
ILLUSTRATED PRESS

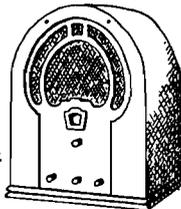
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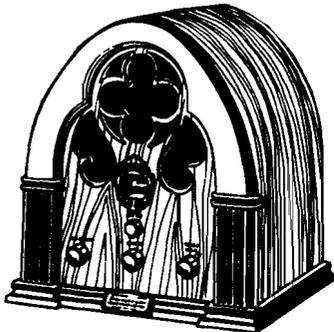


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THE OLD TIME



RADIO CLUB



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ECHOES

TWO GEMS FROM "QUIET, PLEASE"

BY: Rex E. Ward

It was, perhaps, the most unique dramatic radio program ever broadcast. I started listening to "Quiet, Please" in the autumn of 1948, and stayed with it, every Sunday afternoon thereafter, until it was discontinued in the spring of 1949. It had been on the air for some time before I discovered it, so I missed a lot of good stories, but I fondly remember such titles as, "Adam and the Darkest Day," - with its play on the words "Adam" and "Atom" - "The Venetian Blind Man," - was he a seller of venetian blinds, or was he a man from Venice, Italy who could not see? - "Where Do You Get Your Ideas?" - about a writer who got his ideas in bars from people who just happened to be Martians - "The Oldest Man in the World", - concerning a Cro-Magnon or Neanderthal man who still lived in a remote cave in the mountains between Spain and France - and the brooding mood-piece, "Dark Rosaleen."

There are no hard and fast limits on the time-periods to which the word "nostalgia" applies. But those of us who read this magazine would probably agree that the heart of OUR nostalgia - whether with regard to pulp magazines, comic books, radio programs, movie serials, or whatever - is to be found somewhere between the early 1930s and the late 1940s or the early 1950s. "Quiet, Please" falls into this period, the latter portion of which I sometimes refer to as "the final phase of the world's last Golden Age." Because it does, and because of its own special merits, it deserves to be honored.

Willis Cooper, the writer-director of the program, had, on the one hand, an outlandish sense of humor and a mastery of the grotesque, which served him well in the scripts he had written for Arch Obler's "Lights Out" - and, on the other hand, a solemn streak which permitted him to express the most profound and finely-felt emotions. Two stories examined in this article will illuminate both sides of Cooper's coin of talent.

Earnest Chappell, the narrator of "Quiet Please," sometimes identified by the announcer at the end of the program as "the man who spoke to you," possessed an exceptionally smooth and adaptable voice. He could do wonders with any role Willis Cooper might write for him. "Quiet, please," he would say, to begin each episode, and after several seconds

of dead air, during which time some radio listeners could conceivably have slid their dials past the station and thus missed the program, he would repeat the words, "quiet, please." Then came the famous contemplative theme from the second movement of the Cesar Franck D-minor Symphony, played by the program's musician, Albert Berman, on a combination piano-organ, or whatever such musical instrument existed at that time.

Most of the stories were plotless, and they followed no pattern - and therein rested much of their charm. Willis Cooper once remarked that he was able to write as he did only because he was his own director. The first-person narrative form, which relied very little on sound or musical effects, was the perfect vehicle for Ernest Chappell, whose role was always dominant, and who used that remarkable voice of his, now restrained, now impassioned, to communicate to the listener the words and thoughts so carefully chosen by Willis Cooper.

When "Quiet, Please" left the air, Cooper announced that he was going to write the scripts for the television version of FuManchu. I watched and waited, but never saw FuManchu on television - though recently I heard that such a series did exist in the early 1950s. I don't know how I missed it, but considering the nature of television, it is probably just as well that I did.

As for Ernest Chappell, I wondered many times how his physical appearance would correspond to his outstanding voice, but it was not until several years later that I finally saw him, on a television commercial for Pall Mall cigarettes. He was a heavy-set man, whose features did not lend themselves to description. His only line was, "And, they are mild." Yet, even in those four words, there was a trace - just the barest trace, mind you - of his old vocal magic.

"THE THING ON THE FOURBLE BOARD"

This story illustrates perfectly the meaning of the term "the suitable surroundings" (used by Ambrose Bierce as the title of one of his most frightening tales). Could there be a more appropriate setting for a horror story than a deserted oil field, with its derricks thrusting their skeleton shapes against the night sky, and - something - lurking in the darkness?

Porky, a retired oil field worker, begins his narrative by speaking to a silent guest in his home. The guest,

of course, is "you", or "us," the listener (s). Porky is now living quietly with his wife Maxine, who prefers the name Mike, and who, being a little deaf, does not hear Porky's call to come out and meet his visitor.

The story Porky tells took place some 20 years earlier, or in the late 1920s. Porky gives a little speech about the fascination of oil drilling, and adds that he doubts if an oil man ever lived who didn't wonder, at one time or another, what was down there so deep (three miles was the limit at the time of his speaking) besides rock and gas and oil - oil made out of trees that died 20 million years ago, oil made out of dinosaur bones, or maybe the bones of men who clubbed each other and ate saber-toothed tigers for lunch. Porky's dissertation on the details of oil field work need not concern us here, but it proves that Willis Cooper was either very familiar with such work, or that he put many hours of research to good use.

"We found something once," Porky says, "me and Billy Gruenwold. And - something found us."

Porky is all alone - his story continues - at the oil rig. The rest of the crew has gone into town for the night. As he is roasting pork chops over a forge, a car drives up, and Billy Gruenwold, the geologist, joins him on the derrick floor. Though late, Billy wants to examine the core, or sample, which the drill pipes have brought up from the depths so that he can determine the sort of material the pipes have now reached. Porky talks him into having something to eat first, and when Billy announces that he has a bottle in the car, they anticipate a real banquet, while the gloom presses in on them and the derrick's wooden skeleton looms above them.

