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Alice Faye &
Phil Harris

Old Time Radio DIGEST

No.127

Fall 2009

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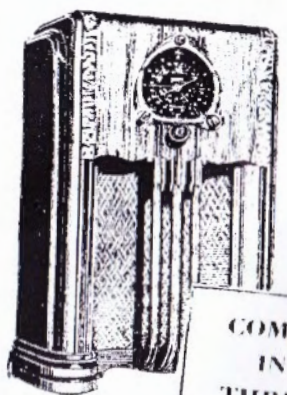
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Amos 'n' Andy - Here they are

Part 6 of a series from *Radio Guide 1935* by Harry Steele

With their first sponsor came Gosden and Correll's first real fight. The issue? Whether they'd consent to merge themselves with a big show, or remain an independent team. Little did they dream that before that fight was over...

Freeman Gosden, Amos of the famous team, was born thirty-six years ago in Richmond, Virginia; he began life an automobile salesman. He is married and has two children, Freeman, Junior, six, and Marie, four.

Charles Correll, Andy, is a native of Illinois; his early claim to fame and fortune was made through laying bricks. He too is married, but the Corrells have no children.

A mutual interest in amateur theatricals threw the pair together. In previous instalments Harry Steele has described many turns in their affairs, including the accident that came within an ace of preventing their ever making a contact with each other; their adventures coaching amateur theatrical companies in several states; their earliest flings at radio.

Herewith is presented instalment six, containing further glamorous episodes in their life-story.

No one who ever has worked as a sustaining radio artist, and watched the parade of stars go by to network fame, could fail to thrill at the alluring words which Niles Trammel directed at Gosden and Correll, after the preliminary formalities of their first meeting.

"How would you boys like to come over to NBC?" was the nubbin of his first inquiry.

In light of the bright vision engendered by that simple question, both Gosden and Correll forgot the shimmer of their success with their "personal network," that web of recordings which had given them the national prestige only accorded, as a rule, to performers for the chains.

There is a psychological gratification that comes with being solicited by network officials, and Amos 'n' Andy's creators were not distinguished from fellow artists in their reaction to Trammel's pointed question. Assent was in their eyes long before they could co-ordinate their thoughts sufficiently to phrase it.

Naturally, there had to be the customary fencing with which men of business conduct their negotiations—that backing and filling over terms and conditions which is deemed to be sound business, regardless of the high probability that both sides are predetermined to come to terms. Somehow the process seems to imbue the negotiators with the belief that it wouldn't be dignified or strictly commercial, or perhaps even masculine, to yield without the customary palaver that leads only to the contract.

It safely could be assumed by the two comedians that M. r. Trammel had a



Amos 'n' Andy, as their recent late Winter vacation nears its end, sun themselves and "relapse" in the invigorating atmosphere of El Mirador Hotel and Palm Springs,

potential sponsor up his sleeve. Had it been a case merely of wanting to give the act a national airing, the network executives could have dealt directly with WMAQ, the Chicago Daily News station, which had inaugurated the Amos 'n' Andy scripts.

He did. It was the toothpaste company which still presents the boys—but it developed that there was more in store than the mere signing of a contract and the launching of the program under a new sponsorship.

Before Gosden and Correll were approached by Trammel, the sponsor had

wavered between the two comedians in a special treatment of their own devising, and a symphony orchestra program; at one stage of the negotiations it appeared that the musical unit would be selected. Only the fact that the company felt that the symphony would be too heavy a dose for more than one presentation a week, and they wanted to be heard at least three times a week in order to pound home their sales story, averted the musical choice. So Amos 'n' Andy got the call. But from Gosden and Correll's point of view, there was a catch in it.

By this time, of course, the nation at large knew about the famous negro characters. Countless listeners who had not heard the broadcasts, had picked up endless favorable comments about them, and had read the mounting columns of publicity which were accorded Amos 'n' Andy. So it was that the boys were established with the public, and naturally they were hardly of a mind to entertain a proposition which would rob them of the identity so completely their own and for which they had worked diligently and conscientiously.

Yet that was the very proposal with which they were met, once the preliminaries of the conference with Trammel were over. The name of the proposed sponsor was revealed to them, and along with it the sponsor's plan: they wanted to fabricate an elaborate minstrel show in which the two black-face comedians were to perform as end men. If they consented, their independent identities would be submerged in the necessarily elaborate cast.

