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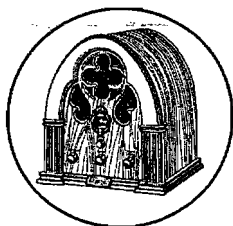


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Club Mailing Address

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Lancaster, NY 14086



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Ed WANAT's Clips

(This column is made up of clippings from various publications gathered over the years by Ed Wanat)

Edgar Bergen (and Charlie McCarthy)

By AL MARTINEZ

Edgar Bergen is a soft spoken international star and American institution whose career has spanned 55 years and every entertainment medium. His companion is Charlie McCarthy, who is, as Bergen likes to say, "of the distinguished Wisconsin Pines."

Bergen tries very hard to be kindly to Charlie. He rarely refers to him as a dummy. The person who built Charlie back in 1922 was, for instance, "a figure maker." When Bergen ships Charlie as luggage on their flights across the country and around the world, he tells his little friend he is simply flying "economy class." "He's very sensitive Bergen whispers."

Charlie on the other hand makes no effort to spare the feelings of his companion, although, one suspects his needling is done in good fun. It is simply his nature to be childish. An acid wit has been his form of communication since high school days. Bergen is his foil. "Bergen is nothing without me." Charlie adds. "He is dull and you may quote me." To interview "them" is to converse with two people, and one must strain to bear in mind that they are both Edgar Bergen, ventriloquist. It is easy to forget as they talk that Charlie is made of wood and sits on Bergen's knee and is able to speak or move only at Bergen's will. It seems perfectly natural, for instance that when Bergen is speaking and Charlie is agreeing with what he is saying that Charlie should nod casually. When Bergen forgets the name of a city or the year they played Akron, why shouldn't Charlie remind him?

"Just last year we did Century Plaza." Charlie will say. "Oh, yes." Bergen adds, "we were invited to appear with . . ." He frowns, trying to remember. "Arthur Fiedler," Charlie reminds him. "Yes, Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops. We'll be playing with him again in August, and we've done symphonies in San Diego and Minneapolis . . ."

"We're up to our neck in symphonies," Charlie says. They both laugh. Again, together. Such is the total illu-

sion that Bergen creates with perfection that even listening to them on tape it seems their conversations overlap.

The interview alternates between Bergen's home in Beverly Hills, which he shares with his wife of 31 years, Francis and their 15-year old son Kris, and the Bergen office over a Chinese restaurant on Sunset Blvd. At both places there is memorabilia of his life in show business, from vaudeville through radio and television to movies and nightclubs. There are innumerable photographs and medals and trophies and scepters and scrolls, on the walls and in cases next to Charlie McCarthy dolls and Charlie McCarthy T shirts.

Displayed prominently in the study of his home is a color photograph of his daughter, the actress Candice Bergen. "She's making a little money now," Bergen says, smiling and glancing at the picture, "so she's more conservative than she used to be." "They get that way," Charlie adds.

Bergen was born on the west side of Chicago, the son of Swedish immigrants. He began Mimicking in the seventh grade. "I copied people, animals and birds, and my classmates seemed to enjoy it, so I kept it up. Then one day I tried a distant voice. I was sitting at home with my mother and said 'Hello there,' trying to make it sound as though it was coming from outside. She got up from the table and went to the door. I guess that was the beginning."

He sent for books, Bergen says, but ventriloquism was more a hobby than a dedicated lifetime ambition. "It came easy," he says, "I just stumbled into it."

Charlie was born when Bergen was in high school and their first show was a high school recital. They began playing fairs and churches and hotels, then went on the old Orpheum Circuit. Sometimes in those early days, it would be Bergen and Charlie alone on the road and in hotel rooms. They would rehearse together, Bergen says, but he never really counted on Charlie for company.

"It never went quite that far," he says, blue eyes twinkling. "But I always insisted on separate beds," Charlie adds. Then he whispers to Bergen, "Don't tell him too much."

