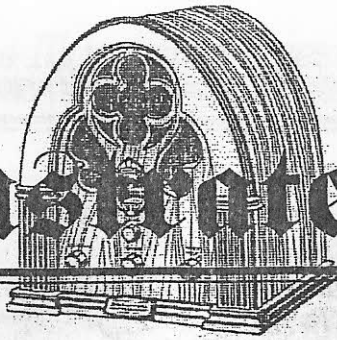


The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

The Illustrated Press



Number 378

March 2010



BING!

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.

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All Submissions are subject to approval prior to actual publication.

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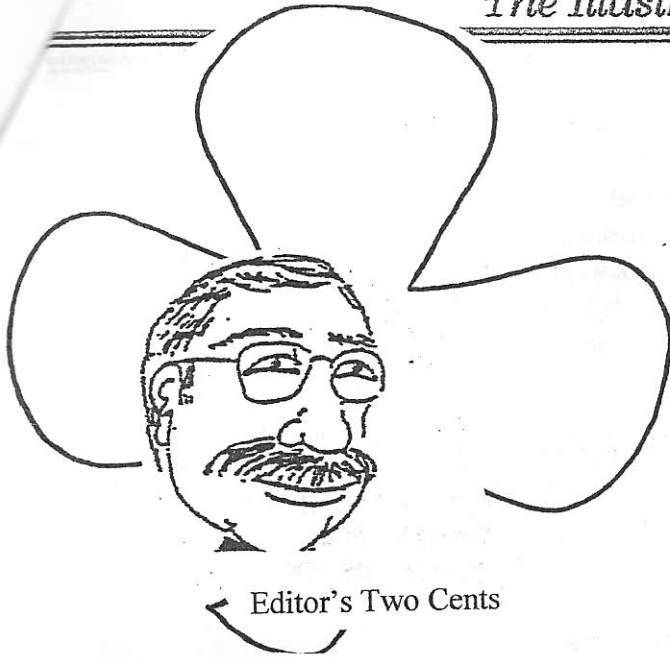
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Library Rates:

Audio cassettes and CDs are \$1.95 each and are recorded on a club supplied cassette or CD which is retained by the member. Rates include postage and handling and are payable in U.S. funds.



With this month being the month of the "Shamrock" I thought it would be appropriate to have one of Ireland's favorite's adorn this month's cover. I thought about maybe Charlie McCarthy, but he's a bit of a dummy. The cast of Duffy's Tavern, but there's too many. Fred Allen came to mind and even Mr. Keene's partner Clancy were possibilities. I almost decided on Dennis Day, but when I heard Bing singing McNamara's Band I made my choice. I have a two or maybe three part article on Der Bingle. It's has plenty of new stuff for all you Crosby fans to enjoy. I'm sure the late Ed Wanat would approve. The article is from the September 21st issue of Radio Guide. I have edited it for brevity and clarity. It was written by Jeff Stevens and titled "The Beloved Loafer". Hope you like it. Dominic has informed me Grant Brees has been kind enough to donate a stack of old time radio shows on record to the club. A big tip of the hat and a hearty thank you goes out to Grant. These records will be transferred to cds and tapes and entered in the library. As Frank mentioned at the last meeting I would also like to thank all the members who joined us for our Spaghetti Dinner January 31st.

Betscha Didn't Know:

