



### ← SHIRLEY JONES

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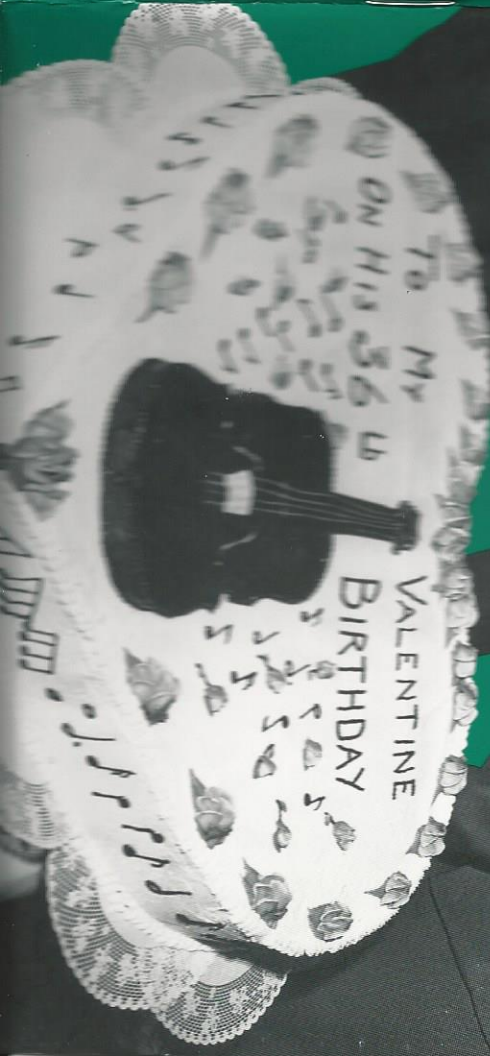
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and  
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# NOSTALGIA DIGEST

BOOK 38, CHAPTER 1

WINTER 2012

JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH

## Norman Corwin: 1910-2011

To paraphrase the Fab Four, it was more or less 20 years ago today when I was made fully aware of the genius of Norman Corwin. Thanks to Chuck Schaden and *Those Were the Days*, I had been a fan of the Golden Age of Radio since my childhood, but I'd never had a chance to hear the work of Norman Corwin — or if I had, I was too young to really savor and appreciate it.

That changed for good at the end of 1991, when *TWTD* began its four-year retrospective of radio during World War II. Going week-by-week through the war was fascinating enough but the *coup de grace* was *We Hold These Truths*, an hour-long broadcast written and directed by Norman Corwin in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Bill of Rights. As coincidence would have it, the show was broadcast one week after America's entry into the war, and it was a powerful, passionate show in praise of life, liberty, and the imperfect process that went into making a country great.

It didn't take long to discover that Mr. Corwin had the ability to write in virtually any style, from verse to light comedy to Biblical drama to nation-building prose. But this was not mere hackwork or the flitterings of a dilettante; even the "big statements" were presented as conversations rather than lectures. These plays offered was a hybrid of poetry and dignity that had an impact on anyone who ever heard them.

Some years after hearing some of the best of Norman Corwin's wartime work — including *We Hold These Truths* and the epic V-E Day broadcast *On a Note of Triumph* — I wrote a book for DC Comics that was very much inspired by Mr. Corwin's poetic brand of patriotism and sent him a copy along with a note of thanks.

A few weeks later, I was amazed and delighted when a note arrived in response, filled with thanks and compliments. Thus began a long-distance friendship that was cultivated by conversations and visits to his Los Angeles home, and at all times — even as his health deteriorated in later years — he was polite and engaging and his conversations always spirited. Possibly he was amused at the idea that some "kid" in his thirties would know so much about the work he'd done 60 years earlier. Possibly he was this polite to everyone who approached him. Probably both.

When I became publisher of this magazine in 2005, my first issue coincided with

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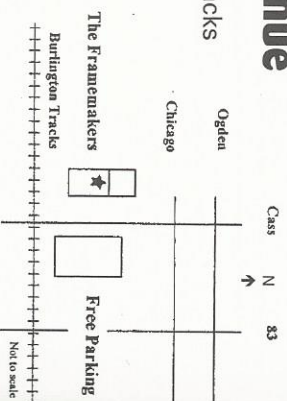
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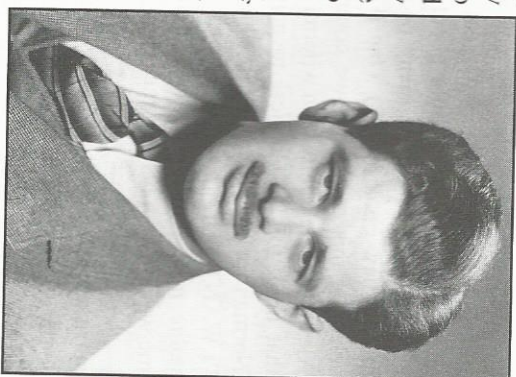
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the 60th anniversary of V-J Day. I mentioned this to Norman and he responded with a short piece about the making of *Fourteen August*, the brief monologue he wrote and that Orson Welles delivered on the day of victory.

That article was as nice a boost as we could have asked for. The next year, I had the great honor of interviewing Studs Terkel for the *Digest* and Norman was there to add a few words of his own in honor of his longtime friend.

When it came time to celebrate Norman's 100th birthday in 2010, we spent an hour on the telephone interviewing him about his career and his new book (and how many people get to promote a new book at 99?), *One World Flight*. To celebrate this centenary, we commissioned artist Alex Ross (the fellow with whom I collaborated on that book for DC Comics) to paint a portrait of Norman for our cover, one in which Norman was presented in the famous Uncle Sam "I WANT YOU" pose. We sent a copy and were delighted by Norman's unfailingly polite, modest response. "I've put it on my wall," he said of the cover image. "It makes me want to be a better American."

As nice as that was, we were even more thrilled when our listeners got into the spirit of the celebration by sending cards and letters of thanks and congratulations in honor of Mr. Corwin's 100th birthday on the air. These cards and letters were hand-delivered at Norman's birthday party on May 3, 2010.

All of this reminds me how wonderful it must be to have created something decades earlier — something that you probably thought would be ephemeral — and realize that it has not only survived, but that it continues to inspire. Before Norman Corwin came along, radio was still kind of feeling its way creatively; as a result, there were a number of entertaining programs and perhaps not so many moving ones. Norman Corwin showed us that radio could possess as much poetry and beauty as any other art form, whether the subject was whimsical or of grave importance.

Norman once joked that he had his obituary written out in advance: "Norman Corwin, 126, was killed today in a duel with a jealous lover. His gun jammed."

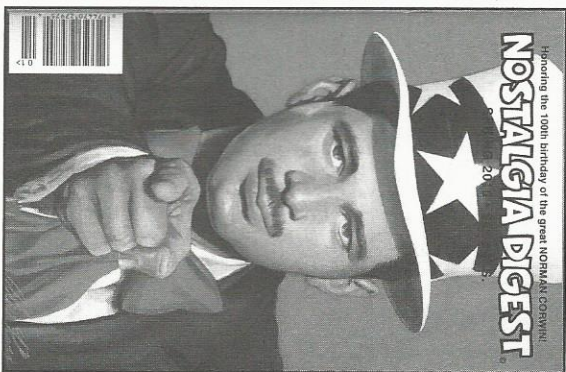
Regrettably, he fell a few years short of his goal when he passed away on October 18, 2011 at the age of 101.

Too many people leave this world without knowing how beloved they were. Thankfully, Norman Corwin had the respect and admiration of every generation that heard him. He was a personal and professional inspiration.

Thanks, Norman. We'll miss you.

—Steve Darnall

*Time in to Those Were the Days on January 14 and 21 for a tribute to the radio work of Norman Corwin.*



## My Tube is YouTube...

It started out with three friends who wanted to e-mail video clips to one another and went on to become the world's biggest article, filled with everything from home movies to political conspiracy theories to piano-playing cats to rare and hard-to-find moments from performers both past and present.

Here are some moments that we believe would interest readers of this magazine. They are listed under the names given to them as we found them — hopefully they're still in place under these names as you're reading this:

1) **Judy Garland: A Rare Red Carpet Moment with David Rose, The Hollywood Premiere of 'Charley's Aunt'** — Okay, the file name is a mouthful but the footage is a delight. Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone arrive at Graumann's Chinese Theater for the premiere of Jack's new picture, *Charley's Aunt*. Jack tells the same joke twice (presumably for two different audiences) while an adoring Mary looks on. Others who turn up at the microphones include Judy Garland, Gary Cooper, Claudette Colbert and Bob Hope, who's on screen for ten seconds and has the crowd in the palm of his hand the whole time.

2) **Kay Thompson** — A montage of film and television clips featuring the creator of Eloise in her element as a singer and vocal arranger. Includes a marvelous choral version of "All Over Nothing At All" and a performance of "I Love a Violin" that practically screams "TV Variety Show."

3) **Radio with pictures in your mind** — A fascinating behind-the-scenes glimpse at the production of radio sound effects, courtesy of *Back of the Mike*, a film made by the Chevrolet company (who manage to work a new car into the western action) in conjunction with the good folks at Jan Handy Productions. Given its proximity to the auto industry, it's likely we're seeing performers and technicians from WXYZ in Detroit — which makes it entirely possible that the balding, bespectacled actor who takes center stage at around the 6:05 mark is really John Todd, who spent two decades playing Tonto to the Lone Ranger.

4) **Best Ever To Tell The Truth Feb 18 1963 Surprise Ending** — There's very little I can add to that without spoiling the surprise ending, but we'll second the recommendation of writer Mark Evanier: "Watch it from the beginning and don't skip ahead...and try to play along with the panel and decide how you would have voted."

Have you spotted anything on YouTube that you think *Nostalgia Digest* readers ought to see? Let us know by sending the information and whatever explanation you wish to us, either electronically (at [info@nostalgia digest.com](mailto:info@nostalgia digest.com)) or the non-technical way by sending a note to **Nostalgia Digest, Box 25734, Chicago, IL 60625**. The *Digest* takes no responsibility for any materials posted on YouTube that are in violation of copyright.



A few moments with...

# BOB ELLIOTT

Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding met at Boston radio station WHDH in 1946 and began an informal partnership that would last for the next four decades, creating an overstocked warehouse of brilliant, absurd humor and "insane" (Kurt Vonnegut's description) characters that influenced everyone from Bob Newhart to Garrison Kellor to David Letterman to Saturday Night Live (where his granddaughter Abby is a cast member). During a conversation at his home in Maine, Bob Elliott recalled that was a teenager when he began his radio career at WHDH:



I got the job in 1941, after I'd studied radio [at a] drama school that didn't really teach me anything more than I thought I knew at that point. So I took one year of the two-year course after high school. The war was looming, and I just went into the station on a hunch and asked if I could audition — not even thinking about the fact that men were being drafted. I took the audition, went back to New York, and I got a telegram — those old things! — saying "Can you come to work Monday?"

*And at the age of 18, were you a disc jockey then?*

Yeah, they didn't call it that then; it was just a "record show." It became "disc jockey" a little later.

*But this was also a time when a — and I hate to use the term — "small station" meant you had to wear a lot of hats, even an 18-year-old.*

Yeah, everybody did. The staff of

announcers that they had then was seven, I think, and practically all of us got caught in the draft sooner or later, but being 18, I was able to stay out a year or two longer, but I was finally drafted. But I had the job to come back to; that was the big thing.

*Now, you're a young man — maybe 18, 20, 22 years old — at a radio station in Boston, which is a major city. Did it go through your mind, "Wow, I've made it"?*

Oh, yeah.

*So that could have been your whole life?*

I guess it could have been. But then I met Ray. Neither of us said "This could be a good chance for a team." We just did it.

*You certainly didn't meet Ray [Goulding] thinking in terms of forming*

*a partnership — but do you have any first impressions of Ray that you remember?*

I can remember meeting him for the first time; I was on the air with an afternoon music show called *The Air Express*, and the manager of the station brought Ray in to meet me, because he was going to be on the same shift in the morning. It was spring and I think he had one of those flat straw hats and a moustache and a summer suit, so it must have been fairly warm. He had the moustache, he told me later, so he'd look older. And we hit it right off — off the air, and eventually he'd stay in the studio with me after he'd done the news, and we would kibitz back and forth. That was the beginning of a team.

*Now, what is it that leads two young men to make the leap from kibitzing and goofing around while a record is playing to goofing around when the record is over and you're on the air?*

Well, that's how it happened, really. I guess Mary McGoon was the first character of many he'd play. He probably came out with her voice and [my character Wally] Ballou was the next one. He was based on a janitor-type member of the station.

[Calvin] Hoogewin, for which Ray did the voice, was also Webley Webster; he was named after the news runner for the writers in the next office, bringing the five-minute news into where we were.

*Clearly, when you two did this — and it was an organic thing — you clearly weren't afraid that you were going to be fired.*

No, we weren't. Nobody particularly complained about it, and we got to do it more and more. At that time, the station got the broadcast rights for the Red Sox and the Braves, who were both in Boston. They wanted a show they could

make a premium on before the ball game. Most of the games were day games in those years, and so we were on almost every afternoon between the two teams. And they fed that to New England stations, and they would feed ten minutes of what we were doing on the air to the engineers of the other stations. That was our original audience.

*Were you still wearing many hats at WHDH when you were doing the Matinee [with Bob and Ray] show?*

Yeah, we were the opening members of the staff, who signed the station on in the morning [at] six or 6:30. Ray came from Lowell and I came from... south of Boston. We didn't miss many [mornings], even with storms and what-have-you; we were there almost every day. I did an early morning record show and Ray did the news every hour or half-hour.

*The Matinee with Bob and Ray shows were clearly improvised —*

Well, we didn't have time to really write anything. We might jot down a note of something we really wanted to remember. We got into the soap-opera takeoffs — which we did our whole career, actually — based on the real soaps that we listened to going home in the afternoon. We might talk about where we'd be in the story so the engineer could play the proper sound effects. There was no sound man then and no director; just Ray and the engineer and me. ■

*To hear this conversation in its entirety — including Bob Elliott's recollections of breaking into New York radio, working with Les Paul and spoofing Senator McCarthy — tune in to Those Were the Days on March 31 for an afternoon with Bob and Ray.*



# JACK AND MARY:

## A love story

BY STEVE DARNALL

For two decades on radio (and another two on television), Jack Benny earned the love and laughter of millions who adored hearing jokes about his age (the last time he was actually 39 was in 1934), his cheapness, his vanity, his baldness, his lousy violin playing, his battered old Maxwell automobile, and his underground vault, which contained not only every dollar he'd ever earned, but also a guard who hadn't seen the light of day for years (possibly for centuries).

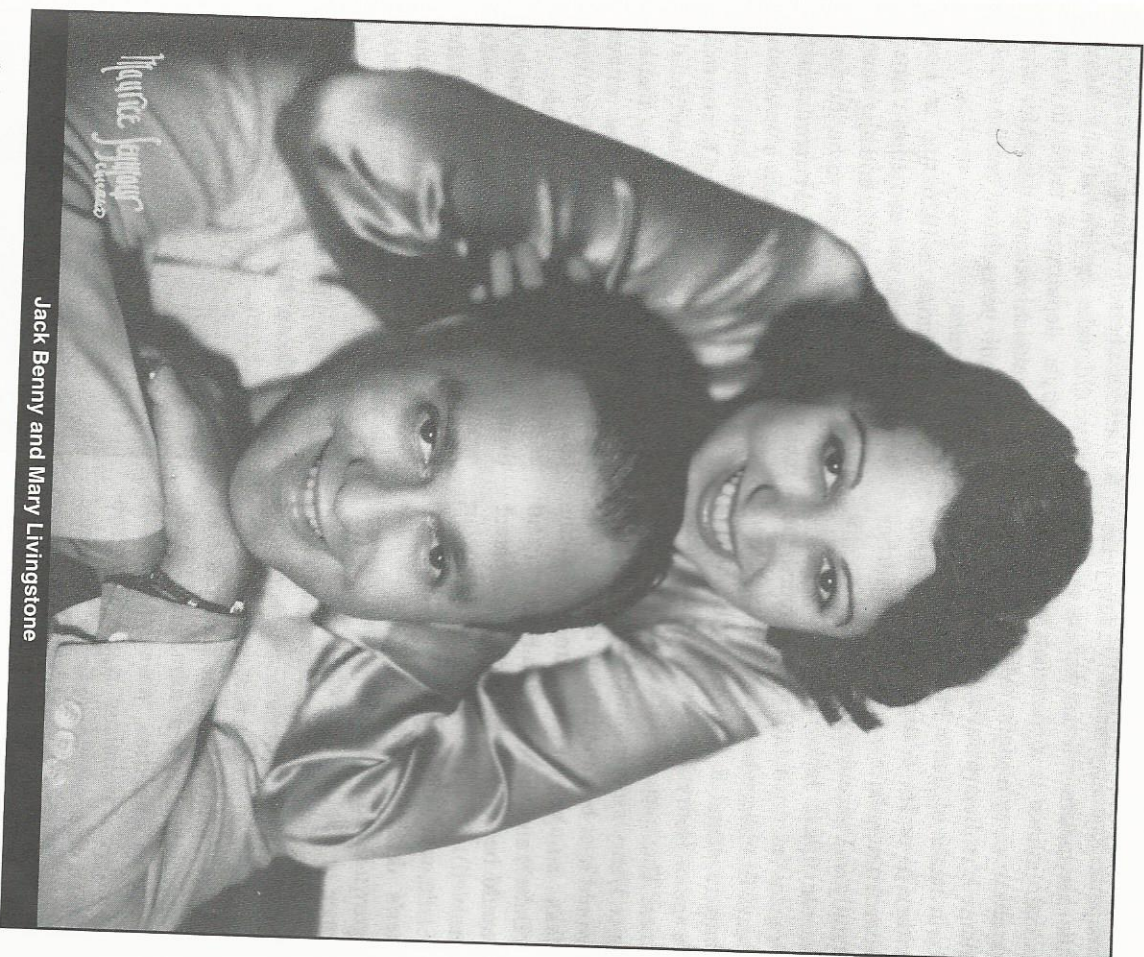
Of course, one of the things listeners adored about *The Jack Benny Program* was the fact that everyone in Jack's supporting cast (including announcer Don Wilson, bandleader Phil Harris, singer Dennis Day, and Eddie Anderson in the role of Jack's butler Rochester) was ready, willing and able to puncture their boss' ego with a well-placed remark. Perhaps no one in the Benny ensemble was better at such wisecracks than Mary Livingstone, the May Company refugee from Plainfield, New Jersey.

Not everyone who listened to *The Jack Benny Program* knew that much of the show was a well-constructed facade. Jack didn't wear a toupee; nor was he, as suggested on *The Fred Allen Show*,

tighter than the skin on Sidney Greenstreet's hip. (In fact, Jack often tipped excessively to counter his radio image.) Say what you will, it took real confidence to present yourself so that your audience assumed you were a vain, narcissistic, parsimonious boor.

