The Old Time Radio Club

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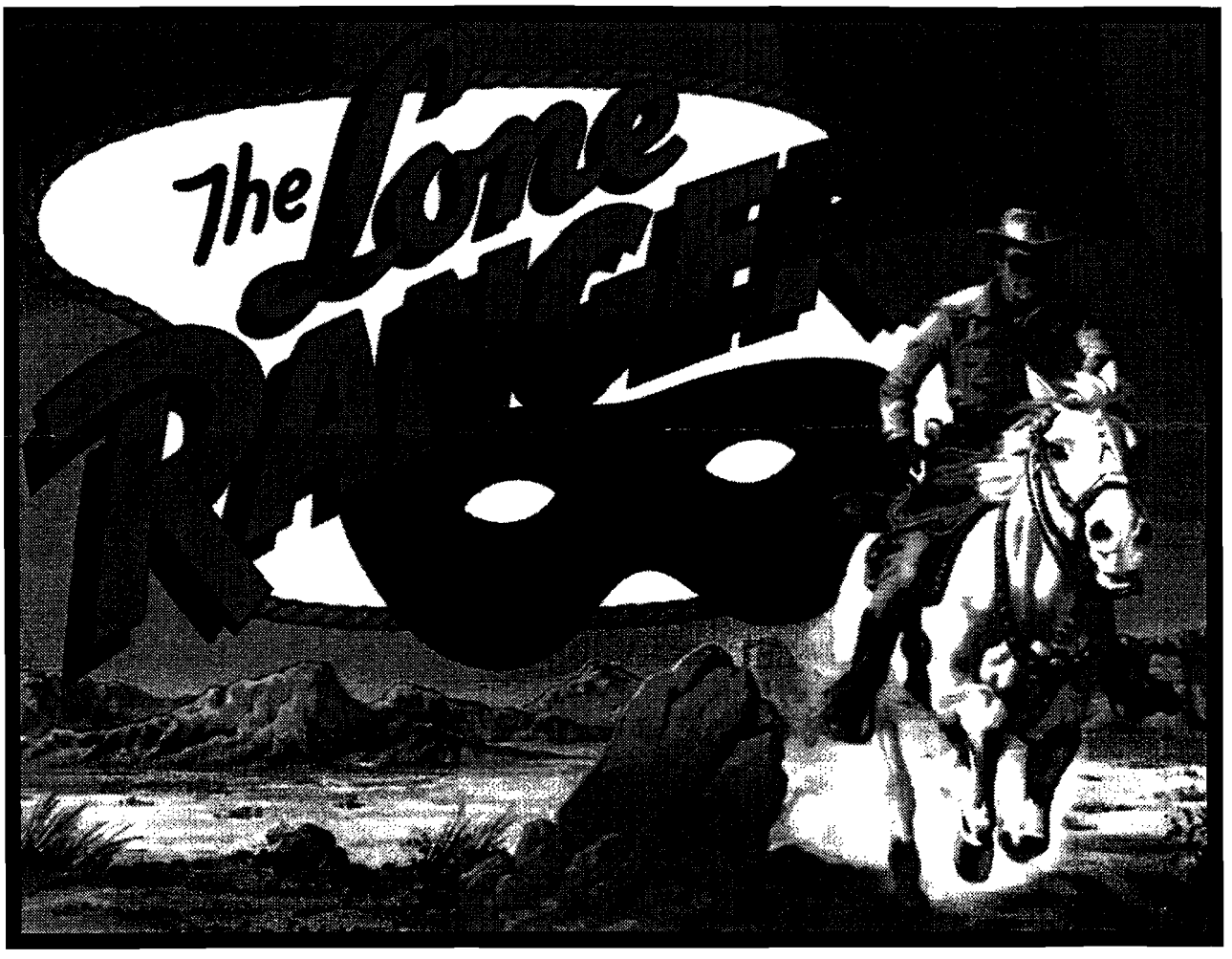

Hi-Yo-Silver, Awaaaayyyyy!

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 7:39 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.

