

*The Old Time Radio Club*

Established 1975

# THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS

Number 267

February 1999



*Wicky wacky Swan diddle doo—  
Look what's coming on the radio-oo!  
Look who's on the way for Swan ..  
The pure new floatie you dote on !*

**GRACIE ALLEN  
GEORGE BURNS  
PAUL WHITEMAN**  
in  
**"WELL, I SWAN!"**

That darling of dumbelles, Gracie Allen, goes on the air soon for SWAN SOAP . . . with George Burns and Paul Whiteman . . . in a music-mad revel the like of which you never heard!

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Lancaster, NY 14086



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

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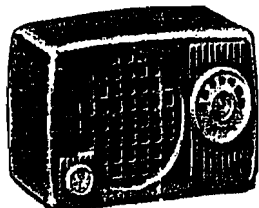
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## SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

### MY TRUE STORY

*My True Story*, a drama anthology that survived almost two decades in varying 30-, 25- and 15-minute formats, was rooted in what is generally accepted as broadcasting's first 60-minute dramatic series.

*The True Story Hour with Mary and Bob*, which debuted in January 1928 on CBS, was based on narratives adapted from *True Story* magazine. Mary was played by Nora Stirling; actors William Brenton, Cecil Secrest and David Ross appeared as Bob. The show aired for four-and-a-half years and ranked second only to *Roxy's Gang* among favorites in a poll of *New York Telegram* readers in October 1929.

The fact that a popular consumer magazine was underwriting such a series wasn't unusual. Indeed, a genre of dramatic programs was developing under auspices of several recognized journals. *The Collier Hour*, launched in 1927, was quickly joined by dramas featuring stories from *Redbook*, *True Romances* and *The American Weekly* besides *True Story*. Eventually, *True Confessions* would get into the act with serialized adaptations of some of its pulp yarns. And the magazine series doubtlessly recalled by most listeners focused on crime: *True Detective Mysteries*. While *True Detective's* ancestry dates to 1929, its most durable weekly installment ran on MBS almost exclusively Sunday afternoons between 1944-56.

In addition to *The True Story Hour with Mary and Bob*, *My True Story* — bringing stories from the pages of the same magazine to the airwaves — was preceded by another short-lived series from the same publication: *True Story Theater*, featuring Henry Hull.

Yet in its final reincarnation — *My True Story* — the weekday dramatic anthology reached its zenith, surpassing several contemporaries seeking to interest housewives in fiction without long-term commitment. The formats of most soap operas maintained open-ended, non-conclusive story lines, requiring fans to

“tune in tomorrow for another absorbing chapter.” For most of its life, however, *My True Story* offered tales in single installments, allowing its audience to miss tomorrow's episode without feeling cheated or guilty. Thus, it wasn't a true soap opera, but a morning dramatic program similar to those that listeners tuned into at night.

Radio historiographer John Dunning suggests that the studio versions were about as maudlin as some of the narratives within the publication. Quoting from a 1948 *True Story* magazine cover, he cites “Anyone Would Have Been Better than the Man My Daughter Married” as typical of the readers — and, presumably, the listeners — experienced. Both mediums pursued stories that their audiences were waiting for — about people in trouble, those pushed by unusual motives, matters of the heart and relationships and elements of surprise. It was, according to Dunning, a “morning dose of heart-break.”

The show, in a 30-minute format, debuted on a sustaining basis on the NBC Blue network (forerunner of ABC) February 15, 1943 at 3:15 p.m. By April 17, 1944 it was picked up by Libby Packing and transferred to 10 a.m. on ABC where it continued through at least 1959. Sources disagree on what happened at that juncture, some affirming that it remained at ABC another couple of years, others suggesting it transferred to NBC until 1961. (Even Dunning does not agree with himself in two books he authored.) The program ended after a final year at 8:15 a.m. on MBS in the 1961-62 season in an odd Monday-through-Thursday serialized version. In its ABC years, *My True Story* aired 30 minutes except from 1952-54 when the web experimented with unusual start/end times for some of its dramatic fare. *My True Story* aired at 10 o'clock followed by *Whispering Streets* at 10:25 (a 20-minute dramatic anthology). Following a quarter-hour *When A Girl Marries* at 10:45, at 11 o'clock ABC featured a 25-minute *Grand Central Station*. Its successor, a 15-minute *Modern Romances*, aired at 11:25. That this confusing scheduling pattern continued for two years is a real surprise.