Much of that confidence was due to the support of Mary Livingstone, who was something of a construct herself. On the air, she was a fierce wit; at all times, she was Mrs. Jack Benny. As a comedienne, she became an indispensable part of the Benny program, but as Jack later acknowledged, Mary also "had the brains, the courage and the ambition to push me forward. She's responsible for my success... If it wasn't for her, I'd be a third-rate violinist in some little dump."

Such a remark downplays Jack's own remarkable skills as both a performer and a judge of good material (as well as the many contributions made by the creative and business people with whom Jack worked), but it's true that Jack Benny the performer owed no small debt to Mary Livingstone. When Jack prepared to return to Broadway in 1931 after making a number of undistinguished films, it was Mary who recom-



Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone

mended he ask for more money — since, after all, he was now a star of stage and screen. (When Jack got the figure he asked for, he made sure that Mary reviewed all of his contracts from then on.) When *The Jack Benny Program*

needed a tenor to replace the departing Kenny Baker, it was Mary who brought Dennis Day to Jack's attention. When Jack was considering making the move

to television a decade later, Mary volunteered to work with him step-by-step through the production of a test show. "Believe me, doll," she said to him, "I'll tell you honestly how I think you look, and if the show works."

Such devotion was the farthest thing from Jack's mind when he met his bride-to-be for the first time. At this point, Jack was 27, and the young man born



Benjamin Kubelsky was only a few years into his metamorphosis from a professional violinist to a comedian who happened to carry a violin. Meanwhile, the future Mrs. Benny was still known by her birth name of Sadie Marks. Sadie was either 14 or 16 — depending on which source you believe — and living with her family in Vancouver.

In 1921, Jack was performing in Vancouver on a bill that included the Marx Brothers when Zeppo Marx invited him to attend a Passover seder at the home of Henry Marks, a local businessman. That evening, Jack came along and met Henry's older daughter Ethel (who would later become famous among radio fans as Mary Livingstone's sister "Babe") and his young son Hilliard (who would become integral to Jack's career as well). The middle child was teenager Sadie, who greeted Jack wearing her sister's dress and heels, trying to look grown-up while also maintaining her balance.

If this was someone's idea of a blind date, Jack wasn't amused. His mood soured further when Henry asked his guests to listen as Sadie played a Bach composition on her violin. Jack, who by his own admission "always hated auditioning girl violinists," was none too subtle about his desire to leave. Infuriated, Sadie finished the piece, but hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. This young woman got her revenge the next day when she and a group of friends sat in the front row during Jack's performance, without cracking a single smile among them.

When Jack and Sadie met a few years later in California (where the Marks family had moved), he recalled that he managed to be even more rude than before, breezing by her as she tried

to introduce herself. Young Sadie eventually did take a job at the May Company's department store in Los Angeles, which became grist for the comedy mill years later on the *Jack Benny Program*.

It was during a 1926 stop in Los Angeles that Jack was invited to dinner with violinist Al Bernovici and his young wife. The wife turned out to be the former Ethel Marks, while the fourth party was Ethel's sister Sadie, now a vivacious brunette with a laugh that Jack found enchanting — and a sense of humor that had him in hysterics. "At the time, I didn't know he always reacted to a line he thought especially funny by either pounding on the table or literally falling to the floor," Mary said years later. "I therefore considered myself terribly sophisticated and witty." Jack apparently hadn't made the connection between the teenager he'd met a few years earlier and this young woman, but he was definitely smitten.

That's not to say that love was actually in bloom: at that time, Sadie had a

steady boyfriend — not to mention a healthy distrust of actors and the nomadic lives they led — while Jack, who had recently ended a romance with actress Mary Kelly, was what modern-day analysts might call a "commitment-phobe." It took a subsequent visit to the hosiery department of the May Company (on the pretense that Jack needed to buy stockings for his sister Florence) before Jack managed to get both a luncheon date with Sadie and, as he put it, "enough French hosiery to restock the May Company."

What followed was perhaps as *mild* a courtship as the annals of romance have ever recorded. Jack claimed he took the idea of marriage so seriously that he never brought it up before he was asked to tour in the revue *Great Temptations*. Sadie clearly saw this caution as indifference and actually became engaged to a young man who was visiting California from Vancouver. When Jack learned about Sadie's engagement, he invited her to visit sister Ethel in Chicago (her new home after her divorce from Al Bernovici). When Sadie arrived in the Windy City, Jack emphasized that she was too young to take such a big step... "But if you are going to get married," he said, "why don't you marry me?"

"Without missing a beat," she recalled in her autobiography, "I said, 'Fine'... the following Friday afternoon, January 14, 1927, I became Mrs. Jack Benny."

The ceremony was especially memorable for Sadie fainting (which she later explained was due to low blood sugar). Later, when she called her parents in California with the news, her mother responded with, "Your father and I wish you every happiness, but I don't think it will work out."

For a time, the signs suggested that Sadie's mother knew what she was talking about. After all, Jack was in his thirties and his act was becoming increasingly popular, which led to more work, which led to more touring, which led to more socializing. Sadie, meanwhile, was a young woman (19 or 21, again depending on which source you believe) who had no particular love for show business or for the endless traveling involved, yet here she was accompanying her husband from town to town, to do... what? Sit in the theater and watch her husband perform in the same show every night? Sit in their hotel room and wait for him to come home?

It may come as no surprise, then, that there was some friction between Jack and Sadie in the early days. At one point, she recalled, an argument led her to scratch Jack's face right before a photo session, which is apparently how Benny's famous hand-to-check pose came about. (Leave it to Jack to turn actual pain into comedy.) Still, as the saying goes, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, and after a few half-hearted efforts to carry on without Sadie, Jack realized that "I was bound to her not by a legal document and a religious ceremony. I was linked to her by love."

In fact, it wasn't long before the personal connection became a professional one as well. By 1928, Jack was back on the road and looking for a woman who could play a "dumb bunny" role in a sketch. When his first choice became unavailable, he asked Sadie to step into the role.

"I said 'Sure,'" she recalled years later. "I was at that brash stage in life."

So it was that Sadie Marks became "Marie Marsh" and took to the stage alongside her husband. She had no prior



Sadie Marks, a.k.a. Mary Livingstone



performing experience and Jack recalled that “She was as nervous as a cat on a hot stove, but she forced herself to do it.”

It turned out to be an amazing stroke of good fortune; as Jack wrote years later, “Sadie was a natural as a comedienne and the first time she walked out onto that stage, she was a professional.” So much so that when the actress who had been working with Jack returned to the act, theater management more or less told him to hire his wife instead.

The career of “Marie Marsh” was considered to be over when Jack landed his first weekly radio show in May of 1932. Sponsored by Canada Dry, the early programs consisted of music from bandleader George Olson and his wife, singer Ethel Shutta, interspersed with comedic monologues from Jack. The *Canada Dry Program* bore little resemblance to the *Jack Benny Program* that became the most celebrated comedy show in radio, but it began to evolve over time — and Jack’s wife was there to help.

Her most immediate and obvious contribution came about in the summer of 1932, when Jack and writer Harry Conn created the character of Mary Livingstone, a flighty girl who served as president of the Jack Benny Fan Club in Plainfield, New Jersey. There are conflicting reports as to how Sadie came to play the role of Mary: she recalled that the character had been created when the show came up two minutes short in rehearsal, while Jack said that it was another case of a script for which the original actress wasn’t available.

Whatever the case was, Sadie’s performance as Mary Livingstone was an instant sensation, thanks in part to her nervous but endearing laugh. Listener reaction was so positive that “Mary



Jack and Mary in the 1930s

Livingstone” eventually became a regular fixture on the Benny program. Ostensibly, Mary was initially hired as Jack’s secretary, but it didn’t take long before her main occupation became reading her poetry, sharing letters from her mother back in Plainfield, and tearing Jack down to size with a few well-chosen words. The woman became so closely associated with the role that Sadie finally had her name legally changed to Mary Livingstone.

As Jack recalled, Mary contributed to the show — and to Jack’s success — in other, less tangible ways. In his aborted autobiography (published posthumously as part of Joan Benny’s book *Sunday Nights at Seven*), Jack recalled listening to Ed Wynn’s radio program and noting that Wynn’s weaker jokes appeared to get bigger laughs than the

strong ones. It fell to Mary to point out that Wynn — a veteran stage performer — was probably punctuating the weaker jokes with sight gags for the benefit of his studio audience, a gesture that “doesn’t mean anything to us at home.”

Mary’s observation led Jack to conclude that the key to success in this new medium was the intimacy of conversation rather than the broad cavoring previously associated with stage comedy. “I felt that I now understood the medium,” Jack wrote. “The radio audience totaled approximately 30 million, but it really consisted of small family groups. I would play to those family groups and get them to know me and my [cast] as real people with real problems.”

This was a seismic discovery for all comedians who would dare to try their hand at radio. For the rest of Jack’s broadcasting career, he would not be a comedian; rather, he would be a character actor playing a comedian — and that character’s less-than-appealing traits would become comedy gold.

Once Jack made that change, it wasn’t long before everyone on the Benny show became a character. Bandleader Johnny Green played opposite Jack as an Ivy League snob; his replacement Phil Harris assumed the characteristics of an illiterate drinker who saw a sign marked “Infirmity” and wondered why the hospital staff had it “in for Mary.” Singer Kenny Baker was cast as a naive idiot and his successor Dennis Day embellished that character even further.

And as Jack’s radio style developed, so too did Mary’s. Just as Jack evolved from a joke-telling master of ceremonies to the vain and cheap character that his fans grew to love, so did the flighty and silly character of Mary

Livingstone give way to a sophisticated, sharp-tongued woman. (Even sister Babe became a source of jokes on the Benny show; although she rarely appeared on-mike, the writers used her name to create the character of a lady plumber who could’ve passed for a member of the Chicago Bears.) As the popularity of the Benny program grew during the 1930s, it was only natural that Jack would return to making movies; Mary even found herself in front of the camera for the 1937 film *This Way, Please*.

Of course, Mary was quick to acknowledge that her husband was the real star. Jack in turn admitted that he wasn’t a writer (unlike his friends Fred Allen and Goodman Ace), but he knew how to give directions to Mary that were helpful without scolding (e.g., “Slow down on that second sentence”). Mary dutifully wrote these directions into the



Jack and Mary in the 1940s



margin of her script so that she wouldn't risk forgetting them when the show was on the air.

Occasionally, though, her tongue tripped and the results were hilarious. In one scene, Mary was supposed to order a swiss cheese sandwich and out came "I'll have a chiss sweeze sandwich." In a famous 1950 broadcast, Mary asked about Jack's car being up on a grease rack, but somehow, the words "grease rack" came out as "grass reek." Jack and his writers pounced on moments like these and made them running gags for weeks afterward.

Still, Mary never really shared Jack's performing bug and over time, she began to develop a serious case of mike fright. "In the beginning, my appearances on Jack's radio show were fun," she acknowledged, "but ironically, the more shows I did, the more nervous I became." There were times when Mary couldn't (or wouldn't) go on the air. Her always-sympathetic husband would either draft a guest to take Mary's place (among those deputized were Barbara Stanwyck, Phil Harris' wife Alice Faye, and even sister Babe) or simply acknowledge that Mary was sick and unable to appear on the show. On those occasions, Jack would conclude the show with a warm, "Goodnight, doll!"

By the early 1950s, Mary's mike fright had grown so intense that she told Jack she wanted to quit radio once and for all. Jack had no desire to make his wife suffer but he also loved working with her on the air. Then, fate — in the form of a new technology — stepped in. As luck would have it, Mary made her decision at a time when the era of live radio was being supplanted by recording tape, which allowed performers to pre-record shows in advance and edit out

unwanted mistakes. Mary's brother Hilliard (who had gone on to become the producer of the Benny program) hit upon a solution: Mary could record her lines at home, with no audience and none of the pressures of a "live performance." Meanwhile, Jack and his cast could do the regular show while a stand-in (sometimes it was Jack and Mary's teenage daughter Joan) read Mary's lines. From there, the engineers could edit the tape to place Mary's readings into the final show, as if she'd been there all along. It was a technical *tour de force* and it allowed Jack to maintain a valuable continuity during his last few years on radio.

When Jack retired from radio for good in 1955 (returning only for a 1956 Christmas special), Mary's performing career was more or less over. She appeared infrequently on Jack's television show (mostly on the pre-filmed episodes) before announcing her retirement from show business in 1958. Her last performance came in 1970, when she appeared — reportedly at the request of President Richard Nixon — on a special celebrating Jack's 20th anniversary in television.

During the last decade of his life, Jack divided much of his time between television specials and live performances, while Mary was happy to stay at home in Beverly Hills and socialize. It was prior to a scheduled performance in Dallas that Jack noticed numbness in his arm. The doctors suggested Jack had suffered a mild stroke but were unable to do anything about the pancreatic cancer that would eventually take his life on December 26, 1974. The outpouring of sympathy was global and thousands of friends and admirers turned out on a rainy day for Jack's funeral.

As one last gesture of devotion, Jack



Livingstone character into her personal life as well.

Thankfully, when one listens to them on the radio, none of that really matters. When Jack and Mary are together on the air, their obvious affection for each other outweighs any personal insecurity or fear. The woman born Sadie Marks may have been terrified of performing, but she carried on doing so for three decades, in part because it made Jack happy when she did. He would probably argue that having her alongside made him a better performer as well.

As human beings, Jack and Mary were no more perfect than the rest of us — indeed, their radio show was built almost entirely on that premise. Thankfully, it appeared that they were perfect for each other. ■

Recent accounts have suggested that Mary was a social climber obsessed with "keeping up with the Joneses." In her own book, Mary recalls talking with glamorous Ann Sheridan (who had co-starred with Jack in *George Washington Slept Here*) and saying, point-blank, "Jack wouldn't give my little finger for your whole body!" Daughter Joan described her mother as a woman with "so many good qualities," but ultimately felt "sadness because I wish she could have enjoyed [her good fortune] more." It was as though Mary never got over the insecurity she felt as the young bride of an established comedian — or perhaps she had decided to apply the brash Mary

*Time in to Those Were the Days this February for Jack Benny Month.*



# MEMORIES OF THE MOVIES

BY JERRY MOE

Growing up on the Northwest Side of Chicago (Edison Park, to be specific) in the 1930s and early 1940s, movies were a large part of my boyhood. I spent many Saturday afternoons at the local movie theater — in our case, the Pickwick Theater in nearby Park Ridge. In those days, the movies cost only a dime for a kid, and you could go and stay as long as you liked. The movies were shown continuously, and no one seemed interested in finding out if you had already seen the whole show. As a result, you might hear people getting up to leave midway through, saying, "This is where I came in." It's not that way anymore.

Usually I went with my brother or cousin or a friend to the Saturday matinee. Often the theater would show a triple feature: three comedies, three horror pictures, or three adventure movies. I loved the comedies, especially those starring Joe E. Brown or the team of Laurel and Hardy, who made me laugh so hard

*Jerry Moe is a Nostalgia Digest subscriber from Valparaiso, Indiana.*

that I thought my sides would split.

I loved the cartoons — Popeye especially — and I remember the theater would often have a serial; a 15-chapter saga featuring Buck Rogers or Tom Mix or some other hero. At the end of each episode, the hero would usually find himself in an impossible dilemma — then, in the next episode, he got out of it as easy as pie. I remember that the Pickwick once offered children a punchcard. They would punch the card each time I went to see one of the 15 chapters; when all 15 holes were punched, I got to take my Dad to a movie for free. Was I ever proud when this happened!

I especially loved the movies of Shirley Temple and those featuring the screen partnership of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

Certain movies stick out in my memory. Like everyone else, I was struck by *The Wizard of Oz* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Some movies gave me the shudders, like those featuring the Dead End Kids. One film in particular that made a deep impression was *Our Town* — a movie based on Thornton Wilder's play about life and death in a small town — which made me think

about the preciousness of life and family. My heroes were actors like Gary Cooper and Cary Grant, and, of course, I developed crushes on some of the many beautiful actresses, like Rogers and Rita Hayworth.

Sometimes there would be special entertainment on stage at the theater. I can remember Hi-Li contests (the Hi-Li was a paddle with a little hard rubber ball, which was attached to the paddle by a long elastic string.) Kids were invited up onto the stage to see who could paddle the ball the most number of times. Some could keep it going into the thousands, as I remember. There were also professional yo-yo exhibitions. I remember some young men from the Philippines who did amazing tricks.

While there was plenty at the movies for a kid, we also went to the movies as a family. When we were sweltering at home during the summer, it was especially nice to go to the air-conditioned

theater to escape the heat for a while. Sometimes the theater made special offers, such as dishes, just for attending the movies. During the Depression, you might get a plate or bowl as a "reward" for going to the theater.

Of course, I went to other theaters, especially when I accompanied my cousins, who lived near Diversey Avenue, which was much closer to downtown Chicago. Many times we would go to the Gateway in Jefferson Park, to the Portage on Milwaukee Avenue\*, the Belpark on Cicero Avenue, the Belmont (on Belmont Avenue, as you might imagine), the Luna (in the Belmont-Cragin neighborhood), or the Will Rogers in Portage Park. I would ride the street cars or city buses (often by myself) to reach these other theaters.

Once in a while, my mother would take me to one of the downtown Chicago theaters, such as the Chicago, the State-Lake, or the Oriental. There we would



Ray Bolger, Judy Garland and Jack Haley in *The Wizard of Oz*

\* - ED. NOTE — The Portage Theater is the current home of what used to be Chuck Schanden's Memory Club Movie series.





Ole Olsen and Chic Johnson

see one of the first-run movies that had just come out. The downtown theaters always included a stage show; during our visits, I remember seeing Veloz and Yolanda, the Spanish dancers; Borrah Minevich and His Harmonica Rascals; and the comedy team of Olsen and Johnson. As a part of their show, a man came through the theater carrying a small plant, and saying loudly, "Plant for Mrs. Jones." He appeared again a few minutes later — by which time the plant had grown considerably — and say pleadingly, "Plant for Mrs. Jones!" This happened several times — with the plant getting successively bigger each time — until finally the man (and he must have had help) re-entered, carrying a large tree and crying, "Plant for Mrs. Jones!"

I even remember seeing the notorious Sally Rand, doing her bubble dance instead of the more famous (or infamous) film dance. The bubble dance involved Miss Rand sitting in a bathtub on a stage filled with giant bubbles — I suppose they were artificial — and as she emerged from the tub that had been



Sally Rand with Truman Bradley

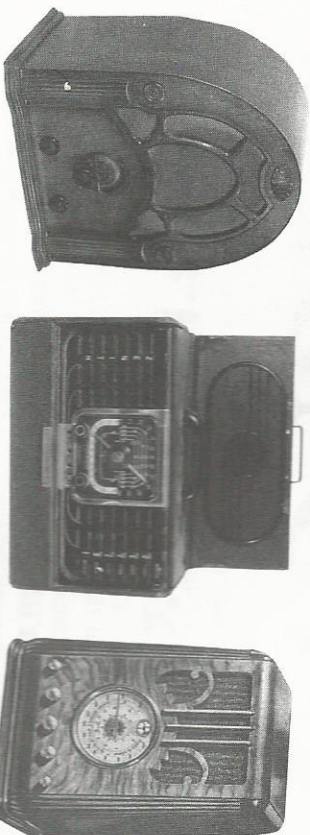
placed on stage, she'd dive from one bubble to the other, almost like she was hiding behind them. I assume she was clad in some near-transparent outfit.