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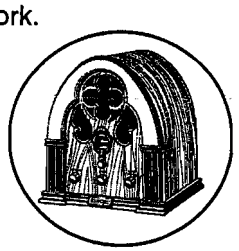

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Notre Dame Enters The Television Age

by JERRY COLLINS

On September 30, 1939 Fordham played Waynesburg in the first televised football game. Eight years later Notre Dame entered the age of television with one of the greatest college football teams.

Many experts consider the 1947 Notre Dame football team the greatest of all Irish football squads. The team coached by Frank Leahy included Johnny Lujack, Bill Fischer, George Connor Ziggie Czarobski, Terry Brennan, Leon Hart, Gus Cifelli, Bill Gay, Jim Martin, Bob Livingston, John Panelli, Emil Sitko, Lancaster Smith, Art Statuto, George Stohmeyer, Frank Tripuka, Coy McGee, Marty Wendell, Bill Walsh and Bill Wightkin. Lujack, Connor, Czarobski and Hart were All-American selections in 1948. Fisher, Hart, Sitko and Wendell were All-American selections in 1949. Strohmemeyer was an All-American selection in 1946, but lost his starting position to Bill Walsh in 1947. Fourteen members of the team played in the College All-Star game the following August. Twenty seven members of the squad would later play professional football. Seven members of the 1947 squad, Connor, Czarobski, Sitko, Martin, Lujack, Hart and Fischer, are members of the College Football Hall of Fame. Johnny Lujack won the Heisman Trophy in 1947, while Leon Hart won the award in 1949. The Knute Rockne Memorial Award was won by Bill Fisher in 1948 and Leon Hart in 1949. The Walter Camp Memorial Trophy was won by Johnny Lujack in 1947 and Emil "Red" Sitko in 1949. The William M. Coffman for the outstanding offensive player in the East-West Game was presented to Johnny Lujack in 1948 and John Panelli in 1949.

It was only appropriate that the 1947 squad would be the first Notre Dame team to be televised. It would be the October 25h Notre Dame-Iowa game that made history. The Irish won the game 21-0. The game was merely a dress rehearsal for the biggest game of the season, the annual Army-Notre Dame game. The Irish won the game 27-7. The third and final game to be televised was a 59-6 victory over Tulane. Notre Dame concluded the season with a 38-7 victory over third ranked Southern California team. The Irish went 9-0 and won their second consecutive National Championship.

Station WBKB carried the Notre Dame games against Purdue and Michigan State in 1948. The Dumont Network then entered the picture carrying Irish games against Washington and Northwestern. Dumont thus became the first network to carry Notre Dame football games. The network had affiliates in Chicago, Milwaukee, Toledo, Detroit, Cleveland and Buffalo.

In 1949 the Dumont Network was given exclusive rights to televise all Notre Dame home games as well as the North Carolina game in New York City. If the Dumont Network did not have an affiliate in a specific city, the game was shown in a Dumont affiliated theater.

Notre Dame put up the 1950 season for bids and the Dumont Network won the rights for $185,000. Jim Britt and Mel Allen announced the games for Chevrolet. A 20minute pre-game show was hosted by Fr. John Cavanaugh and Fr. Theodore Hesburgh.

Beginning in 1951 and extending to the mid 1980s extensive restrictions were placed on the broadcasting of all college football games. NBC carried the games from 1951-1953 In 1954 ABC won the NCAA contract. NBC had very good ratings carrying Canadian Football League games that year. Coverage of college football games passed back and forth amongst the three major networks from 1955 to 1965. ABC gained the rights in 1966 and has held them ever since. Curt Gowdy, Paul Christman, Lindsey Nelson, Terry Brennan, Johnny Lujack, Jim Morse, Chris Schenkel, Bud Wilkinson, Bill Fleming, Keith Jackson, Ara Parsegian, Dick Enberg, Bill Walsh, Tom Hammond, Chris Collingsworth, Dick Enberg and Pat Haden have announced the games at different times.

In 1953 the NCAA relinquished control of all non-conventional television coverage of college football games. Beginning in 1953, 110 theaters in 62 cities began regular coverage of Notre Dame football games. In 1954 Notre Dame began feeding closed circuit broadcasts into hotels. The following year they signed a contract with the Sheraton Hotel chain to broadcast their games

in the ballrooms in 13 cities with an admission charge of $4. Lindsey Nelson and Red Grange were the broadcasters.

