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NORMAN CORWIN

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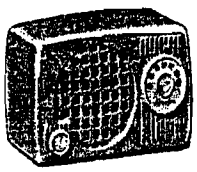

SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

STRIKE IT RICH

They called it "the show with a heart" and, indeed, it's intention was to offer temporary solutions to the distress experienced by some of life's downtrodden and misfits. *Strike It Rich* may have been on a spectrum between *Queen for a Day* and *Stop the Music!* Not only did it seek to help the outcasts, it shamelessly attempted to transform them from rags to riches, for a while, at least.

The contestants, selected from the studio audience, were chosen because of their hard luck stories. They, or someone they loved, might require medical attention that was absolutely unaffordable. A loved one could be dying in a far off ancestral homeland and the contestant needed a way to travel on an important final mission. A penniless widow with a string of youngsters might show up. Unable to sustain themselves with the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter. A breadwinner could be laid up for a long spell, the result of a debilitating illness or accident, with the family medical bills mounting in astronomical proportions.

Whatever the dire circumstances, these people believed that if they could just get on *Strike It Rich* their destitute plights — if not erased — could be relaxed by a significant infusion of cash from contest winnings, generous benefactors, or both. On *Strike It Rich* there were lots of ways to come out a winner for here was a show itching to give away money, home appliances and other favors.

The concept was elementary enough. Contestants would be asked a few simple questions like "Spell Purple" by quizmaster Todd Russell (1947-48) or Warren Hull (1948-57). They'd start out with a small sum of money that might be increased to $200 if every question was answered correctly. But if misfortune intervened, as it occasionally did — or often, even if they won the top cash prize — they could almost count on the Heartline to carry them still further.

The Heartline was a large red heart on stage connected to a telephone with a loud bell. When the heart lit up for the studio audience, the phone began ringing. This signaled the home audience that some good hearted soul had called in with extra gifts or financial padding for this victim of dire circumstances.

Sometimes a company or an individual or a philanthropic group was moved to action, recognizing a need and pledging to meet it. In its day *Strike It Rich* was the most humanitarian of all broadcast offerings. Many who were among its most ardent supporters came away daily impressed by the generosity of fellow Americans for those who were down on their luck.

In practice, however, the program's creator-owner-producer-writer-director, Walt Framer, spiced up some of the shows by helping infuse fascination in them. Working behind the scenes, his staff placed phone calls to employers and business people who might be in a position to diminish a contestant's woes with offers of jobs, cash, merchandise or whatever. Framer later acknowledged: "If a widow with six children came on to explain the pressing need for a new roof for her house, ahead of time we would contact a roofer in her locale to set up a donation." The roofer got a plug, the poor wretch got a roof, beyond the phone call the show didn't dole out a penny and the audience experienced an unmitigated exhilaration. Everybody came out a winner.

The show began as a weekly 30-minute Sunday sustainer on CBS June 29, 1947 at 10:30 p.m. Eastern Time. By Nov. 2 it had picked up Luden's cough drops as a sponsor, carrying it through Feb. 20, 1949. The series moved to 5:30 p.m. in 1948. It was again sustained from Feb. 27, 1949 through April 30, 1950 when it left CBS. The following day, May 1, 1950, a weekday run opened at 11 a.m. on NBC for Colgate, often on behalf of its Vel dishwashing and Fab laundry detergent brands. The final show aired Dec. 27, 1957.

By the time it arrived at NBC plans were in the works to take the series to television. In a strange turn of events, after the radio show became an NBC property *Strike It Rich* debuted on CBS-TV May 7, 1951 at 11:30 a.m. It was seen in that time period on the competing network through Jan. 3, 1958. The live video version was taped one day and replayed on NBC radio the following day.

Strike It Rich was revived in title only in 1986 as a syndicated TV game series hosted by Joe Garagiola. Lasting but a few months, its contestants were married couples who weren't facing poverty, a far cry from earlier days.

