

CHUCK SCHADEN'S

NOSTALGIA NEWSLETTER

AND
RADIO
GUIDE

FROM THE HALL CLOSET • BOX 421 • MORTON GROVE, IL 60053

BOOK SIX

CHAPTER TWO

FEBRUARY, 1980



EDDIE CANTOR was a radio star for nearly 20 years. His first major appearance was with Rudy Vallee in February of 1931. Later that year he became the star of his own show, *The Chase and Sanborn Hour*. Over the years he appeared on the air for *Pebco Toothpaste*, *Texaco*, *Camel Cigarettes*, *Ipana* and *Sal Hepatica*, and *Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer*. He made an easy transition to TV in 1950 on the *Colgate Comedy Hour*.

FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY

CELEBRATE THEIR FIFTH

ANNIVERSARY FOR JOHNSON'S WAX

REPRINT FROM RADIO VARIETIES, APRIL, 1940

When letters, wires and presents began pouring into NBC studios in Hollywood weeks ahead of Fibber McGee and Molly's fifth anniversary on the air, Jim and Marian Jordan, who play the lovable comedy pair, were speechless with astonishment.

"Why Jim," commented Marian, "look at all these nice things. Now who'd have thought we'd get all these."

"Gosh," said Jim, "I never thought we had so many friends."

For the leading citizens of Wistful Vista can never get used to the idea that they have the third largest listening audience in radio. They have the same humility that marked their philosophy in the days when they did daytime serials in Chicago, before the characters, Fibber and Molly, so much as words on a radio script.

Fibber and Molly's rise to fame is as great a tribute to the American people, as it is to the comedy team. The program embodies the finest qualities of American wit. It has never made an attempt to be sensational. It has always steered clear of salacious or risqué humor. There has always been a conscious effort on the part of the whole Fibber company to keep the program clean. It has been aimed toward an "ideal American Family" and the show's success has proved that the average American family lives up to its ideal.

Growth of the program has been a constant gradual process. Five years ago when the present sponsor, Johnson's Wax, launched Fibber and Molly on the air, the broadcast caused no stir in radio circles. It was just another new radio program that had promise. At the end of the first year it was apparent that the promise was going to be fulfilled, and on its fifth anniversary, the program has so far surpassed expectations that the original "promise" has been put to shame.

The Fibber company is far from being impressed with its own importance. To watch rehearsals one would suspect the gang was there just for fun. They work together easily, enjoy a lot of sideplay, and on the whole have a good time.

Bill Thompson, who plays the Oldtimer, Horatio K. Boomer, and a variety of other characters, needs no encouragement to bring his accordion or his Scotch bagpipes to entertain the cast between readings. Hal "Gildersleeve" Peary always has a new story to dramatize. Molly and Isabel Randolph, who plays "Mrs. Upington" are always exchanging ideas for sewing or crocheting patterns.

Members of the cast are as familiar to radio listeners as the comedy stars, themselves. Don Quinn, who writes the original show, is still turning them out, week after week. Two months ago, he added an assistant, Len Levinson. Isabel Randolph has known the Jordans since the days when they all broadcast on Chicago serials. Bill Thompson is another Chicago recruit. Harlow Wilcox is as well identified with Johnson's Wax as is Fibber, himself. In fact, the agency is forever having some fan insist upon talking to Mr. Wilcox "who will know what to do for my special problem of floor waxing." Hal Peary has done his rumbly "Gildersleeve" laugh so many times on the program, he can be in any theater audience and be indentified by his guffaw.

The rise to prominence of Jim and Marian Jordan is the kind of success story to which all Americans warm. Born of modest circumstances, the pair by virtue

of hard work, intelligence, and ability, have won a place high in the current firmament of fame. In a 1940 era, which is supposedly smart and sophisticated, the Jordans and their copy book maxims have arrived at the top of the heap.



Fibber McGee and Molly

How the Jordans started in radio has been told often. They were listening one night at a friend's house to a radio, airing a program consisting mostly of jokes old Joe Miller would have been ashamed to claim. In disgust, Fibber commented:

"I could do a better job of acting than anyone on that program is doing."

"Ten dollars says you can't!" shouted the host.

Jim took the dare, and the next morning Marian and he set out for the radio station. They were used to facing vaudeville audiences, but talking into a microphone was something else again. They were scared stiff but braved it through. The audition was successful, and several weeks later, they made their debut as the O'Henry Twins. During their long term of radio apprenticeship they were known

as the Smith Family, they did children's programs, a program called Smackouts, and did a variety of other assignments.

