

The Old Time Radio Club

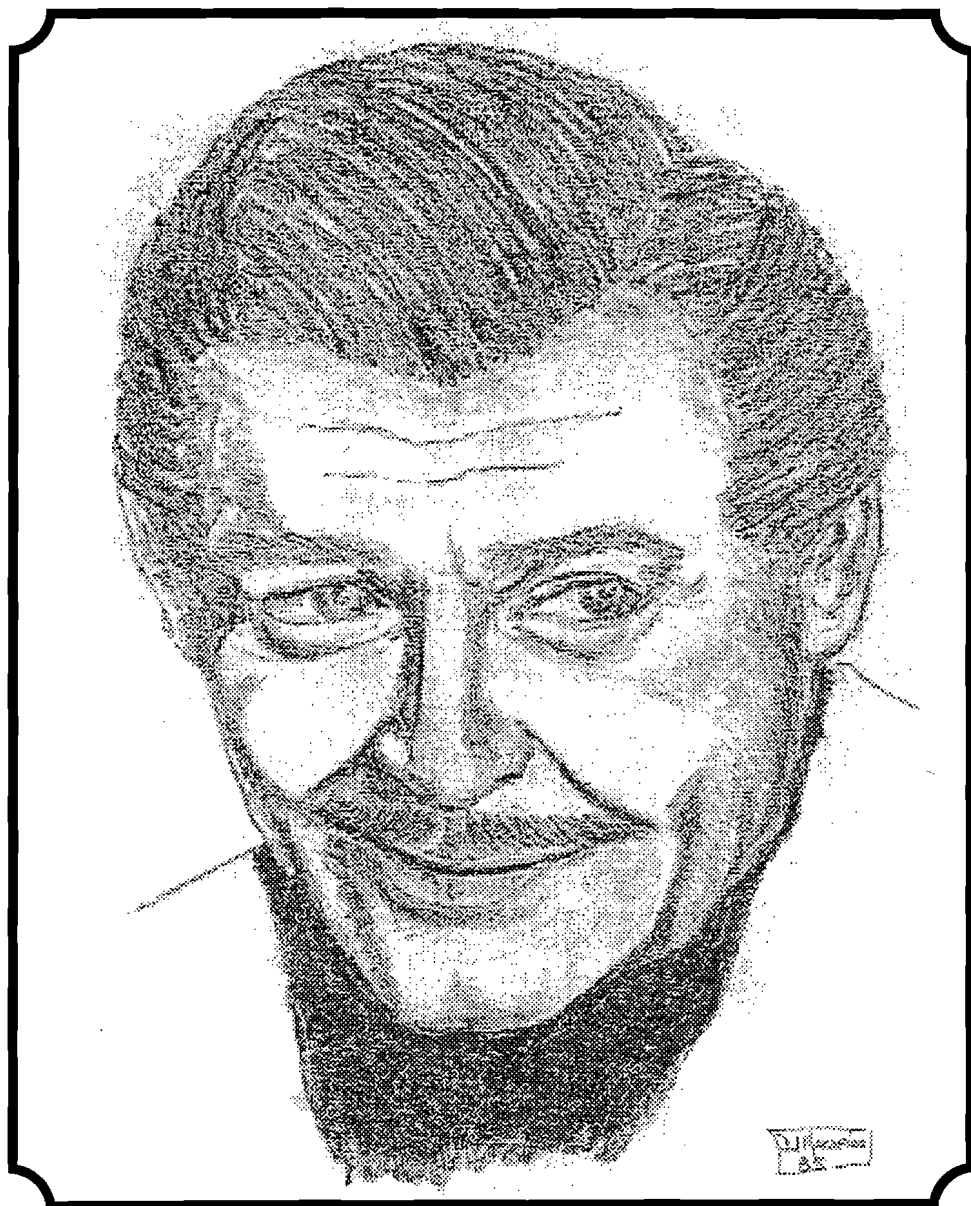
Established 1975

THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS

Number 283

Our Twenty-fifth Year!

October 2000



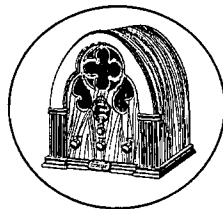
"The King" CLARK GABLE

Membership Information

New member processing, \$5 plus club membership of \$17.50 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and a monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: if you join January-March, \$17.50; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The **Old Time Radio Club** meets the first Monday of every month at 7:30 PM during the months of September to June at 393 George Urban Blvd., Cheektowaga, NY 14225. The club meets informally during the months of July and August at the same address. Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome. The **Old Time Radio Club** is affiliated with The Old Time Radio Network.