It was all too baffling. Literally the dawn had come in a sponsor-call, but it had brought clouds that completely dimmed the usual jubilation over the event. Gosden and Correll yearned for the perquisites that are the fruit of national sponsorship—but most assuredly they did not want to relinquish the characters which had won them their chance.

With no show of servility but with the natural caution of the employe toward employer they argued their case, pleading that to cast them as Bones and Tambo would be to undo the good of several years of toil. Allied with them in arguing their case was the loyal Sen Kaney. Sen had been a warm admirer in the days of the Kinky Kids' Parade era over WEBH, and had watched with delight the flowering

of the characters born of those patter choruses. The boys' sound reasoning eventually wooed the sponsors from their decision to launch a gigantic minstrel show, but the concession was a reluctant one fraught with the general opinion that "no good would come of it." But nevertheless Amos 'n' Andy, along with Bill Hay and his traditional "Here they are," were introduced to network audiences under the toothpaste sponsorship. Developments were awaited eagerly.

It would be useless to attempt to analyze the furore which the act created. Psychologists, radio experts, the public and Gosden and Correll themselves have attempted to put their finger on the ingredient which accounts for the overwhelming success of the broadcast. But despite the erudite conclusions that have been reached, there never has been a completely satisfying explanation.

A success it was, beyond anyone's most exalted dreams. Amos 'n' Andy swept the nation like the current dust storms. A thousand programs have imitated it and failed—as many sterling productions have been devised to wrest from it a share of its glory without so much as casting a shadow on its bright luster—and like the brook, it goes on forever.

The act made its network debut in August of 1929, and by September the country was aflame with the affairs of the various characters to an extent where they exceeded in popular interest the vital current events of politics and economics. They became an overnight menace to amusements in general, and it was then that public places had to find means to cope with the Amos 'n' Andy threat.

Many hotels found it wise to equip their lobbies with loudspeakers in order that tran-

sients might not lose track of the adventures of the boys. At both the William Penn and the Ft. Pitt Hotel in Pittsburgh, cafe service was suspended completely in the fifteen minutes consumed by the nightly presentation—as a service to guests and a sop to employes who literally were threatening to abandon their jobs if those jobs interfered with the hearing of Amos 'n' Andy.

Doubtless many other hotels found the same course necessary, and there are many specific instances of Eastern motion picture theaters having to air the program to overcome the loss of business at 7 p.m., which, normally, was the most productive time of the day.

And while the boys were somewhat surprised by their tremendous vogue, it wasn't a marker to the bewilderment which assailed their sponsors. If their sketches were on everybody's tongue, their toothpaste apparently was in the identical position, and long before the original one year contract was concluded Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll had been signed up to an agreement which enlisted their services for an additional five years at a previously unheard-of remuneration, and with a clause that permitted another two-year option.

Spurred by their brilliant success, the boys found no difficulty in keeping the act fresh. It was their prerogative to introduce or drop characters at will, to test situations, discard, expand, reintroduce and otherwise alter according to public reaction.

So vivid a sensation could hardly be overlooked by the motion picture producers. Amos 'n' Andy had hardly swung into its stride before NBC, the sponsor and Gosden and Correll were besieged with demands for an Amos 'n' Andy pic-

ture by everyone of the leading celluloid producers of the country. After long consideration, a decision was reached to film a story around the boys—a conclusion which led practically to an ultimatum by David Sarnoff, president of RCA, and an active director in the affairs of the National Broadcasting Company.

Amos 'n' Andy was the brightest jewel in the NBC diadem—it would have had to be to stir the attention of the busy Sarnoff. But he scented in the proposed picture a threat to the boys' popularity, and he opposed the venture vigorously. His voice thundered from his luxurious Manhattan office.

"If the picture is a flop," he said, "and the boys' popularity suffers as a result, all of you NBC executives who had a hand in sanctioning it had better begin to look around in the fields in which you were employed before you made the mistake of thinking you knew something about radio."

So the picture went into production. Gosden and Correll had no worries. Their contracts were secure enough to withstand the shock of a motion-picture flop, but there was a deal of breath held by NBC executives during the weeks attending the making of the film and the time which elapsed before it was flashed before the public. The interim seemed endless, and one or two local officials of the network were rumored to have spent many an unhappy moment eyeing the distance between their office windows and the nearest roof.

