity plans to seize the space station and use it as an orbital launch point for missiles designed to force the submission of the various governments of Earth.

ORBITER X is really straight "space opera." That is not necessarily a derogatory term, especially not so in this case. This story captures the spirit present in "Doc" Smith's Lensman and Skylark pulp novels; that is, sheer adventure with larger-than-life heroes and villains. The hero of ORBITER X is Captain Bob Britain (shades of Captain America), who is accompanied by two sidekicks, Captain "Mac" McClellan, the solid dependable character, and "Hickie" Hicks, the comical Flight Engineer. Through a series of adventures, these three men manage to thwart the designs of Unity (giving away the ending doesn't matter, because you know that the good guys will win, the question is how).

The science presented is accurate; there is little that requires the "willing suspension of disbelief" in that area. The spacemen use bulky space-suits with umbilical cords, jet pistols to control their movements on space walks, and, on the moon, hovercraft. There are no space "drives" in this story, no warp engines or hyper-drive. It takes time to travel between the Earth and the moon.

ORBITER X was written by B. D. Chapman and was presented in 12 thirty minute episodes.

This article is the first of an irregular series on SF on the radio. I am sure that many readers will say, "Oh, no. Not that crazy Buck Rogers stuff." And I am sure that those readers who have just said that have never really been exposed to good SF and therefore equate it with the generally terrible "sci-fi" films on the Late Show. If this article has stirred your interest in SF, go out right now and pick up an book by Robert Heinlein. I'm betting that you'll be pleasantly surprised.



Do you know any thing
about this Photo?
If you do. Please
let us know.

O	L	L	E	T	S	O	C	E	T	A	D	B	N	Y
C	O	E	R	U	T	N	E	V	I	N	L	E	U	S
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Can you find the 45 blank words in this puzzle? Fill in the blanks to complete the title of an old time radio show, then find only the words in the blank spaces, in the puzzle. You will find them in different directions - vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backwards. Circle the words when found and check them off the list. Some letters are used more than once, in different words. When all words have been found, you will have 13 letters remaining and not used. Rearrange these letters to form the title of a comedy show

BLUE _____
 BOLD _____
 BOSTON _____
 _____ KID _____
 _____ LU & RM _____
 _____ "X" _____
 DUFFY'S _____
 FAVORITE _____
 FBI IN _____ & WAR _____
 GREEN _____
 HERMIT'S _____
 _____ LOBBY _____
 _____ JONES _____
 MY FRIEND, _____
 _____ WOLFE _____
 _____ BOOK _____
 _____ GALLERY _____

_____ 'N' ANDY _____
 _____ WITH JUDY _____
 _____ AGES _____
 _____ HIT PARADE _____
 _____ GROUCHO _____
 _____ RANGER _____
 _____ SHAW & ORCH. _____
 _____ OBOLER'S PLAYS _____
 _____ TELEPHONE HOUR _____
 _____ GILDERSLEEVE _____
 _____ CASSIDY _____
 _____ ABBOTT & _____
 _____ BLACK _____
 _____ BULLDOG _____
 _____ PAT _____ FOR HIRE _____
 _____ WIDDER BROWN _____
 _____ AGAIN DUFFY'S _____

CHALLENGE OF THE _____
 COLUMBIA PRESENTS _____
 DAVID HARDING _____
 GENE AUTRY'S _____ RANCH _____
 HAVE GUN WILL _____
 MANHATTAN _____ GO ROUND _____
 _____ CRIME PHOTOGRAPHER _____
 _____ PERFORMANCE _____
 _____ THE MAGICIAN _____
 _____ ROGERS IN THE 25th CENTURY _____
 _____ DISTRICT ATTORNEY _____