The 1959 season saw the beginning of Sunday morning replays of all Notre Dame football games. UPI had the broadcast rights in the initial season, while WGN-TV held the rights from 1960-1963. The C.D. Chesley Company took over production the following year and held them for the next 16 years. Metrosports took over production of the games in 1980 and continued production until the cessation of the program in 1984. Harry Wismer, Moose Kraus, Lindsey Nelson, Paul Hornung, Lou Boda and George Connor announced the games at various times. Incidentally the University of Buffalo had similar delayed coverage of their games with Chuck Burr doing the announcing.

Many schools including Notre Dame became progressively concerned about the high handedness and arbitrary decision of the NCAA. In 1977 the College Football Association was formed. It was comprised of only Division IA schools. In June of 1981, in defiance of the NCAA, the CFA began developing their own TV plans. In June of 1984 the University of Georgia successfully sued the NCAA over the control of their schedule. The CFA then negotiated a $13 million contract with ABC, a decrease of $20 million from last year's contract. The Big Ten and the Pac 10 negotiated an $8 million contract with CBS.

In the midst of these negotiations, Notre Dame turned down a very lucrative exclusive contract with Turner Broadcasting. As a result of individual contracts with ESPN, Metrosports and ABC, eight Notre Dame football games were televised in 1984. Still Notre Dame was concerned about ABC's plans to regionalize many of its games. Following the retirement of Fathers Joyce and Hesburgh, the new leadership at Notre Dame now hoped to maximize its profits from football.

On February 5, 1990, Executive Vice President Father Beauchamps and Athletic Director Dick Rosenthal met with officials from NBC. The participants quickly worked out a deal by which Notre Dame received $40 million over five years for exclusive rights to all Notre Dame football games.

The opposition to this contract was loud and relentless. Still Notre Dame refused to change its policy. In fact the contract has been renewed twice. Notre Dame expanded its stadium and added lights for night games. Not only did NBC pay for the stadium lights, but they also expanded lighting around the stadium to improve safety during evening football games.

The Notre Dame NBC contract has brought about many changes. Through NBC Super Channel and World Tel Incorporated, Notre Dame games are broadcast all over the world. To gain greater leverage with the networks, bigger conferences i.e. Pac 10, SEC, ACC, PAC 10, were created. The CFA was also dissolved in 1997. The Bowl Championship series was also created to help select a national champion and also to improve TV ratings.

As a result of their increased media attention Notre Dame has become America's team. Whether you loved them or hated them, you knew they were going to be on television almost every weekend.

GUNSMOKE

by TOM CHERRE

It's been said *Gunsmoke* was the best western on the air. Some say it may have been the very best program period. William Conrad, not known for his dapper looks, claimed he had a great radio face. He also had the best radio voice. His dulcet tones electrified us for 9 years as U.S. Marshal Matt Dillon. Mr. Dillon had the unsavory job of keeping law and order in the frontier town of Dodge, Kansas. Unlike the fluff-cake westerns of Cisco, Gene, Hoppy and Roy, *Gunsmoke* dealt with a formidable array of adult human concerns. Many times Matt Dillon would have to kill just to stay alive, something unheard of on *The Lone Ranger*. Even words like prostitute, of which Miss Kitty Russell was formerly one, was never even uttered on the other westerns.

Gunsmoke had a respect that westerns up until then hadn't. *Gunsmoke* even hired a woman writer to develop stories with a female slant. There was great character

The cast of *Gunsmoke* included William Conrad (as Matt Dillon, U.S. Marshal), Georgia Ellis (Miss Kitty), Howard McNear (Doc Adams) and Parley Baer (Deputy Chester Proudfoot).

