

The Old Time Radio Club

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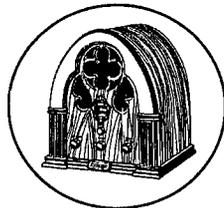
*You mean I have to send a check to
renew my membership?*

Membership Information

New member processing, \$5 plus club membership of \$17.50 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and a monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: if you join January-March, \$17.50; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The **Old Time Radio Club** meets the first Monday of every month at 7:30 PM during the months of September to June at 393 George Urban Blvd., Cheektowaga, NY 14225. The club meets informally during the months of July and August at the same address. Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome. The **Old Time Radio Club** is affiliated with The Old Time Radio Network.

Club Mailing Address

Old Time Radio Club
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086



Back issues of *The Illustrated Press* are \$1.50 post-paid. Publications out of print may be borrowed from our Reference Library.

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Cassettes - #1 up to 1999

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Lancaster, NY 14086

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Ed Wanat, Sr. (716) 895-9690
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Tape Library Rates: All reels and video cassettes are \$1.85 per month; audio cassettes and records are \$0.85 per month. Rates include postage and handling and are payable in U.S. funds.

The Skelton Saga

From the father he never saw, Red inherited two weapons: a stick of greasepaint, a pair of clown's trousers. With them, he began to fight for what he wanted.

By PAULINE SWANSON

Everybody calls him Junior. Women who've never met him knit him socks and bake him cakes. Women who know him well and love him take care of him as though he were indeed a child.

He's like a child, in many ways, guileless and irrepressible, or rather like a big, friendly puppy, loving everybody matter of factly and taking it for granted that everybody loves him back. And everybody does, too.

Like so many other stories of the great comics of our times, the story of Red Skelton begins with tragedy. It is the story of a perennial child with perennial man-sized responsibilities. It is a success story, checkered with failures; a story full of contradictions in which the biggest laughs light up the hardest years, and the lump in the throat bows in along with ultimate triumph. It would make a pip of a movie, the Red Skelton story—and it could be simply titled, "The Clown."

Red's father was a clown, but the boy never knew him. Joe Skelton was killed in a freak accident under the big top a month before Red was born. But he left Red something. So far as anyone knows, Joe Skelton—and Red—were the only performers in the family. But Red got the itch for grease paint, and got it bad, from the father he never saw.



With announcer Ned Lefevre and Red is Rod O'Connor (right) ex-announcer, now Red's "straight man."

His father's costumes and props and makeup were his favorite toys from the time he was old enough to toddle. They were his only toys, as a matter of fact, for Ida Skelton had all she could do to feed her four sons—all under ten when Joe died. Luxuries, even some necessities, were out of the question. Like most show folk in those days, Joe Skelton died broke. Ida was left with the little one-story frame house—and its mortgage—in Vincennes, Indiana, and enough insurance money to give Joseph a decent funeral.

Red was still in swaddling clothes, sleeping in his hand-me-down cradle, when Ida went out to work, scrubbing floors in downtown office buildings at night, running an elevator by day. The older boys, Denny and Chris and Paul, took care of little Richard, already tagged "Red," fed him and changed him and rocked him to sleep. And when Ida came home tired from work, they rubbed her sore feet while she relaxed, for a brief interlude, in the front porch swing, and warmed up the, luncheon soup to give her a hot supper, Ida Skelton was a remarkable woman. She wasted no time worrying about her sons' growing up on their own. "I have raised you to know right from wrong," she used to tell them in her rich Irish brogue. "I trust you to do right." She never gave them advice—unless they asked for it. And although actually they "ran loose" all their growing up years, not one of Ida's four boys ever got into trouble.

The family had its own scraps—"noisy, Irish fights," Ida put it—as "noisy, Irish families will. There was practically never anything we agreed about. But just let an outsider try to criticize any one of us—and watch out!"