Libby Packing underwrote *My True Story* (largely for its baby foods division) from 1944-49 when the program went to multiple sponsorship. From 1950-54 and again starting in 1955 it was sponsored by Sterling Drugs (Phillips Milk of Magnesia, Bayer aspirin, etc.). Multiple sponsors reappeared from 1954-55.

There were no regular running characters on *My True Story*. Various actors and actresses appeared on a rotating basis. Despite that, there were some constants dur-

ing much of the series' 19-year run that helped it achieve familiarity with its audience.

Glenn Riggs, a rather nasal-sounding authoritative figure, announced for most of the program's life. His commercials in the 1940s denoting "Libby McNeill and Libby" on behalf of Libby Packing are forever etched in the minds of fans who still hear him as he sounded then. How Riggs launched a career in radio is a fascinating sidelight about a man who became one of the medium's most recognizable voices.

Born July 14, 1907 at East McKeesport, Penn., Riggs grew up in nearby Pittsburgh. As a youth he showed early signs of promise in performing, taking part in glee club concerts and dramatic productions in high school and college. By the time he was 22 the nation was experiencing a stock market collapse and people weren't looking for actors. Riggs called on the personnel department at Westinghouse, headquartered in his city, seeking a factory job. An interviewer suggested that he look for something at company-owned KDKA. As Rigg's conference was drawing to a close, someone burst in, reporting that KDKA's announcer hadn't arrived. Riggs found himself in a studio a short time later, being given the daily stock quotations and told to "read." His career was off and running.

Not long after he was hosting one of the nation's first recorded breakfast programs, *The Musical Clock*. Nine years later he joined NBC. When NBC's Red and Blue networks split in 1943, he moved to the Blue where he gave 29 years to ABC radio and TV, retiring in 1972. Rigg's radio announcing credits, in addition to *My True Story*, included: *The Bing Crosby Show* (aka *The Kraft Music Hall* and *Philco Radio Time*), *The Dunninger Show*, *Ethel and Albert*, *Hop Harrigan*, *Jungle Jim*, *Lavender and New Lace*, *Mark Trail*, *Musical Varieties*, *Olivio Santoro*, *Radio Hall of Fame*, *Stairway to the Stars*, *True or False*, *Vic and Sade*. He died at 68 in Malaga, Spain Sept. 12, 1975.

Another constant during the long run of *My True Story* was theme and bridge music supplied by well known and versatile radio organist Rosa Rio. The program's theme song was especially written for the series by Hathaway and was appropriately titled "*My True Story*."

Also, the writer who adapted much of the magazine's content for radio scripts was Margaret E. Sangster, who stayed with the show most of its life. She was the author of the serial *Ellen Randolph*, wrote biblical narratives for *The Light of the World* and penned yet

another dramatic anthology *Modern Romances*. Sangster died at 90 on Oct. 23, 1981.

While the origins of *My True Story* date to the beginnings of broadcast drama, the series survived longer than almost every other dramatic forum aired during radio's golden age — in fact, extending at least two years beyond what is traditionally accepted as its demise. For any program to continue without interruption for 19 years is remarkable. The fact that a single series touched both the beginning and ending of the era is nearly unbelievable.

## "The Jack Armstrong Murder"

by Woody Smith  
(Part One)

(Ed. Note: Apparently due to an exceptional amount of snow falling in the Western New York area for the first couple of weeks in January, our regular contributors were busy shoveling instead of writing columns. I have therefore resurrected several interesting pieces from the old "*Memories*" publication which will hopefully fill the void. This article by Woody Smith was originally published by the club in 1975.)

I'm not sure how it happened. Oh, they've explained it to me several times but I can never keep it straight in my head. It started like this:

I was sitting on my back porch frying some perch on the hibachi and watching the storm coming in over the lake. I hoped to be done cooking before the storm hit but I wasn't. I burned my hands trying to pick up the hibachi and swore while the rain soaked me. It happened then, I remember distinctly. A bolt of lightning hit the gutter downspout on my cabin, rolled across the edge of the porch, and engulfed me. Before I blacked out, I remember a feeling of icy cold waves passing through me.

