



The Old Radio Times

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Number 58



Harlow Wilcox, "Molly", Don Quinn, Phil Leslie, "Fibber"

December 9, 1941: Two Days after Pearl Harbor by Mickey Smith

Editor's Note: 2011 marks the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

One can only try to imagine the atmosphere in the studio only two days after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. The show had already been written! Indeed, the finishing touches would have been put on the script on the very day Pearl Harbor was bombed. Uncertainty and apprehension must have been rampant, but the show went on.

The broadcast began with the announcement: "NBC will be on the air with the latest war news at the beginning of every program day and night. The British radio, heard by NBC, has reported that the Sultan of one of the little Malay states has handed control of his country right over to the British to make it easier to repel the Japanese ... The United Press in New York, the

United States has banned Germans, Austrians, and Italians from American citizenship until further notice ... The Bolivian cabinet has decided to adhere to any joint action by American nations From United Press in Vichy, British planes have blasted the German-held port of Calais Press in Manila, a number of new fire stations have been opened up with steel helmets and gas masks. All civilians are being evacuated to areas near American military bases. We thank the sponsor of this program for relinquishing its time in order to bring you the latest news from the NBC Newsroom."

It was up to the announcer Harlow Wilcox to open on a seemingly ordinary note. But not for long: "We have just received this message for

our listeners in a telegram from the President of S.C. Johnson and Son, Incorporated, our sponsor." In these serious days, there can be no division of opinion. The United States is at war. We are all ready and eager to do our part. The makers of Johnson's Wax and GloCoat® believe it is in the public interest to continue programs as entertaining as *Fibber McGee and Molly*. They have a place in national morale. So you can continue to hear *Fibber McGee and Molly* and still be in touch with latest developments. We have asked the National Broadcasting Company to feel free at any time to cut into our programs with important news flashes and announcements," Signed, H.F. Johnson, Jr.

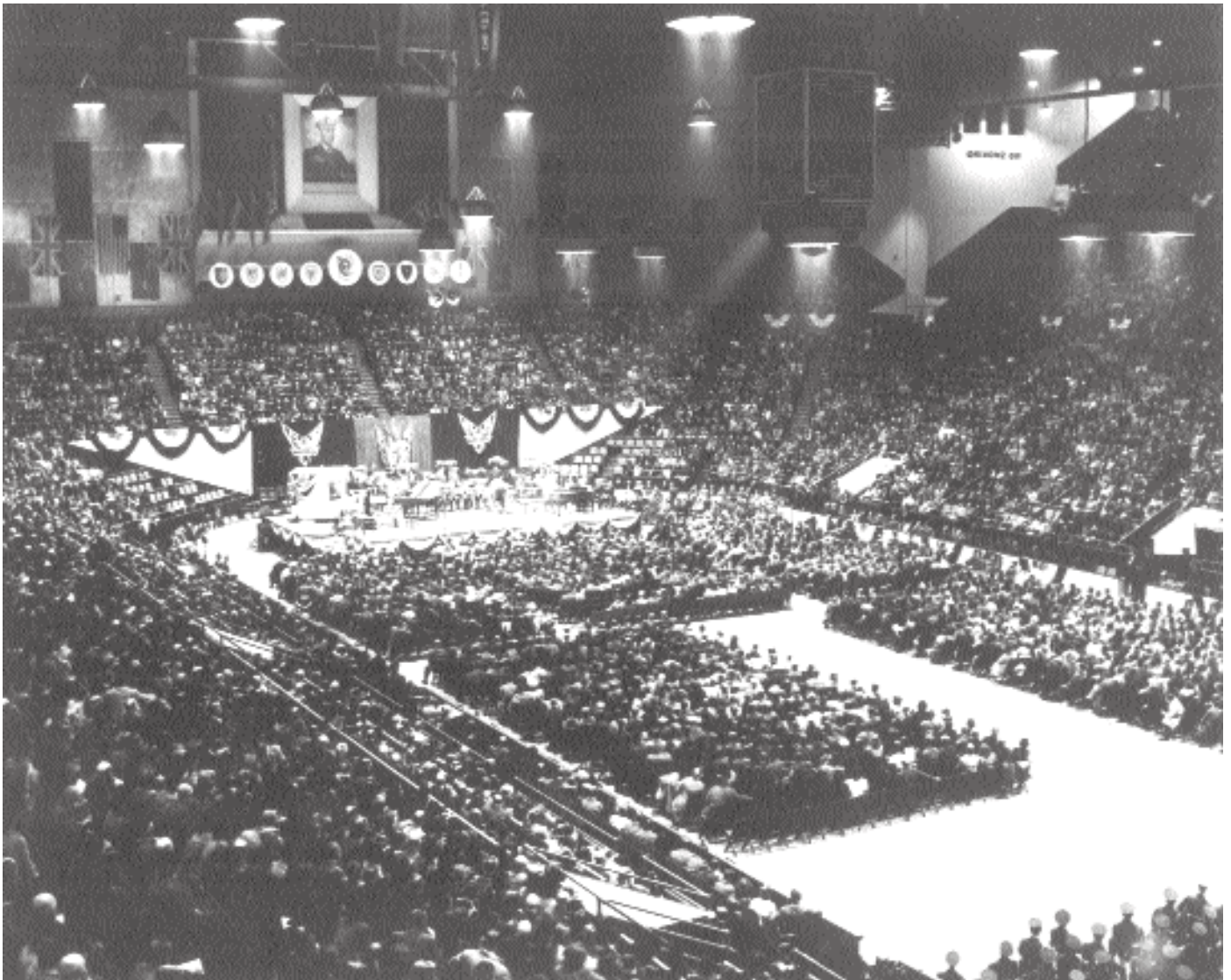
The program continued more or less as usual. There was no reference to the war in the program proper. There just hadn't been time to work in war messages, especially in a way, later perfected, that did not interfere inordinately with the flow of humor.

The program centered on Fibber's supposed ability to buy things wholesale. Bandleader Billy Mills was heard speaking, which was a rarity. Mrs. Uppington had so much money she wasn't interested in any bargains. The neighbor, Mort Toops, was interested in buying a shot gun. When Harlow Wilcox knocked on the McGees' front door (the signature doorbell was not yet



In 1945, they flew to Toronto (via the RCAF) and did a show at the Maple Leaf Gardens to sell bonds for the Canadian Government. From left to right: Jane Pickens (formerly one of the singing Pickens Sisters), Frank Pittman (Jane was his secy at this point), Virginia Gordon, wife of Gale Gordon, Mari Wilcox, wife of Harlow Wilcox, Edythe Quinn, wife of Don Quinn, Phil

Leslie, Helen Leslie, Billy Mills, a Canadian official whose name was forgotten, Mary McCue, secy to Marian and Jim, Arthur Q. Bryan
Kneeling: Charley Adams, Copyist for Billy Mills Orch, Andy White, a prodn' asst. who went on to produce Bat Masterson, etc. and now produces The Waltons, and another Canadian who was among the welcoming committee.



Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto where they did a show to sell bonds for the Canadian Government

being used). He was carrying a box of cigars, bought as a gift for the man who coined the phrase, "Your linoleum will be your pride if Johnson's GloCoat® is applied." Fibber, in an aside, says: "That's it folks. It's the stuff that keeps Wilcox working, you waiting, and us eating." This was yet one more example of the good-natured kidding that personified the relationship between the stars and their sponsor.

Mayor LaTrivia comes by and McGee agrees to get him a globe wholesale. Wallace Wimple wants dumbbells for his wife, also wholesale.

Everyone, it seems, is Christmas shopping. The McGees go to the wholesaler, who agrees to deliver all the purchases. Later, all of the people for whom he made 40-percent-off purchases parade in to complain about the shoddy merchandise they received.

It was, admittedly, not a great show, but everyone had other things on their minds. Harlow Wilcox seemed to confirm this by saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, we know everyone is anxiously awaiting the words of President Roosevelt." In the meantime the makers of Johnson's Wax® have

this message for you. America has answered the treacherous attack of the Japanese by declaring war until the victorious end. To assure our victory, we must turn our dollars into guns and our dimes into bullets. Buy United States Defense Bonds and Stamps at your post office, bank, and savings and loan office. Get them from your newspaper carrier boy or your retail dealer ... Don't delay. Do it now." ■

The show closed with a moving rendition of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" (also known as "America"), sung by the live studio audience.



Editor's note: For many years I've made my Christmas card a puzzle so friends will have to call me to find out what it is. This way we get to visit once a year, and catch up on what has happened over the year. You can also try to

solve the puzzle this year, or wait until next issue for the answer. You can email me with your guess. bob_burchett@msn.com.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at The Old Radio Times.



The first ever American Radio broadcast of *Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol"* starring Lionel Barrymore, as 'Old Scrooge' began one of the Golden Age of Radio's longest running annual traditions. The Columbia System in June 1934 announced the signing of *Lionel Barrymore* to a five-year contract with Columbia to perform in the role of 'Scrooge' in its annual Christmas Day celebration for Columbia System listeners throughout the world.