And finally, after the usual delay, the picture made its appearance. Then —

The effect of that motion picture will astound anyone who never has learned

the inside story of what it did by way of making history in the industry. Read about it, and further intimacies in the lives of this popular pair, in next issue of the Digest.

Amos 'n' Andy may be heard every day except Saturday and Sunday at 7 p. m. EST (6 CST) over an NBC- WJZ network, and on the same days at 11 p. m. EST (10 CST, 9 MST and 8 PST) over a split NBC network.

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-Mrs. F. W. Cote, 28 Division St., Sidney, N. Y. (Oct. 26 over Station WTAM.)

"Hobby Lobby" guest: "If anyone is thinking of committing suicide tet him get in touch with my organization and to will help him with his problem."

-Charles Dooler, Box 73, Glouster, Ohio. (Oct. 29 over CBS.)

Announcer: "If there are any tonely girls in the city they should go to the Y. M. C. A."

-Lee Schirck, 916 N. W. 19th St., Oklahoma City, Okla. (Oct. 26 over Station KTOK.)

Judge Gutknecht on "Traffic Court" broadcast: "We had 10,000 criminals in 1932. In 1933 and 1934 those boys were cut in two."

-Mrs. Dorothea Davison, 7341 N. Seeley Ave., Chicago, Ill. (Nov. lover Station WIND.)

Vocalist: "My next song is dedicated to every single mother."

-Mrs. H. H. Dillingham, Skowhegan, Maine. (Nov. 1 over Station WGAN.)

Announcer: "Look for the In de pendent grocer with the Monarch lion head."

-Joe Moya, Box 55, Patterson, Calif. (Oct. 27 over Station KFRC.)

Bob Brown, announcer: "One bath with that wonderful soap turned him into an Ivory fan."

-M. C. Pearson, 1304 W. 97th Place, Chicago, ur, (Oct. 30 over NBC.)

Football broadcaster: "Before telling you any more about the game I'll turn you over and let you listen to the music."

-Mrs. William A. Spears, 1118

American Radio Networks: A History

by Jim Cox Reviewed by Ryan Ellett

Editor's note: Ryan's review wasn't complete in the last issue. This is the reason for re-running it in this issue.

Jim Cox's latest effort, American Radio Networks, is as close as that author has so far come to writing a broad overview of commercial radio history. If you've followed Mr. Cox's articles in old time radio publications over the last year or two you'll recognize many of the main themes and highpoints that are a focus of this work.

Covering the history of the nation's four major radio networks is a perilous task for a writer: how does one approach the task (which is inherently muddy and convoluted) so as to be both clear and enlightening to the reader? Instead of meshing the histories of NBC, CBS, ABC, and Mutual into one historical narrative that follows them all concurrently, he devotes individual chapters to each chain.

While this necessarily requires repetition from chapter to chapter since one radio chain cannot be explored entirely independently of the development of the others, Mr. Cox deftly keeps the repetition to a minimum and creates an understandable and easy-to- follow text. The initial two chapters cover material that has been well-covered by radio historians already (recently in such books as Balk's *The Rise of Radio* and McClure, Stem, and Banks' *Crosley* biography). Nevertheless, the era of the late teens and early 20s is not easy to grasp with the machinations of numerous corporations angling to maximize profits on the new radio technology. Add to that constant government involvement

from WWI to station licensing to the FCC to the breakup of NBC and Cox's narrative skill forges a readable history which is perhaps as clear as any text can be on this era.

American Radio Networks is not devoted to old time radio programming beyond particular shows' importance to the overarching network story. Yet the real-life figures of Sarnoff, Paley, Noble and their cronies who built the aural network empires are in some ways as entertaining as the men and women who entertained the masses with their jokes and songs.

Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 cover NBC, CBS, Mutual, and ABC respectively and in this author's view are the meat of the book and well worth the price of admission. Not to be overlooked, though, is chapter 7 which covers the regional webs which radio fans will see referenced in OTR literature with some regularity, such as the Colonial Network, Don Lee Broadcasting, Pacific Network, and Yankee Network.

The following chapters, 8, 9, and 10 are topical, covering in more detail the federal government's role in early radio, early financing of these burgeoning commercial ventures (also explored in Cox's prior book *Sold on Radio*, and the spirited rivalry between NBC's David Sarnoff and CBS's William Paley.