Violent antagonists in the living room, the boys were just as violently loyal to one another once they faced the outside world. One by one, as they grew big enough for long pants, the four brothers went off to work themselves, and brought back their slim pay envelopes so Mom wouldn't have to work so hard. Red's turn came when he was ten, and he ran away from town with a medicine show.

School had been an ordeal, but, this man's job was heaven to Joe Skelton's son, who had known all along that he had to be, would somehow manage to be, a clown. For four years, Red—in blackface and his father's cut-down floppy pants—sold Dr. R. E. Lewis' "Famous Miracle Remedy" on street corners and vacant lots in every one-horse town in the middle west. He worked twelve hours a day, seven days a week, and he made \$10 a week, which he sent home unbroken every Saturday to his mother. "We get plenty to eat, and we sleep in the wagon," he wrote home. What more—so long as the audiences laughed—could an actor want?

At fifteen, he landed in the Gaiety Theater in Kansas City, the youngest comedian in burlesque, and the strip-tease queens, 40-Beautiful Girls-40, competed for the job of mothering him as women—except his own mother, perhaps—always have mothered him.

A year later he met the girl who was to take on the job for keeps, Edna Stilwell, who for ten years was his wife, and his manager, writer-producer of his radio shows, and general Solver-of-All-Problems.

The gossips buzzed in Hollywood after Edna and Red were divorced in 1942, and—although both remarried very soon—Edna stayed on as chief of the inner circle of Red's professional life. The gossips didn't bother Red. His ears just don't hear anything unpleasant. Edna heard it all right, but she shrugged it off.

"Let them criticize," she said. "I'm not going to leave Red. He's all the family I have."

Edna Stilwell's childhood had been just as rugged as Red's. Her parents had separated when she was six months old, and her mother—like Red's—had to work hard, long hours for a bare living. When she met Red she was fifteen. He was seventeen, and they were married six months later without asking any adult's permission. "When you've been working since you were ten, you're old enough at fifteen to know your own mind," Edna says.

Edna was a contestant in a walkathon—her first, last, and only walkathon. Red came on from burlesque to join the show as master of ceremonies. Edna won the endurance contest, after walking for four and a half months. Red says his job was comparatively easy. All he had to do was be funny for seven hours a day, seven days a week. They didn't think it was too tough. "Hell," Red says, "that was 1931, remember. We were working. A lot of folks weren't."

But it takes a lot of material to keep people laughing for four and a half months, and the contestants—to say nothing of the throngs of people who kept the 10,000 seat auditorium filled day and night all that while—were pretty impressed with this unknown red-headed sprout who could do it. Except for Edna, they admired him without qualification. She opened up kindly. "You ought to have a raise," she told him. "The comic is the mainstay in this business. You hold the show together. Also, you need better material."

Red was pleased, both with the praise and with the prospect of getting his hands on more money. He never had any sense about money. "Why don't you fix it?" he said.

"I will," she said. And, little by little, she did. Little by little, Red changed from a brash burlesque clown with a hat full of bang-bang jokes to the subtler and funnier character comedian he is today.

Edna's job just grew. She didn't plan it or even look for it. "He couldn't afford to hire anybody," she says. "So whatever he couldn't or wouldn't do for himself, I did!" Her wife's job was half mother-job from the first. She loaned him the \$2 to pay for their marriage license. She covered the agents' offices trying to sell Red to vaudeville, cooked his favorite fried bread and stews for him on a two-plate grill they kept hidden in the bottom bureau drawer in their cheap hotel room.

Although he was a big hit on the walkathon circuit, Red wasn't satisfied. Vaudeville was the big thing in the early Thirties and Red from the beginning wanted to be the biggest in the biggest. When an offer came along to do a show in Harwichport, Massachusetts, Edna said he had to take it. It was at least closer to New York, hub of the vaudeville world. They spent the last of their money for an old broken down Packard, borrowed Edna's mother's last five dollars and hit the road. Harwichport was 2,000 miles away.