The first thing I saw when I woke up and focused my eyes was a body. It didn't register for a minute because I realized that I wasn't where I was. I mean, I wasn't on the back porch of my cabin on the shore of Lake Huron. I was lying face down on a blue rug in the living room of what I rightly guessed to be an apartment. A window was wide open on one wall. A cool breeze swept in and

the sunlight hurt my eyes. I got to my feet and made sure everything worked. Then I took a closer look at the body. It too, was lying face down, next to an overturned chair. The body was that of a good sized boy, maybe 15 or 16 years old. I noticed the knife in his ribs when I tried to turn him over. The blue rug was all red underneath him. The handle of the knife was heavily inlaid with some kind of jewels and wrought with gold. The boy was dead.

Just then the door opened. A tall, older man walked in, followed closely by a young boy and a young girl. They stopped and stared at me and the body. I stood up quickly. Have you ever felt as though you were guilty of something even if you weren't? I did. All I could think of to say was: "Hi."

The young girl gave a short scream and covered her eyes with her hands. The older man growled, stepped quickly towards me, and planted his right fist alongside the left side of my jaw. I saw stars for the second time in five minutes.

This time I woke up in handcuffs. An angular faced guy, wearing a felt hat, was looking at me impassively. He looked familiar. "I give up," I said "Who are you?" He didn't smile. "My name's Friday. You're under arrest for suspicion of murder. Wanna talk about it?" I was a little bewildered. I looked around. The place was full of uniformed police and people taking pictures. The three people I had seen before were in one corner. The little girl was sobbing softly on the shoulder of the young boy, while the guy who had slugged me just glared at me. I was really confused.

"Look, Friday--" I said and then something dawned. "Not . . . Joe Friday?" He still didn't smile. "Yeah," he said. "Joe's a common enough name. Now tell me yours." I realized I was looking at Jack Webb. JACK WEBB! "Don't tell me," I said. "This is Los Angeles, right?" He just wasn't amused at all. "You're full of smart guesses, aren't you, bright boy? Now are you gonna talk here or do we go downtown?" "Sure, sure, I'll talk. I didn't do anything." "That's what they all say. What's your name?" "Kyle Foster." "Why are you wearing those clothes and why are they soaked?" I looked down at my fishing clothes. "Well, when I'm up at the cabin, I fish a lot." "Cabin?" "My fishing cabin near Oscoda, Michigan." Friday looked at the heavy-set man next to him. He nodded slowly. "Let's take him downtown, Ben." They each took an arm and led me out of the apartment. "Look, I know it sounds ridic--" "Shaddup." Friday said in his monotone. "Will you at least tell me who's been killed?" Friday looked at me hard and his gaze made me feel like a low animal. "A

real smart guy, huh? I hope they let me watch you fry." "Hey, come on. Really. Who is that guy?" By this time we had reached a squad car on the street. "Don't you keep track of who you kill, punk?" he spit out the last word. As he shoved me roughly into the back seat of the car, he added. "You killed Jack Armstrong."

I sat, slumped and dejected, on the bunk in the evil smelling cell they had put me in. I was exhausted. They'd been at me for hours. "Why did you kill Jack Armstrong?" they asked me over and over again. "Where did you get the knife?" I told them again and again who I was and where I lived, and, no, I didn't know what I was doing in Armstrong's apartment. It was a nightmare. Joe Friday and Jack Armstrong. That was wrong. Something else was wrong, too, the city, I've never been in Los Angeles, our Los Angeles, that is, but as we drove through the city, it looked . . . old, somehow. All the cars I saw were old, too, but they looked like new, as if we had stumbled on the biggest convention of antique car collectors there ever was. Hell, even the police car was old, a 1949 Dodge.