There were bleak periods too when radio seemed to feel no need for the Jordans, and the two would pack their bags and set out on a series of one-night stands.

"Everything comes to him who waits" may be outmoded," says Fibber, "But we believe it."

"We waited ten years--and waited patiently," continues the comedian, "before anything of any consequence happened to us in radio. We worked and hoped and held tight to our convictions that things would come out all right.

"During that entire ten years, we didn't miss a single week on the air, except when stage engagements interfered. Most of our programs were over small stations with a meager listening audience. There were times without number when I wanted to toss the whole thing overboard and go back to being a machinist, or selling washing machines, or carrying the mail or doing any of the other dozen and one things I had done for a living before the radio bug started persistently nipping at Marian and me."

This anniversary doesn't mean that the two reached their peak. Since taking their broadcast to Hollywood, they have been sought after by picture studios and this Spring signed a three picture contract, with production due to start in June.

Their friends say of them, "hmm, this fifth anniversary is nothing. Wait until they're ready to celebrate their tenth."

But Fibber and Molly can't get over the fact that "all those nice people remembered us on our anniversary."

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REPRINT FROM

THE EVERYDAY ALMANAC

By Bob Perlongo

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I'm an old smoker, and have at one time or another tried all the different Smoking Tobaccos, but for a good smoke Bull Durham beats 'em all.

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(1870)

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GLENN MILLER, VERSATILE MUSIC MAKER

REPRINT FROM RADIO VARIETIES, MARCH, 1940

Glenn Miller, who leads the "band of the year" over CBS is not new to music and swing in spite of the fact that until recently his name meant very little or nothing in the realm of orchestra leaders.

Before setting out on his own, Glenn played in orchestras with such famous fellow musicians as Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Bix Beiderbecke and many others who now occupy a place in the swing fans' Hall of Fame.

While playing in various orchestras, Glenn drew a mental picture of the kind of combination he'd like to form. He spent fifteen years completing this picture and the finished product may be heard any Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday over a coast-to-coast CBS network.

Yes, Glenn spent a long time preparing for his debut, but once he made it, he shot to the top like a bullet out of a gun. He opened with his fourteen piece outfit at the Roseland-State Ballroom in Boston and shortly afterwards was signed to a recording contract. Engagements at the Meadowbrook in New Jersey and the Glenn Island Casino in New Rochelle followed and definitely established the new maestro with the dancing collegians in the East.

Glenn was born in Clarinda, Iowa on March 1, 1911. He was raised on a farm in the Dust Bowl and later his father

moved the family to a Nebraska farm completely cut off from civilization. In fact, the nearest railroad was 40 miles away.

Being isolated didn't prevent young Glenn from taking up music. His mother bought him his first trombone when he was 14 and from here on there was no stopping him.

His first instrument earned him a place in his high school orchestra and this was the start that Glenn needed. It wasn't much, but it was in an orchestra and this put ideas into his head.

Between high school and college, he made his first professional appearance with Boyd Senter's Orchestra in Denver. He stayed with Senter's band for a year and then entered the University of Colorado. The musical bug had bitten Miller too severely, however, and after two years he left college.

He set out for California where he was hired to slide his trombone for Ben Pollack. He was well liked by the Pollack fans and remained with the famous bandsman for four years. In the meantime a new Glenn Miller was created. Hereafter he was known not merely as "Glenn Miller—musician" but as "Glenn Miller—arranger."

Miller finally left Pollack's band and headed East. In New York he worked with Paul Ash at the Paramount Theatre and with Red Nichols who was leading the pit orchestra for the musical successes "Strike Up The Band" and later "Girl Crazy."

Free lance work followed, with Miller playing in such outstanding bands as Jacques Renard's, Vic Young's, Freddy Rich's, The Dorsey Brothers' and Ray Noble's. It was while working for Noble that he decided to strike out on his own. He gathered together several outstanding musicians with whom he had worked and his "band of the year" was on its way.

Although Miller's music is definitely on the swing side, he is not taboo with people who merely like to dance and not "jitter-bug." He can play it either sweet or swing and does both equally well.

Glenn's band is made up of several unique combinations. His "Saxotones"

is a five man sax section in which a clarinet takes the lead and forms the most unusual feature of the orchestra.

His "Saxotones" came into being by accident. It seems that while he was arranging for Ray Noble, a trumpeter named Pee Wee Irwin asked him to think a really unusual arrangement. Miller went to work and came up with an arrangement featuring four saxes with the trumpet lead.

Irwin left the band soon after and was replaced by Johnny Mince. Mince took over the trumpet part but played it with his clarinet! People began to comment on this unusual setup and Glenn decided that he'd put it in his own band when it formed.