Club Mailing Address

Old Time Radio Club
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086



Back issues of *The Illustrated Press* are \$1.50 post-paid. Publications out of print may be borrowed from our Reference Library.

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

The Illustrated Press is a monthly newsletter of the **Old Time Radio Club**, headquartered in Western New York State. Contents except where noted are copyright © 2000 by the OTRC.

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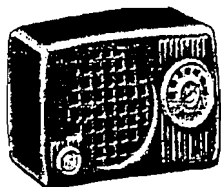
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SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by JIM COX

Dr. I. Q., The Mental Banker

Known as "The Mental Banker" and introduced on the air as "the genial master of wit and information," Dr. I. Q. was tagged "the wise man with the friendly smile and the cash for your correct answers" during the show's opening. The series he fronted was a quick-tempo, straight-to-the-point question-and-answer program in which players could win silver dollars for their knowledge of a wide range of general subjects.

Authoritative radio historian John Dunning considers *Dr. I. Q.* no less than "the first great quiz show on the air . . . None before it possessed the style, pace, or longevity of this brisk item."

Unlike its chatty, persona-based contemporaries, *Dr. I. Q.* distinguished itself with a hard-driven, no-nonsense strategy. "The main attraction was the pace," Dunning alleges. "A contestant got one quick shot at the money and the microphone moved on." While other quiz shows spent lots of time building up to the main event by exploring a player's background, that wasn't the case on *Dr. I. Q.*

When one of four, five or six assistants with portable microphones who were roving about the studio audience acknowledged: "I have a lady in the balcony, doctor that might be all the listeners would ever know about the next participant, other than whether she could answer the question pitched her way.

Coincidentally, at the program's inception, the catchphrase ("I have a lady in the balcony, doctor!") became one of the most memorable and oft-repeated lines of any pre-TV game show and perhaps from all of radio. Despite its "slight hint of impropriety," according to Dunning the phrase was bandied about nationally almost overnight.

Once Dr. I. Q.'s assistant had introduced the lady in the balcony (or the sailor in the third row or the gentleman in the right front or the young lad in the far left corner), the "doctor" might articulate this clarion wail "Sixteen silver dollars to that young lady for telling me which of the following was not one of our famous Revo-

lutionary [War] generals . . . Washington, Wayne, Burgoin, Schuyler."

"Schuyler?" the lady answered questioningly on the broadcast of January 26, 1942.

"Oh I'm soooooo sorry, I think you'd find it was General Burgoin. He was an *English* general, not one of our generals, came the doctor's patronizing reply, feigning pity for the guest. "But a box of Dr. I. Q. candy and two tickets to next week's production to that lady!"

On a typical broadcast from 35 to 40 questions were asked in rapid-fire succession. The show claimed that while the interrogations were tricky, contestants answered correctly slightly more than half the time. There was a 10 second limit imposed for each query and Dr. I. Q. could be constantly heard shooshing the audience: "No coaching, please. Let him (or her) answer it." When a contestant offered absolutely no reply, the emcee would spur him on, urging the faltering contender to respond by inquiring: "Don't you want to take a guess?" He appeared exasperated, in fact, when even that didn't motivate some to supply an answer.

By the television era, the roving assistants with the hand-held mikes were carrying silver dollars in large sacks hanging from their necks, a resolute bow toward the visual medium. When a player satisfactorily answered a question, an assistant doled out the player's winnings with an accompanying flourish that played appropriately to the camera. But in radio, aides grumbled that such heavy burdens burst their tuxedo jackets at the seams, requiring them to have their pockets reinforced. Besides, all those weighty coins made them appear stoop-shouldered, they affirmed.

For the "Biographical Sketch" portion, someone at home received \$250 for supplying a half-dozen clues to the identity of a celebrated mystery figure.

In another weekly match, the "Monument to Memory" (aka the "Thought Twister"), a player was required to repeat a phrase verbatim that was read aloud "one time and one time only" by Dr. I. Q.

In the "Right or Wrong" segment the quizmaster read aloud 12 rapid-fire declarations that had been supplied by listeners (at \$50 for each trio of entry statements). The studio audience then branded those assertions as "Right" or "Wrong" on cards they had been given. The cards were collected and tallied by the show's staff following the broadcast. Winners of the "Mastermind Award"—which included getting all one dozen of the statements right, and was valued at \$100—were announced on the subsequent show.

There was also a "Famous Quotation" segment in which a contestant could win silver dollars for identifying the source of a popular or well-known expression.

Dr. I. Q. was initially broadcast to a nationwide audience from a Chicago theater. But the Windy City police viewed it as a game of chance, an illegal lottery, and tried to shut it down. Partially as a result, fans in nearly every major American city had an opportunity to play the "The Mental Banker's" game. Like a number of its contemporaries, the quiz trekked back-and-forth across the nation. Airing weekly for about a month from a single locale, it normally originated from the stages of cinema theaters.