While Todd Russell — one of several quizmasters for radio's *Double or Nothing* — was the original host of

Strike It Rich, he soon departed and the show was inherited by Warren Hull. The faithful, especially those who observed Hull on TV, will not soon forget how this unflappable veteran of audience participation shows was moved to tears by the sad stories his guests told on the air. Tear-stained, eyes flashing, his heart touched, Hull's eyes grew moist as he doled out medical payments and house trailers to some of the nation's unfortunates.

Born at Gasport, New York January 17, 1903, he studied voice at nearby Eastman School of Music. His introduction to the stage came through casting in musical comedies and operettas. A Quaker, Hull was an ex-Broadway and B-movie actor who appeared on the screen in serials like the *Spider* and *Green Hornet.* He broke into broadcasting as a singer, producer and announcer. By the mid 1930s he was introducing network shows like *Good News, Your Hit Parade, Log Cabin Jamboree, Vick Open House* and *Melody and Madness.* He played dramatic roles in *The Gibson Family* and *Show Boat,* then went on a tear as an emcee. Beginning with *Spin to Win* in 1940 and *Vox Pop* in 1942, he later hosted *Mother Knows Best.* His first taste of TV came in the form of presiding over a couple of CBS daytimers, *Ladies Day,* a variety show, and a game series, *The Missus Goes a-Shopping,* both in 1948-49. Hull hosted radio and television versions of *Strike It Rich.* His capacity for human kindness allowed him to make personal appearances for worthy causes around the nation. He died Sept. 14, 1974 at Waterbury, Connecticut at 71.

Walt Framer, meanwhile, had arrived at *Strike It Rich* notably by way of his writing talent. He contributed to *The Black Hood, Break the Bank, Glamour Manor* and *Ladies Be Seated* — the final trio challenging him in audience participation settings. For several months in 1958-59 he produced the CBS-TV daytime game show *For Love or Money.* Framer was 80 when he died June 21, 1988.

Another name indelibly associated with *Strike It Rich* is that of Ralph Paul, the show's announcer for most of the radio-TV run. Paul earlier announced radio's *True Detective Mysteries* and was one of several carrying those duties on *The Aldrich Family* broadcasts.

Strike It Rich was "a charity show masked as a quiz," radio historiographer John Dunning believed. The series came under fire by the New York Welfare Department in 1954. That office was deluged with petitions from non-New Yorkers who arrived in the city with hopes of capitalizing on "the show with a heart." A stingy public servant, commissioner Henry McCarthy, claimed the "Heartline" made the series a charity order attempting to raise money minus a license. He said it also urged folks who needed public relief to come to Gotham. As a result Walt Framer merely tinkered with the show's precept and — since no law agency had charged anybody with a crime — continued gift-giving without a hitch.

Hull, himself, took it as a personal affront when critics attacked his show for exploiting human suffering. Framer's answer was that most newspapers were filled with human anguish, agony and affliction. While "the show with a heart" was put down by detractors who saw it as preying upon unfortunate victims, the general public relished it, giving it high marks for providing assistance to hopeless outcasts. As a result both radio and TV versions remained popular until their final broadcasts.

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Gary Zeline

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of one of our local club members, Gary Zeline. He passed away on Sunday, May 23rd, 1999. Although sightless, he was able to attend most of our meetings with the help of Jerry Collins.

Remembrances may be made through donations in his name to:

Guiding Eyes for the Blind
611 Granite Springs Road
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

Penny Singleton, radio's Blondie knows exactly how to get anything you want—if you want it badly enough.

Blondie, BY REQUEST . . .

Penny Singleton, who has been starring as Blondie on CBS every Monday night for almost three years, started making up her mind about how to be a success in life when she was eight years old. Her creed was then, and is now: "If I want something badly enough , I'll get it — because I'll work until I do."

