

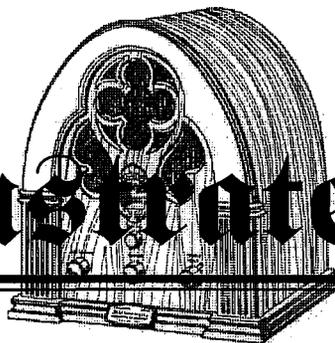
*The Old Time Radio Club*

Established 1975

# The Illustrated Press

Number 353

October 2007



**BARTON YARBOROUGH**

# *The Illustrated Press*

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## Membership Information

Club Membership: \$18.00 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and the monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$18.00; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing newsletter issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The **Old Time Radio Club** meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 PM during the months of September through June at St. Aloysius School Hall, Cleveland Drive and Century Road, Cheektowaga, NY. There is **no** meeting during the month of July, and an informal meeting is held in the month of August.

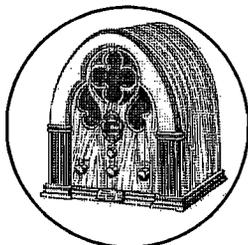
Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome. The **Old Time Radio Club** is affiliated with the Old Time Radio Network.

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All Submissions are subject to approval prior to actual publication.

**Deadline for The Illustrated Press is the 1st of each month prior to publication.**

The Illustrated Press is the newsletter of the **Old Time Radio Club**, headquartered in Western New York State. It is published monthly except for the months of July and August. Contents except where noted are copyright © 2007 by the OTRC.

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## The Illustrated Press



Sgt. Ben Romero (Barton Yarborough) and Sgt. Joe Friday (Jack Webb) examining evidence at the scene of the crime.

## Barton Yarborough

by Tom Cherre

I have no idea why Jack Webb ever picked Barton Yarborough to play his partner Ben Romero. OK, I can see why he picked him, but why give him the name Ben Romero? Barton Yarborough, a fine actor he was, but he had that strong Southern twang about him. Hearing him talk sounded like one of the "Dukes of Hazzard" from Jackass Junction, Mississippi or some other moonshine town. He was supposed to play an LA Hispanic cop, but he sounded more like Tennessee Ernie Ford. Apparently Webb had the name in mind before he picked the actor to play the part for his new police show. Maybe it's just me, but I thought it was a poor casting choice. It's like having Barry Fitzgerald play the role of the Godfather.

Barton Yarborough had a tremendous radio career. For his relatively short life (he passed away at the age of 51) he starred in some of the most popular shows of all time. He was Doc Long in *I Love A Mystery*. He played Clifford Barbour in the longest running radio show, *One Man's Family*. Family ran for 27 years including 3,256 episodes and that doesn't include reruns. The show I think he will most be remembered for was *Dragnet* playing the partner and sidekick of Joe Friday in the role of Ben Romero. Again, why on earth did Jack Webb give him the name of Romero is beyond me.

William Barton Yarborough was born on October 2, 1900 in Texas to Patrick and Mollie Yarborough. He had some family problems as a kid and left home to join a vaudeville troupe in the early 1920s. This gave him some on stage experience and he joined the theater

starting his acting career with the Eva LeGallienne Company. He did some movies and a little early TV, but radio was his first love. While Doing *One Man's Family* he worked with some famous actors like Richard Crenna, Rosemary DeCamp, Hans Conried, Howard (Floyd the barber) McNeer. Some of the other actors on the show including Bill Bouchey, Janet Waldo, Virginia Gregg, Vic Perrin and Herb Butterfield would become part of the Jack Webb stable crew that would act on *Dragnet*.

On December 13, 1951 Yarborough starred in the 133rd Episode of *Dragnet*. It was titled "The Big Overtime." This was Yarborough's last show as Sgt. Ben Romero. The following show on December 20th was a repeat Christmas show "22 Rifle For Christmas". Barton Yarborough died of a heart attack on the evening of December 19, 1951 at 8:55 pm at his home in Burbank, California. Jack Webb cared very deeply for his friend



BARTON YARBOROUGH

Barton Yarborough and dedicated the next episode to him with Sgt. Romero dying of a heart attack on that same show. Joe Friday had three other partners to follow, but out of respect for Yarborough they never equaled the rank of Sgt. Romero. So even with his accent I still liked *Dragnet* and I really liked Ben Romero, and that's a fact.

## The Year 1945 in Review

By JERRY COLLINS

The year 1945 proved to be the final year of World War II. By years end our vocabulary would include such new terms as: the Manhattan Project, Enola Gay, Big Boy, Kamikaze, Nuremberg Trials, VE Day, VJ Day etc. The more significant events of the year included:

1. In January American troops crossed the Siegfried Line into Germany.
2. On January 27 the Red Army liberated Auschwitz and Birkenau Concentration Camps.
3. In early March Ann Frank died in the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp.
4. Allied leaders, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin met at Yalta on the Black Sea in early February to decide the fate of