Frequently the roving announcers with the hand-held mikes who helped *Dr. I. Q.* ferret out those contestants from the studio audience were well known by native audiences: they were often staff members of the affiliates that broadcast the show, regional celebrities who were ready, willing and anxious to accept network assignments for even minimal notoriety—including those that lasted only a few weeks.

Dr. I. Q. quickly became a radio staple and a forerunner of the enormous popularity of quiz programs. It aired on the Blue network in its first 13 weeks in 1939, transferred to NBC through 1949, then broadcast for most of 1950 on ABC. Its final show was heard on November 29, 1950.

The television debut occurred three years later. With all of its weekly performances on ABC-TV, its broadcast history included two continuous periods in primetime: from a debut on November 4, 1953 through October 17, 1954, originating from New York; then again from December 15, 1958 through March 23, 1959, from Hollywood. During the first few weeks, Jay Owen played the role of *Dr. I. Q.* on the tube. Jimmy McClain, who had been one of two principals filling that responsibility on radio, followed him on January 18, 1954. Tom Kennedy hosted it during the 1958-59 segment.

Mars, Incorporated underwrote the show for most of its radio run, including 1939-42 and again from 1944-49. Announcer Allan C. Anthony was cited by several reviewers for his ability to deliver marvelously convincing marketing messages on behalf of the sponsor's multiple candy products: he wrapped them in persuasive onomatopoeic-sounding descriptions like "creamy nougat," "delicious chocolate" and similar syrupy metaphors. Anthony was so convincing at what he did, by the way, that the sponsor assigned him to perform that same duty on other series that Mars underwrote, including *Dr. I. Q. Jr.* and *Inner Sanctum Mysteries*. Anthony died at age 55 on May 11, 1962.

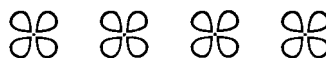
The origins of *Dr. I. Q.* were based in Houston, Texas under the watchful eye of a local producer, Lee Segall. Conceiving the notion as a somewhat burlesque routine, he packaged it for a sponsor and sold it to several area radio stations. A regionally limited Ted Nabors was *Dr. I. Q.* on its premiering Lone Star run. He was later supplanted by Lew Valentine, a youthful announcer, actor, vocalist and production manager at San Antonio's WOAI Radio. The popularity of Professor Quiz helped *Dr. I. Q.* attract a sponsor and a competing network that was willing to bring it before a national audience.

Valentine, then only 26, got the nod as the quizmaster when the show went to a national hookup, although his identity—and age—weren't disclosed to audiences. On occasions, when fans did learn Valentine's real age, some refused to accept it, believing one so young could hardly be such an intellect. The questions he read on the program weren't written or even researched by him, of course. The show's staff and listeners supplied them.

Valentine was born August 5, 1912 at San Benito, Texas and died at Santa Monica, California in June 1976. In the summer of 1942 he also hosted the Blue network game show *Sing for Your Dough*. That autumn, when Uncle Sam called, he gave up his radio assignments to devote three years to Army service. Valentine returned as *Dr. I. Q.* on the program of May 27, 1946 and remained with it to the end of the run. Subsequently, he was absent for 10 weeks starting December 8, 1947, continuing through February 9, 1948. Stanley Vainrib, who earned no other distinct radio credits temporarily replaced him. During Valentine's absence from the microphone, he primed himself for an additional series, *I. Q. Jr.*, on which he would also play *Dr. I. Q.*

While on his Army hitch, Valentine was succeeded as *Dr. I. Q.* by Jimmy McClain, a young seminary student who was training for the Episcopalian ministry. In the summer of 1941 he had successfully performed as quizmaster on a preliminary version of *Dr. I. Q. Jr.*

While it might not be considered one of the most interesting games people played, *Dr. I. Q.* likely raised the national intellect a notch or two. It surely encouraged Americans to gain a broader background of knowledge about a variety of topics. And while *Information Please* and others of its ilk may have been highly competitive, mining the attention of so-called "fact-freaks," no series provided the no-nonsense, in-your-face kind of revelations that *Dr. I. Q.* did, nor did it as well for more than a decade.