They got as far as St. Louis before the five dollars dwindled to fifty cents. "Guess we have to grub for tinfoil," Red said cheerfully. "Come again," said Edna. "Pick up empty cigarette packs," Red ordered, "and save the tinfoil."

They worked for a couple of hours and grubbed up quite a lot. Then Red spent the fifty cents for a few bars of ivory soap, which, in the back seat of the Packard they sliced with a razor blade into one inch cubes. Each cube they wrapped in smoothed-out tinfoil. "Voila," said the old Medicine Man, "fog remover for your eyeglasses."

With a pocket full of silver cubes, and a spiel remembered from the "Miracle Remedy" days, Red took to the street corners, and sold the fog remover tablets for fifty cents apiece. Edna collected the money and kept an eye out for the cops. They slept in a hotel that night, and every night on their way to Harwichport, which they made in good time to keep their engagement.

Red doesn't see anything unusual about the story. "I never had anything," he says. "I never got anything the easy way. And everything I ever did get was gravy. I didn't mind working for it. I thought everybody had to."

Still nobody but Edna—and the legion of walkathon fans—thought that Red had the stuff for the big time. As master of ceremonies for the endurance contests, Red had broken all records. His show played for a solid year in

three, spots in Camden, New Jersey, in 1933, just because people were willing to come back again and again—at 10 below zero, at 10 o'clock at night—to laugh at Red. But vaudeville wanted no part of him. Edna set, auditions for him but the big, cold, empty theaters with no people in them depressed him, and he couldn't as he puts it, "get off the ground."

Their good friends Jim and Marian Harkins, former big timers in variety, were "thrown out of every agency in New York trying to sell Red." Red and Edna, in the meantime, were being thrown out of their room at the Old Flanders Hotel on 46th Street in default of nine dollars rent. They doubled up with Marian and Jim that night.

Red always had friends like that, battering away at the closed gates for him. Another was Eve Ross, who was in charge of the Gae Foster chorus lines at the Roxy theatre in New York. Eve "knew an agent" but Eve's agent, like so many others, couldn't see Red. But Eve would not, be put off. "Let me take him up to the Lido Club in Montreal," she begged. "I know he's got it."

Eve won, and went with Red and Edna to Montreal. Opening night Red fell flat on his face. The manager wanted to toss him out. But Eve had heard him when he was good: "The kid's just scared," she said. "Let him stay the week out and if he isn't a hit, I'll pay his whole week's salary." Red was a hit. He always is on the second bounce. And he stayed at the Lido for months.

That was the beginning. Considering the fact that it was a nightclub, his success was startling. Red doesn't like clubs, and as a rule they don't like him. He's not a wise guy, he doesn't know how to insult the customers—who expect it. His work is largely pantomime. But at the Lido, with his second wind, he mopped up.

Harry Angers, booking agent for Loew's Montreal, caught the act one night, and joined the Skelton fan club. He spoke to Edna, backstage. "I'd like to book the kid into Loew's," he said, tentatively, "if he has any free time." Free time! Red didn't have anything else. But Edna didn't let on. "We have a booking in Atlantic City after the Lido run. After that, we could work you in."

They went off to Atlantic City expecting never to hear from the little man again. But a few days later a contract arrived with railroad tickets back to Montreal. Loew's in Montreal, Shea's in Toronto—Harry Angers booked Red into the entire Canadian circuit. He played for a solid year. All of Canada loved him, and everybody in the United States—hearing about his record-breaking runs—began to wonder about this "unknown Canadian comic," who was killing the people up there.

So Red finally crashed American vaudeville—as a Canadian!

First American stop was the Capitol Theater in Washington, for Carter Baryon and John Ford. Later, Red transferred around the corner to the Earle Theater, then being booked by Red's old friend Harry Angers.