development. *Gunsmoke's* high standards were not limited to superb acting and writing. They had the best sound effects crew in Tom Hanley and Ray Kemper. For perfect realism, they took the task of gathering .022, .038, and .045 caliber hand guns along with different rifles and shot guns. They claimed they all sounded a little different when fired. Eventually they wound up at Conrad's house at Laurel Canyon in the Hollywood Hills one weekend. He lived in a remote area, with obvious understanding neighbors. They recorded a tremendous amount of gunshots including ricochets for different effects on the show. With proper editing they had gunshots for every possible scene. You could also hear the sound of horses trotting or galloping along. The clanking of spurs on a dusty street were very clear. Even when Marshal Dillon would unlock the jail cell you could hear every tumbler in the lock turn. Ray Kemper wanted listeners to see what their ears heard. When the buckboard came down the bumpy road he wanted you to feel the bumps, hear the kids playing and the dog barking. Instead of using tape for music, *Gunsmoke* engaged the talents of Rex Khoury and his 20 piece orchestra for theme music and the like. On top of this, you had the dynamic voice of William Conrad. It was said Conrad sounded like the TV James Arness looked.

NOT SO

[redacted] Before the radio series started, Conrad auditioned for the TV role. He actually hoped he would be turned down for the part. He felt more comfortable in the radio media. Eventually L&M pulled the plug on *Gunsmoke* and it ended its run in the early '60s. Conrad gained more fame on TV as he starred as *Cannon* and *Jake and the Fatman*. He will forever be remembered as the narrator of *The Fugitive* series in the mid '60s. For all of us loyal radio listeners Conrad will always be Mr. Dillon.

Speaking of westerns, the cowboy's best friend was always his horse. I'm sure you all know Buckshot was Wild Bill's horse. His sidekick Jingles P. Jones had Joker. Sgt. Preston of the Yukon rode upon Rex. Could anyone out there tell me the rarely mentioned mount of Matt Dillon. The first correct answer wins another insignificant prize of little value. Just tell me at the next meeting. Addios and Happy Trails Buckaroos.

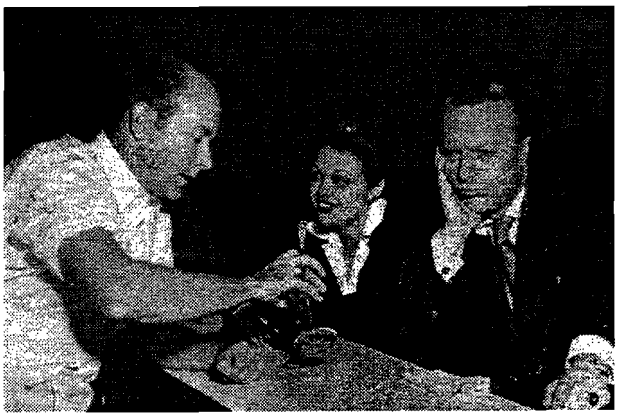
Answers to last month's Quiz:
1.-i, 2.-e 3.-d, 4.-j, 5.-g, 6.-b, 7.-k, 8.-a, 9.-l, 10.-b, 11.-h, 12.-m, 13-c

Photographer Casey and reporter Ann Williams often get in Dutch with the editor through their crime solving sprees.

Casey, Press Photographer

Trouble and Flash-Gun Casey are practically synonymous. As the devoted followers of *"Casey, Press Photographer"* know, the intrepid cameraman manages not only to dig up the obvious news story on every assignment, but also unearths and solves the mystery behind it.

As is often the case with amateur detectives, the extra-legal methods used by this human bloodhound make him far from a favorite with the forces of law and order—in this case personified by Lieutenant Logan (played by Jackson Beck). Logan sometimes doubts just whose side Casey is on. After all, there must be some fire where there's so much smoke—and the photographer seems to fall over corpses with alarming frequency. Batting in Casey's corner, however, are his slangy sidekick, girl-reporter Ann Williams (Alice Reinheart), and the hilariously dopey and lovable bartender, Ethelbert



Bartender Ethelbert supplies both sage advice and pick-me-ups to his good pals.

(John Gibson). Somehow the trio manage to extricate themselves from their dangers and difficulties, and come up smiling each week.

All of the thespians involved in the series admit modestly that they're just good actors, and have no experience with either crime or newspapers in real life. Alice did take a course in journalism once, but never put it to any practical use, while John Gibson states firmly that he has no connection with bars at all.