Of course, the performers weren't the only beautiful aspect; the theaters were very beautiful in those days as well. People called them "palaces," and they were. We especially liked going to the Uptown Theater on North Broadway for special occasions, as it was such a magnificent place.

The theater organs were really worth listening to as well. Although the years of silent movies were long past, the organists were great artists. Sometimes they would put on a little show between performances.

And then as now, the movies wouldn't be complete without the popcorn and candy. I particularly remember the Jujube gun drops, one of many candies intended to last for a long time — but not nearly as long as my happy memories of the movies (and the movie houses) of my youth. ■

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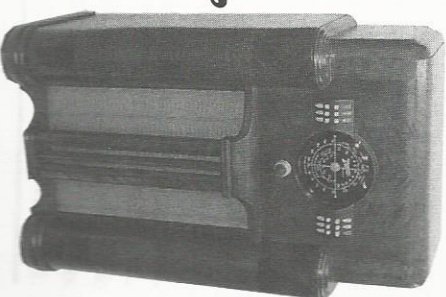
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# OF MUSH AND MEEN A “cereal-ized” story

BY JIM WEYRICK

If you are in the Midwest and it's winter, chances are good that you or someone in your house had hot cereal for breakfast today, or did yesterday, or will tomorrow.

Whether zapped in a microwave, cooked on a stovetop, or simmered all night in a slow cooker, hot cereal is cold weather comfort food. Eaten plain with milk and sugar, or enhanced with fruit or maple syrup, the taste is warm and non-confrontational. It exists in exact opposition to the cold and bluster outside. Simply holding a hot bowlful helps allay winter. Hot cereal has been a part of our winters since childhood, just like hats, gloves, extra blankets, storm windows and a furnace or fireplace.

In fact, hot cereal has been around

*Jim Weyrick is a writer from Elk Grove Village, Illinois, and an integral member of the “behind-the-scenes” team at Those Were the Days.*

for centuries. The recipe for dried grains made edible by boiling in water or milk predates the arrival of the English into Virginia. They brought with them European grains like wheat and oats and referred to the cooked concoction as “porridge.”

But when the Europeans arrived on American soil, they found Native Americans eating a new world grain called “maize,” which we better know as Indian corn or flint corn. It could be dried and preserved for winter, when it would be pounded or ground into a course meal. The dry kernels could also be soaked in wood ash water to make hominy.

But in the end, it's all mush...corn meal cooked in liquid and eaten as new world porridge. It can also be left to coagulate into a loaf. The loaf is then cut into slices, fried and eaten smothered in butter and syrup.

For most of the U.S.A.'s first century, corn and wheat were the primary grain staples of the American diet. After harvest, they were ground into coarse meal or fine flour at local gristmills

across the country and shipped out in wood barrels or cloth sacks. There was little need for fancy marketing where these necessities of life were concerned.

Even now there is no glamour, no fancy branding for corn meal. It is rare on restaurant menus. Some try an imported enhancement, using the Italian name, polenta. But it's still plain old mush.

Oats, on the other hand, were for horses — or so we widely believed until Ferdinand Schumacher changed our minds.

Born in 1822 at Celle near Hanover in what is now central Germany, Schumacher immigrated to America in 1850. He settled in Ohio, farming for a year east of Cleveland before becoming a grocer in Akron. He grew up eating oatmeal in Germany but balked at the high price of importing oatmeal to America. Instead, he started making his own, roasting and de-hulling the oat kernels and chopping them into small bits for cooking.

The popularity of Schumacher's oatmeal might have gone no further than the other German immigrants shopping in his store, were it not for the Civil War. In 1862, the Union Army — looking for non-perishable foods for its troops — ordered 100 barrels of Schumacher's oatmeal.

The deal for Schumacher's oatmeal may have been partly psychological. Dried corn was a staple for the armies of the South, in the region known as the Grits Belt. To prove themselves better than their enemy, Union troops got oatmeal: a new-fangled breakfast created from what had been horse food.

The boys in blue liked it enough to keep eating it when they went back home, and Ferdinand Schumacher kept making and selling it. As demand grew,

he expanded his Akron mills and earned the title “The Oatmeal King.” Competing mills were built around the Midwest.

In the 1880s, millers started rolling the toasted, hulled oats instead of chopping them. Rolled oatmeal cooks faster and quickly became more popular than the slower-cooking chopped variety (although the latter is still commercially available as steel cut or “Irish” oatmeal).

At the height of production in downtown Akron, steel pipes were placed under Mill Street and carried the raw grain four blocks downhill from the rail yard and silos to the factories. As competition and demand increased, so did the urge to merge. In 1901, Schumacher's German Mills American Oatmeal Company joined with three other companies, including the Quaker Mill Company of nearby Ravenna, Ohio. The new combine adopted the Quaker name.

You might know already that the oatmeal manufacturer has no ties with the Religious Society of Friends, the Quakers. This Christian pacifist sect started in the mid-1600s in England. Its adherents were so fervent during their prayers and praises that their bodies trembled; as a result, the name “quaker” was applied derisively. However, Quaker church members came to be known for their truth and honesty in business. In the days before pure food and drug laws, honesty and quality were often suspect, but not from a Quaker.

In 1877, in an effort to put a face on its quality, the original Quaker Mills decided to put a face on its quality by registering the first trademark for a breakfast food. They adopted the image of a Quaker man wearing traditional plain clothes. Contrary to legend, the smiling man on each box of Quaker Oats is an artist's creation and not William



Penn, Quaker founder of the English colony that became Pennsylvania, nor famed Philadelphia Benjamin Franklin.

By contrast, the smiling face on boxes of Cream of Wheat is a real person. For original marketing purposes, he was dubbed Rastus. But the image is widely acknowledged as that of Frank L. White.

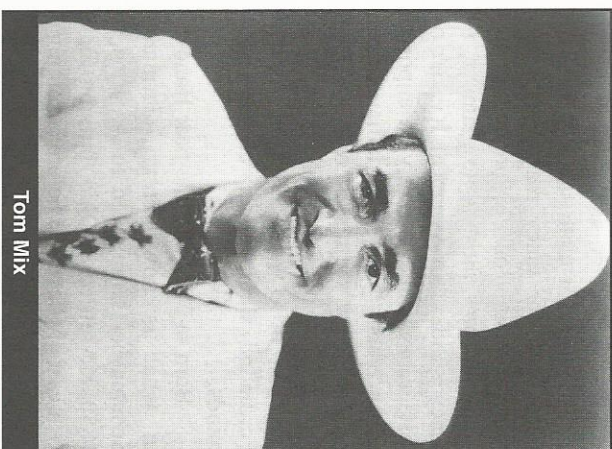
Born in 1867 on the island of Barbados, White immigrated to the United States at age eight. He became an American citizen in 1890, working as an itinerant waiter and cook. In 1900, White was a master chef for a Chicago restaurant when he was photographed by artist Edward V. Brewer for the cereal box portrait.

In 1918, White settled in Leslie, Mich., 20 miles south of Lansing. When he died there in 1938, he was buried in a numbered grave. His fame was finally acknowledged in 2009 when the anonymous grave marker was replaced with a headstone bearing his name and smiling face.

His cereal was created in 1893 in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and debuted that year at Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition. Cream of Wheat is a dressed-up, trademarked name for farina, a coarsely ground wheat white flour.

Wheat is also the grain of Hot Ralston, the hot cereal championed by the first King of the Cinema Cowboys, Tom Mix.

Born in 1880 at Mix Run near Dubois in the central Pennsylvania mountains, Tom appeared in over 315 movies. His first, *Ranch Life in the Great Southwest*, was made in 1910, two years before New Mexico and Arizona became states. With his dashing good looks and the daring stunts (which the cowboy



Tom Mix

reportedly did himself), Mix became an idol of silent movie Hollywood. He lived and dressed the life of a star, complete with an oversized, white cowboy hat. He made a fortune and he spent a fortune.

Perhaps he suffered losses in the 1929 stock market crash or maybe he was concerned over his fading movie career. Whatever the reason, in 1933, Mix was convinced to sign a contract with the Ralston Purina Company, granting them permission to use his name for a children's radio program.

*The Tom Mix Straight Shooters* began on September 25, 1933, and gave birth to a new era of celebrity marketing. Not only did Tom push Ralston Wheat Cereal, he also peddled a long trail of souvenirs and trinkets. Kids who mailed a Ralston box top and a dime to Checkerboard Square, St. Louis, MO, got everything from toy cowboy gear to plastic arrowheads to comic books with secret messages. The *Tom Mix* serial went beyond cowboy stories to murders

and international intrigue. It was radio's biggest western-detective program. Ralston sales soared. In the words of one friend, "I ate Hot Ralston because Tom Mix told me to."

No one seemed to mind that the voice on the radio show didn't actually belong to Tom Mix, who was more interested in touring with cowboy shows and circuses than in being tied to broadcasting from one place and drawing a comparatively small actor's salary. As a result, a number of actors played Tom on radio over the years, including Russell Thorson and Joe "Curley" Bradley.

Mix died October 12, 1940 near Florence, Arizona, when his speeding roadster missed a detour turn and crashed into a gully, killing him instantly. The gully, now called Tom Mix Wash, is marked by a cairn. Atop the rocks is a metal sculpture of a riderless horse with head bowed down. Tom's horse Tony, who was credited in 34 Mix movies, was euthanized exactly two years later, on October 12, 1942. He was 42.

In fact, Ralston's radio show outlived its star by almost ten years. On June 23, 1950, announcer Don Gordon signed off on the show's final broadcast, saying "In the heart and imagination of the world, Tom Mix rides on and lives on forever." Ralston kept on selling a Mix-ture of premiums for two more years.

The final chapter in this cereal is John Hubley. Born in Marinette, Wisconsin in 1914, Hubley went to California to be an artist. He was hired by the Disney Studios in 1935 and worked on several of their animated classics. When Disney's animators went on strike in June of 1941, Hubley left Disney—in doing so, he also left the elaborate artistic style of Disney cartoon features.

In 1949, Hubley created Mr. Magoo.

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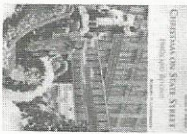
### The Legend of the Christmas Ship

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Voiced by Jim Backus, Magoos was drawn in a flat and minimalistic style, the antithesis of Disney at the time. Working with other Disney alumni at United Productions of America, Hubley was the supervising director of the Oscar-winning cartoon short for 1951, "Gerald McBoing-Boing." Dr. Seuss wrote the cartoon's story, the tale of a little boy who spoke only in sound effects.

But Hubley ran afoul of the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1951. Unwilling to name names, he ended up on the blacklist. As a result, his career detoured from cartoons to commercials, which list no credits.

Working on his own in 1953, Hubley signed a contract to create a television commercial for Maypo, a maple syrup-flavored oatmeal. As research for the spot, John and his wife Faith watched and recorded their four-year-old son, Mike. The minute-long cartoon drama — featuring a father trying to feed Maypo to his cowboy hat-wearing son — premiered in September 1956. The slogan that resulted became a by-word across

the land: "I want my Maypo!"

As the blacklist faded, Hubley was credited as the director of 45 cartoons, three of which won the Academy Award for Best Short Subject Cartoons: 1960's *Moonbird*, 1963's *The Hole* and 1967's *A Herb Alpert Double Feature*. Four others got nominations. From 1971 to his death in 1977, John and Faith Hubley worked as animators for *The Electric Company*, a children's educational comedy and variety television program.

Mikey Maypo is still on the cereal box. At last report, Mike Hubley is alive, training and breeding horses in upstate New York. He still does not like Maypo.

So enjoy your hot cereal, whatever it may be. And when you do so, take a moment to thank the men — be they German-American, African-American, or animated-American — who helped bring them to you.

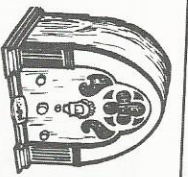
*Time in to Those Were the Days on March 24 to hear an episode of The Tom Mix Ralston Straightshooters.*

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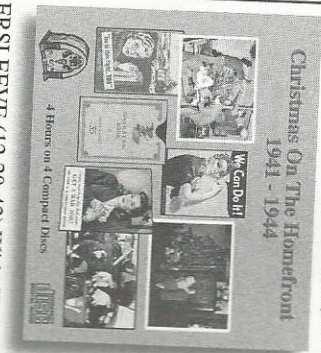


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The show's press agent suggests a contest. Jack is mortified because he has to come up with the \$10,000 prize for the best entry. Joining in the fun are Fred Allen and Ronald Colman. The letters pile in and now Jack must give away \$10,000! Ronald Colman reads the winning entry.

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# GRAND CENTRAL STATIONS

Looking Back at Chicago's Great Railroad Terminals

BY GARDNER KISSACK

*"As a bullet seeks its target, shining rails in every part of our great country are aimed at Grand Central Station... crossroads of a million private lives... a gigantic stage on which are played a thousand dramas daily."*

—from the opening of the *Grand Central Station* radio program

The Grand Central Station immortalized on radio was, in fact, the New York City railroad terminal at Park Avenue and 42nd Street in Manhattan. However, most major U.S. cities had a version of a Central Station — including Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Baltimore, Indianapolis, St. Louis (once the nation's busiest), Kansas City, and Los Angeles. Still, the odds are that you were planning to travel by train to any of those cities, you were likely to

pass through the Midwest — specifically, through Chicago, the nation's rail hub for most of the 20th Century.

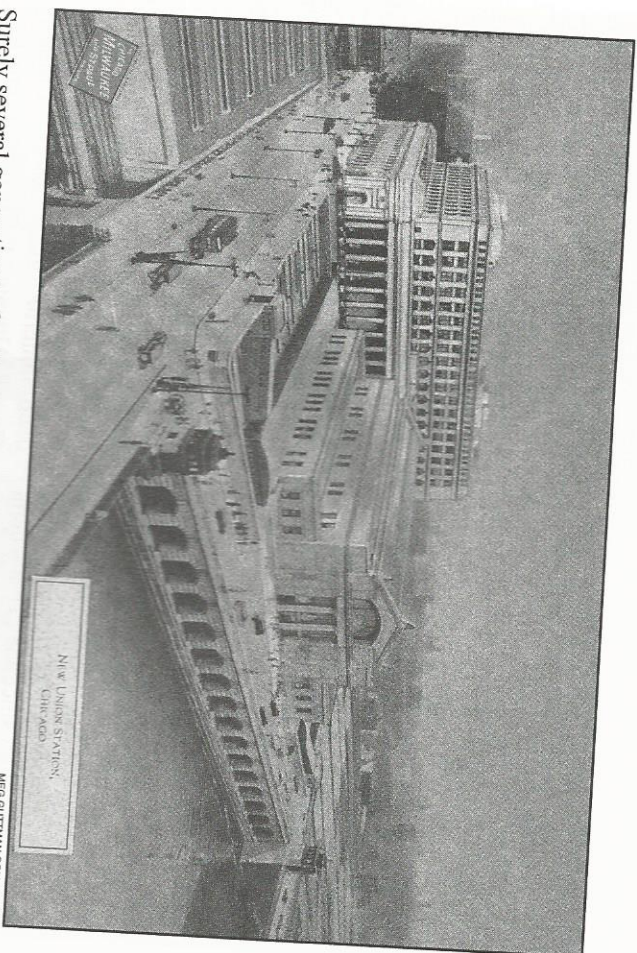
Herein, we honor the Windy City train stations that made that possible.

## Union Station

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, narrator Nick Carraway talks about taking the train home from school at Christmas time. "Those who went farther than Chicago would gather in the old Union Station at six o'clock of a December evening with a few Chicago friends...the murky yellow cars of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul looking cheerful as Christmas itself."

There's probably no way to estimate how many thousands of people over the years have had an encounter (or more than one) in Chicago's Union Station.

*Prior to his passing in February 2010, Gardner Kissack was a retired schoolteacher and frequent Nostalgia Digest contributor from Chicago Heights. Nostalgia Digest has several of Mr. Kissack's unpublished articles and we plan to include them within our pages as space permits.*



Surely several generations of college students have said their sweet farewells or a hearty "Welcome back" or even a first, tentative "Hello," in the station's grand, immense waiting room. The waiting room is notable for the sturdy varnished wood benches (dating back to the 1920s) and the arched skylight. (The skylight had been painted over for decades but now, newly restored, once again illuminates the great concourse's buff walls.)

Fitzgerald himself knew Chicago's Union Station well: he sometimes met friends there during his Princeton years as he traveled between the New Jersey campus and his home in Minnesota. While not limited to Ivy Leaguers or the North Shore classes (Fitzgerald's preferred social circle), Union Station was a natural place for students to congregate between trains. Lingering in the great hall today, one can easily imagine the romances that began, flourished, and faded there — not to mention the friendships, random meetings, business deals, and uniformed soldiers and sailors who

left or came home during and after World War II.

Although Union Station has rarely, if ever, reached its capacity, its superb and unusual layout — 10 tracks north, 14 tracks south — made it possible to serve 700 trains and 400,000 passengers daily.

The station may be familiar even to those who have never been there, thanks to its appearances in the movies. In Kevin Costner's *The Untouchables*, Union Station was part of a memorable scene in which a baby buggy bumps down a flight of stairs in the northeast corner during a dramatic, if fictionalized, shoot-out between gangsters and government agents.

## Chicago's Grand Central Station

The Baltimore & Ohio's enormous terminal, built at Wells and Harrison Streets in 1890, was known as Grand Central Station. Distinguished by its Romanesque style and magnificent fit-



teen-story brick four-clock tower (designed in the Norman Castellated style), Chicago's Grand Central contained a large, deluxe hotel and hundreds of offices. Its amazing soaring glass and iron trainshed, considered a triumph of design and engineering, curved above the tracks south of the station, near where River City stands today.

For tens of thousands of European immigrants, traveling from the east coast to the midwest during the first half of the 20th century, Grand Central was their first look at Chicago — although the B & O's prestigious train, the Capital Limited, was favored by pols heading to the nation's capital. The terminal site near the Eisenhower Expressway has been a vacant lot since the depot's demolition in 1971.

## Illinois Central

Built in 1892, the Illinois Central Depot was located at Roosevelt Road and Michigan Avenue (the southern end of Grant Park) during its 82-year history. Like Chicago's Grand Central Station, Illinois Central Depot featured a four-sided clock tower; however, it was more a regional station than a national one, as most of its travelers came from or went to the South along the Illinois Central's well-established rail lines.

The South Shore service — taking riders from South Bend, Indiana to Chicago via Michigan City, Gary, and Hammond — was a favorite ride of Hammond's Jean Shepherd, the legendary humorist and radio personality perhaps best-known as the author and narrator of *A Christmas Story*. Fans of the radio series *Vic and Sade* (of whom Shepherd was one) might remember that one of the show's peripheral characters,

Hank Gutstop, slept on the Illinois Central platform for ten hours!