Red, overwhelmed with gratitude, decided to buy Harry a car, and he and Edna went shopping for it. They wrapped it all in cellophane, draped it with red ribbons and had it delivered to Harry's office door, only to discover that Harry couldn't drive. He couldn't, but he did, and in quick succession knocked down his own garage door, hit a tree and piled up six cars in traffic. "I don't know whether to thank you," Harry's wife told Edna on the phone, "or sue you."

A hit in Washington, Red proceeded in style to Chicago where—true to his own erratic traditions he "laid the biggest egg in vaudeville history."

Two weeks after this debacle Red was booked into the Chicago Palace. There, also true to tradition, he was a sensation. Up, down! High. Low! And never certain that the next performance wouldn't be a frost. And then vaudeville itself began to get shaky. A thing called radio was sticking its nose into show business.

As though Red didn't have enough trouble. He made a few auditions, with the usual frightening results. Radio could go hang. Red would stick to vaudeville until its last breath. He could always go back to Montreal.

He didn't know that he had yet another friend to front for him. At about this time—it was early 1937—Freeman Keyes, an advertising man in Chicago who had made an early reputation in radio with hillbilly shows, was looking for a comedy variety show for one of his clients. Something fresh, different. He took his headache home to dinner with him one night and his wife—along with two aspirins—gave him some advice. "I saw a red-headed fellow in Chicago once," she said, "who was the funniest person I ever saw. He did an act dunking doughnuts." Too tired to explain that doughnut dunking was a pretty visual operation for radio, Mr. Keyes contented himself with "What was his name?" Mrs. Keyes didn't remember. Mr. Keyes went on auditioning aspiring comics, and his headache grew. And at home the barrage of propaganda proceeded for the funny man with red hair who dunked doughnuts.

Finally, as he puts it "to get my wife out of my hair," Freeman Keyes called every talent agency in Chicago to ask if by any chance any of their clients had red hair and dunked doughnuts.

Continued next month

**MEMBER'S
MIKE**



Letter To The Editor:

OOOPS! When you are writing a column, you should recheck it sometime after you write it and not immediately afterward. I know that, but I didn't do it after my last column. I wrote Porky Pig when I meant Elmer Fudd as my editor pointed out to me. Elmer was originally voiced by the same person who played Doc Gamble on Fibber McGee & Molly.

I've known that for a long time, in fact, I won 2 passes to a local movie theater on that same question several years ago. When I gave that answer to the usher, he looked at me strangely (He did not know the answer or the person I mentioned.) and went to the manager. Shortly afterward, he returned with two passes to the show.

Elmer was played by that same person until about 1959 (when he passed away on 11/30/59) and then the role was assumed by Mel Blanc. I do not know the exact date of the change. For those of you who not know the answer, it was Arthur Q. Bryan who also played Floyd Munson, the barber on The Great Gildersleeve and Lt. Walt Levinson for a while on Richard Diamond. He also appeared on The Al Pearce Show, Blondie, The Charlotte Greenwood Show, The Ethel Merman Show, Forever Ernest, The Grouch Club, Major Hoople (The lead), The Milton Berle Show, Nitwit Court, and Red Ryder. Arthur was a very busy person.

Well, I hope that clears that issue. Again, I am sorry for the "Goof". Keep up the good work, Ken. Now, how about some letters & columns from the rest of our members.

Dick Olday

EDITOR

Is there a complete copy of the *Lux Radio Theater* "Rue Madeleine," dated 10/20/47? The copy I have is missing Act 2. I've ordered this show from a few collectors, and they are also missing Act 2.

Anyone know, or have a complete broadcast?