But as they eat, Billy begins to show signs of uneasiness. He thinks he hears a sound close by. Porky assures him they are entirely alone, unless there is a screech owl around somewhere. A little badinage follows. It is agreed what while Porky would like to know what is down there deep in the earth, he is too fat to go sliding down a drill pipe to find out, and as for Billy, he is perfectly content to stay on the surface and look at cores. Billy reveals that he has had a life-long fear of the dark. Instead of shaming him, Porky admits that his own special fear is of spiders. Billy starts to get the core he came to examine, but hesitates when he thinks he has heard another sound. His nervousness increases. He sends Porky

out to the car to fetch the bottle, and, alone, turns the ray of his flashlight up toward the fourble board. (It is explained that the fourble board is the narrow platform which runs around the outside of an oil derrick, about halfway up, and which provides a place for the storage of drill pipes.) The light shows nothing except the usual stand of pipes. But a few moments later, when Porky returns with the bottle, Billy suddenly lets out a shriek. "Yike!"

He has found, in a core, a carved and filligreed ring - a ring from a mile beneath the earth and a million years ago in time. And right alongside the place where Billy had dug out the ring, Porky sees a mud-covered, but very recognizable, finger. It is cold, heavy, and feels like solid rock. When they try to scrape the mud off the finger, it disappears from sight. They drop it in horror, and can't find it again on the derrick floor. So they take the bottle and, between them finish it in a few gulps. As Porky puts it, "It was bathtub gin, and it tasted like so much well water."

After that, they just sit and stare wordlessly at each other, until Porky becomes drowsy. He thinks he hears a sound coming down from the fourble board 80 feet above. He falls asleep, and has nightmares about spiders and about Billy Gruenwold climbing up the ladder on the outside of the derrick to the fourble board. There is a terrible scream, and a thump beside him. He jerks awake, and sees the body of Billy Gruenwold on the derrick floor. The body has a broken neck. Billy had placed the ring on his little finger. Now both the ring and his finger are gone.

Porky runs to Billy's car, gets inside and tries to start it, but can't get it going. So he sits there and shivers till dawn breaks.

The work crew arrives and learns what has happened. Soon a policeman comes. The policeman is suspicious, and thinks Porky has done Billy Gruenwold in. But Ted, the foreman of the crew, insists that Porky is innocent and that the whole thing was an accident. Eventually the policeman leaves.

Work resumes. Ted tells Porky to go up on the fourble board. Porky is very hesitant, but Ted informs him that he is getting paid to do what he is told to do, so Porky reluctantly obeys.

On the fourble board, he sees nothing except the stand of pipes. He starts to do his job, moving the traveling block, which weighs two tons, into position. Suddenly, the cable supporting the traveling block

snaps before his eyes, and the block falls - and lands right on Ted. "If you have any ideas," Porky says, "about what a man looks like when he's been hit with two tons of metal dropped from 80 feet up, you keep your ideas to yourself."

The crew quits. There will be no more work done here. Ted had been footing the bills, and now there is no more money. Everybody goes away. Alone, Porky remembers how the cable had broken before his very eyes, as if invisible fingers had snapped it. He says, "You know what? There WAS something up there on that fourble board with me."

A few days later, Porky comes back. "Is there anything in the world as desolate, as dismal, as dead-looking as an abandoned oil rig?" As he steps onto the derrick floor, he hears a clink, and looks down to see the ring Billy Gruenwald had dug out of the core. It had fallen, or been thrown, from the fourble board.

A sound like the whining of a child reaches his ears. It is coming from above him. He takes a revolver and climbs up to the fourble board. He sees nothing, but continues to hear the whining voice, now close by. He fires several shots, but the whining voice is not stilled. Suddenly, whatever it is on the fourble board with him knocks over the stand of drill pipes, and Porky is barely able to jump out of the way. He almost trips on a can of red lead, which he picks up and hurls at the sound of the whining voice. As the red paint runs down over the invisible shape, he stares in horror at a little-girl face, a hand with a finger missing, and a body so hideous it reminds him of a nightmarish fears of spiders. And he knows it came from the bowels of the earth, riding up the drill pipe into an alien world. And it is lost and terrified. As it stands there, dripping red paint, it reaches out and puts its hand on Porky's arm. The hand is stone-living, moving stone. Its eyes look into Porky's and it continues to mew like a homeless kitten.

"That was 20 years ago," Porky says to his silent guest. "I've learned many things about it since then. That it's deaf, that it's invisible and can't see, unless it's smeared with grease paint, or paint of some sort, so that it can be seen, and then it can see. I don't like to think of its body - I dream about that in my nightmares. But its face-that pathetic little-girl face. I'm afraid maybe I've fallen - it's very beautiful when made up - but oh, making it up, rubbing grease paint

on a stone face that looks at you and makes sounds like a lost kitten, yet. I can disguise the body in long dresses. And I found out what she like to eat - so when she's hungry, I say out of her way."

Suddenly Porky becomes animated. "Sit still! Sit still, do, or I'll have to shoot you! I want you to meet my wife. Or rather, my wife wants to meet you. Mike! Mike!

There is a heavy step, like one made by a stone foot. A whining sound reaches our ears. "There she is," Porky says. "Come on in, dear." And then we hear the theme from the second movement of the Franck Symphony.

Sometimes, when Ernest Chappell would introduce Willis Cooper at the end of the program, so that the writer-director could say a few words, usually about next week's story, there seemed to be a note of suppressed amusement in their voices, as if they were sharing some inside joke they could not reveal on the air - after which, Ernest Chappell would give his usual sign-off: "I am quietly yours, Ernest Chappell."