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| 2744 | Johnny Chase, Secret Agent of Space (BBC)
#24 "Johnny on Isis" | 2769 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| | #25 "Emperor Percy's Wedding" | 2770 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 5, 6, 7, 8 |
| 2745 | Johnny Chase, Secret Agent of Space (BBC)
"Dr. Death" | 2771 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 9, 10, 11, 12 |
| | "The Mirror Demona" | 2772 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 13, 14, 15, 16 |
| 2746 | Johnny Chase, Secret Agent of Space (BBC)
"The Last Human" | 2773 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 17, 18, 19, 20 |
| | "The Clone Killer" | 2774 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 21, 22, 23, 24 |
| 2747 | Johnny Chase, Secret Agent of Space (BBC)
"Empress In Exile" | 2775 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 25, 26, 27, 28 |
| | "The Mozart Mystery" | 2776 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 29, 30, 31, 32 |
| 2748 | Johnny Chase, Secret Agent of Space (BBC)
"The Living Crystal" | 2777 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 33, 34, 35, 36 |
| | "The Alpha Mega Threat" | 2778 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 37, 38, 39, 40 |
| 2749 | Sleeping Beauty #1 (90 min.) | 2779 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 41, 42, 43, 44 |
| 2750 | Sleeping Beauty #2 (90 min.) | 2780 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 45, 46, 47, 48 |
| 2751 | Sleeping Beauty #3 (90 min.) | 2781 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 49, 50, 51, 52 |
| 2752 | Sleeping Beauty #4 (90 min.) | 2782 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 53, 54, 55, 56 |
| 2753 | Sleeping Beauty #5 (90 min.) | 2783 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 57, 58, 59, 60 |
| 2754 | Sleeping Beauty #6 (90 min.) | 2784 | Magic Island, Vol. 1, Episodes 61, 62, 63, 64 |
| 2755 | Big Town "The Trap" 9/28/48 | 2785 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 65, 66, 67, 68 |
| | Big Town "Double Murder" 10/12/48 | 2786 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 69, 70, 71, 72 |
| 2756 | Big Town "Double Murder" 10/12/48 | 2787 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 73, 74, 75, 76 |
| | Big Town "Angel of the Street" 10/19/49 | 2788 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 77, 78, 79, 80 |
| 2757 | Big Town "Angel of the Street" 10/19/49 | 2789 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 81, 82, 83, 84 |
| | Big Town "Fatal Chain" 11/9/48 | 2790 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 85, 86, 87, 88 |
| 2758 | Big Town "I Remember Murder" 11/30/48 | 2791 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 89, 90, 91, 92 |
| | Big Town "Lost and Found" 12/7/48 | 2792 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 93, 94, 95, 96 |
| 2759 | Big Town "Dangerous Resolution" 12/28/48 | 2793 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 97, 98, 99, 100 |
| | Big Town "Mask of Evil" 1/4/49 | 2794 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 101,102,103,104 |
| 2760 | Big Town "Death at the Wheel" 2/8/49 | 2795 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 105,106,107,108 |
| | Big Town "Prisoner's Song" 2/15/49 | 2796 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 109,110,111,112 |
| 2761 | Big Town "Crooked Eye" 3/8/49 | 2797 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 113,114,115,116 |
| | Big Town "The Shinney" 3/15/49 | 2798 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 117,118,119,120 |
| 2762 | Big Town "Deadly Squawking Rat" 4/5/49 | 2799 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 121,122,123,124 |
| | Big Town "Lovely Heart" 4/12/49 | 2800 | Magic Island, Vol. 2, Episodes 125,126,127,128 |
| 2763 | Adventures of Rin Tin Tin "The Ambassador"
11/13/55 | 2801 | Counterspy "Foolish Father" 8/15/50 |
| | Adventures of Rin Tin Tin "White Buffalo"
11/27/55 | | Counterspy "Fight Against Narcotics" 2/14/52 |
| 2764 | Lux Radio Theater "Jazz Singer" (60 min.) | 2802 | Boston Blackie "Brandon Jewels" |
| 2765 | Johnny Dollar "Perakoff Policy" 2/11/49 | | Boston Blackie "Congdon Ransom" |
| | Johnny Dollar "Murder is a Merry Go Round"
3/11/49 | 2803 | Boston Blackie "Tour Bus Corpse" |
| 2766 | Fibber McGee & Molly "Chaperones" 11/27/51 | | Boston Blackie "Nobody at the Door" |
| | Jack Benny Show with Amos and Andy 12/3/50 | 2804 | Let George Do It "The Man Who Died Twice" |
| 2767 | Dangerous Assignment "Paris" 4/8/53 | 2805 | Sherlock Holmes "Reigate Squires" |
| | Dangerous Assignment "Tibet" 4/15/53 | | Sherlock Holmes "Five Orange Pips" |
| 2768 | Mark Trail "Eyeglass Monster" 3/22/50 | 2806 | Sherlock Holmes "The Beryl Coronet" |
| | Mark Trail "The Deluge" 3/24/50 | | Sherlock Holmes "The Golden Pince-Nez" |
| | | 2807 | Sherlock Holmes "Solitary Cyclist" |
| | | | Sherlock Holmes "Priory School" |
| | | 2808 | X Minus One "The Old Die Rich" 7/17/56 |
| | | | X Minus One "Bad Medicine" 7/10/56 |
| | | 2809 | The Lone Ranger "Jud Jackson's Plan" 6/30/55 |
| | | | The Lone Ranger "A Change at Circle B"
6/29/55 |
| | | 2810 | Big Town "Blind Justice" 9/14/48 |
| | | | Big Town "Final Payment" 9/21/48 (skips) |
| | | 2811 | Suspense "Parole to Panic" 4/12/58 |
| | | | Suspense "The Card Game" 4/19/54 |
| | | 2812 | Gunsmoke "Blue Horse" 5/25/58 |
| | | | Gunsmoke "Quarterhorse" 6/1/58 |