That first presentation of *"A Christmas Carol"* also marked *Lionel Barrymore's* debut over Radio. Since that very first "A Christmas Carol" broadcast in 1934, Lionel Barrymore's interpretation of Scrooge has been aired continuously every subsequent Christmas Season to this day. Here at The Digital Deli Online, we've presented one of several recordings of *Lionel Barrymore's "A Christmas Carol"* every Christmas Season for the past eight years.

That first broadcast of Barrymore's interpreta-

tion of Old Scrooge was part of an extraordinary *Christmas Party*, presented as a Christmas gift from the Columbia System to all of its network listeners. *The Christmas Party* aired for two and three-quarter hours from 11:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. PST, adjusted for time zone, across the entire Columbia Network. Columbia System studios in Hollywood, Chicago, and New York participated in the Christmas extravaganza.

Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" was first published by Chapman and Hall as a novella, subtitled, *"A Christmas Carol. In Prose. Being A Ghost Story of Christmas"* on December 19, 1843. As with many of Dickens' other timeless stories, he was informed by the often brutal conditions for children throughout England during the early to mid-1800s, as well as his own upbringing--his own father--and family--having been housed in a debtors' prison for three months in 1824. Young Dickens had been forced to take a job in a 'blacking' factory until his family was released from the prison.

Dickens' *"A Christmas Carol"* brought together all of his impressions of the working poor of the mid-18th century Industrial Revolution in both England and The U.S., in one of literary history's first popular, *secular* accounts of the story of Christmas, interpreted through a miserly old taskmaster, Ebenezer Scrooge and his clerk, Bob Cratchit and Cratchit's family.

In what would eventually become a timeless morality play about the consequences of one's actions in life,



Lionel Barrymore

Ebenezer Scrooge is forced to confront his ostensible past, present and future, with three 'Ghosts' representing those three respective portions of his own life. Indeed, the story remains timeless to this day. Though debtors' prisons were eventually abolished, the dynamics between industrialists and their workers have changed very little during the ensuing 167 years. Child labor laws were implemented in most of the industrialized nations in the interim, but indeed, to this day, child labor remains a staple of industrial commerce in the murkier and less regulated economies of contemporary nations great and small. Nor, apparently, do American businesses have any moral compunctions about shipping American manufacturing off-shore to those remaining child and civil-rights abusing nations--until they get caught doing it. *A Christmas Carol* continues, therefore, to represent precisely what it did in 1843.



"A Christmas Carol" Debuts Over British and American Radio.

Dickens' Christmas tale of class imbalance, its consequences, and resultant largess had been first enacted as an adaptation of *Dickens'* novella, over British Radio shortly after the first Royal Charter (1927) of the British Broadcasting Corporation, as early as 1931. The earliest American productions of *A Christmas Carol*, as of this writing, appear to have been over the early Columbia chain in both 1929 and 1930. It's widely alleged that the The National Broadcasting Company aired its first rendition of *A Christmas Carol* on Christmas Eve of 1931, though we have yet to find a newspaper listing for either NBC-Blue (WJZ) or NBC-Red (WEAF) showing any airing of *A Christmas Carol* on Christmas Eve, 1931. Here are representative listings for both WJZ and WEAF for Christmas Eve, 1931:

- The New York Times Radio Listings for Christmas Eve, 1931
- The Lima News Radio Listings for Christmas Eve, 1931
- The Bradford Era Radio Listings for Christmas Eve, 1931
- The Canadaigua Daily Messenger Radio Listings for Christmas Eve, 1931

It should be noted that the Daily Messenger listing (above) does cite a broadcast of *A Christmas Carol* over WHEC, but WHEC was a Columbia affiliate in 1931. We did, however, find a broadcast over NBC-Red (WEAF) in 1930. WEAF's 1930 broadcast of *A Christmas Carol* starred *Arthur Allen* as 'Old Scrooge' and aired on December 23, 1930.

The Columbia chain first began airing dramatized versions of *A Christmas Carol* in 1929. Columbia's 1930 production in particular was adapted by *Georgia Backus* and featured solid stage performers of the era.

Columbia and Campbells air Lionel Barrymore as Scrooge: A 20-Year Christmas tradition begins.

By 1934, when the Columbia System and Campbells Soups first considered a fully staged dramatic adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, *Lionel Barrymore* would seem to have been the ideal choice to portray Ebenezer Scrooge for American audiences. *Barrymore's* first appearance as Scrooge in CBS' three-hour Christmas extravaganza on Christmas Day, 1934 had been overwhelmingly successful. *Lionel Barrymore*, the eldest of the 'First Family of The Stage', comprised of his younger sister *Ethel Barrymore* and younger brother, *John Barrymore*, performed while predominantly confined to a wheelchair throughout the late 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. His Radio portrayals of 'Old Scrooge' were no exception.

From the December 4, 1935 Frederick Post:

RADIO DAY BY DAY

C.E. BUTTERFIELD AP RADIO EDITOR
(Time Is Eastern Standard)

New York, Dec. 4--Lionel Barrymore, by information, just now available, is under contract at CBS to make a Christmas broadcast for the next five years, playing the lead of Scrooge in Dickens' "*A Christmas Carol*."

The first appearance by this arrangement is next December 25, when he is to go on behalf of the sponsor of the Friday night series, Hollywood Hotel. Meanwhile this week for that program he will do scenes from the new picture, "Ah, Wilderness." It will be his second participation at the hotel this broadcast season.

The program referred to immediately above, was the *Dick Powell*-hosted *Hollywood Hotel*, sponsored by Campbells Soups. That first 1936 appearance never really happened, as it turns out. While widely announced in the build-up to



Lionel Barrymore's third contractual appearance for CBS, on Christmas Eve of 1936, *Lionel Barrymore's* second wife, *Irene Fenwick*, died of complications from influenza. *Lionel Barrymore*, understandably in mourning, was unable to complete that third contracted appearance. His younger brother, *John Barrymore* stepped in at the last minute to perform in the role. It was one of only two performances of *A Christmas Carol* in which *Lionel Barrymore* didn't appear, as scheduled, between 1934 and 1953: the above cited 1936 *Hollywood Hotel* performance and the 1938 *Campbells Playhouse* performance, in which *Orson Welles* substituted for *Lionel Barrymore*. *Lionel Barrymore* did, however, appear in the seventeen other performances of *A Christmas Carol* between 1934 and 1953. He passed away on November 15, 1954, a month prior to what *would have been* his 18th appearance in the role of Ebenezer Scrooge, and his 14th *consecutive* appearance in the annual production.

"*A Christmas Carol*" is one of the best examples of the *timelessness* of Golden Age Radio. Indeed, it remains one of the most *illustrative* examples of precisely why the recordings from The Golden Age of Radio will never, ever be 'old-time' *anything*. The enduring message

remains identical to its first broadcast, and every subsequent performance--and rebroadcast--of *Barrymore's* performances in *A Christmas Carol*, capturing the identical magic that first enthralled audiences back in 1934.

Much like a beloved grandfather to American and Canadian audiences, *Lionel Barrymore* figuratively set his collective audience on his knee, and dutifully recited "*A Christmas Carol*" live, year after year after year, for as long as his health permitted. Indeed, the very reason Barrymore's performances continue to touch his listeners so intimately is precisely *because* the Christmas season of each year is that season when most of us--*if we're lucky*--tend to suspend disbelief for one forty day period. During that period, for the young, middle-aged, or old, others' gestures do, indeed, ring sincere. And nothing sounds more sincere and heartfelt each passing year than *Lionel Barrymore's* recitation of 'Old Scrooge.'

Those of you who've read some of our other articles are familiar with contemporary Radio reviewer *John Crosby* and his 'Grinch-like' observations regarding programming from The Golden Age of Radio. Here's an article we're inclined to re-title, 'The Grinch Meets Scrooge', from the December 24, 1953 edition of The Oakland Tribune:

Everyone Gets Into Act for 'Scrooge' Role

By JOHN CROSBY

NEW YORK, Dec. 24--Christmas is here again and with it, of course, Scrooge. For a good many years Scrooge was the exclusive possession of Lionel Barrymore who has been bah humbugging away for seventeen long years. This year just about everyone played Scrooge except Sherman Billingsley.

Scrooging this year were several of the brightest jewels of the English stage. Sir Lau-

rence Olivier will play Scrooge on NBC radio Christmas evening (Friday, KNBC, 7:30 p.m.). Alec Guinness will do the part on ABC radio tomorrow. (Not aired locally). Mr. Barrymore did his annual chore last Sunday on CBS radio and Edmund Gwenn, another scrooge regular, did it Saturday on the same network.

The only TV Scrooge I know of will be Noel Leslie who will play it on Kraft Theater tonight (KGO-TV 6:30 PST). That ought to be enough of Dickens' "Christmas Carol" to suit everybody, certainly enough for me. You know what I think. I think there should be one annual official "Christmas Carol" on all the networks and we could call on all these gentlemen to staff it--Lionel Barrymore as Scrooge out of respect for his sheer longevity, Edmund Gwenn as Bob Cratchit, Sir Laurence Olivier as Tiny Tim and maybe Alec Guinness as the First Ghost.

