



Volume 34, Number 10

October, 2009

## ***The Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar Multi-Part "Matter"***

**By Stewart Wright, Copyright 2009**

### ***Notes:***

*All Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar multi-part "Matters" mentioned in this article can be found in the RHAC Tape and CD Libraries. Most of the half-hour YTJD "Matters" mentioned in this article are not found in the RHAC Libraries.*

*Shows from other series mentioned in this article that can be found in the RHAC Tape and/or CD Libraries are followed by a letter-number combination in square brackets [ ], that indicates the RHAC Tape or CD Number for that specific episode..*

*The spellings of all Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar episode titles mentioned in this article are taken from series scripts. The spelling of episode titles from other series are taken, for the most part, from various archival sources including scripts.*

When *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* returned to the CBS air waves on October 03, 1955 after a year's hiatus, it came back as a 15-minute, weekday, serialized series. A total of 55 multi-part "Matters" (53 five-part, one six-part, and

one nine-part) were produced when the last installment of "The Silent Queen Matter" was aired on November 2, 1956. For the remainder of its run, *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* reverted to a once-a-week, 30-minute format.

With 75 minutes of air time minus commercials, there was sufficient time to develop good story lines and interesting characters. The weekday, serialized *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* episodes are often acknowledged as some of the finest radio detective shows ever produced.

### **From Whence They Came**

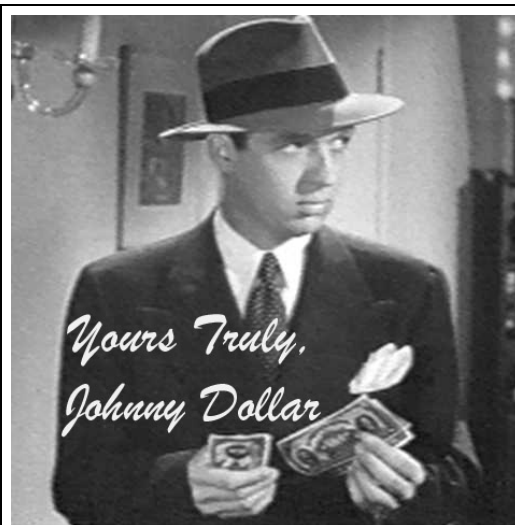
No fewer than 22 of these multi-part "Matters" reused scripts from earlier, half-hour *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* episodes and/or from other series. These determinations of reuse were made by listening to many shows and reading and comparing numerous scripts.

The reuse of scripts probably had been an industry practice since at least the 1930's, but definitely became more common as the fortunes of network radio were declining in the mid 1950's. *Yours Truly, Johnny*

*Dollar* director/producer/writer Jack Johnstone provided insight into the reuse of radio scripts in a

1983 interview by John Dunning [T412]. Johnstone mentioned that he started writing radio scripts in the latter part of the 1950's because "as the fees for

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Bob Bailey as Johnny Dollar

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### 2009 Convention Schedules

**34th Friends of Old-time Radio Convention;** Oct 22 – 25, 2009 at the Holiday Inn, Newark, NJ; Info; Jay Hickerson, 27436 Desert Rose Ct, Leesburg, FL 34748 (352) 727-6731, JayHick@aol.com, or web site <http://www.fotr.net>

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**RETURN WITH US NOW...**

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**October, 2009**

writing for TV shows got bigger and fatter, these fellows, writers such as Les Crutchfield and John Dawson, all moved over to TV."

Luckily, Crutchfield and Dawson were still available for radio writing assignments when the multi-part *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar* "Matters" were in production. These two writers were responsible for 35 of the 55 multi-part productions with Les Crutchfield writing 17 and John Dawson 18. Four of Crutchfield's efforts reused half-hour *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar* scripts he has previously authored. All 18 of John Dawson's multi-part scripts reused half-hour *YTJD* scripts he had written or co-written and/or scripts he had created for other series.

### **Script Changes**

The half-hour scripts were extended to fit the roughly 75-minute content needed for the multi-part daily shows (90 minutes for "The Kranesburg Matter.")