Is Charlie real? Bergen thinks about that for a moment. "Sometimes," he finally says, "he comes out with things that surprise me. (circa 1977)

*Edgar Bergen passed away on
September 29, 1978 at the age of 75.*

The Falcon

(Continued from last month)

Mike whistled. "Better call Carol and ask her, Nancy," he said. "That's a lot of dough for a thing like that." "Nope." Nancy shook her head firmly. "She doesn't want to sell it and anyway, I wouldn't disturb her."

Mrs. Lattimore registered polite regret. "It doesn't really fit in this room," she said with some truth. "I warn you, I've set my heart on having it . . ." Mike downed the last of his drink. "Suppose you drop around tomorrow," he suggested briskly, "when Mrs. Drew can talk to you herself. Wouldn't that be the best solution?" Nancy glared at him. He met the glare with bland good humor. "We-ell," Mrs. Lattimore said doubtfully. "I hadn't planned on being in the neighborhood tomorrow . . ." She hesitated, and seemed to make-up her mind.

"Very well. Perhaps that would be best. And now I must really be going." Mike accompanied her to the door. Nancy stayed where she was. By the time Mike returned she had already put out all the lights and was on her way upstairs. "Going to bed already?" Mike asked. "Yes." If the temperature of Nancy's voice could have been measured, it would have been found to be sub-zero.

"What's the matter?" She didn't answer, and Mike, climbing the stairs after her, chuckled delightedly. "I believe the wench is jealous!" he said. Nancy sniffed. "Jealous? Me? Of that road-company Hedy Lamar? Hah!" She went into her room and closed the door behind her with a click. Grinning, Mike entered his own room.

Some time later, Mike woke up all at once, and lay there, listening. Quietly, he raised his arm and looked at the illuminated dial on his wrist; it was a few minutes before two o'clock. The rain had stopped, and there was silence except for a slow, muted dripping from the eaves. That, and—and whatever it was that had wakened him. Now he heard it again: a movement, a bumping noise, in the room below him. That would be the living room.

He slipped out of bed, found his robe in the dark and put it on. Barefoot, he moved across the room and out into the hall. He could hear the sound more plainly now; without any doubt, someone was prowling around the living room. He crept down the stairs to a point from which he could see into the room. A tiny beam of light darted around in there, flicking from one spot to another and never lingering anywhere for more than a second.

Mike made the last part of his journey in one gigantic leap, landing squarely on the shadow which held the light. The light gave way to a blackness filled with scuffling sounds, then Mike's voice calling loudly, "Nancy! Carol! Come down here and turn on some lights!" The figure under him squirmed desperately in the darkness. It wasn't very big, but it was wiry and active and had a disconcerting quality of slipperiness. Finally Mike located a head. Grasping it firmly in both hands, he lifted it and brought it down smartly on the floor, which luckily was not covered by a carpet at that point. The figure relaxed, a few seconds before Nancy ran in and turned on the lights. She was followed by Carol, clutching a negligee around her and with her mouth rounded ready for a scream.

The man with the white mustache blinked up at them dazedly from the floor. "Call the police, somebody," Mike commanded, "and tell them to send someone around to pick this guy up." Keeping the man pinned down by the weight of his own body, he took the edge of the mustache between thumb and forefinger and pulled. "Ow!" the man said, and water came into his eyes: "Not false after all," Mike said in mild surprise. "Oh, well, he didn't have any, business here anyway. Breaking and entering," he reproved the man on the floor. "When will you boys learn that's bad?" "All right, all right," the intruder said crossly. "You've got me. You can skip the smart cracks."

"Just as you like," Mike agreed. From his position astride the man, he glanced around the room "Hey!" he said. "The egg's gone." He patted the man's body with his hands. "And you haven't got it on you, either. What did you do with it?" "Never found it," the man said sulkily.

Nancy, returning from the telephone, said to Mike, "It's all right about the egg I put it away last night, before I went upstairs. The cops'll be here in a minute." "Good. Where'd you put the egg?" "Never you mind," Nancy said darkly. She went back and stood beside Carol in the doorway, her lips drawn into a thin line. It was plain that the mere capture of a would-be burglar was not enough to make her forgive Mike.