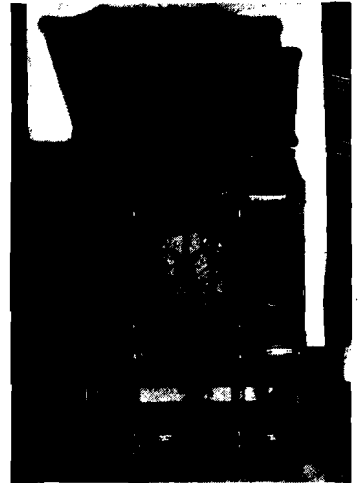
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or any of today's best. Perhaps you feel like hearing something deeper... the glorious voices of JOHN CHARLES THOMAS or LAWRENCE TIBBETT or... JOHN McCORMACK, the incomparable... or DR. KOUSSEVITZKY leading Boston's symphony. Call for whatever you want most—it's here, on Victor Records waiting for you.



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REVIEWS

Ladies and Gentlemen--Easy Aces by Goodman Ace, Doubleday, 1970, 210 pp.

The book is exactly what the title says--EASY ACES. It is a collection of eight scripts from the radio show, chosen by Goodman Ace and his wife, Jane. Goodman has added short bridges between the scripts which are at least as entertaining as the scripts themselves. Ace has an engaging writing style and a terrific sense of humor. It's light, fast reading that sends you to digging through your pile of tapes to find and listen to the shows again. Excellent book.

Funny Men Don't Laugh by Arnold M. Auerbach, Doubleday, 1965, 176 pp.

Every radio comedy buff should read this book. It presents a fascinating look at the behind-the-scenes of old radio comedy shows. Auerbach does not mention all the comedians by name, especially those that he treats uncomplimentarily. It's interesting to figure out who he is talking about. The book also presents a different view of Fred Allen and his new (for the time) approach to radio comedy. All in all, a good book, well-written and absorbing.

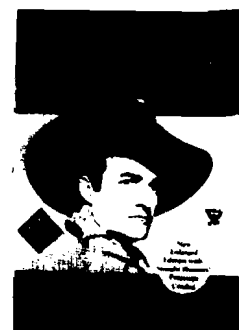
The Broadcasters by Red Barber, The Dial Press, 1970, 271 pp.

Red Barber...writes this book...using the annoying practice... that I am using...in writing this review. Although the contents are interesting...and informative...this style of using...periods all over the place...grates on my nerves. Aside from that, the book is okay. There's a lot of stuff about Graham McNamee, Ted Husing, Bill Munday, Bill Slater, Harry Wismer, and Bill Stern. In fact, most of the book deals with Barber's reminiscences of these men and the early days of sports broadcasting. Baseball broadcasting takes up most of the book; football is regulated to one section of one chapter. There is also a section on scoring, which is interesting in that it shows the techniques broadcasters use to keep track of what's going on in the game. All in all...this annoying technique aside...this book can be...enjoyed by all radio enthusiasts...not just sports fans.

Cavalcade of Broadcasting by Curtis Mitchell, Follett Publishing Co., Chicago, 1970, 256 pp.

This over-sized volume is a broad overview of the history of broadcasting from Marconi to videotape cassette, and from the first wireless to color television. The book is fairly evenly divided between radio and TV. No deep detail is given on either, just general information. Of especial interest is the chapter dealing with the formation of the various networks in the early days of radio. It's a good book for someone who wants a general look at the history and high points of radio and TV broadcasting.

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THE JACK ARMSTRONG MURDER

by Woody Smith

For Those Who Came In Late: Kyle Foster, the narrator, has been mysteriously transported to another reality, a world where characters of old time radio really exist. Wrongly accused of the murder of Jack Armstrong, Foster is aided by the Shadow and Sam Spade. Narrowly escaping capture by Jack Packard, Doc Long, and Reggie Yorke, the three men, with Margo Lane, set sail for Singapore on the trail of a vast criminal conspiracy, master-minded by Fu Manchu. When their ship is taken over by Manchu's Si Fan, the four escape in a lifeboat. Incredibly, the ship is then attacked and sunk by a strange submarine. Foster, Spade, and Margo are hauled aboard the sub, but the Shadow cannot be found. They learn that their captor is Ivan Shark!