"AND JEANNIE DREAMS OF ME"

If poetry is read when the mood is not right, it can fall flat, can even seem ridiculous or embarrassing. The same poetry, read when the mood is right, can be extremely effective and moving. So it was with the writing of Willis Cooper, which sometimes possessed an almost poetic quality. Let Ernest Chappell set the mood for this story:

"Do you dream, friend? I know a man who remembers a road from his dreams, a pleasant country road that wends its dusty way past broad, smiling fields and along the skirts of a lofty green forest, a road that speaks to him of memories unremembered, a road that promises and beckons on over the next hillside, and wavers and fades and vanishes in the cold darkness as he opens his eyes, and comes again another night to soothe his spirit so that he smiles in his sleep, and wakes to weep silent and alone for his lost dream. Do you dream of long-forgotten friends, of a hillside under the clouds, of an island in a sunlit sea? Do you know the desperate longing to return to the dream-place, the hopeless nostalgia for the world that lies beyond the curtain of sleep? And *do* you ever return? Listen to me, for perhaps we are kin."

The narrator, whose first name is Troy, begins his story by telling us that he has always had a recurring dream, in which he sees himself walking up a pathway toward a high

house surrounded by trees. "There were always the trees - the tall great oaks and the solemn cypresses, the distant weeping willows and the holly trees beside the pathway spreading their sturdy arms, flaunting their green and red in the twilight." Always as he hurries up the long pathway toward the tall white house, he hears music.

When he is about ten years old, he tells his mother of his dream, and asks her to identify the music. He picks it out on the piano, and recognizes the famous Foster song, "Jeannie With the Light Brown Hair," which she has never played for him. He tells his mother that in the dream he must open the door of the house, because somebody is waiting inside who wants to see him. His mother asks him how he knows this, and he simply says that he knows. "Who wants to see you?" his mother asks, and he replies, "Maybe it's Jeannie." Troy's mother is bewildered by this talk of his dream, and when he asks her if she can give him a key to open the door of the house in his dream, she is rather alarmed. "Of course not," his mother says. "You can't take a key into your dreams."

Troy then shows her a piece of holly which he brought back from his dreams with him - an indication that his dream does, indeed, have some kind of reality.

The result is that Troy's mother takes him to a doctor. The doctor prescribes plenty of fresh air and wholesome food. After that, the dream does not come for a while, or appears only vaguely. But when Troy sleeps, he hears the Foster melody, and is filled with a sense of despair, because he knows he cannot unlock the door of the house in his dream, the tall white house surrounded by the trees, where Jeannie, his beloved, waits for him.

Years pass. The dream comes and goes. The Second World War arrives. Troy's mother falls ill. Her illness is made worse by her knowledge that just as her husband had been taken from her by the previous war, so, now, will her son have to go fight in this one.

A night comes when Troy is sitting by his dying mother's bedside. It seems he has fallen asleep. He hears someone calling his name. "Troy," and he answers, not with the name of his mother, but with another name. "Jeannie."

At this point, Willis Cooper proves that when the occasion demands, he can, indeed, use musical effects with great success. For in the background, very quietly, Albert

Berman begins to play, on his piano-organ, the first few notes of the Liebestod, or Love-Death, from Wagner's Tristan und Isolde. The full theme is never heard, only the first few notes played over and over again, while above them Ernest Chappell, in his best impassioned voice, reads Cooper's flowing prose:

"And, magically, the darkness dissolved, and behind me were the trees of the park, the tall oaks with the mistletoe clutching at their lofty branches, the distant weeping willows, and the glossy holly trees. And I stood on the majestic porch of the white house, before the great door - and there was a key in the lock. I do not think my hand trembled as I turned the key and opened the great door that led beyond my dream. And she was there."

Jeannie speaks to him. "You found the key at last, didn't you Troy? I've been dreaming of you so long, darling." And while the Liebestod continues in the background, Jeannie explains. When she was a little girl, she had dreamed of Troy also. She explains that everytime Troy had dreamed of her, she had dreamed of him. She dreamed of him the time he brought the holly branch back to his mother, and all the times he could not open the door because he did not have the key. She tells him she had watched him in her dreams all those years, wanting him to find the key. And at last he has found it.

"But now that we are together, what will we do?" Troy asks. "This is a dream."

"Is it?" Jeannie says. "Your other life was a dream to me."

She begs him to stay with her, and tells him that they could walk through the woods every day, and that she knows secret places they could have as their own. He says he would like to stay with her but cannot, because his mother is ill and needs him.

"Your mother is dead, Troy," Jeannie informs him. "How else do you think you found the key?"

The Liebestod comes to a halt on an organ sting. Troy awakens, and gazes at the dead body of his mother on her bed. As he stands up, an object falls from his lap. It is a great old brass key, the same one he had last seen in the door of Jeannie's house.

(Some historians like to evaluate the artistic productions of 30 or 40, or more years ago, by what they regard as the "superior" standards of the present age. In so doing, they are occasionally led to the conclusion that the artists of yesteryear were crude or naive, and

almost seem to hold it against them that they did not create works more agreeable to future generations. This, of course, is absurd, especially in the field of popular fiction, where the writers were trying only to appeal to the tastes of their own time. Historians who are so inclined might criticize Willis Cooper for drawing out on a blackboard, so to speak, the fact that Troy was unable to find love with another woman - even a "dream-girl" - until he was completely free of his mother and her influence over him. Others might consider as a too-obvious trick Cooper's use of the Love-Death music at the time in his story when love and death were intermingling. Yet it remains my firm opinion that in this scene Willis Cooper achieved an emotional impact unequalled in dramatic radio.)

On the day his mother is buried, Troy is drafted into the Army, and he doesn't dream of Jeannie again for some time. Then one night, in a training camp in Tennessee, he wonders, as he falls off to sleep if Jeannie is dreaming of him - and suddenly there he is once more in his dream, walking up the curved path to the great house, holding the brass key in his hand. He opens the door and is greeted by Jeannie, who excitedly tells him to go away. He cannot understand, until abruptly he awakens in his tent and rolls to one side just in time to avoid a runaway tank which would have crushed him had he not been warned by Jeannie in the dream.