- 2813 Have Gun, Will Travel "Hanging Cross"
12/21/58
- 2814 Have Gun, Will Travel "No Visitors" 3/2/51
- 2814 Duffy's Tavern "Singing Opera" 3/2/51
- Duffy's Tavern with Arthur Treacher 5/4/51
- 2815 Lux Radio Theater "Arrowsmith" 10/25/37
- 2816 Rex Saunders "Game With Death" 4/13/51
- Rex Saunders "Hate in Her Heart" 5/2/51
- 2817 Wayside Theater "Madcap Princess" 12/11/38
- Wayside Theater "Absent Minded Professor"
1/1/39
- 2818 Columbia Workshop "Fall of the City" 9/28/39
- Columbia Workshop "Blennerhassett" 11/2/39
- 2819 Nick Carter, Master Detective "Graveyard
Gunman"
- Nick Carter, Master Detective "Invisible
Treasure"
- 2820 Nick Carter, Master Detective "Death Plays
the Lead"
- Nick Carter, Master Detective "The Cat Brings
Death" 4/15/44
- 2821 Crime Does Not Pay "Summer Tale" 11/22/49
- Crime Does Not Pay "Female of the Species"
11/29/49
- 2822 Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons "Two Faced
Murder"
- Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons "Melody of
Murder"
- 2823 Sam Spade "Bailbond Caper" 6/27/48
- Sam Spade "Death Bed Caper" 6/20/48
- 2824 The Whistler "Man From Calais"
- The Whistler "Death Claim"
- 2825 Dr. Christian "Artist Comes to Town" 9/23/42
- Dr. Christian "Such Things Don't Happen"
12/13/44
- 2826 The Chase "Fortune Hunter" 1/4/53
- The Chase "Professor Calvin and The Voice"
1/13/53
- 2827 Gene Autry "John and Martha"
- Gene Autry "Robbed by Frisco" 1940
- 2828 World's Greatest Novels "Dana of the Cross-
roads" Pts. 1 & 2 10/10, 17/47
- 2829 World's Greatest Novels "Dana of the Cross-
roads" Pts. 3 & 4 10/24, 31/47
- 2830 Tarzan "Omen of the Emerald"
- Tarzan "Volcano of the Sun"
- 2831 The Lone Ranger "Lead for a Quitter"
- The Lone Ranger "The Camels Are Coming"
- 2832 The Skull Beneath Pt. 1, BBC (90 min.)
- 2833 The Skull Beneath Pt. 2, BBC (90 min.)
- 2834 Suspense "Goodnight Mrs. Russell" 8/3/54
- Suspense "Never Steal A Butcher's Wife"
8/10/54
- 2835 Nick Carter "Clumsy Forgeries"
- Nick Carter "Imitation Robberies"

- 2836 CBS Radio Workshop "Heaven Is In The Sky"
5/26/57
- 2837 Sam Spade "Overjord Caper" 4/5/46
- Sam Spade "Vapio Cup Caper" 8/22/46
- 2838 Challenge of the Yukon "Witness for the
Crown" 3/13/48
- Challenge of the Yukon "The Debt" 3/6/48
- 2839 Imagination Theater "Adventures of the
Bishop's Ring"
- Imagination Theater "Case of the Fisheye
Murders"
- 2840 Big Town "Dangerous Resolution" 12/28/48

THE FAT MAN

US Version: 1946 - 1951?

First Show: 01-21-46 Last Show: 09-26-51
 Number Shows: ?? Audition Show: none known

Australian Version: 19?? - 19??

First Show: ??-??-?? Last Show: ??-??-??
 Number Shows: 52? Audition Show: none known

Series Description:
 "There he goes across the street into the drugstore, steps on the scale, height: 6 feet, weight: 290 pounds, fortune: Danger. Who is it? THE FAT MAN." Brad Runyon was the Fat Man, played by Jack Scott Smart. The series was created by Dashall Hammott and was first heard on the ABC network Jan. 21, 1946.

