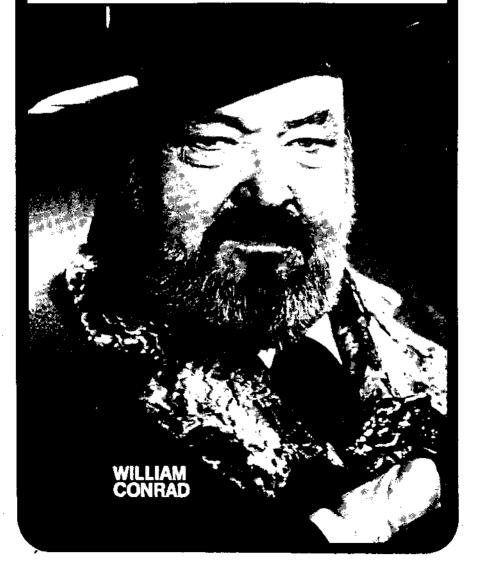
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No.90

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Notes On Nero Wolfe

by: Charles Stumpf

Unlike many of his fellow fictional slenths. NERO WOLFE was a much more unique and colorful character. Rather than pound the pavements in a soiled trench coat in hot pursuit of some grubby criminal, natty Nero preferred the comfort of his luxurious brownstone home on Manhattan's West 35th street. The portly sophisticate doted on raising rare orchids, and instead of eavesdropping at some rusty keyhole, or peeking over some grimy transom, Wolfe relished devouring the sumptuous Epicurean delights concocted by his major domo-chef, Fritz Brenner, He took great pleasure in announcing to the outside world that "the knife and fork were the greatest tools ever invented by man."

This later day Nero did not fiddle while Rome burned, or while Syracuse sweltered, or Rochester shivered from the frigid cold. He exercised brains over brawn and mind over muscle, and relied on his trusty side-kick, handsome young man-about-town Archie Goodwin, to do the leg work. Together, they rivaled the combined efforts of Inspector Kramer and his complete police force, in solving the city's most baffling crimes. The climatic scene in any Nero Wolfe yarn was sure to find all of the suspects in the case, neatly assembled in Wolfe's office, and the master prepared with the proper solution.

Nero Wolfe's creator Rex Todhunter Stout was born in Noblesville, Indiana on December 1, 1886. The sixth of nine children, Rex had a strict Quaker upbringing. He was a child prodigy in arithmetic and toured in an exhibition of solving complex math problems within seconds. He was educated in public schools and then tried his hand at a variety of occupations including: office boy, store clerk, bookkeeper and hotel manager. He served in the U.S. Navy during 1906-08

During the 1920's Stout struck it rich by selling bankers his "Educational Thrift System," a scheme which recruited school children as depositors in savings accounts. After amassing a sizeable fortune Stout retired to Paris in 1927 to write fiction.

His first novel was "How Like a God," published in 1929. This was followed by "Weed on the Wind," in 1930. Recalled today as a prolific author, Stout spent only a limited time at his writing chores, a reported six consecutive weeks each year. The remainder of his time was used to pursue his other varied interests. During the years 1939 and 1940 he turned out three novels each.

The author declared that he never re-read nor re-wrote any of his manuscripts and that they found their way into print that way. He further stated that "Writing any kind of fiction is a sort of explosion. When the explosion has taken place, there's no use going around looking at the debris."

In later years Stout became overweight and had white hair and a full beard and resembled a stern-faced Santa Claus. His last novel, "A Family Affair," was published a month before he died at the age of 88 on October 27, 1975.

Although NERO WOLFE was a top

favorite on the printed page, his success in other mediums such as films, radio and television, never really gained him the kind of popularity he deserved.

In 1936 Columbia Pictures announced a series of Nero Wolfe films. The first entry was MEET NERO WOLFE and starred Edward Arnold with the gravel-voiced Lionel Stander as Archie. A brief synopsis of the plot stated: "Sets out to prove the link between the sudden death of a college president on a golf club, and the slaying of a young mechanic."

The second, and final entry was titled LEAGUE OF FRIGHTENED **MEN** and was released by Columbia in 1937. It starred Walter Connolly with Stander repeating the role of Archie. Synopsis: "A group of Harvard graduates hire Wolfe to catch the murderer of the three of their group." In referring to the film series, it was written: "Novelist Rex Stout's popular private eye reached the screen in. sadly, only two neat, low-budget thrillers - whose costs were kept to a minimum by virtue of the fact that the sybaritic, food-swilling, orchidcultivating. Wolfe did most of his sleuthing without leaving home."

In 1938 a radio series dramatizing Wolfe's adventures was to have starred actor Craig McDonnell with Wallace Ford as Archie. The program was auditioned but did not meet with success.

It wasn't until July 5, 1943 that THE ADVENTURES OF NERO WOLFE premiered over the Blue network. Sponsored by Elgin watches, the program featured Santos Ortega, and later, Luis VanRooten as Wolfe. The series was short-lived. Late in 1945 a second radio series starred silent screen film star Francis X.

Bushman with Elliott Lewis as Archie. Heard on Sunday the show was sponsored by Jergen's Lotion. Scripts were by Louis Vittes. The series ended on December 15, 1946.

In 1950 the most memorable of the Nero Wolfe radio programs starred Sydney Greenstreet who was both physically and vocally perfect for the role. It was carried by NBC as a sustaining program. During the show's air run the role of Archie was portrayed by no less that five different actors: Gerald Mohr, Wally Maher, Harry Bartell, Herb Ellis and Lawrence Dobkin.

In 1977 a TV-Movie entitled NERO WOLFE was adapted from Rex Stout's novel "The Doorbell Rings," directed by Frank D. Gilroy the film starred a little known actor named Thayer David. He was ideally cast and the series might have been successful had it not been for the untimely demise of the leading man. After which plans to continue were shelved.

It was inevitable that a television series based on the Wolfe character would come about. The **NERO WOLFE** series debuted on NBC-TV on Friday, January 16, 1981 and continued through August 25th. This time around veteran actor William Conrad starred as Wolfe, another excellent choice for the role. In support were Lee Horsley as Archie, Allan Miller as Inspector Kramer, while George Voskovec appeared as chef Fritz Brenner.