One thing I miss around Christmas is "Peter Pan," which in England is considered as much a



part of the holiday as plum pudding. I cannot think why someone doesn't do it on television. In fact, I was sitting around rather dreamily casting it the other day. I've always wanted to see a Peter Pan with Betsy von Furstenberg playing Wendy. The sight of Miss von Furstenberg floating through the air in a filmy nightgown would, I guarantee any network, bring Christmas cheer to young and old alike.

But let's stop wool-gathering. The most elaborate special show will be a full-hour job called "Christmas With the Stars" which will be on KRON at 7 p.m. PST Christmas night and on ABC radio at the same time. It'll emanate from New York, Boston and Hollywood and the performers will include Tyrone Power, Eddie Fisher, Audrey Hepburn, Rosemary Clooney, Victor Borge, Rochester, and the Boston Pops orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler, which will play, among other things, "The Look Sharp March." (I can hardly wait for "The Look Sharp March.")

The closest thing we have to a modern Christmas classic is Gian-Carlo Menotti's opera "Amahl And The Night Visitors," which was presented for the fourth time last Sunday. Amahl was done in color for the first time and was NBC's first color show since the F.C.C. authorized the RCA system.

No Christmas would be complete without that famous editorial, "Yes, Virginia, There Is A Santa Claus" and, if you think you're going to avoid it this year, you're dreaming, son. Lillian Gish will read it on CBS-TV at 2 p.m. (KPIX, "Christmas Festival of Music") Christmas Day. Also, Mrs. Virginia O'Hanlon Douglas who wrote the letter that inspired the editorial appeared yesterday on "The Second Mrs. Burton," a CBS soap opera, to explain what drove her to question the validity of Santa Claus back in 1897.

There will, as usual, be a few rather off-beat



For a . . .
Merry
Christmas
Tune in KDYL
Today for . . .
The
Christmas Carol
Starring
Lionel Barrymore
12:30 p.m.
★
Yuletide Concert
Just the right music
for Christmas day
1:30 p.m.
★
Holiday Star Time
Two Hours of Stars
2:00 p.m.
★
The Littlest Angel
A tender story of the
true Christmas spirit
4:00 p.m.
★
Christmas Songs
You Love
5:00 p.m.
★
The Boy Who
Sang for the
King
Told by Dennis Day
6:00 p.m.

KDYL
UTAH'S NBC STATION

tributes to Christmas. On "Today," J. Fred Muggs, the celebrated chimpanzee, will supervise the gifting of gifts to 200 under-privileged children. Last week on the "Rocky Fortune Show," Rocky, who is played by Frank Sinatra, foiled "The Plot To Murder Santa Claus," a real Christmasy story. And naturally, "Dragnet" had to get into the act. Sgt. Joe Friday and his partner were at work chasing the guy who swiped a figure of the Christ Child from a church.

And last Saturday, the Hayden Planetarium, where the Christmas spirit is tempered by scientific curiosity, offered over WCBS-TV five different astronomical explanations for the origin of the star of Bethlehem.

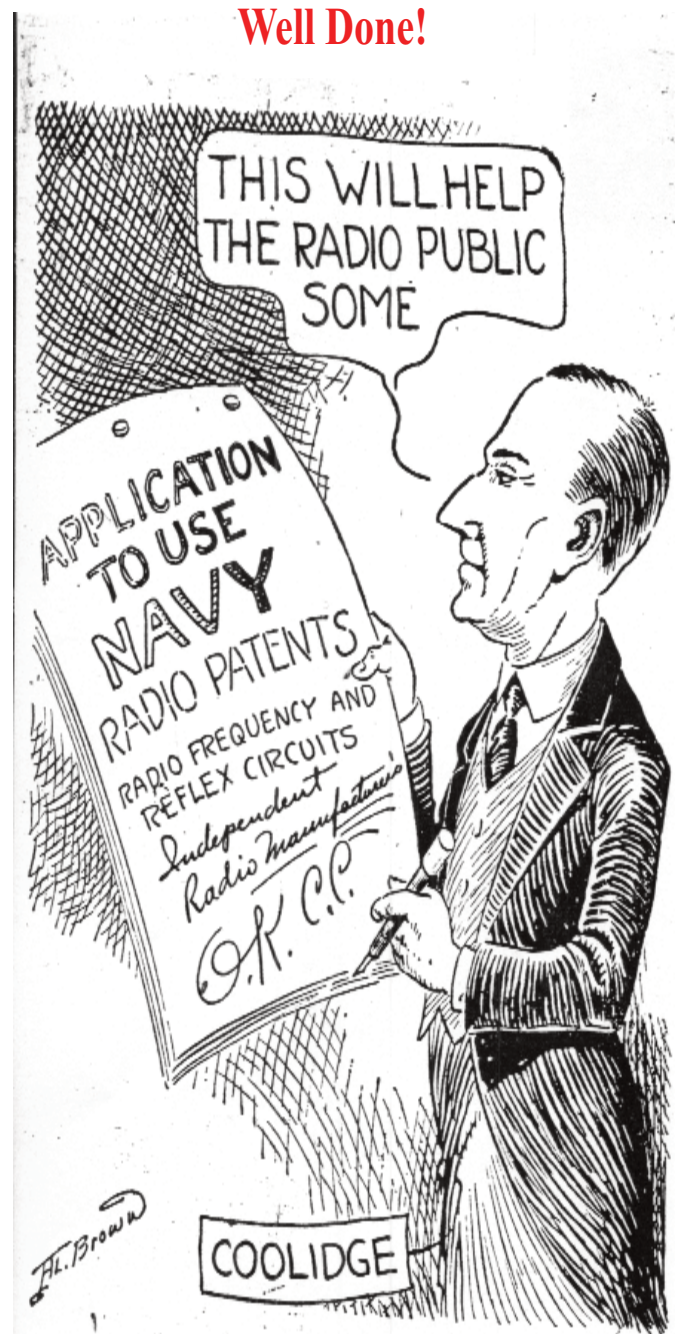
Merry Christmas, all.

Copyright, 1953, for The Tribune

Needless to say, Crosby's observations about Television's expanding 'vast wasteland' were as irreverent as most of his other Radio articles and critiques over the years. But he clearly had a soft spot for *Lionel Barrymore's* performances of Ebenezer Scrooge through the years. It's quite safe to say Crosby had been brought up on those annual performances. Even more poignantly, the year of Crosby's campaign for even *more* performances by *Lionel Barrymore*--1953--marked the last live performance of "A Christmas Carol" by *Lionel Barrymore* himself.

In 1947, *Lionel Barrymore* recorded a twenty-four minute performance of "A Christmas Carol" for M-G-M Records on a 10-inch, 78rpm disc. [MGM-16: *Lionel Barrymore* as Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol"(1947) reissued in 1950 as E-520 and as LION L70124 in 1956] That recording began selling like hotcakes during Christmas 1947 and every year after that, right up until Barrymore's death. It was that M-G-M recording that was reprised virtually every year after Barrymore's live performances were si-

lenced. That is, until NBC's *Monitor* Program reprised one of *Lionel Barrymore's* 1947-recorded commercial performance for a retrospective of "A Christmas Carol" in 1965. ABC, for its part had aired the M-G-M recorded rendition for most of the ensuing years between Barrymore's passing and the 1965 *Monitor* rebroadcast. ■



November 15, 1924

The 4th Revised Ultimate History of Network Radio Programming & Guide to All Circulating Shows

Written by Jay Hickerson October, 2010
Editor of Hello Again

565-page reference book listing over 6000 network, regional, local and syndicated radio programs. (Soft cover and spiral bound). This information was first presented in this combined format in 1992 with separate publications issued in 1986.

Traces each program by giving broadcast dates, sponsors, network and air time. Often a brief description with one or two cast members is given. The main purpose, however, is to trace each program by showing when it was on the air.

Includes theme music titles if known. Most complete source available.

Lists ALL shows available to collectors. Exact dates and sources are mentioned in most cases.

Includes All Information
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THE MARTIANS ARRIVE AT GROVER'S MILL by Martin Grams

It has become an annual tradition for old-time radio fans to listen to the 1938 "War of the Worlds" panic broadcast on Halloween Eve. After listening to the broadcast more than a dozen times, it still surprises me that I catch something I overlooked the prior times, from bloopers to historical references. This year, however, I made the trek to the Grover's Mill Coffee Roasting Company, inspired by the 1938 panic broadcast.

Four years ago, I joined my good friends Neal Ellis, Ken Stockinger, Dr. Mike Biel and his daughter Leah Biel, to Grover's Mill, New Jersey, the real-life town where the fictional Martians invaded. Visiting the supposed landing site is like a Civil War buff touring the Civil War battlefields. After talking to locals and discovering new facts behind the broadcast, the significance of Orson Welles' 1938 broadcast has more meaning today than it did when I was a kid.