## The Illustrated Press

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- fate of postwar Europe.
5. Allied troops crossed the Rhine River by using the Remagan Bridge. The last major obstacle to an Allied victory was surmounted.
6. Berlin was attacked by 1,250 bombers on March 18.
7. Harry Truman assumed the office of President following the sudden death of Franklin D. Roosevelt at Warm Springs, Georgia.
8. Two more concentration camps were liberated; Buchenwald on April 10th and Bergen-Belsen on April 15th.
9. US and Soviet troops linked up at the Elbe River, effectively cutting Germany in half.
10. On April 28th Benito Mussolini and his mistress Clara Petacci were captured while fleeing Italy. They were captured and executed by Italian partisans. Their bodies were then hung by their heels in the Milan's Public Square.
11. The German army in Italy finally surrendered on May 2nd. In the final days of World War II Hitler and his mistress committed suicide in their bunker.
12. On May 7th German forces surrendered and the following day would be celebrated as V-E Day.
13. The United States continued its policy of island hopping in the final year of the war. American forces landed on the island of Corrigedor in the Philippines on February 16th. On that same day the Bataan Peninsula was recaptured. Three days later 30,000 Marines landed on Iwo Jima. Just four days later the American flag was raised on Mount Suribachi. On March 16th the battle of Iwo Jima came to a conclusion. On February 23 Manila was liberated. On April 1 US troops landed on Okinawa. Victory was achieved on June 21st.
14. On March 9th and 10th American B29 bombers attack Japan with incendiary bombs leaving 100,000 civilians dead.
15. On July 26th the atomic bomb was successfully tested at Alamogordo, New Mexico. President Truman was attending the Potsdam Conference when he received news of the test. He also made the decision to use the bomb while he was at the conference.
16. On August 6, a B-29, named the "Enola Gay," dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. When Japan did not respond to American peace feelers, a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Japan surrendered on August 15 - V-J Day. Eventually 57 nations would participate in the war, with the death of 55 - 62 million people.
17. Japanese Americans were permitted to return to their homes on the west coast.
18. The United Nations was founded in October. On December 4th the United States Senate approved the UN Treaty allowing for the entrance of the US into the United Nations.
19. In 1945 only 5,000 American homes have television sets.
20. Rationing came to an end in November of 1945.
21. Sir Alexander Fleming, Sir Howard Florey and Dr. Ernst Chain won the Nobel Prize for their work on penicillin.
22. Ernie Pyle, America's most famous war correspondent was killed by enemy fire in the Pacific Theater.
23. Beth Myerson of New York City was selected Miss America.
24. Due to the manpower shortage, Pete Gray from Naticoke, Pennsylvania became a starting outfielder for the St. Louis Browns. He had a very good minor league career before and after his one season in the Majors. The one-armed athlete later became an accomplished golfer.
25. In July of 1945 a B-25 bomber crashed into the Empire State Building. The 78th and 79th floors were damaged and 13 people were killed.
26. Jackie Robinson signed with the Montreal Royals, a Triple A farm club of the Brooklyn Dodgers.
27. The microwave oven was patented.
28. The most famous picture of the war is taken in its final year, the flag raising ceremony on Iwo Jima.
29. Soviet troops liberated prisoners at Auschwitz, the most famous of German concentration camps. The films of the prisoners shocked the World.
30. The United Nations convened with representatives from 51 nations. The United States joined the organization on July 28th.
31. Grand Rapids, Michigan became the first American city to fluoridate its water.
32. Ball point pens, Tupperware, the Slinky toy and frozen orange juice all reached the market. On a record day in October, 5,000 people jammed the entrance to Gimbel's, waiting for the store to open. By the end of the day their complete stock of 10,000 ballpoint pens were sold at \$12.50 each.
33. American General George S. Patton died in Europe of complications following an automobile accident.
34. Between May 7th and May 11th every American League baseball game was rained out. Both the Athletics and the Tigers lost seven games.
35. Pete Grey, the Brown's one-armed outfielder, was both the offensive and defensive star on May 20th as the Browns defeated the Yankees in both ends of a doubleheader, 10-1 and 2-1.
36. On September 3rd Ted Wilks lost a game for the Cardinals. He would not lose another game until 1948, 77 appearances without a defeat.
37. George Stirnweiss got three hits in the final game of the season to win the batting title with a .309 average.
38. Jake La Motta lost two more brutal fights to Ray Robinson, February 23rd and September 2th.

## The Illustrated Press

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39. Orson Welles played the Shadow from 1937 to 1938. He was followed by Bill Johnstone (1938-1943) and Brett Morrison (1945-1954). Agnes Morehead, Grace Mathews, Gertrude Warner and others played Margot Lane. Not only were the lead roles played by talented people, but the supporting parts were played by radio's best: Everett Sloane, Santos Ortega, Alan Reed and Kenny Delmar. The show had the best announcers; Ken Roberts, Andre Baruch, Dwight Weist and Ted Mallie. The show usually featured Rosa Rio on the organ. The scripts and sound effects were also the best. If you lived in the Northeast you were treated to those great Blue Coal commercials and John Barkley's advice on the proper use of coal and how to save it. Even today fans of "Old Time Radio" always think of this show first. The war years were also great for other detective and crime shows. In addition to the *Shadow*, listeners could choose from *Nick Carter*, *I Love A Mystery*, *Mr. District Attorney*, *David Harding*, *Counterspy*, *Bulldog Drummond*, *Nero Wolfe* and *The Thin Man*.
40. Even though many players were returning from the service, some teams were still desperately short of players. On September 4th the Yankees brought Paul Schreiber in from the bullpen. He pitched 3-1/3 innings of perfect relief. What was so special was that the 43-year old Schreiber was the Yankee batting practice pitcher. He had last pitched in the Majors in 1923 and the Minors in 1931.