Miller has never been a slave to convention. He makes his music different and the whole set-up of his personnel defies any iron clad rules. For example, his two vocalists, Marion Hutton and Ray Eberle had never sung regularly with a band until Glenn hired them. Marion's sister, Betty, and Ray's brother, Bob, are vocalists with orchestras and it was due indirectly to this fact that they found a spot with Miller's organization.

Most orchestra leaders audition dozens of singers before they will trust anyone with the vocal chores of their band, but Glenn auditioned only two, — Marion and Ray, and signed them. Marion had been pinch-hitting for her sister by singing the only song she knew at the time, "Says My Heart" with Vincent Lopez's orchestra at Saratoga Springs and later in Boston, when Glenn heard about her. He flew to Boston, heard her, and signed her the next day in New York after hearing her sing "Says My Heart" with his band.

Glenn further violated the laws of convention when he signed Ray Eberle, brother of Bob Eberle, Jimmy Dorsey's vocalist, as his male vocalist. Glenn was listening to Jimmy Dorsey's orchestra one evening in a Manhattan hotel and thought he saw Bob leaving the room. He remarked to a friend that it was odd that Bob should leave while he still had some numbers to sing. His friend told Miller that it wasn't Bob but his brother Ray who had left the hotel. Miller remembered this and when the time came for him to set his own band, he called Bob and asked him if Ray could sing.

Bob didn't know but asked Miller to give him a shot at it, anyway. Ray flew in to New York for an audition and was signed in short order. Marion and Ray did not have extensive experience as



GLENN MILLER

singers with orchestras but that didn't stop Miller from giving them a chance in the big time.

Another unusual feature of Glenn's orchestra is his novel method of playing medleys. It's called "Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue." It's made up of a tune that was hitting its stride a decade or so ago, any popular tune of the day, a song borrowed from another leader's library such as "Marie" from Tommy Dorsey and any popular blues tune.

Yes, Glenn Miller is an amazing young man who is enjoying amazing success as a result of his amazing ideas.

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THOSE WERE THE DAYS • WNIB- FM 97.1

SATURDAY AFTERNOONS • 1:00 UNTIL 5:00

February is Jack Benny Month!

Once again we devote our February programming to the considerable talents of Jack Benny. If he were still with us, there's no doubt that he would be celebrating his 39th birthday on February 14th.

Jack Benny is gone, but certainly not forgotten . . . and so we'll celebrate all month long on **THOSE WERE THE DAYS** with four special Saturday afternoons devoted to **BENNY ON THE AIR** . . . offering a good cross-section of Jack Benny entertainment.

Here are the candles on Jack Benny's 39th birthday cake:

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd
FRIAR'S CLUB ROAST (1951) Fred Allen offers a "recap" of Jack Benny's life on the occasion of Jack's 20th anniversary in radio. (6:05)
THE CHEVROLET PROGRAM (6-23-33) starring Jack Benny with Mary Livingstone, James Melton, and Frank Black and the

JACK BENNY

WEAF
10-10:30 P. M.
EVERY SUNDAY
CHEVROLET
PROGRAM

Orchestra. The last program of the 1932-33 season displays how topical Benny and his cast were in the early days of the Depression. Chevrolet, NBC-Red. (7:25; 7:25; 13:00)
COMMAND PERFORMANCE (1940s) Deanna Durbin and Jack Benny are co-hosts for this variety show for military audiences. Entertainment by Martha Tilton, Tommy Dorsey, James Cagney, Ginger Rogers. AFRS. (9:10; 9:20; 9:35)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (12-16-46) "Killer Kates" starring Jack Benny, Gail Patrick, Alan Reed and Gale Gordon. Jack plays a would-be comedian who bombed out in night clubs but becomes the toast of Broadway in a serious role as a gangster, playing to packed houses. AFRS rebroadcast. (14:50; 16:30; 18:30)