PART III

She was super-ugly and she wanted to kiss me. She came close, so close that I felt ill. Her breath smelled of rotting fish. The worst part about it was that I was chained, hand and foot.

"You are so handsome, Kyle Foster," Fury Shark told me.

"Yeah, well, just lucky, I guess."

She put one clawed hand behind her head. I guess she thought she was cute.

"Do you find me....attractive, Kyle? You don't mind if I call you Kyle, do you?"

I told her I didn't mind.

"Well?" she said.

"Uh, what---what did you want?"

She spun around on one foot, sending a vague stench of something unpleasant floating by me.

"I asked you if you thought I was attractive."

"Oh yeah, yeah, that's right. Mmmph, well, I've never seen any-one quite, ah, like you before."

She hurled herself on me, her warty arms around my neck, her smelly breath in my face.

"Do you really mean that, Kyle darling? Do you?"

I almost passed out.

"God, yes, yes!" I choked.

She squealed unappealingly and planted a slobbery kiss on my cheek (I had turned my head in time). She jumped up and down and hugged herself.

"Oh, I must run and tell Father. He'll be so pleased! I'll get someone to take off those nasty chains and we can be married right away!"

She capered out the door and I had the dry heaves.

Shortly, two guards came and removed my fetters, then hauled me into Ivan Shark's cabin. He sat there behind an immense desk, Fury stood, beaming hideously, next to him. He fixed me with a piercing gaze.

"Well, young man, I understand that you want to marry my only darling daughter."

His accent was getting easier to understand.

"Well," I gulped, "She seems to have her heart set on it."

Ivan Shark joined his fingertips together.

"Unfortunately," he said, "I cannot allow it."

I almost let my elation show. Fury screamed.

"YOU WHAT?"

Ivan took a conciliatory tone with his loving daughter.

"Now, now, my dear, you know it would be quite impossible---"

"YOU LET ME HAVE HIM! YOU PROMISED!"

Ivan was forced to grab her arms to keep her from hitting him.

"Please, Fury. You can have another. How about that nice Mr. Spade down in the hold?"

She tore loose from him and ran sobbing from the room. Ivan looked after, then straightened his clothes.

"Now, ah, Mr. Foster," he said. "As to your....disposition. It seems that you are eagerly sought by both the forces of the law and a... relative of mine."

I was puzzled.

"Relative?"

"Yes. You know him as Dr. Fu Manchu. We had the same father, you see."

"Then why---"

"Why did I attack your steamer? Because I knew that the Si Fan were aboard. I did not know why, but that they were aboard was sufficient. My half-brother and I do not get along, Mr. Foster. We never have. And now it comes to my attention that he wants you. Why is that, do you think?"

I shrugged.

"Beats me. I never met the man."

Ivan smiled thinly.

"You will. Fu Manchu will pay dearly for you, Mr. Foster, more than the reward offered by Warbucks Industries for the slayer of Jack Armstrong. I intend to sell you to him. Before I do, however, I wish to know what it is that makes you so valuable."

"Gee. I wouldn't know, really."

Ivan looked impatient.

"Come, come, Mr. Foster. You will tell me one way or another. If need be, I'll sell you by bits and pieces."

I thought it over. Torture never turned me on. I'd almost rather marry Fury. And I figured I was on my own. The Shadow never came out of the water, so he must have drowned. Spade was locked up in the hold, nursing a nasty scalp wound. Of what Ivan Shark had done with Margo Lane during the three days since our capture, I shuddered to think. I hadn't even seen her, so I didn't know if she was alive or dead. I could expect help from no one.

So Ivan Shark and Fu Manchu didn't get along, eh? There might be a way to work both ends against the middle and maybe stay alive.

"All right," I said. "I'll talk."