The list of the top books of 1945 would include:

1. The Black Rose
2. Cass Timberlane
3. Captain from Castille
4. The Egg and I
5. Up Front
6. Brave Men
7. Black Boy
8. A Bell for Adano
9. Cannery Row

The year's best movies:

1. Lost Weekend
2. Anchors Aweigh
3. The Bells of St. Mary's
4. Spellbound
5. A Tree Grows in Brooklyn
6. Mildred Pierce
7. The Keys of the Kingdom
8. The Picture of Dorian Gray
9. G.I. Joe

The following champions were crowned in 1945:

1. The 1945 World Series was the first post-season series after World War. Both the Tigers and the

Cubs had rosters that were greatly depleted with very short benches. Some of the players returned from the battlefields late in the season. In fact Virgil Trucks played in one regular season game and then started and won game two of the World Series. Detroit sent Hank Greenberg, Eddie Mayo and Hal Newhouser (25-9) to the All Star game. Dizzy Trout was also part of a relatively strong Tiger pitching staff. The Cubs sent seven players to the game; Phil Cavaretta (.355), Stan Hack, Don Johnson, Andy Pafko (110 RBI's), Claude Passeau, Hank Wyse (22-10) and Bill Nicholson. The Cubs lacked power that year as Nicholson led the team in homeruns with 13. Paul Derringer and Hank Borowy were veteran members of the Cubs pitching staff. The Detroit Tigers defeated the Chicago Cubs in seven games. The Tigers hit with power and used their pitching staffs more effectively. Hal Newhouser won two games for the Tigers. Hank Greenberg homered twice and drove in seven runs for the winners. Doc Cramer had 11 hits and four RBI's to lead a more balanced Tiger attack. It was definitely a hitter's World Series as the Cubs were led by Phil Cavaretta with 11 hits, one homerun and 5 RBI's Stan Hack with 11 hits and Peanuts Lowery with nine hits. Hank Borowy started three games and relieved in a fourth and compiled a very unique 2-2 record.

2. Bob Waterfield out dueled Sammy Baugh as the Cleveland Rams defeated the Washington Redskins 15-14. The margin of defeat was Baugh's attempted pass from the end zone that hit the goal post. Based on the existing rules it was ruled a safety. Bob Waterfield threw touchdown passes of 37 yards to Jim Benton and 44 yards to Jim Gillette. Frank Filchok, who replaced an injured Sammy Baugh threw touchdown passes of 38 yards to Steve Bogardus and eight yards to Bob Seymour. Another key event occurred on Waterfield's second extra point attempt. The kicked was partially blocked, it landed on the cross bar and then fell over for another deciding point.
3. Once again the Black Knights of the Hudson totally dominated college football. John Green, Glenn Davis, Doc Blanchard, Joe Seckey and DeWitt Coulter were All American selections. The team's biggest victories were over Notre Dame, 48-0, Pennsylvania, 61-0 and Navy, 33-13. It was a special year for Doc Blanchard as he won the Heisman, Maxwell, Walter Camp and Sullivan Awards.
4. DePaul won the NIT with a 71-54 victory over Bowling Green before 18,161 fans at the Garden. George Mikan scored 34 points as he easily out dueled big Don Otten.
5. Oklahoma A. and M. defeated NYU 49-45 to win the NCAA title before 18,034 fans at the Garden.

## The Illustrated Press

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Bob Kurland led the way for the Aggies with 22 points.

6. Just two days later Oklahoma A. and M. defeated DePaul 52-44 in a Red Cross benefit game before 18,158 fans at the Garden. Bob Kurland scored 14 points, while George Mikan got into foul trouble and scored only 9 points.
7. The Most Valuable Player Awards were given to American League - Hal Newhouser and National League - Phil Cavaretta.
10. Montreal had a 38-8-4 season's record, but their success did not carry over to the Stanley Cup Playoffs as Toronto defeated Detroit in seven games. Montreal regular season success can be attributed to the fact that they had the three highest scorers in the league; Elmer Lach, 26-54-80, Maurice Richard, 50-23-73 and Toe Blake, 29-38-67. In addition to their "Punch Line," the Canadians also had Bill Duman, the best goalie in the league.
2. The best boxers in the final year of the war were. Joe Louis (HW), Gus Lesnevich (LHW), Tony Zale (MW), Bob Montgomery (LW) Beau Jack (LW), Jake LaMotta (WW), Ray Robinson (WW) and Willie Pep (FW).

Some of America's greatest music would come out of the final year of the war:

1. Rum and Coca Cola
2. Sentimental Journey
3. There, I've Said it Again
4. Till the End of Time
5. White Christmas
6. It's Been a Long, Long Time
7. Accentuate the Positive
8. Dream
9. I'm Beginning to see the light
10. On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe
11. Along the Navajo Trail

The following radio shows premiered in 1945:

1. The Saint
2. This is Your F.B.I.
3. Rogue's Gallery
4. Rocky Jordan
5. Queen for a Day
6. Bride and Grooms
7. Philo Vance

Some of radio's more popular shows were :

1. Break the Bank
2. Meet the Press
3. The Green Hornet
4. The Jack Benny Show
5. The Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy Show
6. The Great Gildersleeve
7. Fibber McGee and Molly

8. The Shadow
9. Nick Carter
10. The Lone Ranger

Your 1945 budget might include the following items:

1. New House - \$4,625
2. New car - \$1,025
3. Monthly rent - \$60
4. Annual tuition to Harvard - \$420
5. Movie ticket - \$.50
6. Gasoline - \$.15
7. Postage stamp - \$.03
8. Loaf of fresh baked bread - \$.09
9. A dozen eggs - \$.22
10. Average annual income - \$2,390