Of the many fine actors who have portrayed **Nero Wolfe**, in my opinion the most memorable was Sydney Greenstreet.

Greenstreet was born in Sandwich, Kent, England on December 27, 1879, the son of a tanner. Along with his seven brothers and sisters. Sydney was educated in the nearby town of Deal. He then followed his three older brothers into Danehill College During his school years Greenstreet excelled at various sports such as tennis, hockey, cricket and soccer. At the age of 18 he ventured to Cevlon where he worked on a tea plantation. He filled his lonely nights reading and memorizing Shakespeare's writings. It is said that he could recite over 12,000 of the Bard's lines, from memory.

A drought in the year 1901 sent Greenstreet back home to England where he took up employment for an agency of a brewery. Encouraged by his mother, Sydney joined the Ben Greet Academy in pursuit of an acting career. He was given his first walk-on in Shakespearean production. His first important speaking role was as a murderer named Craighen in a production of "Sherlock Holmes." He then went on to work in a number of touring companies.

Greenstreet arrived in America in 1904 and the following year he made his Broadway debut in "Everyman." The actor gained a fine reputation for portraying Shakespearean roles and was seen in 18 of the Bard's plays. The famed British actor, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, once referred to Greenstreet as "the greatest un-starred "star" of the English stage."

A most versatile performer, in 1933 Sydney joined Bob Hope on stage in the hit musical "Roberta" in which he sang a musical number entitled

"Let's Begin."

For six years Greenstreet worked exclusively with the famed acting team Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontanne. It was while he was appearing in a West Coast production of "There Shall Be No Night" that he was spotted by director John Houston and was cast in his most memorable role as Kasper Gutman (the Fat Man) in the film THE MALTESE FALCON. His performance won him an Oscar nomination as Best Supporting Actor. Then at age 60 Greenstreet was placed under contract to Warner Brothers. He went on to make many fine films, a number of which found him cast opposite pint-sized villain Peter Lorre.

Greenstreet often joked about his

girth and liked to tell a story about how his weight once caused a stage to collapse. On another occasion he was accidentally knocked down by a runaway horse, and although the actor received only minor injuries, the poor animal had to be destroyed.

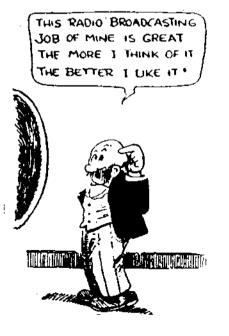
Greenstreet excelled in cynical, sinister-type roles and was also adept at comedy and had a most distinct and memorable laugh. His unique voice was utilized by radio and on recordings.

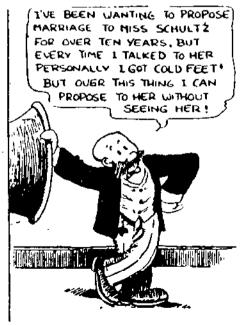
Note: Charles Stumpf is the author of the book "Heavenly Days, The Story of Fibber McGee and Molly." The book is out-of-print, but a limited number of copies are available from Stumpf @ \$25 Postpaid. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy can contact Charlie at: P.O. Box 1274, Conyngham, PA 18219-1274

THE WIRELESS AGE

October, 1922

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MARRY ME?



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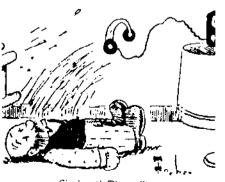
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WELCOME VALLEY

By Chester Matthews

ISTEN in any Tuesday night to one of the Welcome Valley broadcasts, and you will hear a dozen or more friendly human beings whose loves and irritations and pursuits of happiness have woven them into a curious design for living. You will hear Edgar Guest, publisher of the local newspaper, big brother and adviser to all: Doctor Haines, smitten with Esther Ferguson, daughter of the community sheriff, and Esther's beautiful friend from the city, capable of breaking the heart of any swain she meets. The program is centered around one character, and very rightly. But back of the character played by Eddie Guest is a human quality-friendliness. All the characters reflect it. Every listener becomes imbued with it.

A short time ago I set upon a curious quest. I determined to run down that friendliness, trace it to its source. I was struck by it when I heard the broadcasts. I wanted to know what brought it into being—to the extent that listeners were carried away by it.

Before ever I attended a rehearsal or mingled with the members of the cast after a broadcast, I heard one thing that brought me up short, that seemed to indicate that my quest was over before it barely had begun. I learned that every Tuesday; the day of the broadcast, Eddie Guest has played host to the entire cast for lunch.

Maybe the full significance of that isn't apparent. Eddie commands a high place among living writers for his homey verse and prose. His financial security is well assured. He could jolly well retire to his place in Michigan and devote himself to his beloved golf and to such picked associates as

he might wish for companionship of an order rich in human values. But does he? Not Eddie! The fifteen or twenty members of the cast are his guests once every week, featured players or extras—and he gets a real kick out of the associations.

And then I met them all—Cliff Arquette, Betty Winkler, Judith Lowry, Bernardine Flynn, Harold Perry, Sidney Elstrom, Johnny Ames, Lucy Gil-

If Irna Phillips, who writes the Welcome Valley scripts, were a man her hat would be off to Eddle Guest, for the friendly spirit he conveys to the show

man, Isobel Randolph, Joseph Richardson Jones. Ted Maxwell.

Now consider. You must have read of squabbles among members of a cast—jealousies and temperamental upsets and bickering. Surely, I thought, among so many—and considering that some of them are stars in other air shows—temperament at least must ride high and upset the works during rehearsals. And if not, then—well, some miracle-worker was present. But wait.

At rehearsal I found the star, Eddie himself, sitting down beside several others in the cast on a row of benches, studying his script the same as the rest. And when it came time for the star to speak his lines, I heard Director Ted Sherdeman say: "A little closer to the mike! You're coming over too thin, no body to your voice!" For a second I held my breath, expecting an outburst. And what do you suppose hap-

pened? Eddie came out of character, smiled toward Ted, took half a step forward, and before he went back to the intensity with which he had been reading he asked: "How's this?"

There and then I came close to the answers to my search. That spirit of friendliness conveyed to the listeners of this program is in every member of the cast.

The first opportunity I had, I took Director Sherdeman aside and got talking to him. He's produced the Welcome Valley program since it first took the air in January of 1935.