The squad car arrived a few minutes later, and White-mustache was removed. "You'll finger-print him, of course?" Mike said to the policeman. "Good. I'll come down to the station in the morning. I'd like to know who he is—I'll bet anything you like he's got a record."

As the front door closed, Carol emitted a tremendous gasp and sank limply down onto the stairs. "I wish I'd given him his wretched egg this afternoon!" she said. "I don't know when I've been so terrified. And—Mike!—he

might have killed you!" "If he'd had a gun," Mike assented. "But he didn't. Bloodshed isn't in our little friend's line. But you've got a much better customer for the egg—a lady willing to pay a hundred dollars for it."

"A hundred—Who?" Briefly, while Nancy stood by in disapproving silence, Mike told her about Mrs. Lattimore. "And she's coming again tomorrow?" Carol asked. "She said she would. And I've a hunch," Mike grinned, "that she'll keep her promise. She rather wants that egg—says it's a nineteenth-century Bavarian object of art." Nancy's lip curled. "If there's any nineteenth-century Bavarian object of art mixed up in this business, it's Mrs. Lattimore herself. Don't you let her have that egg, Carol!"

"I—" Carol looked bewildered. "I don't even know where it is. You've hidden it." "It's your egg. Dickie gave it to you. If you decide to sell it I can't stop you, and I'll tell you where it is." But Carol wasn't listening. "Dickie!" she said. "Goodness, I forgot all about him. Do you suppose he's slept through all this?" Dickie, it developed when they went upstairs, had done exactly that. "I'm glad," Carol said relievedly. "So much excitement would be bad for him. It's bad for me too, as far as that goes," she added. "Nancy, I just don't want to see that woman tomorrow—this whole business scares me!" Nancy patted her shoulder. "You'll feel different in the morning. Let's all try to get some more sleep." "I'll spend the rest of the night on the couch downstairs," Mike remarked. "The window our friend jimmed open just might be a temptation to someone else."

Morning came, however, without any further disturbances, and the familiar routine of preparing breakfast and getting Dickie off to school made everyone feel more normal. As soon as breakfast was over, Mike announced that he was going to drop in at the police station to check up on their night's visitor. "If Mrs. Lattimore should come while I'm gone," he told Nancy, "stall her until I get back, will you?" "Sorry," Nancy said. "I know it will be a tragedy for you to miss her, but you'll simply have to take your chances. I can't promise to do any stalling." "Okay." He regarded her pensively. "You know, you're cute when you turn up your nose like that."

Mike took Dickie along, to drop him at school; and once they were alone in the house, Carol and Nancy attacked the dishes and the unmade beds. Carol was still somewhat on edge, inclined to drop saucers and sweep the same area of floor twice, and once when the telephone rang she uttered a small scream. But it was only some-

one calling to remind her that she had promised to bake a cake to be auctioned off at the Parent-Teacher Association bazaar.

"I feel guilty," Nancy told her, "for having brought Mike up here. I might have known something upsetting would happen if I did. Trouble follows him around like a faithful dog." "Oh, I'm glad he's here!" Carol assured her. "What I'd have done last night without him in the house I'm sure I don't know." "You probably wouldn't have known anyone had broken into the house," Nancy said, "and you'd have had a good night's sleep." Carol glanced around the kitchen apprehensively, to guard against possible eavesdroppers. "Where did you put that egg, Nancy?" she asked, and then quickly recoiled from her own daring. "No, don't tell me. I don't want to know. If that woman comes, you talk to her. You don't think I ought to let her have it, do you?" "No, I do not!" "Then I'd better not even know where it is," Carol decided. "I might weaken."

Mike came back, about ten o'clock, to find them both in the living room. Carol was mending some of Dickie's clothes, and Nancy was darning one of Richard's socks. "A peaceful domestic scene," Mike commented. "No one would guess, looking at you, that you had ever been objects of interest to Roggy O'Dowd, alias The Pinch, alias Horace Hewlett, alias goodness knows how many other things. Yet you were, not eight hours ago."