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079 - HOPALONG CASSIDY (104)  
041 - IN THE NAME IN THE LAW (06)  
030 - JACK BENNY (10)  
022 - JIMMY DURANTE (36)  
020 - JUBILEE SHOW (10)  
077 - LAND OF THE LOST (04)  
054 - LET GEORGE DO IT (82)  
081 - LES MISERABLES (08)  
078 - LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE (08)  
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056 - LUX RADIO THEATER (57)  
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052 - MUTUAL RADIO THEATRE (35)  
053 - MUTUAL RADIO THEATRE (33)  
046 - MYSTERY IS MY HOBBY (62)  
050 - NBC UNIVERSIY THEATER (07)  
034 - NIGHTFALL (15)  
026 - ONE MAN'S FAMILY (339)  
050 - OTRC'S RADIO SHOWS (1-9)  
019 - PLANET MAN (76)  
047 - RADIO CANADA INTERNATIONAL (04)  
024 - SCREEN DIRECTOR'S PLAYHOUSE (53)  
031 - SEARS RADIO THEATER (41)  
025 - STRAIGHT ARROW (09)  
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080 - THEATER ROYAL (08)  
047 - VANISHING POINT (04)  
039 - VIC AND SADE (58)  
035 - WINSTON CHURCHILL SPEECHES

## The Adventures of SAM SPADE

by MARTIN GRAMS Jr.

(Continued from last issue)

Just one year after his "Sam Spade" debut, Howard Duff found himself under personal contract to Mark Hellinger, movie producer. His first screen role as "Soldier" in Hellinger's production of *Brute Force*, had rated him star material from critics throughout the country. He received on-screen credit as "radio's Sam Spade." Even when Duff was given offers for movie roles, he never gave up the radio gig, often making long trips to multiple studios so he could juggle both acting mediums.

The enormous success of the Sam Spade radio program, spawned a comic strip series. A short-lived series of single-page comic strips appeared in the newspapers beginning the summer of 1947, entitled *The Adventures of Sam Spade*. The strip (in color) was authored by artist Lou Fine, and subtitled "The Case of the Box-Car Bandit." The weekly feature was a tie-in with the radio program, and featured the likeness of Howard Duff as Sam Spade. Wildroot also sponsored the comic strip, which only lasted a few months.

On the July 20, 1947 broadcast of the radio series, Effie (played by Lurene Tuttle) rustled about through the newspapers and brought to Sam's attention her discovery of the comic strip, which she saw in the San Francisco Examiner. Sam, of course, isn't getting any residuals or royalties, but shrugs the matter off quickly when Effie prefers a little romance at his desk.

This was not the first time the Sam Spade character appeared in the form of a comic. In 1946, Feature Books (David McKay Publications) issued a comic book (issue #48) adapted from the Dashiell Hammett novel, *The Maltese Falcon*. The artist was Rodlow Willard.

The popularity of the Sam Spade character caused a number of radio cross-overs. On the evening of December 5, 1946, William Spier marked a highlight on his *Suspense* program when he offered a spooky drama entitled "The House in Cypress Canyon." The tale concerned a real estate agent who invites a friend of his, a detective named "Sam," to listen to a transcription made by a young couple who just purchased their new home. The tale involved a werewolf that howls at night. While the last name of the detective is not given, the actor playing the role is Howard Duff. This was one of William Spier's in-jokes.

## The Illustrated Press

Though subject of debate on the world wide web (accessible via the Internet), whether or not it was Sam Spade on that particular *Suspense* episode, the fact remains that Spier arranged for Duff to play the role of a detective named Sam and most likely, to avoid paying royalties for an additional Sam Spade broadcast, avoided using the "Spade" name during the broadcast. "The House in Cypress Canyon" is now considered by old-time radio fans as one of the 10 best episodes of the *Suspense* program, and one of the 10 most frightening horror radio broadcasts of all time.

Howard Duff did assist other radio programs spoof the Sam Spade character on variety/comedies. On the October 22, 1947 broadcast of *Philco Radio Time*, starring Bing Crosby, guest Clifton Webb starred as "Clifton Web: Private Face, Eyes, Ears, Nose and Throat of Crime." Howard Duff appeared in the middle of the skit as Sam Spade. On the January 24, 1948 broadcast of *Joan Davis Time*, Joan falls asleep, and dreams she is involved with a caper with private detective Sam Spade, also played by Howard Duff. On the February 10, 1949 broadcast of *Maxwell House Coffee Time*, George Burns and Gracie help Sam Spade, played by Howard Duff, solve the murder of a shady character named Mr. Benson. Comedian Henry Morgan also used a Sam Spade-like bit in his radio program more than once. His character was "Ham Spade, Private Eye" and in one episode, "Ham Spade, Private Orb"

### THE YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR CONNECTION

In early 1949, Gil Doud began scripting for the radio program, *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*. Borrowing a few of the plot lines and motives from episodes of *Sam Spade*, Doud rewrote the stories to fit the *Johnny Dollar* mold. Two episodes from the program's first season on the network, however, scripted by Gil Doud, spoofed the *Maltese Falcon* caper to a tee.

"The Case of the Slow Boat From China," broadcast February 25, 1949, Johnny Dollar, an insurance investigator, visits Singapore to help expedite a shipment of tin, only to meet up with suspicious and shady characters all searching for the mysterious "it." One of the shady individuals sounds like Casper Gutman, and in one scene, Johnny comments that "Your mother must have been frightened by Sydney Greenstreet."