Dom Parisi

**LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE
CASSETTE LIBRARY**

- 2872 Let's Pretend "Elves and Shoemaker" 9/5/42
- Let's Pretend "The Water of Life" 9/12/42
- 2873 Let's Pretend "Prince Gigi and the Magic Ring" 9/19/42
- Let's Pretend "The House of the World" 12/26/42
- 2874 Let's Pretend "Jack and the Beanstalk" 10/26/46
- Let's Pretend "The Six Swans" 6/7/47
- 2875 Let's Pretend "The Golden Touch" 1/23/43
- Let's Pretend "Princess Moonbeam" 3/20/43
- 2876 The First Nighter "Speak Ever So Gently" 5/24/44
- The First Nighter "Give Up the Ship" 5/31/44
- 2877 The First Nighter "No Publicity" 7/5/44
- The First Nighter "Old Lady Shakespeare" 7/12/44
- 2878 The First Nighter "Mother's Angel Children" 5/4/44
- The First Nighter "The Heart that has Truly Loved" 7/23/44
- 2879 The Lone Ranger "Change at Circle B" 6/29/55
- The Lone Ranger "Jud Jackson's Plan" 6/30/55
- 2880 The Lone Ranger "The Winner" 6/28/55
- The Lone Ranger "Scout Sounds the Alarm" 6/27/55
- 2881 The Lone Ranger "The Thunderbird Emblem" 9/22/54
- The Lone Ranger "One Peso Bill" 9/22/54
- 2882 The Crime Club "Death Swims at Midnight" 8/28/47
- The Crime Club "A Deed Indeed" 8/21/47
- 2883 Here Comes McBride "Missing Diamonds" 5/19/49
- Here Comes McBride "I Confess Narcotics Case" 10/17/52
- 2884 Broadway is My Beat "Nick Norman, Santa Claus" 12/24/49
- Broadway is My Beat "Thomas Hart" 4/15/51
- 2885 Nick Carter, Master Detective "Missing Street" 12/28/47
- Nick Carter, Master Detective "Policy Makers" 12/21/47
- 2886 Crime and Peter Chambers "The Envelope" 8/24/54
- Crime and Peter Chambers "The Hot Spot" 8/31/54
- 2887 Murder by Express "Prescription for Murder" 7/11/49
- Murder by Express "Big Money" 7/25/49
- 2888 Theater Five "The Hostage"
- Theater Five "I've Got Your Number"

- 2889 Philo Vance "Meeker Murder Case"
- 2890 Philo Vance "Deathless Murder Case" (X-talk)
- 2890 Philo Vance "Backstage Murder Case"
- 2891 Philo Vance "Argus Murder Case"
- 2891 Wild Bill Hickok "Legacy of Death" 1/4/52
- 2892 Wild Bill Hickok "Shawnee Raid" 1/9/52
- 2892 The Six Shooter "Escape from Smoke Falls" 11/15/53
- 2893 The Six Shooter "Gabriel Starbuck" 11/22/53
- 2893 Sam Spade "Wheel of Life Caper" 7/11/48
- 2894 Sam Spade "Missing Newshawk Caper" 7/18/41
- 2894 Whitehall 1212 "Case of Anguish" 7/13/52
- 2895 Whitehall 1212 "Unidentified Woman" 7/20/52
- 2895 Whitehall 1212 "Weed Eradication" 6/29/52
- 2896 Whitehall 1212 "Murder of Mr. Sweet" 7/6/52
- 2896 Man Behind the Gun "Incident in the Pacific" 2/19/44
- 2897 Man Behind the Gun "A.P.T. Named Prep Joe"
- 2897 Grand Marquee "If The Shoe Fits" 1/16/47
- Grand Marquee "Deep Freeze" 2/13/47

Local member Bob McDivitt has volunteered to digitize our tape library and create MP3 CDs. As the disks become available they will be listed in the Illustrated Press. Stay tuned for progress reports on this exciting new development.

Frank Roma and Bob McDivitt have been working on the Old Time Radio Club's new web page. For a sneak preview log on to www2.pcom.net/robmcd

It is renewal time once again, and in order to remain a member we must receive your dues by the end of February. If the mailing label has 1/01 listed after your name it means your membership is expiring and this will be the last issue mailed to you. Please send your check in today while it's still fresh in your mind.