This month's feature has absolutely nothing to do with old time radio. It does however, relate to something I didn't know at the time. It's an interesting anecdote and it should appeal to all of you baseball fans, both young and old. I have to take you to October of 1970. The World Series was going on at the time and I was working at the Main St. office of Buffalo Optical Co. (I'm still there). The Yankees were beginning a six year drought of not being in the fall classic. At the time I was in charge of the Sundry department, which consisted of binoculars, telescopes, magnifiers, etc. I was assisting an older gentleman showing him some magnifiers. Somehow the subject of baseball came up and I told him I was a big Yankee fan and a bit disappointed the Bombers weren't playing in the Series. He too said he was a Yankee fan also. Well I told him I was more or less an authority on the Yankees and knew just about all there was to know about them from Ruth to Mattingly. He said "Is that so"? I had just finished reading Creamer's new book on Ruth and I told him I know the real reason behind the Ruth-Gerhig feud. He told me he knew a little about the Yankees himself and said it was a little more to it than I told him. In a nice way I tried to tell this nice old gent he was wrong. We shook hands and parted company. My boss Mr. Morphy came to me and said looks like you had a nice chat there. I said "Yeah he knows almost as much as I do about the Yankees." He said "Well he should, That was Marse Joe McCarthy." He was only the former Manager for the New York Yankees, Hall of Famer winning a total of 8 world series. I was humbled. I didn't know.

The Case of the Holy Scepter
By Frank Bork

Mr. Johns then went to the door and called out, "Miss Simpson, would you please go to the warehouse and see if Alf and Bill are there. If so, ask them to come to my office for a moment, thank you." "You misunderstood, Mr. Johns," said Holmes, we did not question the quality of your service or the condition of the merchandise, for we know that both are excellent. I just want to discuss a similar move with your men, with your permission, of course." "Of course Mr. Holmes, I understand now. But you see, I had a similar incident just last week with a certain Mr. Frederick Crown. He came in my office, or I should say, burst into my office, completely unannounced, and began to shout at me about a vase which was broken when he uncrated it. We made good of course, but he also insisted he be given the names and addresses of the delivery men." "Did you give him the information he required, asked Holmes?" "No I did not. He was paid for his troubles quite handsomely, I might add, and furthermore, as I told him at the time, I am not in the habit of giving information about my employees. Gentlemen like yourselves, who come here politely, I will certainly try to help, but no addresses. If Alf and Bill give you that information, that's fine with me." Just then there was a knock on the door. "Come in," Mr. Johns said. Miss Simpson came in and said Alf and Bill were indeed in the warehouse and would be along shortly. "Thank you, Miss Simpson. You may return to your duties now." "Yes sir," she said as she closed the door. "How long have these men been working for Mr. Johns?" Holmes then asked. "Alf about eight years and

Bill about five, I should guess and both are very capable and honest men, to the best of my knowledge, that is. Excuse me just a moment," he said as there was a knock on the door and he went to open it. "Oh here you are. Come right in." A huge man stepped into the office. He did indeed look like a fighter or a wrestler. "This is Alf, gentlemen." Alf was followed by a man who was not as tall, but every bit as large as Alf. "And this is Bill" introduced Mr. Johns. "These men would like to ask you some questions." "We understand that you delivered a large crate to Harrogate Street W yesterday, that is correct, is it not?" asked Holmes? "Right enough, gov," replied Alf, apparently the leader of the two. "Why what's wrong" asked Bill. "Is there supposed to be something wrong" replied Holmes. "No gov," replied Bill. Alf gave Bill a stern look and said, "Button up Bill. You'll have us both in the kettle." "Why are you both on the defensive? Just what have the two of you done? Asked Mr. Johns. "We ain't done nothing boss", said Alf. "It's just this here bloke comes here and starts to question our work and we thinks something got broke or is missing, or

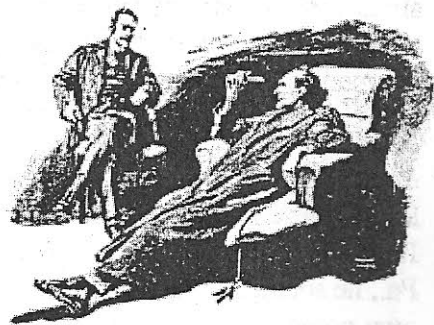
Gee I hope Frank's still not mad at me.



Robert Downey Jr.

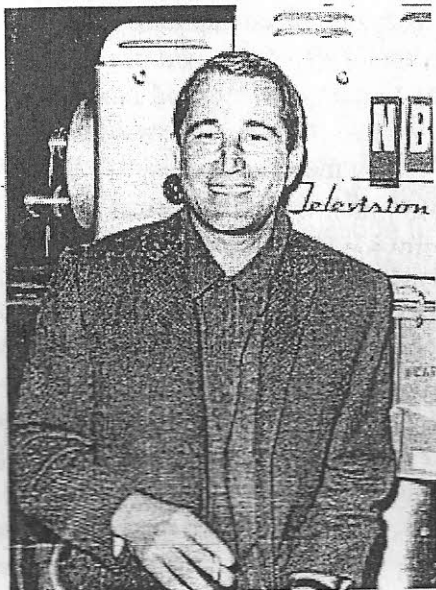
something, and we ain't never had any trouble before. You know that Mr. Johns. Me and old Bill here, we do our work and mind our p's and q's. We don't give nobody no trouble, and that's what it is sir." "My good fellow," said Holmes, "I did not mean to cause you and your partner any trouble. I just want some boxes moved, and I want the best and most reliable men I could find. The contents of the boxes are extremely valuable and must be handled very carefully. Did you perchance, meet Mr. Frederick Crown, and did you deliver his merchandise?" "Yes we did gov" this from Bill. "Did you fellows indeed break his vase when you delivered the crate?" "Don't know that gov. Everything was crated, and we don't open any crates. Them's the rules, right Alf?" "Right as rain, Bill" Alf agreed. "You still did not answer my question. Did you meet Mr. Crown?" "Yes we did" said Alf. "We was out back in the stable loading our van when this bloke comes in, holds the shed door open, he does standing there with the wind and snow blowing in. Shut the door, says I. "Was you born 'd and raised in a stable? So he shuts the door and walks in. "I'm looking for Alf and Bill," says he. "Are they here now?" "Who might you be, says I and what does you want with Alf and Bill for?" "Oh I'm Mr. Crown. Here's my card." He gives me a blue card with his name on it. "His name" and nothing else on the card?" asked Holmes. "Well gov, it had his name and Enter-prize Limited on it. Now I don't know about this Enter-prize or what that is, but it did look important enough" answered Alf. "Yes yes" Holmes said impatiently. "Go on." "Well he wanted us to do a job for him, that's all." "Did you tell him he had to speak to your employer, Mr. Johns about that?" "That I did gov, but he told us he

did talk to Mr. Johns and he said after working hours what we do is our business." "What was that job he had for you?" "It was just a moving job, pick up a crate from one place and take it to another, that's all." "Did you use the company van or what?" asked Holmes. "No sir we had a nother fellow who had a cart." "You mean a hand cart?" "No gov, a four wheeler with horses." "Two horses and a four wheeler, well that certainly doesn't sound like a cart to me, but more like a heavy delivery van." "Well that's right, we just calls it a cart gov." "Where did you pick up this crate and where did you take it?" asked Holmes. "We picked it up at Market Street, near Westgate, and took it to a place on Blackwater Place, near the waterfront." "Was Mr. Crown with you when you did this job, or did he meet you later?" "No he wasn't with us, he was at the warehouse on Blackwater Place. This Jack who had the van, picked us up here after work, and did all the driving as he knew just were to go. After the job Mr. Crown paid us, and Jack brought us back here." **To be continued.**



Book Review
By Jim Cox

Perry Como



For those of you who are resolute Perry Como fans, and their number may be legion, it must have been surprising that perpetually there are lots of biographies about pop vocalists of the past (Bing, Frank, Dinah, Rosemary, Al, Vaughn, Ginny, Jo, Mel, Rudy) and so little about him. That changed when a couple of Englishmen who've studied the genre more than four decades—Malcolm MacFarlane and Ken Crossland—recently completed a narrative filling the void...*Perry Como: A Biography and Complete Career Record*, released by MacFarlane. The author brings to life, events that impacted a Como we never knew. Initially a promising young Italian-American barber at Cannonsburg, Pa., he seemed totally dismissive of his own potential at his start as a singer. Breaking free of the rather obscure existence prescribed for him, Como made his way onto the stage. From modest beginnings in 1933, he performed with bands (Freddie Carlone, Ted Weems) at scores of venues. This

led him into radio (and pervasive exposure) recordings, film (his only self-acknowledged disaster), TV (and superstar status), plus limited personal appearances. Macfarlane and Crossland provide a whole lot more than a mere tracing of the entertainer's profession. They offer insights into what was behind that handsome, polished exterior belting out so many easy-going tunes. While Como habitually came across as smooth, unfettered, laid-back, he could be intolerant when he felt a situation warranted, lashing out in displeasure. He also had a long memory. When a Decca recording official stabbed him in the back, informing a source one Crosby-sounding singer was plenty, the remark got back to Como. He let it go, for awhile. When the man appeared at a Como recording session 15 years later at RCA, vengeance overcame him. "What the hell is he doing here?" asked an enraged Como. Told the man had recently been added to RCA's payroll, Como exclaimed into the studio mike: "Hi Dave. Get the hell out of here!" He recounted what prompted his retribution to onlookers. It was a side of Como fawning fans never witnessed. Another time in 1944, Como and singer Mary Ashworth co-hosted radio's *Chesterfield Supper Club* backed by Ted Steele's orchestra. NBC provided Martin Block to announce the weeknight quarter-hour (that Martin Block of Make Believe Ballroom fame). In a behind the microphone struggle, Como was determined he—not the instantly recognized announcer—would be the show's star. He took over the task of introducing and chatting with visiting guests celebs rather than allowing Block that honor, a practice on most similar series. Singers usually sang and rarely

spoke. Como's ambitious attempt to promote his own personality paid off at the expense of falling out with Block. Again, something we never knew. What we did believe—and the authors confirm—is that Como was a devoted family man, true to one woman, Roselle Bellino, whom he wed in 1933 in Meadville, Pa. He was faithful to her until her death unexpectedly took her August 12th 1998. The pair celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary less than two weeks earlier. Following her passing Como seemed to give up his desire to live. He was too ill to attend an 87th birthday party Cannonburg staged for him in 1999 at which a life-size statue was unveiled. He died at Jupiter, Fl. May 12th 2001. The treatise reveals numerous examples of Como's own understanding of his simplicity, his desire for privacy, and a large self-effacing persona. Once he summed up his career to a reporter with: "I was a barber. Since then I've been a singer. That's it." It was the Como we heard and saw and gravitated toward and it reaffirms that most people's suspicions were well-placed. The only shortcoming here is in some of this volume's indexing. Look up the word "radio" and all you'll find is a single reference to "radio broadcast, solo." Nothing more, as if Como didn't have but one audio appearance. In fact he starred on the aural airwaves two decades. Unless you know the series on which he appeared (Fibber McGee and Molly, 1936-1938, Beat the Band 1940-1941, The Perry Como Show, 1943, 1953-1954, Columbia Presents Perry Como, 1944, Chesterfield Supper Club, 1944-1949, 1954-1955, Weekend with Perry, 1970s-19990s) you must guess which might be his in an index referencing other features. A trio of appendices highlights some of the

superlatives in Como's career but even there, radio—which first projected him to mass appeal—is given short shift. The initial appendix covers his recordings; the second, his TV exposure; the last, his single achievements year by year, birth to death. In the latter, the Como aficionado may ferret out all those radio shows in 38 pages of fine print. But that's too much work. Did the authors fail to provide a section on radio because they, as many contemporaries don't view radio as that critical to an entertainer's success? Where would Como have been without it? Waiting for TV? Who would have bought his records without a way to project them to buyers? While this appendix appears all in-inclusive, it's missing a 1969 interview with Art Ford on NBC's *Monitor* in our personal collection. What others may be overlooked? Despite these blemishes the book is a fabulous introspective that tells us what went on beyond the microphone, the recording studio and the camera. It will enhance readers' appreciation for a gifted singer who created a following that kept him in the top tier of American vocalists in the mid 20th century. Perry Como: *A Biography and Complete Career Record* is published by McFarland & Company. The 300 page hardback with a large number of compelling photos may be ordered for \$55 by calling 800 253 2187. It belongs on the bookshelf of all who would like to know details transpiring in the life of a captivating artist who was for years at the top of his game.

Attn all members: I wish to inform you that fellow member Ken Krug suffered a heart attack last month. He underwent successful by-pass surgery Feb. 16th. At this time his wife said Ken is doing OK. I would hope all our members keep Ken in our thoughts and prayers as we wish him a speedy recovery. editor

Old Time Radio A Dieing Hobby By Jerry Collins Pt. 6

Fibber McGee and Molly. Jim (4/1/88) and Marian (4/6/61) Jordan along with Don Quinn (12/30/67) created what would become a radio institution. The show featured a multitude of candidates. Fibber and Molly were played by Jim and Marian Jordan. Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve was played by Hal Perry (3/30/85), while Doc Gamble was played by Arthur Q. Bryan (11/18/59). Gale Gordon (6/30/65) played Mayor LaTrivia, with Marlin Hunt (3/21/46) playing Beulah. Isabelle Randolph (1/11/73) played Mrs Uppington while Bea Benadarett played Mrs Carstairs. Hugh Studebaker (5/6/78) portrayed Selly Watson with Shirley Mitchell (Still alive—born 11/14/17) as Alice Darling. Bill Thompson (7/15/71) one of radio's skilled actors played numerous parts in the show including Nick Depopulous, the Old Timer, Wallace Wimple, and Uncle Dennis. Marian Jordan played d Sis and Teeney. She was also very patriotic and continuously cautioned Fibber and other members of the cast to recycle, ration, and eat more macaroni and cheese. Cliff Arquette (9/23/74) filled in as the Old Timer while Ransom Sherman (11/26/85) did the same for Uncle Dennis. Don Quinn (12/30/67)



Phil Leslie (9/3/88) wrote for the show while Harlow Wilcox (9/24/60) was the announcer. Like other great announcers, he was able to incorporate the Johnson Wax commercials into the show. Fibber McGee and Molly were on the air close to 20 years from 1935-1953. After a few seasons it became a fixture at the Tuesday night 9:30 slot. Their address at 79 Wistful Vista and the hall closet became symbols of this marvelous show.

Lum and Abner. I don't know that I am the only fan of Lum and Abner. Ted Davenport is an avid listener. After all Ted is from Little Rock, Arkansas. Lum Edwards was played by Chester Lauk (2/21/80) with Norris Goff (6/7/78) played Abner Peabody, the joint owners of the Jot Em Down Store in Pine Ridge, Arkansas. Our two heroes also played multiple parts in the show. Lauck played Grampa Spears, Snake Hogan, and Cedric Wehunt. Goff played postman Dick Huddleston, Doc Miller and Squire Skimp. Occasional guests on the show were Zazu Pitts (6/7/73), Andy Devine (2/18/77) and Cliff Arquette (2/23/74). The show premiered in 1931 and remained on the network until 1953.

My Friend Irma. My Friend Irma was a cute little comedy that lasted from 1947-1954. Irma Peterson and Jane Stacy were secretaries sharing an apartment in New York City. Irma was played by Marie Wilson (11/23/72) while Jane was played by Cathy Lewis (11/20/68) and Joan Banks (8/18/98). Irma's boss Mr. Clyde was played by Alan Reed (6/14/77) and her boyfriend Al was played by John Brown (9/16/57). Jane's boyfriend and boss, Richard Reinlander was played by Myra Marsh (1/1/64). Mrs. O'Reilly was Gloria Gordon

while Professor Kropotkin was Hans Conreid (1/5/82). Cy Howard (4/29/93) was the show's director, while Lud Luskin (?) provided the music.

The Halls of Ivy. The show portrayed the comical life of a college president. Dr. William Todhunter was played by Ronald Coleman (5/19/58), while Victoria "Vicky" Cromwell who was played by Benita Coleman. (11/1/67). Mr. Merriweather was played by Willard Waterman (2/2/95), while the highly antagonistic Clarence Wellman was played by Herbert Butterfield (5/2/57). Ruth Gordon (8/28/85) played Penny the maid. Don Quinn (12/30/67) was the creator and writer of the show, while Ken Carpenter (10/19/84) was the show's announcer. The show met with some minor criticism when the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company was selected as the show's sponsor. Coleman laughed it off at a public appearance, saying that he enjoyed an occasional beer himself.

Detective Stories

Nick Carter Already Profiled

The Shadow Already Profiled

Yours Truly Johnny Dollar Already Profiled

The Adventures of Sam Spade Already Profiled

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes Already Profiled

Ellery Queen. The show premiered in 1939 and remained on the air until 1948. Ellery Queen was played by Hugh Marlowe (5/2/82), Larry Dobkin

(10/28/02) and Carlton Young (7/11/71). Inspector Queen was played by Santos Ortega (4/20/76), while Sgt. Vellie was portrayed by Ted DeCorsica (4/11/73) and Ed Lattimer (?). Virginia Gregg (9/1/86) and Gertrude Warner (1/21/86) played Nikki. The show was directed by William Rousseau (5/2/72), with Ernest Chappell (7/4/83) and Ed Herliht (1/30/99) serving as the announcers. This detective show was different from all others. Before the solution was revealed to the studio audience, a panel of three celebrities was given the opportunity to offer their solution to the case. Rarely were they correct and thus it was up to Ellery Queen to solve the case. The shows sponsors were Anacin and Bromo Selzer.

Mr. District Attorney. This was radio at it finest, the show professionals listened to. It was loosely based on the career of Thomas E. Dewey. Mr. District Attorney was played by Dwight Weist. Raymond Johnson and most notably by Jay Jostyn. Miss Edith Miller was played by Vicki Vola(7/21/85) while Harrington was played by Walter Kinsella. Mr. District Attorney spanned from 1939-1952, and sponsored by Sal Hepatica and Ipana.



Vicki Vola portrayed the District Attorney's secretary, Edith Miller, for the entire run of the series on both radio and television.

The Beloved Loafer

By Jeff Stevens

Radio Guide September 21st 1935

Part 1:

It's been about five years now that the Crosbys have not had to worry about their third son Harry Lillis or as we know him as Bing. From infancy he was always a charming person. As he grew up he was liked by everyone who crossed his path. He was generous, humerous, and tolerant, but he was — well — irresponsible, to be perfectly plain Bing was downright lazy. Bing admits it himself. It was in their small frame house in Tacoma, Washington that the Crosbys first heard the wail of Harry Lillis. They could never imagine that wail would develop into a vibrating baritone for which a new word "crooner" would be coined. In fact that little boy who wore the hand-me-downs of older brothers Larry and Everett would eventually be running the offices of Bing Crosby Ltd. Inc. in the Paramount lot in Hollywood. Things seem to come easy for Bing. He could always pick up a little money, but it casually slipped through his fingers. He never had any definite plans for making his mark in the world. And yet Bing made it. He reached the top of the entertainment world doing a thing he could do without any effort-singing. He was born to carve out rhythm lazily. Bing has fame and fortune, happiness, an ideal family, work he truly enjoys, and devoted friends. Today Bing Crosby is one of the biggest stars of radio and the silver screen. He is exactly the same sort of fellow he was when he bummed his way to Los Angeles to sing for his supper not too long ago. He is also as lazy and happy-go-lucky and modest too. When he came to Hollywood they first planned to make Bing a romantic hero on the screen. Bing

said "I can't act. They can never make a Barrymore out of me."



He didn't even try to act. The results of his lazy attitude and slothfulness has made him a grand romantic comedian. The fact that he refused to take acting seriously goes back to his high school days when he took on the part of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. Bing considered his role much of a joke, but his dramatic teacher was determined for him to follow through. On the opening night in the school auditorium Bing brought down the house, but not precisely the way the drama teacher had hoped. Dressed in a toga his mother had made from old sheets, the third son of the Crosbys faithfully emulated the immortal works of Shakespeare. He even managed to die nobly. The curtain began to descend. Bing playing dead had one eye opened. He perceived that the curtain was not only falling, but falling on him. There was only one thing to do, and that was to move. So just as the curtain was about to strike him, he leaped to his feet. The audience doubled up laughing. The drama coach nearly



died over "the thwarted dignity" of the play, and yours Caesar Crosby was called back for numerous bows. He struck various poses in his toga, and was finally yanked off the stage. More comic returns to the curtain by an indignant teacher. Bing's mother has aspirations of her son studying law. Since he had the easiest temperament it was logical he could deal with just about anyone. Mrs. Crosby would have been horrified if she knew Bing was considering a career in music. She also noted with some regret Bing didn't take an interest in girls. She gently scolded him for being too lazy and not being a successful Lotharian like Everett. Bing thought it was too much work having your hair groomed and looking neat all the time. He thought girls were too persnickety at the time. Bing looked forward to going to college. He felt as long as he was in school he wouldn't have to work. He enrolled at Gonzaga and sang in the glee club. He also played drums in the band. He felt it was more fun to play in the band instead of dancing. Eventually he and his friend Al Rinker formed a quartet and made

their debut in a Spokane theater. Their best number was "Red Hot Hearty Brown." For awhile he thought the priesthood might be calling him. It was the Jesuits that convinced Bing he might be better suited for something else. That something else, was music. Well that was nothing new to his mother. When he would come home for lunch she could hear him singing three blocks away. During the summer Bing got a job singing at a local theater in Spokane singing with the house organist. Bing and the organist didn't seem to hit it off and he persuaded the manager to let his friend Al Rinker accompany him on the piano. He and Al began singing with a unique blend of harmony that was very well acclaimed in Spokane. Al and Bing decided to take a chance and maybe hit it big in Hollywood. Bing had a clunker of a car that shook violently every time it hit a slight bump. They eventually made it all the way to Santa Barbara before the car breathed its last breath. Paying for carfare would have exhausted their meager savings so they got their bags and stuck out their thumbs in the direction of Los Angeles. That forced march by the way was no fun, not if you know anything about the dusty heat in the San Fernando Valley region. By the time they got to Los Angeles, the third son of the Crosby's, was for once in his life, at a loss for a wisecrack. Al's sister Mildred Bailey hardly recognized her kid brother, and his buddy when they knocked on the door. "What are you kids doing here" she asked. "We want a job" said Al. "I want a nap" chirped Bing. After which conquering and soul stirring words he fell into a deep slumber while Al and Mildred had a tete-a-tete over their future. Mildred Bailey was all they had hoped she would be. She was a pal.

Next Month Part Two.

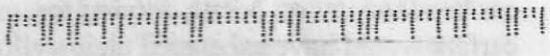


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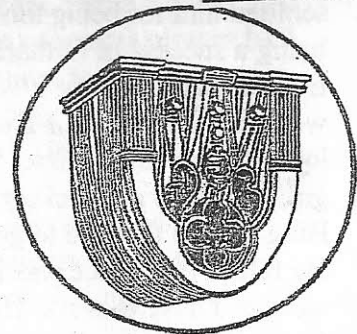
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