And I did, for nearly an hour. I spun such a tale, he had to believe me. I told Shark all about the Collier Door into other realities and about Manchu's conspiracy with criminal geniuses from other worlds, but I embroidered it a little. I told him that, while Clay Collier had invented and built a small model of the Door, I was the only one with the necessary knowledge of "cryalosis mechanics" which was a vital component of the Door. Of course, I made it all up. Ivan Shark bought it. His eyes gleamed.

"So!" he said. "Without you, Fu Manchu cannot carry out his plans. Good. Good! You will construct a Door for me!"

Uh. I hadn't figured on that.

"But I can't," I replied. "Collier has all the formulae and blueprints. I'd need those."

Ivan frowned.

"Very well. I'll have the plans stolen."

"But there are no plans, Mr. Shark, not written ones. They're all in Collier's mind."

"So?" Ivan thundered. "Then we'll steal Collier! Fang!"

The creature came running. Ivan rapidly explained to him that they were going after Collier. That was just what I wanted. I didn't think that Shark could pull off his plan, but it would give me time to escape, well, try to escape with Margo and Spade.

"First, however," Ivan told Fang, "We will put in at our base. We will leave Mr. Foster there to prepare his laboratory for our return."

"Yes, Master," slobbered Fang, and he slinked off to give the necessary orders.

Ivan turned to me.

"I think perhaps I shall leave Fury with you, Mr. Foster. I think romance makes her color better."

Yeah, I thought. Puss green.

"I would like to have Mr. Spade and Miss Lane with me, also."

"Really? Why?"

"Well, Mr. Spade is rather handy in the lab---"

"A private detective?" snorted Ivan. "Handy in the lab?"

"Oh. Well, we are close friends, you see, and---"

"Oh very well. He will live as long as you do."

That didn't sound heartening.

"As to Miss Lane," he continued, "I shall indeed leave her at my base. I would not want to take her into serious danger."

So I knew Margo was alive, at any rate. We had a chance.

Ivan Shark's base, I discovered, was in a vast underground cave, accessible only through an underwater tunnel of considerable length. I reflected that any escape was going to be extremely difficult. I was shown "my" laboratory which was very well equipped. Spade was there, looking somewhat worse for the wear. Two guards stood by the single door, watching us.

"Foster," Spade said, "Would you mind telling me, slowly please, just what in blazes is going on here?"

"Quiet, Sam," I cautioned him. "Here, help me plug in some of these gizmos onto those whatchacallits. The trick is to look busy."

We worked all day, making something out of glass tubes, flasks, rubber hoses, and anything else I could find. It looked impressive as hell. While we worked I brought Spade up to date. Margo was being kept in Ivan Shark's own suite of rooms. Shark had already left on his wild goose chase. Spade and I each had a cell to sleep in.

That night, Fury came to my cell.

"Oh, Kyle," she wailed. "What are we to do? My father will never let us marry. He means to kill you when you've completed the Door."

Ivan was considerate; he didn't want to make his daughter a widow. Fury suddenly looked shrewd.

"If I help you escape from here," she put forth, "Will you marry me when we're safe?"

I most definitely did not want to marry Fury Shark. Just as definitely, I wanted to live. Ergo, I lied.

"Sure."

She hugged me. God, she was strong.

"Oh, I'm so happy!" she squealed. "We'll have lots of kids and--"

I disentangled myself from her.

"Sure, sure, but we have to escape first."

"There is another way out," she said, "Besides the underwater tunnel. There is a stairway, carved from stone, that leads to the surface above us."

"What is above us?"

"Calcutta," she answered.

"Calcutta? India?"

"Yes, of course. The stairway opens into the basement of the Hoobli Hotel. Oh, what an excellent spot for a honeymoon!"

I had to keep her mind off that track.

"Listen, Fury, I won't leave unless Sam Spade and Margo Lane go with us."

Her baleful little eyes blazed.