"Mike!" Nancy exclaimed, forgetting for the moment that she was angry at him. "He had all those names, the little man with the mustache?" "Without a doubt," Mike assured her. "Also a police record as long as my arm." "What about the egg?" "Our friends the police know nothing of any egg, Nancy. If you'll remember, we didn't mention it to them last night, and Roggy has chosen to be reticent on the subject too. At least, I couldn't find any evidence that he discussed it at the station." "But then—" Nancy looked blank. "We aren't any farther along in knowing what this is all about than we were last night." "Not much farther," Mike agreed. "But we do know that Roggy isn't the only person who knows why the egg is valuable. There is always Mrs. Lattimore coming to see us now." "Oh, I can't—" Carol said, and half rose from her chair, and subsided into it again. Mike was at the front door before the bell rang "Come in, come in, Mrs. Lattimore," they heard him say cordially.

Mrs. Lattimore wore an outfit of brilliant color and cut. Her makeup job, Nancy noted, was as expert as ever, and her hair was as black as Nancy's opinion of her. She swept into the room, smiled insincerely at Nancy,

and acknowledged her introduction to Carol with a spate of words: "Mrs. Drew! It's so kind of you to see me, and I do hope you won't think I'm intruding, but the fact is I've set my heart on having that perfectly intriguing Easter egg I saw here last night. She broke off, staring at the spot on the end table where the egg had rested. "Where is it?" she demanded, in quite a different tone. "What have you done with it?"

To tell the truth, Mrs. Lattimore," Mike said, "I don't know. We had a little excitement here after you'd gone. Someone broke into the house, and—" "He stole it!" Mrs. Lattimore cried; in fact, she very nearly screeched. "Roggy O'Dowd stole it back again! Oh, you fools, you idiots!" Her eyes generated lightning. "Do you know what you've done?—you've let a cheap little crook get his hands on one of the—" She stopped, biting her lips.

"Yes, Mrs. Lattimore?" Mike prompted. "Get his hands on what? Is it a diamond, or an emerald, or what? We'd love to know." "I'll bet you would," Mrs. Lattimore said sullenly. "But I'm not going to tell you." Her bitterness spilled over once more. "If I hadn't tried to play it fancy last night, I'd have made you hand over that egg right then and there, and Roggy would've found it gone when he came looking for it! Instead, he grabbed it and there's no telling where he is by this time!" "On the contrary," Mike said mildly. "Mr. O'Dowd is comfortably established in the Darien jail. I saw him there barely an hour ago."

Mrs. Lattimore whirled on him. "And the egg? Where is it?" "I told you I didn't know." Mike pointed with his pipestem at Nancy, who was putting the last few stitches on Richard's sock. "Miss Collins here took the egg last night and—ah—put it away somewhere. In plain words, she hid it." "Oh, she did, did she?" Mrs. Lattimore said in a low, dangerous voice. "Well, I'm tired of playing around with you characters. I want," she said directly to Nancy, "that egg." Nancy raised the sock to her lips and delicately bit off a thread. "Do you?" she said. "Why?" "Because it's mine, that's why! Roggy O'Dowd stole it from me. He pretended to be a peddler and sold it, thinking he could come back and pick it up again when the coast was clear. But it belonged to me all the time." "Very interesting," Mike commented. "You mentioned last night that you sometimes imported objects of art, Mrs. Lattimore. Do I understand that you imported this egg—possibly without paying any duty on it?" "You're pretty smart, aren't you?" Mrs. Lattimore snapped. Her hand darted into the bag she carried, and emerged holding a neat and shiny revolver, which she pointed at Mike. "Collins," she said, "or whatever your name is, get that egg and give it to me before I shoot your boy friend." Carol screamed. "For goodness sake, Nancy," she said, "give

her the egg. With a sigh, Nancy stood up. "I suppose I'll have to," she said. She walked across the room, carrying the sock she had just darned, until she was within a foot or so of Mrs. Lattimore. Here she suddenly relaxed her hold on the sock so it dangled to its full length, weighted down by a large round object in its toe.