"Gosh!" he said "When I was told that I would have the Welcome Valley show to handle, I just—well—just got a headache, that's all. Imagine! There I was with a star on my hands who never had done a bit of acting in his life, and they wanted me to teach him. Get it? Teach a multi-millionaire, and a great writer! I'm here to tell you it was the toughest job I'd ever been handed. But," he added, and a smile came over his face that radiated friendliness, "that was before I knew Eddie Guest."

"What do you mean?" I asked. But Ted was called away before he could tell me. I had to get the answer

from another member of he cast:

"When the train pulled out, taking Eddie to Hollywood last Winter to make his first movie, I heard Eddie say: 'Any acting ability I may have is the result of Ted Sherdeman's untiring patience'."

All that was a supreme puff for Ted Sherdeman, you say? Of course! But much more than that—it was a concrete example of the friendly spirit that motivated the star. Without it, he couldn't have taken the tiniest part of Ted's direction. With it—

The next person I tackled for a chat was Betty Winkler. What she told me led me even closer to the end of my quest.

T SEEMS that her part in the script several months ago called for her to sing. Never in her life had she dreamed of singing outside her own—her own boudoir. She was panicky,

for she felt that if she didn't makegood with a song—one that would go over the air from Maine to California—she would lose her place in the cast. Director Ted shared her apprehension. It was Eddie Guest who saved the day.

He came up to Betty, laid his hand on her shoulder, and in that friendly way you've heard him speak over the air hundreds of times he said:

"Betty, why don't you try it?"

For a long moment his broad, warm smile of friendliness suffused her.

Five minutes later—at that rehearsal—Betty was singing. And so successful was the try that Author Irna Phillips had to write into the script many other songs for Betty to sing.

The truth then began to come home to me, that the friendliness of the show is the friendliness of the star, magnified and reflected by the entire cast.



Poet, Philosopher and Friend



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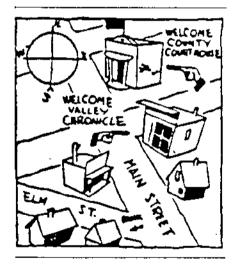
And so great is it that Eddie's physical presence isn't always necessary to keep it alive. They learned that when Eddie was away in Hollywood-and under most trying circumstances, too.

Ted Sherdeman was left with the problem of presenting Welcome Valley with the star separated from the rest of the cast by more than half a continent. And he did it!

Eddie spoke his lines in Los Angeles from word-cues sent him by wire, that reached him through earphones. And in Chicago Cliff Arquette also wore earphones and heard what Eddie said.

At one time, in commemoration of the thirty-ninth broadcast, the sponsors of the show made a one-time offer. They promised to all interested listeners a calendar with a portrait of Eddie and a copy of that famous verse which begins with:

"It takes a heap o' livin' in a house to make it home."



Little did those sponsors dream what would happen. The offer called forth an all-time record in number of reauests-264,000!

And why? I believe it was because listeners wanted some memento, some tangible evidence, of the friendliness of the program; some constant reminder of the big-hearted friendliness of its star, Eddie himself!

Welcome Valley, starring Edgar Guest, presented by the Household Finance Corporation, may be heard every Tuesday over NBC at 8:30 p.m. EST (7:30 CST: 6:30 MST: 5:30 PST).



KAR-NU CO., Dept. H-88, Dakley Sta., Cincinnati, Onic

Hello again, I'm Jack Benny. The CBS Mystery Theater Panel will try to figure out how I'm able to attend the 24th Friends of Old-time Radio Convention October 21-24.99 Holiday Inn North, Newark, NJ

Where there's a will (Jordan) there's a way.



RADIO AND THE

T IS amusing—to look back a decade ing-picture offers, it is doubly, trebly. in order to gauge the steps by which the radio gained its hold on our attention, and the position it occupies in our lives today. At first it was the expensive novelty of the moneyed classes. -one to a household-like the automobile. But like the automobile, it became cheaper and cheaper, until anybody not actually on relief could own one. Presently, one radio was not enough for a single household, and before we knew it there were several. Small shops installed the new contraption, then hotels.

It took the middle-aged some time to accustom themselves to this strange, versatile toy. Often, opening the door of my upstairs living-room, I have found myself suddenly startled because apparently a horrific fight was going on in the drawing-room downstairs. Even yet, I experience starts and surprises as my home seems suddenly to spawn multitudes of loud-mouthed strangers.

How often have I sat in one room of the house of this friend or that when suddenly there would break out in the other room, where the young fry were gathered, a melee of scuffles, shrieks, screams, shots, groans and threats.

"Betty," or "Harry," the mother would call, "turn that dreadful thing off. How can you listen to such trash!"

Always, incidentally, I appeared to be the only one who understood why Betty or Harry listened to such trashthe reason being youth's perennial enjoyment of terrors and horrors.

Like the movies, the radio is here and it is here to stay. And as long as it is here to stay, let us look at it dispassionately while we ask ourselves two questions. What are young people listening to and what are the things they listen to doing to them?

Curiously enough, what they hear over the radio parallels in many ways what they see in the movies. Difficult as it is to classify exhaustively the streams of entertainment that the movquadruply difficult to classify the floods which pour from the radio.

There are news flashes of local. national and international happenings. including the broadcasting of all kinds of sports events. There are foreignlanguage lessons, book-reviews, talks in general on all kinds of "isms," "ologies," and politics. There are programs on cooking, cosmetics, dressing, interior decoration. There are humorous dialogues-condensed plays from the theater, playlets written especially for radio, serial melodramas.

Then music-and what music!

MUSIC deserves a section by itself, for here radio offers us what the moving-pictures can not give. On the radio, we can hear singers from the most popular current crooners to the most eminent grand opera stars. We can hear instrumental music from the most popular dance orchestras to the Philharmonic. Perhaps the most marvelous thing about all this-and it concerns children quite as much as adults-is that one can hear it in one's own home.

That ease in listening is, in my opinion, the greatest extension of enjoyment that the radio has offered society. However, I am not here primarily concerned with what the radio does to or for grown people; it is what it does to or for the young.