"There's no trick in that," she says today. "It's just my Irish stubbornness." But her Irish stubbornness carried Penny a long way. A burning ambition for a new pair of skates was what began her career, at the afore-said age of eight. She noticed that the feature picture at the old opera house in National Park, N.J., where she lived, was something starring "Baby Dorothy." Penny, whose own name at the time was Dorothy McNulty, called on the theater manager and promoted an assignment to sing in accompaniment to the picture (a silent one, of course) — and not only received a salary for her appearance but raked the audience for a collection as well.

No one ever needed to give Penny ideas for making money. She's always had a million of 'em. At fourteen she wanted a coat with a fur collar. At the time she was taking dancing lessons at Al White's dancing school in Philadelphia — so she put up a sign "Dancing Lessons at Half the price of Mr. White's." The cut-rate appealed

to enough children so that Penny soon had her coat. And when Dorothy McNulty, out in Hollywood, heard that Columbia Pictures was looking for someone to play the comic-strip character of "Blondie" in the films, she lost no time in changing her brunette tresses to golden yellow and her name to Penny Singleton. Blondie she became, and Blondie she has been ever since.

Penny's married to Robert Sparks, producer of the Blondie films, and they live in the valley north of Hollywood on their own farm, named Pennybob. Not only that, but they've recently bought another 120 acres, including a productive orchard, which will be called Pennybob Oaks. Penny still collects the coins which inspired her name — but for a purpose. Friends who come to see her are invited to drop their pennies into a chest, which has been filled several times for the benefit of Penny's favorite charity, a Los Angeles children's hospital. She has her own Baby Dumpling, six year old daughter Deegee, who long since has proved that she inherited her mother's Irish stubbornness.

Around the studios, both broadcasting and movie, Penny is one of the most popular stars of Hollywood — and not just with other stars, but with everyone right down to the humblest page-boy. She knows every member of the crew on her broadcasts by his or her first name — knows when their wives or children are sick, when they've had or are expecting a new baby, how their gardens are growing, when relatives have arrived from the East, and how many payments are left on the car. *(Radio and Television Mirror - July 1942)*

NORMAN CORWIN

By Lance Hunt

(N.B. These words were written by me in 1976 for a degree, as part of a communications course. Corwin is 89 now, May 3rd, and recently wrote me he is busier than ever. God bless his vision and him. If ever pleas for a better world seem needed, it is now . . . Kosovo, China, the Irish question, Africa, et al.)

One of the most talented and certainly the most prolific writers the medium of radio has produced is Norman Corwin. Clifton Fadiman has said that Corwin ". . . the first-rater, writes as if he were several men, but there is only one of him . . . he is a radio man, pure (and not at all simple)." Carl Van Doren said "he is to American radio what Marlowe was to the Elizabethan stage." Fadiman goes on to say that Corwin: "From the very beginning . . . has conceived of radio as a special medium, not as an extension or transformation of the stage, the lecture platform, or the pulpit. In a sense he is a technician even before he is a writer, as Rembrandt (if I may employ a somewhat too grand comparison) was a calculating expert in the chemistry of pigments and the mixtures of tones before he could be the brooding and tragic visionary of the self portraits."

Corwin, who was born in Boston, Mass. on May 3, 1910, is an ex-newspaper reporter and columnist, who turned author, radio producer and writer. He is the first radio craftsman to have been honored by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. While Corwin has written for other media (after television supplanted radio as the nation's mass entertainer) his success is strictly confined to a place in the history of radio drama. But Corwin, who is known for other radio works — fantasies, comedies, etc. — is especially important for his intense outpouring of patriotic and wartime pieces produced in this country during the period of the Second World War. Some of these are being recognized as minor radio classics and history is now putting them into proper artistic prospective. This is because Corwin, while not only mastering the art of radio writing, usually had something to say. And while in the guided disinterest of the late 1970s, a little nationalism seems hypocritical in the light of our Viet Nam involvement and more recently, Watergate, Corwin's red, white and blue faith in America seems out of date but impressive nonetheless. And as one reads his words again (and even better hears them dramatized) his faith seems stronger than the transient discord produced by the universal discord of today. "He is not averse to a little corn now and then, but his central interest is in the projection of important ideas," says Fadiman.