J. Scott Smart fit the part of the Fat Man perfectly, weighing in at 270 pounds himself. When he spoke, there was no doubt that this was the voice of a big guy. Smart gave a witty, tongue-in-cheek performance and helped make THE FAT MAN one of the most popular detective programs on the air.

Smart also appeared in The March Of Time (early 1930s), the Theater Guild On The Air, Blondie, The Fred Allen Show, and The Jack Benny Program.

There was also a version made in Australia. Although not featuring J. Scott Smart, it is quite good and readily available.

Log Comments:
 There are two lists below. Since there are only 10 surviving FAT MAN shows done in the US (except for a few half shows) the first list shows only those complete shows, as offered by various vendors.

The second list is the Australian version. Broadcast dates and actual number of shows are not known. There were believed to be 52 shows in this series. Unknown shows will have "... title not known" in the Title field.

The SPERDVAC catalog listed one CBC show, "Murder is the Medium".

Jay Hickerson's "Ultimate History" was used to verify data used in this log.

Logs:

US Version:

Date	Title
01-21-46	"The 19th Pearl"
02-??-46	"Twice Told Secret"
07-08-46	"The Black Angel"
9-09-46	"The Crooked Horse"
16-03-47	"A Window for Murder"
??-??-47	"Murder Plays Hide and Seek"
04-01-49	"Murder Wins The Draw"
07-22-49	"Murder is the Medium"
01-17-51	"The Nightmare Murder"
09-05-51	"Order For Murder"

Australian Version:

Number	Title
1	"Murder Squares the Triangle"
2	"Murder Plays the Horses"
3	"Murder Sends a Christmas Card"
4	"Murder Runs a Want Ad"
5	"Murder Wears a False Face"
6	"Murder Stalks the Dead"
7	... title not known ...
8	... title not known ...
9	... title not known ...
10	... title not known ...
11	"Murder Murder through a Crystal"
12	"Murder Makes a Ham"
13	... title not known ...
14	... title not known ...
15	"Murder and the Peacock"
16	"Murder Calls the Undertaker"
17	"Murder Seeks a Lost Penny"
18	"Murder Makes a Statue"
19	... title not known ...
20	... title not known ...
21	"Murder Rings a Bell"
22	"Murder Repeats Itself"
23	"Murder Rides a Wheelchair"
24	"Murder Finds a Coffin"
25	"Murder for Sale"

26	Murder by Mail
27	... title not known ...
28	... title not known ...
29	Murder Shows an Unfamiliar Face
30	Murder Makes the King's Coffin
31	... title not known ...
32	... title not known ...
33	Murder Makes a Black Moon
34	Murder Shows a Phantom Face
35	Murder
36	Murder Makes Music
37	Murder Writes a Story
38	Murder Meets an Uncertain Lady
39	Murder Shows a Card

The Singing Indian Chief

TECUMSEH

Once more deserts Valley of Wenatchees as the Autumn Leaves are falling to visit Broadcast Tepees

Silent as an apparition the tall dark figure suddenly materialized before the information desk. His black shining eyes gleamed out from beneath the brim of his big sombrero, and the brightly colored beaded vest proclaimed his nativity. "Whoops, my dear" gasped Marcella after a quick glance toward the door. The office greeter stepped briskly forward with outstretched hand.

"How! How! Chief! Off the reservation again? How are you?" The dusky caller was not cordial. "I see many pictures in Radio Digest," said the chief, "but why never a picture of Chief Tecumseh?" That of course was by way of bullying preliminary to an invitation to show what he had wrapped in his newspaper bundle. So the greeter humored the round-about way of the Indian nature and asked: "Well, Chief, if you only had some nice new pictures—" The bundle was unwrapped. Two of the pictures selected you behold in this article.

Every autumn this red minstrel goes to the big Lookout Rock on the edge of the Wenatchee River and turns his face eastward where the paleface dwells in great cities and where the great broadcast stations sweep the con-