Here's one of those E-Mail stories with an OTR slant that has been filling my mail box:

THE LONE RANGER

The Lone Ranger and Tonto are camping in the desert, set up their tent and are asleep. Some hours later, the Lone Ranger wakes his faithful friend.
 "Tonto, look up at the sky and tell me what you see."
 Tonto replies, "Me see millions of stars."
 "What does that tell you?" asked the Lone Ranger.
 "Astronomically speaking it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Time wise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, it's evident the Lord is all powerful and we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What it tell you Kemo Sabe?"
 The Lone Ranger is silent for a moment, then speaks:
 "Tonto, you dumb ass, someone has stolen our tent."

That's about it for this month . . . Let's hear from you. Send a note, or better yet a column along with your membership renewal check.

*For any Reel-to-Reel listeners out there,
 here are the latest reels as compiled
 by our Reel Librarian*

- R-990 The Zero Hour-Starring Rod Sterling, 2400'
- "The Tiger Cage"
- "Murder in a Theatre"
- "The Children are Dying"
- "Dead Man in the Museum"
- "Larceny on the Lake"



Editor's
Clips

It's been a real mixed up year for the Illustrated Press. On the local level we've been calling for more participation in the selection and writing of articles. On the national scene we've encouraged and accepted pieces from other organizations and individuals. All this was done to make our club's newsletter more interesting and informative for our members. When some of the contributors stopped sending we fell behind and that's why the publication date was a month late for the past three months. With the printing and mailing of this issue we are now back on track. We are still looking to the membership to help fill the pages, and any contributions will be gladly accepted. Remember, it's your newsletter and you should have a voice in it.

On another note, have any of our members begun collecting OTR on CDs in the MP3 format? These are CDs containing large numbers of programs playable through the sound card on a computer and a special CD player. What's been your experience with them? What is the reaction of the OTR Dealers?

- "The Lam"
 "Blood in the Snow"
 "Those Things That Flash"
 "The Ghost of the Black Plague"
 "A Trunk Full of Trouble"
 "The Grand Prize"
 "Welcome Home Denny Shackelford"
 "Death of A Genius"
 "Remember Me?"
 "Lost In Time"
 "Once Upon A Truck"
 "Corpse Takes The Stand"
 "The Circus"
 "Chicago Live"
 "Smoke Screen"
 "The Holdout"
- R-991 Tales of Time & Space, 1800'
 "The Beast that Shouted Love at the Heart of the World"
 "The Day After the Martians Came"
 "Starting From Scratch"
 "Twilight" (Part One)
 "Twilight" (Part Two)
 "The Winner"
 "Spare the Rod" (Part One)
 "Spare the Rod" (Part Two)
 "The Sentinel"
 "Nine Hundred Grandmothers"
 "Aunt Jennie's Tonic" (Part One)
 "Aunt Jennie's Tonic" (Part Two)
- R-992 SF-68, 1800'
 "Andover and the Android"
 "The Answer"
 "The Cage"
 "The Castaway"
 "Death Dust"
 "Homecoming"
 "Jenny With Wings"
 "Last Rites"
 "The New Wine"
 "The Quest"
 "Routine Exercise"
 "A Sound of Thunder"
- R-993 The Lone Ranger, 1800'
 "Outlaws of the Rio Grande" 7/17/40
 "When Thieves Fall" 7/19/40
 "A Bullet of Silver" 7/22/40
 "An Outlaw Manhunt" 7/24/40
 "Return of the Masked Man" 7/26/40
 "When Death Waits" 7/29/40
 "Horse Named Toby" 8/4/40
 "Feuding Brothers" 10/14/40
 "Andy's Gold Map" 10/16/40
- "Land Grabber's Masquerade" 12/29/40
 "Ambushed Ambushers" 1/29/41
 "Buyers Beware" 4/2/41
- R-994 The Lone Ranger, 1800'
 "Landgrabber's Loss" 4/4/41
 "Sixty Days for Life" 4/7/41
 "Homesteader's Ruse" 4/9/41
 "Sanctuary" 4/11/41
 "Work Win" 4/14/41
 "United We Stand" 4/16/41
 "Lone Ranger Moves" 4/18/41
 "Outpost in the Desert" 4/21/41
 "Mustang Mag Grows Grain" 4/23/41
 "Dodge City or Bust" 4/25/41
 "Wild Horse Untamed" 4/28/41
 "Dead Men Pay No Blackmail" 4/30/41
- R-995 The Lone Ranger, 1200'
 "Night Watch" 11/17/41
 "Danger At Breakneck Rapids" 11/21/41
 "A Girl to Aid" 12/1/41
 "Death and Taxes" 12/4/41
 "Untitled" 1941
 "Outlaws Years" 11/24/41
 "He Wouldn't Stay Dead" 12/5/41
 "Parson of Fairfield" 12/10/41
- R-996 The Lone Ranger, 1200'
 "Gold Beyond the River" 11/26/41
 "Torlock's End" 11/28/41
 "Iron Box" 12/12/41
 "For Those Who Fell" 12/15/41
 "Masked Man's Fists" 12/17/41
 "Ambush in the Desert" 12/19/41
 "House of Stone" 1/7/42
 "Adventures of the Yellow Dog" 1/9/42