IT'S TIME TO SMILE (11-25-42) Eddie Cantor stars with regulars Harry Von Zell, Bert Gordon (the Mad Russian), Dinah Shore and Hattie McDaniel. Guest is Jack Benny who tries to interest Cantor in a big business deal. Ipana, Sal Hepatica, NBC. (19:35; 8:40)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (1-20-52) Guest George Burns joins regulars Mary Livingstone, Phil Harris, Dennis Day, Rochester, Don Wilson, Mel Blanc. This is one of four related Benny programs where Jack tries to get exposure for the song he has written. (Other programs in this sequence will be presented throughout the month of February on Those Were The Days.) AFRS rebroadcast. (11:30; 11:45)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9th
JACK BENNY PROGRAM (2-13-55) The gang plans a surprise party for Jack on his birthday. Mary Livingstone, Rochester, Dennis Day, Bob Crosby, Don Wilson, the Sportsmen. CBS, Lucky Strike Cigarettes. (11:30; 14:45)
JACK BENNY STORY (1975) Jack Benny reminisces about his career, his violin, money and timing. Includes excerpts from famous Benny characterizations and sketches. (14:45; 5:50; 9:35; 5:20; 17:35; 12:10)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (1-10-37) Mary Livingstone, Kenny Baker, Andy Devine. Jack is upset about remarks made on last week's Fred Allen Show. Andy joins in for a "Buck Benny" sketch. Jell-O, NBC-Red. (6:55; 7:30; 13:50)

JUBILEE (1940s) Host Ernie Whitman welcomes Erskine Hawkins, Effie Smith, Jack Benny and Rochester. AFRS variety show for military audiences. (14:48; 14:20)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (2-17-52) Mary, Dennis, Rochester, Phil Harris, Joe Kearns, Mel Blanc, Don Wilson. Jack dreams he's at Carnegie Hall where the New York Symphony will play his song. Second of four related "Benny's song" programs. AFRS rebroadcast. (12:40; 10:40)

THOSE WERE THE DAYS • WNIB- FM 97.1

SATURDAY AFTERNOONS • 1:00 UNTIL 5:00

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16th

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (10-29-44) Jack and the whole gang — Mary, Don, Phil, Rochester — welcome singer Martha Tilton and comedian Fred Allen and the cast of Allen's Alley: John Doe, Mrs. Nussbaum, Socrates Mulligan, Falstaff Openshaw. AFRS rebroadcast. (8:40; 6:20; 11:40)

EDDIE CANTOR SHOW (1-30-47) It's Eddie's 55th birthday and joining in the celebration are Jack Benny, Peter Lind Hayes and Ralph Edwards. Eddie wants to borrow money from Jack to start a new radio network! Harry Von Zell, Cookie Fairchild and the orchestra. Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer, NBC. (11:50; 13:19; 3:00)

CHUCK SCHADEN interviews **MEL BLANC** in a conversation recorded in Chicago on April 26, 1971. Mel talks about his radio career including some happy times with Jack Benny. (11:30)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-20-49) Guest Van Johnson joins the gang. Jack sets up a double date with Gertrude and Mable (Bea Benaderet and Sara Berner) and the foursome go to Ciro's where Mel Blanc is the headwaiter. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (13:40; 14:15)

MAIL CALL (1940s) Jack Benny has a date with four glamor girls to see the preview of "The Horn Blows at Midnight." Claudette Colbert, Jinx Falkenberg, Paulette Goddard and Jeanne Crain join in the fun with Eddie "Rochester" Anderson and Frank Nelson in this Armed Forces Radio variety program. (10:40; 8:55; 11:00)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (5-16-48) Actor Robert Taylor substitutes for Jack who has gone to New York City. Mary, Phil, Rochester, Don, the Sportsmen and Frank Nelson. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (8:35; 10:45; 7:05)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-2-52) The third program in the "Jack's song" sequence of shows. Jack and the gang are in Palm Springs for the opening of a new golf course. Guests include Danny Kaye, Frank Sinatra, George Burns and Groucho Marx. AFRS rebroadcast. (11:45; 10:25)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-26-53) Backstage at the Kern Theatre in San Francisco where Jack and his cast are appearing. Guest Fred Allen visits and they reminisce about the good old days in Vaudeville. AFRS rebroadcast. (10:00; 13:45)



JACK BENNY

CAMPBELL PLAYHOUSE (3-24-40) "June Moon," the hit Broadway comedy by Ring Lardner and George S. Kaufman comes to radio as Orson Welles, star and producer of the Campbell series, presents Jack Benny as a song writer from Schenectady who goes to the big city of New York to write a romantic hit. Cast includes Welles, Benny Rubin, Bea Benaderet, Lee Patrick. Campbell Soups, CBS (28:00; 30:30)

ACADEMY AWARDS (1944) George Jessel is in front of Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood to welcome celebrities to the 1943 Academy Awards ceremonies. KFWB, Hollywood. (9:30; 10:20; 7:30)

ACADEMY AWARDS (1944) Jack Benny hosts the 1943 Oscar Awards show from the stage of Grauman's Chinese Theatre. Ken Carpenter announces. (9:45; 9:50; 4:00)