Chapter 11 highlights a selection of trend-setting and popular old time radio programs. Some will be familiar from Cox's prior books but he touches on other favorite series as well, such as *Dragnet*, *the Shadow*, and *Lux Radio Theater*.

Early television fans (of which there are surely a few in the reading audience) will enjoy chapter 12's review of television's birth and overtaking of radio, a subject covered more in-depth in Cox's brilliant book *Say Goodnight Gracie*. Similarly, chapters 13 and 14 review the growth of DJ and pop-oriented radio and talk radio, genres that still dominate the airwaves today. For OTR fans these three chapters are positively depressing.

For fans of broader radio history American Radio Networks is indispensable. For those predominantly interested in just old time radio programming itself and less in the context in which it was created and matured, this book won't make its way to the top of your must-buy list.

Begun with 2002's *Say Goodnight Gracie*, and continued with 2008's *Sold on Radio*, the medium's best modern historian has capped the most well-written and informative history of radio in recent memory with this tome. This triumvirate of books should stand for some time as the definitive history of classic radio's beginning, maturation, and demise.

American Radio Networks can be ordered for \$45 from McFarland Press online at www.w.mcfarlandpub.com or by phone at 1-800-253-2187.

Ryan can be contacted at OldRadioTimes@yahoo.com.

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Chapter 9

Ross was invaluable in getting the show together, as I knew he would be. Besides being a first-rate actor, he has a stage electrician's knowledge of what's watt, and all of us in the Morale Unit had to do double duty. He even cut the script while I wore holes in the -drill field, and after chow we'd both rack our brains for ways to pare down the number of feminine roles. Our blue pencil performed miracles which transmuted the sex of the grandmother, banished one of the girls to the invisible end of the telephone, and sacked the colored maid.

Ross had an idea for dispensing with the only two feminine characters left, but I pointed out that the boys would welcome the sight of one or two girls. "Do you mean one particular boy would welcome the sight of one particular girl for about three weeks of rehearsals and as long as the play runs?" Ross ribbed.

"People who live in mass houses shouldn't cast stones if they want Stone to cast them," I reminded him. "And, anyway, wise guy-it so happens that Pete Feller's wife is giving up a summer-stock job to play one of the parts, and Gary Merrill's girl friend is taking the other one. Pete and Gary can do a better job for other boys' morale if somebody takes care of theirs."

"How's yours?" Ross teased. "Want me to write a nice juicy part back in for Sara?"

I threw what was left of the script at him.

I still wonder how we got the play whipped into shape on schedule in the face of problems no Broadway producer has ever heard of. As most of us were still in the nine-week process of taking shots, we could almost never get the entire cast together for rehearsals. And the rehearsals themselves were as fragmentary as their attendance, being constantly interrupted by more immediately pressing morale duties. We'd barely get

started when we'd have to stop to bale magazines for an outgoing troop train or put on a show at the station hospital. After being out on one of these emergency calls we got back to the Opry House to find ten tons of orphan coal left literally on our doorstep. We couldn't even wheedle a wheelbarrow from the quartermaster to remove it. He evidently didn't consider coal an essential industry. We had to use buckets. It took us two days sweating in the mid-August sun to transplant the mound far enough from the entrance of the Opry House so our clientele wouldn't have to come dressed for mountain climbing. And there it remained to taunt us all winter, a snow-covered monument to a frozen troupe and a cold audience. Our stove didn't arrive until spring.

I had many opportunities to recall and appreciate Gary's forewarnings about the lot of an actor in the Army. At times I was sure it would have been easier to learn a new business than adapt familiar techniques to Army needs and methods.

But Alan Manson helped all the rest of us keep our sense of proportion by completely losing his. Tall, dark-haired, extremely personable, Alan was indefatigable in all the theatrical activities. But he couldn't lift a shovelful of dirt or move a piece of scenery without regretting that it interrupted his dramatic career. If you've had a life-long ambition to be a movie star, I guess a mere world war isn't likely to knock it out of you. Alan would brood for hours, always before a mirror, over whether the Army was shaping him into a stevedore instead of a matinee idol. Even worrying worried him. It made lines in his handsome, manly brow.

Alan's vanity is a typical actor's brand-more comical than objectionable. We kidded him unmercifully about the frank pleasure he got from a mirror, but he was so good-natured and always so anxious to

do one favors, it was easy to forgive him this one harmless hobby. After all, many an actor's special tricks were first done with mirrors-and that may have had something to do with Manson's ability to steal any scene he was in.