He does not dream of Jeannie again for a long time. When next he does, he is in North Africa. As he enters the dream-world, Jeannie tells him she has been dreaming of him all the while. She says she has good news for him. He will be able to stay with her from this moment on. He will not have to go back to the other world with its terrible war. If he does go back, she warns, he will suffer an accident the next day which will cost him his leg. But all he needs to do is stay there with her. He wants to return to where his duty lies. But he also wants to stay with Jeannie - and he does stay. And he lives with Jeannie in happiness, and the great lawn is green, and the scent of magnolias is cloying. Sometimes Jeannie tells him her dreams of him lying in a hospital bed, with nurses talking about how he raves and must be given frequent injections of morphine for pain. But his life with Jeannie continues. As he puts it:

"And so the long days and peaceful nights went by, while in another world men fought and murdered each

other, had no thought of another world that might be a world of dreams - and then might not be. For which is the REAL one? I found myself as the endless days and nights went by wondering, and secretly wishing for the other world I had left behind for my dream of Jeannie. I watched the sun set in magnificence beyond the rolling forest-clad hills, and I thought of another sunset, the sunset at the end of a dusty, grubby city street, with smoke griming the tawdry buildings - and I knew homesickness. I thought of a sunset past a frozen lake in wintertime, and the long shadows on the snow, and the shouts of gay youngsters, and in my mind's eye I saw a man standing, watching the skaters on the lake, a man with stooped shoulders, a thin beaten man with a crutch instead of a right leg - and my heart turned over within me. I thought of the goodness of pain, and the happy bitterness other men might now, and of work, harsh straining labor, and the good tiredness that comes at nightfall. And again, of a bed in a hospital somewhere, and doctors puzzling over a man who had slept for five years or more, while I pleased myself in a country of dreams and knew the love of Jeannie. And heartily I wished myself away from the peace and contentment - and love."

Jeannie says she will let him go for as long as he pleases. But she tells him to leave the key in the door, and it will be there whenever he wants to come back. And she assures him that he WILL come back.

Troy awakes to intolerable pain, in a hospital bed with doctors surrounding him. As he looks down, he sees that his right leg is gone. The doctors tell him they will send him to another city, to a great specialist who will make him well. His spirits rise, because now it looks as if he can be his own man forever.

And Jeannie? Yes, he thinks of Jeannie. He is thinking of her as he boards the plane, for his first trip by air, which will take him to the distant city where he will be treated by the specialist. He sits in a front row seat. Soon the drone of the engines makes him sleepy. He dozes off. And again he is in the DREAM.

He sees the trees and the tall white house. He goes up the path, and notices that the key is still in the lock. He opens the door and calls, "Jeannie!" He finds her sprawled at the bottom of the staircase, her eyes closed. He hurries to her and takes her into his arms, continuing to call her name. She can hardly speak, but she is trying

to warn him. Something about a door, and a man named McClintock. "Don't go near the door," she gasps. "Don't go near McClintock - or I'll never see you again."

The scene wavers before Troy's eyes, and suddenly he awakens when there is a sound like thunder.

"And I am here, sitting in the front seat on the right in an air-plane full of people. What did she mean? I thought. And as the lighted sign above the door flashes on - FASTEN SEAT BELTS - I glance at the other little signs on the wall in front of me. Stewardess, somebody, Second Officer, Harry somebody, Pilot, William J. McClintock. And the ship is moving strangely now. We're going down fast. Must be coming in for a landing. But the door. That's where the pilots are, where McClintock is. Smoke is coming out from under the door." And then we hear the theme from the second movement from the Franck Symphony.

At the end of this program there was no sense of any inside joke being secretly shared by Willis Cooper and Ernest Chappell. A respectful and subdued note tinged the announcer's words of thanks to "Mr. Chappell." One suspected that all the persons involved in this production realized they had had a hand in a genuine masterpiece. When Willis Cooper came on the air, he said only, "Thank you for listening to Quiet, Please," and named next week's story and there was no suppressed amusement in Ernest Chappell's voice as he gave his usual sign-off: "I am quietly yours, Ernest Chappell."

The future of dramatic radio is, to put it kindly, practically non-existent. Dramatic radio collapsed in the early 1950s, though a few long-standing favorites such as the Lone Ranger and One Man's Family, managed to hang on for several more years. The re-broadcasts of The Shadow, the Green Hornet, and Sherlock Holmes, which began in 1964, and resulted over the next few years, in re-runs of many old time radio shows, did little to stimulate any widespread interest in the return of original dramatic radio, but succeeded only because they represented themselves as being nothing more than what they actually were - namely, relics of the past. The CBS Radio Mystery Theater, in spite of its creaking door, and a few good attempts, simply could not recapture the old magic, any more than the present-day comic magazines can recapture, or even reflect, the magic of the Golden Age comic books. The examples of radio drama which I have heard on National

Public Radio have not, in my opinion amounted to much - except for an adaptation of "Frankenstein," notable for its close resemblance to the Shelley novel.

I think it is safe to say, then, that radio will not again present a horror story as terrifying as "The Thing on the Fourble Board," or a romantic fantasy as moving as "And Jeannie Dreams of Me." And I am very sure that there will never be another dramatic radio program as great, or as different, as "Quiet, Please."

8/28/45 TONIGHT
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RETURN WITH US TO... by Bill Owen

Comic Strips to Radio



IN THE 1930S AND 1940S RADIO THRILLED MANY LISTENERS... PARTICULARLY YOUNG ONES... WITH PROGRAMS BUILT AROUND APPEALING CHARACTERS FROM AMERICA'S COMIC PAGES (OR "FLUNNIES" AS THEY WERE POPULARLY KNOWN).



MOST OF THEM RAN AS 15-MINUTE LATE AFTERNOON SERIALS BUT BLONDIE WAS A PRIME-TIME EVENING FEATURE ON CBS, NBC AND ABC FOR 11 YEARS.



JERRY COLLINS

Once again it's time to delve into the days of radio past.

A few months ago I did an article on the importance of sports in radio. In this second article I will discuss some of the great moments in boxing and baseball history that were broadcast on the radio.