This was primarily accomplished by expanding existing dialog, addition of new scenes and dialog which often included new characters that were not present in the original scripts, and brief plot summaries of previous parts of the current story line. An additional device was used to fill the remaining additional air time for each 15-minute episode: an extended playing of the new closing theme music which generally lasted from a minute to over a minutes and a half.

When a *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar* half-hour script was reused as the basis for a multi-part "Matter," there was always a leading actor change and usually at least a few crew and/or guest cast differences from the original production. Additionally, title changes were usually made to the new production. Since the new production was of a longer length, dialog changes usually entailed the addition of entire scenes and additional characters.

If the script was reused from different series, modifications could be minor or significant. Series-specific changes such as opening, closing, and between acts segments and locale and characters' names were to be expected. Cast and crew changes were made, episode title changes were common, and dialog alterations were to be expected.

### **Les Crutchfield's Writing Activities** **For *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar***

From the late 1940's through the mid-1950's, Les Crutchfield was a highly sought after radio script

writers/story adaptor. Crutchfield wrote approximately 500 scripts for radio. His series credits included *Escape*, *Fort Laramie*, *Gunsmoke*, *Rogers Of The Gazette*, *Romance*, *Suspense*, *T-Man*, *The Columbia Workshop*, *The Man Called X*, and *The Story Of Doctor Kildare*.

Crutchfield scribed 92 *Johnny Dollar* scripts: six half-hour scripts in 1953-54 and eighty-six 15-minute scripts for the five-day-a-week portion of the series' run during 1955-56.

Four of Crutchfield's half hour scripts were reused as the basis for the multi-part, five-day-a-week, 15-minute adventures:

"The Ben Bryson Matter" 12/29/1953 became "The Confidential Matter" 09/10/1956 – 09/14/1956,

"The Beauregard Matter" 01/26/1954 became "The Kranesburg Matter" 08/24/1956 – 08/31/1956 (six parts),

"The Piney Corners Matter" 03/23/1954 became "The Shady Lane Matter" 07/09/1956 – 07/13/1956, and

"The Dan Frank Matter" 05/04/1954 became "The Open Town Matter" 07/23/1956 – 07/27/1956.

The airing of his last multi-part *YTJD* script, "The Primrose Matter," would mark the end of Crutchfield's association with the series featuring "The Man With The Action-Packed Expense Account." From this point on, Crutchfield would limit his radio script writing mainly to *Gunsmoke*.

### **A Man Who Never Was Writes** **For *Johnny Dollar***

E. Jack Neuman was one of the most in-demand script writers/adaptors during Radio's Golden Age. (He also did a great deal of writing for television and motion pictures.) Among his many radio writing credits were numerous scripts for four very popular detective series:

*Jeff Regan, Investigator*; *The Adventures Of Sam Spade*; *Richard Diamond, Private Detective*; and *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*.

He was the most prolific writer of the *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar* multi-part story lines; eighteen of the fifty-five 1955-56 multi-part stories were written by Neuman. Yet, he is not credited with writing any of them. An omission? No, Neuman also wrote using the pen name, John Dawson, when he wrote the scripts for those multi-part *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar* stories. He also used that pen name when he served as a "script doctor" adapting many

*Have Gun, Will Travel* television scripts for radio. Exactly why E. Jack Neuman used the John Dawson pen name isn't exactly clear and may remain one of the many small mysteries that are associated with Old-Time Radio.

In several instances, two half-hour scripts by E. Jack Neuman were merged to make a multi-part "Matter." These combinations could involve two half-hour *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* scripts or a *Dollar* script and a script from another series for which Neuman wrote. Scripts from the previously mentioned detective series were adapted for *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*. All of Neuman's multi-part "Matter" scripts were credited to his alter ego, John Dawson.

Disclaimer: There are many 30-minute detective series scripts by E. Jack Neuman for which broadcasts do not survive. It is possible that some of these 30-minute scripts for these missing broadcasts also could have been reused for the John Dawson multi-part "Matters." Such a determination would require an examination of the scripts for the 'missing' episodes.