On October 29, 1988, the citizens of West Windsor Township dedicated a monument to the memory of the Martian Invasion. The bronze monument depicts a skyscraper-high Martian war machine in the upper right corner; in the left center, a brilliant, twenty-three year-old Orson



Martin at the Bronze monument at Grover's Mill.

Welles stands in front of a microphone; and in the lower two-thirds, a fairly typical American family listens to the radio broadcast. It not only reminds us of the broadcast that panicked Americans but also recalls the fateful night when America lost its innocence. Naturally, we went there to visit the monument, located a few miles away from the coffee shop.

We were shocked to learn, during our first visit to Grover's Mill, that tourists flocked to the memorial every Halloween, but after the 50th Anniversary of the broadcast, interest has diminished and rarely does anyone come by to check out the memorial, or question the local citizens about the Martian scare. This is disheartening, but a fact of life as the fan base continues to age.

Supposedly during the night of the Martian scare, locals unfamiliar with the territory, took pot shots at the Martian machine that roamed the city. In reality, what they shot was the water tower which was found, weeks later, to have buckshot inside. One of them was a farmer, Bill Dock, who admitted afterwards that he was among the people who took aim and fired at the



outer space intruder. It didn't take long for Life magazine to pick up on the story, and asked Mr. Dock to pose for their camera (pictured below).



Bill Dock posing for a photographer of Life magazine.

The end result was that many of the locals in Grover's Mill wouldn't talk to the press. When Ken and Neal wandered about Grover's Mill a few years ago, they discovered some of the locals still won't talk to people about it! More amusing, they found the mill (pictured many times as a local landmark around the corner from where the monument) which is where Mr. Dock posed for the photographers. The owner of the mill would not talk to us about the Martian scare, initially, until he was convinced we were historians and then opened up about the local tourist attractions.

On the plus side, a recent visit on the anniversary, October 30, 2011, sparked an attempted revival from Franc Gambatese, originally from Patterson, NJ, owner of the Grover's Mill Coffee Company. Franc and his wife have been in the coffee business for seven years and three years ago opened the Grover's Mill Coffee House and Roastery, located at 295 Princeton Hightstown Road, Southfield Shop-

ping Center, in West Windsor, New Jersey. Every year on the weekend of the "War of the Worlds" anniversary, they organize a celebration which includes re-creations.

"We're deadly serious in the coffee business, as much as we are in preserving Grover's Mill," Franc told me. "Our place has become a museum and all of the donations originate from other people. They've even given us radios. People seek us out and make donations and we put them on display for everyone."



Inside the Grover's Mill Coffee House



Robert Hummel painting

Whether it was a Martian war machine made out of coffee pots or an original newspaper from 1938, the most impressive display was an original painting by Robert Hummel, created in 2008 specifically for the coffee shop. "I know Robert as a friend and I saw him one day and told him we were opening a coffee house and asked him

to make a contribution. We gave him an old coffee pot and he used it as the model of the Martian machine. What he did was wonderful. Robert even has copies of the painting available on his website."

For anyone wanting a copy should visit Robert's website, <http://www.artistroberthummel.blogspot.com/>



Martian machine made of coffee pots.



Martian cupcakes



The crew of Radio Once More broadcasting live.



Anyone who came in with a costume got a free coffee.



The coffee shop not only offers a museum of artifacts from posters, models and autographed photos, but some great coffee and tea. During our visit, they served Martian Moca Java. Turns out they have their own specialty blends, which are really good. I'm not a coffee drinker, so I chose the caramel apple cider and it was fantastic.

If you ever want to check out their inventory, purchases can be made at www.groversmillcoffee.com

If you are looking for something different to do next Halloween, why not consider visiting the Grover's Mill Coffee House & Roastery in New Jersey next year. You won't regret it. ■



Editorial Policy of the Old Radio Times

It is the policy of The Old Radio Times not to accept paid advertising in any form. We feel that it would be detrimental to the goal of the Old Time Radio Researchers organization to distribute its products freely to all wishing them. Accepting paid advertising would compromise that goal, as dealers whose ideals are not in line with ours could buy ad space.

That being said, The Old Radio Times will run free ads from individuals, groups and dealers whose ideals are in line with the group's goals and who support the hobby.

Publishing houses who wish to advertise in this magazine will be considered if they supply the publisher and editor with a review copy of their new publication. Anyone is free to submit a review or a new publication about old time radio or nostalgia though.

Dealers whose ads we carry or may carry have agreed to give those placing orders with them a discount if they mention that they saw their ad in 'The Old Radio Times'. This is in line with the groups goal of making otr available to the collecting community.

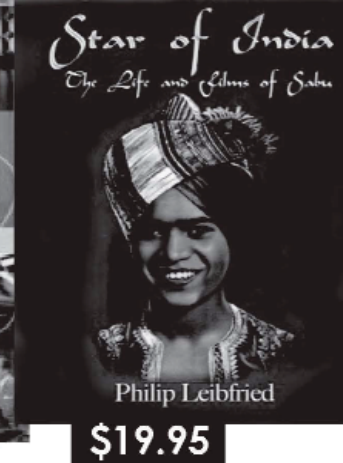
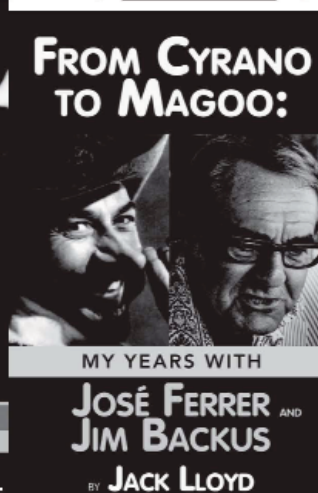
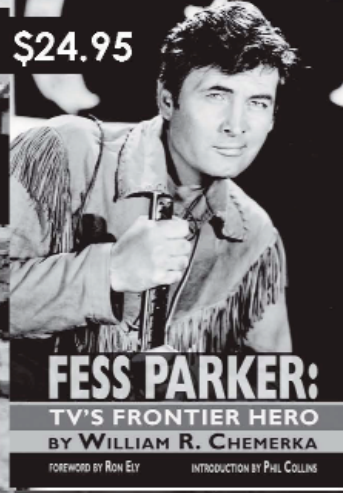
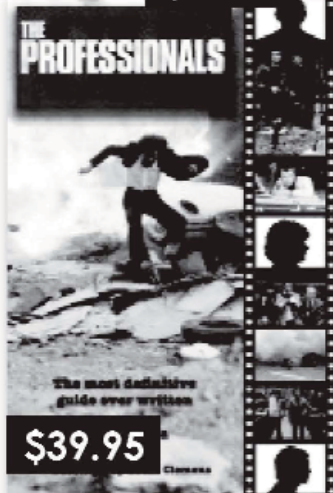
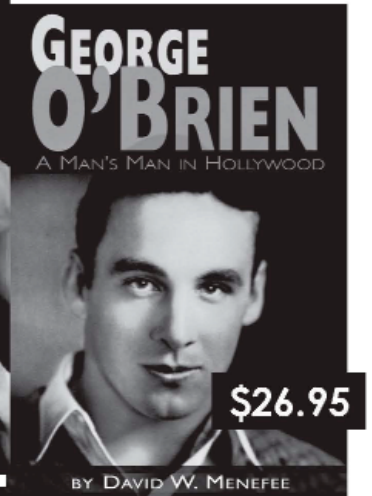
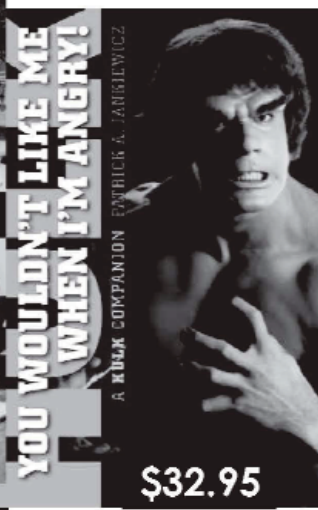
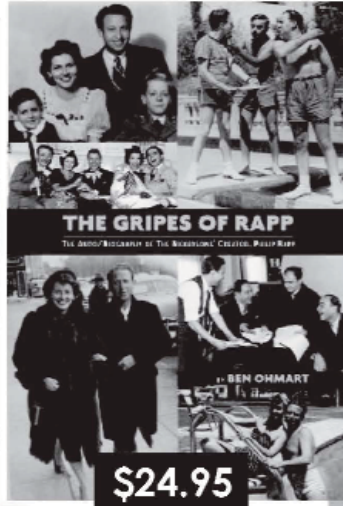
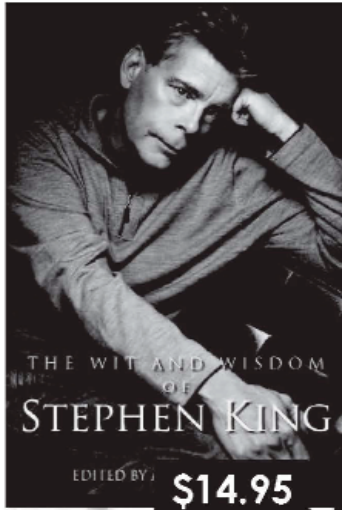
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Eye on eBay: Tracking Vinyl or Vintage Records Are Groovy

By Doug Hopkinson



This time around I thought I'd show you some vintage records and transcription discs being offered on eBay.