It was the evening of September 22, 1927, Chicago's Soldiers' Field had opened its gates to 104,942 spectators who had come to see Jack Dempsey-Gene Tunney rematch. Little did these people know but they would witness the most controversial fights in boxing history. For those not fortunate to be in attendance Graham McNamee described all the details of the famous "Long Count Fight."

Almost as controversial and certainly one of the most publicized fights was the second Joe Louis-Max Schmeling fight. Ted Husing was at the mike on the evening of June 22, 1938 as Louis successfully defended his title with a first round knockout over the former German champion.

In baseball many great moments have been captured on radio. Red Barber was at the mike for two memorable moments in the World Series of 1947. Al Gionfriddo, a reserve Dodger outfielder, made one of the greatest catches as he robbed Joe DiMaggio of a homerun in the sixth game of the World Series.

This was not the most memorable event in the Series. In the fourth game Cookie Lavagetto broke up Bill Bevens no hitter with a 2 out double in the ninth inning. The blow also drove in 2 runs to give the Dodgers a 3-2 victory.

Mel Allen was there in St. Louis on October 15, 1947 to witness what Bob Devaney calls the "most spectacular play in World Series history." The event came in the bottom of the eight of the last game of the World Series and it proved to be the winning run. Enos "Country" Slaughter scored all the way from first on Harry "the Hat" Walker's single.

Mel Allen was also doing the commentary for the Yankees throughout the memorable 1941 season. This was the year that the Yankees won the American League pennant by 17 games. Allen also witnessed one of the greatest individual efforts in sports history, Joe DiMaggio's 56 game hitting streak.

Many people saw this final event on television. Many others still remember Russ Hodges screaming over the radio "the Giants win the pennant." He had good cause for emotion as Bobby Thompson had just hit a three run homerun in the ninth inning of the third playoff game to win the 1951 National League pennant for the New York Giants.

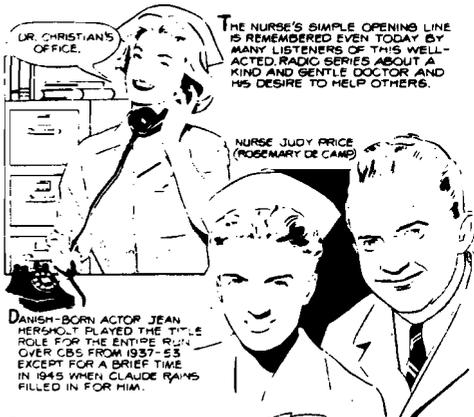
Our discussion could go on ever so much longer. In boxing radio also brought us the fights of Ray Robinson, Tony Zale, Rocky Graziano, Willie Pep and many others.

In baseball we could never neglect Don Larson's perfect game, Ted Williams' homerun in his last time at bat as well as a record breaking homeruns by both Roger Maris and Hank Aaron.

RETURN WITH US TO...

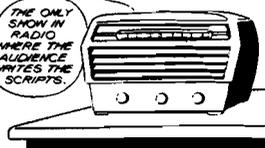
by Bill Lawler
and
Dorothy
Dunbar

DR. CHRISTIAN



BEGINNING IN 1941, LISTENERS COULD SUBMIT SCRIPTS FOR THE SHOW. EVENTUALLY, PROFESSIONAL WRITERS WERE PHASED OUT AND THE BEST SCRIPT OF THE YEAR EARNED \$2000. THIS, ANNOUNCER ART GILMORE'S INTRODUCTION...

THE ONLY SHOW IN RADIO WHERE THE AUDIENCE WRITES THE SCRIPTS.



Letters



One of the best things about the Old Time Radio Club is the diverse quality of writers and talent appearing in the Ill. Press; the distinct style of the regular writers is very refreshing. Each of these people have something to contribute and doing it should be enough, however, the fact that they go about their task in more than a journalistic manner adds credibility to themselves as well as our Club.

Recently it would seem that Bob Davis has been holding down the fort in the column department and no one can say Bob is dull. Knowing Bob, I must admit that his writing for the Ill. Press does seem different from other pieces I have read dealing with "Popular Culture" in general. However, Bob has probably stirred my imagination in his column as much as anyone including either Snyder or Seeley. To that end I have been saving some comments which I will blurt out at this time.

First and foremost it would appear to the casual reader that Mr. Davis has in fact made some less than serious references to the Rockford or Rocky award. This is not my feeling on the matter. I believe that Bob's suggestion that the award be given to Chuck Seely is a good one and should be taken seriously. In this respect it is my considered opinion that Mr. Seeley is more than deserving of this award as a pioneer of our hobby and a moving force in establishing and sustaining our great club. Please make no mistake about the fact that this is a great club or that Chuck Seeley is our most stabilizing influence; both statements are completely accurate. As such it would seem to me that every one of us should write to Jay Hickerson or Joe Webb and nominate Chuck for the award. This support seems very small compared to the accomplishments of Mr. Seeley in this hobby. Bob Davis is right on point on this one regardless of the tone of his syntax.

Turning to the lighter stuff-- Mr. Davis' column on making out lists for trading radio shows must have hit home for many of us. This is

probably the "gosh awfullist" task in an otherwise fun venture. I've always admired people like Jim Snyder who makes out one of the neatest, informative list imaginable. When I was getting started Jim and other traders tried to give me some good advise on making out a list. But I didn't listen to them mainly because I just couldn't see this thing getting as big as it now has become. Trying to keep track of reels and cassettes has become a nightmare. Of course, I still remember what is on old faithful over there in the corner but what about that pile of tape setting on the table for six months. Used to be I could tell just by the stains on the box what was in there. But the stains and boxes seem to have multiplied over the years. What's more, my typewriter has a mind of its own or maybe it listened to a different show than the one I heard. Anyways, if your not very organized to begin with, you end up with a mess. Just last week I found two reels of tape that I received several years ago that were displaced and turned out to be some of the best shows I'd heard lately. So if your gonna collect radio shows keep good records or else your gonna regret it in the future - let's see now where did I put that Green Hornet last! As an example: I trade with a fella who sends me reels with numbers only-- no titles or dates, just numbers. When I ask him about this he says I can get the title out of his catalogue. Unfortunately he must number the shows as he sends them to me because I can't find it in his catalogue for sometimes a year. And that's another thing about lists, I suspect that many people must make up their own titles because quite often when I get a show it's one I already have under another title. I've been sending out one show for years-everyone requests it-only to find out recently that the title was wrong and everyone already had the show. In all that time no one of several dozen people mentioned to me that the title was wrong. This is embarrassing but everyone has the same problems I guess.