We worked on the play under constant peril of losing our leading man or others of the cast at any moment. Every so often we had to apply for renewal of their temporary hold orders, and there was always an excellent chance that reprieves wouldn't be granted or would arrive too late to do any good. As persistently as the hero of early movies used to save the heroine from on rushing trains, we had to save Ross from offrushing trains. He was snatched from eleven shipping lists in the nick of time.

This suspense was complicated by the hoax I had perpetrated and my fear of its discovery and consequences. Ross and I didn't trust our guilty secret even to the rest of the cast, though naturally Gary knew it. I prefaced some of my stage directions with "Ross, don't you remember how you did this bit for Abbott?" And then I'd show him how Frankie Albertson had done it, while Ross unhappily had to pretend he had been dope enough to forget it.

Once when I knew the zero hour was approaching for Ross again, I sent him to the Records and Assignment Office to find out whether his hold order had been renewed.

"Well, well-another Brother Rat deserting a shrinking shipment?" Lieutenant Paaris quipped. He consulted his records, then gave Ross a quizzical look. "This is very unorthodox, Elliott," he said. "You are not here. You are at Fort Jay."

"Are you sure?" Ross asked like a nitwit.

"Wait-I will find out what you are doing at Fort Jay," the Lieutenant said with a twinkle.

He called Fort Jay long distance. "I am trying to trace a Private Ross Elliott, serial number 32163357, who came through Camp Upton. Do you have him at Fort Jay?"

The clerk checked and reported back, "We had that man here last Wednesday, Lieutenant Paaris. But he has been sent

to Mitchel Field."

"You seem to be on detached service, Private Elliott," Lieutenant Paaris commented with a sly wink. "Your records got detached from your hold order. Shall we now call Mitchel Field, and see whether you are keeping out of mischief there?" "Yes, he's here in Headquarters Squadron," Mitchel Field answered.

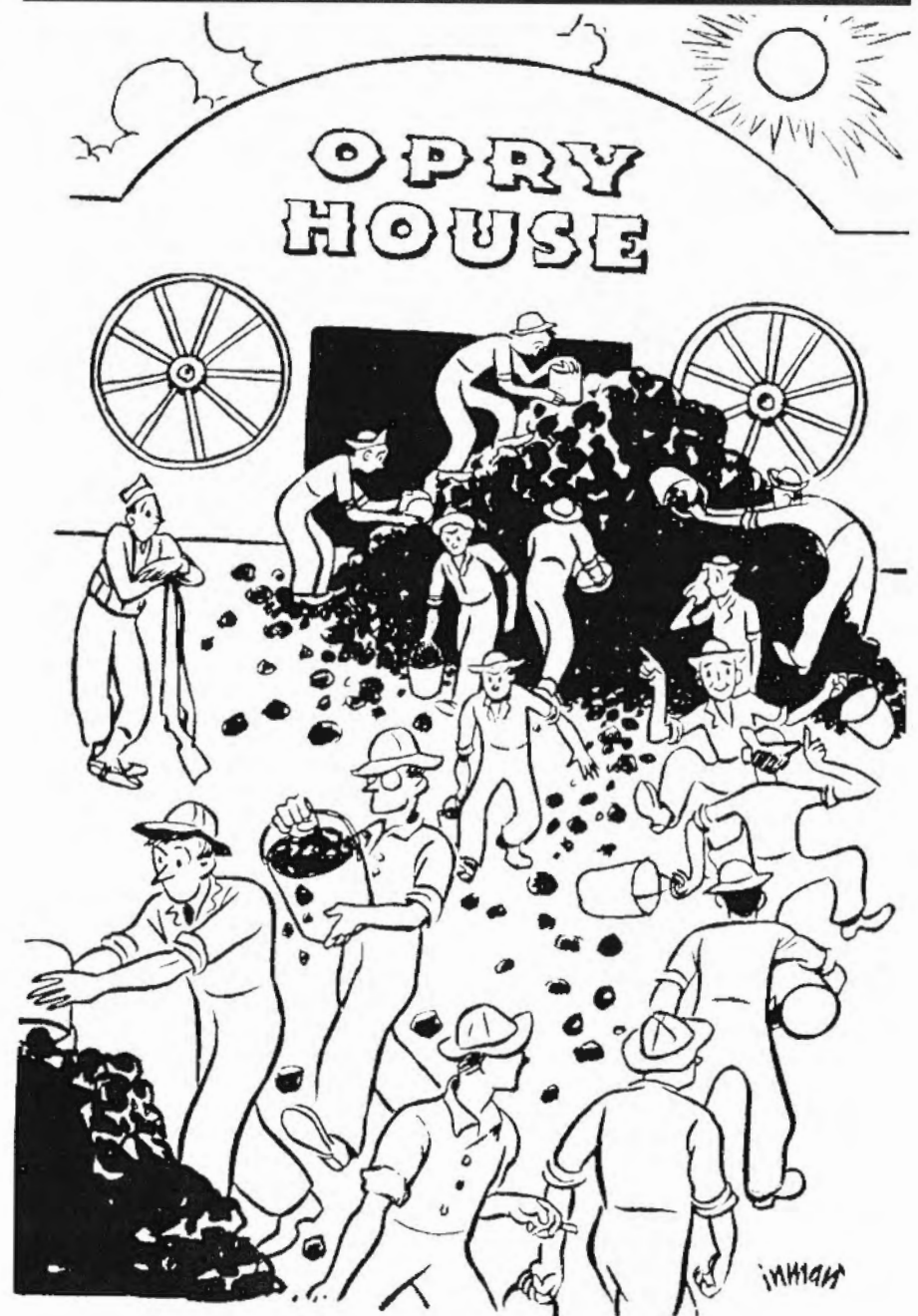
"What a coincidence," Lieutenant Paaris drolly replied. "He is also in my office!" And, turning to Ross, "How you do get around!"