"The Disappearance of Twelve Apex Cabs," broadcast July 24, 1949, definitely contains shades of *The Maltese Falcon*, and the *Sam Spade* radio program. The episode was subtitled, "Who Took the Taxis for a Ride?" Many of the *Sam Spade* radio broadcasts feature a humorous subtitle, courtesy of the script writers. Numerous shady characters are once again in search of a valuable artifact,

this time referred to as "The Scarlet Madonna." One of the individuals searching for the artifact, bears resemblance to Sydney Greenstreet's character, and is named "Fat Stuff."

The *Maltese Falcon* formula was reused in *The Commonwealth Tankard*, broadcast August 10, 1947. A valuable antique known as "The Commonwealth Tankard" is missing and numerous people are after the same item, resorting to any means to acquire the trinket. Among the suspects is Patience Cromwell, another version of Brigid O'Shaughnessy, who steals the package from Spade.

In "The Cinderella Caper," broadcast September 14, 1947, Spade is hired to escort Ella Pryor, winner of the Cinderella Contest, to the Cinderella costume ball at the Belvedere Ballroom where she will be crowned Miss Cinderella Plastex of 1947. The entire event is hosted by a Shoe Manufacturing Company. At the ball, Spade stumbles upon the murdered body of J.K. Grimm, and Ella turns up missing. A plastic slipper is found at the scene of the crime. Spade, figuring the entire concept is nutty, forgets about the kidnapped girl, and walks away. At his office the next day, the detective finds a classified in the newspaper, asking for Spade to return the plastic slipper in exchange for the missing girl.

Spade learns that the advertising agency that insured the whole publicity stunt stands to lose a million dollars unless Ella is found before the newspapers catch wind of the kidnapping. Spade visits Ella's house, meets her wicked stepsisters, boyfriend and stepmother and learns they are holding the girl hostage. In the meantime, Effie accidentally leaves the plastic slipper near the heater and the shoe melts, revealing \$50,000 worth of diamonds.

Spade arranges for a representative of the advertising agency, and Ella's evil boyfriend, to visit him late at night in his office to clear the whole matter up. Spade steps aside as the men exchange their differences with gunfire, for the same reason one of them killed J.K. Grimm - ownership of the diamonds. Both men die from their wounds. Ella, no longer a hostage of her evil kin, is shocked by Spade's methods.

ELLA: You didn't kill those people, did you, Mr. Spade?  
SPADE: No, but I didn't save them.  
ELLA: I'll bet you would have if you could.  
SPADE: That's something I have no way of knowing, Sweetheart. It really is.

Sam hands her the diamonds and orders her to leave town quickly and quietly.

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## The Illustrated Press

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Diamonds, naturally, are the motive for murder in numerous episodes. In "The Caper With Eight Diamonds," broadcast November 23, 1947, Professor Raymond Rivers employs Sam to find eight diamonds that were stolen from his laboratory. He was experimenting on staining diamonds, a procedure that would be worth millions - only if his experiment is a success. But the professor won't be able to prove it unless they are recovered. When the professor is found dead the next day, Sam suspects foul play.

DUNDY: Well, the way it looks, Sam, is that the Professor's death was really a suicide.  
SPADE: Sure, that's the way it was supposed to look. Only it wasn't. It was murder.  
DUNDY: It's always murder. Can't you get mixed up in a simple suicide for once?

After Sam recovers the diamonds, he learns that the Professor's wife had taken out an insurance policy and was his sole heir. She had gotten away with murdering her first husband, and having cashed in on the life insurance once, made a second attempt.

### THE DETECTIVE DOESN'T ALWAYS WIN

By 1949, Wildroot continued as sponsor for the program, satisfied with the results for which they were paying, and CBS had another radio program in their prime-time lineup of which they could be proud. But like many successful radio programs, the network was not without complications.

In 1930, Judge Learned Hand suggested in a court ruling that fictional characters, as well as the plot to a literary property, could be copyrighted. Warner Bros. Studio, having filmed three previous versions of *The Maltese Falcon*, used Hand's ruling as the basis for laying claim to the ownership of the novel, believing it owned all the rights to the story and the characters contained within. Dashiell Hammett and Alfred A. Knopf, the publisher of *The Maltese Falcon*, sold the movie studio the exclusive rights to the story in movies, radio, and television. Naturally, the studio assumed they owned the entire property.

Years later, in 1946, both Hammett and Knopf sold the exclusive right to produce a radio version of the Sam Spade character, to the American Broadcasting Company (transferred to the Columbia Broadcasting System shortly after). After hearing the broadcasts over CBS, Warner Brothers then sued Hammett, Knopf, and the radio network, claiming that they owned the exclusive rights to the Sam Spade character under their prior contract with Hammett.

The studio contended that the radio show was an unauthorized use of the character, and sued the studio under the grounds of copyright infringement. Hammett argued that Warner Bros. had purchased only the motion-picture rights. Since the movie studio would not back down, the case was dragged to court while the radio program continued its weekly course.

Known as "The Sam Spade Case," the studios, Warner Bros. Pictures Inc. and the Columbia Broadcasting System, battled over the ownership to the Sam Spade character for years. The legal heads of CBS were used to handling infringement suits from outside parties, so *Warner Bros. Pictures v. Columbia Broadcasting System* (9th Cir. 1954) 216 F.2d 945, 951 was nothing new to the network.

In 1949, a New York court decided in favor of Warner Bros. Legal council for CBS continued to fight the ruling. In 1954, three years after the radio program ceased broadcast, the Ninth Circuit Court held that Hammett had not granted Warner Bros. the exclusive right to the character of Sam Spade. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals covered a substantial part of the movie and broadcasting industry. "The characters were vehicles for the story told," it said, "and the vehicles did not go with the sale of the story."