And finally, it was very amusing to read in the May issue of Bob's recollection concerning premiums from old radio. I say amusing because collecting premiums is most likely one of the biggest hobbies around. It's not really funny to fork over \$35. for a bobble you got as a kid for 10¢ and a box top. But that is exactly what is going on out here and \$35. is a conservative figure

In the last year the flow of new radio shows has slowed somewhat and as an alternative I have dabbled in collecting premiums. Actually, Jim Snyder started me on this when he sent me one of those arrow heads that Bob was talking about. Since then I have very carefully invested a small fortune in radio shows and cash for some very nice badges, rings and paper collectables. Hopefully, you will all get a look at some of these in the fall MEMORIES which I am working on now. But I'm still not sure what people get out of this stuff as it just lays there. At least with radio shows I get action and movement in my imagination. How often can you go into the closet to see if your arrow head still glows in the dark or to see if the compass still points north. My wife objects to my walking through the house blowing on my whistling sherriffs badge and she only laughed when I gave her a Jack Benny Jello Cook Book from 1939.

Remember, you gotta keep this stuff in some kinda perspective but I'm not sure what.

Probably the most interesting event in the old time radio hobby will occur in November when the North American Radio Archives (NARA) celebrates its tenth anniversary by hosting a convention in Los Angeles, California.

NARA is of course a very fine club and the activities planned for their convention should certainly be a highlight of this or any other year. However, it is not the content of the convention, nor the fact that it is being held so close to the date that the Friends of Old Time Radio plan their convention, that makes this event so very interesting. What should make this convention so very interesting is the unavoidable influence that will be present in the name of yet another club - SPERDVAC.

For those of you who do not know or may have missed it, SPERDVAC had made overtures to NARA to co-host or some such involvement in this convention. This request I am told was flatly turned down by NARA. Since that time SPERDVAC has not mentioned the convention in what they laughingly call a newsletter, but, word has it that they (SPERDVAC) will be well represented at the convention. Bruised egos at SPERDVAC we hear.

This must be an untenable situation for NARA because many people in that club as well as the OTRC absolutely deplore the influen.e-peddling, opportunistic policy and action of the SPERDVAC Board of Directors who are basically all that there is of a club at SPERDVAC; the

very few at SPERDVAC benefit from that clubs resources. The question is whether the SPERDVAC mob will attempt to "steal the show" at the convention. There should be no doubt that they will try. In my view it would be a shame if such a thing happens, however, we will wait and see how far these people will go to promote their own self interests. Which brings up another point: if you are a SPERDVAC member you should ask how much of the memberships dues are spent on conventions-you'll be surprised at the answer, if you can get one.

Gene Bradford
19706 Elizabeth
St.Clair Shores, Mich.
48080

Just a word to say I found the current issue of the Illustrated Press quite interesting--basically the same publication I remember receiving several years ago when I was publishing News & Reviews. Since that time, as you may know, Joe Webb and I published Collector's Corner which for a number of years, was quite successful, until (basically) it met its demise the past year. I'm happy to see the Illustrated Press and The Old Time Radio Club are apparently doing quite well after seeing the most of the other independently produced publications (including my own) either crumble or die altogether, Collector's Corner has a successor, true, but it doesn't look like it'll be anything like the magazine Joe and I planned and developed in 1978.

Finally, as an OTR collector/dealer/former publisher, I take great pride in the quality of the recordings I make, and writing about techniques and tips. (Contrary to what some collectors believe, there's a lot more involved to recording a radio show - and doing it properly - than what is thought). Would the Illustrated Press be interested in a few such articles? (((YES!!!--ED))) I wrote several which appeared over the years in Collector's Corner. I think this is one of the few areas in which your publication is lacking.. Your letters/commentary section is the best, in my opinion and I have lots of respect for a publication catering to OTR collectors that can last 8 years. You must be doing something right!

Looking forward to future issues.

Bob Burnham
BRC Productions
(BRC OTR Dist.)
8276 Brooke Park 212
Canton, MI. 48187

Program Notes

Bill Devine, Station Manager of Public Radio Station WEBR, Buffalo, New York, informs us that Old Time Radio will continue this summer on WEBR, 970 KHz.

The following programs will continue on the schedule: The Shadow, Dragnet, X-Minus One, Fibber McGee and Molly, and Jack Benny.

New on the Schedule: Screen Directors' Playhouse and The Mysterious Traveller.

Returned by popular demand as selected by WEBR members during the last membership drive are: Suspense, The Aldrich Family and Our Miss Brooks.

Old Time Radio is heard on WEBR Monday through Friday at 8 pm and Saturday and Sunday at 6 pm.

A new syndicated program is The Golden Age of Radio Theater, heard in Western New York on WBTA, Batavia, 1490 KHz at 6:15 pm Monday through Saturday and also on WHAM, Rochester, 1180 KHz at 10 pm Monday through Friday. These one hour broadcasts contain two half hour programs. The usual sequence is repeated approximately every seven days. Included are: The Life of Riley, The Man Called X, Abbott and Costello, Cavalcade of America, The Great Gildersleeve, Night Watch, The Aldrich Family, NBC Short Story, Fibber McGee and Molly, X Minus One, You Bet Your Life, Night Beat, Duffy's Tavern, Hall of Fantasy, People Are Funny and the Haunting Hour. It has been announced that as new programs become available, they will be included in the schedule.