YOUNG BY INEZ HAYNES IRWIN

training the first generation of this country which has developed real musical appreciation. And creation will ultimately follow. Up to the era of the radio, we were the least musical of all peoples. We had produced painters. We had created a style in architecture. Since the World War, the American drama has stepped into the front rank. But as for worthy and original music, we had little more than the simple folk-songs of the Negro and of their follower, Stephen C. Foster,

Youngsters with their ears pressed to the radio listen at first, doubtless, only to the shallowest popular music. But they can not help overhearing snatches of the very best, like the performances of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. Some day, when they are ready for it, some strain will catch these youngsters' attention, touch in some of them a deep chord of response. There real musical appreciation is born. Since radio came soaring through the ether, this appreciation has been increased among the American people, especially the younger generation. And against that background will grow our creative giants. I will be disappointed indeed if,

within the next generation, we fail to have an outburst of creative and really American music.

But there the young sit, metaphorically speaking, lines and lines and lines of them-millions of themstretching across the country, with their ears pressed to the most magical instrument the world has ever evolved. The radio is much cheaper than the movies. It is much nearer. One may even-and this is the special joy of invalids, shut-ins and insomniacs-listen while lying comfortably in bed.

IKE moving-pictures, radio offers something for every taste. Not enough, perhaps, for the best-but that is only because it is so young.

We see our children sitting quiescent, for long intervals, their ears plastered to the magic orifice which emits so much vocal wonder. And



moving - picture pours-and pours primarily through the eyetorrents of impressions over the plastic surfaces of their young minds, the radio pours torrents, too, but entirely through the ears. Torrents! A very Niagara of suggestions and ideas:

BUT there are other and more inportant effects on the juvenile mind and they demand our profound at-

though here, it must give place to the

cinema-to their store of information.

The impact upon the imagination has been terrific-much greater, for instance, than that of the moving-pic-

so eye-minded as mine. We got the best and the most of our education out of the printed word. The result on us was curious. It was astonishing how few words spoken in our presence were

Now, happily, the younger generation is growing ear-minded again. Perhaps we shall reach the ideal condition when eye-mindedness and ear-mindedness stand at balance. If that ever happens, radio will have done more than any other force to achieve it.

DUT most important of all is-I coin a new word--a curious bimentalism which the radio has produced in our children. The young listen to the radio and read at the same time. They lis-

just as the

group of people clustered around a mi-

redeveloping ear-mindedness. Ear-

mindedness was perhaps at its height

among the early Greeks, who carried

Homer in their heads for centuries

before anyone wrote down his lines.

But we were scarcely less ear-minded

a century ago when the intellectual-

Also, radio is producing, or rather,

crophone reading from manuscripts.

ten to the radio and write at the same time. More amazing than either of these, they listen to the radio and study at the same time! In fact, they tell me that they read and study best with the radio on, that they are at a loss without it.

As radio voices, radio pronunciations and radio enunciation become more natural they will set the fashion for English speech. Radio will perfect pronunciation and enunciation. It will help to keep the language pure, to eradicate slang, vulgarism, elisions, shurred pronunciation, jumbled speech—even, perhaps, jumbled thinking.

N 1930, I was in Paris. We were dining with friends. They turned on what Great Britain calls the wireless

to get the news from England. Suddenly there came a signal over the radio. "Oh, it's the nightingale!" our hostess exclaimed joyfully. "They have discovered a roost somewhere in England," she explained rapidly to us, "and arranged radio connections so that, if the nightingale sings, they can transmit it over the wireless. Whenever the nightingale starts, they interrupt any program—no matter what it is—to broadcast his song."

And there we sat in a French saton and listened to the aria of an English nightingale!

Moments like that dot life, alas, only too sparsely. I want that one to show that whatever radio has done for me, it is doing more to imaginations infinitely more fresh, tender and delicate!

Wives! Mothers!

Don't miss this vital new radio drama—the story of a courageous woman who is wife, doctor, mother—presented by the sponsors of the Lux Radio Theatre.

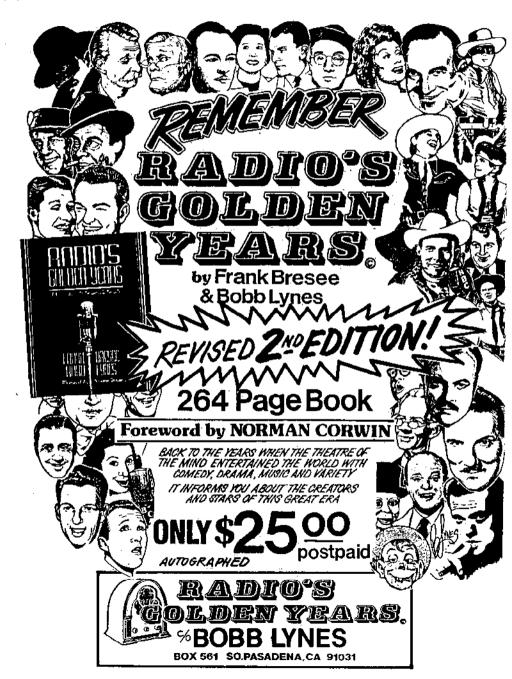
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"Private Eyes" for Public Ears

by Jim Maclise

The origins of radio's The Adventures of the Falcon, which aired variously on ABC Blue, Mutual, and NBC from 1943 to 1954, are somewhat confusing. For example, John Dunning in Tune In Yesterday tells us, "The Falcon, Drexel Drake's suave detective, came first to the screen in a slick series of RKO Radio Pictures." He also writes that Michael Waring, the radio detective hero, "for reasons more dramatic than practical, was known to friend and foe alike as the Falcon," But in fact there is no Michael Waring in the RKO movies. all of which state in the opening credits. "Based on the character created by Michael Arlen." (These 1940's films are shown frequently on cable AMC.) In Movies On TV (1990 ed.) Steven Scheuer says, "Michael Arlen's debonair detective character covered a lot of territory, including a TV show (1954) and a radio show in addition to this movie series. Here George Sanders played Gay Falcon, the uppercrust amateur sleuth; he was later replaced by his real-life sibling Tom Conway in the role of Tom Falcon." (The latter was known as Tom Lawrence in at least one of the films).