Here we shall examine Corwin's wartime plays for radio and offer a seldom glimpsed retrospective into what they did for America in the 1940s and late 1930s. There is no doubt that Corwin understood implicitly the medium of radio. He had the ability to manipulate actors, words, machines and the ether waves to express clear, lofty and inspiring thought. He did perhaps sometimes cloyingly stress the flag, mom and apple pie complex of Americanism. At the same time his clear cut hatred of Fascism (domestic as well as foreign) — "Fascism is a horrid word, but it's worse on the end of a bayonet, stuck in your midriff." — was transmitted through his writing to the listener. (He once called Hitler " a fantastic little pervert.")

Obviously, Corwin is still worried today. More than 30 years later, in notes prepared for the recently released jacket of a recording of his famous work, "On a Note of Triumph," he states: "There will never be another world

war whose end anybody can exalt. If that statement came from a qualified prophet before Hiroshima, it would be cause for universal rejoicing. But now it can only mean that any future world war would be so ghastly, so illimitably lethal, that no one would come out the winner, hence there would be nothing to celebrate. Even the lesser wars since 1945 did not end with dancing in the streets, only with mud in the craters."

They Fly Through the Air with the Greatest of Ease
First produced on "Words Without Music" Corwin's first radio series on Sunday February 19, 1939. It was directed by Corwin (who directed many of his radio scripts) and was narrated by noted radio actor House Jameson (Henry Aldrich's father), a popular actor who often appeared in Corwin productions.

Corwin's verse play was called a "script of burning anger" by Erik Barnouw. It was chosen by the Ohio Institute for Education by Radio as the outstanding broadcast of the air. The script evolved from a quote of Vittorio Mussolini, who was then serving in his father's air force. The future dictator described a bombing: "One group of horsemen gave me the impression of a budding rose unfolding, as the bombs fell in their midst and blew them up. It was exceptionally good fun." This psychotic observation incensed Corwin who was already disturbed "by the rape and betrayal of the Spanish Republic and its deliverance into the hands of the loathsome Franco through the active assistance of Hitler and Mussolini and passive assistance of practically everybody else."

Corwin facetiously dedicated the poem to all the aviators who have bombed defenseless civilian populations and machine-gunned helpless refugees. The verse drama aroused an equally enthusiastic response from both the public and the critics. Douglas Coulter said "the script constitutes some of the best writing ever to be heard on the air." Coulter said that "They Fly Through the Air" is so patently radio from its first syllable to its last that one doubts if Corwin could have written it had radio not existed.

Corwin's outrage at this type of warfare is reflected in the following dialogue after the strafing of helpless refugees on a road: PILOT: come to think of it, that was a pretty thorough job of strafing. That work always reminds me of mowing wheat — as though some invisible mower were cutting across the field. RADIOMAN: Nice symmetrical pattern, isn't it? (Cross to exterior motors.) NARRATOR: It is, it is. A symmetry of unborn generations, of canceled seed. The dead below spread fanlike in their blood, will bear no more. The pattern is symmetrical indeed — Of cyphers linked, repeating down infinity. How can we justly celebrate the odysseys of demigods who finger destinies from their trigger tips? The bomber and its crew does not get away with its aerial atrocities, however, for Corwin has them crash after being attacked from the air.

The narrator concludes: "That's all. That's all the fighting they will care to do. They have a treaty with the earth that will never be broken. They are unbeautiful in death, their bodies scattered and bestrewn amid the shattered theorem. There is a little oil and blood slow draining in the ground. The metal still is hot, but it will cool. You need not bother picking up the parts. The sun has reached meridian. The day is warm. There's not a ripple in the air.