In spite of everything and in the face of the incredibility of it all, I was nodding off. That's when I heard the laugh. It was a low wicked chuckle that filled my cell and seemed to come from everywhere. The short hairs on the nape of my neck stood up at attention. I came wide awake. I didn't see anyone. The laugh faded away. "Kyle Foster," a low voice said. I almost passed out. "Kyle Foster," the disembodied voice continued. "I am . . . the Shadow." I was certain then. The lightning bolt had killed me. This was Hell. "Go away," I said. "Go haunt someone else." "Hear me, Kyle Foster. I can help you." He sounded just like he did on the radio, low, compelling tones, sometimes speaking slowly, sometimes quickly and urgently. I shook my head. "You are not real. Go away. This whole damn thing's not real." "But it is real, Kyle Foster, and I am real. You are in deadly danger, no, not from the police, but from something else. I was present during your interrogation, Foster. I believe you. I know you didn't kill Jack Armstrong." "Look, Shadew, I know I didn't kill Jack Armstrong because he isn't real. And neither are you." The Shadow's voice became more urgent. "Listen to me, Kyle Foster, this is reality, not your reality, but a reality, my reality. I do not know how you came to be here, but you are. And you will die for Armstrong's death if you remain here." He paused, for effect I suppose. "I can help you, Foster, and you can help me. Do you wish to leave this place?" I thought about it. I still didn't believe it, but I figured, what the Hell. "Sure," I answered "Make with your magic." The Shadow chuckled softly. "I shall return, my friend." "OK, I'll wait here."

A little while later, I saw a key ring floating by in mid-air. One key picked itself out and inserted itself into the lock on my door. The door opened. "Quickly, Foster. Here take my hand." "Hey wait a minute. Won't somebody see us?" The Shadow chuckled again. "None will see us. I've made you as invisible to the guards as I am invisible to you" Sure enough, I was invisible. We waltzed by the guards right in their plain sight, but they didn't see us. There was a long, low slung black car waiting at the curb when we reached the street. The back door opened, we entered swiftly, and the car zoomed off. The back and side windows were covered by black drapes and I was sitting behind the driver. She had a lovely head of black hair. There was a depression in the seat next to me so I knew the Shadow was there.

"Uh," I said. "What do we do now?" "We're going to San Francisco," the Shadow replied. "for two reasons. First, I will arrange for you to have a bodyguard, yes, I'm afraid you will need one. I will not be able to be at your side constantly. Second, we will take a ship there for Singapore." "Singapore!" "Yes Singapore. There we will pick up the trail of — tell me, Kyle Foster, have you ever heard of . . . Fu Manchu?" I just groaned. "Yes I have heard of Fu Manchu. I've read the books, seen the movies, Hell, I've even heard the radio show. But he is not real!" "He is all too real, my friend. Please, bear with me, I shall explain it as well as I can. It seems that, according to the scientists, there is more than one universe, or reality. This is as yet not general knowledge. Further travel between the universes is theoretically possible, more than that, it is possible. A man named Clay Collier invented a 'door' to other universes. Unfortunately, he never was able to use it. Two weeks ago he was kidnapped, his notes and the 'door' stolen. Evidence points to the Si Fan of Fu Manchu. The immense fortune of Warbucks Industries was put to use to no avail, except for Jack Armstrong. He sent a message in code to Warbucks that said — you must believe this, Foster, it becomes really incredible now." "Whole thing's incredible," I sniffed. "But go on."

"The message said that Fu Manchu had indeed kidnapped Collier and he was using the 'door.' Manchu has conspired with criminals of other universes in a plan for world domination! He has joined forces with the Emperor Ming of the planet Mongo, from our own far future, and a man named Lex Luthor, from an alternate reality. All these men are criminal geniuses and have agreed to help each other."

I considered. If it was a dream, it wasn't bad. Exciting anyway. If I was dead, and this was Hell, it could be worse. I decided to play along. "Alright, but what's this all got to do with me?" "I believe you are a crux, maybe

the crux of the whole affair. I can't believe that it was a mere accident that transported you from your world to this one, especially to Armstrong's apartment, minutes after his murder. However, I am really not sure what to do with you, so I will take you to Singapore where some . . . colleagues of mine are gathering. You may be most important in our fight against the evil of Fu Manchu. Now, here, put on these clothes. Your prison outfit is a dead giveaway." He handed me a brown suit with wide lapels. I shrugged and took them, saying, "Thank you, Mr. Cranston." The Shadow hissed. "What did you say?" His voice seemed particularly ominous. I talked while I changed. "I said, thank you Mr. Cranston. Sure I know you're Lamont Cranston, wealthy man about town and you have the power to cloud men's minds so that they cannot see you. You got it in the Orient somewhere. And, oh yeah, our driver up there must be the lovely Margo Lane, the only one who knows your secret and close companion and so forth.