Michael Arlen was born Dikran Kuyumjian of Armenian parents in Bulgaria in 1895, later becoming an English citizen and writing the best selling novel, The Green Hat (1924), the heroine of which considerably influenced Hemingway's creation Lady Brett Ashley in The Sun Also Rises, as well as some of Scott Fitzgerald's bright and loose young flappers. Arlen also wrote mysteries (The Crooked Coronet and Hell. Said the Duchess) including a short story entitled "Gay Falcon." When this became the basis of the highly successful series of RKO films, Arlen spent two years in Hollywood accomplishing absolutely nothing except

enjoying himself. He died in 1956.

So where did the radio detective. Michael Waring as The Falcon. originate? While the Falcon films undoubtedly had their influence on the radio version, each show ends with the statement: "The Adventures of the Falcon are based upon the famous character created by Drexel Drake." Drake (a pen name for Charles H. Huff, who died in 1959) was the author of at least three novels. The Falcon's Prev (1936), The Falcon Cuts In (1937), and The Falcon Meets A Lady (1938). His New York City hero, who does his detecting from his apartment, is indeed Michael Waring. If Drake's novels had any influence on the films, as Dunning suggests, his character's name does not exist in them. While Drake's novels are long out of print and difficult to locate, one suspects that both these books and the movie series combined to create the "suave" and "debonair" (and flirtatious) Falcon of radio. (Incidentally, the best Falcon film is reputed to be The Falcon Takes Over - 1942 - using the same plot as Raymond Chandler's Farewell. My Lovely with the Falcon taking over the role of Philip Marlowe, Chandler's detective. Two years later Marlowe was restored in the better known version of the same novel, Murder, My Sweet with Dick Powell.)

On radio The Falcon was first heard April 10,1943, as a sustained show on the Blue Network. Most memorably it moved to Mutual on Tuesday nights in July 1945 with James Meighan as the freelance detective who is "always ready with a hand for oppressed men and an eye for repressed women." Meighan's slightly British accent reflects that of the English actors Sanders and Conway in the films. In fact the title character is always pronounced "the Fallkon," even after the decidedly American voice of Les

Damon took the role in 1950. Meighan's run had the advantage of being sponsored by Gem Razors and Blades with the distinctive ticking clock commercial, "Avoid . . . five . . . o'clock . . . shadow," each word punctuated by a striking chime. Then came the command, "Use Gem Blades! Use Gem Blades! Use Gem. Blades!" But this edition folded in 1947 when the show was sustained on Mutual with Les Tremayne until May 1950 when it moved to NBC starring Les Damon and sponsored by the Kraft Food Company. Damon's Falcon was less smoothly urbane than Meighan's, and the Sunday afternoon commercials for processed cheese and Miracle Whip further dissipated the ominous atmosphere created by Gem Blades' tolling clock. Unfortunately only one 1945 Gem show has survived, although there are sixty or so Damon episodes available.

"Murder Is A Family Affair" (11/27/45) is the lone remainder of James Meighan's reign as the Falcon and thus the only episode with the Gem commercial. Like all of the Falcon shows, it opens with a ringing telephone which Mike Waring answers: "Hello? Yes, this is the Falcon. Oh Nancy, I'm glad you called. What's on the program for tonight? (He chuckles.) Well it sounds like an awfully dead evening, baby. But you never can tell. Tomorrow there may be . . . mourning!" Following the commercial and the introduction underscored by bouncy organ music, a narrator sets the scene on a rainy New York evening. Brenda Sinclair sits with her Pekinese Wang Poo and her boyfriend Jimmy when her husband Ray suddenly appears. Bang, bang! and Jimmy's dead. After a quick trial and sentencing, we find Mike Waring and his girl Nancy visiting Ray Sinclair in his prison cell on the night of his execution. The Falcon promises Ray to look after his vounger brother Danny and his bride Gloria, whom Waring invites to his apartment. There Danny finds a spare gun and rushes off into the

night intent on killing Brenda, the unfaithful wife, and maybe little Wang Poo as well! Meanwhile we learn that Brenda now has a gangster lover to whom she owes large gambling debts. Predictably there's a second murder, which the smooth unflappable Falcon swiftly solves by spotting overlooked details and reconstructing the crime in classic whodunit fashion with all suspects present at the murder scene (a standard Falcon ploy.) Along the way he handles women the way Sterling Moss handled race cars.

The Falcon's "eye for repressed women" seems to have once focused on Brenda the unfaithful, who refers to him as Sugarplum, a name which intrigues his current girlfriend Nancy. Back in Waring's apartment, the case solved, Nancy presses Mike for information.

"Brenda called you Sugarplum. How do you explain that?"

"Oh, Nancy, let's not go into that. It's a long story."

"Oh, but that's the kind I like best." "Come here, darling," (Some scuffling is heard.)

"Now, Michael, stop it. You're not going to get out of it like that."

"I didn't intend to, dear. You wanted to hear the story of Brenda and Sugarplum."

"Yesss."

"Well, what you just got then was the ... prologue!"

With this sort of debonair dialogue and clever whodunit plotting, Gem Razor's The Falcon was one of the gems of 1940's radio mysteries. (As a kid I rarely missed it on Tuesday nights.)

In the early fifties for Kraft Foods, The Falcon starring Les Damon on NBC was a fairly pedestrian detective entry. The 1951 shows I sampled almost all concern established criminals involved in murder or mob assassinations. The women all seem to speak with Bronx or Brooklyn accents, and the titles suggest the type of stories that follow: "The Invisible Thug," "The Happy Hoodlum," "The Big Talker." In the first title, Waring is

hired to defend a killer we've already heard commit the murder in question. In "The Proud Papa" Waring's girlfriend is held hostage to insure his cooperation in assisting a mob boss, and a surprised Sergeant Corbett of NYPD (Ken Lynch, a series regular) tells Waring, "You wouldn't actually take that bum for a client. I've known you for almost ten years." Often multiple suspects either confess ("Proud Papa") or strongly deny murder: "All right, all right, Vera didn't do it, you didn't do it, pobody did it, but the guy's dead!" shouts a frustrated Falcon. Some of these episodes seem to have a dreary sameness to them, perhaps because they're the work of the same two writers.