CORWIN ON FASCISM

In notes prepared for a 1944 printing of his radio play, *Samson,* Corwin uses the opportunity to compare Delilah's scheming to those of the Fascist's of the war. ("Samson" was first performed on the air August 10, 1941.) Corwin believes she would have made a wonderful Fascist "since one of the techniques of Fascism is to invent an elaborate rationale, however absurd, for every treachery." "According to Fascists, you commit rape in order to protect yourself; thus Japan was protecting herself from China, Italy from Ethiopia, Germany from Czechoslovakia," he states.

Delilah's need for justifying her double-crossing makes her irascible and bitter — "a form of sadism whose chief modern exponent is Nazi Germany. Nazis make a point of issuing decrees and proclamations to go along with their atrocities. Law and order you know."

A musi-comedy entitled "A Man With A Platform" was produced on Nov. 2, 1941. Lyn Murray wrote a song for the show, "He Got His," which Corwin was obviously responsible for at least in suggestion. It reflects his hatred of despots and history's tyrants including Pharaoh, Philip, Caesar and Napoleon. There is one verse devoted to Hitler: Now Hitler he is a censored phrase, The arch foe of the Jew. He set the whole wide world ablaze, and wiped out Gentiles too. He made us pay, he made us pay, with blood he made us pay; But he's getting his, he's getting his, He's getting his every day. And he'll get more, yes he'll get more, Get more in a great big way, In a bumping, thumping, smashing, bashing, thunderous, wondrous way. From Britain, China, the Soviet Union, and the U.S.A., hey! The good . . . old . . . U.S.A.!

To Tim At Twenty
First produced in Hollywood on "Forecast" on August 19, 1940. It was written especially for Charles Laughton and Elsa Lancaster, who starred in it. Corwin notes that the bleak English situation prompted him to write this vehicle for Laughton and Lancaster.

"Guernica and Mussolini suggested *"They Fly Through the Air"*; London and Hitler suggested *"To Tim At Twenty."* The Luftwaffe was bombing London by the hundreds, and an invasion of the island looked imminent. The Laughtons were almost daily receiving news of casualties among their friends and relatives at home, and it was no easy task for them to undertake a script of this kind," he said. "They gave a superb performance, unlikely to be equaled very often within so short a compass of acting time."

The script is quite gentle and takes the form of a letter written by an RAF (Royal Air Force) gunner about to embark on a mission from which there can be no return. He addresses the letter to his son, Tim, now five years old, but who will not read the letter until 15 years hence or age twenty.

Through the flier's voice and a series of flashbacks we gain a glimpse of his aspirations and thoughts concerning the world for his son after the war. He tells how he met Tim's mother and about himself — good at cribbage, not bad at reciting Shakespeare, can handle a game of tennis.

Corwin slips in a little forerunner philosophy bordering on women's lib when he has Marshall (the gunner) state that he hopes the "men of the second half of this poor century have sense enough to develop a fuller appreciation of women."

". . . our sex has done all the swaggering and made all the big decisions and pretty much taken over the running of the earth. Can you imagine the female of the species doing worse? Can you fancy a diplomacy of women trafficking in sons and husbands? Well, I can't and I doubt if you can, because there must come a special understanding of the dignity of life to those who grow it in their vitals.

Marshall says the great sorrow of his time is that "all of man's vast raw materials of love and tenderness and courage should be cornered and destroyed by half a dozen wanton wills."

As the morning light begins to glow in the east and the morning star which glows now so serenely in the indifferent night will hang outside your window, too, on any morning you may choose to hail it," Marshall writes.

"To a more gracious time, then, Timothy. To freedom, and the England under your feet; to trees, to crickets, to the love of women; to the morning star.

"The sun is up, and I must go out now into the light. Good luck, Tim. Your father."

A Book Review

by John Rayburn

"If any of my work over the past 60 years has inspired, encouraged, or motivated any young person to write comedy for radio, motion pictures or television, I apologize."