*(To be continued in the next issue)*

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## BEING THERE: Collecting Radio Broadcast Admission Tickets

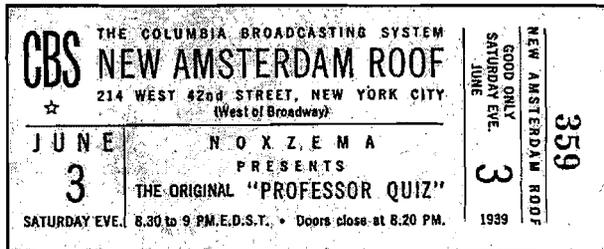
By RICK PAYNE (All Rights Reserved 2007)

*During the golden age of radio, networks and sponsors invited the general public to attend live performances of many popular programs. For the performers, the presence of the studio audience provided encouragement, laughter and appreciation. For the audience, the experience was an unforgettable opportunity to see their favorite entertainers at work. Tickets from some broadcasts survive today . . . waiting for collectors like me.*

This month, we take a look at audience tickets for some of radio's most important quiz programs. The idea of turning brains into bucks is nothing new . . . but it certainly was in 1936, when the first program aired. Since then, quiz shows have proven to endure through scandals and saturation. Americans just can't resist the notion of reaping rewards for answering a few simple questions.

## The Illustrated Press

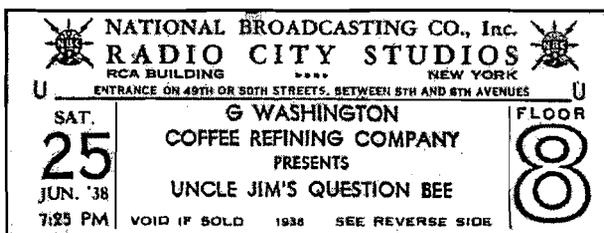
Tickets for most radio quiz shows are plentiful, and you can build a nice collection very quickly. I have over 160 different series represented in my collection . . . so let's take a look at some of them!



The original *Professor Quiz* was, indeed, the original. CBS launched the first national radio quiz show in 1936. The Professor, a man named Craig Earl, started a revolution by offering cash prizes to contestants. To be more precise (and certainly more theatrical), he offered twenty-five silver dollars . . . and the clink of the coins could be heard across the land. The stroke of genius was the decision to offer a similar prize to listeners who submitted questions deemed worthy of use on the broadcasts.

We've mentioned the New Amsterdam Roof studio in previous articles, for it was used by NBC as early as 1930 (*Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*). Several CBS programs originated from the roof in the late 1930s and early 1940s. This 1939 example for *Professor Quiz* uses the ticket layout favored for many CBS Manhattan-based programs from 1936 to 19\_\_\_. Noxzema was preceded as sponsor by the George Washington Coffee Refining Company, which coincidentally sponsored the *Sherlock Holmes* series.

While the Professor was the original, today more people remember his NBC rival *Doctor I.Q.*, *The Mental Banker*, who took to the airwaves just two months before the date on this 1939 ticket. That action prompted CBS to declare their program to be "the Original" as noted on the ticket. The Doctor (Lew Valentine) challenged studio audience members to stump him, and the declaration "I have a lady in the balcony, Doctor" became one of radio's classic phrases. *Doctor I.Q.* outlived *Professor Quiz* on the air by many years, and even spawned a spinoff for children called *Doctor I.Q., Jr.* in 1950. Alas, I've had no luck finding tickets to either version.



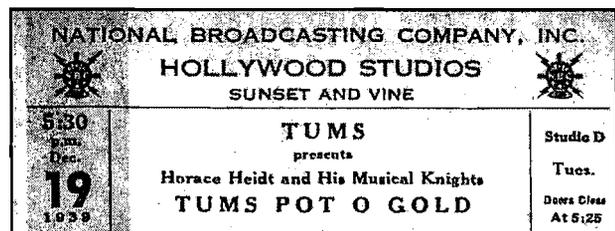
*Illustrated Press 10*

The good people at George Washington Coffee weren't content to sponsor only one successful radio quiz show. Based on the success of *Professor Quiz*, the company quickly bankrolled a second national quiz program to air on another network. *Uncle Jim's Question Bee* took to the Blue Network airwaves in September of 1936. It briefly moved to CBS before returning to the Blue Network through the series end in 1941.

Whereas *Professor Quiz* challenged random studio audience members with boom or bust based on a single question, the *Question Bee* format featured the now-familiar format of selected contestants accumulating points throughout the program. The person with the most points won the day.

"Uncle Jim" was originally Jim McWilliams, an ex-vaudevillian who found a brief burst of fame with this new quiz format. McWilliams went on to host similar shows, including the *Colgate Ask-It Basket* and *Correction Please*.

When McWilliams moved on, Bill Slater replaced him . . . but keeping the moniker "Uncle Jim." Among many other radio assignments, Slater was a moderator for the original *Meet the Press* series.



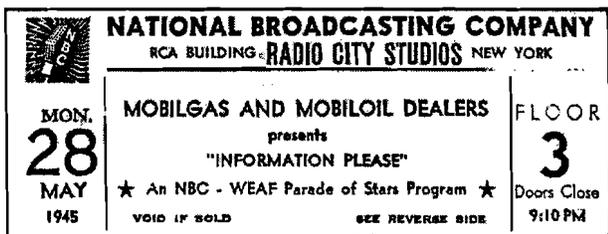
Here's a great looking ticket from 1939 for the first radio quiz to offer big prize money: the *Tums Pot O Gold* show, hosted by Ben Grauer. The show premiered on September 26, 1939 and lasted less than two years, but the \$1,000 minimum prize created a national sensation. To win, all you had to do was answer your phone.