**Jeff Regan and Sam Spade Become Johnny**

Four *Jeff Regan, Investigator* scripts by E. Jack Neuman which initially aired between July 17, 1948 and August 21, 1948 later became multiple-part *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* "Matters" with Neuman's alter ego, John Dawson, receiving the writing credits. Additionally, Neuman retained the writing credits when two of these *Regan* scripts were also recycled on *The Adventures Of Sam Spade* and one was also reused as a half-hour *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* episode.

*Jeff Regan, Investigator* 07/17/1948 episode "The Story of the Prodigal Daughter" [T1657]

Became

*YTJD* 06/18/1956 – 06/22/1956 episodes "The Pearling Matter"

*Jeff Regan, Investigator* 08/07/1948 episode "The Story of the Man Who Liked the Mountain" [T1657]

Became

*YTJD* 04/02/1956 – 04/06/1956 episodes "The Salt City Matter"

*Jeff Regan, Investigator* 08/14/1948 episode "The Story of the Diamond Quartet" [T1657]

and

*The Adventures Of Sam Spade* 07/24/1949 episode "The Tears of Night Caper" [T5167]

Became

*YTJD* 05/21/1956 – 05/25/1956 episodes "The Tears of Night Matter."

(NOTE: At the end of the *Sam Spade* 07/24/1949 broadcast, Gil Doud and Bob Tallman are credited as the writers. However, the script for "The Tears of Night Caper" lists Neuman as the writer. I believe the writing credits at the end of this broadcast are in error because E. Jack Neuman had previously written "The Diamond Quartet," which is basically the same radio play, a year earlier for *Jeff Regan, Investigator*.)

*Jeff Regan, Investigator* 08/21/1948 episode "The Story of the Man Who Came Back" [T1254]

Became

*The Adventures Of Sam Spade* 08/07/1949 episode "The Champion Caper" [T903 & T5167]

Later became

*YTJD* 12/12/1952 episode "The Elliott Champion Matter"

And finally became

*YTJD* 02/20/1956 – 02/24/1956 episodes "The Bennet Matter" ----- **(to be Continued)**

Answers to the horror trivia quiz on page 5

13. H - Inner Sanctum Mysteries
12. G - They Mysterious Traveler
11. K - Lights Out
10. I - The Shadow
9. L - Escape
8. M - Suspense
7. F - The Whistler
6. B - The Witches Tale
5. D - Mystery House
4. A - The Sealed Book
3. C - The Hall of Fantasy
2. J - The Black Museum
1. E - Dimension X

# The Trivial Matter of the Openings for OTR's Horror Shows

*Match the opening lines/sound effects with the show title. Fill in the name of the show in the blank space indicated or after the description.*

- 1) "I am \_\_\_\_\_ and I know many things, for I walk by night."
- 2) "This is Orson Welles, speaking from London."  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3) "And Now \_\_\_\_\_, (drums, footsteps)  
Welcome to the series of radio dramas  
dedicated to the supernatural, the unusual, and  
the unknown."
- 4) (cackling laughter) "Once again, the keeper of  
the book.." \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) "This is Bela Lugosi, welcoming you to  
\_\_\_\_\_".
- 6) "We bring you \_\_\_\_\_ written and produced  
by Alonzo Dean Cole. And now, let us join old  
Nancy, Witch of Salem, and Satan, her wise  
black cat."
- 7) "Adventures in time and space, told in *future*  
tense ..." \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) (tolling bell) "This is the man in black, here to  
introduce..." \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) "Tired of the everyday grind? Do you dream of  
a life of romantic adventure? Wanna get away  
from it all? We offer you \_\_\_\_\_!"
- 10) "Who knows what evil LURKS in the hearts of  
men? \_\_\_\_\_ knows."

- 11) "\_\_\_\_\_ for (*episode name*). It... is...  
later... than... you... think."
- 12) (Train whistle, footsteps, train passing) "This is  
\_\_\_\_\_ inviting you to join me on another  
journey into the realm of the strange and the  
terrifying..."
- 13) (swelling organ music) "Lipton tea and Lipton  
soup present \_\_\_\_\_ (long squeak) Good  
evening, friends, this is your horror host at the  
squeaking door ..."