HERE'S TO VETERANS (11-1-47) Jack Benny, Rochester and Mary Livingstone appear on behalf of the Veteran's Administration. Jack attempts to fix his phonograph. (13:25)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-23-52) Jack tries to sing his song at the Academy Awards ceremonies. Last program in our "Jack's song" sequence. Mary, Phil, Don, Dennis, Rochester, Mel Blanc, Sheldon Leonard, Frank Nelson. AFRS rebroadcast. (12:15; 11:40)

NORTH WEST FEDERAL SAVINGS COMING ATTRACTIONS

If you have a fondness for the "good old days" then you're invited to enjoy some nostalgic programs at the North West Federal Savings Community Center Auditorium, 4901 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago. There's plenty of free parking in the large lot on Dakin Street at the rear of the NWF office or CTA transportation will take you to the door. Enter the Community Center thru the parking lot. Visitors who arrive by CTA should walk south along the side of the NWF building, then turn west to the entrance to the Center.

Most programs begin at 8 p.m. and doors to the auditorium open at 7:30 p.m. Proceeds are donated to recognized charities.

ADVANCE TICKETS to these events, unless otherwise specified, are available at any office of North West Federal Savings.

Here's the line-up of coming attractions for the weeks ahead:

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd

KID MILLIONS (1934) Eddie Cantor, Ethel Merman, Ann Southern, George Murphy. Samuel Goldwyn presents an elaborate Cantor musical about Eddie inheriting a fortune, having the time of his life. Songs include "When My Ship Comes In." (\$1.25)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9th

THE HORN BLOWS AT MIDNIGHT (1945) Jack Benny stars with Alexis Smith, Allyn Joslyn, Reginald Gardner, Guy Kibbee, Franklyn Pangborn, Margaret Dumont, Bobby Blake, Mike Mazurki, Truman Bradley, John Brown. Jack plays an angel sent to destroy Earth with Gabriel's horn. It's Benny's most talked-about film, now a classic comedy-fantasy. PLUS: Newsreel and Phil Harris short, "Double or Nothing." (\$2.00)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15th

THE TINGLER (1959) starring Vincent Price in William Castle's horror-fantasy. Price discovers the nerve in the spine that controls the emotion of fright and he goes around menacing everyone! PLUS: Woody Woodpecker cartoon; Speaking of Animals: "Going Hollywood;" and the beginning of the Republic serial "Zorro's Fighting Legion" (1938) starring Reed Hadley. Chapter 1 - "The Golden God." (\$2.00)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd

ALWAYS LEAVE THEM LAUGHING (1949) Milton Berle stars with Virginia Mayo, Ruth Roman, Bert Lahr, Alan Hale, Jerome Cowan, Ransom Sherman, Iris Adrian. Made at the peak of Uncle Milt's popularity, this is the nearly-biographical story of a comedian who rides to the top on everybody else's jokes. PLUS Selected Short Subjects: Newsreel; Vincent



Lopez and his Orchestra; "Zorro's Fighting Legion" Chapter 2 "The Flaming 'Z'." (\$1.25)

SATURDAY, MARCH 1st

RIDE 'EM COWBOY (1932) starring John Wayne and Ruth Hall. An early shoot-'em-up with the Duke. **BLAZING GUNS (1943)** starring Hoot Gibson and Ken Maynard. Exciting Monogram western. PLUS Selected Short Subjects: "Pony Express Days" (1935) with George Reeves as Bill Cody (in color); "Zorro's Fighting Legion" Chapter 3 - "Decending Doom." (\$1.25)

SATURDAY, MARCH 8th

GO INTO YOUR DANCE (1935) Al Jolson and Ruby Keeler star with Glenda Farrell, Benny Rubin, Phil Regan, Barton MacLane, Akim Tamaroff, Helen Morgan, Patsy Kelly. Al and Ruby sing and dance their way into your heart. Great musical score includes "About A Quarter to Nine." PLUS Selected Short Subjects: "Hollywood Newsreel of

1934;" Cartoon: "We're In The Money"; "Zorro's Fighting Legion" Chapter 4 - "The Bridge of Peril." (\$1.25)

SATURDAY, MARCH 29th - 8 P.M.

SUNDAY, MARCH 30th - 2 P.M.

A SALUTE TO BUSTER CRABBE, the screen's original "Flash Gordon" starring BUSTER CRABBE, in person! The star of numerous movie serials in the 1930's and 1940's will appear in person to talk about his career, meet fans, answer questions and sign autographs. Film clips will provide a visual trip to his exciting past when Buster starred on the silver screen as Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers and Tarzan. Two identical performances will be held at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 29 and at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 30. (\$3.00)

FRANK CAPRA FILM FESTIVAL

The films will be shown in North West Federal's Irving Park Community Center auditorium at 8:00 p.m. Doors open at 7:30. Donation is \$2.00 per person with proceeds going to recognized charities.