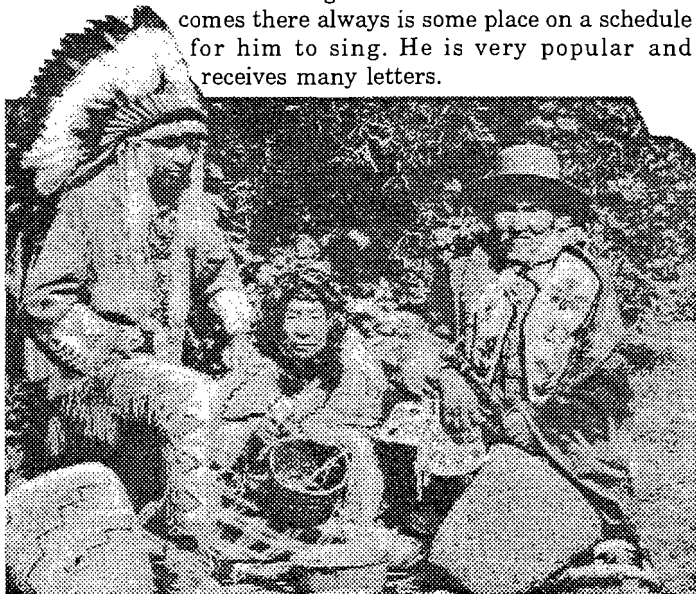
tinent with mighty hosts of singing voices. The blood of his ancestors surges in his veins. He, too, has a voice. He, too, would ride the clouds over the plains and the mountains and the valleys like spirits from the Happy Hunting Grounds on white winged horses.

From early sunrise until dusk sits Tecumseh on this rock and thinks of his people who have vanished. He sings a quavering melody from a half forgotten campfire. Below is the old Wenatchee reservation now covered with orchards where the famous Skookum apples grow.

In the morning Tecumseh sits in council with his father, old Sam Kami. His mother brings her basket materials, for she is famous throughout all the Northwest as a weaver of baskets. She is old now, but her fingers have not forgotten their cunning. They quickly thread the reeds and fibers in gay color designs learned from her mother and her mother's mother.

"Rest your hands, my mother," says Tecumseh (named from a great ancestral chief). "I am going on a journey. I have looked out from the rock and it's time to go. I will sing and tell the palefaces of our Skookum apples. Then they will buy the apples and we will have money to provide us meat and bread for another year. I will go tomorrow."

And the iron horse takes Tecumseh away from the little village of Cashmere in the Washington valley. He wears the beaded vest given to him by his mother. But otherwise he follows the white man's ways. He is known in a hundred broadcasting stations. And when Tecumseh comes there always is some place on a schedule for him to sing. He is very popular and receives many letters.



Autumn brings thoughts of the white man's radio and Tecumseh turns to the rising sun from his rendezvous on Lookout Rock . . . He bids farewell to his father and mother.

Last year he received so many letters that he covered his tepee with them and still had many left.

"Where are you singing in Chicago?" asked the Radio Digest man, after some of the pictures had been selected. "At WLS." "Why don't you sit down and write us your own story?" "I will have my secretary do it." His secretary! This Indian was getting on!

But when the days passed and no story came from Tecumseh or his secretary the Radio Digest man called up Don Malin at WLS. "Oh Tecumseh, the Indian?" answered Mr. Malin. "Yes, he sang here several times. But he seems to have folded his tent and disappeared—a queer chap."

Tecumseh has gone to a new camping ground. Somewhere in the big circle that wends its way around from the big rock on the edge of the Wenatchee over the Great Lakes region to the Atlantic and back by way of the Southland and the Pacific this wondering red minstrel has pitched his lodge and is singing tonight the songs of his people to the white conquerors who throw their voices from ocean to ocean and move with the speed of the spheres.

Radio Guide, February 1930

The McGees of Wistful Vista

by Robert M. Yoder

What does hard work get you? Well, it got Fibber McGee and Molly to the happy point where they can make top radio comedy out of anything that happens to Uncle Henry . . . or to you. Here's the way they do it.

The characteristic American delight in a slang phrase results in phases that may seem a little eccentric to outsiders. There was a time, for instance, when levelheaded citizens went around asking each other, "Do you want to buy a duck?" In another day, the phrase heard all over this favored land was "I'm regusted." Still later men and women quite possibly named Czuskinski or Twerklemeyer kept telling each other, "Tain't funny, McGee." If this baffles any literal-minded archaeologists about the year 5000, that will be fine; there ought to be a stiff jail sentence for being literal-minded, anyway. Brighter souls will know these expressions are just something we picked up from the radio—from the late Joe Penner, from Amos and Andy and from the show which seems now to be comedy's fair-haired boy. Fibber McGee. and Molly.

The mildly curious thing about the remark the McGees put into the national idiom is that a rebuke for not being funny helped make these comedians famous. "Tain't funny, McGee. It was what Molly said to her spouse when Fibber tried to fret off Something good and fell on his smiling face. This being a nation of wisecrackers—how about the band leader who, at the unveiling of a monument to President Harding, elected to play *Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone*? How about the scientist who had his banquet speech put on recording tape, so he could listen and help applaud?—there seemed to be a need for a reply, when somebody tries, but misses. Then, too, "Tain't funny" could be used to mean "You are kidding on the square buster," or "That's no Joke." Whatever the appeal of this not sensationally cogent remark, it became so prevalent a few years ago that the McGees and their author, Don Quinn, got as sick of it as everyone else, even though it proved their hold on the public. There is more to it than a simple reproof; usually it is Molly's comment on a chain of events. Even so, the public wore the words so thin that the McGees now use these trademark words very sparingly, perhaps a couple of times in a radio season.