The first item I have for you is a 12" LP put out by Mark56 Records in the 1970s. Owned by George Garabedian, Mark56 Records put out a large number of records like this Little Orphan Annie album. If you search either Mark56 or George Garabedian on eBay, you're sure to turn up a lot of items. The record above is priced at \$25.00 which is a bit high for this type of collectible. I've seen many sell for under \$10.00.

The next item is a 78RPM record released in 1933. It is music performed by Paul Whiteman and his orchestra. Although this is not a radio show, Paul did appear on radio. I wanted to bring this record to your attention because it is highly collectible and unique because it is referred to as a "picture disc". This type of record has a picture on both sides which take up the entire face.

There are many examples of picture discs to be found on eBay. Some are very rare and sell for large amounts of money. Others are much more common or of less interest to collectors. You can find them from Rudy Vallee to the Beatles to Lady GaGa. There is even a Mark56 release of *Captain Midnight* that is a picture disc. The disc pictured below sold for just over \$100.00, which was about right. Incidentally, the man and woman featured in the picture are Marilyn Miller and Clifton Webb



Next up is just one example from Radiola Records. This record company was owned by J. David Goldin, the man known as "the man who saved radio". In the 1970s and 80s, Radiola put out many, many records of old time radio broadcasts. I'm not sure if there are any rare Radiola albums. I do know there are an endless supply of them available on eBay and most can be picked up for well under \$10.00. The one is listed for 99¢.





From time to time some interesting transcription discs get listed. The at left is a low numbered episode of *Superman* from 1940. While not being a real popular

radio show for collectors today and the fact that most of the entire run of the show can be found in digital format for free on the internet, this disc is valuable from the standpoint that it has a great label and that an original 16" transcription disc of this show just are not seen very often. I own one myself and it looks very nice hanging on my wall. This particular disc is a bit pricey at \$199.95 (not \$200.00) but you never know when you'll see another one.

Moving along, here is a little gem you occasionally come across. This is an AFRS recording of *Command Performance* from 2/15/1945 put out by



Curtain Call records. Although this radio show is widely available in digital format on the internet, I have found that sometimes this type of record (Radiola, Mark56) is better quality. *Command Performance* was a fantastic show and well worth a listen if you've never heard it before. I couldn't resist bidding on this one myself.



This is an example of what I consider to be an over-priced transcription disc. While it may be, as the owner claims, very rare and possibly one of a kind,

true interest in this disc may only come from a local buyer. This is a radio broadcast from 1951

at radio station WBIG in Greensboro, NC. The owner doesn't even know what's on the recording as he does not have equipment to play a 16" disc yet he surmises what it might contain in order to entice a buy. At \$60.00 I doubt it will sell.

This next item was very exciting to see. Six 12" acetates containing an uncirculating 1939 *Campbell Playhouse* broadcast starring Joan Bennett, titled *Black Daniel*. I watched this



item for several days and bid at the last minute as did several other like-minded collectors. Unfortunately, I lost out to someone with deeper pockets. The seller claims this set was specially produced for Joan Bennett which, if true, combined with being a "lost" show, makes it pretty valuable. It sold for almost \$400.00 after 17 bids, most of which all came with less than 30 seconds remaining on the auction.

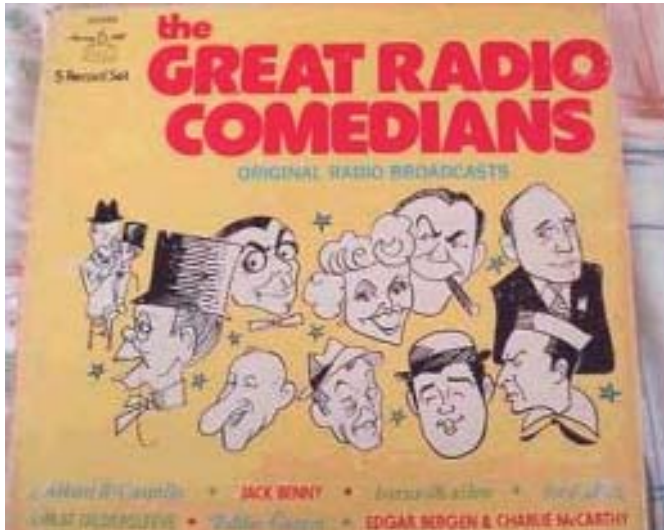


Next we have an unusually high priced record. It appears to be a commercially produced LP that contains outtakes of the Rege Cordic radio show which was on KDKA Pitts-

burgh. Having never heard of Rege, I looked him up. He seems to be a radio icon in Pittsburgh. Very popular in his day. Is he popular enough that someone will pay \$499.00 (not \$500)? I kinda doubt it.

This is an excellent example of "I'm not sure what it's worth but it must be worth \$100.00." This 5 disc set was produced by Murray Hill records, another company like Radiola and Mark56 that specialized in old time radio broad-

casts and tried to cash in on the nostalgic memories of our parents and grandparents. A quick search for this same set on eBay turns up at least 7 others ranging in price from \$5.00 to \$34.99 (not \$35.00). The moral of the story is look before you bid.



This is a cool item. A 4 LP set of an American Top 40 broadcast in January 1989. This item is priced to sell. The host at that time was Shad



(not Shadow) Stevens. Personally, I'll hold out until I see a Casey Kasem set. I bet those sell for more. Opening bid \$28.00.

The last item today is not even remotely related to old time radio or radio at all but I just had to include it. I watched it for a few days and then one day it was just gone. The seller removed it from auction for reasons unknown. This record was sent out to electro-shock therapy candidates and their families. It discusses the procedure and the expectations. It has a Psyche Inc. label on it. I can't believe there are too many of these floating around! Priced at only \$1999.00 (not \$2000) you'd have to be crazy not to have jumped all over it before the seller yanked it. ■

One of the best: Halls of Ivy

By James Mason

A couple of years ago, I ran across *Halls of Ivy* and listened to a few episodes. I really didn't like it then; it came across as a 'soap opera' to me and one with moral overtones. While the show was in the comedy genre, I could find nothing funny about it. Basically, I just didn't like the show and moved on.

About six weeks ago, a friend from a forum made the show sound so good (and I trust his judgment about old time radio) that I was persuaded to give the show another go.

30 episodes later, I am very happy I decided to listen to it again. This second stab at the show makes me realize how totally wrong I was about the first go-round and how right my friend was about the show.



The Halls of Ivy is a show about a husband and wife (William "Toddy" and Victoria "Vickie" Hall.) Toddy is the president of Ivy University, a college somewhere in the United States, while Vickie is a dramatics teacher at the school.

My memory of the show the first time revealed that the show was "heavy" and carried a

moral message. I realize now that I misunderstood the show; for though the show can be dead serious about issues such as racism, cheating, stealing, ethics and the usual problems associated with college students at that age (except sex, of course) the show is really about the love of Toddy and Vickie.

After all, Toddy and Vickie were Ronald and Benita Colman in real life and there is a chemistry there that you rarely feel on radio. As a matter of fact, I can't think of another husband-wife couple on radio who come anywhere near it.

School problems are just a buffering peripheral to the message of love, understanding and admiration for husband and wife.

Each episode includes a flashback of Toddy's younger days when he found himself falling hopelessly in love with Vickie while on sabbatical in England and she was a rising English stage star. These are well-acted scenes - as is the show in whole.

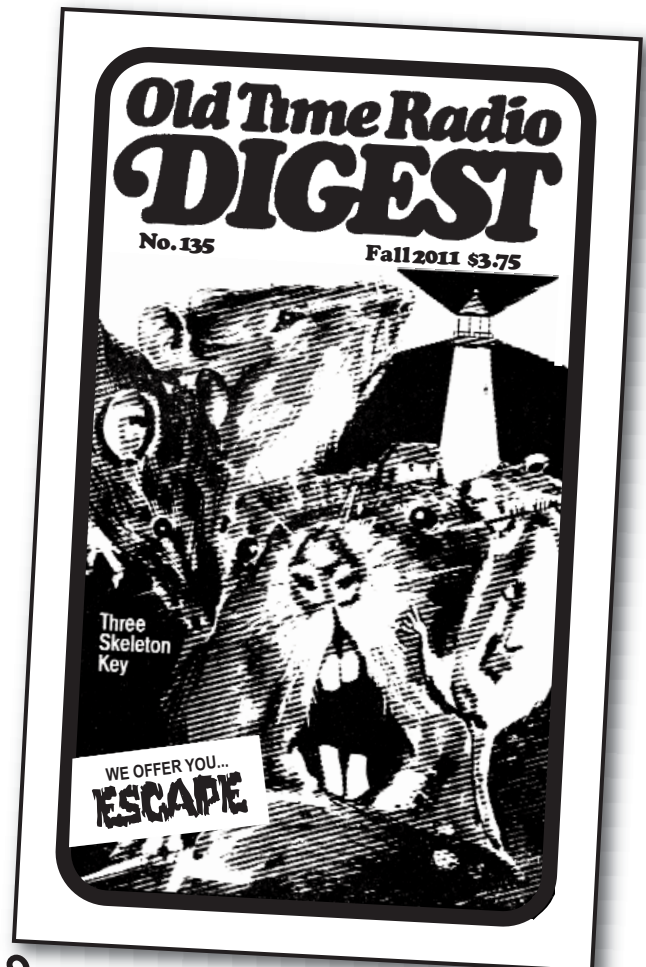
While this may sound a bit corny or mushy, I assure you, it's not. This may not be a show for the 20-ish year old single male, I'll grant you, but it is a show most can appreciate for it's well-acted, well written value.

Written by Don Quinn (he was the main writer for *Fibber McGee and Molly*) you might expect a show full of clever puns and word jokes; instead *The Halls of Ivy* is warm, intelligent humor - the humor of life. ■

You can follow Jim at his blog:
<http://otrbuffer.blogspot.com/>

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BLOGJAM *by Greg Williams*

ROSA'S RADIO DAYS

Story by Rosa Rio
(with thanks to
Tara Schroeder)

Adapted by Greg Williams

In the 1930s, I was the first woman musician NBC Radio ever hired. I played the organ for a number of programs, including "The Shadow" — which is where I first met Orson Welles.



At that time, Orson Welles was a very THIN, very young, good-looking man. Very talented.



He could take a script and do any character it called for. He would be Lamont Cranston in one instant...



...and then he'd jump to another mic to answer himself in the creepy voice of The Shadow.

He could change his whole voice, his whole personality — all within the three or four steps between the mics. He was amazing.

Later he went to California and made "Citizen Kane."



He made a big name for himself, but he also made HIMSELF big. But he was still very talented.



Rosa Rio, an exuberant 106, began her career as a theater organist during the silent film era. She will provide the music for the 1927 film "Wings" on Sun., Aug. 31, at the Tampa Theatre.

Eddie Anderson (1905-77)

By Billy Jack Long

Edmund Lincoln Anderson was born September 18, 1905, in Oakland, California, into a poor show business family. As a child, Eddie sold newspapers to help meet family expenses. He yelled so much to sell the newspapers that it permanently damaged his vocal chords. His raspy voice became his trademark.

He joined the vaudeville circuit at the age of 14 with his brother and a friend. They were known as the Three Black Aces. They had long standing contracts in New York (at the Roxy and Apollo Theaters) and the Cotton Club on Central Avenue in Los Angeles.

Eddie was always plagued with health problems. When Hollywood called, he was able to get a motion picture studio contract with Metro Goldwyn Mayer. Even after he began working on the *Jack Benny* Program, he would continue with films through 1945, and a few cameo appearances after that.

The character, Rochester, originally appeared on the *Jack Benny* Program as a Pullman porter. The story was changed a few times. As the writers thought it over, they decided that Rochester was a cabby for the Sunshine Taxi Company. Jack then ended up hiring Rochester for the position of personal valet.

At first the humor involved with Rochester was racially motivated but, during World War II, when the Jews were tortured during the Holocaust, Jack, a nonpracticing Jew, decided that racial humor was not funny. Any jokes resulting from Rochester's ethnicity would have to come from Rochester himself.

Eddie Anderson was one of the highest paid performers in radio, regardless of race. Not being one to squander his money, he invested



his money well, including a thoroughbred race horse named "Burnt Cork."

In his personal life, Eddie was very private. He was happily married to Mamie, a fellow entertainer at the Cotton Club in Los Angeles. His adopted son, William (called either Billy or Willie), almost made the 1948 U.S. Olympic team. He played for the Chicago Bears, but was arrested on a drug charge and spent five years in prison. Mamie died of cancer in 1954.

It's not too often remembered that Eddie had quite a successful motion picture career, having taken part in over sixty films. That was his reason for being in Hollywood in the first place. He is best remembered for *Cabin in the Sky*, but he also appeared in *Gone with the Wind*, *Topper*, and *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*.

Jack Benny and Eddie maintained a close relationship until Jack's death. Three years later, Eddie died. His pain wracked body finally gave up. He died on February 28, 1977, at his house in Los Angeles.

Eddie Anderson was one of the best entertainers of all time. ■

OTRR ACQUIRES NEW EPISODES & UPGRADED SOUND ENCODES FOR SEPT/OCT

This is a list of newly acquired series/episodes. They may either be new to mp3 or better encodes. These were acquired by the Group during the month of October. They were purchased by donations from members and friends of the Old Time RadioResearchers. If you have cassettes that you would like to donate, please e-mail beshiresjim@yahoo.com For reel-to-reels, contact david0@centurytel.net and for transcription disks tony_senior@yahoo.com

Martin And Lewis Show

49-04-03 Guest - Lucille Ball.mp3

Meet The Menjous

50-xx-xx (475) Pentagon.mp3

50-xx-xx (476) Absent Mindedness.mp3

xx-xx-xx The Menjous remember events of the past few decades.mp3

xx-xx-xx The Menjous reminisce about what Christmas means to them.mp3

Melody Round Up

xx-xx-xx (829) First Tune - New River Train (The Sunset Riders).mp3

xx-xx-xx (830) First Tune - I Learned To Love You Too Late (Duce Spriggins).mp3

Meredith Wilson Show

(Rehearsal).mp3

Mindy Carson Show

50-08-29 First Tune - Just For You.mp3

Navy Day Special

48-xx-xx(54) Look To The Sea.mp3

New Fred Lowery Show, The

xx-xx-xx First Tune - The Whistler And His Dog (Audition).mp3

Night Before Christmas

47-12-26.mp3

Noah Webster Says

50-12-21 First Guest - John J Broadalus.mp3

One Man's Family

50-06-07 Bk 75 Chapter 3.mp3

Our Gal Sunday

50-04-11 Rehearsal.mp3

Paul Whiteman National Guard Show, The

47-05-07 First Tune - Alabamy Bound.mp3

Personal Album

xx-xx-xx (879) First Tune - I'm Thinking

Tonight Of My Blue Eyes (Carolina Cotton).mp3

xx-xx-xx (880) First Tune - Good Blues Tonight (Anita Boyer).mp3

Pet Milk Show, The

50-10-30 First Tune - Buttons And Bows.mp3

Phil Regan Show, The

51-01-02 First Tune - Three Little Words (Audition).mp3

Philharmonic Intermission Interview

50-01-01 Guest - Norman Corwin.mp3

Photoplay 11th Annual Gold Metals Awards Dinner

55-02-10 Dick Powell Hosts.mp3

Pickins Party

52-01-03 First Tune - Thou Swell.mp3

Point Sublime

41-03-24 Game Reserve For Hunters.mp3

Pride Of Service

xx-xx-xx (11) Bombs Away.mp3

Pride Of The Outfit

xx-xx-xx (15) The Silent Service.mp3

Queen For A Day

49-07-27 A New Wedding Ring.mp3

50-02-13 A New Suit Of Clothes.mp3

RKO Pictures

46-02-27 Cornered.mp3

Raymond Graham Swing

44-02-28.mp3

Says Who

56-03-16.mp3

57-05-24.mp3

58-02-02.mp3

Sea Hound, The

43-09-11.mp3

Show Stoppers

46-03-22 Guests - Abbott And Costello.mp3

48-xx-xx (08) Host - Billie Burke.mp3

48-xx-xx (12) Host - Abbott And Costello.mp3

Solitary Singer

xx-xx-xx (185) First Tune - Saturday Night.mp3

xx-xx-xx (186) First Tune - Christopher Columbus.mp3

Songs By Morton Downey

- 48-08-07 First Tune - Blue Shadows On The Trail.mp3
48-11-04 First Tune - I May Be Wrong, But I Think You're Wonderful.mp3
49-10-04 First Tune - Who Do You Know In Heaven.mp3
49-10-13 First Tune - One More Time.mp3
49-10-22 First Tune - She Didn't Say Yes.mp3

Special Troop Information

- 51-03-17 (123) The Three Wishes Of Jamie McRuin.mp3
51-xx-xx (103) We Take Our Stand.mp3