That's the closing sentence in a wonderful new book by comedy writer Hal Kanter, who has been putting funny words on paper for those six decades and is still doing it at age 81. It's called *So Far, So Funny: My Life in Show Business* and it's published by McFarland & Co. I'll tell you right up front that it's one of the rare books that caused me to laugh out loud while I was reading it.

Kanter got his illustrious career started when he was only 17 years old, doing some writing for a weekly radio program. *Jack Haley's Log Cabin Jamboree.* He said part of the reason was his speedy typing ability; that he could type nearly 60 errors a minute.

A couple of years later he did some stuff for *The Joe Penner Show* and never looked back. Not all was comedy though in the early days. He even wrote some dramatic scripts for *Grand Central Station* when it was sponsored by Listerine. But funny material was really his stock in trade and he wound up providing some bits for the irascible W. C. Fields for use on the popular *Lucky Strike Hit Parade.* Kanter observes that yes, Fields drank adult broth, or as he noted, "Either that or he used gin as a room deodorizer, after-shave lotion, breath freshener and underarm deodorant."

That observation more or less sets the pattern for Kanter-isms throughout the book. If he liked someone he is effusive and equally so for those for whom he didn't care a great deal. He never gets overly vituperative but makes no bones about his likes and dislikes. For example, while writing for Don Ameche on a show sponsored by Drene, Kanter also had to work with someone he described this way: Ameche's co-star was a jackass of a different color. Pincus Leff was a short, sibilant, boastful burlesque comic who was known professionally as Pink Lee . . . an example of the humor the clown expected me to provide: "I just had a terrible accident. I was coming here lickety split, lickety split, when all of a sudden, I split my lickety.

Soon after, Kanter got a short trial with *Ozzie and Harriet* but the low-key domestic approach wasn't his cup of tea and he asked for another assignment. It turned out to be a job working on the expanded *Amos 'n' Andy* program, a show he called "one of the few examples of genuine American folklore radio has ever produced."

It may sound like mere name-dropping but Kanter wrote material for Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Danny Kaye, Olsen and Johnson (when they filled in for Abbott and Costello on the *Kate Smith Show*), Ed Wynn, George Gobel, Milton Berle and Jack Paar, among many others. He wrote on *Beulah* when the lead was played by Hattie McDaniel. He was involved with Paar when the new comedian became Jack Benny's summer replacement. Of Berle Kanter writes that every comedian working in his giant shadow owes him an enormous debt. On the other hand, he adds, "If he ever reads this, I want him to know that I would rather spend just 15 minutes in Milton Berle's company than three hours in a dentist's chair."

The book centers primarily on radio through Chapter 23 when the focus turns to television and movies. He did material for 28 Academy Award presentations and personally handled the audience warm-ups for several "Oscar" events.

One of the most enjoyable portions of this book runs from Chapters 6 through 13 covering time with Armed Forces Radio. Part of the time while he was stationed at Lowry Field in Denver he had a disc jockey show on KMYR, hosted a game show called *Canteen Quiz,* wrote, directed and appeared on 45 weekly dramas on KOA called *The Lowry Field Theater of the Air* and did *The Bookworm,* a book review program. Talk about diversity!

One of Kanter's great descriptive lines in the book concerns musical director Lud Gluskin, who provided melodies for more shows than virtually anyone else. He was director of all music affairs for CBS in Hollywood. Kanter says of him, ". . . Lud Gluskin, a name that sounds like oil being poured into a tub."

He once made a suggestion for a Zsa Zsa Gabor book, *I Never Married a Man I Didn't Meet.*

All I can tell you is, if you love old time radio and you like to laugh, this book's for you. Check with McFarland & Company, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640 or call their order number 800-253-2187.

A Review of "World Series Classics 1956 - New York Yankees vs. Brooklyn Dodgers"

by Jerry Collins

If you are acquainted with John Rayburn, you know he is a man of many talents and accomplishments. We can now add one more item to this list. He has done an excellent job with his historic reenactment of the 1956 World Series between the New York Yankees and the Brooklyn Dodgers.