Only Staats Cotsworth, who plays the title role, will come right out and confess a peccadillo or two in his past, which give him a kind of inside slant on jail and jailers. His only American irregularity was a case of speeding and sassing a Philadelphia cop as a youngster, and he'd almost forgotten that prank. He hasn't forgotten, however, the lurid glimpse he once had of the hoosegow in a Mexican border town. It seems that about 1928, the adventurous young Cotsworth set out in an old Ford, with his eventual destination Honolulu, and took a .22 revolver along to shoot crows with. On Christmas eve, he strayed across the Mexican border, stayed too long at night, and was picked up and thrown into the jug as a dangerous character—because of the .22.

That would have been bad enough—especially on the night before Christmas—but it was a particularly unhealthy jail for Staats. It was the custom to let petty crooks out for certain periods during the day, when they ambled over to the nearest bars and cadged drinks from visitors. Earlier, Cotsworth had refused their requests (since many of them were already drunk) and now found himself locked up in the same room with 35 or 40 "hostile birds."

Dinner-time didn't improve his spirits, either, for when the food came it turned out to be a huge cracker can full of beans in which each man had to dig with his fists. Staats says he didn't feel hungry—and still shudders when he thinks about it.

But luck was with him, as it always is with Casey. The town magistrate felt a touch of the Christmas spirit, and offered to let a few of the boys out if they came across with a present. Cotsworth joyfully shelled out $10, made a dash for his Ford and the States, and hasn't been back since.

Casey knows what he's talking about when he says that "crime doesn't pay."

(February, 1945)

From top to bottom: Van Cleve, musical director, William N. Robson, program's director and actor Frank Lovejoy.

The Man Behind the Gun

by JOHN K. HUTCHENS

(August, 1943)

Whatever you may have thought of this year's Peabody Radio Awards—and the chances are you scarcely thought about them at all, because four of the six awards went to programs the average listener could not hear—no voice has yet risen to protest the garland that crowned the Columbia Broadcasting System's *The Man Behind the Gun*. And this is as it should be. In all the welter of wartime programs, some very good, some very

bad. *The Man Behind the Gun* is not only excellent but virtually unique. It is dramatic and hard-hitting. It is also honest and authoritative. To the ear harrassed by phoney sentiment, heroics and opportunism on the radio, there is something definitely refreshing about this. Deserving, certainly, of a prize.

If you do not yet know, this is the Sunday night series which Ranald MacDougall writes and William N. Robson produces and directs; which a gifted And more or less permanent company Acts with fine ensemble skill. Its title means precisely what it says. These are stories, part drama, part documentary, of our men on the far-flung battle lines, of how they talk and think and fight, of how they react in victory and defeat, And, yes, of how they die.

That, perhaps, is making *The Man Behind the Gun* sound rather more grim than it actually is. For here, along with the blood and mud and death, is the saving, healthy humor of the fighting man. This is a people's war, Mr. Mac Dougall seems to be saying, and this is a people's army. The names are various—Magione, Scott, McCarthy—and so are the accents, and the laughter is real if often sardonic. They are the boys from down the street in a thousand cities and towns across the land, without illusions of glory, without neatly articulated theories. Wherever they are, they are there to fight a war, to win it, to go home.

We have heard a good deal, before and since Pearl Harbor, about improving morale by bringing soldiers and civilians closer together. A few programs have done this, and done it very well, by ushering the fighting forces to the microphone and thence into the American livingroom. *The Man Behind the Gun* reverses that procedure. In a manner of speaking it takes you, the civilian, into the field, around the world. Mr. MacDougall, as author, does this by (in part) the device of addressing the listener directly, in the second person singular; Mr. Robson, as director-producer, by the faithful reproduction of the sounds and mechanics of war and the astute blending of them into a script whose tone is as realistic as a tommygun. And, together, they do something even more.

For it takes a good deal of courage, when you come to think about it, for a program to be as honest as *The Man Behind the Gun* is. Being a drama, and therefore in the field of entertainment, it could very easily have glossed over certain unpleasant aspects and still escaped the charge of cowardice. It could have done that—and have been just another war drama of the sort which employs a Hollywood star and an atmosphere smacking slightly of the *Rover Boys*, 1943. The Messrs. MacDougall and Robson chose, instead, to take a chance. Defying the Radio Row tradition that deems the public an ostrich, and not a very bright one at that, they said in effect to the entertainment-loving, listener: "Here is the way it is." They set out to be simple, direct and adult, thus honoring not only the public but themselves. It is agreeable to report that virtue, which is not always its own reward among the kilocycles, paid off.