**Ah radio! The city room
 was never like this.**

by PAUL DENIS

Hildy Johnson is annoyed when his city editor, Walter Burns, gives him an assignment. When he's good and ready, he informs his boss, "I'm free now. What can I do for you?" I do not suggest you imitate Hildy.

Hildy does not belong to the Guild. He is one of the many newsmen portrayed in radio dramas, and he'd just as soon spit in his boss's eye as write a lead story. Hildy (portrayed on the ABC network by movie actor Dick Powell) is dynamic, rude, wise-cracking, egotistic, *shrewd, casual, flippant, remarkable and completely unread*. He is part of the continuing legend of the free-



wheeling, independent, devil-may-care, romantic newspapermen, as built up by magazines, novels, movies, radio and, soon, by television.

He is cut from the same stereotype, the same hunk of ham that has been smelling up the newspaper business for decades in novels, plays and movies.

Hildy, for instance, snarls at his city editor: "You sound almost human today, Walter." And, when the boss scolds him for not reading his own paper, Hildy snaps back, "I didn't know it was part of my job to read this rag."

Hildy is virtually a one-man reform squad. He can't be bothered with office hours, rewrite, doing obits, covering press release handouts, clambakes, fires and conventions. Hildy chases crooks single-handed and the cops may as well take a vacation.

All radio newspapermen chase crooks. Apparently, newspapers run nothing but crime news. Even a radio program that proudly dramatizes true stories of newspapermen's experiences (*The Big Story*, on NBC) rarely uses anything but a crime yarn.

The crime reporter and photographer are apparently the only acceptable newspapermen in radio-fictional or alive. Reporters who dig up sensational yarns on finance, politics, industry, science and labor are never, never recognized.

I'll bet, you some brand new, never-used Stassen buttons that you'll never hear a radio dramatization of Bert Andrews' exposure of the government's security firings, or of Sylvia Porter's scoop on the I. G. Farben Trust's Nazi American ties, or of Albert Deutsch's exposure of degradation in mental institutions.

Look at radio's leading newspapermen: You know what a whack Hildy Johnson is. Mickey Rooney just finished playing a reporter, *Shorty Bell*, for CBS. Shorty exposed crooks, fought with his editor, turned the town upside down but radio listeners yawned, so Shorty disappeared.