Story Of The Bible, The

- 46-09-24 Cain And Abel.mp3

Straight From The Shoulder

- 50-04-14 Sports Talk Show (Audition).mp3

Tea Time Tunes

- 36-01-08 First Tune - 4:30 O'clock Wednesday.mp3

Teachers For Lyndon Johnson

- 48-07-16 Local Texas Program Endorsing Lyndon Johnson.mp3

Terry And The Pirates

- 44-10-19 Air Attack.mp3

That's My Pop

- 45-07-29 Vacation In The Country.mp3

The Defense Rests

- 51-04-17 (01) The Joseph Moriono Story.mp3

The Falcon, Adventures Of

- 51-04-29 TCOT Big Talker.mp3
51-05-06 TCOT Flaming Club.mp3

The Purple Heart

- 44-08-27 Patriotic Talk.mp3

The Road Of Life

- 45-05-28 The Brents Leave New York.mp3
45-06-22 The Two Old Sisters.mp3

Theatre Guild On The Air

- 52-12-28 (133) The Unguarded Hour.mp3

Thirty Minutes In Hollywood

- 37-10-17 (02) Guest - Norma Talmadge.mp3

This Is Nora Drake

- 48-10-05 Nora Is Shocked To Learn about Her Father.mp3

This Is The Story

- xx-xx-xx (10) The Question of True Liberty (Russia Series).mp3

This Is The Story

- xx-xx-xx (11) Case Number 876 (Russia Series).mp3
xx-xx-xx (42) The Commander Packs a Satchel (Pride of Service).mp3
xx-xx-xx (43) The Voyage of the Pregnant Perch (American Salute).mp3
xx-xx-xx (44) Tour of Duty (Ambassador of Good Will).mp3

Twenty Questions

- 50-02-11 Subject - Jimmy Valentine.mp3

Voice Of Industry

- xx-xx-xx (02) The Story of Canning.mp3

Waltz Time

- 41-05-30 First Tune - A Madrigal Of May.mp3

Whistler, The

- 45-12-17 Lucky Night.mp3

Win, Place Or Show

- 46-xx-xx Audition.mp3

Xavier Cugat

- xx-xx-xx (15) First Tune - The Peanut Vendor.mp3

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MARY MARTIN

(THE "MY HEART BELONGS TO DADDY" GIRL)

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(1) Catalog **B25**, (2) a certificate good for \$4. off on any catalog purchase and (3) a copy of our next catalog when issued.

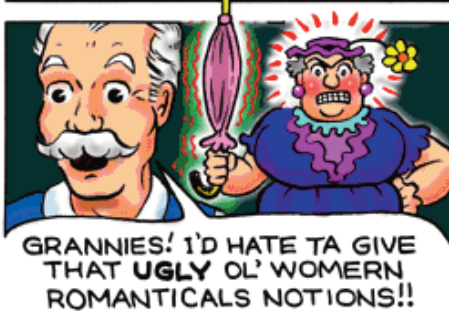
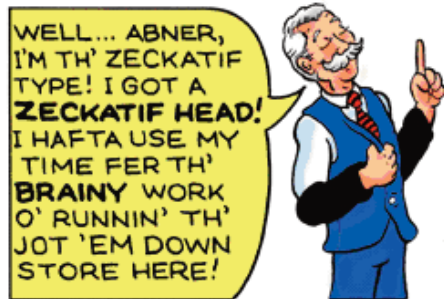
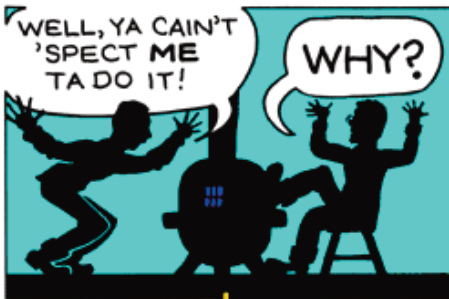
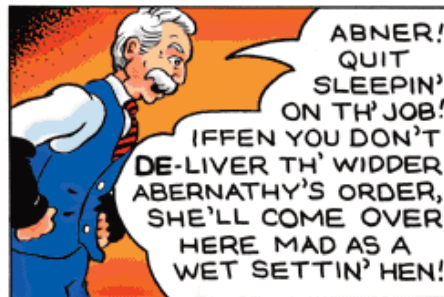
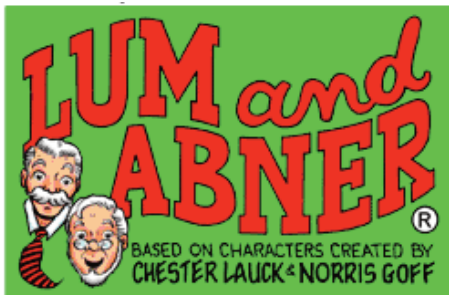
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Stay Tuned For Terror/1945

Robert Bloch was the writer to this mysterious series James Doolittle was the host.

Stay Tuned For Terror was penned by veteran horror writer Robert Bloch. According to Richard Hand's OTR book, *Terror On The Air*, it was a 15 minute series starring Boris Karloff (Hand, 10, 15). However, Karloff's involvement is unlikely. Even though no recordings of the show are in circulation to hear, Bloch has discussed the series and provided numerous details in several interviews. He makes no mention of Karloff in any of them. Here's what he told Graeme Flanagan about the series, as it appeared in Robert Bloch: A Bio-Bibliography (July, 1979):

"An announcer and radio actor friend brought my work to the attention of John Neblett, a

sportscaster, and his friend, agent Berle Adams. Neblett produced the show, Adams bought into it and marketed it, and my friend, James Doolittle, took the lead. Other performers were his brother Donald, an actor named Wilms Herbert (now deceased) and Angeline Orr, who later married Neblett. They did all the roles - as was customary in those days. The director, Howard Keegan, had previously directed Lights Out and gave us excellent assistance.

"The shows were recorded in Chicago, at the Wrigley Building studios, one night a week, three shows per session. I attended and made suggestions at the rehearsals. I never rewrote a script - but I should have, as they were dreadful by today's standards, I'm sure. Doolittle used a pseudonym ('Craig Dennis') but I believe the rest of the cast were listed by their own names. "The shows sold, here and in Hawaii, and to the



Weird Tales

is on the air . . . in

STAY TUNED FOR TERROR

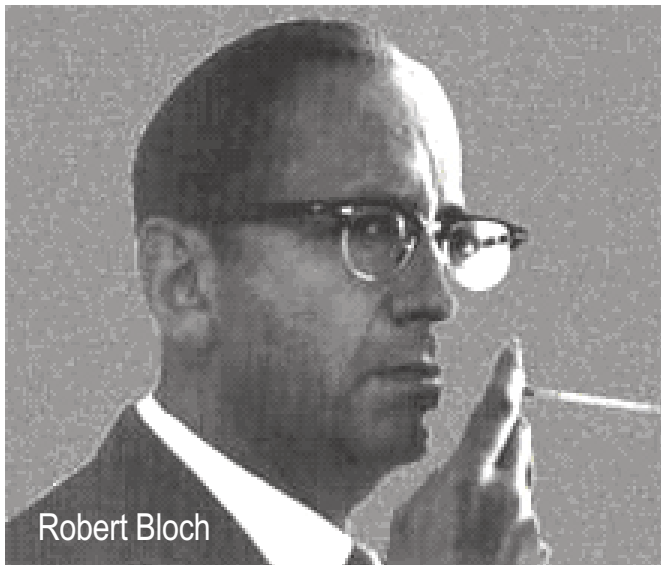
This programme is adapted by **ROBERT BLOCH** from his stories which have appeared in **WEIRD TALES** the narrator being Craig Dennis.

STAY TUNED FOR TERROR is produced by Neblett Radio Productions with the active cooperation of **WEIRD TALES MAGAZINE . . .** for the enjoyment of fantasy fans everywhere.

LOOK FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS IN YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER giving the broadcast times and dates in your area.

And remember to . . .

Stay Tuned for Terror!



Robert Bloch

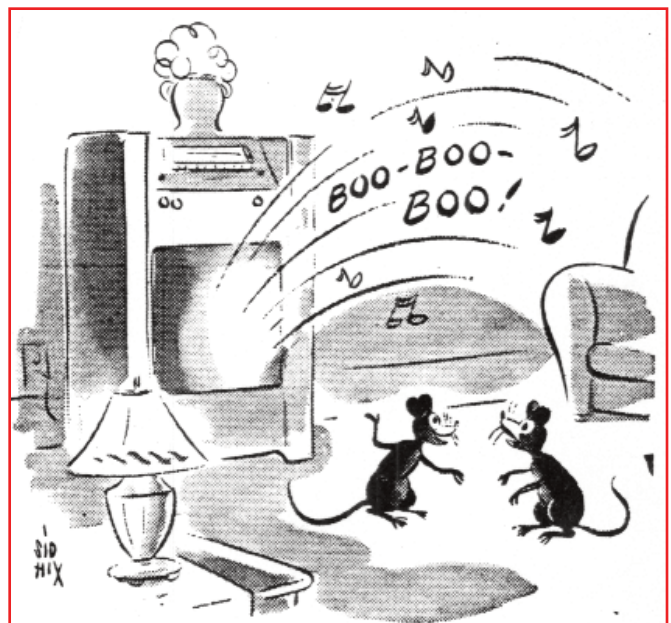
entire Canadian Broadcasting Network. A second series of thirty nine was about to be ordered when John Neblett died in the crash of his private plane which he was piloting either to or from a football game down South. The series died with him."