Margo spoke up for the first time. "You may as well tell him, Lamont, he knows now anyway and it would be ever so much easier if we didn't have to keep the secret from him." "Hmmm," the Shadow said. "Very well Foster. What you say is true. But I must have your solemn vow never to reveal it to anyone." "Sure," I said. "You got it." I looked down to tie my shoes and when I looked up again I was sitting next to Lamont Cranston. He looked like a young Orson Welles. I should have known. "Far out," I said. "By the way, what's the name of this bodyguard we're going to see?" "Samuel Spade," he answered. I guess I should have known that too.

The sign on the frosted glass of the door said "SAMUEL SPADE, PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS." Cranston walked in, followed by Margo and me. The trim little secretary looked up. "Yes, may I help you?" she asked. Only Effie had a squeaky voice like that. "Yes, we'd like to see Mr. Spade," Cranston said smoothly, "On a matter of some urgency." "Oooh, just a minute, please," she squealed and bounced through a door into Spade's inner office. After a moment, she bounced back out. "Go right in," and she held the door coyly for us. She sniffed at Margo, who always looked spectacular. Now I want you to know that I was prepared for this. I was certain about what Sam Spade would look like. But I was still speechless when I shook Howard Duff's hand. We sat down. Duff, I mean Spade perched easily on the corner of his desk. "Before we begin Mr. Spade," Cranston said "I must ask you to keep everything that is said here strictly confidential." Spade spread his hands. "My client's affairs are usually confidential." "Very well, I wish to hire you as a bodyguard." Spade's eyebrows went up. "That's interesting. A bodyguard for who, or shall I say for whom." He smiled this last and inclined

his head at Margo. I swear that guy is on the make 24 hours a day. Cranston waved a negligent hand at me. "For Mr. Foster here." Spade studied me through narrowed eyes. Nonchalantly, he leaned back and moved his hand towards a desk drawer. "Wait, Mr. Spade!" Cranston's voice was so full of authority it startled me as well as Spade. "I see you've recognized Mr. Foster from the pictures in the papers." I never thought of that. "Yeah, that's right," Spade said. "And now if you don't mind, I'd like to call the police. I dislike harboring murderers in my place of business!"

Actually, I was really enjoying it. I felt like I was in a radio show. Orson Welles and Howard Duff. Far out! "Actually Foster did not kill Jack Armstrong." "Really? The LA police seem to think otherwise." Cranston leaned back in his chair and laced his fingertips. "Are you aware of the Warbucks Industries Foundation?" Spade nodded. Cranston reached slowly into a jacket pocket and withdrew a small black case. He handed it to Spade, who opened it and read something. I never did get to see the thing up close. Spade handed it back. "I guess I should be impressed. That thing carries a lot of weight." "Indeed," Cranston said. "Will you accept my word as an operative of the Foundation that this man is innocent of that crime?" "Why haven't you gone to the police to tell them that dingus?" Spade asked. "Or don't you have the proof?" "The police have the proof." "Which is?" "The knife that killed Armstrong. As to why I haven't gone to them, it is because I must keep out of the limelight. Our . . . opposition must not know everything that we do." "Opposition? I'm afraid I don't follow you Mr. Cranston." So Cranston sighed and proceeded to tell Spade what he had told me about the Collier Door and the Manchu-Ming-Luthor conspiracy. Spade didn't say anything, but picked up a pencil and rolled it back and forth between his lips. Cranston finished and Spade put the pencil down. He spoke. "And you expect me to believe all this?" "I had hoped you would," Cranston said. "That is why I am here." "Why me? "To be frank Mr. Spade, you are my second choice. I could not contact a larger company that I had in mind. I should say that you are my second choice in that three men could protect him better than one, however, I am quite confident in your abilities. You see, I have studied you Mr. Spade, you are a survivor, and this little expedition may well need a survivor type before we're through."