"That hussy! If you feel anything towards her---"

"No, no, nothing like that. It's just that she pulled my fat out of the fire a few times and I want to return the favor. Spade, too."

Fury glared at me.

"You're positive?" she demanded.

"Yes, of course."

"Very well, Kyle. Come with me."

We left my cell and made our way down a corridor, picking up Spade on the way. When we got to Ivan Shark's quarters, Fury left us outside and went in alone. She came out dragging Margo. Margo looked very pale and drawn, but I knew she would make it. She's tough.

Fury led us to a small chamber at the farthest end of the huge cavern that housed Ivan Shark's base. She closed and locked the door behind us, then went to the wall opposite and inserted a peculiarly shaped key into a hole. The wall swung outwards and revealed a long, stone corridor, lit eerily by flickering gas lamps.

"This way," Fury said, and I smacked her on the chin. I didn't pull my punch because I knew she was as tough as anyone. She went down like a deflated blimp. We left her in that chamber, tied up with her own clothes, and entered the stone corridor. We pushed the wall back until we heard it latch close. We went on.

Shortly, we came to a huge stone stairway, which curved up into the gloom above us. The lights became fewer as we went up. How long we climbed I can't say; we did have to stop several times to rest.

Finally, the lights were no more, and we continued upwards in darkness, stumbling. The stairs narrowed until we could only pass in single file. I led, then Margo, with Spade at the rear. All at once, I took a step and sprawled flat on my face.

"Kyle! What is it?" Margo breathed.

I got up.

"Watch it here," I said. "The steps have stopped."

We continued on. Soon, I walked into a wall. That was it. The tunnel had stopped. I felt around, looking for a crack, a protuberance, anything to indicate that this was an exit. Finally, I found a hole and inserted into it the strange key I had taken from Fury. This time the wall swung inwards, and we had to step back a few paces.

I saw lights through the opening, but not so bright as to blind us after the long darkness. We emerged into a large, damp, stone-walled room, which was the basement of the Hoobli Hotel. There were crates and boxes piled all over the place. And against one wall, bound, gagged, and seated on the floor, were two people. One was a man, handsome and dark haired. The other was a boy, blond and stringy looking.

I debated about untying them. I was getting very cautious of late. I pulled their gags off first.

"I'm Kyle Foster," I said quietly. "And this is Margo Lane and Sam Spade. Who are you?"

The man's voice was deep. He was Irish.

"My name's Pat Ryan and my little friend here is Terry Lee."

He looked at me quieriously.

"Where did you come from?" he asked.

"It's a long story, Pat. Why are you tied up?"

It probably means something that by now I was through being suprised. It didn't faze me in the least that I was talking to Terry Lee and Pat Ryan. Sam and I began untying them.

"Blame it on the Dragon Lady," Pat said.

It figures, I thought to myself.

"Yeah," put in Terry. "She's mixed up in a---"

"Terry," Pat cautioned.

"A conspiracy with Fu Manchu, among others," I finished for Terry.

Pat eyed me.

"You know, then."

"Yup," I said, and told him all about the Shadow and the Sharks.

"So you're the one that was wanted for the murder of Jack Armstrong?" Pat asked.

"What? Was wanted?"

"Why, yes. Oh, you couldn't have known. Fu Manchu has come out into the open. He has given an ultimatum to every government of every major nation in the world. They have forty-eight hours in which to dissolve themselves or Manchu will destroy their capitol cities with some sort of ray. That was yesterday. And he claims the credit for having Armstrong killed. I guess that clears you, Kyle."

I was rather pleased. I was no longer a hunted murderer. I suddenly felt very light hearted.

Pat took command of our little group. First, we broke open some of the crates which, it turned out, held various weapons. I outfitted myself with a rifle and a handgun. When we were all armed, we made our way upstairs.

We emerged into the kitchen, which was empty. We cat-footed it outside into the darkness. I didn't know the time, but the eastern sky was lightening.