Advance tickets are not available for the Friday Night Film Festival; purchase admission at the door.

Here's the line-up of great Capra films:

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1st - MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN (1936) Gary Cooper, Jean Arthur, George Bancroft, Lionel Stander. A small town boy inherits millions and is swept into life in the big city.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8th - LOST HORIZON (1937) The original release version of the film as it was first presented in theatres. Starring Ronald Colman, Jane Wyatt, Edward Everett Horton, Thomas Mitchell, Sam Jaffe, it's the classic Shangri-La story.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15th - YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU (1938) James Stewart, Jean Arthur, Edward Arnold star in classic film version of the play by George S. Kaufman. A millionaire wants to buy an eccentric family's house in order to erect a huge office building.

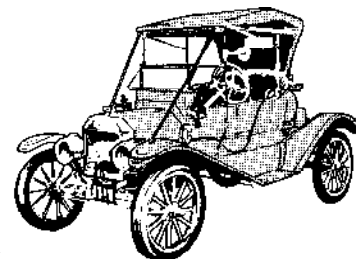
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd - MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON (1939) James Stewart, Jean Arthur, Claude Rains, Edward Arnold, Thomas Mitchell. An idealistic young Senator learns about Washington politics.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29th - MEET JOHN DOE (1941) Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck, Edward Arnold, Walter Brennan. A minor-league baseball player agrees to commit suicide to protest "the state of civilization."

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LUX RADIO THEATER FACES A CRISIS

REPRINT from TUNE IN, March, 1943

Back in the early thirties, New York was the undisputed center of broadcasting, Hollywood was the mecca for movies and there was little to link the two. Then, suddenly in 1931, radio executives learned that the best way to stimulate a radio show that was losing popularity was to book a guest star from the movie ranks in Hollywood. It remained, however, for Cecil B. DeMille to develop this piece of radio showmanship to its logical conclusion—a show built in Hollywood, featuring Hollywood stars in radio-adapted motion picture scripts.

That Lux Radio Theater should become the ultimate in dramatic shows, topping all popular polls year after year, was a foregone conclusion. Its stars are paid \$5,000 per performance; motion pictures' best script writers do the stories; the show itself, running a full hour, is exactly a half-hour longer than any other dramatic programs heard on the networks.

Cecil Blount DeMille likes everything good and big. When he was producing movies back in the lush, silent-film days, he thought nothing of hiring ten thousand extras for a mob scene or construct-

ing sets covering acres of space at the cost of a large fortune. He made lavish bathtub sets a cinema institution and, starting in a barn which he shared with a cow and a horse in the primitive Hollywood of 1912, he promoted himself by colossal (which is the word for DeMille) ingenuity to an office as lavish as one of Nero's drawing rooms.

No one expected DeMille to do anything trivial when he turned to radio eight years ago. He didn't. The show to which he became advisor became the biggest spectacle on the air. He uses top-flight talent, picks his plays with an eye to the public's likes and dislikes (among the three hundred plays he has brought to the air have been everything from "Peg

O' My Heart" to "The Awful Truth") and produces them with master showmanship. When he declaims at the outset of each broadcast, "This is Cecil B. DeMille speaking from Hollywood," it is with a solemn reverence, much as if the lines were, "This is God, speaking from heaven."

But because Lux Radio Theater is built on just such a colossal DeMille for-

STAR FAMINE CONFRONTS CECIL B. DeMILLE SHOW FEATURING HOLLYWOOD'S GREAT



CECIL B. DEMILLE, SPEAKING FROM HOLLYWOOD

mula—big movie names in big movie plays—the program faces for the duration of the war one of the most vital problems on the airways—a shortage of movie talent. The problem grows out of ceiling set upon salaries and the fact that DeMille radio stars are under contract, first, to the movies. Motion picture producers feel that if their stars can only earn so much in a year, then they should devote their full, limited time to motion pictures. If the ceiling salary act is applied to these stars, then radio will see less and less of them during the coming months of war. For a show like Lux Radio Theater, it can amount to a temporary disaster.

Alternatives to such disaster are (1) possibility that Congress may set no ceiling in the case of such talent on the theory that current taxation program actually takes most of the salary beyond the proposed \$67,000 limit and (2) that actors and actresses, who love acting, will want to keep their names before the public and accept small fees for radio appearances in preference to doing no radio work.