Not unlike today's *American Idol*, the *Tums Pot O Gold* was masterful at stretching the suspense. Most of the half-hour program was dedicated to musical interludes featuring the Horace Heidt band. Between songs, Grauer would spin a wheel of fortune to ultimately select a specific person from a city telephone directory. Near the end of the program, the fateful call would be placed. If no one answered, the jackpot for the following week would go up.

Like many fad shows, the momentum wasn't sustainable. When questions arose about the integrity of the show, producers couldn't stop the bleeding. Were calls actually placed? Were numbers dialed correctly? Was it

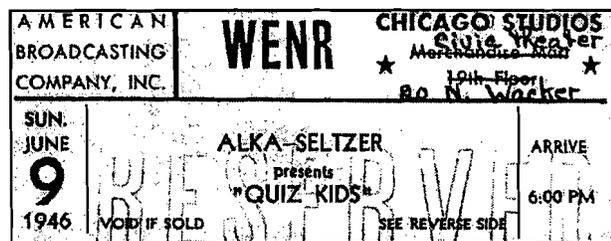
## The Illustrated Press

all a fraud? A nation of disgruntled and disappointed listeners turned the backs on the show, and it left the air quietly in June of 1941. The fame of the show makes it an important ticket to have in a collection, and the short life of the show makes it a very tough one to find!



In 1938, NBC launched *Information Please*, a unique program designed to showcase the intelligence and skill of experts and colorful characters. Many doubted the appeal of a radio show designed to make the masses feel stupid, but as it turned out the show provided a welcomed change of pace from the typical lowbrow programming of the 1930s. It wasn't for everyone, but many listeners enjoyed the banter between book critic and host Clifton Fadiman and a rotating slate of panelists. News columnist Franklin P. Adams and sportswriter John Kiernan were regulars, and were joined by a wide range of guests from all walks of life.

The show lasted ten years. This ticket is from the last run on NBC; the program switched to CBS in October and to Mutual a year later. Tickets from the latter runs are very scarce. The reference on the pictured ticket to the "Parade of Stars" is a reference to a major NBC advertising campaign. Just as Eliot Ness and his Untouchables nailed Al Capone, CBS eventually nailed NBC through income tax laws. CBS was able to lure away most of NBC's Parade of Stars in 1948 through a clever income tax scheme.

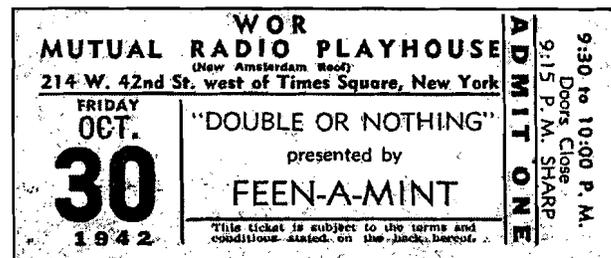


One of radio's most famous quiz programs originated from Chicago. Quiz Kids premiered on NBC's Blue Network in June of 1940. This 1946 ticket reflects the 1945 formation of the American Broadcasting Company. A few months later, the show shifted to NBC for a five-year run and concluded on CBS in 1953.

With no real prize money and no financial rewards for the listeners, Quiz Kids nevertheless captured the imag-

ination of Americans for over a decade. Some writers simply refer to it as *Information Please* in reverse. The selfless host Joe Kelly regularly acknowledged his sense of awe and admiration for the intellectual horsepower exhibited every week by children as young as seven years old. Kelly also served as host of another Chicago-based program sponsored by Alka-Seltzer, *The National Barn Dance*. The kids themselves came and went, but the story was still the same: one could no longer associate wisdom with age. Perhaps that's where our trouble started . . .

Quiz Kids tickets are in high demand, and are surprisingly scarce. The show periodically originated from venues outside Chicago. I have a 1944 ticket in my collection from a wartime military base appearance. Postcards acknowledging listener question submissions are readily available.



The strains of "Three Little Words" may resonate in your head as we view this 1942 ticket for *Double or Nothing*. This popular show allowed contestants to increase their winnings by answering consecutive questions correctly. The show lasted 15 years, and has the distinction of being one of the few shows to air on all four major networks.

But am I the only person who finds it troubling that a laxative manufacturer sponsored a show called *Double or Nothing*?

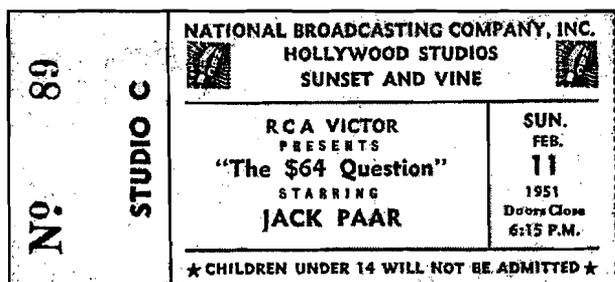
Tickets from the Mutual run of the show are pretty scarce and very desirable. Mutual's flagship station WOR aired this 1942 episode from the very popular New Amsterdam Roof studio in Manhattan, with Walter Compton serving as host. Tickets from the later NBC series are among the most common of all radio tickets. The NBC shows aired from Hollywood and met the needs of the many tourists wishing to see a live program. (Now that I think about it, both ventures were a bit of a crashshoot...)