By now they have a basketful of these "recognition devices," the second most famous of which is, of course, Fibber's hall closet. He opens it forgetfully, and it's like the breaking of a dam. Out of this catch-all, as thousands of faithful listeners automatically yell "Don't.," pours all the clutter of odds and ends that get stuck into closets like that—the moose head that was put away in 1936, the anchor somebody bought for a boat he never got around to building; the lamps that will get repaired any day now, the outgrown roller skates, the tin candy box that was going to be so handy if anybody could think of a use for it. That closet has become a symbol negotiable in conversation on any level; no doubt it is a far better reference than Pandora's box. A few listeners complain; they think the idea is worn out. Quinn himself, who dislikes all set pieces, is inclined to agree. But so many others find it good for a laugh every time, that it could never be dropped from the show.

Because studio audiences get a kick out of it, it is often the sound man who gets the first laugh on one of F. & M.'s Tuesday-night sessions. If the closet will figure in the story, the sound man comes in to set it up, and he comes in looking like an evicted pawnshop keeper whose stuff had just been moved into the street. On a set of steps he sets up about what such a closet might contain. Carefully, as if baiting a trap, he lays out such items as golf clubs, roller skates, trays, a guitar, shoes, a brief case, a pith helmet, a sword, a spray gun, a suitcase or two, several packages, a broken alarm clock and the kind of wooden bucket widely purchased early

in the war to hold sand—to put out bombing fires, of course. There is never any doubt that this homey clutter will crash with a realistic jangle. But for twenty-nine minutes of the thirty-minute program, the sound man stewes for fear it will crash beforehand. It never has; nothing ever goes wrong on this show. Putting it together undoubtedly is the smoothest operation in radio. Quinn and the Jordans have worked together so long they could almost do it by telepathy, and commonly do it by telephone. Quinn comes up with a theme. He wants it simple, and often makes it so timely it seems to continue the listeners' dinner-table conversation.

Perhaps, in the ballooning real-estate market, Fibber has a chance to sell his home for \$18,000. Immediately he realizes the joint ain't right for a man with \$18,000, although a minute ago it was the little Gray Home in the West and he loved every curling shingle on that dear roof. Now he'll sell without a qualm. Doesn't know just what he'll do next; he's in a thumbs-in-suspenders mood now, feeling expansive. He may buy something flossier, more suitable for the type big shot he is. Or he may just knock around the world, I and Somerset Maugham. With the general theme agreed upon, there will be several turns the action could take, several choices of good lines. In these hands, decisions like that don't take much fretting.

Fibber and Molly, who are Jim and Marian Jordan, have been perfecting their radio roles for thirteen years, and Quinn has been writing for them since F.D.R.'s first administration. Big-tine vaudeville stars didn't trifle with radio until later, but the Jordans had no pocketful of heavy old money to hold them back.

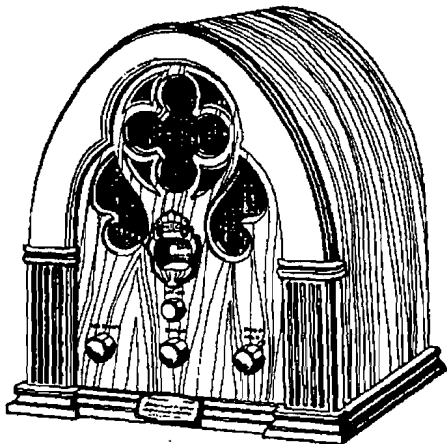
The ball for a Tuesday-night show gets rolling the preceding Friday afternoon in Producer Frank Pittman's office on the seventh floor of the Taft Building on the celebrated Hollywood corner of Sunset and Vine, or as the principals describe the office, "Overlooking the corset department of the Broadway-Hollywood" (department store). Molly is inevitably smartly dressed; Fibber may be setting off a plaid shirt with a sports Jacket; he will be the figure lounging nonchalantly on the davenport. Don Quinn and Phil Leslie, who has helped with the writing the last five years, come in from their own office across the street, and the general line of the show is thrashed out.



To be continued next issue.

Old Time Radio Club

49 Regal Street
Depew, NY 14043



FIRST CLASS MAIL



CANADA

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MUST be Licensed*

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Radio Dealers, Radio Inspectors, or from
Radio Branch, Department of Marine,
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A. JOHNSTON,
Deputy Minister of Marine