The Lux Radio Theater is not only good on the air, but also in the studio. Often DeMille turns up in his working clothes from the movie lots—pastel green jacket with matching vest, riding breeches, high tan boots. The performers, too, are frequently striking in appearance. Most of them appear in slacks, Barbara Stanwyck, a frequent guest, never wears shoes.

A stickler for what he calls sincerity on the air, DeMille thinks nothing of sending his agents out to pick up a pack of beagles needed for a scene. At other times, he calls upon the actors, themselves, to supply sound effects. During the radio presentation of "Disraeli," George Arliss cut loose with some shrill peacock screeches to the delight of DeMille, who couldn't duplicate them in the sound-effects department. Stars, too, are often as temperamental as their high radio fee will permit. Paul Muni has to listen to violin music before he can face a mike. Joan Crawford is ordinarily so frightened on her infrequent radio appearances that she has to do her acting sitting down.

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Two Blocks North of Dempster

ELGIN — Today I received a cassette recording of that fantastic and wonderful ESCAPE presentation of "A Shipment of Mute Fate." I watched my twin sons, who are now just twelve, held transfixed by the story, as I was once many years ago when I was exactly their age, and the story was broadcast for the first time. Thank you, Sir, for your weekly broadcasts, and thanks even more for helping a middle-aged school teacher recapture a wonder long lost to him, the joy of imagination. This feeling that grew as I watched the faces of my sons is something impossible to describe; it was of worth beyond measure. —**PETER M. KUSNIERZ.**

CHICAGO — I have been a regular listener since I saw a small item about your program in the Daily News a few months after you went on the air from Evanston (in 1970). Your program is a refreshing change from what passes nowadays for entertainment. And your shows are awfully good radio to "wash floors or windows by!" I will not touch that dial! —**TOM MACHURA.**

EVANSTON — I just wanted to write and tell you how great I think your Saturday afternoon radio show is. I am a 16 year old and I listen whenever I don't work. And when I am not home, I set a timer to my stereo and tape deck and cut out the commercials later. I know exactly when to set the timer because I subscribe to the Nostalgia Newsletter. Until a few years ago I always wondered what people did before television was used in the home. And then one day I was listening to the radio and I accidentally tuned in your show. From that day on I was hooked. —**JERRY E. LARSON.**

CHICAGO — I tuned in WGN Sunday night at 8:30 p.m. and was surprised to discover they present an "old time radio show" every Saturday evening. This week was a Jack Benny show from 1946. The guest on the show was William

WE GET LETTERS

Powell in a segment about Powell's being a "gentleman's gentleman" — but the program host kept announcing the Benny guest was DICK Powell. Such professional sloppiness would never occur on your program! Well, at least he didn't call him JANE Powell! —**ROBERT ROSTERMAN.**

(ED. NOTE — WGN is programming some old time radio on Sunday afternoons between 2 and 4 p.m. and then on Sunday nights at 8:30 p.m. The evening show is a regular event; the afternoon series will probably continue until the baseball season begins. You can also find some old time shows from 6 to 9 a.m. weekdays on WXFM and every Thursday night at 8 p.m. on WBEZ.)

TEMPE, ARIZONA — I really enjoy receiving the Nostalgia Newsletter, but when I see what I'm missing on TWTD on Saturdays, I feel the pang of jealousy. We are originally from Brookfield, Illinois and moved to Tempe. We really love it in Arizona; it is beautiful and special. There is a radio station, KWAQ from Sun City, that plays one hour of old-time radio each day, but there is no chitter-chatter to go along with it. Chuck, did you ever think of moving to a sunny, warm climate in the Southwest? I really do miss listening to you on TWTD days. I did tape a lot of the programs when we lived in Illinois, so I do have some some to listen to. We also have the Cinnamon Bear tapes and have six children from 21 years on down to a 7 and a 5 year old. They feel the Cinnamon Bear reminds them of Christmas in Illinois and gets them in the Holiday spirit. Keep up your good work. I do hope all the Chicagoland people know and appreciate all the enjoyment you bring them. You never know what you had until it's not there anymore. —**EILEEN SABAN.**

HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA — One of the high points of an occasional weekend visit to Chicago is having the opportunity to hear "Those Were The Days" again. The show was a major part of my life for more than five years and, believe me, no one can handle that kind of show with more warmth and humor than you. Los Angeles has a few broadcasts



of old radio every week, but to be frank, TWTD is as much nostalgia to me as that old Zenith console with the flickering green eye is to you. I wonder if other out-of-state listeners — nostalgia transplants, as it were — miss the show as much as I do? Perhaps you might consider circulating air checks of the programs to out of state listeners. —**MARK NELSON.**