## The Illustrated Press

Phil Baker was the main attraction of several radio shows between 1933 and 1950. His most successful venture was *Take It or Leave It*, which aired on CBS for Eversharp from 1940 to 1950. Baker was master of ceremonies from 1941 to 1947, and parlayed his success into a 1944 feature film based on the show.

From previous articles, you know that most radio broadcast admission tickets were not torn at the door. This 1944 CBS ticket is an exception...the perforated stub along the left side was intended to be taken by the usher as you entered the studio. That means that the pictured ticket is, indeed, an "unused" ticket. The Manhattan location still revolves around "take it" and "leave it" ... it's now a parking garage.



*Take It or Leave It* moved to NBC in 1947, and was retitled *The \$64 Question* in 1950. Future late-night TV legend Jack Paar handled the duties for NBC. This ticket, like the previous one, was printed with a perforated stub; in this case, it was taken by an NBC usher.

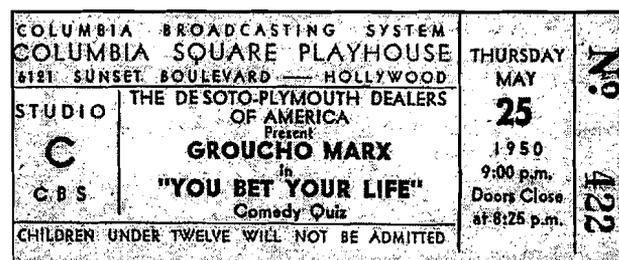
Later, of course, the stakes were raised for television when the show was repackaged as *The \$64,000 Question*. The same basic format (giving contestants a choice of taking the money and stopping the game) is still entrancing viewers on TV shows like *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and *Deal or No Deal*.



*Stop the Music!* is widely remembered as the show that Fred Allen couldn't stop. Drawing from the tactics of the *Tums Pot O Gold*, this sensational show resurrected the idea of calling listeners at home...with a twist. Instead of winning by just answering the phone, listeners had to be able to identify a song being played by the house orchestra. Subsequent questions offered the opportunity to increase winnings. Once again, it became a national craze ... for a while. The show died after four years.

*Illustrated Press 12*

The ABC program was hosted throughout the run by Bert Parks, who had found earlier radio success with *Break The Bank*. Later, he would change his "three little words" from "stop the music" to "there she is" as he presided over the Miss America pageant for 25 years.



"And now, here he is ... the one, the only ... GROUCHO!" With those words, announcer George Fenneman and a shouting audience introduced the most famous Marx brother as the undisputed master of radio's most unconventional quiz show, *You Bet Your Life*. This ticket is from the brief nine-month CBS run of the show, which started in 1947 on ABC. Later in 1950, the show switched to NBC for the duration of the series.

Creator John Guedel worked persistently to persuade Groucho Marx to give radio one more try. Despite his quick wit and legendary film career, Groucho had known little success with radio's rigid formats. The secret, Guedel realized, was to enable Groucho to improvise without a script. The advances in tape recording and editing gave him the opportunity to exploit Groucho's talent. The show moved easily to television, and remains entertaining in reruns to this day.

Tickets for *You Bet Your Life* are expensive and extremely tough to find. When an item crosses over among different bases of collectors, things can get out of hand. You'll be fortunate to find a ticket for less than a hundred bucks ... unless you know the secret word!

Well, friends, the old clock on the wall tells me that we've come to the end of another round of *Being There*. I'll be back next month with more thrilling tales of my travels and travails in tracking terrific tickets. Keep those cards and letters coming in, folks (to [oldtix@aol.com](mailto:oldtix@aol.com))!

*We've added 88 - MP3  
CDs to our Library*

—  
*See pages 6 and 7  
for Details*



**THIS IS WHAT SLAYS THEM** — Week in and week out as Garry Moore, very often amiably referred to as “Junior,” and the incomparable Durante go into their high jinks routine. This is a rare dou as both are stars in their own right, yet they blend very well together.

Whether in rehearsal or on the air Jimmy Durante and his younger associate, Garry Moore, are earthy, witty comedians to hear and to enjoy. Durante is irrepressible, running down among the musicians, bantering with the announcer and other actors on the show while Moore is a droll character who gives even Jimmy a comedy run for his money.

Umbriago! Umbriago is a sort of character, or watchword, or what you will that Durante has made famous in recent years. Just to hear Durante mouth the word is enough to make a wax image laugh. And we're not kidding.

Umbriago!

## DURANTE

**HE AND GARRY MOORE KEEP  
PACE AS OUTSTANDING DUO**



**GARRY MOORE**, co-star with Jimmy Durante on one of radio's star comedy shows, goes over script with Harry Lang and Elvia Allman. Sparkling humor requires constant revising of the script in the studio.

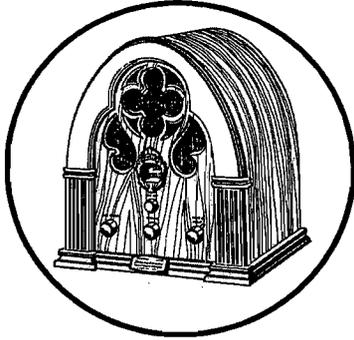


“UMBRIAGO,” cries Durante to huge Howard Petrie who tries to show Jimmy where he gets off (on the air of course). Durante's whimsicalities during rehearsals have the technicians in stitches.

*Article originally published March 1946*

# The Old Time Radio Club

73 Banner Avenue  
Lancaster, NY 14086-1930



## FIRST CLASS MAIL