L to R: Jackson Beck, narrator, Paul Luther, actor, William N. Robson, producer, clearing up an involved point.

Without fanfare, *The Man Behind the Gun* opened on October 7, 1942 as a Wednesday night sustaining program, continuing as such until March, when it came under the sponsorship of the Elgin Company. Its first program brought to listeners who chanced upon it a sense of discovery too seldom experienced in the play-it-safe radio industry. Here was a war drama with a clean, straight story line, suspenseful but not melodramatic (indeed, more given to understatement than otherwise); with dialogue that crackled; with characters who lived as individuals. Just off-hand, it seemed too good to be true. But then, when the second and third and subsequent chapters measured up, the listeners knew they had really found something.

Since then, they (the listeners) have been on some mighty journeys to those outposts of the land and sea and sky to which our men have gone. For three programs they were aboard the aircraft carrier Yorktown (whose sinking was reported in an especially moving show called "The Death of Aunt Aggie").

Another trio of chapters took them to the jungles of Guadalcanal with the marines. They have flown over IndoChina, landed in Africa with the paratroopers, gone out over the sea with the Atlantic Patrol and lurked in submarines beneath the Pacific. They have traveled in destroyers, Flying Fortresses, tanks. They were aboard

the Boise when she disposed of six Jap vessels in twenty-seven minutes. Clearly, this is a show that takes some doing, as the saying goes. It may be argued that before a line is put to paper, *The Man Behind the Gun* is off to a headstart, since many of its situations have been suggested by incidents plucked out of the daily news: that story, for instance, of the appendectomy performed with a kitchen knife in a submarine by a pharmacists mate who had never held a scalpel. The audience is emotionally prepared, receptive. By the same token, the program faces a stupendous challenge. Let it fail by ever so little in realism, taste or the dignity its theme deserves, and it were better not produced at all. But Mr. MacDougall and Mr. Robson see to it that it does not fail.

The first duty of a realistic artist being exactness of detail. they are research workers as well as creators. They have gone into the field to learn those professional terms, so terse and colorful, that add immeasurably to the vitality of the writing. They have studied the sound effects—an idling motor, the sound of the swivels on a troop-carrying plane as the paratroopers jump—which in themselves are so intensely dramatic. The result is that a show broadcast from a studio is more nearly a documentary in tone than many an on-the-spot broadcast which trusts to luck and uncertain conditions. A documentary in which the material is personalized and the gadgets come to life.

They are quite a team, then, the Messrs. MacDougall and Robson. "The Twenty-second Letter," on which they collaborated last year, indicated as much. Mr. Robson has, of course, long been known as one of radio's ablest and most original craftsmen, trained in all the odd jobs a director learns when he comes up the hard way. Mr. MacDougall had been regarded as "promising," a term that frequently damns with faint praise when it means anything at all. Now he has, in a word, arrived: a storyteller with a style and an imagination at home in an exacting medium. To one listener, the meeting of their talents in *The Man Behind the Gun* is the most hopeful and most significant event of this radio season.

RADIOLDIES

by DAN MARAFINO

I Was A Communist For The F.B.I. was originally aired over WIP in Philadelphia on Sundays at 6:00 P.M. The show was syndicated because it was more readily purchased by local stations than it would have had it gone with the networks. The entire run of 78 shows were broadcast and all 78 are available to collectors. The show deals with one Matt Cvetic, who worked for the F.B.I. but infiltrated the communist party on behalf of the former. This was done to gain information that would ultimately protect freedom loving citizens from the party's avowed intent to subjugate the globe.

Cvetic had to lead a very careful life, playing the party for information and letting the F.B.I. know all. He had many close calls, one in particular dealt with a 30 pound weight tied and locked around his waist and standing at the edge of the pier. Fortunately the cavalry arrives in the nick of time (as usual). Cvetic did this sort of nerve shattering thing day and night for nine long years with no margin for error. The program most certainly kept listeners on the edge of their seats as each story unfolded.