## Chicago/Northwestern

The Chicago & Northwestern Station was located at Madison and Canal Streets. Built in 1911, the station's designers claimed their facility was “so large and well planned... that it could accommodate 500 trains and 250,000 passengers per day.” (It doesn't appear that the station ever operated at that capacity.) The fortress-like structure featured sturdy columns that protected the Madison Street entrance. In the 1980s, the building was torn down and replaced by Helmut Jahn's shimmering neo-deco/moderne glass tower, Citicorp Center. Although the patina of time had taken a toll on the old station, with proper maintenance the husky edifice might have stood for a thousand years.

## LaSalle Street Station

Before they were transferred to Union Station, the legendary 20th Century Limited (billed as “the fastest train in the world”) as well as the Broadway Limited and later the Sunset Limited used the LaSalle Street Station as their terminus.

The station was built in 1911, and for some 30 years, one could board the 20th Century Limited in Chicago during the late afternoon, sleep through Ohio and Pennsylvania and awaken for breakfast in New York — or depart Manhattan just before supper, emerging from the tunnel beneath Park Avenue to the Bronx and glimpse the familiar, famous facade of Yankee Stadium, before dining along the Hudson River at sunset and arriving in Chicago the following morn-

ing.

Movie buffs can see the LaSalle Street Station in 1959's *North By Northwest* and 1973's *The Sting*. (The 20th Century Limited was the inspiration for *Twentieth Century*, the 1932 Broadway comedy by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, two Chicago expatriates and regular riders of the train.) Today, the station serves mainly commuters from the south and western parts of the city and suburbs.

## Dearborn Station

Although the last train left Dearborn Station in 1971, the station's brick tower and depot building (built in 1895) remains at Dearborn and Polk streets. Today, it survives as a community center with shops, offices, and common areas. During its vital heyday, during and after World War II, the Santa Fe Super Chief, The Chief, or the El Capitan arrived or departed daily from Dearborn Station.

The sleek, stainless steel Super Chief attracted the likes of Jimmy Stewart, Spencer Tracy, Kathryn Hepburn, Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone, Edgar and Francis Bergen, Eddie and Ida Cantor, and James Cagney, in addition to numerous authors and politicians — and of course, passengers of all other stripes.

The Super Chief was Santa Fe's prestige train, which allegedly could travel from Chicago to Los Angeles in

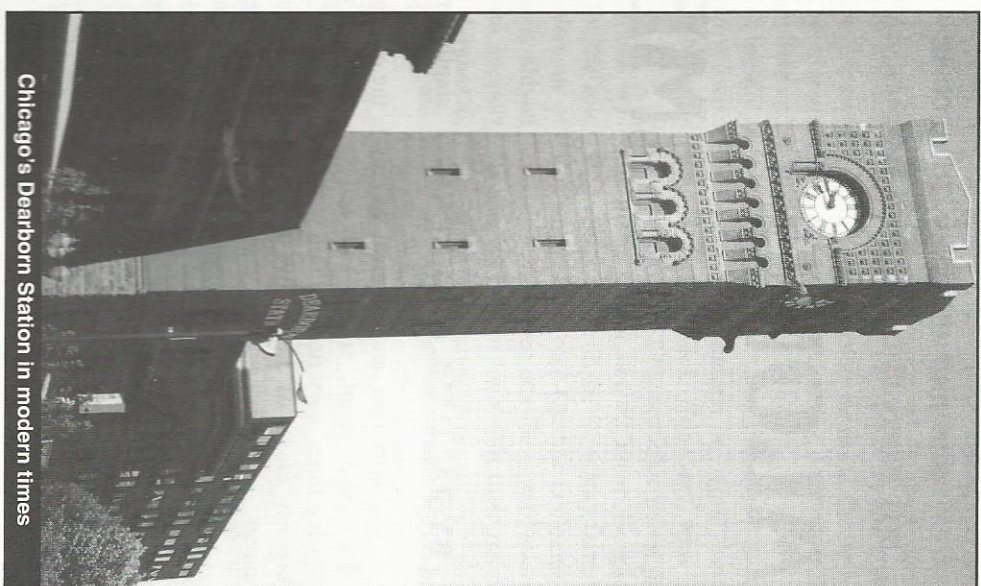


PHOTO BY GARDNER RISSACK

39-1/2 hours. The most affordable of the three streamliners, El Capitan afforded its riders a slightly more leisurely three-day, two-night trip (that is, 42-45 hours) from Chicago to Los Angeles' Union Station.

A list of the rail lines that arrived in and departed from Chicago is more than a lesson in geography; it is, more importantly, a story of democracy, as people of all classes met and mingled at Chicago's railroad stations.

“Now leaving on Track 9 .... ALL ABOARD!”



SHE HAD PLANNED TO BECOME A VETERINARIAN—  
BUT WHEN RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN NEEDED A SINGER...

# ALONG CAME JONES

BY RANDALL G. MIELKE

As surprising and magical as any Hollywood script, singer and actress Shirley Jones' very first audition was the biggest move of her show business career.

In the early 1950s, Jones recalls, "I was 18 years old and I was on my way to college. But I knew I could sing. I had been singing since I was 6 years old."

Although she was already enrolled in college with hopes of becoming a veterinarian, she was encouraged by a friend to audition for replacement chorus roles in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific*, then on Broadway.

"I had a pianist friend from Pittsburgh, close to where I grew up, and he encouraged me to attend these open auditions that Rodgers and Hammerstein were holding in New York," Jones, now 77, recalls. "They had three shows running on Broadway and they had to cor-

*Randall Mielke is an author and freelance writer from Warrenville, Illinois.*

stantly replace chorus people."

So Jones auditioned and impressed the casting director so much that he said, "Wait, I want Richard Rodgers to hear you."

"This was my first audition of any kind," she notes with a trace of astonishment in her voice. "Fifteen minutes later, Richard Rodgers came and I sang for him. I did not know who he was, so I asked his name. He said, 'I'm Richard Rodgers. I wrote the music.'"

Rodgers heard Jones sing and then he said, "Miss Jones, please wait 20 minutes. I want to call my partner to come down to hear you."

Oscar Hammerstein arrived, carrying the score of *Oklahoma!*, the song-writing duo's famous musical about a couple of young cowboys who win the hearts of their sweethearts in the Oklahoma territory at the turn of the century. "He was rehearsing a symphony orchestra across the street, so they asked me to sing with the orchestra," Jones says. "He handed me the score... and I sang 'People Will Say We're in Love' and another song from the show. Three weeks later I was in the chorus of *South*

*Pacific* on Broadway as a nurse."

It was about this time that Jones was put under a "personal management" contract and given a small role in another Rodgers and Hammerstein show. *Me and Juliet* was a story about a love triangle among two backstage crew members and one of the chorus girls. "I was the only one to ever have a personal contract with Rodgers and Hammerstein," she says today.

Less than a year later, Jones was screen-testing in Hollywood for the role of Laurey in the 1955 film version of *Oklahoma!* In the movie, Jones played opposite Gordon MacRae, with support from Gene Nelson, Gloria Grahame, Charlotte Greenwood and Rod Steiger. When the film version was completed, Jones recalls that "Rodgers and Hammerstein sent me to Europe to do the role on stage."

Many films followed, including 1956's *Carousel*, another adaptation of a Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway

musical. In the film version, carnival barker Billy Bigelow (Gordon MacRae) asks for permission to be sent down "from above" for one day to try and make amends for mistakes he made during his life. Jones played Julie Jordan, Billy Bigelow's wife.

The next year, Jones appeared as Pat Boone's love interest in *April Love*. Boone plays Nick Conover, who is forced to leave Chicago after being put on probation for stealing a car. He goes to live and work on the Kentucky farm of his uncle Jed Bruce (Arthur O'Connell) and his aunt Henrietta (Jeanette Nolan), where he falls in love with their neighbor, played by Jones.

In 1962, Jones scored one of her biggest hits when she appeared opposite Robert Preston in the 1962 film version of *The Music Man*. Based on Meredith Willson's 1957 Broadway hit, the story involves a con man (Preston) who comes to a small Iowa town with a scam involving taking the people's money to start a



Shirley Jones and Gordon MacRae in *Oklahoma!*



boy's marching band program while setting his sights on winning over the local librarian, Marian Paroo (Jones). Buddy Hackett and Ronny Howard were also in the cast.

In 1963, Jones played Elizabeth Marten in *The Courtship of Eddie's Father*. In the film, widower Tom Corbett (Glenn Ford) needs to adjust to a new bachelor life with his young son Eddie (Ronny Howard). Several women come in and out of Tom's life, but Eddie is partial to their next-door neighbor Elizabeth.

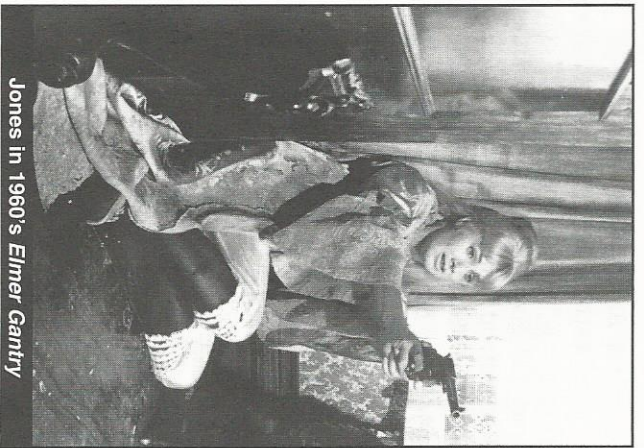
Still, for all of Jones' success in musicals and romantic comedies, she stresses that it was her willingness to try different roles that enabled her to sustain a successful show business career.

"The musicals I did early in my career were incredible," Jones admits, "but if I did not make the transition to drama, I would not have had the longevity in my career."

One of her first dramatic roles was as an alcoholic on a 1956 *Playhouse 90* program, "The Big Slide." As she recalls, "That is when Burt Lancaster saw me and cast me in *Elmer Gantry*." In the 1960 film, based on the novel by Sinclair Lewis, featured Lancaster as the titular traveling salesman who uses his wit and knowledge of the Bible to become a part of a religious road show led by Sister Sharon Falconer (Jean Simmons). Jones won an Best Supporting Actress Academy Award for her performance as Lulu Bains, a woman from Gantry's past who re-emerges as a prostitute.

"[*Elmer Gantry*] probably is the highlight of my career," Jones says, "Even though I did 20 or so more motion pictures after that."

In addition to her many films, Jones has performed extensively on Broadway



Jones in 1960's *Elmer Gantry*

in such productions as *Maggie Flynn* and *42nd Street*. More recently, she has taken speaking engagements, performed in symphonic concerts and appeared as a guest star on many television shows.

In 1970, Jones moved to television and was introduced to another generation of fans when she starred in *The Partridge Family*, a musical show about a widowed mother and her five children (one of whom was played by Jones' real-life stepson, David Cassidy), who form a group and embark on a career in music. The show ran on ABC for five seasons and made Cassidy into a bona fide pop star. Some 35 years after leaving the air, the show lives on in what appear to be perpetual reruns.

"My agent warned me that if the show was a hit, then that would be the role that I would forever be remembered for," Jones notes, "and he was right. I'm still known as Mrs. Partridge." ■



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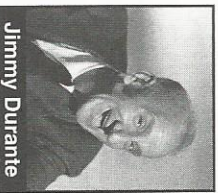
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**JANUARY 2012**

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 7

**JIMMY DURANTE SHOW** (1-28-48) It's Jimmy's first show after four weeks off the air, with Peggy Lee, Candy Candido, announcer Howard Petrie, Roy Bargy and the orchestra, and guest Victor Moore. Jimmy and Victor plan to produce their own pictures; Peggy sings "I Can't Give You Anything But Love." Rexall, NBC. (30 min)



Jimmy Durante

**LIGHTS OUT** (8-24-43) "Sub-Basement," written and directed by Arch Oboler. A man and his wife make an astonishing discovery in the sub-basement of the large department store where he works. Cast includes Joseph Kearns. Ironized Yeast, CBS. (29 min)

**ACADEMY AWARD** (10-9-46) "It Happened Tomorrow" starring Eddie Bracken and Ann Blyth in a radio version of the 1944 film, about a reporter who finds he is able to get a copy of tomorrow's newspaper today! Squibb, CBS. (30 min)

**GUNSMOKE** (9-19-53) "There Never Was a Horse" starring William Conrad as Marshal Matt Dillon, with Parley Baer as Chester, Howard McNear as Doc, Georgia Ellis as Kitty. A gunman with a reputation for being fast comes into Dodge City. Sustaining. CBS. (28 min)

**SPOTLIGHT REVUE** (11-14-47) Spike Jones

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and the City Slickers star, with Dorothy Shay, Doodles Weaver, and guest Francis Craig, author of the hit song "Near You." Professor Feederbaum (Weaver) performs "The Man on the Flying Trapeze." Coca-Cola, CBS. (28 min)

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 14 WE REMEMBER NORMAN CORWIN - PART 1

*Norman Corwin died on October 18, 2011 at the age of 101. Read the article about Mr. Corwin on page 1.*

**SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS** (12-7-41) "Between Americans" is "a dramatic picture of this, our America" written by Norman Corwin and narrated by Orson Welles. Roger Pryor hosts. Gulf Oil, CBS. (28 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO** (8-6-76) Chuck Schaden's conversation with Norman Corwin, who talks about his career in radio. Recorded at Mr. Corwin's home in Westwood, California. (37 min)

**COLUMBIA WORKSHOP** (8-3-41) "Descent of the Gods" is program number 13 of the series-within-a-series "26 By Corwin." Henry Morgan (as Nick, the God of Trivia) narrates this "speculative fantasy" in which Venus, Mars and Apollo come to earth. Written and directed by Norman Corwin. Cast includes Eileen Burns as Venus, Winfield Honey as Mars, House Jameson as Apollo. Sustaining. CBS. (29 min)

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 21 WE REMEMBER NORMAN CORWIN - PART 2

**FOURTEEN AUGUST** (8-14-45) A message for the day of victory marking the end of World War II, written, produced and edited by Norman Corwin and spoken by Orson Welles. CBS. (16 min)

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 26 WE REMEMBER NORMAN CORWIN - PART 3

**SEEMS RADIO IS HERE TO STAY** (11-5-45) An "animated essay" written, produced and directed by Norman Corwin, to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of radio broadcasting in America. A look at radio's importance around the world during its first quarter-century, narrated by House Jameson. CBS. (28 min)

**AN AMERICAN IN ENGLAND** (12-1-42) "Cromer" is the first in this series of four programs written and directed by Norman Corwin, "an extension of the transatlantic series originally short-waved by CBS from London." Joseph Julian narrates the story of a small town on the east coast of England. Sustaining. CBS. (29 min)

**SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS** (2-4-46) "My Client Curley" starring Robert Montgomery and Ted Donaldson in a radio version of the Lucille Fletcher story about a dancing caterpillar who achieves fame and fortune. Written for radio by Norman Corwin. Lady Esther Products, CBS. (29 min)

**COLUMBIA PRESENTS CORWIN** (8-7-45) "Savage Encounter" starring Glenn Ford in the sixth show of the series, written, produced and directed by Norman Corwin. A pilot becomes stranded on an island where war is unknown. Cast includes Elliott Lewis. Sustaining. CBS. (29 min) *Read the article about Glenn Ford on page 42.*

**ON A NOTE OF TRIUMPH** (5-8-45) A special

program in celebration of the end of the war in Europe, written and directed by Norman Corwin and narrated by Martin Gabel. CBS. (59 min)

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 28 RADIO FROM THE CLASS OF 1912

**CAVALCADE OF AMERICA** (2-10-47) "The Voice of the Wizard" starring **Dane Clark** and Donna Reed in a story about the early career of inventor Thomas Edison. Cast includes Alan Hewett, Robert Dryden, Chester Straton. DuPont, NBC. (28 min)

**SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS** (12-18-44) "The Age of Innocence" stars Merle Oberon and **John Payne** in a radio version of the story by Edith Wharton, about a 19th-century divorcee who returns home to New York and falls in love with an attorney. Lady Esther, CBS. (30 min)



John Payne

**EVERYTHING FOR THE BOYS** (3-21-44) "A Girl on the Road" starring Ronald Colman and **Martha Scott**. A motorist picks up a young hitch-hiker whose family has been affected by the war. The show includes a shortwave conversation with two Canadian soldiers stationed in Naples. Auto-Lite, CBS. (30 min)

**GREAT SCENES FROM GREAT PLAYS** (1-21-48) "Icebound" starring **Cornel Wilde** in a radio version of Owen Davis' Pulitzer Prize-winning play. A fugitive son returns home after the death of his mother and learns that her property has been left to a distant cousin. Walter Hampden hosts. National Council of Protestant Episcopal Churches. Syndicated. (29 min)

**SUSPENSE** (6-12-47) "Stand-In" starring **June Havoc**, with Elliott Lewis, Cathy Lewis, Hans Conried. The "stand-in" for a Hollywood star falls in love with the star's husband. Roma Wines, CBS. (26 min)

**OUR SPECIAL GUEST** will be film historian **BOB KOLOSOSKI**, who will talk about the film careers of Dane Clark, John Payne, Martha Scott, Cornel Wilde and June Havoc, all of whom were born in 1912.





# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

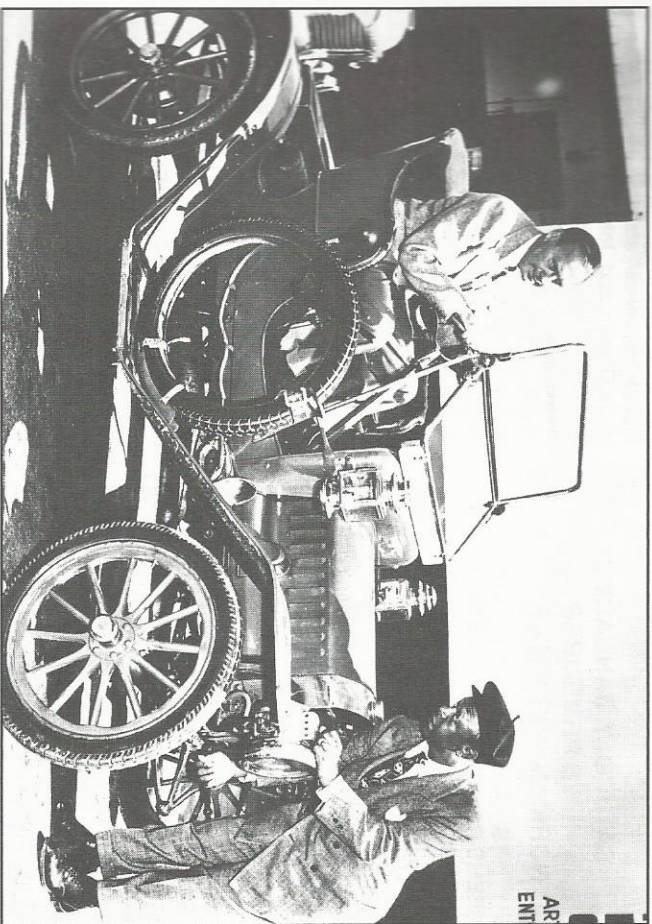
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FEBRUARY 2012

## February Is Jack Benny Month!



### Celebrating the 80th Anniversary of The Jack Benny Program!

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4

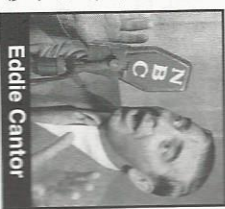
**SPEAKING OF RADIO: The Jack Benny Program** (2-5-94) The first program in Chuck Schaden's 12-part audio documentary, with recollections from Jack Benny and Sheldon Leonard. Excerpts include Jack's first show for Canada Dry (5-2-32); Jell-O Program (1-31-37); Grape Nuts Program (10-11-42);

Lucky Strike Program (9-26-46); Jack introduces Sheldon Leonard (5-29-49); the Tout at the race track (1-23-54); the Tout at the fruit stand (4-3-49); the Tout in the department store (12-13-53). (29 min)  
**SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS** (1-8-39) The first show of the series, with host George Murphy and guests Judy Garland, Reginald Gardner, Jack Benny, and Joan Crawford. Reginald

delivers a monologue about trains; Judy sings an operatic version of "Thanks for the Memories;" Jack and Joan talk about Jack's sex appeal. Gulf Oil, CBS. (30 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: The Jack Benny Program** (2-12-94) Second program in this 12-part audio documentary, with recollections from writers George Balzer and Milt Josesberg. Excerpts include Jack introducing his writers (5-29-49); the cast at rehearsals (3-24-46); Your Money or Your Life (3-28-48); Dorothy Kirsten and Mary's biggest laugh (4-25-48); Gertrude and Mabel (11-14-48); Jack introduces the switchboard operators (5-29-49). (26 min)

**EDDIE CANTOR SHOW** (1-30-47) Eddie celebrates his birthday with guests Jack Benny, Peter Lind Hayes, and Ralph Edwards. Eddie wants to borrow money from Jack to start a new radio network. With Harry von Zell, Margaret Ribbon, NBC. (29 min)



Eddie Cantor

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: The Jack Benny Program** (2-19-94) Third program of this 12-part audio documentary, with recollections from Don Wilson and Dennis Day. Excerpts: George Jessel narrates Jack Benny's life story (11-4-51); Don Wilson's 16th anniversary in radio (3-12-39); Don's contract (1-23-49); Benny on sight-seeing bus (9-11-49); Jack introduces Dennis Day (5-29-49); Dennis brings his mother (10-6-46); Dennis as Titus Moody (3-17-46); as Ronald Colman (11-9-47); as Hitler and Tojo (1-2-44); sound effects man (2-1-42). (39 min)

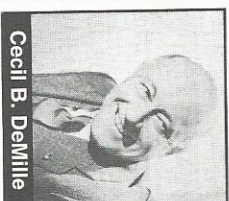
#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

**BURNS AND ALLEN SHOW** (11-9-43) George and Gracie star, with announcer Bill Goodwin, singer Jimmy Cash, Felix Mills and the Orchestra, and guest Jack Benny. When Gracie spies Jack at a beauty parlor, she blackmails him into letting George sing on his show. Swan Soap, CBS. (29 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: The Jack Benny Program** (2-26-94) The fourth program in this 12-part audio documentary features recollections by Frank Nelson, Veola Vorn, Don Wilson, George Balzer and Mel Blanc. Excerpts: Jack introduces Frank Nelson (5-

29-49); Footwalker (12-14-41); Dr. Nelson, Dentist (1-23-49); Shooting of Dan McGrew (3-27-55); "Dreer Poosen" flub (1-8-50); Jack introduces Mel Blanc (5-29-49); the Maxwell; Carmichael the Bear (3-12-39); shopping for a Christmas gift for Don (12-21-47). (36 min)

**LUX RADIO THEATER** (2-15-37) "Brewster's Millions" starring Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone. A young man must spend a million dollars within a year to inherit six million! Cecil B. DeMille is host, with Frank Nelson, Crawford Kent, Fred Harrington, Margaret Brayton, Helena Grant, Hal K. Dawson, Lionel Belmont, Ross Forrester. Lux Soap, CBS. (23 min & 17 min & 18 min)



Cecil B. DeMille

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: The Jack Benny Program** (5-7-94) Program five features recollections from writers George Balzer and Milt Josesberg. Excerpts: Jack introduces Arlie Auerbach (5-29-49); Mr. Kitzel, Movie Extra (10-26-47); Jack's echo, Part 1 (10-3-48); Jack's echo, Part 2 (10-10-48); Jack's echo, Part 3 (10-24-48); King Solomon's Mines (1-7-51). (33 min)

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

**COMMAND PERFORMANCE** (6-17-44) Jack Benny is master of ceremonies, with guests Bing Crosby, Georgia Gibbs, Harpo Marx, Gary Cooper, Ann Miller, announcer Ken Carpenter. Harpo plays "My Blue Heaven" and enlists Gary Cooper to speak on his behalf. AFRS. (29 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: The Jack Benny Program** (7-30-94) The sixth program in this 12-part audio documentary series features recollections by Jack Benny. Excerpts: Jack's life story in music (5-11-41); Fred Allen's tribute to Benny (5-11-41); Benny-Allen feud (6-27-48); Allen and Benny in vaudeville (4-26-53). (31 min)  
**FRED ALLEN SHOW** (6-27-48) With Portland Hotta, Minerva Pious, Kenny Delmar, Parker Fennelley, Peter Donald, the DeMarco Sisters, and guest Jack Benny. As Jack prepares to leave for Europe, Fred accompanies him to the dock. The Allen's Alley question is "Where do you plan to take your summer vacation?" Ford Motors, NBC. (29 min) ➔





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### FEBRUARY - MARCH 2012

#### SPEAKING OF RADIO: *The Jack Benny*

*Program* (9-24-94) The seventh program in this 12-part audio documentary, with recollections from writers George Balzer and Mill Joselberg, Jack Benny and Joan Benny. Excerpts: Mary reads a letter from Mama; Jack and Mary recall the early days of his show (5-9-41); Mary's letter from Mama (3-12-39); Jack takes inventory (10-2-49); Jack's memory loss (10-9-49). (33 min)

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announces. Auto-Lite, CBS. (29 min)

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

#### SPEAKING OF RADIO: *The Jack Benny*

*Program* (10-1-94) Program eight offers recollections by writer George Balzer. Excerpts: How Jack met Rochester (5-31-42); Rochester at sea (2-17-46); Railroad station for Colorado trip (1-11-48); Railroad station in Pasadena (1-29-50). (28 min)

**BLUE RIBBON TOWN** (2-26-44) Groucho Marx stars, with Leo Gorcey, Faye McKenzie, Bill Day, announcer Ken Niles, and guest Jack Benny, who comes to Blue Ribbon Town to get a break from radio. Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer, CBS. (30 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: *The Jack Benny***

*Program* (10-15-94) Program nine features recollections by Jack's manager Irving Fein, Jack Benny and writer George Balzer. Excerpts: Drug Store lunch (4-9-50); Professor LeBlanc (5-19-49); George Burns sings Jack's song (1-20-52); CBS closed circuit broadcast (12-23-48); CBS Benny promotional announcements (1948-49); First Benny show on CBS (1-2-49). (37 min)

**HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE** (11-18-48) "My Financial Career" stars Jack Benny in a radio adaptation of the story by Stephen Leacock. Jack plays a man who is afraid of banks!

James Hilton hosts, with Jack Kirkwood, Joseph Kearns, Ken Christy, announcer Frank Goss. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (30 min)

#### SPEAKING OF RADIO: *The Jack Benny*

*Program* (11-19-94) The tenth program in this 12-part audio documentary features recollections from Don Wilson and writer George Balzer. Excerpts include "The Don Wilson Story" (1-10-54); Don introduces the Sportsmen to Jack (10-6-46); Don's 30th anniversary in radio (1-10-54); Jack's vault

and secrecy pledge (12-30-45); Jack introduces Joe Kearns (5-29-49); Jack's vault and "Virus X" (1-11-48). (33 min)

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 3

#### THE BIG STORY (7-20-49) "Death and Hate Can Be Partners" is the story of Tom Mercer, reporter for the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, who investigates the murder of a man whom everyone hated. Bob Sloane narrates, with Jackson Beck as Mercer. AFRS rebroadcast. (26 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: *The Jack Benny***

*Program* (11-26-94) Program 11 in the 12-part series includes recollections from Phil Harris, Dennis Day and Elliott Lewis. Excerpts include Phil's first appearance with Jack (10-4-36); Benny show rehearsal (11-7-48); Too many mistakes (11-13-49); "How Are Things in Glocca Morra?" (5-4-47); Phil and Frankie Remley (6-6-48); "That's What I Like About the South" (11-30-47). (38 min)

**MURDER AT MIDNIGHT** (6-15-46) "The Dead Hand" is a tale of murder and retribution. When a concert pianist loses a hand in an accident, he hires a pickpocket to obtain a replacement. Syndicated. (25 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO: *The Jack Benny***

*Program* (1-14-95) The conclusion of the 12-part series features recollections from Don Wilson, writer George Balzer, Dennis Day, Jack Benny and Joan Benny. Excerpts: Jack introduces the Sportsmen (5-29-49); Sportsmen sing "Old Jack Benny Had a Farm" (3-23-47); Jack plays violin with the Sportsmen (11-23-47); the replacement quartet of Bing Crosby, Andy Russell, Dick Haymes, Dennis Day (3-16-47); "Sl, Sy" routines; Cimmaron Rolls sequence (1953) Birthday surprise for Jack (2-15-42); Radio honors (1-31-37). (36 min)

**RICHARD DIAMOND, PRIVATE DETECTIVE** (3-5-50) Dick Powell stars as Richard Diamond, who is hired to investigate when an actress receives a snake as a present. With Ed Begley, Joan Banks, Jack Kruschen, Charles Seel. Sustaining, NBC. (29 min)

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 10

**BOB HOPE SHOW** (10-16-53) Broadcasting from Hollywood, with announcer Bill Goodwin, singer Margaret Whiting, Les Brown and his Band of Renown, and guest

Anne Baxter. Bob jokes about celebrity ranches and wants Anne to star in the new movie he is going to produce. Margaret sings "I'm Walking Behind You." AFRS rebroadcast. (24 min)

**CBS RADIO WORKSHOP** (1-27-56 and 2-3-56) "Brave New World" is the first show of the series, a two-part radio adaptation of the famous story by Aldous Huxley about a mechanized society in which people are produced assembly-line style. Introduced by Mr. Huxley, with Joseph Kearns, William Conrad, Herb Butterfield, Bill Idelson, Gloria Henry, Charlotte Lawrence, Parley Baer, Doris Singleton, Jack Kruschen, Lurene Tuttle, Vic Perrin, Sam Edwards. Sustaining, CBS. (29 min and 29 min)

**YOUR HIT PARADE** (8-4-45) The top tunes of the week, as performed by Joan Edwards, Dick Todd, the Hit Paraders, and Mark Warnow and the Orchestra. AFRS rebroadcast. (28 min)

**GREEN HORNET** (7-6-39) "Disaster Rides the Falls" stars Al Hodge as Britt Reid, a.k.a. the Green Hornet, with Raymond Toyo as Kato. The Hornet investigates a gambling racket taking place on a train. Syndicated, NBC BLUE. (29 min)

**LUM AND ABNER** (2-20-49) Chester Lauck and Norris Goff star, with Clarence Hartzell as Ben Withers, announcer Wendell Niles, Felix Mills and his Orchestra. Lum tries to borrow funds so that he might travel to his Lodge convention in Kansas. Cast includes Willard Waterman. Frigidaire, CBS. (27 min)

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 17

#### ST. PATRICK'S DAY

**HOAGY CARMICHAEL SHOW** (1940s) A portion of a St. Patrick's Day show, as 11-year-old John Gay sings "Danny Boy" and John Ryan performs his version of "McNamara's Band." Hoagy sings Duke Ellington's "Mood Indigo." Music by the Teenagers. NuMade Mayonnaise, NBC. (22 min)

**HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL** (4-24-60) "Irish Luck" stars John Dehner as Paladin, with Virginia Gregg as Miss Wong. On St. Patrick's Day, Paladin saves an Irishman who has been thrown from his horse, but is confused when the man is accused of murder. With Ben Wright, Harry Bartell, Jeanne Bates, Jack Moyley. AFRS rebroadcast. (25 min) ➔





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with host **STEVE DARNALL**

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**MARCH 2012**

**ROYAL GELATIN HOUR** (1-14-37) Rudy Vallee stars in a show laden with Irish guests: Pat O'Brien, Walter O'Keefe, Sheila Barrett, and Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. O'Brien and Sylvia Fields perform an original scene by Arch Oboler set in Ireland, "Escape." Later, O'Keefe delivers a monologue. Royal Gelatin, NBC. (28 min & 26 min)

**A DAY IN THE LIFE OF DENNIS DAY** (10-2-48) Dennis Day in his own show, with Barbara Eller as Mildred, Bea Benaderet and Dink Trout as Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, announce Vern Smith. To accommodate his girlfriend's mother, Dennis agrees to babysit a neighborhood brat. Colgate-Palmolive, NBC. (30 min)

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**HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE** (3-17-49) "Our Own Kind" starring Barry Fitzgerald, with Gilbert Barnett, Dick Ryan. The story of an old Irishman who cannot read and his adopted grandson, James Hilton hosts. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (28 min)

## SATURDAY, MARCH 24

**TOM MIX RALSTON STRAIGHTSHOOTERS** (6-21-44) "Mystery of the Vanishing Herd" stars Curley Bradley as Tom in an isolated episode of the series. Thousands of cattle have been killed and the air base has been marked for destruction by a villain known as "The Iron Mask." Ralston, MBS. (14 min) Read the article about Tom Mix and Ralston on page 18.

**PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW** (6-5-49) Phil is nervous when he learns his tonsils must come out. With Elliott Lewis, Walter Tetley, Robert North, Jeanine Roos, Anne Whitfield. Rexall, NBC. (29 min)

**I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE FBI** (9-10-52) "Violence Preferred" stars Dana Andrews as Matt Cvetic, undercover agent for the FBI. Cvetic tries to get incriminating Party records to the FBI before they are destroyed. Cast includes Parley Baer, Olan Soule. Syndicated. (27 min)

**VIC AND SADE** (1941) Art Van Harvey is Vic, Bernadine Flynn is Sade, Bill Idelson is Rush. Sade receives a letter promoting a book written for wives of the Sky Brothers of the Sacred Stars of the Milky Way. Crisco, NBC. (12 min)

**RADIO CITY PLAYHOUSE** (1-17-49) "Portrait of Lenore" starring Bernard Grant and Jan Miner. After seeing the film *Laura*, a writer falls in love with the painting of a beautiful woman. Sustaining, NBC. (28 min)

G.I. JOURNAL (recorded 12-15-44) Orson

Welles is editor-in-chief, with Faye Mackenzie, Victor Moore, Ziggy Elman, Connie Haines, the Pied Pipers. Victor is offering a personality course and Orson presents a soap opera parody. AFRRS. (30 min)

**MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY** (5-26-48) "Case of the Deadly Snowflake" stars Jay Jostyn, with Len Doyle as Harrington and Vicki Viola as Miss Miller. A blind safecracker is involved in a warehouse caper that leads to the death of a night watchman. Ipana, Sal Hepatica, NBC. (29 min)

## SATURDAY, MARCH 31

### A DAY WITH BOB AND RAY

**BOB AND RAY** (1950s) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding present a book review by television critic Crawford Patsley, plus a tale of "Anxiously" and Ella Fitzgerald's recording of "Let's Do It." AFRRS rebroadcast. (15 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO** (5-14-11) Part one of Steve Darnall's conversation with Bob Elliott, as he discusses his partnership with Ray Goulding and their work on radio and television. Recorded at Mr. Elliott's home in Maine. (30 min) Read an excerpt from this conversa-

tion on page 2.

**MATINEE WITH BOB AND RAY** (12-9-49) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding from early in their careers, with organist Ken Wilson and pianist Bill Green. The duo present a detective show, "Lawrence McGaffigan, Cop" and spoof children's shows with "Rancid, The Magician." Participating sponsors, WHDH. (30 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO** (5-14-11) Part two of Steve Darnall's conversation with Bob Elliott. (36 min)

**BOB AND RAY** (7-27-59) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding present the CBS Radio Network. Plans for the Bob and Ray Company Picnic are discussed. Webley Webster moderates a panel discussion; Wally Ballou interviews a visitor to New York City. Sustaining, CBS. (15 min)

**BILLION DOLLAR SHOW** (8-28-52) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding host this special program in honor of the 30th anniversary of commercial radio, with plenty of sound clips from famous performers and legendary commercials, and appearances by Fred Allen and Nick Kenny. Sustaining (really!), NBC. (30 min)

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## SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**PHILCO RADIO TIME** (1-1-47) Bing Crosby rings in the New Year with guest Joe Frisco, along with Peggy Lee, Skitch Henderson, The Charlovers, Philco, ABC.

**THE SHADOW** (1-1-39) "The Man Who Murdered Time" stars Bill Johnstone as Lamont Cranston. A madman's invention causes the world to relive New Year's Eve over and over. Blue Coal, MBS.

**PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW** (1-1-50) On New Year's Day, Phil is recovering from the Musicians Union's New Year's Eve party. Rexall, NBC.

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

**MAN CALLED X** (3-10-51) Herbert Marshall stars as Ken Thurston. An investigation of illegal aliens begins at the Flying Mustang Dude Ranch. Participating sponsors, NBC.

**OUR MISS BROOKS** (1-9-49) Eve Arden stars as Connie Brooks, who returns from Christmas break and tries to convince Mr. Conklin (Gale Gordon) to heat the school. Colgate-Palmolive, CBS.

**INNER SANCTUM** (5-21-46) "Detour to Terror" starring Mason Adams and Mercedes McCambridge. A man and his twin sister are lured from a country road to a strange house. Lipton Tea and Soup, CBS.

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 15

**LUX RADIO THEATER** (6-28-37) "The Front Page" starring Walter Winchell, Josephine Hutchinson and James Gleason in Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's classic Chicago-based newspaper story, Lux Soap, CBS.

**CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON** (2-28-49) "River Pirates" stars Paul Sutton as Sgt. Preston, who helps a former riverboat captain

to become a lighthouse keeper. Quaker Puffed Wheat and Rice, ABC.

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 22

**MAIL CALL** (10-5-44) A salute to North Carolina, with master of ceremonies Kay Kyser, Kathryn Grayson, Georgia Gibbs, Jack Haley, Ish Kabibble, The King Sisters, announcer Don Wilson, AFRRS.