"There's your egg!" she said, and brought the sock down on Mrs. Lattimore's hand, the one holding the revolver. The revolver promptly went off, Mike jumped in the direction of Mrs. Lattimore, and Carol screamed.

Half an hour later, it was all over. Mrs. Lattimore was on her way to join Mr. O'Dowd in jail, and the egg was in the custody of the police. Carol was stretched out on the couch, sniffing smelling-salts, and Nancy was sitting near Mike.

"It was pretty obviously a smuggling job of some sort," Mike was saying. "Something was concealed in the egg, and there wouldn't have been any point in hiding whatever it was, except to get it past customs inspectors. We could have turned the egg over to the police, of course, but if we had we wouldn't have caught Mrs. Lattimore, or whatever her real name is. So I decided the best thing was to string along with her until she made a move we could have her arrested for."

"But how about the other one—Roggy O'Dowd?" Nancy asked. "Was he her confederate?" "No, I don't think so. We can't be sure, but my hunch is Lattimore was telling the truth. Crooks are awful gossips, you know, and the chances are that Roggy found out Mrs. Lattimore was bringing something pretty valuable into the country."

The telephone rang, and Mike got up to answer it. "That was the station," he said when he came back. "They chiseled the egg open. What do you think was inside it?—an emerald about as big as the egg yolk would have been—if it had had a yolk, of course." He threw himself down in the chair nearest Nancy, and reached over to seize her hand. "Too bad," he said pensively, "that such a beautiful woman is going to end up in the Federal penitentiary."

Nancy snatched her hand away. "You thought she was beautiful?" she demanded. "Well, I must say I didn't!" Then she caught Mike's eye and saw the twinkle in it. "I knew all along," Mike said, "that the surest way to keep you from handing over the egg to Mrs. Lattimore was to make you jealous."



AH! THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

by LAWRENCE MEYER

Each Monday, Wednesday and Friday night, just as we were sitting down to dinner, out of the past with thundering hoofbeats and a hearty "Hi-yo, Silver!" the Lone Ranger rode into our dining room. I welcomed him. He was my friend, and the days he was not on I missed him. In fact, to this day I consider Tuesdays and Thursdays to be "down days." The Masked Man was only one of a number of radio acquaintances I made in my youth, adventurers with whom I shared scores of hairraising escapes.

And because I could hear but not see them, I used my imagination to picture the Masked Man, and his faithful guide, Tonto. I never felt particularly deprived in not being able to see them. I already knew what they and all the other people looked like. With each program, I gave the characters faces, dressed them up and provided them with settings and atmosphere. If I didn't like the heroine as a blonde, I could make her a redhead—no problem. But when I saw the Lone Ranger on television for the first time, I was disappointed; the actor (the real Lone Ranger, I knew, was still on radio) picked for the part was wrong. Disappointing, too, was the lack of imagination of the people who constructed the sets. Where I pictured vast landscapes, they settled for tacky sound stages. I envisioned mansions; they provided what looked like prefabricated housing.

One other thing: Radio somehow afforded an intimacy that television never permits. With television, the basic fact is that you're looking at a picture of something: With radio, though, you were in the action and could believe that the person on the other end was really talking just to you.

In those days, though, other kids were beginning to turn to television. Programming began then at 4 p.m. with *Kukla, Fran and Ollie*. From watching TV at friends' houses, I knew there were other actors—Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca, Buffalo Bob with Howdy Doody and Clarabelle and Mr. Bluster (Phineas T.). But mostly I knew about them because we didn't get a television set until 1955. My mother, who distrusted television, thought it would be a disruptive force, that it would ruin our meals and turn us into a family of vegetables.

With radio, no one worried about brain rot or disrupting the family. It was possible to listen quietly to radio and do something else—play checkers, clean house, bake a cake, fix a broken bike or whatever. Radio

did not insist on being watched. It was enough if you listened with one ear while doing something else. Radio was a gentle companion, not the demanding overseer that television is.