The movie of the same name had previously been released in 1951 and the radio show followed and ran from 1952 to 1954 with Dana Andrews in the lead role. The movie version starred Frank Lovejoy.

I was lucky enough to discover a full reel of the radio show in my collection that I forgot I had. 12 pristine shows have been copied on to cassettes and they will most assuredly go in the library soon. A later version called *I Led Three Lives* starring Richard Carlson as Herbert Philbrick aired on TV from 1953 to 1956. A total of 117 shows were done and maybe someday TV Land will see fit to show them. Philbrick added one more element to the plot. He was married creating a real trifecta. Both men made it through the tough times, wrote books and disappeared into history. If you get the chance, listen to these programs and think about what might have been and what we might have become, it does make one think.

Cassette Library Update

Good news, we're ahead of schedule on our revamp of the tapes, thanks to computer Bob. He has personally looked at every single tape we own and if it was needed, he dated them, titled them and labeled them and if it couldn't be found on a log, he listened to them busy, busy, busy. Soon it will be my turn. I'll be filling in the blanks, that is replacing all the missing tapes and they are considerable. I consider this to be the fun part because I get to listen to them, after all, they have to sound good.

As I stated in an earlier I.P., the original tapes will stay in the library when orders come in. Copies will be made, sent out and they'll be yours to keep. We'll be helping you to build an OTR library for $1.95 each and that includes postage. You can't buy a pre-recorded tape in the store this cheap and it's custom made.

One more thing before I go, if there's a particular show you're looking for and can't find, write or E-Mail us, maybe we have it or maybe we can find it for you. We have lots and I mean LOTS of shows (club and members). Hey! you never know. *Dan Marafino*

RADIO ODDITIES

Wallace Wimple was Well Equipped to Handle Role

The oddities about Ransom Sherman would fill a book. He was the Wallace Wimple of the *Fibber McGee and Molly Program.*

His parents wanted him to be a musician. He went so far as to learn to play the bass fiddle, but it was just an expediency to get into college plays without paying. He took singing lessons, but was never able to convince himself he'd sound well outside of a shower stall. He had a college degree, but he took a paragraph when asked to name his school. He was a freshman at Northwestern, a sophomore at Michigan, a junior at Ripon and a senior at Lewis Institute.

Serious-appearing, bespectacled, he resembled an insurance broker with his clients' births and deaths upon his mind, but he is listed in the radio directory as a comedian. However, Sherman had a sturdy radio background. He started broadcasting in 1923 in Chicago. He was listed as an "entertainer," which included wisecracking, stooging and tongue-in-cheek singing.

❄ ❄ ❄

Radio serials were so popular that almost four-fifths of all daytime broadcasting was devoted to them. However, they drew only fifty percent of the daytime listening audience. The average listener spent slightly over three hours per day on them, following twelve or more stories simultaneously.

From out of the past . . .

10/3/42 --- CBS TO PRESENT NEW *"SHADOW"*

The old snarly, nasty, criminal-like "Shadow" is no more. *The Shadow* who returns to thrill millions of listeners to Mutual stations every Sunday at 5:30 p.m., has become a dull personality—a cross between a Lucius Beebe and the Thin Man.

Early Dialers with the who-dun-itch may remember the gory crimes of *The Shadow* scripts. Today *The Shadow* will go about his anti-crime crusade with a reasonable respect for his own heroic state. He will never kill his victims directly. He will just aggravate them into suicide or unequivocal surrender.

Bill Johnstone portrays *The Shadow,* who in private life is Lamont Cranston, the 32-year-old well read, extensively traveled cafe society man.

And Margot, the one person in all the world who knows that the crime-crusading "Shadow" is portrayed by Marjorie Anderson.

Johnstone, who succeeded Orson Welles in the title role, began as a newspaper man but soon heeded the urge of the footlights. After a few years of trouping, he made his radio debut in 1925. Since then he has been one of the airlanes busiest actors.

Marjorie Anderson, a product of Finch's Finishing School, spent all her pre-radio years doing social work. Someone casually remarked back in 1932 that she had a lovely voice for radio so she auditioned for the part. Since that fateful audition, she has devoted all her time to radio.

The Old Time Radio Club
49 Regal Street
Depew, NY 14043

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING!