

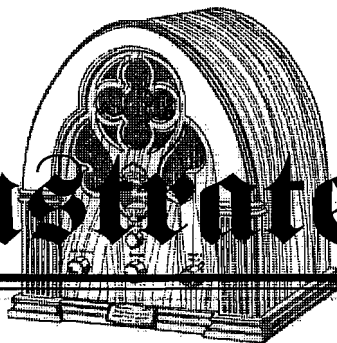
The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

The Illustrated Press

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Benita and Ronald Colman

The Illustrated Press

Membership Information

Club Membership: \$18.00 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and the monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$18.00; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing newsletter issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The **Old Time Radio Club** meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 PM during the months of September through June at St. Aloysius School Hall, Cleveland Drive and Century Road, Cheektowaga, NY. There is no meeting during the month of July, and an informal meeting is held in the month of August.

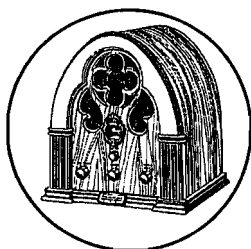
Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome. The **Old Time Radio Club** is affiliated with the Old Time Radio Network.

Club Mailing Address

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

E-Mail Address

otrclub@localnet.com



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Send all articles, letters, exchange newsletters, etc. to: **The Illustrated Press**

c/o Ken Krug, Editor (716) 684-5290
73 Banner Avenue
Lancaster, NY 14086-1930

E-Mail address: AnteakEar@aol.com

Web Page Address:

members.localnet.com/~robmcd

Club Officers

President

Jerry Collins (716) 683-6199
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086
collinsjf@yahoo.com

Vice President & Canadian Branch

Richard Simpson (905) 892-4688
960 16 Road R.R. 3
Fenwick, Ontario
Canada, L0S 1C0

Treasurer

Dominic Parisi (716) 884-2004
38 Ardmore Pl.
Buffalo, NY 14213

Membership Renewals, Change of Address

Peter Bellanca (716) 773-2485
1620 Ferry Road
Grand Island, NY 14072
pmb1620@worldnet.att.net

Membership Inquires and OTR Network Related Items

Richard Olday (716) 684-1604
171 Parwood Trail
Depew, NY 14043-1071
raolday@yahoo.com

Technical Manager

Bob McDivitt (716) 681-8073
109 Poinciana Pkwy.
Cheektowaga, NY 14225
robmcd@verizon.net

Cassette, CD and Reference Librarian

Frank Bork (716) 835-8362
209 Cleveland Drive
Cheektowaga, NY 14215
frankbork209@yahoo.com

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ROY ROGERS

By TOM CHERRE

Robert Osborn, host of TCM Movie network couldn't have been more right when he said "There was no greater thrill for a ten year old back in 1949 than to have a brand new Roy Rogers movie playing at your neighborhood theater. No question about that. Rogers was also smart enough to know just the right amount of romance to have with his leading ladies. He had to be careful or he would lose his huge fan base, that of the 8 to 11 year old male boys all over America. Roy Rogers was at the tail end of his movie career in the early 1950s, but I still enjoyed plucking down my 15 cents for admission and bringing along my little brown bag of popcorn every Saturday afternoon at the North Park Theater on Hertel Avenue. As I got a little older I started to complain that they were showing too many Randolph Scott and Wild Bill Elliot movies and not enough Roy Rogers movies. Maybe I wanted to see a little more Dale Evans. Who Knows?

When I was just about 8 or 9 my biggest wish for Christmas was to own a genuine Roy Rogers gun and holster set. Boy have times changed? What young kid

would be seen dead wearing a pair of toy six-shooters? Kids want computer games I-pods and heaven knows what else that's on the market. It's too much for my tiny brain to comprehend. As we all know times have changed since the early fifties, and I don't know if it's for the better. Back then you had Roy and Gene on the radio and also on TV. There was also Hoppy and the Lone Ranger, and for the older folks like my dad, there was "Gunsmoke." Back then families could breathe easy and not have to worry about any sensitive dialog infiltrating young ears. Roy Rogers and the rest of the good guys all had shows that stressed good morals and proper upbringing. I can't imagine a kid listening to Roy or Gene today. If kids grew up with heroes like Roy or Gene maybe there wouldn't be so many problems with youth today. Now I'm getting political so I'll stop.

There's a reason Roy Rogers was such a good person in real life as well as on the radio, TV, and movies it was because he knew what the good life was all about. He grew up not having many material things. He knew the virtue of humility, having grown up in the Great Depression era. When he achieved success he never forgot his roots growing up in Ohio and not having a good pair of shoes till he started going to school. Even after Roy Rogers was a success he suffered the hardship of losing his wife after giving birth to his son in 1946. With the help of his family and friends and his new co-star Dale Evans he managed to overcome this tragedy. On New Year's Eve 1947 Dale became Mrs Roy Rogers and became "The Queen of the West." As kids, my older brother and I used to argue who the real King of the Cowboys was. I liked Roy, but my brother insisted Gene Autry was king and lost that title only because he went to fight in World War II. It's just like a Mickey Mantle and Willie Mays thing. That's another story too. Anyway both Gene and Roy were super people. They both knew how to sing, had great sidekicks, they both had great horses, and they appealed to a young buckaroo like me.

I'll end with a little Roy Rogers trivia:

1. Roy Rogers' father was a full blood Cherokee Indian.
2. Willie Nelson was such a big Roy Rogers fan that he named his guitar Trigger.
3. Roy's horse Trigger was in the movie "Robin Hood" in 1935 and they had Maid Marian (Olivia DeHaviland) sitting on Trigger.
4. Trigger lived to be 33 years old. He was not a Tennessee Walker as many people thought.
5. Trigger Jr. was no blood relation to Trigger. He was a genuine Tennessee Walker breed.

And for all you buckaroos out there. Whoever the first two people to answer my trivia question I will give you a DVD of the Roy Rogers Classic "Trigger Jr." Just tell me what was Trigger's name before it was Trigger? Good luck.

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Dale Evans

By TOM CHERRE

In the last year or so I might have bored you writing about my old time cowboy favorites. That bunch included Hoppy, the Lone Ranger, Gene and Roy. I neglected to mention one of the most talented western stars of the 40s and 50s, not to mention one of the prettiest. No I'm not talking about Trigger. It's the cowgirl with the well deserved title "Queen of the West," Dale Evans. Dale had one heck of a roller coaster ride throughout her illustrious career.

Dale Evans was born Frances Octavia Smith October 31, 1912 in Uvalde, Texas. At the very tender age of only 14 she eloped with her high school sweetheart. Just a year later she found herself in Memphis, divorced, out of work with an infant baby boy. Her love and talent in music landed her a job in radio singing and playing piano for stations WMC and WREC. This was way back in 1929. Later on, she was hired as a staff singer on radio station WHAS. It was here that the program manager Joe Eaton decided to change her name to Dale Evans, not liking her married name Frances Fox. She protested, saying Dale was a boy's name. Eaton told her she was named after a beautiful silent screen star Dale Winter. And he felt the Evans last name would just roll

off your lips. Thus Frances Smith was forever to be Dale Evans.

In the 1930s Dale was young, attractive and had a great voice. She moved to Chicago and became a top vocalist for some of the biggest bands playing in many notable hotels such as the Blackstone, the Drake, and the Chez Paree Supper Club. It was while singing at the CBS affiliate WBBN that talent scouts for Paramount Studios took note of her talent and decided to give her a screen test. If it wasn't for her dancing talent, she might have co-starred with Fred Astaire and Bing Crosby in the '41 classic "Holiday Inn." However, her agent showed her screen test to 20th Century Fox and they liked what they saw and signed her to a one year contract. She had just a few bit parts in movies like "Orchestra Wives," and "Girl Trouble." Her next big leap on the ladder to fame came when she became a regular singer on the *Chase and Sanborn Hour* with Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. At the time this was one of the most popular shows on radio. The exposure caused Republic Studios to sign her to a movie contract. She was cast in the John Wayne movie "The War of the Wildcats" where her singing talent was featured. Herb Yates head of Republic was impressed by the new Broadway play "Oklahoma" and wanted to expand the female lead in westerns and feature her in his Roy Rogers movies. He knew Dale had a good voice and since she was from Texas he assumed she could ride a horse. Yates found out later that you should never assume. Nevertheless history was made when Dale starred with Roy in the 1944 movie "The Cowboy and The Senorita." She would



appear with Roy for 27 more movies. They would get married on New Year's Eve of 1947 and stay happily married for over 50 years.

In 1950 while preparing for their radio show Dale wrote a theme song for

Roy. Since Roy always signed his autographs with "Thrills of Happiness" or "Happy Trails" she titled her song "Happy Trails To You." Scribbling on an envelope, Dale wrote the lyrics and taught the melody to The Sons of the Pioneers only 40 minutes before the show started. What came across the radio that night was one of America's favorite and loved theme songs of all time. Dale also wrote another favorite, "The Bible Tells Me So".

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It's hard to believe, but Dale was married three times before she married Roy. Like they say the fourth time is a charm. If there was ever a title given for "Sweetheart of the West" it would have to go to Dale Evans. Dale and Roy's relationship in the movies was somewhat like the Doris Day and Rock Hudson thing. Dale was great in her sarcastic romantic role as a romantic rival often getting the upper hand on Roy. If you get a chance, watch the "Don't Fence Me In" flick. It's one of her best. Actually they're all good. I should know. I'm one of her biggest fans. And until we meet again happy tails to you and Dale Evans, and as Roy would say "May the good Lord take a lik'in to ya."

The Year 1946 in Review

By JERRY COLLINS

The top news headlines of 1946:

1. Penicillin was synthesized. No longer would a serviceman or a civilian fear for their lives if they became infected.
2. The Nuremberg War Crime Trials that began on November 20, 1945 came to a conclusion on October 1, 1946. Robert H. Jackson from Frewsburg and later Jamestown was the chief prosecutor during the trial. He was on leave as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. Most of the Nazi leaders were found guilty and sentenced to death.
3. Winston Churchill delivered his "Iron Curtain" speech during the graduation ceremony at West Minster College in Fulton, Missouri.
4. Juan Peron became president of Argentina.
5. The United States granted independence to the Philippines.
6. The first meeting of the United Nations General Assembly opened in London in January.
7. The League of Nations was dissolved in April.
8. Ho Chi Minh was elected president of North Vietnam on March 2nd.
9. On April 15th Herman Goring poisoned himself prior to his upcoming execution.
10. Japanese War Trials began on April 29th.
11. The Flamingo Hotel opened in Las Vegas, beginning a new era for that city.
12. The first electric blanket was manufactured.
13. The United States conducted atomic tests on Bikini Atoll.
14. The Bikini bathing suit, named after Bikini Atoll explodes on the scene in Paris.
15. Although the CIA was formed in 1947, the preliminary work was done through the efforts of Major General William Bill Donovan of Buffalo and others. Donovan had been the head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II.
16. Colleges were overflowing because of the GI Bill of Rights.
17. Alaskans voted in favor of statehood.
18. AT&T developed the first car phone.
19. The big rivalry between Tony Zale and Rocky Graziano began in 1946. It began on September 27th when Zale KO'd Graziano in the 6th round. They would have two more bloody affairs in 1947 and 1948. Shirley Povich and Tom Donelson referred to these fights as three of the greatest brawls in boxing history. Zale was a perfect family man out of the steel mill town of Gary, Indiana, while Graziano came off the streets of New York City, spent time in a reform school and was dishonorably discharged from the army. Irregardless, no two fighters had more guts, courage and determination than these two. The three fights easily propelled the two of them into the Boxing Hall of Fame.
20. Joe Louis had a much easier time with Billy Conn than the 1941 battle. The fight ended in the 8th with Louis the knockout winner.
21. Normally an even-tempered person, Mel Ott manager of the New York Giants was thrown out of both ends of a doubleheader against Pittsburgh on June 9th.
22. The first American-made rocket left the atmosphere of earth and reached an altitude of 50 miles.
23. On May 20th Claude Passeau, Chicago star pitcher, committed an error, his first since September 21, 1941, a streak of 273 errorless chances.
24. On July 16th Ogdensburg defeated Granby in the Border League 35-14. The winners out hit the loser's 32-21. Player-manager Bob Dill went 6/6, hitting two homeruns, a triple and three doubles and drove in ten runs.
25. August 9, 1946 is a special day in Major League history. For the first time all games were played at night.
26. On August 12th Bluefield in the Appalachian league defeated Pulaski 35-5. First baseman Zikmund went 7/8 with seven runs.
27. Bill Kennedy a hurler for Rocky Mount in the Coastal Plain League ended the season with 456 strikeouts, surpassing Virgil Trucks' previous record of 418 in the Alabama-Florida League in 1938.
28. The Reds-Dodger's game was called at the end of 19 innings, the longest scoreless tie in Major League history.
29. On October 1st the Reds defeated the Dodgers in a special playoff game before a crowd of only 26,012. More than 10,000 seats remained empty.
30. The year 1946 marked the beginning of the All American Football Conference. Teams were located in New York, Brooklyn, Miami, Cleveland, San

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Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago and Buffalo. With so many veterans returning from the War and university enrollment at an all-time high, there was a vast pool of good football players desiring to play pro football. The league lasted only four years, but the AAFC was never short of good football.

Cleveland and San Francisco were the two dominant teams during the four years. The New York Yankees fielded a good team during the first two seasons, while the Buffalo Bills proved to be the only threat to the Forty-Niners and Browns in the final two seasons. Buffalo's records for the four seasons were; 3-10-1, 8-4-2, 8-7 and 5-5-2. The Bills finished first in the Eastern Division in 1948, but lost to the Browns in the championship game 49-7. Although the Browns lost only three games in four years, the Bills tied them twice in 1949, 28-28 and 7-7. In the post seasons the Bills gave them a tight game, but lost 31-21. At the conclusion of the 1949 season the league was dissolved. Cleveland and San Francisco became part of the NFL. Buffalo fans were shocked when Baltimore, the weakest franchise and worst team in the league, not Buffalo was accepted into the NFL. The league produced some great players; Otto Graham, Mac Speedie, Marion Motley, Dante Lavelli, Frankie Albert, Elroy Hirsch, Lou Rymkus, Arnie Weinmeister, Dick Barwegan, Lin Houston, Bill Willis, Tommy James, Spec Sanders, Otto Schnellbacher, John Strzykalski, Buddy Young, Lou Groza, Frank Gatski, Dub Jones, Len Ford, Warren Lahr, Brun Banducci, Joe Perry, Tom Landry, Bob Hoernschemeyer, Glenn Dobbs and Bob Reinhard. The Bill's Roster included some equally talented players; George Ratterman, Abe Gibron, John Kissell, Alton Baldwin, Chet Mutryn, Lou Tomasetti, Vic Kulbitski and Ed "Buckets" Hirsch.

The following radio shows premiered in 1946:

1. Let George Do It
2. The Adventures of Sam Spade
3. Hawk Larabee
4. Sky King
5. The Fat man
6. The Casebook of Gregory Hood
7. The Adventures of Frank Merriwell
8. Academy Award Theater

The top ten shows of 1946 were:

1. The Johnson Wax Program (Fibber McGee and Molly)
2. The Bob Hope Show
3. The Lux Radio Theater
4. The Chase and Sanborn Hour (Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy)
5. The Red Skeleton Show

6. The Lucky Strike Program (Jack Benny)
7. Lady Esther Screen Guild Theater
8. The Fred Allen Show
9. Mr. District Attorney
10. Walter Winchell

The following sports champions were crowned in 1946:

1. The 1946 World Series pitted two of the most talented teams of the post war period. Close analysis indicated that the war had limited the depth of both teams. Boston finished the regular season with a record of 104-50 and a 12 game lead over Detroit. St. Louis had a 98-58 game record and a two game lead over Brooklyn. The Red Sox sent eight players to the All Star game; Dom DiMaggio (.316), Bobby Doerr (116 RBI's), Dave Ferris (25-6), Mickey Harris, Johnny Pesky, Hal Wagner, Ted Williams (38 HR's, 123 RBI's and Rudy York (119 RBI's). Other key players for the Sox were Ted Hughson (20-11) and Joe Dobson (13-7). The Cards sent seven players to the mid season classic; Whitey Kurowski, Marty Marion, Stan Musial (228 hits, 103 RBI's and .365 BA), Enos Slaughter (130 RBI's) and Emil Verban. Other important players for the Cards were Murray Dickson (15-6), Harry Brecheen (15-15) and Al Brazzle (11-10). The St. Louis Cardinals won the World Series defeating the Boston Red Sox in seven games. Enos Slaughter scored all the way from first on a single late in the seventh game. This gave the Cards a 4-3 victory in game seven. Harry Brecheen won three games, including the last two games, for the Cards. Enos Slaughter and Whitey Kurowski both had eight hits to lead the Card's attack. The Red Sox were led by Bobby Doerr with nine hits, while Rudy York had six hits including two homeruns.
2. The Chicago Bears defeated the New York Giants 24-14 to win the NFL title. Sid Luckman threw a 21-yard touchdown pass to Ken Kavanaugh for the Bears initial score. Dante Magnani then intercepted a pass and returned it 19 yards for a touchdown. Later in the game Luckman ran 19 yards for another score. Frank Maznicki concluded the Bears scoring with a 26-yard field goal. Frank Filchock did all the Giant's scoring with touchdown passes of 38 yards to Frank Liebel and five yards to Steve Filipowicz.
3. Kentucky defeated Rhode Island 46-45 to win the NIT before 18,475 fans at the Garden. Ralph Beard led the winners with 13 points.
4. Oklahoma A. and M. defeated North Carolina 43-40 to win the NCAA crown before a Garden crowd of 18,475. Bob Kurland led the winners with 23 points.
5. Notre Dame was the number one rated college football team in the country. In what has been called the

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"Game of the Century" Notre Dame and Army played a scoreless tie. The game featured four current or future Heisman Trophy Award winners; Glenn Davis, Doc Blanchard, John Lujack and Leon Hart; three Maxwell Trophy winners, Glenn Davis, Doc Blanchard and Leon Hart; five Walter Camp Award winners, Glenn Davis, Doc Blanchard, John Lujack, Leon Hart and Emil "Red" Sitko; three Outland Trophy Award winners, George Connor, Bill Fisher and Joe Steffy and fourteen current or future All Americans participated in the game, Glenn Davis, Doc Blanchard, Joe Steffy, Barney Poole, Hank Foldberg, Johnny Lujack, George Connor, Bill Fisher, Marty Wendell, Leon Hart, Emil Sitko, John Mastrangelo, Jim Martin and George Strohmeier. Ziggy Zarobski was injured and did not play in the game. Other prominent participants in the game were Arnold Tucker, Terry Brennan, Jack Zilly, Jim Mello, Bill Walsh, John Panelli, Gus Cifelli and Bill Wighkin. Two future pro quarterbacks George Ratterman and Frank Tripuka did not play in the game.

6. The Montreal Canadians were the regular season champions with a 28-17-5 record. They then defeated the Boston Bruins in five games. The Canadians also dominated the NHL all-star team with Bill Duman (G), Butch Brouhard (D) and Maurice Richard (RW) on the first team and Ken Reardon (D), Elmer Lach (C) and Toe Blake (LF) on the second team.
7. The best boxers of '46 were Joe Louis (HW), Gus Lesnevich (LHW), Tony Zale (MW) Ray Robinson (WW) Bob Montgomery (LW), Beau Jack (LW) Jake LaMotta and Willie Pep.
8. The Most Valuable Player Awards were given to American League - Ted Williams and National League - Stan Musial.
9. Lloyd Mangrum won the U.S. Open Golf Tournament
4. George Robson won the Indianapolis 500 with an average speed of 114 MPH

The best movies of the year were:

1. The Best Years of our Life
2. It's a Wonderful Life
3. The Big Sleep
4. To Each His Own
5. Song of the South
6. My Darling Clementine
7. The Razors Edge
8. The Jolson Story
9. The Yearling
10. Henry V
11. Saratoga Trunk
12. Anna and the King of Siam

13. Sister Kenny

The top songs of 1946 were;

1. The Old Lamplighter
2. Ole Buttermilk Sky
3. Prisoner of Love
4. Surrender
5. Symphony
6. To Each His Own

The Most Popular Books of 1946 were;

1. This Side of Innocence
2. The Miracle of the Bells
3. The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care.
4. The Stranger
5. All the Kings Men
6. Brideshead Revisited

Your budget for 1946 would have included;

1. New House - \$5,600
2. New Car - \$1,125
3. Average Rent - \$65/Month
4. Tuition to Harvard - \$420/Year
5. Movie Ticket - \$.55
6. Gasoline - \$.15/Gallon
7. United States Postage Stamp - \$.03
8. Average Income - \$2,500
9. Eggs - \$.22/Dozen
10. Fresh Ground Hamburger - \$.40/pound
11. Fresh Baked Bread - \$.10/Loaf

The Adventures of SAM SPADE

by **MARTIN GRAMS, Jr.**

(Continued from last issue)

DASHIELL HAMMETT INVESTIGATIONS

Perceptions changed soon after the end of World War II, with Communism increasingly becoming a focus of American fears and hatred. In 1947, the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HCUA), an investigative committee of the United States House of Representatives, held nine days of hearings into alleged Communist propaganda within the Hollywood motion picture industry. The events of the investigation soon spread fear among stage performers, movie actors, screenwriters, directors, and others involved in the entertainment industry. Eventually, more than 300 artists—including directors, radio commentators, actors and particularly screenwriters—were boycotted by the

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studios. This included Lillian Hellman, who was having a long-term relationship with Dashiell Hammett.

In 1948, Dashiell Hammett became vice-chairman of the Civil Rights Congress, an organization formed in 1946 by a merger of the International Labor Defense and the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties. The Attorney General and the F.B.I. deemed the organization subversive. Suspicion regarding Hammett's loyalties to the United States, and his leanings as a Communist sympathizer earned him suspicion as being a Communist by trade papers and the F.B.I., which began investigating Hammett.

Hammett's name also surfaced before the HCUA, and both CBS and Wildroot, the sponsor for the detective program, became concerned. Under the insistence of William Spier, the script writers began incorporating patriotic messages in the scripts. In "The Bow Window Caper," for example, broadcast November 9, 1947, Sam Spade makes a positive comment about the Constitution, quoting J. Pamell Thomas, chairman of the HUAC, who was responsible for meeting with film industry executives, intending to expose "subversives" responsible for Communist infiltration of motion pictures.

The Columbia Broadcasting System was getting nervous about Dashiell Hammett's links with pro-Communist groups. Despite inconclusive or questionable evidence, including Hammett's involvement with the Civil Rights Congress, Hammett was too hot for CBS, and network executives decided to cancel *The Adventures of Sam Spade*.

During this time many thousands of Americans were accused of being Communists or communist sympathizers and became the subject of aggressive investigations and questioning before government or private-industry panels, committees and agencies. The primary targets of such suspicions were government employees, those in the entertainment industry, educators and union activists. Many people suffered loss of employment, destruction of their careers, and even imprisonment.

When four Communists related to the organization were arrested, Hammett raised money for their bail bond. When the accused fled, Hammett was subpoenaed in 1951 about their whereabouts. At the hearing, the credibility of the Civil Rights Congress was questioned when the organization presented a denunciation of lynching in the United States, titled *We Charge Genocide*. Hammett, as a member of the CRC, was asked to provide information about the four communists accused of conspiracy. Hammett refused to provide that information, and was imprisoned for five months for contempt of court.

Without skipping a week of broadcasting, Wildroot moved with Duff and the entire cast to the NBC network, under the stipulation that Dashiell Hammett's name be removed from the opening and closing announcer sheets and program credits. Hammett still received his royalty checks as agreed by contract for use of the Sam Spade name, but *Variety* magazine reported that the sponsor was not enthusiastic about Howard Duff, and remained uncertain at the time.

The National Broadcasting Company gave the program the same time slot, Sunday evening from 8 to 8:30 pm, E.S.T. Faithful listeners could tune in at the same day and time to hear their favorite program, but on a different network.

During the NBC run, the sharp wit and dialogue associated with the mystery program was starting to lose its edge. The program started imitating the other mystery detective programs on the air (which they themselves were skimmed-down imitations of what the *Sam Spade* program once was). Spade started driving a car instead of hitching rides on trolleys. He stopped sleeping and kissing married women. In one episode he actually told a client that he stopped drinking!

Among some of the better episodes of the NBC run was "The Wedding Belle Caper," broadcast January 22, 1950, in which Spade was asked by Betty where he got the key to her apartment. He replied, "Made love to the landlady."

In "The Emerald Eyes Caper," broadcast March 19, 1950, Eileen, a suspect in the case, asks Spade if he knew the difference between right and wrong. He replies, "Well, Eileen . . . it's right for you to be so beautiful, but it's wrong for me to be thinking the thoughts I am."

Spade meets an actress in "The Picture Frame Caper," broadcast April 9, 1950, telling her "I saw your last picture four times." "Really?" asked Lois. The detective proved it by commenting, "I was tailing a man in the seventh row."

On June 22, 1950, the right-wing journal, *Counter-attack*, released a pamphlet-style book naming 151 actors, writers, musicians, broadcast journalists, and others in the context of purported Communist manipulation of the entertainment industry. Some of the 151 were already being denied employment because of their political beliefs, history, or mere association with suspected "subversives"; *Red Channels* effectively placed the rest on the industry blacklist. Howard Duff's name was listed among the 151, on pages 50-5. Among the full bill of particulars as grounds for including him on the list:

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- Reportedly attended a 1948 Thanksgiving Benefit Program for the "Hollywood Ten."
- Was an unfriendly witness before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947.
- Reportedly a member of the Committee for the First Amendment.
- Reportedly a member of the Actors' Committee of the Progressive Citizens of America.
- Signer of an Amicus Curiae brief appealing to reverse the convictions of Trumbo and Lawson.
- His association with a radio program "created by Dashiell Hammett."

Even though Howard Duff and Dashiell Hammett never met personally, the damage was already done. The last subversive deed listed under Duff's entry seriously hurt the radio program, and Duff suffered from what author and historian Jim Cox referred to as "guilt by association." Wildroot, the sponsor, decided to execute a clause in their contract, granting them permission to walk away from the series. In a formal letter, the request was placed in writing.

On September 9, 1950, *Billboard* announced that Wildroot was no longer undecided about whether or not to continue sponsorship. The publication reported the sponsor was dumping *Spade* and putting its money into a new series, *Charlie Wild, Private Detective*. (The character named after Wildroot's closing commercial jingle, "Cream Oil Charlie," and the name of the sponsor.)

According to author/historian John Dunning, the report caused an avalanche of mail: 250,000 letters poured in protesting the decision. The sponsor, however, did not care for the feedback of the radio listeners. Duff was taking potshots at politicians on the trail of Communist sympathizers, and the heat was turned up.

The only material to which *Red Channels* based their accusation was trade periodicals, which did not let up. Such gossip sold papers and the American public, especially the entertainment industry, couldn't buy enough of them.

The July 13, 1951 issue of *Hollywood Life* called Dashiell Hammett "one of the most dangerous" Communists in America, and added, "Hammett is said to be responsible for selling the Red banner to dozens of men and women including actor Howard Duff, alias Sam Spade. Duff is also a member of one or more red fronts, and a definite red sympathizer."

"Well, I wouldn't know if Dashiell Hammett had any affiliation with the Communist Party," Duff said. "I certainly didn't, and a lot of the people in the *Red Channels* book didn't. It was at a time when they were trying to

smear liberals. It was typical McCarthy smear stuff. I was in *Red Channels* and Hammett was in contempt of court, so the sponsor and the network, showing their usual great backbone, caved in, and that was it."

Charlie Wild, Private Detective fit the same mold of the *Sam Spade* program, but like the other radio detectives, failed to meet the criteria that made the Spade character (especially in the early Spade broadcasts) different from the rest. The plots were "a routine entry in the private eye meller groove with full complement of stock characters and cliché dialog," according to *Variety* (issues Feb. 27, 1950 and Feb. 26, 1951).

To help launch the new series, which aired on Sunday evenings (beginning September 24, one week after the final *Sam Spade* broadcast), Howard Duff appeared in character on the first broadcast in the form of a vocal telegram, wishing the new hero well in his endeavors. This means Duff's final role in the character of *Sam Spade* was on another detective program!

The format was similar to the *Sam Spade* program, with Charlie dictating his adventures (into a tape recorder). A few weeks after the series premiered, the character of Effie Perrine moved to New York and began assisting Charlie Wild. Lurene Tuttle did not play the role of Effie for this series. The actress was never billed on the air, who remains a mystery to this day. William Spier did not have any involvement with the *Charlie Wild* series, since the program originated from NBC's New York studios, instead of Hollywood.

William Spier applied whatever efforts he could (including gathering fan mail) to encourage NBC to revive the series. *The Adventures of Sam Spade* returned for a brief and final run with Steve Dunne as the detective. The scripts were no where near the caliber of the ABC and early CBS scripts, and to this day, fans of the radio program still insist Duff was the definitive *Sam Spade*. Without a sponsor, NBC did not foot the bill for long, and the program went off the air for good.

At one time Universal Studios even considered the possibility of making a *Sam Spade* movie with Duff in the lead. They succeeded in doing *The Fat Man* with J. Scott Smart and Rock Hudson, but with the investigations associated with the *Sam Spade* program, it's no wonder why the studio never got around to filming a big-screen version.

To imagine that all this and much more came out of a single radio program, based on a fictional detective glamorized in one novel, three short stories, and the impressive 1941 motion-picture, *The Maltese Falcon*, still boggles the mind. Thankfully, a large number of the

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radio broadcasts do exist in recorded form and we can still have the opportunity to enjoy one of the most influential radio programs ever broadcast during the golden age of radio.

Martin Grams, Jr. is the author of numerous books on old-time radio including *GANG BUSTERS: The Crime Fighters of American Broadcasting* (2005), *The I Love A Mystery Companion* (2004) and *The Radio Adventures of Sam Spade* (2007).

BEING THERE: Collecting Radio Broadcast Admission Tickets

By **RICK PAYNE** (All Rights Reserved 2007)


During the golden age of radio, networks and sponsors invited the general public to attend live performances of many popular programs. For the performers, the presence of the studio audience provided encouragement, laughter and appreciation. For the audience, the experience was an unforgettable opportunity to see their favorite entertainers at work. Tickets from some broadcasts survive today . . . waiting for collectors like me.

Here's a time-tested recipe for sure-fire comedic success:

- Take one humble home in an average American town occupied by a traditional family: some bright but brash children (usually two, of any gender), a wise and devoted wife/mother (of the stay-at-home variety, of course), and a strong-willed but hapless husband/father (the more desperate for shortcuts to Easy Street, the better).
- Add a nosy neighbor, a demanding boss and/or a good-for-nothing live-in relative (for best results, from wife's family).
- Season liberally with a wisecracking hired helper.
- Stuff with plenty of overreactions by father to minor events and marinate with advice (generally bad) from opinionated friends.
- Let simmer until explosive situation is imminent.
- Top off with generous serving to father of humble pie by wife and children, whose quick thinking and dedication to virtue saved family from certain disaster.

The domestic situation comedy is yet another of the many entertainment innovations we can trace back to network radio. They focused on the trials and tribulations of ordinary families, and were enjoyed by listeners of all ages. Best of all, half-a-century later they can make my kids laugh as they realize that there are fathers even more ridiculous than their old man.


So let's take a look at broadcast tickets for some of radio's best-loved sitcoms!

 NATIONAL BROADCASTING CO., INC. RITZ THEATRE 	
219 WEST 48TH ST BETWEEN BROADWAY & 8TH AVENUE	
THURS. 11 JUL. '40 11:55 PM	JELL-O presents THE ALDRICH FAMILY by Clifford Goldsmith starring EZRA STONE as HENRY ALDRICH VOID IF SOLD 1940 SEE REVERSE SIDE

The Aldrich Family featured the misadventures of Henry Aldrich, a teenage boy with a gift for creating mayhem. Based on a play by Clifford Goldsmith, the radio version first appeared as skits on the enormously influential Rudy Vallee NBC program. It gained increased popularity when picked up by Kate Smith on CBS in 1938. By 1939, it won its own time slot as a summer replacement for Jack Benny on NBC, and stayed on the air on various networks for Jell-O and General Foods into the 1950s.

This ticket is from the show's early run on NBC's Blue Network. Fittingly, it's blue! *The Aldrich Family* was broadcast from various settings in New York City until at least 1951. The Ritz Theatre was built in 1921 and is still in use for Broadway plays (since renamed The Walter Kerr Theatre). It was also used for Alexander Woollcott's *The Town Crier* CBS radio broadcasts in the late 1930s. Many Broadway theatres served as homes for radio broadcasts; in fact, *Aldrich* was broadcast from the Belasco Theatre in 1951.

Tickets throughout the run reflect the cast changes caused by wartime enlistments of the ever-aging cast. The best-remembered cast featured Ezra Stone as Henry and Jackie Kelk as his pal Homer. A 1944 ticket names Dickie Moore starring as Henry; he was best known as the voice of Pinocchio in the 1940 Disney classic. Henry Aldrich was featured in a series of B-movies in the 1940s, featuring Jimmy Lydon in the starring role.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS SUNSET AND VINE	
	
KRAFT Makers of PARKAY MARGARINE presents "THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE"	
Deers Close 2:25 P.M. CHILDREN Under Six Years of Age Not Admitted	

We've looked at several tickets for the *Fibber McGee and Molly* program in previous articles. Harold Peary's unforgettable portrayal of Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve, McGee's Wistful Vista neighbor, eventually

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led to one of radio's first successful spinoffs. *The Great Gildersleeve* featured Gildy's adventures in Summerfield, where he established a home with his orphaned niece Marjorie and nephew Leroy. Add his sassy cook Birdie, crusty Judge Hooker and timid druggist Peavey, and the stage was set for many memorable episodes. While Gildy never took a bride, his forlorn pursuit of numerous females provided many years of entertainment. On a personal basis, my dad called me "Lee-roy" throughout my youth for reasons I could never quite figure out. When I finally heard tapes of *The Great Gildersleeve*, I understood!

This particular NBC ticket is for the third episode of the series from 1941, called "Leroy's Paper Route." Unlike the trend of today's TV sitcoms, the spinoff didn't follow the original show's timeslot. McGee owned Tuesdays, while *Gildersleeve* aired on Sunday nights. Originating from the great NBC complex in Hollywood, this early episode would have aired at 5:30 in the east. A similar ticket from December of the same year called for the show to start an hour later. Kraft Foods sponsored the show until 1954, usually featuring Parkay Margarine or their cheese spread Pabst-ett in the commercials.

The Great Gildersleeve may be the only spinoff show that spawned a spinoff of its own. When the show took the regular hiatus for the summer of 1947, Peary and other cast members appeared in character on a music program originating from their fictional town. I learned that when I picked up a ticket for *The Summerfield Band Concert!*

BLUE NETWORK COMPANY. INC. 6285 SUNSET BOULEVARD HOLLYWOOD		
Mon. OCT. 16 <small>Doors Close 10:20 p.m.</small>	SPECIAL PREVIEW THE LIFE OF RILEY <small>starring</small> WILLIAM BENDIX as RILEY	STUDIO D

The Life of Riley aired on the Blue Network during the network's transition to new ownership and eventually it's conversion to the American Broadcasting Company. The show premiered on January 16, 1944 as a Sunday afternoon feature, but shifted to a more important evening timeslot in June. William Bendix was the perfect Chester A. Riley, although Jackie Gleason used the role as a springboard for his career when he took it to the Dumont Television Network in 1949.

This 1944 ticket is for a preview, not a broadcast. It's not clear how the late-night version differed from the actual show which would have been presented the following Sunday. We have all heard tales of the down-to-the-wire

writing of our favorite programs; I'm not sure why *Riley* had the luxury of a six-day head start on gauging audience reaction to a draft. Perhaps Mr. Bendix's filming schedule might provide the answer . . . a long day at the movie studio would have taken priority over his radio duties.

The show was sponsored by the American Meat Institute. In those days of ration points and "Meatless Tuesdays", it's hard to understand why they advertised at all. Harder still, however, is the unsettling fact that the most popular character on the show was the friendly undertaker, Digger O'Dell. Kind of makes you wonder about the supply chain, doesn't it?

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY. INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS SUNSET AND VINE		
Mon. Nov. 28 <small>See Reverse Side</small>	METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PRESENTS THE HARDY FAMILY <small>STARRING</small> Mickey Rooney, Lewis Stone & Fay Holden ★ CHILDREN UNDER 14 WILL NOT BE ADMITTED ★	STUDIO B <small>Doors Close 6:20 P.M.</small>

In 1949, MGM authorized the creation of a radio series based on their popular movie series about the lives of a small-town judge and his family . . . particularly his teenage son Andrew. On screen, the series helped make Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland into major stars. Andy's talks with his father, first played by Lionel Barrymore but best-remembered as portrayed by Lewis Stone, helped bridge the generation gap of the day. Fortunately, Rooney, Stone and Fay Holden (Mrs. Hardy) all agreed to reprise the roles for radio in *The Hardy Family*. For reasons not known to me, their hometown was changed from Carvel to Centerville for the radio version.

While this is a 1949 NBC ticket, the series actually was syndicated and not part of any official network schedule until 1952, when Mutual picked it up. Other tickets in my collection similarly demonstrate that occasionally networks would borrow the studios of rivals. I can't recall seeing another *Hardy Family* ticket; I fortunately found this one among the offerings of a dealer selling vintage movie posters.

The Mutual entry was part of a major move by MGM to help fight the growing popularity of television. A promotional booklet names ten programs featuring movie stars in their own shows as part of the push for 1952. Among the programs were series for Bette Davis (*Woman of the Year*), Orson Welles (*The Black Museum*), Lew Ayres & Lionel Barrymore (*The Story of Dr. Kildare*), Errol Flynn (*The Modern Adventures of Casanova*), and *The MGM Theatre of the Air*.

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THURS EVEN	American Broadcasting Co., Inc. A. B. C. STUDIOS 1535 NORTH VINE - HOLLYWOOD	
23	American Broadcasting Company PRESENTS "BLONDIE" STARRING ARTHUR LAKE as "Dagwood" ANN RUTHERFORD as "Blondie"	457
STUDIO Z	Doors Open 4:40 P.M. — Doors Close 4:50 P.M.	
5-5:30 PM		

We covered *Blondie* in our article on radio shows based on comic strips. One ticket meant for inclusion in that article was missed, and it's fitting that we show it here now. You might recognize that the actress who played the title role in this 1950 performance first found fame in the Hardy Family films. Ann Rutherford played the role of Polly Benedict, Andy Hardy's girlfriend in 12 Hardy Family films.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS SUNSET AND VINE		
Fri. May	R. C. A. VICTOR PRESENTS The PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE Show	STUDIO B
28	★ CHILDREN UNDER 14 WILL NOT BE ADMITTED ★	B
See Reverse Side	Doors Close 6:45 P.M.	Doors Close 4:50 P.M.

Jack Benny's carefree bandleader found sitcom success when he teamed with his movie star wife for *The Phil Harris - Alice Faye Show*. The pair first appeared on the CBS series *Request Performance* in January 1946, and the audience reaction launched them into a starring role on *The Fitch Bandwagon* that fall. It meant that Harris had to be on the air in a different studio immediately after the *Jack Benny* program. Benny's writers put Phil's lines in the first half of the Benny show, so that he could race down the block to be on the air with Alice.

Things got even more complicated when Jack switched networks, meaning Phil had to get to a competitor network's building on the same schedule. Incredibly, Benny insisted that everyone cooperate to make it possible. By that time, the series was titled *The Phil Harris - Alice Faye Show*.

The show hit its peak when the Rexall Drug Company took over as sponsor in 1948. Walter Tetley (who played Leroy on *Gildersleeve*) topped that role with the part of Julius, the wise-guy delivery boy. Elliott Lewis played Frankie Remley, a musician in Phil's band, and naturally Phil fell for his latest scheme every week. Alice's on-air brother Willie filled the bill as the freeloading live-in relative, and Phil and Alice raised their two daughters amid the mayhem.

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This 1954 ticket is from the final days of the series. The show's last program aired on June 18, just three weeks later. By this time, many programs were taped for later broadcast . . . and the show normally aired at 9:00 pm eastern time. Since this ticket implies a 10:00 pm Eastern time performance ("Doors close 6:45 PM" Pacific time), this might be a ticket for the last performance!

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS SUNSET AND VINE		
Fri. Apr.	THE Jos. Schlitz Brewing Co. PRESENTS "THE HALLS OF IVY" STARRING MR. & MRS. RONALD COLMAN	STUDIO B
28	★ CHILDREN UNDER 14 WILL NOT BE ADMITTED ★	B
See Reverse Side	Doors Close 6:45 P.M.	Doors Close 4:50 P.M.

Film legend Ronald Colman was a regular on the radio circuit. He had the perfect voice; in fact, his acting success is even more impressive when you realize he became a star in silent pictures! Colman appeared as a guest on many radio shows, but most notably with wife Benita as the reluctant next-door neighbors of Jack Benny. It was Don Quinn, the writer for *Fibber McGee and Molly*, who conceived of a radio series specifically developed for the Colmans.

The Halls of Ivy premiered in January 1950 on NBC. This ticket is from April of that first year. Schlitz sponsored the series throughout the two year run. One of the regular characters on the show was played by Willard Waterman, who succeeded Harold Peary in the title role on *The Great Gildersleeve* after Peary bungled an attempt to cash in on the talent raids by jumping to another network. To his chagrin, he found that while he could go to CBS, the show's owners decided to stick with NBC. Waterman thrived while Peary failed with a CBS series called *Honest Harold*. The subsequent *Gildersleeve* tickets include the notation "Starring Willard Waterman", which never happened during the Peary run.

SAT. MARCH	American Broadcasting Co., Inc. A. B. C. STUDIOS 1535 NORTH VINE - HOLLYWOOD	
28	HOT POINT and LISTERINE PRESENT THE ADVENTURES OF OZZIE & HARRIET Starring the NELSON FAMILY OZZIE, HARRIET, DAVID & RICKEY	162
STUDIO A	★ CHILDREN UNDER 14 NOT ADMITTED ★	
8:00 to 8:30 P.M.	Doors Open 7:30 P.M. — Doors Close 7:45 P.M.	

Ozzie Nelson was a popular bandleader in the 1930s, and his band's vocalist was Harriet Hilliard. Billed on tours as "Young America's Favorites", the pair soon found regular work on various radio series. They supported cartoonist Robert Ripley on *The Baker's Broadcast* and

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were the musical stars on Red Skelton's *Raleigh Cigarette Program*. By 1944, Ozzie and Harriet were ready to take a chance on a series of their own.

The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet debuted on CBS in October of that year for International Silver. This ticket is from 1953, near the end of the series. You see the children named on the ticket, as the actual Nelson children they had joined the series in 1949. All, of course, found even greater success with the television version of the program. Ricky (he dropped the "e" by then) became a teen idol in the process.

One other notable bit of trivia: appliance-maker Hot Point also sponsored the television version. Their TV commercials featured a young actress wearing a curve-hugging black outfit as she played the part of "Happy Hotpoint" in pitching the product. That actress was Mary Tyler Moore.

COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM COLUMBIA SQUARE PLAYHOUSE 6121 SUNSET BOULEVARD — HOLLYWOOD		FRIDAY APRIL 21 1950 9:00 p.m. Doors Close at 8:50 p.m.	No 567
STUDIO B CBS	JELLO presents "MY FAVORITE HUSBAND" Starring LUCILLE BALL with RICHARD DENNING WILBUR HATCH & HIS ORCHESTRA		
CHILDREN UNDER TWELVE WILL NOT BE ADMITTED			

My Favorite Husband was, of course, the springboard for the most famous television situation comedy of them all: *I Love Lucy*. It was this radio series, produced by Jess Oppenheimer, which provided the foundation for the TV series. Lucille Ball was at a career crossroads when this program premiered in 1948 as a sustaining program. Jell-O had signed on as sponsor by the time of this 1950 broadcast.

Lucy's role of Liz Cooper gave her the chance to show off her comedic talents, and when the series was considered for television she had the leverage she needed to demand one small change. She wanted to do the show with her husband Desi Arnaz. (By the way, one of the characters on the radio program was played by Gale Gordon, who eventually joined her as banker/boss Mr. Mooney on *The Lucy Show* in the 1960s).

Lucy collectors are legion; in fact, if you ever have the chance to go to her hometown of Jamestown, New York, you'll find a full-blown obsession. There's a wonderful museum filled with rare memorabilia, including full-size recreations of the sets from the television show. There are a couple of Lucy festivals which draw visitors from around the world. They are rabid collectors, and tickets for *My Favorite Husband* are very valuable. Ebay auc-

tions have reached up to \$350 for a single ticket, while the television tickets for *I Love Lucy* usually go for over \$1,000! And I can't even imagine what would happen if you tried to auction one off in Jamestown!

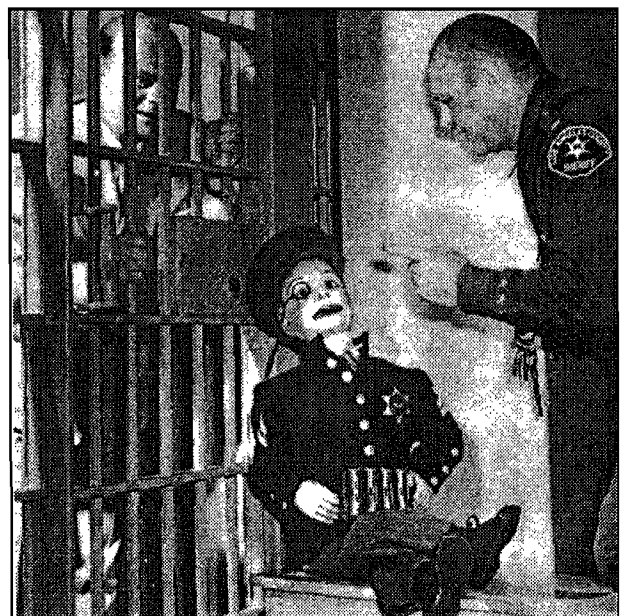
And that last ticket sets us up well for the next installment of *Being There*, when we'll take a look at tickets featuring the greatest stars of the golden age of television: Lucy and Desi, "the Great One", Dean and Jerry, "Uncle Miltie" and many more. But they won't be television tickets; we'll find them learning the ropes on network radio shows. Until then: good night, Mrs. Calabash . . . wherever you are!

The Old Time Radio Club wishes to thank the following people who have made donations to our tape library while at the recent Friends of Old Time Radio Convention. Please patronize and support our donors.

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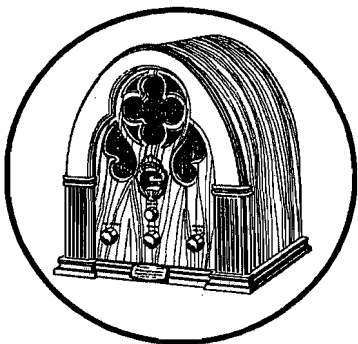


Charlie McCarthy may be wooden-headed, but he knows his rights. Edgar Bergen's not leaving that cell until he coughs up Charlie's 75-cent-a-week allowance in full.

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