In the '40s and '50s staying home from school when I was sick meant a succession of programs, starting with *Don McNeil and the Breakfast Club*, followed by Arthur Godfrey in the morning—and then the soap operas. If some soap operas moved at a glacial pace, at least they were not the perverted, twisted, demonic fare on television now. Those soap operas had character. You knew who the good folks were, and who was bad. You knew that the good folks had traditional values and were square with their fellow human beings, spoke the truth and never dealt underhandedly. That was a different era, when America had confidence in itself and a deeply ingrained sense of its own goodness. Sex had not been invented.

I'm talking about *Oxydol's Own Ma Perkins*; *Aunt Jennie* and her "real life stories;" *Just Plain Bill*, barber of Hartville; *Our Gal Sunday* ("The story that asks the question: Can this girl from the little mining town of Silver Creek, Colorado, find happiness as the wife of a wealthy and titled Englishman?") And, *Stella Dallas: The Second Mrs. Burton*; *The Romance of Helen Trent*, (Cue announcer, Fielden Farrington, while chorus hums "Juanita": "Time now for the Romance of Helen Trent, the real-life drama of Helen Trent, who, when life mocks her, breaks her hopes, dashes her against the rocks of despair, fights back bravely, successfully to prove what so many women long to prove in their own lives: that because a woman is 35, and more, romance in life need not be over; that the romance of youth can extend into middle life, and even beyond." Humming reaches crescendo.)

And *Mary Noble*, *Backstage Wife*; *The Guiding Light* (yes, it was on radio); *Young Widder Brown*; and *Lorenzo Jones and His Wife, Belle*. Belle dropped out somewhere along the way while I was healthy and in school, and Lorenzo, who had been something of a ne'er-do-well, suddenly became an overnight success as an inventor and acquired a younger, sexier sounding spouse. That was the first warning that life might be a little more complicated than I thought.

For kids, there were programs like *Let's Pretend*, *Sky King* (and his niece, Penny), *Jack Armstrong*, *All-American Boy*, *Frank Merriwell*, *Tom Mix* and *Captain-n-n-n MIDnight* (brought to you by Ovaltine. Every week Captain Midnight gave the kids a secret message, decipherable only by using the Captain Midnight Secret Decoder Ring.)

Depending on what night of the week it was, I had a rich choice of fantasy. *The Fat Man*: ("His name, Brad Runyan. There he goes now into that drugstore. He's stepping on the scale. Weight? Two hundred thirty-nine pounds. Fortune? Danger! Who is it? *The Fat Man!*"); *Johnny Dollar*, the hard-boiled insurance investigator, ("the man with the action-packed expense account"); *Sam Spade*, played by Howard Duff.

My brother and I also liked *The Green Hornet* (and his faithful Japanese—later Filipino—servant, Cato); *The Big Story* ("the story behind the story" and the weekly presentation of the Pall Mall Award, which included something like \$200), and for light entertainment, *Fibber McGee and Molly* and Willard Waterman as *The Great Gildersleeve*. On Sunday afternoons there was Lamont Cranston, who while on a trip to the Orient had learned the secret of clouding men's minds so that he became invisible to them. He was *The Shadow* ("Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows." Diabolical laughter sends chills down your-spine.)

Sunday nights brought Fred Allen, Jack Benny, Phil Harris and Alice Faye, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, and Amos 'n' Andy. These were all real people for me, and to this day, when I see shots of actors standing in front of a microphone reading scripts, and when I learn how the sound-effects man simulated the sound of hoofbeats and fists making contact with jaws and doors slamming, I refuse to believe that had anything to do with the world I entered in those programs. By the time I listened, radio had grown sophisticated enough to tolerate the likes of Henry Morgan (whose sponsor dropped him for two weeks for mocking it on the air, only to discover that the audience was wild for that kind of irreverence) and the inspired zaniness of Bob and Ray.