We headed for the docks. Pat told me he had friends with a boat. We reached the docks in about a quarter of an hour. The boat that Pat's friends gave us wasn't much. But we boarded the ancient scow and began rowing out to the center of the river. The boat had a single mast that supported a tattered sail, and a cranky steam engine. Pat waited until the sun had been up for an hour before deeming it safe enough to fire up the boiler. The little engine made a hellish noise, but it worked.

"Does anybody have any idea where we're going?" This was from my erst-while bodyguard, Sam Spade.

"Does anybody know where we are?" I asked. "Geography has never been one of my strong points."

Terry Lee looked at me like I was dumb. Maybe I was.

"Anybody would know that we're on the Ganges River, headed south," he answered.

"Oh," I said.

"I figure on heading for Chittagong, in the Bengal," said Pat.

"Unless someone has a better idea."

We didn't.

"How long will it take?" I asked.

"Three days, maybe four. Assuming the Dragon Lady doesn't catch up with us."

I frowned, my light-hearted mood had vanished. Fu Manchu would be destroying cities at the end of the day, if governments hadn't capitulated to him. The Shadow had told me that he thought I might be a focal point in the whole affair of the Collier Door. While I didn't understand that, I felt I should be doing something to help. But what? The only lead I had was Singapore, hundreds of miles away. I decided to head for that city when I could. After all, the Shadow had given his life to protect me.

We traveled and talked. Pat filled us in on the news of the world from the time our ship had been sunk. Superman was missing. He had failed to answer many urgent calls. An attempt on the life of the fabled Daddy Warbucks had been foiled by the faithful Punjab and the Asp. Captain Midnight had been wounded in a battle with a mysterious rocket ship. Sightings of similar rocket ships were being reported all over the world. And the criminal Green Hornet (well, they didn't know that he was a good guy) was purported to have helped Batman and Robin escape a Si Fan death trap in Gotham City. Nayland Smith and Dr. Petrie, Manchu's well-known adversaries, were last seen in Singapore, thus confirming the Shadow's information and my own decision.

Margo was a little broken up about the Shadow. We tried to cheer her up, but now that she had time to brood about it, she became more melancholy.

Nothing much happened for the rest of the morning. There was some food aboard, so we ate. There was no sign of pursuit.

I thought a little about home. I figured that I had been gone about five days. I doubted that anyone would be concerned about me, except my boss, who had probably fired me by now.

It was mid-afternoon when I began tingling. It was strange, like pins and needles. I had felt it before.

"What's the matter, Mr. Foster?" asked Terry. "You look funny."

I agreed. I looked at my hands and watched my skin shimmer. And then the waves of cold passed through me, the waves I had felt five days ago on the back porch of my fishing cabin in Michigan. I heard a scream from far away and then it was over.

I wasn't in the scow anymore. I looked around. I was sitting on the ground in the middle of a barren valley. It was cold. I saw the rocket ship when I looked behind me. It was a stubby ship, matching the description of the ones Pat Ryan had told me about. It rested on its belly, smoke curling from the rocket tubes in the rear.

A hatch on the side of the ship opened, and two oddly dressed men and a girl stepped out. The girl saw me first and cried out. The bigger of the two men, the blond giant, whipped out a strange looking pistol and leveled it at me. The other man, older, slightly flabby, with thin dark hair, put a hand on his arm.