"Supposing I do go along with this, what's in it for me?" "\$500 a day, plus expenses, with a guarantee of \$10,000 no matter what, plus the small satisfaction of helping the world survive." Spade thought for a moment, studied me again. Then he reached out a hand towards

Cranston. "Mr. Cranston, you've hired yourself a boy." They shook on it. Margo and Cranston stood up. "Very well, Margo and I shall go make arrangements for the voyage to Singapore. Mr. Spade, I leave Foster in your hands now. You would be well advised to shoot first and ask questions afterwards."

Spade didn't show any surprise at the mention of Singapore. He told me later that it looked to be a vacation as well as a job. Margo and Cranston left. Spade called Effie in and told her to take the rest of the afternoon off. "Oh, and sweetheart," he said, "I'll be gone awhile on a case and I don't know how long I'll be gone, so--" "Gone for you don't know how long! Oooh, Sam!" "Now, now sweetheart, don't worry, you just take care of things here while I'm gone and I'll bring you back a China doll." "A China doll Sam?" "That's right sweetheart, so you just pack up your purse, powder your nose, and shop the afternoon away." Spade led her to the door and she stopped, putting a small hand on his shoulder. "You will be careful won't you Sam?" He smiled at her. "Sure sweetheart. Goodnight, Effie." "Good night Sam," she squealed and Spade closed and locked the door behind her. "Sam," I said. "Yes Mr. Foster?" "Call me Kyle." "OK Kyle." "What's Effie's last name?" He looked puzzled. "Perrine. Why?" "No reason. Just wondering."

We sat around and talked for a while, waiting for Cranston and Margo to get back. I kept expecting to hear a voice doing a Wildroot Cream Oil commercial. I glanced through a newspaper and, sure enough, there was my picture on the front page, four columns worth. Inside there was an article about Superman failing to show up at a public function in Metropolis. That's right. Superman. I wondered if he looked like Bud Collyer. I would find out later. Spade sent out for sandwiches long about 4 o'clock and pretty soon there was a knock on the door. "Rudi's Deli!" A voice called out. I should have recognized it. Sam unlocked the door, opened it a crack, and was thrown to the floor as the door slammed open. A tall, lanky man leaped over him towards me. He had a gun. A big gun. Two more guys came in and they had guns too. "Why you must be Kyle Foster," the lanky man said, his gun aiming at my chest. "Now you jus' raise yore hands son, and stay quiet." The other two pulled Spade roughly to his feet and pushed him next to me. "Keep 'em covered Doc," said the leader and I knew who they were. "Reggie, get on that phone in the other office and call the police." "Righto, Jack" "Well, well, Doc" Jack said. "It looks like the A-1 Detective Agency has solved another one." We were being held prisoner by Jack Packard, Reggie York and Doc Long!

*Continued Next Issue*



## BOGART . . . On the Radio

by BOB DAVIS

Many articles and books have been written about Humphrey Bogart and his films, but this article will touch on a different facet of his career — Bogart on radio.

Radio in its hey-day always had room for a voice that was distinctive and Bogie's voice certainly fit the bill. It sounded plausible delivering comedy lines against Bing Crosby, yet it could convey the menace needed for the tough guy/gangster parts that were his specialty.

Perhaps the best vehicle for his talents was the *Lux Radio Theater*, a show that featured audio versions of a number of Bogie's films. It was on *Lux* that he recreated his famous role of Fred C. Dobbs in the classic "Treasure of Sierra Madre." On another occasion he reiterated his role as the crusty skipper of "The African Queen."

It was during the *Lux* broadcast of "To Have and Have Not" that his wife, Lauren Bacall, spoke the famous lines — "If you want me . . . just whistle. You know how to whistle, don't you Steve? You just put your lips together, and . . . blow." The line, and its superb delivery by the smoldering Bacall, had an effect on both Bogie and the audience, for it had become as famous as the movie itself (interestingly, this line is nearly always remembered exactly by film-goers, unlike the equally famous "Play it!" from "Casablanca"). This performance also marked the first radio appearance of Lauren Bacall. For *Lux*, Bogie also starred in "Moontide" and "Bullets and Ballots" with his movie nemesis, Edward G. Robinson. Probably the biggest disappointment for an audience took place when *Lux* presented "Casablanca" and Bogie was not the star, due to his commitment to entertain troops in North Africa. The role of the disillusioned, cynical Rick went to Alan Ladd, who although he turned out a top-notch job, could not really fill a role so closely identified with Bogie. Bogie was Rick, and Rick was Bogie.