"The Happy Hoodlum" is more cleverly plotted than most of the sampled episodes, opening with a seemingly reckless armed robbery of a building protected by 68 armed guards. But we soon discover that the robber actually had planned to be caught in order to be sent to Sing-Sing, where there's a prisoner named Bailey he believes is responsible for his father's death. But once inside it seems to be the wrong Bailey. A pull-the-rug-out ending makes this story worth a listen.

Ed Herlihy is the Kraft announcer, pushing a variety of their products, including Kraft salad oil, nine different cheese spreads. Parkay margarine, and "Miracle Whip! has a flavor so pleasing. Miracle Whip! tastes so lively, so teasing!" In "Proud Papa" Herlihy even enters the story. preparing a Miracle Whip salad for the Falcon right at his restaurant table. Waring is unsurprised by its taste, claiming that he's been a Miracle Whip lover for years. One's faith in the Falcon is shaken. (My mother used to stock the stuff in her refrigerator regularly, which is why I won't allow it to cross the threshold at my house.)

The Lone Wolf, which John Dunning describes as "more than a little reminiscent of The Falcon," was its replacement on Tuesday nights when Mutual moved The Falcon to Mondays in 1947. American author Louis Vance created Michael Lanvard. known as the Lone Wolf, during World War I and wrote numerous stories and novels featuring Lanvard and his English manservant Jamison. A series of more than a dozen films followed between 1939 and 1949, the better of which starred Warren William as the amateur sleuth and Eric Blore as Jamison. These two brought their authentic version of the tales to radio on July 20, 1943, on Suspense, where the announcer called the Lone Wolf "one of the most celebrated characters of modern crime fiction. This familiar character will speak to you now for the first time on the air in the story 'Murder Goes For A Swim.'" The production had a decidedly British flavor. Lanyard describes himself as "an author of sorts. I was once known rather well by quite a different name, and there are still times when I find myself obliged to return to that character, to resort to the somewhat questionable talents of the Lone Wolf." As such he was a notorious jewel thief, now reformed and on the side of the law. The Suspense episode is a good one, involving the disappearance of a girl from a beauty contest at which Lanyard is a judge and her subsequent appearance at the bottom of a nearby swimming pool. This is the only Lone Wolf radio adventure to feature actors William and Blore and is far better than the only surviving episode from the 1947-49 Mutual sustained series.

"The Golden Santa" of New Years 1949 is the lone Lone Wolf from Mutual currrently available, starring the otherwise unknown Walter Coy. Coy's is a distinctly American voice, manservant Jamison is nowhere to be heard, and no mention is made of Lanyard's prior career as jewel thief. Thus the hero might as easily been known as the Lone Fox or the Lone Coyote. The program's organ music all but bouces off the walls, each show

apparently opens not with a Falcon phone call, but with the Lone Wolf knocking, ala Nick Carter. No credit is given to original author Louis Vance. nor to the films. The story concerns the disappearance and search for a six inch gold Santa lost by a girl named Peggy, who happens to wander into the Lone Wolf's favorite hangout, the Silver Seashell Bar and Tavern, a place which could easily double for Duffy's Tavern replete with a Duffy soundalike behind the bar. Peggy leads Lanvard off on a search of nightspots she's visited earlier in the evening: the Gay Grotto, Mike's Place, the Barbary Coast Room. But to no avail: no golden Santa, Eventually, of course, the search leads to murder, two to be exact. But the case isn't very interesting, so one can hardly blame the Wolf when he complains, "I was tired, the hour was late, and it was time to wind up the game." Only one show in circulation, but maybe one too manv.

Raffles, another reformed jewel thief, first appeared in a 1904 Black Mask magazine story, "Amateur Cracksman" (safe cracker), written by one E.W. Hornung. Raffles is British, but operates in New York. In the 1939 film bearing his name, he is played by David Niven. No such luck blesses the 1948 radio series, however, which features Horace Braham. Naturally. any time a piece of jewelry disappears. A.J.Raffles is both in the vicinity and a prime suspect. This happens in "Murder Signs Its Name," in which a woman's pearl necklace leaves her neck in a crowded theater where Raffles had been seated next to her and had left early. Soon the police are all over his apartment. Think Boston Blackie. but not as inventive and not as much fun. The BBC also did Raffles, probably with better results.

The Private Files of Rex Saunders involves yet another Englishman (whose detective status is undefined) involved in jewel theft. This 1951 NBC show's inspiration is obvious from the initial echoing footsteps and foghorn of Bulldog Drummond. The duplication is easily explained. Himan Brown, director of Inner Sanctum and The Thin Man directed both shows (and one day, CBS Radio Mystery Theater). But this was surely one of his weaker efforts. The tolling clock bell chiming in with the foghorn blasts might have been the death knell for radio drama. especially since the show's sponsor was RCA Television! The only thing going for Rex Saunders was that Rex Harrison played him; what may have been the nadir of Harrison's acting career with My Fair Lady several years off yet. But not even a smooth professional like Harrison can save the convoluted plot of "Concerning Diamonds" with its 25 minutes crammed with stolen gems, a stock goon, two coincidentally matching matchbook covers, two murders, two fatal car crashes, counterfeit British pounds, and capture of criminals aboard an ocean liner via police launch. No doubt Harrison found teaching Eliza Doolittle to speak properly far less harrowing.

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- C03835 02/12/48 # 53 Out Of The Wilderness w/Maureen O'Hara, Gale Storm, Bill Williams 02/19/48 # 54 - The Future Is Yours
 - w/Don McNeil, Rosemary DeCamp, Bobby Driscol
- C03836 02/26/48 # 55 Life's A Circus w/Fred Allen, Margaret O'Brien, Pat O'Brien 03/04/48 # 56 Dear Mr. American w/Loretta Young, J. Carroll Naish
- C03837 03/11/48 # 57 The Man Who Died Twice w/Roddy McDowell, John Sutten, Patricia Morrison
 - 03/18/48 # 58 Talent For Living w/Danny Thomas, Kirk Douglas, Dianna Douglas
- C03838 03/25/48 # 59 The Passion And Death Of Christ w/Guv Madison, Ethel Barrymore (Easter Story) 04/01/48 # 60 Little Boy Blue w/William Gargan, Robert
- C03839 04/08/48 # 61 Toledo Smith w/Shirley Temple, Dan Durvea, Skip Homeier 04/15/48 # 62 Wanted: One Baby
 - w/Paul Henreid, Kengy Baker, Alan Reed