In the '50s, one by one, a lot of these shows started drifting off. Jack Benny was one of the first to go. I never thought television improved his product. He was successful on television, but he was still a creature of radio. And I felt sorry for people who knew him and all the others only from television. They enjoyed the shows, to be sure, but aside from a few—Steve Allen, Sid Caesar and Ernie Kovacs—television didn't add anything to what they did. What the audience saw on television was a smaller-than-life re-creation of a world that earlier was bounded only by the limits of imagination. And it seemed to me that when some of my friends from radio got to television, they changed somehow, became remote stars rather than the simpler folks I had known. My peers may have been impressed by all those glittering "new" television stars, but I wasn't. I knew them back when.

How Top Comics Reacted to Comedy

by Don Horine

Lucille Ball once broke up and stomped her foot so heavily that the chandelier in the room below began shaking . . . Bob Hope hardly ever laughed out loud at any gag . . . and Jack Benny used to roll on the floor hysterically when he heard a great joke.

These interesting glimpses of top comedians came from veteran comedy writer Milt Josefsberg who'd been cranking out their material for nearly 40 years.

Fans remember Jack Benny as a deadpan who kept a straight face. But Josefsberg recalled that at "rehearsals and script conferences, anything you said to him that was the slightest bit humorous would get him hysterical."

"Many times he'd fall over and start rolling on the floor. One time he was wearing a brand new suit that got all dusty, but he couldn't stop." Benny's favorite gag—which he used again and again—had a holdup man walk up to the tightwad character he portrayed and demanded, "Your money or your life!" After a long pause, the holdup man would repeat his line and Benny would reply, "I'm thinking it over!"

Josefsberg added that the beloved comic was really one of the most generous men he knew. Benny once gave all his writers a solid gold money clip for Christmas—and bought another writer a \$55 sweater when he ran into him at a men's store.

"Lucille Ball is another one who'll get hysterical over a joke. But instead of rolling on the floor, she'll stomp her feet up and down," declared Josefsberg, who's recorded all these anecdotes in his book "The Jack Benny Show: The Life and Times of America's Best Loved Entertainer."

"I was once in her office which was right above her husband Gary Morton's. I told her a joke, and she broke up. She began stomping her feet so hard that the phone rang. It was her husband downstairs. 'What the hell is making the chandelier shake down here?' he wanted to know."

"Not all comedians react to jokes that way. Bob Hope for instance almost never laughs out loud. If he likes a joke the most he'll do is smile and say, 'That's good'."

Yuletide Songs

"Santa Claus is Comin' to Town"

Haven Gillespie wrote the words and J. Fred Coots the music to "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town" in 1932, but it was two years before they could get it published. During those two years the tune was turned down by practically every major music publisher in the United States. Nobody wanted it. Then Coats decided to try it out on comedian Eddie Cantor. He was writing special material for Cantor's radio show. "If Eddie will sing it," said his partner Gillespie in true show business fashion, "the song is made. We'll be swamped with publishers." Thus it was that one day in October 1934, Coots went to Eddie Cantor's home with the song. He sat down at a piano in the comedian's living room and played it. He did his own singing, too. "That's nothing but a kiddie number," said Cantor. "The public won't go for it." Over the years in his comedy act, the beloved comedian had often joked about his wife Ida. Practically everybody in America knew Ida. After the song was played that day, Ida Cantor came in from the kitchen where she had been preparing coffee. "I loved that song," Ida announced as she came into the living room carrying a tray. "It will be a hit, Eddie." Cantor still was not interested. But in the weeks that followed, his wife kept humming the tune every time Eddie was close. The comedian finally surrendered. He sang the tune on his radio show the week before Thanksgiving. It was an instantaneous hit. Ida had been right. So was Gillespie. The day after Cantor sang "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" on his program, the song writers were swamped with offers from publishers.

"Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer"

Many years ago, a young man named Johnny Marks happened to be browsing through an old Montgomery Ward catalog. On one of the pages, he happened to spot a sketch that made him chuckle. It was a drawing in the toy section of the catalog. It was a sketch of "a reindeer with a luminous nose." Years later—in 1949, to be exact—the same Johnny Marks pecked out a tune on the piano. By then, he was a well known composer of popular songs. Marks loved his latest tune. All it needed was the right lyric. It was then he recalled the sketch of the reindeer in the old Montgomery Ward catalog. The words came easy once he did. Thus was "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" written. Marks had trouble getting the song recorded. He thought it would be great for Perry Como, but RCA, which had the crooner, under contract, didn't agree. He tried some others. They all dismissed the song. Finally, he tried cowboy star Gene Autry. Once again the answer was no. But Autry's wife happened to hear the song, and she

persuaded Gene to record it. Autry decided to put the song on "the flip side" of a Christmas record he had coming out. The song on the other side, "If It Doesn't Snow On Christmas," was supposed to be the big hit. But it was Rudolph who took off. The "reindeer with a luminous nose" became a star performer on our American Christmas scene. Thus far, more than 115 million "Rudolph" records have been sold around the world. There are more than 400 different versions of the song, and it has been recorded in just about every language. In addition, Rudolph's television shows at Christmas have been delighting children, young and old since 1963.

Eddie (Rochester) Anderson

Eddie Anderson won fame on radio and television playing Jack Benny's gravel voiced chauffeur and butler. He had spent more than thirty years working with Mr. Benny. The voice that became his trademark had developed during his youth selling newspapers in San Francisco. A native of Oakland, California, Mr. Anderson was the descendant of slaves whom abolitionists smuggled north via the underground railway. His father was a minstrel show performer and his mother a circus tightrope walker.

Mr. Anderson and an older brother, Cornelius, became a vaudeville song-and-dance team in 1923. They spent more than a decade playing variety halls until Mr. Anderson settled in Los Angeles and began playing bit parts in motion pictures. His first important film role was as Noah in the film "Green Pastures." He also appeared in "Gone With the Wind," "Jezebel," "Cabin in the Sky" and many films with Jack Benny.

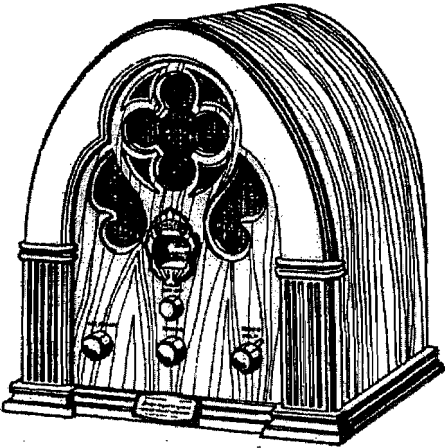
In 1937, Mr. Benny auditioned Mr. Anderson to play the part of a Pullman porter on his radio show. A train sequence had been written because the show was moving to Hollywood from New York. Mr. Anderson proved to be such a sensation in that brief appearance that Mr. Benny decided to make him a regular in the show's cast. He was the first black actor to have a regular role in a network radio show.

Mr. Anderson credited Mr. Benny with thinking up the name "Rochester" for the character he portrayed. "When I'd get mad and shout 'Rochester!' it had a really good ring to it," Mr. Benny said. The name was copyrighted, and years later Mr. Benny sold it to Mr. Anderson for \$1.

The Old Time Radio Club


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LEADS IN ROCHESTER RADIO!

CRIME DOESN'T PAY!



Mr. & Mrs. North
8:30 P. M.

Your favorite amateur sleuths, Joseph Curran and Alice Frost, re-star in another hair-raising adventure proving that crime does not pay!

Pursuit
9:30 P. M.

Radio star Ben Wright portrays Inspector Peter Black of Scotland Yard in another exciting story of the men who take the evil track down criminals!

Perry Mason — 2:15 P. M.

John Larkin stars and Joan Alexander plays the role of his secretary/confidante in this daily series about the champion of justice who outwits would-be lawbreakers.

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