Sam Spade, Dashiell Hammett's famous private detective, was one of the best known characters of the Golden Age of radio, but few people realize that Bogart was the first to play him. It was in the film "The Maltese Falcon" that Bogart gave the definitive portrait

of Sam Spade. He was a smash as the hard-boiled dick (as they were affectionately known in those days), and later did the role again for the *Gulf Screen Guild Theater*. That program also featured some of Bogie's other films, such as "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse" and "High Sierra," with Bogie as "Mad Dog" Roy Earle and Ida Lupino. This was radio at its best. Bogie did comedy as well for *Screen Guild*, appearing in "If She Could Only Cook."

Bogart apparently liked radio as a medium very much because he did a good deal of it and, at one point, even went into the producing end of it. He produced and acted a small bit part on a show called *Humphrey Bogart Presents*. The story was "Dead Man" and starred William Tracy. Bogie portrayed a railroad yard bull who is killed in the first few minutes of the show. It seemed like a good idea, but the show never caught the necessary interest and the series died before even one episode was officially aired.

It was on the *Bing Crosby Show* that Bogart revealed a new aspect of his talents — singing. Roughly, the "plot" of the show was that Bogie was tired of playing the tough gangster roles and wanted to become a crooner like Bing. Before the show was over, Bogie got his big chance and the audience was treated(?) to a rendition of an old sea chantey called "There Was An Old Fisherman" which proved, if nothing else, that Bogart was no singer. The show was played for laughs and we all felt that the one laughing the hardest was Bogart himself.

Take an American in the tropics who operates a bar/hotel and a fishing boat for hire. Then take an assortment of gangsters, grifters, killers, thieves, and throw in an occasional slinky blonde for taste. These were the ingredients of Bogart's highly successful radio series called *Bold Venture*. Bogie was Slate Shannon, owner of "Shannon's Place" Havana, Cuba (things were friendlier then). He had a boat called the "Bold Venture" that he chartered out, and every week he could run across someone in trouble or trying to cause trouble, which would set Bogie to getting things straightened out, usually with a right cross or a pistol. His co-star in the series was his real life co-star—Lauren Bacall, his wife. It was an action series, full of adventure and intrigue, and it fitted Bogart like a glove.

Bogie died on Jan. 14, 1957, and America lost one of its heroes, a non-conformist, a tough guy, he was all of these and yet he was loved by his movie fans and radio listening public, so well loved that almost twenty years after his death, his name is as well known today as it ever was.



# Lux Radio Theater

by BOB DAVIS

"Lux, presents Hollywood"

For two decades this opening was used to announce that radio's most glamorous show was about to begin. Because they presented radio adaptations of movies, the series could not be called a highly original program, but there was no denying that the show had a gloss and a finesse that gleamed like a diamond. It took the then current and not so current screenplays and presented them to the public in a way that the listener felt they were seeing a movie right in their own home, a movie that, at times, was at their local movie house at the same time. Often a person could return home from a movie matinee and, a few hours later, hear the story that they had just seen. It sounds like a concept that couldn't work, but it did . . . and how!

The *Lux Radio Theater* first appeared on the air on October 14, 1934, with the presentation of "Seventh Heaven," starring Miriam Hopkins. The show ran 932 presentations, ending on June 7, 1955, with "Edward My Son" starring Walter Pidgeon. The final curtain rang down and radio was a little poorer for it.