(ED. NOTE — We're blushing — and bursting — with pride from all those kind words. We've heard from many out of state friends who ask about tuning in TWTD again. We'll be glad to start a "round robin" tape of TWTD airchecks if enough out of state people are interested. If you are, drop us a note in care of the Nostalgia Newsletter, Box 421, Morton Grove, Ill. 60053)

MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA — Last year I bought a stereo equipped with off-the-air cassette tape recorder and to date have taped about 60 programs. Up until the past few weeks I have had good results, but lately — always about 2:30 to 3:00 p.m. — I have been getting interference from some source — either a Ham operator, CB or perhaps aircraft. It is only momentary and I can't tell what they are saying, but it is enough to louse up an otherwise good radio show. Do you have any suggestions as to how I might trace this and put a stop to it? —**F.C. STANDLEY.**

(ED. NOTE — If the interference lasts long enough, you might be able to identify some call letters or numbers. If you decide it's an aircraft, contact the local office of the Federal Aviation Administration; if it's a Ham operator, call the local office of the Federal Communications Commission; if it's a CB, call Smokey the Bear. These agencies will identify the operator and, at your option, call to ask that they cut down on the signal or somehow try to avoid cutting into your reception. On the other hand, it might be Sky King or Hop Harrigan, America's Ace of the Airwaves, or Captain Midnight!)

BERWYN — I have been listening for a couple of years now. I discovered the program by accident. One day I was flipping the dial looking for something to listen to, then I found your show. It's a change from the usual radio

fare. The part I like best on the old shows is the commercials, especially for a product that is still around today. I find them interesting. —**LARRY C. LEOPARD.**

ROCKFORD — Ever since WNIB has become a station on Cablevision in Rockford a couple of years ago, I have missed only a few weeks of this great entertainment. Comedy—that's for me. Even when I have to be somewhere on Saturday, I don't miss your program. I have 1 7/8 ips on my reel deck and put on 3600 foot tapes . . . six hours. My wife or even sometimes friends help me as I set the deck and radio on; all they have to do is turn off the "Temporary Stop" button. It's 2:00 a.m. now and Charlie and Edgar just came on (I'm over two weeks behind in listening!). Thank you again for your wholesome entertaining four hours. I'm only 31. I'm not a nostalgia nut, I just enjoy listening. —**MIKE BARRON.**

ELMHURST — For many years cigarette commercials have been banned from radio and television. However you have still played old radio shows with these in them stating they were for "historical reference only." Has the situation now changed so that you can no longer play complete shows sponsored by tobacco companies (except for opening slogans)? The reason for asking is that in the past weeks you have played some shows without commercials that were not called Armed Forces Radio Shows, which normally have no commercials. While it is to be expected that old shows preserved only by the Armed Forces can be expected to be edited when other shows have survived complete, it is too bad to have them edited now. This would mean there would never be complete shows played again for performers like Red Skelton (Raleigh) and others. —**WALTER J. BRASEN.**

(ED. NOTE — Current broadcast regulations require that no cigarette commercials be presented on radio or television. While the replaying of old cigarette commercials within the context of the rebroadcast of old shows may be in a cloudy or "grey" area, WNIB has requested that we abide by the code established by the National Association of Broadcasters. Basically we eliminate "straight" cigarette commercials, but occasional references to the sponsor's product do stay in so as not to destroy the "flavor" of the vintage program. So you may inhale a little of the smoke, but not so much as to be hazardous to your health!)

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With Danny Thomas

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BABY SNOOKS

TWO COMEDY SHOWS

Starring Fanny Brice

(1) Snooks donates two of Daddy's best suits to a charity auction, and Daddy has to bid on his clothes to get them back. With Hanley Stafford as Snooks' exasperated father. Sponsored by Spic 'n' Span. Broadcast October 17, 1947.

(2) Daddy takes care of Snooks on a hot night . . . so hot "the perspiration is melting Snooks' face." Then Daddy helps Snooks with her homework! That's help?

MR. PRESIDENT
GEORGE WASHINGTON

The Pennsylvania Rebellion

These are little known stories of the men that have lived in the White House. The president is not identified until the end . . . excellent interest getter. In this story we are involved with the President's high spirited niece, and with a rebellious leader, in the year 1794. "If the minority dictates to the majority there can be no security for life, liberty or property." Stars Edward Arnold. 7/31/47.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

His Last Day

These shows were designed to capture the human side of the chief executive . . . dramatic, exciting events in their lives. The war was over and the President has never been happier. "Today is my day!" His son Robert returns from war, and the world is bright and gay for Mr. Lincoln. That evening he eagerly goes to the Ford Theatre!

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