**DRAGNET** (1-25-51) Jack Webb stars as Sgt. Joe Friday, with Barton Yarborough as Sgt. Ben Romero, on the trail of a high school senior selling marijuana to other students. Fatima Cigarettes, NBC.

**HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE** (6-2-49) "Like It Here" starring Paul Lukas in a comedy by A.B. Schifferin. A "foreigner" working as a domestic servant has problems being accepted by the woman of the house. Hallmark Cards, CBS.

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

**SPACE PATROL** (11-8-52) "The City of the Sun" stars Ed Kemmer as Cmdr. Buzz Corry and Lyn Osborn as Cadet Happy. A huge mobile atomic drilling machine runs amok on the planet Mercury. Ralston Cereals, ABC.

**FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY** (4-13-43) Jim and Marian Jordan star. Fibber's Uncle Sycamore is going to be featured on a radio program. Johnson's Wax, NBC.

**BROADWAY IS MY BEAT** (2-3-50) Larry Thor is Detective Danny Clover, who investigates the stabbing of a hospitalized war veteran. Sustaining, CBS.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

**MILTON BERLE SHOW** (1-6-48) It's Uncle Miltie before television, offering a "Salute to Winter Sports." Philip Morris Cigarettes, NBC.

**CRIME CLASSICS** (12-2-53) "If a Body Need a Body, Just Call Burke and Here." Thomas

Hyland (Lou Merrill) tells the story of the men who provided cadavers for medical students. Sustaining, CBS.

**ADVENTURES OF MAISIE** (9-28-50) Ann Southern stars as Maisie Revere, whose plans to go to a nightclub with her boyfriend are jeopardized by an old school chum. Syndicated.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

**MERCURY THEATER ON THE AIR** (8-15-38) "Abraham Lincoln" stars Orson Welles as Lincoln, in a play taken from Lincoln's letters, speeches, and conversations. Sustaining, CBS.

**KRAFT MUSIC HALL** (2-26-48) Al Jolson stars, with Oscar Levant, Lou Brink and the Orchestra, and guest David Niven, who talks to Al about making a picture in England. Kraft, NBC.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

**SUSPENSE** (2-10-57) "Murder and Aunt Delia" starring Glenn Ford. A hitch-hiker plots a murder when he is picked up by a man with only one living relative. AFRRS rebroadcast. *Read the article about Glenn Ford on page 42.*

**TEXACO STAR THEATER** (5-24-42) Fred Allen stars, with Portland Hoffa, Kenny Baker, Al Goodman and the Orchestra, and guest Jack Haley, who tells Fred that vaudeville is back! Texaco, CBS.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

**YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR** (8-24-56 thru 8-31-56) "The Cranesburg Matter" stars Bob Bailey in a six-part adventure of the man with the action-packed expense account. A jewel thief claims to have a missing necklace worth \$20,000. Sustaining, CBS.

## SUNDAY, MARCH 4

**INFORMATION PLEASE** (4-18-39) It's "time to stump the experts" as guest H.V. Kaltenborn joins moderator Clifton Fadiman and regulars John Kieran, Franklin P. Adams, and Oscar Levant. Canada Dry, NBC.

**READERS' DIGEST RADIO EDITION** (3-18-48) "One Way to Broadway" starring James Stewart with Mercedes McCambridge. A struggling playwright in New York City plans to write a play based on his own experiences. Hallmark Cards, CBS.

**LIFE OF RILEY** (3-24-50) William Bendix stars as Riley, who tries to find a husband for his unmarried sister. Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer, NBC.

## SUNDAY, MARCH 11

**ESCAPE** (3-10-50) "Port Royale" starring Charles McGraw, with John Dehner, William Conrad. A salvage ship goes after one million dollars' worth of sunken treasures. Sustaining, CBS.

**ALDRICH FAMILY** (10-28-48) Ezra Stone is Henry Aldrich, who is trying to avoid getting an after-school detention period. With Jackie Kerk as Homer. Jell-O, NBC.

**NICK CARTER, MASTER DETECTIVE** (1-21-45) "Death By Ricochet" stars Lon Clark as Nick Carter, who investigates what appears to be the accidental shooting of a wealthy man. Lin-X, MBS.

## SUNDAY, MARCH 18

**DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA** (3-18-37) From the Cotton Club in New York City, with vocalist Iva Anderson and announcer Roger Lyons. Sustaining, NBC.

**MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER** (1-30-44) "The House of Death" with Maurice Tarplin as the Mysterious Traveler. Two elderly sisters fear their niece and nephew are trying to kill them. Sustaining, MBS.

**FATHER KNOWS BEST** (5-7-53) Robert Young stars as Jim Anderson, who is fed up with "modern living" and wants a return to the "good old days" of his boyhood. Postum, Post Cereals, NBC.

## SUNDAY, MARCH 25

**GREEN HORNET** (8-16-41) "Paroles for Sale" stars Al Hodge as the Hornet, with Raymond Toyo as Kato. The Hornet investigates a politician who uses the parole board for his own purposes. Sustaining, NBC BLUE.

**SEALTEST VILLAGE STORE** (5-27-48) Jack Carson stars, with Eve Arden, Dave Willock, Eileen Woods, Frank DeVol and the Orchestra, announcer Hy Averbach. Jack talks about his naval ancestry and organizes a sea cruise. Sealtest/Kraft, NBC.

**GUNSMOKE** (1-8-55) "Robin Hood" stars William Conrad as Marshal Matt Dillon. The stage into Dodge is held up by a gentleman bandit. L & M Cigarettes, CBS.



# FORD. TOUGH.

BY WAYNE KLATT

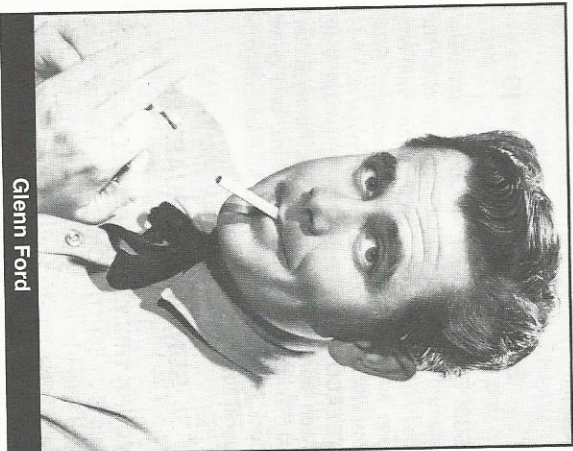
*Time* Magazine once wrote that Glenn Ford always looked like a studio accountant who had blundered onto the movie set.

Cruel? Sure, although there were probably films in his career where the criticism was justified. However, when it comes to his three specialties — Westerns, crime dramas, and light comedy — it's entirely possible that Glenn Ford is one of our most underrated film stars.

Gwyllyn Samuel Newton Ford was born on May 1, 1916, in Quebec Province. (He took his stage name from his father's birthplace, Glenford, Canada.) His Welsh family owned a mill, his father was a Canadian railroad executive and the nephew of John MacDonald, the country's first prime minister. When the boy was eight, the Ford family moved to Santa Monica, California.

Gwyllyn's stern father insisted that he do manual labor as a character-

*Wayne Klatt is a freelance writer from Chicago.*



Glenn Ford

builder. Even when the young man announced his desire to be an actor, his father suggested he "learn something else first...that way, you'll always have something."

The good-looking, introverted teenager enjoyed taking part in plays at Santa Monica High School. When he acted, his thin lips were always pressed together in the same way. When the ends lifted up, he was engaging. When they

turned downward — watch out!

After graduation, Ford went from juvenile parts to playing leads for several theater companies on the West Coast. A 20th Century Fox talent scout arranged for a screen test in 1939, and he appeared opposite Jean Rogers (better known for playing Dale Arden in the *Flash Gordon* serials) in the pleasant romance *Heaven with a Barbed Wire Fence*.

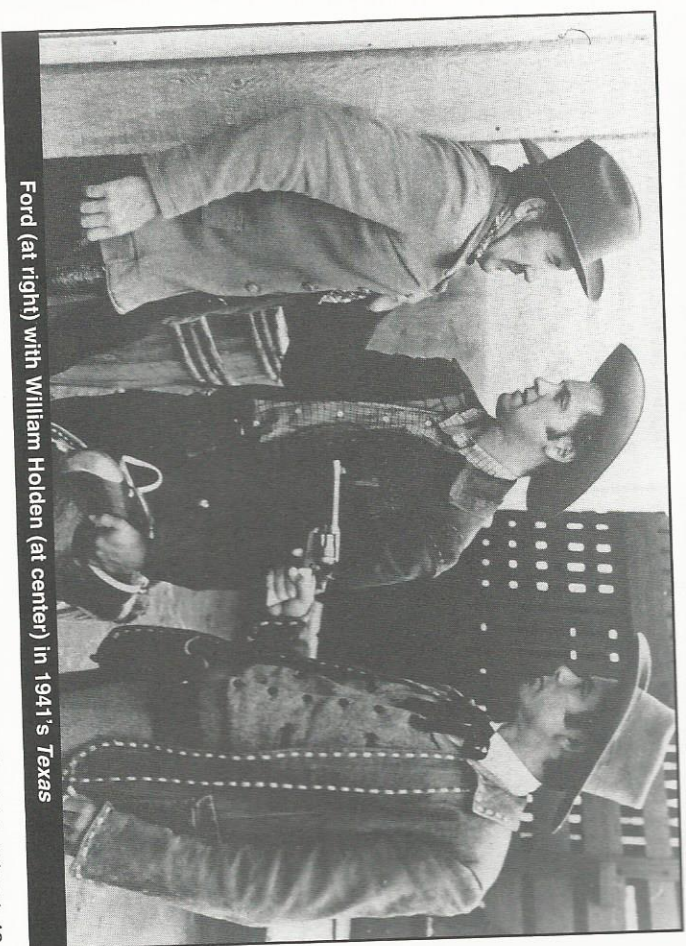
Luckily, Columbia Pictures saw something Fox had overlooked: Here was a man's man, but one with a shy side that might appeal to women. Even so, Ford knew his limitations: "Acting is just being truthful," he would say. "I have to play myself. I'm not an actor who can take on another character, like Laurence Olivier. The worst thing I could do would be to play Shakespeare."

Ford signed a contract with Columbia, which turned out to be equal parts blessing and curse. At Columbia, the possibility of stardom beckoned, but

it didn't disguise the fact that the studio was still considered part of Hollywood's Poverty Row, a minor league franchise compared to the major league studios like M-G-M. That sense of second-class citizenship affected both Ford's life and his career.

One thing Columbia did fairly well was to turn out routine but believable Westerns. Ford's screen personality began to emerge in 1941's *Texas*, when he and William Holden played former friends on opposite sides of the law. In 1943's *The Desperados*, Ford started a horse stampede to free Randolph Scott from jail.

A country boy at heart, Ford amused himself between takes by seeing how fast he could draw a gun. According to studio publicity, Ford eventually could draw in 0.04 seconds. In other words, had Ford engaged in an actual shootout with John Wayne, the odds are that the Duke would've bitten the dust.



Ford (at right) with William Holden (at center) in 1941's *Texas*



By December of 1942, Ford had enlisted in the Marine reserves. In 1943, he married pretty tap dancer Eleanor Powell, a showstopper who had danced on screen with Fred Astaire and Buddy Ebsen. But the “inferiority complex” that Eleanor saw in Glenn troubled their marriage from the start. Ford was a screen nobody while she had recently made \$125,000 per picture at M-G-M. Like Norman Maine in *A Star Is Born*, the acclaim she received in public made him feel a little like “Mr. Powell.” He enjoyed himself a little more as a Marine sergeant in the Navy’s Public Relations Office. (There were reports that Ford assisted in building “safe houses” in France, but subsequent reports have suggested that his wartime activity was limited to working in the U.S.)

When the war ended, Ford decided he didn’t want to be tied down to B-pictures. With his new contract, he agreed to do one movie a year for Columbia and be

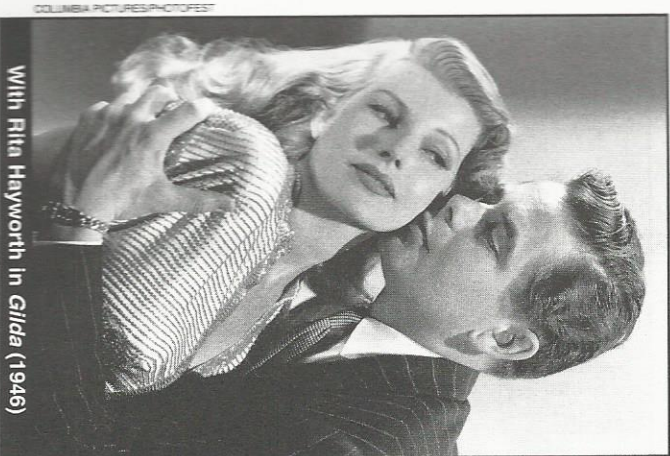
a free agent the rest of the time. Ford’s decision came as a number of stars were setting up their own corporations to avoid skyrocketing post-war taxes. One such star was Bette Davis, who needed a love interest for *A Stolen Life*, her company’s first film for Warner Bros. Davis recommended Ford (believing that he wouldn’t overwhelm her on the screen), but Warner Bros. didn’t want her to team up with a cowboy from Quebec.

According to scriptwriter Catherine Turney, a publicist “literally smuggled Glenn onto the Warners lot”; when studio boss Jack Warner found out, “all hell broke loose.” Ford appeared lost in the film, and he might have felt as though he were destined to appear in nothing but oaters.

Then, fate — in the form of Humphrey Bogart — intervened. The story goes that Columbia had sent Bogart the script for a romance-crime drama, *Gilda*. The male lead, Johnny Ferrill, is a petty gambler who quickly becomes the right-hand-man to the corrupt manager of a Argentine casino owned by ambitious post-war Nazis — a perfect role for the man who had owned Rick’s Cafe American in *Casablanca*.

Then Bogart learned that Rita Hayworth was going to play the title role, the villain’s “show wife” who torments the lead character until he begins to torment her. Bogart reportedly complained that with Hayworth on the screen, nobody would be looking at him. So Bogie gave up what became possibly Glenn Ford’s best movie ever.

*Gilda* gets its power from what is not shown. There are no *Casablanca*-like flashbacks to clarify the former relationship between Gilda and Johnny; the backstory is carried in Ford’s clipped delivery and Hayworth’s sassiness. Even



With Rita Hayworth in *Gilda* (1946)



With Gloria Grahame in *The Big Heat* (1953)

the nature of the triangle isn’t made clear; some shots in Charles Vidor’s direction suggest that Gilda’s evil husband (played by George Macready) seems more interested in Johnny than in his own wife.

That wasn’t the case for filmgoers, who flocked to *Gilda* and made a hit out of “Put the Blame on Mame,” the song Hayworth lip-synched in the film. The movie turned her into an international star and showed that Glenn Ford could play more than a nice guy or a hero. In his second pairing with William Holden, 1948’s *Man From Colorado*, Ford plays a judge overwhelmed by his own sadistic instincts. No one seemed to notice that he made a disturbing villain.

In Ford’s best films, he usually played an intelligent man of peace who gets pushed too far and strives — almost obsessively — to turn the tables. Like a character in an Elmore Leonard novel, there is a moment in almost every good Glenn Ford movie where his character reaches the breaking point. Sometimes the snap gets a close-up — for instance,

when he nearly strangles the amoral gypsy girl (Hayworth again) in 1948’s *The Loves of Carmen*. Other times, you cannot see the exact moment, but you know it’s there. It’s as though a switch is thrown and his character turns cold as if dead inside. It’s evident in the steely way he guns down Brian Keith in 1955’s *The Violent Men*.

“Sometimes he could be a monotonous presence on screen,” said Hollywood biographer Patrick McGilligan, “but he also was capable of performing with surprising subtlety and distinction.” The challenge was matching him with the right story.

Ford hit a low period in 1949 and his insecurities were starting to show. During this fallow time, he played the title character in NBC radio’s *Adventures of Christopher London* in 1950, but don’t feel bad if you missed it. Most people did.

Ford’s fortunes changed in 1953 when he starred in Fritz Lang’s *The Big Heat*. Ford was perfect as Det. Sgt. Dave



Bannion, whose pursuit of a crime syndicate leads to the murder of his wife and sends him on a twisted path of retribution. The famed German director didn't expect much from his B-movie star but found that Ford was fiercely independent and resented being told how to act. With Lang balancing the personalities of Ford, Gloria Grahame (as a sympathetic moll), and newcomer Lee Marvin, the picture had scenes that crackled with intensity. Even today, some of the off-screen violence is harrowing.

With *The Big Heat*, Ford finally made the jump to A-films. In the 1955 hit *Blackboard Jungle*, he is a teacher who must consider how best to communicate with unruly and violent students, played by the likes of Sidney Poitier, Vic Morrow, and Jamie Farr. (The film got an extra boost by including Bill Haley and the Comets' then-new record, "Rock Around The Clock.") In *Trial*, Ford is a law professor who must defend a Puerto Rican teenager accused of murder, while

dealing with both the Ku Klux Klan and the cruelty of strictly applied law. In 1956's *Ransom* (later remade by Mel Gibson), he's a businessman who proposes using ransom money as a bounty to hunt down the kidnappers of his young son.

For all of Ford's skill at portraying troubled souls, no one had yet realized his talent for humor until 1956's *Teahouse of the August Moon*. This gentle comedy set in post-war Okinawa needed a tightly moral central character, and Ford fit the bill. In one particularly memorable scene, Ford is speaking on the phone to his commanding officer, as a lovely geisha he has mistaken for a prostitute is trying to remove his pants. Audiences howled at his embarrassed confusion.

M-G-M was smart enough to realize that no one was better than Ford at comic uptightness, as evidenced by his performance as a television writer turned hapless killer in *The Gazebo*. In 1958, he was the

Number One box office star, appearing in three comedies (*Don't Go Near the Water*, *Sheepman*, and *Imitation General*) in addition to *Torpedo Run* and the excellent *Cowboy*.

He was now at the height of his career, yet something compelled him to join the naval reserves as a lieutenant commander and public affairs officer. (Possibly he was trying to postpone the demise of his marriage to Eleanor Powell; after several unhappy years together, the couple finally divorced in 1959.)

Still, he wasn't ready to leave Hollywood entirely, and if Frank Capra's 1961 comedy *Pocketful of Miracles* comes off flat, blame it partly on behind-the-scenes hostility between Ford, star Bette Davis, and ambitious co-star Hope Lange. After that, Ford let his softer side show in the romance *Dear Heart* and the mild comedy *Courtship of Eddie's Father*. Sometimes he was all right in his later films, and he merely walked through others. He appeared to be tired of acting and more interested in returning to the military.

Ford made annual tours of duty, promoting the Navy in documentary films and on radio and television broadcasts. By the time he left the Navy in the 1970s, he had risen to the rank of captain and considered himself more of a naval officer than an actor. Some critics did, too.

He served two tours of duty during the Vietnam war, and was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal (by the U.S.) and the Republic of Vietnam Legion of Merit, First Class (courtesy of the South Vietnamese). By then his dark hair had started graying at the temple and he had nearly a dozen medals on his chest.

Still, if old soldiers never die, they

sometimes move to television. Ford tried his hand as a modern sheriff in *Cade's County*, and later as a Depression-era Southern minister in *Family Hollow*. One of Ford's later screen appearances was in 1978's *Superman*. As Pa Kent, Ford played the quintessential decent man facing unforeseen challenges—in this case, raising and instilling his own values into his adopted alien son Clark, the sole survivor of the planet Krypton.

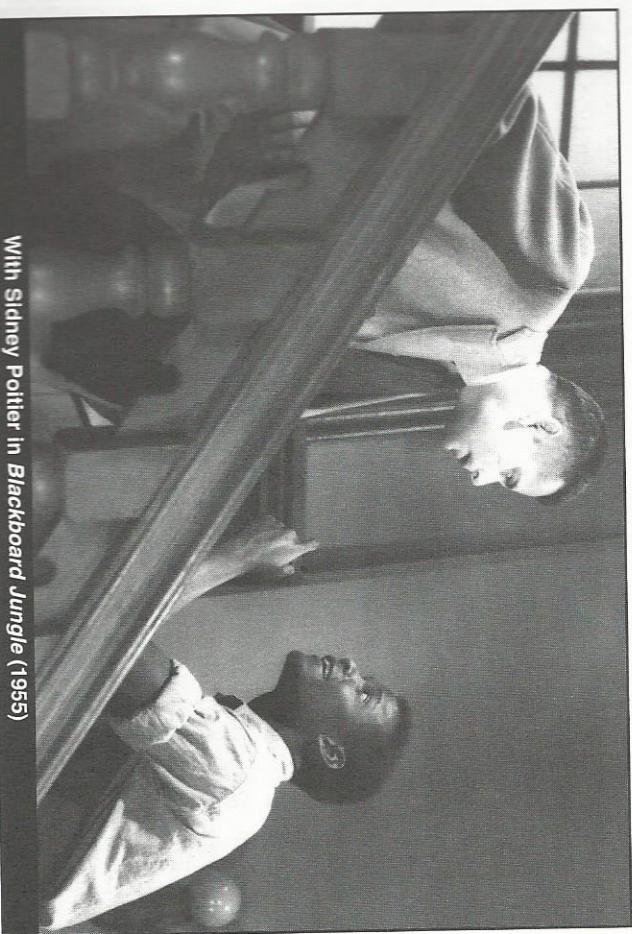
Ford had retired for the most part by the 1980s, partly because of poor health and partly because audiences wanted rebels and oversized characters. No more Mr. Nice Guys. That gave him time for his hobbies of hunting, horseback riding, and engaging in organic gardening at his Beverly Hills home.

In all, he made 106 films and documentaries. But it isn't fair to judge Glenn Ford by his later work. He never did well in Technicolor dramas, especially on a wide screen, where that sense of a man tightly coiled and suddenly letting go became lost. In those cases, he really did seem like an accountant who had blundered upon a movie set.

Ford suffered a series of strokes in the 1990s and had to send a videotaped message to a Hollywood tribute on his 90th birthday in 2006, three months before his death. On the tape he told the audience, "I have so much to be thankful for." It fell to actress Shirley Jones (who co-starred with Ford in *The Courtship of Eddie's Father*) to explain Ford's six-decade career. "He had those magical qualities that are intangible but are quite impactful on the screen.

"He was a movie star."

Time in to Those Were the Days on January 21 and to Radio's Golden Age on February 19 to hear Glenn Ford on radio.



With Sidney Poitier in *Blackboard Jungle* (1955)

MGM/PHOTOFEST



# SKY GIRLS!

## Recalling those pioneering female aviators, both factual and fictional

BY JACK FRENCH

When men began to fly — first in balloons and then with powered aircraft — their feminine counterparts were in the air with them. Often they were neither expected nor welcomed, but the ladies persevered and earned their place in the sky. And their airborne conquests were replicated in American popular culture by fictional heroines in hardback series and comic books.

The French can claim many of the early feats of women in flight. Elizabeth

*Jack French is a radio historian in Fairfax, Virginia and a member of the Radio Once More Hall of Fame.*

Thible of Lyons, France was the first woman in the sky, as a passenger in a balloon a mile high in June 1784. Two other French women were the first to solo in balloons, Jeanne Labrosse in 1798 and Marie Madeleine Blanchard in 1805. The latter tragically became the first woman to die because of flight, accidentally falling from her balloon in 1819 during a fireworks display.

With the Wright Brothers' triumphant 1903 flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, the world's air enthusiasts turned their attention toward America. However, women in Europe continued to maintain their foothold in the sky; in 1910, Baroness Raymonde de Laroche of France became the first woman to obtain a pilot's license.



The year before that, in 1909, Bobbs-Merrill published one of the first fictional books to feature a female pilot. *Virginia of the Air Lanes* was written by Iowa science-fiction author (John) Herbert Quick and told of the exploits of “Virginia Suarez” who piloted a dirigible as well as a helicopter. Quick and Suarez were ahead of their times; the helicopter was not practical (that is, it could not stay aloft for more than five minutes) until the 1920s.

In 1911, the first two aviation book series featuring girls debuted. *Girl Aviators*, written by Margaret Burnham (possibly a pseudonym) and published by Hurst and Company, would eventually total four volumes before ending in 1912. In this series, the two female pilots, Peggy and Jess, had to share the action — and their airplane, “The Golden Butterfly” — with their brothers, Roy and Jimmy.

The second series, *Flying Girl*, was written by none other than L. Frank Baum, author of *The Wizard of Oz*. Using the pen-name of Edith Van Dyne, *Flying Girl* told of 17-year-old Orissa Kane, who flew her brother's plane and thus saved his business. Baum, an early feminist, had the brother suggest that girls would make better pilots than men. Despite its famous writer, the *Flying Girl* series was canceled after the publication of the second book.

But these fictional heroines faced none of the dangers that their airborne sisters confronted in the real world — much of it generated by resentful men — including prejudice, discrimination, and even deadly sabotage. When Germany's Melli Breese tested for her pilot's license in 1911, men at the airport tried to sabotage her aircraft by reducing her gas supply and tampering with her plane's steering.

It got much worse. In the 1929 Women's Air Derby, Marvel Crosson was killed when her engine died at an altitude too low for her parachute to open. Sabotage was likely since two other contestants in that race were also affected: Thea Rasche found sand in her gas tank and a third competitor was forced out of the event when the brace wires of her aircraft were corroded with acid.

But the women aviators would not be denied their place in the wild blue yonder and they persevered — sometimes with deserved publicity, but more often ignored. Both the newspapers and flight magazines were controlled by males, few of whom were willing to give any credit to the gals. The *Aircraft Year Book of 1919* did not mention even one woman flier. By doing so, this publication disregarded the dozens of licensed



women pilots, several of whom had significant accomplishments.

Harriet Quimby, a native of Michigan, was the first woman to complete a solo flight of the English Channel, using an exposed cockpit monoplane in April 1912. Her triumph should have garnered world-wide coverage; however, the sinking of the Titanic dominated the news that week, burying Quimby's unique success on the back pages. Other female aviation milestones ignored by that *Aircraft Year Book* included Ruth Law's speed records in 1916 and the U.S. Post Office's 1918 appointment of Marjorie Stinson as the first female airmail pilot.

Despite the tremendous progress of women in the field of aviation in the 1920s, almost no fictional books were published during that decade to inspire young girls to dream of flight. African-American Bessie Coleman, barred from flight training in the U.S., went to

France, learned French, and earned her pilot's license in 1921. In 1928, Amelia Earhart flew across the Atlantic although two male pilots did most of the flying. Hollywood's first woman stunt pilot, Florence "Pancho" Barnes, performed many of the exciting scenes in 1929's *Hell's Angels*. That same year, an organization of women pilots, the Ninety-Nines, was formed with Earhart as president. They took their name from the fact that 99 of the 126 American female pilots were charter members of the group.

The year 1930 opened the floodgates of girls' aviation books, both as series and individual volumes. *Airplane Girl* (the first in a series of four books) was written by Edith Janice Craine, under the masculine pseudonym of Harrison Bardwell. From 1930 to '31, Mildred Wirt (the ghost writer for the early Nancy Drew mysteries), authored *Ruth Darrow*, a five-book series about a girl flyer. Beginning in 1931, five volumes of Edith

Lavell's series *Linda Carlton* were released by A.L. Burt Company over a three-year period. There were also several individual titles, including *The Sky Racers* by Mildred Wirt and *Jane, Stewardess of the Airlines* by Ruth S. Wheeler.

In real life, women continued to match the flight accomplishments of men. In 1930, Amy Johnson became the first woman to fly solo from England to Australia; that same year, Anne Morrow Lindbergh became the first woman to earn a glider pilot's license. In 1932, Earhart replicated Charles Lindbergh's solo flight across the Atlantic.

However, throughout the 1930s, women fliers were considered novelties by the established press and deemed unsuitable for "serious aviation" by the air transportation industry. Commercial airlines refused to hire women as pilots and viewed them only as potential stewaresses. Eddie Rickenbacker, America's foremost ace in World War I, strenuously opposed employing women in *any* flight capacity, including that of "air hostesses."

Perhaps this animosity toward women in cockpits spilled over into girls' juvenile fiction, where two gradual changes took place. First, the fictional heroines were demoted from pilots to stewardesses. Second, after the success of Nancy Drew and her sister sleuths, it was not enough for the flying gal to have a great adventure — she also had to solve a mystery. Even Vicki Barr, who debuted in 1947, had to start her first volume as a stewardess (as the series progressed she became a licensed pilot, flying a variety of aircraft).

However, no mystery in this fiction could approach the great mystery (still unsolved) of Amelia Earhart's July 1937



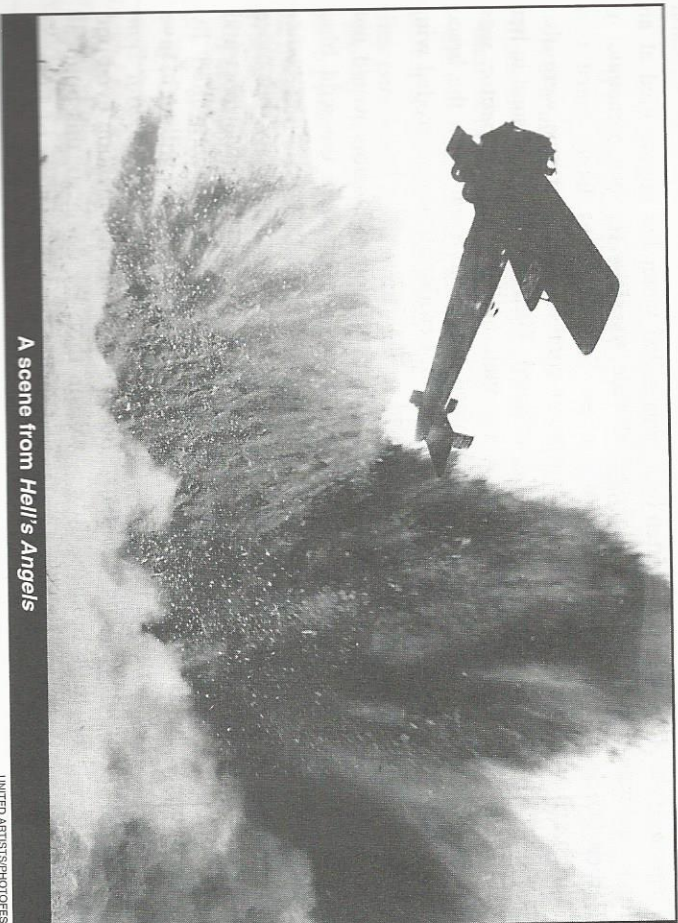
Amelia Earhart

disappearance while trying to find a speck of land called Howland Island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean during the last leg of her around-the-world flight.

While the lady aviators got their fair share in the field of adventure series books, they were short-changed by the comic book industry, which of course was market-driven by their clientele: teenaged boys. Amidst the hundreds of different comic book and newspaper strips, less than five featured a woman at the aircraft controls.

*Flying Jenny* debuted as a newspaper strip in 1939 and featured the heroics of Jenny Dale, who derived her nickname from a World War I training plane. In the strip and comic books, she flew virtually any type of aircraft. Russell Keaton drew the strip until he died in 1945; Gladys Parker took over the art work for its last year.

The next woman aviator in the comics was hardly your standard pilot



A scene from *Hell's Angels*

UNITED ARTISTS/PHOTOFEST



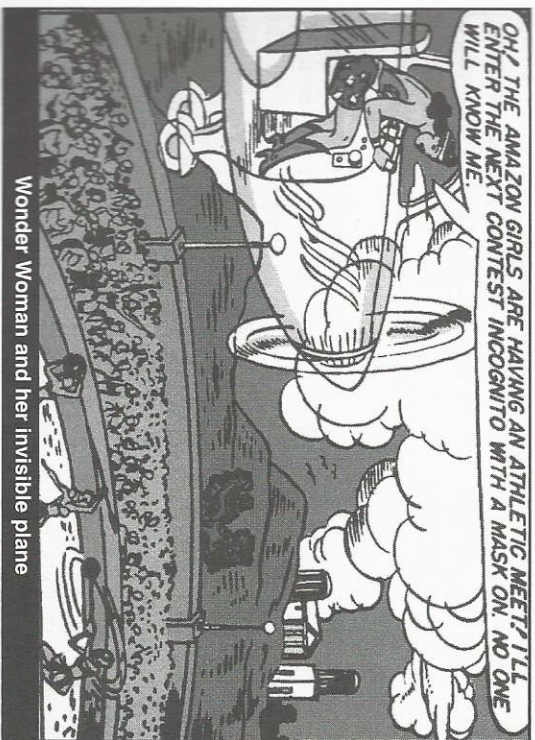
since her plane was totally invisible. Wonder Woman debuted in December 1941 with the first issue of *Sensation Comics*. This heroine was the creation of William Moulton Marston, a psychologist whose research led to the invention of the lie detector. Artist H.G. Peter drew her in a scanty but patriotic costume consisting of red boots and top with white stars on her blue shorts.

Seventy years later, Wonder Woman is still going strong. Her opposite in longevity would be Jane Martin, a traditionally attired World War II aviator, who flew fighter planes in *Wings Comics* but lasted only one season in 1945.

As the '30s turned into the '40s, the opposition to women pilots by the establishment — both civilian and military — did not diminish. The adventure novel *Peggy Wayne, Sky Girl* (written by Betty Baxter Anderson and published in 1941) accurately reflected the attitude of the aircraft industry in that era. In this story, Peggy graduates from nursing school and is hired as a flight "hostess" by a fictional airline, "Skylines, Inc." By the middle of the book, she has completed pilot

training, logged sufficient hours, and obtained her pilot's license. When she asks to be upgraded to a pilot's job with the firm, her supervisor indicates he'll forward her "outlandish request." In the last chapter of this book, the airline agrees to grant her pilot status, but she will only fly cargo planes, not passenger aircraft.

Not even the tremendous need for military pilots in World War II could speed up the advancement of lady aviators. While women did get to fly military planes eventually, it was only under the most convoluted arrangement, which kept them in a permanent second-class status. An all-female organization, the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) was grudgingly created by the War Department in 1941, and uncereimoniously disbanded in 1944; its official files were sealed for 35 years. During WASP's brief but glorious period, 1,074 women ferried planes around North America, towed targets for gunnery practice, served as flight instructors, and performed a myriad of U.S. Army Air Force non-combat duties. However, all of them



Wonder Woman and her invisible plane

FOR HISTORICAL INFORMATION ONLY: WONDER WOMAN © and TM DC COMICS

were classified as "civilians"; as a result, they had to pay for their own training, as well as their room and board at military bases. What's more, they were unjustly denied any military veteran benefits until 1977 — long after many of them were



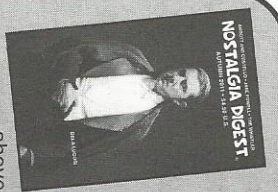
WASP Women: Four members of the Women Airforce Service Pilots

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

deceased.

While serving in the WASP, these women were subjected to frequent discrimination and harassment, in addition to threats of sabotage to their aircraft. Of the 38 WASP deaths in service to their country, some were caused by weather, some by mechanical failure, and probably some by pilot error. Other deaths were caused by sabotage, typically sugar in the gas tank.

Whatever the cause, the lady "civilians" had no government death benefits; each time one was killed, their sister pilots had to take up a collection so the body could be returned to her family. Not until 2002 were members of the WASP finally awarded the right to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Today, their courage and dedication is commemorated at the National WASP World War II Museum, located in Sweetwater, Texas near Avenger Field, where most of these women underwent their training. ■



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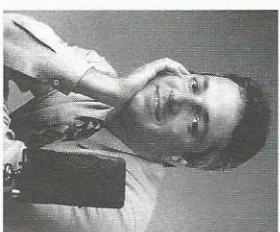
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# CORNY CORN

EARLY AMERICAN FOOD ADVERTISING

BY BOB PERLONGO

Eat, drink and be merry... and you're automatically the target of billions of dollars worth of hype — honest and otherwise — all of it trying very earnestly and very adeptly to tell you just what to eat and drink, and just how and where to be merry.

So it was, and so it remains: only the scale of the expense has changed. In 19th- and early 20th-century America — from whence sprang most of the ads gathered here — all the tried-and-true,

*Bob Perlongo is an Evanston-based writer and editor whose articles have appeared in the Chicago Tribune, the New York Times Almanac and elsewhere. His books include The Everyday Almanac (Capra Press, 1995) and The Write Book (Art Direction Book Co., 2002).*

age-old advertising precepts were in evidence: grab 'em by the palate with suitably enticing art and prose, and make 'em hunger for your brand and yours alone. And, primitive as some of these samples may be, they *did* do their bottom-line job, ringing up the sales.

Although a number of the brands and banners have passed and gone, their well-honed ads make it easy to see why they thrived. They knew their customer and what he or she wanted. They also, obviously, knew a thing or two about pricing and promotion. In 1866, for instance, Coca-Cola was just a drink you could buy at a particular soda fountain in Atlanta. By 1903 (when, as they say, a dollar was a dollar), Coca-Cola was spending over \$200,000 a year in advertising. Today it's more than \$200 million.