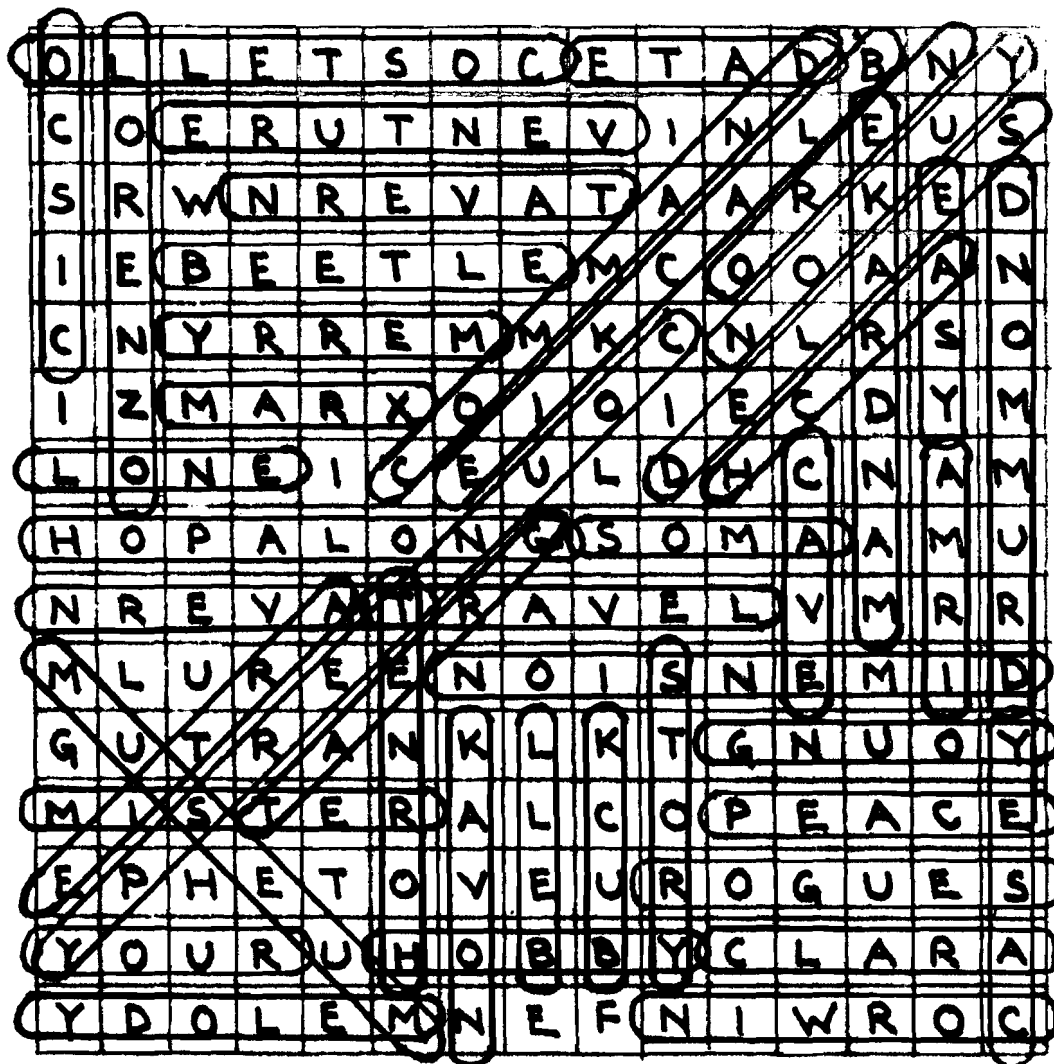
"Wait, Flash," he said. "He may be friendly."

Man, was I friendly.

"Hello, Flash Gordon," I said.

TO BE CONTINUED

Be sure not to miss the concluding chapter of "The Jack Armstrong Murder" in the next issue of MEMORIES! THRILL to the battle of hundreds of rocket ships over New York City! GASP at the incredible Death Trap of Fu Manchu! DISCOVER the true murderer of Jack Armstrong! WITNESS the showdown with Fu Manchu and his cohorts of evil!



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 MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN
 BUCK ROGERS IN THE 25th CENTURY
 MISTER DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The 13 letters remaining are I, I, I, I, L, L, U, G, H, E, F, W, T
 Rearranged they form the title LIFE WITH LUIGI