- A. **The Sealed Book**
- B. **The Witches Tale**
- C. **The Hall of Fantasy**
- D. **Mystery House**
- E. **Dimension X**
- F. **The Whistler**
- G. **The Mysterious Traveler**
- H. **Inner Sanctum Mysteries**
- I. **The Shadow**
- J. **The Black Museum**
- K. **Lights Out**
- L. **Escape**
- M. **Suspense**

(Answers on Page 4)

## The End of a Legend by Paul Barringer

On Friday September 18, 2009 the light went out on the television program "Guiding Light". Some of you might ask, so what, lots of television shows come and go, why is this one so different? This, the oldest soap opera in broadcast history, made its debut on RADIO on NBC in 1937. The Guiding Light as it was then called, ran on NBC till 1946, then on CBS radio from 1947-1956 and made its debut on CBS television in 1952.

No, that's not a typo, the show existed both on radio and television at the same time, from 1952-1956, with the shows actors recording their parts twice each day. The show was written by Irna Phillips, who based the program on her personal experiences.

At the age 19, Phillips gave birth to a still-born

infant. Phillips found comfort during these difficult times by listening to Chicago preacher Preston Bradley and his on-air sermons which stressed the brotherhood of man. These sermons formed the basis for her radio creation.

The shows title referred to a lamp in the program in the study of Reverend John Rutledge, a preacher in the fictional suburb called Five Points, in Chicago. The story line revolved around him and all the people of the fictional suburb. The lamp was seen as a sign for family and residents of the suburb to find help when needed.

In later radio years, the show's setting moved to the fictional suburb of Selby Flats in Los Angeles California, where succeeding preachers continued the work started by Reverend Rutledge earlier.

Some actors and actresses appearing on the radio show were Arthur Peterson, Jr., Mercedes McCambridge, Sarajane Wells, Vivian Fridell, Ed Prentiss, Peggy Fuller, Muriel Brenner, Gladys Heen, Dorothy Reynolds, Gloria Blondell, Dorothy Lovett, Jone Allison, Arnold Moss, Bert Cowlan, James Monk, Theodore von Eltz, Theo Goetz, Gloria Brandt, Adelaide Klein, Lyle Sudrow, Laurette Fillbrant, Charlotte Holland, Helen Wagner, Ann Shepard, Charita Bauer, Larry Haines, Herbert "Herb" Nelson, Tarry Green, James Lipton, Raymond Edward Johnson, Sam Wanamaker, Phil Dakin, Marvin Miller, Donald Briggs, Williard Waterman, Staats Cotsworth, Hugh Studebaker, Gertrude Warner, Lesley Woods, and Maurice Tarplin

Some names on the television program included, Theo Goetz, Jone Allison, Lyle Sudrow, Ed Begley, Sr. James Lipton, Ed Prentiss, Ruth Warrick, Alice Yourman, Lester "Les" Damon, Sandy Dennis, John Gibson, Joseph Campanella, along with others.

Although there were attempts made by other popular radio serials to convert to television, not all of them saw the success that Guiding Light had. Guiding Light never had any difficulty holding onto its old listening audience and simultaneously acquiring new viewers

As recently as 1991-1992 the television program drew 6.5 million viewers, but, drawing only 2.1 million this season, it was inevitable that the light be extinguished bringing an end to 72-years of broadcasting, and setting a record for longevity that will never be broken.



## ***New in the Tape and CD Libraries***

**by Maletha King**

This month we offer 14 shows of "Burns and Allen", with two of them in a miscellanies reel. These shows make us realize just how talented that lady was. It takes a very skillful actress to play that dumb.

Now that summer is fading there will be more time inside for our members to listen to OTR shows and I certainly feel that this month's offering will help you to enjoy your indoor time.

We still have need for a local member to help your club by volunteering just a couple of hours a month to stamp, label and mail out the newsletters. If you can help please contact me at the phone number on top of page two.

As some of you know, RHAC member Rich Pekari has been involved in a project where he's been converting our library of 16" transcription disks to CDs. The process basically involves playing the disks into his computer and then burning them to CDs.

Unfortunately, Rich has moved out of the area and can no longer continue with this activity. Consequently we are also looking for someone who would like to take over this very interesting project. The club will supply the transcription turntable, CDs and whatever other materials are needed.

If you're interested please contact Larry Weide at the RHAC email address near the top of page two.



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