Then there's *Superman*, on ABC network, the only reporter who doesn't have to phone or wire in his stories. He flies them in personally. There's also *Front Page Farrell*, on NBC, who doesn't write for the inside pages. Page One or nothing, bub. Farrell lets his wife come along and they slug crooks, trap politicians and, on quiet days, smash hijacking rackets.

Christopher Wells, on CBS, is a columnist and radio commentator who roams the world, talks to kings, solves international crimes, and shakes the nation with his columns. (Winchell, Pearson, Superman combined.) *Casey*, "*Crime Photographer*," is radio's only glamorous cameraman (on CBS). He solves, as well as photographs, all choice crimes.

The only glamour editor-publisher in radio is Britt Reid of the *Daily Sentinel* (on ABC). When suspicious of dastardly crime afoot, Reid slips out of his office into a secret garage where he leaps into a "sleek, highpowered black car" which "roars into life." At the proper moment, he dons a mask, becomes the Green Hornet, apprehends the crooks, and rushes back to his desk to write the story. Page One, of course. To this day, his staff hasn't wised up.

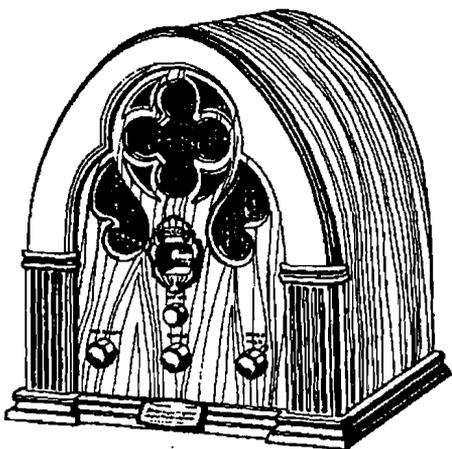
Occasionally, there appears a plain, ordinary, mortal newspaperman, and I tremble for his safety. That happened when Rex Taylor, newspaperman, jeopardized his life by accusing the sheriff and land commissioner of being crooks. Thank God for the Lone Ranger, who happened by and put the crooks in their place. (ABC network.) Yes, in radio, reporters are called Scoop or Flash. The editor is addressed as Chief, and, behind his back, The Old Man. Reporters rush in breathless and gasp, "Stop the press!" or "Replate!" To relieve the monotony, they sometimes phone in front-page editorials..

Nobody talks about any page but the front page. Nobody mentions hours and wages, expense accounts, Guild cards, overtime, office politics. Reporters roar in and out of editors' offices, never look at the clock, never go home on time. They take on only enjoyable, but dangerous, assignments. They let a girl hang around and never bother to romance her. They feud with rival newspapermen, denounce big shots, boast of abominable behavior. They know all the crooks and political bosses by their maiden aliases. They solve murders, snare thieves, uncover scandals. But always, always, they GET THAT STORY.

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7:00—Nelson Selby Trio Is Tops
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8:00—'American Portraits' Premiered
New Series Begins With Benjamin Franklin Drama

8:30—Donlevy as Soldier of Fortune
Britain Is Swashbuckling on "Dangerous Assignment"

9:00—Comic Harry McNaughton
Stars as English Butler in "It's Higgins' Sir"

9:30—Mimi Benzell and Jack Pearl
Baron Munchausen's Tales Are Taller Than Ever

10:00—Big Town's Fighting Editor
Walter Greaza Finds "Charity Begins With Murder"

SUMMER BRINGS GOOD DAYTIME RADIO

Genial Ed Dinamore enceeds the Luncheon Club, spicing it with gay "Johnny," melodious voice of Philip Morris Tomorrow "Johnny," melodious voice of Philip Morris Company, will be spotlighted. Sally Work talks authoritatively on topics of interest to women at 1:30 P. M., followed later by Kenneth Banghart's crisp summary of afternoon news at 2:55. And for late-afternoon laughs, listen to Bob & Ray comedy team at 5:45. All are Monday through Friday afternoons.

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