Another firm that astutely gauged the nation's taste buds (and just as astutely backed its savvy with advertising) was the Kellogg Company of Battle Creek,



Michigan. As an ever-greater number of Americans took up office work in cities, they no longer had the time or stomach for the heavy, biscuit-laden "farm breakfasts" that heretofore had been the norm. Lighter breakfasts of grains and cereals were now being advertised as "brain food." And though others had entered the field before them, Kellogg's came in with an innovative edge: flaked cereal made from wheat or corn. In their well-researched landmark book *Advertising in America*, Charles A. Goodrum and Helen Dalrymple describe the precise moments in 1894 when the Kellogg Brothers invented a wholly new kind of breakfast:

*[Doctor] John Harvey Kellogg said the idea came to him in a dream.*

*An elderly person at Dr. Kellogg's Battle Creek Sanitarium complained that she broke her false teeth on a hard piece of zwieback (a grainy, twice-baked biscuit), and insisted that Kellogg compensate her or at least serve her food she could chew. Pondering the matter, Kellogg fell asleep. When he awoke, he asked his wife Ella to boil some wheat on the kitchen stove. The doctor handed her the soft wheat into a hopper, then through rotating rollers which his younger brother William Keith Kellogg scraped with a knife. To the brothers' amazement, the wheat broke off into individual flakes. Baked in an oven, they were crisp, light, and eminently chewable.*

Of course, when you think of cereal, you think of such adjunct edibles as peaches and cream, which sometimes posed health risks for careless consumers. In fact, unless you bought your vittles direct from the farm and dutifully inspected them beforehand, you often

didn't know what you might be eating. "Vermont Maple Syrup" sometimes originated from places like North Dakota. Hake treated with boric acid was sold as genuine codfish. Pork and beans frequently contained formaldehyde. One manufacturer went so far as to sell flavored glucose as pure honey, capping his ruse by placing a dead bee in every bottle.

Although about half the states in the U.S. had passed "pure food" laws by 1895, their regulations had no uniformity; as a result, foods that were taboo in one state might very well be legal in another. Meanwhile, the situation grew steadily worse as food preparation became increasingly industrialized and subject to more complex processing: products were now being shipped longer distances and passing through many more pairs of hands.

Though some manufacturers thought otherwise, the need for a federal pure-food law became ever more obvious to just about everyone else. With the help of exposes like Upton Sinclair's muckraking novel *The Jungle* (about the grossly unsanitary packinghouses of Chicago) and the strong backing of president Theodore Roosevelt, proponents of such legislation overcame stiff resistance (both in and out of government) to push through the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906.

Despite some initial screams and hollers, the new law was a great benefit to the food industry and the advertisers who helped it prosper, for as the frauds and adulterers began dropping from the scene, there developed a general and lasting rise in consumer confidence.

Advertisers could now trumpet their treats to a much more informed, and trusting, public.



**This Pastry Flour is very economical for quick biscuit, cake, pie-crust, short-cake, etc. Quality always uniform**

December 2, 1915.  
My daughter, being in the dramatic profession, is often obliged to travel, necessitating light housekeeping. At present, we are located in Boston.

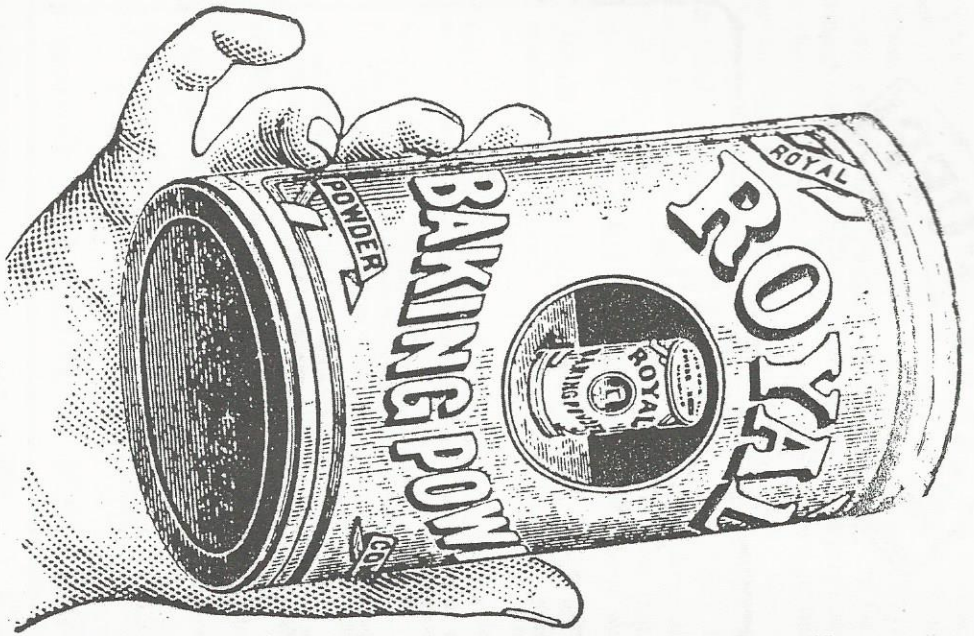
Recently, when playing in Portland, Me., I bought at a local store, some "White Puff" Flour. It was delicious, and I found it a great saving, because I only had to use half the shortening that I had used with other flours.  
Now, really I want some more of this "White Puff" Flour as soon as possible, and will appreciate it very much if you notify me where I can buy it in Brookline.  
I don't see how any good cook can get along without "White Puff". We certainly can't.

Yours truly,  
MRS. F. H. CUSHMAN.  
11 Devotion St.,  
Brookline, Mass.

**GET IT OF YOUR GROCER. IF HE DOES NOT  
KEEP IT, WE WILL SUPPLY YOU DIRECT  
WILLIAM S. HILLS CO., Boston**

In early ad years, as now, the tried-and-true testimonial flourished as a way to get word of one's goods or services banded about. Here, in an ad from 1916, Mrs. F.H. Cushman of Devotion Street in Brookline, Mass. called White Puff Flour "delicious" and a good value as well, "because I only had to use half the shortening that I had used with other flours... Now, really, I want some more of this 'White Puff' Flour as soon as possible." Ever helpful, the manufacturer is quick to add an all-caps P.S.: "GET IT OF YOUR GROCER. IF HE DOES NOT KEEP IT, WE WILL SUPPLY YOU DIRECT."





When it comes to baking powder, by far the brand to beat has always been Royal. Its birth goes back to a small drugstore in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where in 1866 Joseph and Cornelius Hoagland, along with Thomas Biddle, created a formula for baking powder that, unlike the usual mixes, included its own activator, eliminating the need to add a soda activator such as vinegar or sour milk. Their product met with great success and in 1875 the druggists moved their operations to Chicago and later to New York. The above promotional illustration dates from 1903.

# LOWNEY'S COCOA

**Lowney's Cocoa Is Simply  
Nature At Her Best**

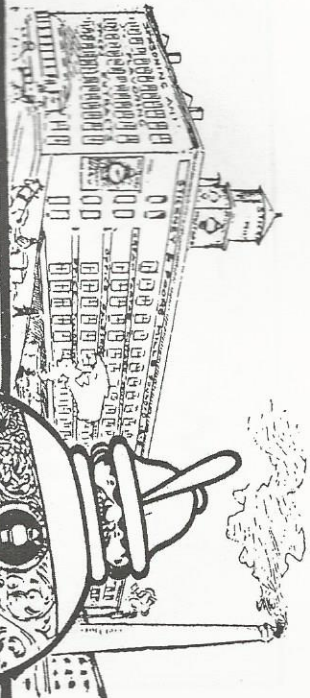
Certain South American districts grow a superior grade of cocoa beans. These beans are roasted and ground for Lowney's Cocoa. You get no man-made additions to blur Nature's best cocoa flavor.

And what a flavor it is! There is joy in the very aroma that steams from the cup. You can taste the purity in each delicious sip.

That natural flavor has never been bettered by man.

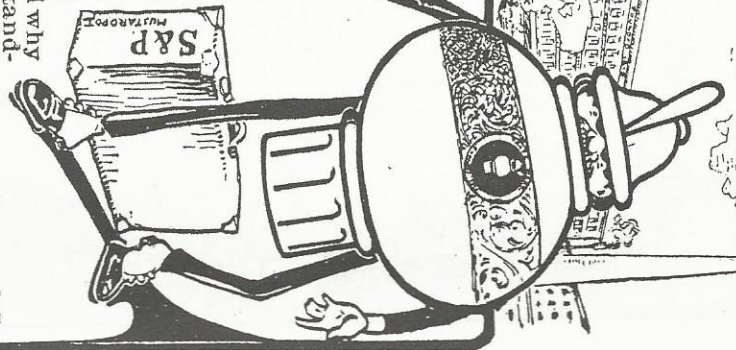
Today's ever-more-popular dietary mantra of "Natural, Unadulterated, Organic" sells well (and evokes no end of promises amongst the populace to eat smarter in the future), but the fact is that advertisers have always done well by Mother Nature. In 1913, for example, this ad promised prospective Lowney's Cocoa drinkers that when drinking their product, "You get no man-made additions to blur Nature's best cocoa flavor. And what a flavor it is! That natural flavor has never been bettered by man." Altogether, an artfully simple pitch, tastefully conveyed.





## How Do You Do?

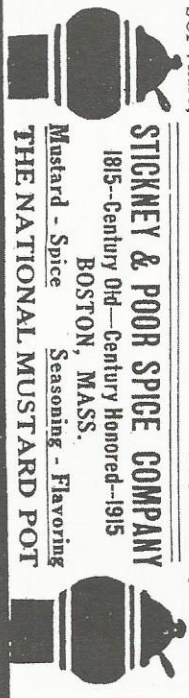
For 100 years I have been the trade mark for **STICKNEY & POOR'S** Mustards and Spices. Recently they have given me a face, arms and legs and made a man of me, and from now on I'm going to tell all I know about **STICKNEY & POOR'S** goods. I'll begin now by saying that *everything* made or sold by **STICKNEY & POOR** is just as represented and has been for 100 years. That's why they are still in business and why their goods have become standard. Of course, I am out to increase sales, and I cannot do it alone. I need your help and co-operation. Always say "**STICKNEY & POOR**" to your grocer. I am to be known in the future as your co-operating servant, "**Mustardpot.**"



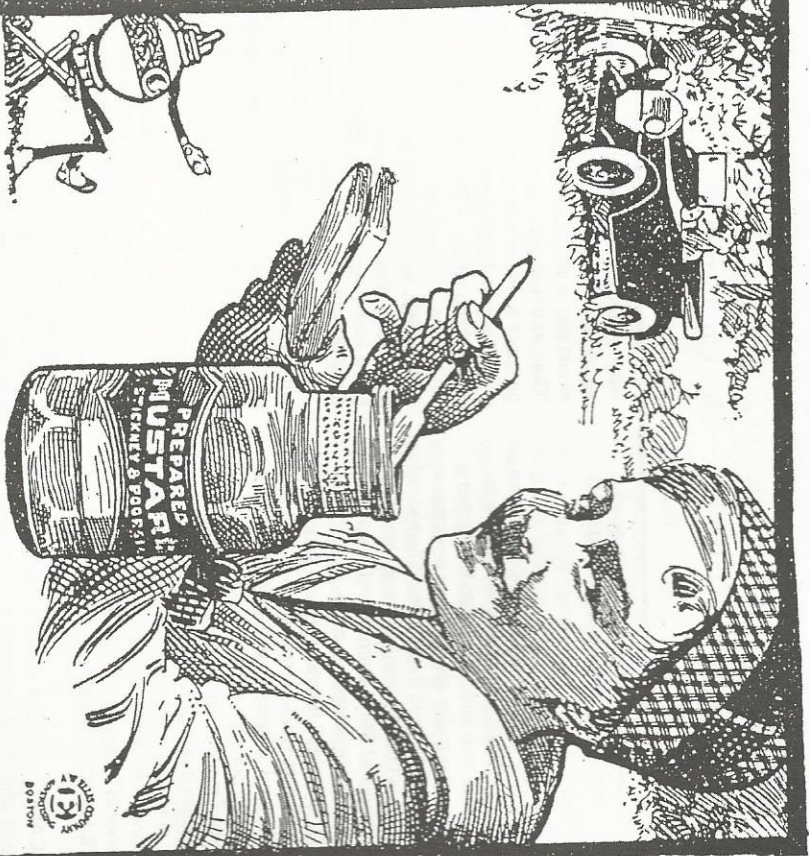
### STICKNEY & POOR SPICE COMPANY

1815--Century Old--Century Honored--1915  
BOSTON, MASS.

Mustard - Spice Seasoning - Flavoring  
**THE NATIONAL MUSTARD POT**



Winsomely weird, and several beam-ups ahead of its time, the above ad (vintage 1915) consists almost entirely of a mustard pot holding out a friendly hand as he addresses you directly: "How do you do? For 100 years I have been the trademark for **STICKNEY & POOR'S** Mustards and Spices. Recently they have given me a face, arms and legs and made a man of me... Of course, I am out to increase sales, and I cannot do it alone. I need your help... your co-operating servant, 'Mustardpot.'" The 1916 ad at right is more usual marketing fare, with a super-smiley satisfied customer doing the selling, while Mustardpot is reduced to sitting on the sidelines, presumably waving hello.



## SUMMER TIME IS SANDWICH TIME STICKNEY & POOR'S PREPARED MUSTARD

represents the last word in PURITY, FLAVOR, KEEPING QUALITIES, AND CONVENIENCE OF PACKAGE. The knowing ones have long since preferred its deliciousness to all others. Stickney & Poor's Mustards, Spices, Seasonings and Flavorings are Standard and guaranteed by a firm that for over one hundred years has merited public confidence by manufacturing superior products. For Goodness sake insist on Stickney & Poor's when you order from your grocer.

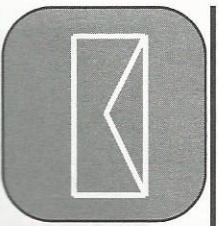
Your Co-operating Servant, "**MUSTARDPOT.**"

### STICKNEY & POOR SPICE COMPANY

1815--Century Old--Century Honored--1916  
BOSTON, MASS.







# MAIL CALL!

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**NORTHBROOK, IL**—Keep up the good work, *Nostalgia Digest* rocks! —**RICHARD POWELL**

**CHICAGO**—The Janet Waldo story [Summer 2011 issue] highlighted her extensive radio career and how success as Corliss Archer cast her as a major professional entertainer. But who could have thought the 87-year-old Janet would be the animated and informative interviewee of Steve Darnall and his wife Meg Guttman as portrayed on the August 27 *TWTTD* program? Leading stories and follow-up interviews have no substitute.

Indeed, one can ask where else would the public get such candid, spontaneous, and informed insights spanning several generations were it not for Steve, Ken, Meg, and a host of volunteers and staff? We in Chicago take these talented people for granted when we should be taking them to dinner. —**WILLIAM O'NEILL**

**CHICAGO**—I was pleasantly surprised to see not one but two perceptive articles on Abbott and Costello, one of my favorite comedy teams, in the latest issue of *Nostalgia Digest* [Autumn 2011]. Chris Costello's remarks about her father's relationship with Abbott reminded me of comments made by Charles Lamont, who directed nine of the duo's films. Lamont once told me, "Some people said they had no rapport off-camera, but that wasn't true at all. Bud was easy-going and Lou was impetuous, like an overgrown

kid, and they got along just fine. I never saw an argument between them. I'm the one who would argue with Lou, because he would yell "Cut!" at the end of a scene just so he could get back to his poker game." Congratulations on another diverse, entertaining issue. —**TED OKUDA**

**LOMBARD, IL**—The articles in the *Digest* are outstanding! Very interesting and informative. I look forward to each issue. —**MARY ANN MINNEC**

**MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN**—I cannot agree with Ronald Reagan being selected to the Radio Hall of Fame [as reported in the Autumn 2011 *Nostalgia Digest*]. He was selected for one overriding reason: he became president.

His radio work was not prolific and was not even very good. There are dozens of others whose work was more prolific and was outstanding. Such names as Parley Baer, Larry Dobkin, Harry Bartell and many, many more who are more deserving. I think the selection of Reagan lowers the standards needed to get into the Radio Hall of Fame. —**RON SAYLES**

**(ED. NOTE)**—Information about how to recommend a performer or show to the Radio Hall of Fame Steering Committee for inclusion in the Radio Hall of Fame is available online at <http://www.radiohof.org/selection.html> or by contacting the Museum of Broadcast Communications, 360 N. State Street, Chicago.

## And if you're on Facebook...

Please take a moment and join our *Nostalgia Digest* group! It's a chance to meet some like-minded listeners and get up-to-date news and information about *Those Were the Days* and *Nostalgia Digest*.

Illinois, 60654-5411.)

**WACO, TEXAS**—Loving the Groucho show [TWTTD, March 26] on the Internet. How cool that you have access to shows that most of us OTR fans haven't heard!

He would have to come to my posthumous dinner party — you know, the "Who are the three people you would invite?" interview/wice breaker question. Wonder whether he and Nikola Tesla would get along? And who would be the third be? Dorothy Parker? Not sure I could keep up with any of them but it would be a hell of a night. —**ANN-CLAIRE ANDERSON**

**E-MAIL**—Just wanted to thank you for your Easter program today [TWTTD, April 23], particularly the *Hollywood Star Time* production of "The Song of Bernadette." This was a really beautiful show. Thank you for airing it. Happy Easter. —**TONI LYTER**

**NEW YORK, NY**—Great show today [TWTTD, April 30]. I have been listening (off and on) since I was 9 years old, February 1984. So glad I can get you online now in NYC. —**RYAN HILLARD**

**E-MAIL**—I am listening to *Destination Freedom* produced by WMAQ, Chicago [Radio's *Golden Age*, May 29]. The Chinese officer hosting an interview for the U.S. press in Korea sounds exactly like Art Van Harvey, who played Victor Gook on *Vic and Sade*. During the break, you gave a promo for *Vic and Sade* recordings. A coincidence? —**MARY LANCEY**

**(ED. NOTE)**—While the cast was credited at the end of that *Destination Freedom* show, Art Van Harvey's name wasn't mentioned. Perhaps he was back in America selling "Vic"-tory bonds!

**E-MAIL**—I'm listening to [the May 21] *Those Were the Days* this afternoon and heard the interview that talked about *Shock Theater*. That was an old TV series back when I was in high school in the 1950s. I had forgotten about it but was reminded today.

I'm enjoying the program featuring Vincent Price. I think I still have my girlfriend's fingernail prints in my arm from when we both were screaming through two showings of *House of Wax* in 3-D at the Colony Theater at 59th and Kedzie in Chicago. It was quite an experience for young teenagers at that time.

My daughters watched that movie when they were teens on TV many years later. They weren't impressed. I guess it lost something going from the big screen, in the dark theater, in 3-D, to a TV in the family room. —**BARBARA VAN WEELDEN**

**CHICAGO**—I listen to you on [www.wdwb.org](http://www.wdwb.org) when I can't get a clear signal on the radio (I live in South Shore). I'm glad to hear you play *Broadway Is My Beat*, a great show [for] people who remember Broadway and New York before Giuliani and Disney. Please don't forget about this show, which may be greater than *Guns n' Smoke*. —**MAURICE SHARPE**

**(ED. NOTE)**—We've got a *Broadway Is My Beat* program scheduled for the January 29 edition of *Radio's Golden Age*.)

**E-MAIL**—Listening to *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* [TWTTD, August 20]. Wonder how the air fare changed on the expense account over the years. —**BRUCE JENSEN**

## NOSTALGIA DIGEST

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Additional thanks to: Meg Guttman, Ken Alexander, Robert Feder, Matthew Hoffman



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