Other shows were on the air that featured movie adaptations but, while they were good, they weren't in the same class as *Lux*. One big reason for this is that the other shows featured radio actors on their presentations while *Lux* was starring the cream of Hollywood on theirs. A list of actors and actresses that appeared on *Lux* would read like a "Who's Who" of Hollywood. Quite often the original stars would appear in their original roles; at other times, a completely different type of actor would assume a role that was closely associated with another actor. An example of this was the casting of Alan Ladd as Rick in "Casablanca," a role that has become synonymous with Humphrey Bogart. For a few moments it doesn't sound quite right, but then the magic takes over, Bogart is forgotten and Ladd shines through in a fine performance. Bogart appeared frequently on *Lux*, however, usually recreating his famous film roles in such classics as "The Treasure of Sierra Madre," "The African Queen," and the never-to-be-forgotten "To Have and Have Not" which co-starred his movie leading lady and wife—Lauren Bacall.

"And your producer . . . Cecil B. DeMille." When the announcer introduced DeMille every week, the show attained a bit of bigness that really came over the radio speaker. DeMille was the producer-director that gave audiences the biggest, the glossiest, the most lavish pic-

tures of the era. His films were noted for a certain largess that seemed to burst out of the screen. When he stepped up to the microphone, he brought this aura of bigness with him and lent it to the story being heard that night. DeMille probably would have stayed with the show until the end if it had not been for a ruling that he had to join the actor's union. He refused, considering the ruling to be "silly" and, as a result, was forced to quit his radio "acting" job.

For a while *Lux* tried other directors and actors to fill DeMille's post as "producer." Actually, DeMille nor any of the other "producers" ever really did produce the show. It was just a way of giving the show an added bit of gloss. After trying a number of people, William Keighley became the permanent "producer." It is said that Keighley got the job because his voice was similar to DeMille's. He stayed with the show until it folded in 1955.

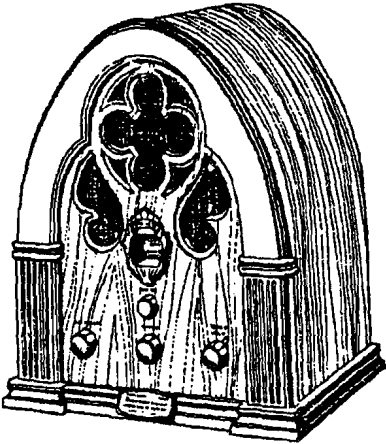
Some of the stories that were presented over the years turned out to be some of radio's best remembered moments. From Charles Boyer and Ingrid Bergman starring in "Gaslight" to Kirk Douglas in the dynamic "Detective Story," *Lux* provided quality radio programming. The stories were first proven at the movie box-office and then re-proven by the tremendous numbers of listeners who tuned in each week to the *Lux Radio Theater*.

Only once during its long run did the show deviate from the film adaptation concept. On January 8, 1945, an adaptation of Bob Hope's book "I Never Left Home" was presented. The story concerns Hope's ours to the fighting fronts to entertain the boys fighting the war. Naturally, the *Lux* show starred Hope and his entourage of Frances Langford, Jerry Colona and all the others. The show was a tremendous hit as it gave some insight to Hope's travels to hospital to battleship to fox-hole in his attempt to take the fighting man's mind off war, if only for a little while, and to let them know that they were not forgotten back home. *Lux* recreated this and let us see what kind of show Hope was putting on for our guys.

Even the commercials on *Lux* were Hollywood oriented. During the commercial breaks, we were often told how the costumes for the latest epic being filmed were always washed in Lux Soap to protect them and to get them really clean. There was usually a starlet from some studio saying how great Lux Soap was and, of course, mentioning that studio's latest release. At the end of each show the stars of the program would return to the microphone to discuss next week's show and casually mention that they too, used Lux Toilet Soap.

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Sometimes these plugs, coming from rough, tough he-men, seemed awfully funny, as evidenced by the night Humphrey Bogart hisped "Why Thee-bee, I'd be lost without my Lux Toilet Soap." Lux stayed on as the sponsor of the show for the entire run, from first to last, a record unparalleled in radio history.

Through the years movies came and went, but the *Lux Radio Theater* stayed on, firmly entrenched as one of the public's top favorites. It took the cyclops eye of television to finally end *Lux's* reign on the air-waves. The show enjoyed a brief resurrection on TV as the *Lux Video Theater*, but the magic was gone, as was the bigness and the gloss. After a short while, it faded even from TV. The *Lux Radio Theater*, in its passing, took something from radio, and radio has never been able to replace it.

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