If Bloch attended the rehearsals, he would have certainly noticed and remembered if Karloff was present. He remembers the other actors, who he said played all the parts each week. He names the lead's real name, James Doolittle (aka Craig Dennis). Radio's Golden Years adds Frances Spencer to the cast, but again, there's no mention of Karloff (Terrace, 250). An ad in *Weird Tales* credits Dennis as the series narrator.

Bloch also explains the involvement of the magazine in issue #300 of *Weird Tales* (Spring, 1991), during an interview with Bradley H. Sinor. "During my years of incarceration at the advertising agency I wrote well over a hundred stories and a radio series, *Stay Tuned For Terror*. Many of the thirty-nine shows I scripted were adapted from the yarns I'd written for *Weird Tales*. The magazine generously advertised and promoted this program, which was terminated abruptly at the end of the first season when the producer died in a tragic crash of his private plane."

Bloch mentioned earlier that Angeline Orr married John Neblett, the sportscaster. They met doing the show. Sadly, his fatal plane crash ended their marriage not long after it began.

Stay Tuned For Terror has become a missing "Holy Grail" show for OTR archivists who dream of finding lost treasures. It certainly had the ingredients to be something exceptional, with one of horror's best known writers behind it (even if he joked about the quality decades later). Some speculate that recordings are likely, because it was never aired live. It was recorded in WMAQ in Chicago, and transcriptions were sent to various stations, including ones in Canada and Hawaii (Digital Deli Too). There was also talk about "a partnership with Mercury Records that would have made episodes available on record" (The unofficial Robert Bloch website). Unfortunately, that never panned out. If someone has been sitting on the recordings all these years waiting for the right time, he or she may have waited too long-- and expired as well! But there is still a chance some could surface one day. ■



"You can have Bing Crosby...I like Ken Carpenter's cheese commercials myself!"

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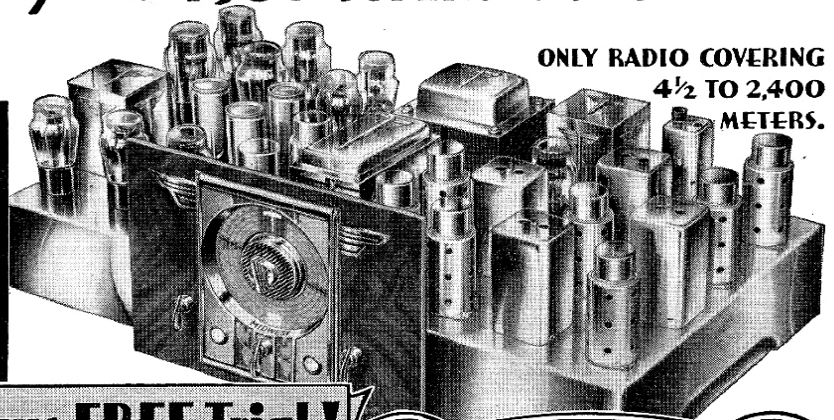
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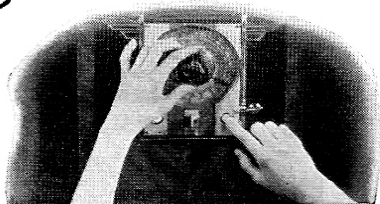
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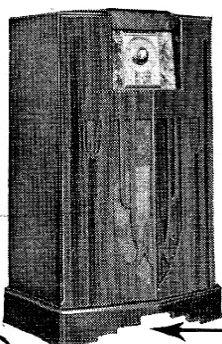
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 "Gabby" Hartnett (Chicago Cubs)

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 Most Every Night

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IF I WERE RADIO CZAR

by
Gracie
Allen

EDITOR'S NOTE: Gracie Allen's highly provocative suggestions for improving current radio programs are presented at her own risk. They do not necessarily express—are not intended to express—opinions of TUNE IN editors!

In the broadcasting studio elevator the other evening, I was standing behind a fat man and a whistling cow who had both been on the "Hobby Lobby" program and who were now both stuck in the door. I was trying to get to the butcher's before he closed, and I said out loud: "Damn this business anyway!" Quick as a flash, a vice-president (who happened to be running the elevator at the time) sneered and, said: "You're so smart, what would you do if you were running the radio business?"

As it so happened, I had an answer ready. First of all, I would have a program of nothing but hearing Charles Boyer breathe. Then I would have a fifteen-minute program of the news commentators giving their opinions of the war generals . . . then I would have a fifteen-minute round-

up of the war generals giving their opinions of the news commentators. I'd arrange to bring Mr. Anthony to Hollywood long enough to play *Rhett Butler* in "Gone With the Wind" on the *Screen Guild* show.

I would inaugurate a program idea in which Bing Crosby's horses, Eddie Cantor's five daughters and Edgar Bergen's missing hair would have an hour variety show of their own, after working so hard on other broadcasts all these years.

As a forfeit on "People Are Funny," I would have Art Baker assign someone to drop a frog down Greta Garbo's back. I would like to hear Archie of "Duffy's" play *Scrooge* in Dickens' "Christmas Carol" on the holiday eve programs.

I would have the "Quiz Kids" take over some of the present Washington Bureaus and explain the rules to us. I would give a great deal to hear H. V. Kaltenborn take over the "Lone Ranger" role and cry "Hi-yo Silver" every evening.

I would take Frank Sinatra out of singing and get him a nice quiet spot as John's Other Wife's Husband's Nephew on His Mother's Side's Step-cousin's Friend Across the Street Upstairs.

I would like to hear Adolf Hitler, Admiral Tojo and Mussolini as guest artists on "Information Please," with a U. S. Marine and a baseball bat as co-masters of ceremonies.

I think we should get Tommy Manville to bring some of his ex-wives up for a guest appearance on "Hobby Lobby."

I would have Spike Jones take over the New York Philharmonic orchestra for a season and appoint *Finnegan*, of "Duffy's" as the commentator.

I would commission someone to go up to all those strange-looking men who sit in the control booth and ask them, once and for all, who they are and what they are doing there. My husband George says that's how men were trained for

ration boards for years before the war even began.

I would certainly like to direct radio broadcasting studio people to hire pages only between the ages of a hundred and a hundred and ten . . . preferably without teeth. The sound of page boys gnashing their teeth, every time a well-paid announcer walks on the stage, has drowned out some of our best jokes.

I suggest that the *Lone Ranger's* horse and Lassie, the new dog movie-star, be given their own morning serial. After all, animals use soap, too.

I would like to rent out my husband George to act on the morning and afternoon soap operas, as his hay-fever is coming on again and, as long as I have to hear him suffer, we may as well get paid for it.

And, speaking of serials, I think it would be a splendid idea to have all the radio critics appear in a dramatic radio show, in addition to their other work. We could call the show "One Pans Hammily."

I would like to hear the members of the "National Barn Dance" in Noel Coward's "Private Lives" . . . all except the part of *Victor*, which I want kept open just especially for Major Bowes. I suggest that Henry Morgenthau and the Congressional tax committees do guest appearances on "Inner Sanctum," where they can frighten people on schedule once a week.

I think there should be a kind of "service" station on radio, to help just as the motor service stations do.

For instance, about eleven o'clock at night, the service station should broadcast nothing but the sounds of someone yawning. Then we can switch it on for a few minutes to make our dinner guests sleepy enough to go home .

Or, failing that, the station might broadcast screams from twelve to one, so we could at least *frighten* the guests away.



Geo and Frank beam on Gracie—unaware of her plans for them.

Of course, these are just a few preliminary changes, but I think most of the programs will find they will make a radical difference in their Crossley and Hooper ratings.

As for myself, I would like to do Shakespeare in modern dress . . . particularly one I saw for \$37.50 in a sweet little shop on Beverly Drive the other day.

And, as a final change, I would tone down the radio commercial at the beginning of each show, if only for the sake of my sister Bessie. Poor Bessie hasn't heard a radio show in years, because she is so impressionable.

Every time the announcer comes on, urging her to buy the product, poor Bessie always runs right down to the corner store to buy one—and, by the time she gets back, the program is over.

I think it's very important that I consider tele-



Gracie Allen exercises her very vivid imagination by reading fairy tales to her children, Sandra & Ronnie

vision and see that it gets off on the right foot. One of the troubles with radio has been its formality. People come to broadcasts all dressed up and frightened, and stand up on a bare, polished stage.

I think television should be more informal. For instance, the first big all-star telecast should be made up of such touches as Don Ameche brushing his teeth, Nelson Eddy baking shortnin' bread, or Charles Laughton arguing with the plumber. We might have Humphrey Bogart being talked down by a traffic cop and Dorothy Lamour doing a series of deep knee-bends.

We could even give the commercials zest and audience appeal. I would handle it by simply having Gypsy Rose Lee walk by, with the commercials printed on her back.

Yes, folks, I think we have more to look forward to, in the post-war world, than the prospect of seeing our husbands with cuffs on their trousers again. ■

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RURAL RADIO