Walker, Jeanne Crain

C03840 04/22/48 # 63 Eddic Meets The Family w/Hoagy Carmichael, Gloria DeHaven, Richard Hart

- 04/29/48 = 64 Their Only Son w Gary Cooper, Victor Jery, Scotty Beckett, Joan Carro1
- C03841 05/06/48 # 65 Mother's Halo Was Tight w/Gene Kelly, Virginia Bruce, John Beals
 - 05/13/48 # 66 Song For A Long Road w/Glen Langen, Donna Reed, John Lund (Repeat Of 07/17/47)
- C03842 05/20/48 # 67 A Thief in The Night w/Edgar Kobac (Mutual President), Robert Walker, Harry Davenport
 - 05/27/48 # 68 The Unsung Hero w/Mona Freeman, Lee Bonell, Gale Storm
- C03843 06/03/48 # 69 High Boarded Fence w/Lon McAllister, Ward Bond, Mary Eleanor Donahue
 - 06/10/48 # 70 Once On A Golden Afternoon w/Tom Conway, Natalie Wood, Maureen O'Sullivan
- C03844 06/17/48 # 71 Fear Is A Little Word w/Bob Crosby, Joan Loring, Louise Beaver
 - 06/24/48 # 72 Suspended Moment w/Victor Moore, Victor Jory. Berry Kroeger
- C03845 07/01/48 # 73 First Class Requirements w/Alan Mobrey, Joe E. Brown, Richard Tyler
 - 07/08/48 # 74 For Bonnie Annie Laurie w/Ray Milland, Donald Crisp. Beverly Tyler. Sarah Algood, Dan O'Herlihy
- C03846 07/15/48 # 75 The Music Of A Broken Bell w/Pedro de Cordava, Otto Kruger
 - 07/22/48 # 76 One In A Million w/Hugh Herbert, Billie Burke, Earle Ross, Louise Beavers

THE COUPLE NEXT DOOR

- C02617 03/23/60 #581 Income Tax Inspector 03/24/60 #582 Tax Examination Begins 03/25/60 #583 Tax Man Gets A Surprise 03/28/60 #584 Poem For Family Reunion
- C02618 03/29/60 #585 Brownie To Dog School 03/30/60 #586 Mr. Piper's Thin Hair 03/31/60 #587 Toast-Master Of Reunion 04/01/60 #588 Betsy Plays April Fool's Joke
- C02619 04/04/60 #589 The Marred Antique Table 04/05/60 #590 House Has Been Robbed 04/06/60 #591 Insurance Policy Fine Print 04/07/60 #592 Identifying The Burglar
- C02620 04/08/60 #593 Forgotten Dinner Invitation 04/11/60 #594 The Scene Of The Crime 04/12/60 #595 The Missing Silverware 04/13/60 #596 Betsy New Easter Bonnet
- C02621 04/14/60 #597 Mr. Piper, The Easter Bunny 04/15/60 4598 Good Friday Church Service 04/18/60 #599 The History Lesson 04/19/60 #600 Mrs. Piper To See Teacher
- C02622 04/20/60 #601 Taking Betsy Out Of School 04/21/60 #602 Who Discovered America 04/22/60 #603 Newspaper Interviews Betsv 04/25/60 #604 Mr. Piper's Job Threatened
- C02623 04/26/60 #605 Domestic Help Tax Return 04/27/60 #606 Social Security Tax Problems 04/28/60 #607 Figuring Out Amount Of Tax 04/29/60 #608 Mrs. Tenny's Age
- C02624 05/02/60 #609 Washing A Drip-Dry Suit 05/03/60 #610 Letter To The Editor 05/04/60 #611 Free The Zoo Animals 05/05/60 #612 Cat Trapped On The Roof
- C02625 05/06/60 #613 Who's Responsible For Crash 05/09/60 #614 Confining Brownie 05/10/60 #615 Betsy Invited To Aunt Effic's 05/11/60 #616 The "Free" Doghouse
- C02626 05/12/60 #617 Getting The Doghouse Home 05/13/60 #618 Doghouse Problems Continue 05/16/60 #619 Betsy Biting Her Fingernails 05/17/60 #620 More Problems With Brownte
- ·C02627 05/18/60 #621 Bad Restaurant Service 05/19/60 #622 Pile Of Old Newspapers 05/20/60 #623 Unexpected Trip To Chicago 05/23/60 #624 Mr. Piper And Housework
- C02628 05/24/60 #625 Unpaid Chicago Hotel Bill 05/25/60 ≠626 15 Minutes A Day Talk Time 05/26/60 #627 Stocks And Bonds Basics 05/27/60 #628 Third Notice Repair Bill

- C02629 05/30/60 #629 Decoration Day Togetherness 05/31/60 =630 The New Private Secretary
 - 06/01/60 #631 Mr. Cranshaw's Niece
 - 06/02/60 #632 The Stuck Dress Zipper
- C02630 06/03/60 #633 Is Bobby A Genius
 - 06/06/60 #634 The Unreturned Card Table 06/07/60 #635 Natural Family Pictures
 - 06/08/60 #636 A Young Man's Fancy
- C02631 06/09/60 #637 Name Mix-Up
 - 06/10/60 #638 The Lost Contact Lens
 - 06/13/60 #639 Chairman Of A Committee 06/14/60 =640 300 Children's Head-Dresses
- C02632 06/15/60 #641 Operating A Booth At A Loss
- 06/16/60 #642 Rehearsal Of Dance Recital
 - 06/17/60 #643 No Sense Of Organization 06/20/60 =644 Living Room Mug Red Spot