I am certain that John drew upon newspaper accounts of all seven games as well as available score sheets from those games. Movie clips are also available from the 1956 series. John has given us more than a simple accounting of the game. He has an excellent understanding for the game of baseball as well as a very good appreciation of a history of the game.

The package includes six cassettes and lasts approximately nine hours. Rayburn has included an enormous number of anecdotes on all players on both sides. Fasci-

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nating stories are also included about all the umpires. What are missing are stories about the two managers and their coaches. Certainly Casey Stengal makes for some interesting stories

John Rayburn perfectly combines his commentary with crowd noises and his many stories. Rayburn's enthusiasm and love for the game helps place us at the games. Players like Jackie Robinson, Mickey Mantle, Duke Snider, Yogi Berra, Pee Wee Reese, Billy Martin, Sal Maglie, Don Larsen, Don Newcombe and Whitey Ford are all brought to life as though we were sitting in front of our radio some 43 years ago. As an added treat we are able to listen to John Rayburn's account of Don Larson's perfect game.

John has made a few mistakes, most of them minor. I was amused by two phrases he uses; a ball was hit to "deep short field" and a batter "drove the ball to short left field." I could be wrong, but I do not think a batter is considered safe at first on an inning ending fielder's choice. I have never heard it used before in a radio commentary, but Rayburn used it at least three times. He made his biggest mistake in the top of the fifth of game four. Rube Walker was pinch-hitting for Carl Erskine. While giving a brief summary of Walker's career John incorrectly credits Walker with hitting the homerun off Ralph Branca in the final game of the three game playoff between the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants in 1951. It was Bobby Thompson, of course, who hit the "homerun heard round the world."

The big test occurred when I compared John Rayburn's coverage of Don Larson's perfect game with an original audiotape of Mel Allen and Vince Scully's television coverage of the game. I alternated the coverage every half inning for the first five innings of the game. John Rayburn does a better job with background and statistical information as as well as with his many anecdotes. Mel Allen did the first half of the game and includes more of the timely information; the weather conditions at game time, Pee Wee Reese's problem with a bad cold, Babe Panelli's injury suffered early in the series and the Mickey Mantle shift used by the Dodgers. And for the trivia fans amongst us Mel Allen does list the base coaches in the game, Bill Dickey and Frankie Crosetti for the Yanks and Billy Herman and Jake Pitler for the Dodgers.

Now to the inning by inning comparison. John Rayburn's coverage is accurate in at least ninety percent of the situations. Some differences are very minor, while a few are quite significant. In the bottom of the second Pee Wee Reese made a long running catch of a pop-up along the left field foul line. Rayburn described it as a fairly easy catch.

There were three major threats to Don Larson's perfect game. John Rayburn accurately covered the first of these but missed the significance of the last two. In the top of the second Jackie Robinson hit a shot off Andy Carey's glove that went directly to Gil McDougald who threw to Joe Collins for the out. Rayburn covered the play perfectly. In the bottom of the fourth Duke Snyder made a diving catch off the bat of Yogi Berra that Mel Allen called the best defensive play of the series. In the top of the fifth Mickey Mantle made a long running catch in left center field of a line drive off the bat of Gil Hodges. Mel Allen felt it equaled Snyder's catch of the previous inning. Rayburn called it a good running catch. In that same inning Sandy Amoros hit a shot down the right field line that missed being a homerun by inches. The umpires did not call it foul until the ball landed in the stands. John Rayburn called it foul soon after the ball was hit.

I would like to put these mistakes aside and give John Rayburn credit for a marvelous nine-hour performance. It was a labor of love. An enormous amount of research went into the project. The games were announced with the same amount of enthusiasm from the first to the last batter. With Father's Day coming up I know I will be ordering the Boston Red Sox-St. Louis Cardinals, 1946 World Series. I am anxious to feel the enthusiasm of John Rayburn as he announces Enos Slaughter's wild dash to home to win the World Series.