Other programs and features of interest include: Sunday Drama at 4 pm Sundays, and NPR Playhouse at 6 pm Sundays on WBFO, Buffalo 88.7 KHz; Sunday Matinee is at 4 pm Sundays on CBC AM, Toronto, 720 KHz; Saturday Stereo Theater at 7:05 pm and Sunday Stereo Theater at 7:05 pm, both on CBC FM, Toronto, 94.1 MHz; The Golden age of Comedy at 10 pm and the Theater Guild on the Air at 11 pm, Sundays on CHRE, St. Catherine's - Niagara, 105.7 MHz. CHUM - Toronto 104.5 MHz - The Funnies at 10 pm* Sundays followed by Hall of Fantasy at 11*, Inner Sanctum at 11:30* and Zero Hour at midnight*. *Programs times vary by as much as 30 minutes.

Program services such as listed above do not serve mass audiences. Many times it is difficult for program directors and/or station managers to justify such services. If you use and enjoy these services, a short note of appreciation to the appropriate station managers could help

in maintaining such programming. Public Radio stations, particularly, are committed to serving the wishes of their membership, and thus receptive to your comments.

If you have any OTR programs being broadcast in your area, please send information to Joe at the address below for inclusion in a future column...Ed.

Joseph O'Donnell
206 Lydia Lane
Cheektowaga, N.Y. 14225

TAPESPENDENTS - Send in your wants and we'll run them here for at least two months.

WANTED - Dimension X and X Minus One in chronological order of broadcast in very good or excellent condition. Also looking for radio premiums, Will trade or buy.

Gene Bradford
19706 Elizabeth
St. Clair Shores, Mich.
48080

Tapespondents is a free service to all members. Please send your ads in to the Illustrated Press.

WANTED!



"BABY SNOOKS"!
Why did she disappear?
Where is she now? Join nation-wide Snooks-hunt!
A mysterious message!
Flash: "Nobody knows where I yam!" Unflash.
For latest news, tune in tonight on "Maxwell House Coffee Time!"
WGY
WSYR **8:00 P.M.**



Ronald Colman's program *Favorite Story* features a famous yarn chosen by a famous personality. Dawn Bender and Herbert Vigran, above, go through the paces of *Alice In Wonderland*.

The CRYSTAL EGG



HY DALEY

Well, the delinquent columnist is back. After months of absenteeism, the old writer of radiola once again puts pen to paper. Actually, it's been tough to find time, but now I have LOTS of TIME. I've been in the hospital for four weeks with a staph infection of the right ankle joint. It get very BORING here. I've listened to lots of radio shows on tape.

Rich Olday says my last column ended with the LONE JOURNEY (I'd forgotten) so next is...
THE LONG RANGER-3 It would be sacrilegious to give the old mask man anything less, although the shows were predictable and the bad guys had absolutely NO redeeming qualities, that is what made the show what it was. One of my favorite shows was where LR and Tonto saved the Mandan Indians from unscrupulous land grabbers. LR even taught the Mandans HOW to be Indians. Thank God for LR!!!!

THE LONE WOLF-2 Although I've seen quite a few of the TV shows starring Louis Heyward, I've only heard one of the radio shows. No great shakes.

LONESOME GAL-1 Heard one show from 1/22/51. Now I know why she's lonesome.

LONGINES SYMPHONETTES-2 Nice music. Great watches.

EORNA DOONE-1 sudsy.

LOST EMPIRE-2 serial, better lost.

LUM & ABNER-4 Ok, so I'm a hillbilly at heart (you've NEVER been to CORRY). I even liked the ½ hour sophisticated version on prime time in 1950 with Andy Devine and Zasu Pitts. Listenable for hours which beats 90% of radio programming.

LULU BELLE & SCOTTIE-3 What C&W music USED to be like.

LUNCH WITH LOPEZ-2 In 1944 Lopez would really wet your appetite.

LUTTICE AND BOB-1 in 1933 NBC broadcasted this dreadful serial no doubt practicing for better times ahead.

LUX RADIO THEATER-4 The greatest

radio adaption of films format show on the air despite Cecil B. WHATSHISNAME.

LYONS BUSY-2 Dave Brubeck brought jazz to the air in the late 40's.

FIBBER MCGEE & MOLLY-3 Small townish. Yes. Overused jokes Sure...Predictable endings Yup. But bushels and closets of fun.

MARY MARGARET MCBRIDE-2 Yak yak yak.. The only show I heard Gary Cooper was the guest and Mary Margaret did all the talking!!!!

THE MCCOY-3 HOWARD DUFF played a Spade-like detective. The only thing wrong with this show is that are so few available.

MR. MCNULTY-3 Ray Milland has some funny moments in this educational setting sitcom. But then Education has always been funny, right?

MADAME BUTTERFLY-2 Undoubtedly a newtork special (3.8.37)

JOHNNY MADERO, Pier 23 -4 Jack Webb's somewhat obscure seaside crime show for lowbrow murders.

MAGIC HOUR -2 In 1935 REXALL brought the crooner (?) Frank Parker to radio.

MAGIC ISLAND-2 A woman searches for her daughter who was lost 14 years before in the sea. The daughter is found on a mysterious fog shrouded island controlled by super beings. Good plot, right? But terrible terrible action!!!

THE MAGIC KEY-3 This hous show (2/7/37) starred Gertrude Lawrence.

THE MAGNIFICENT MONTAGUE-2½ Although the title was a ripoff of the GREAT GILDERSLEEVE, the situations and plots had little relationship. Edwin Montague was an actor on a radio program although he had leanings toward Shakespeare.

MAILCALL-3 Another of those great AFRS shows for the troops via shortwave. All the greats shared the mike for the boys over there.

MAISIE-1 I must apologize to Maisie or Ann Southern lovers everywhere. This overbearing chick should have had four kids and been sent to the kitchen.

MAN ABOUT TOWN-1 1935 fodder.