FIREFIGHTERS

- C02530 #109 Mr. Darby Discovered Locked In Vault #110 Mr. Darby Is Freed, Gives
 - Back Smuff Box
 - #111 The Chief Investigates Several Fires
 - #112 Tim Starts An Investigation Into Fires
- C02531 #113 The Fires Are Starting Inside Mattresses
 - #114 Drive To Round Up All The Mattresses
 - #115 Cotton Seeds, Answer To Mattress Fires #116 Chief Cody On Vacation.
 - Skyscraper Fire
- C02532 #117 Jim & Jack Into Building To Save Someone
 - #118 Tim Starts Up The Side
 - Of The Building #119 Tim Reaches Trapped Woman & Jack
 - #120 Tim Gets Jack & Woman Out Safety
- C02533 #121 Chief Cody Back, Problems With Monkeys
 - #122 Everyone is Trying To Catch The Monkeys
 - #123 Most Of The Monkeys Are Caught
 - #124 An Idea, Get Snake To Catch The Monkeys
- C02534 #125 Snake Used And All
 - The Monkeys Caught #126 A Friend Of Tim's Is Trapped In A Fire
 - #127 Tim's Friend Saved, Floor May Collapse
 - #128 Tim Is Trapped Under
 - The Collapsed Floor
- C02535 #129 Tim Taps On Steam Pipe Saving He's Alive
 - #130 With A Steam Shovel, Tim Is Freed
 - #131 Chief Cody & Tim Leave For Vacation
 - #132 The Plane Is On Fire In Baggage Area



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C02536 #133 Tim May Parachute To Save The Plane

#134 Tim Tries To Find Runway Lights

#135 Automobile Headlights To Light Runway

#136 Tim Meets Chief Friend, Start Vacation

C02537 #137 Several Fires In A Small Town

#138 Small Town Newspaper Burns

#139 Campaign Started For Full Time Firemen

#140 Tom Calpepper To Oppose The Towns Mayor

AUNT MARY

C03012 # 85 Kirt Sees Lisa

86 Baby Can Travel In One Week

#87 Ben Telephones Kitt

88 Peggy Talks To Lefty

C03013 # 89 Asks Lefty's Opinion

90 Aunt Mary Told Of Peggy's Decision

91 Aunt Mary & Peggy Disagree

#92 Bill Talks To Jane

C03014 # 93 Lefty Angry At David

#94 Bill Has Coffee With David

#95 Talking About Date For Wedding

96 Bill Runs Into Nick & Peggy

C03015 # 97 Aunt Mary To Discourage Marriage

98 Wanting Kitt To Leave Soon

99 Paul Lies To Dr. Gordon

#100 Telegram Arrives

C03016 #101 Arriving At Ben's House

#102 Bill Thinks About His New Son

#103 Bill Seen Leaving Ben's House

#104 Bill Won't Stay At Ben's House

C03017 #105 Bill Leaves Ben's House

#106 Ben Argues With Bill

#107 Jessie & Kitt Talk

#108 Ben Returns Home

C03018 #109 Bill Tells Aunt Mary About The Baby

#110 Peggy Learns Of Bill's Plans

#111 Bill Tells Kitt He Doesn't Love Her

#112 Kitt Warned About Bill & Peggy

C03019 #113 Aunt Mary & Lefty Talk

#114 Bill Insists On A Divorce

#115 Bill Gets A Lawver

#116 Ben & Kitt Talk

C03020 #117 Nick & Peggy Run Into Jessie

#118 Nick & Peggy Quarrel

#119 Bill Decides To Fight For Custody

#120 David & Aunt Mary

Discuss Bill's Simanon

C03021 #121 Bill Tells Aunt Mary & David Of His Custody Decision

#122 Ltsa & Paul Are Leaving For Chicago

#123 Peggy Admits She Is In Love With Bill

#124 Peggy Telis Nick

She Is In Love With Bill

C03022 #125 Peggy Tells Of Her Marriage Plans

#126 Nick Confesses He [s In Love With Peggy

#127 Nick & Kitt Talk In A Cocktail Bar

#128 Wedding Plans

C03023 #129 Kitt Drops By To Talk To David

#130 Nick Wants To Talk To Peggy In Person

#131 Bill & Kitt Talk

#132 Bill Tells Kitt He Wants

Custody Of The Child

FAMILY DOCTOR

C04312 # 1 False Witness

2 Wanted, A Bright Youngster

#3 Error In Diagnosis

#4 Enjoyment

C04313 # 5 Once To Every Boy

6 Cupid Without Wines

7 Glass Houses

8 A Race With The Stock

C04314 # 9 A Secret Between Three

#10 The Flood #11 The Fatty Brain

#12 Farewell To Johnny

C04315 #13 The Fire Alarm

#14 Bison Pete's Revenge

#15 The Love Scene

#16 The New Home

C04316 #17 Nature Takes It's Course

#18 Tolerance

#19 The Prospectors

#20 All Bets Are Off

C04317 #21 Dr. Adams Detective

#22 The Committee Meeting

#23 Pete May, Ambulence Driver

#24 Louder Than Words

C04318 #25 The Camival

#26 Patchwork

#27 Chick's Date

#28 The Beauty Contest

C04319 #29 Casting

#30 The Pageant

#31 The Doctor Goes Shopping

#32 House Cleaning

C04320 #33 Campaigning

#34 The New Suit

#35 New Folks

#36 Out Of Control

C04321 #37 The Call

#38. The Decision

#39 Farewell To Cedarton

(End of the series)

ETERNAL LIGHT

C06696 01/14/45 #15 Life Of Solomon Scheshter 01/21/45 #16 The Life Of Rabbi Israel Salater C06697, 02/04/45, #18. The Life Of Dr Waldeman. Mordecai Haffkine

02/11/45 #19 Mr. Lincoln & The Rabbi

C06698 02/18/45 #20 The Life Of Rebecca Grate 03/04/45 #22 The Life Of Sholom Aleichem

C06699 03/11/45 #23 The Life Of Cyrus Adler 03/18/45 #24 The Life Of Rabbi

Asaac M. Wise

C06700 03/25/45 #25 A Second Exodus 04/08/45 #27 The Seed & The Dream

C06701 04/22/45 #29 Henrietta Szold

04/29/45 #30 The Death Of Akiba

C06702 05/13/45 #32 The Book Of Ruth 05/20/45 #33 As A Driven Leaf

C06703 05/27/45 #34 Story Of An American 06/03/45 #35 The Lie

C06704 06/10/45 #36 Jacob & The Indians 06/17/45 #37 The Tabernacie in Duke's Place

C06705 06/24/45 #38 The Bar Mitzuah Of Private Cohen 07/08/45 #40 The Jukebox & The Synagogue

C06706 07/15/45 #41 Hear Ye, Sons Part I 07/22/45 #42 Hear Ye. Sons Part 2

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