MAN BEHIND THE GUN-3½ I've only heard four of these shows and apparently not the best ones at that. The radio historians heap praise on this one....

MAN CALLEDX-2 When heard individually, this show isn't bad, but do not listen on a 1800 foot reel of continuous shows. They are very much alike and tend to blur together.

MAN IN THE IRON MASK-2 Dumas' epic tale put to serial. Routine.

MAN NAMED JORDON-3½ Generally interesting foreign intrigue.

MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN-2 Raymond Edward Johnson adds some excitement to this pilot show featuring the ultimate wizard.

MANHATTAN MELODIES-2 Listened to two shows - one with Morton Downey and the other with Guy Lombardo.

* * * * *

The Saginaw NEWS SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1983

Service Sunday for former WSAM

ROCHESTER (UPI) — A family memorial service will be held Sunday for veteran Detroit actor Robert Liggett Sr., also a former WSAM program director in Saginaw. He played character roles on several popular radio series on WXYZ in the 1930s.

Liggett died Wednesday at Crittenton Hospital of a heart attack. He is survived by his wife, Ellen, and two sons, Robert Jr. and David.

During the Depression, Liggett played char-

acter roles in such radio series as "The Lone Ranger," "Sgt. Preston of the Yukon" and "The Green Hornet," which originated at WXYZ.

He began his radio career in the early 1930s after winning a college scholarship in an oratory contest. He left his native Ohio and found a job in Detroit, playing bit parts on radio for \$10 a show.

After World War II, Liggett moved to Ponti-



Christened by Walter Winchell "the best comedy team since Gallagher and Sheenan," broavod by Jack Benny (above). Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis make with the business Sun, 6:30, NBC.

program director

ac and was program director with WCAR. He then went to Saginaw as program director for WSAM from 1946 to 1950.

He moved back to the Detroit area in 1950, where he worked for several advertising firms. He retired in 1978 as vice president of communications for Morley Brothers, a wholesale merchandising firm.

The family service will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday at the Liggett home.

REFERENCE LIBRARY: A reference library exists for members. Members should have received a library list of materials with their membership. Only two items can be borrowed at one time, for a one month period. Please use the proper designations for materials to be borrowed. When ordering books include \$2.00 to cover rental, postage, and packaging. Please include \$1.00 for other items. If you wish to contribute to the library the OTRC will copy materials and return the originals to you. See address on page 2.

Tom Conway
"The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes"
Saturdays at 9:30 P.M., EST

Don McLaughlin,
Cathleen Cordell
"David Harding-Counterspy"
Monday Evenings at 9.00, EWT

Editor's DESK



As The Lone Ranger convention becomes another pleasant memory stored in the Inner Sanctum of my mind, my thoughts are turning to the annual Friends of Old Time Radio Convention coming this fall. However, before I forget, Dominic Parisi is preparing an excellent article on the Lone Ranger convention which will appear in our next issue.

The Friends of Old Time Radio convention will again be held at Newark International Airports' Holiday Inn-North off Exit 14 of N.J. Turnpike on Friday and Saturday November 11 and 12, 1983. Events starting at noon Friday include cocktail hour, buffet dinner, video tapes, dealer tables as well as workshops. Saturday's schedule includes dealer tables, workshops, cocktail hour, buffet dinner and an re-enactment of a Shadow radio program. Many OTR personalities will appear. Friday's cost is \$17. while Saturday is \$26. for adults and \$24. for children under 16 and senior citizens. Make all checks payable to Jay Hickerson, Box C, Orange, Ct. 06477. If you want a room, they are \$48. (single) and \$53. (double). Send details for rooms to Jay but motel costs are payable at the convention to Holiday Inn.

The OTR Club is now accepting ads for our fall issue of MEMORIES. Rates are \$25. for a full page, \$15. for a half page, and \$8. for a quarter page. SPECIAL: OTR Club members may take 50% off these rates. Fall issue deadline is September 15. Out of town members, this is a chance to help your club, if you know anyone who might want to advertise, please refer them to us. Help your club grow! Fall MEMORIES will be mailed out in late October, just in time for Christmas shopping.

Nick Carter returns next month!. have a good summer.



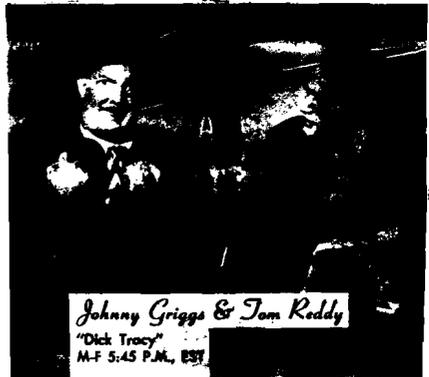
PIECE BY TERRIFYING PIECE ONE MAN UNCOVERS IMPENDING NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION. BUT NO ONE WILL LISTEN. AND TIME IS RUNNING OUT.

Can secret agent Maxon afford to speak out? Or must he pay the incredible price of silence? Find out in this tale of international intrigue where love and death, bravery and betrayal are played out in the shadow of disaster.

THE PRICE OF SILENCE

in nine thrilling radio episodes.

TAPE LIBRARY RATES: 2400' reel-\$1.50 per month; 1800' reel-\$1.25 per month; 1200' reel-\$1.00 per month; cassette and records-.50 per month. Postage must be included with all orders and here are the rates: For the USA and APO-60¢ for one reel, 35¢ for each additional reel; 35¢ for each cassette and record. For Canada: \$1.35 for one reel, 85¢ for each additional reel; 85¢ for each cassette and record. All tapes to Canada are mailed first class.

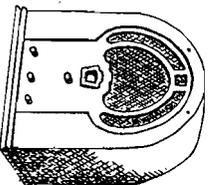


Johnny Griggs & Tom Reddy
"Dick Tracy"
M-F 5:45 P.M., EST

FIRST CLASS MAIL

THE OLD TIME

100 HARVEY DRIVE



RADIO CLUB

LANCASTER, N.Y. 14086