But we went on with preparations for the play, despite all the unforeseen obstacles. Pete Feller got hold of some old canvasses from the Metropolitan (Opera House, not Museum), cut them down from sixteen feet to six, and Al Reuben's brush strokes demoted a castle to a simple southern home. Al had been a master advertising-display artist in civilian life. Rosie made special musical arrangements. On the afternoon of the scheduled preview for the selectees we found ourselves ready with the equivalent of a very good summer-stock production of Brother Rat.

During our dress rehearsal an expressman brought three enormous packages, addressed to Captain Rankin, into the Opry House. I signed for them and kept wondering what they contained. Finally I gave one of the packages a playful tap with the toe of my boot, and GI shoes being what they are, it was immediately apparent that the Philip Morris Company wished to be remembered to us.

Word quickly leaked out among the cast, and so did the dozens of cartons of cigarettes. They were obviously meant for distribution, and why worry Captain Rankin with that responsibility, the boys reasoned solicitously, when they could so easily bear the burden themselves?

It developed, however, that the cigarettes were not exactly the windfall they appeared to be. They were for distribution all right, but to our opening-night audience. Little Johnny, the human trademark of the Philip Morris Company, was coming out to do the honors. Captain Rankin was expecting the packages,



Ten tons of orphan coal were left on our doorstep

and when he inquired about them, I had to tell him I had locked them in the closet for safekeeping. It so happened that I wasn't able to find the key until after I had canvassed my Brother Pack Rats. One of the fellows was most unhappy when I personally supervised the purging of his barracks bag. That single operation netted a dozen cartons, but all told, I was able to recover only about two-thirds of the loot. Pressed for time to cover up the deficit before the Captain returned, we hurriedly removed the packs from their cardboard cartons and threw the empty cartons into the large boxes first, dumping the loose packs over them. Thanks to the false bottoms, the packing boxes had the appearance of being full and brimming over with packs of cigarettes.

One trivial detail was overlooked until the last minute .. As there were at least ten thousand Army cots at Upton, nobody got excited about where we were going to get the three needed as props in the play until it became all too apparent that not one of those ten thousand cots was destined for a theatrical debut. A memorandum receipt would have to be signed, we discovered, before any cot could be removed from its officially designated position. Since the necessity for doing so under the present circumstances had never arisen before, the War Department had made no ruling on it and no one had the authority to sign such a receipt.

There being no time to haggle with Washington over the matter, we tore out for the nearest town and swooped down on the Army-Navy Store, waving our own pocket money and demanding three Army cots pronto for Camp Upton.

The clerks thought we were nuts, but our money talked more coherently than we did and we rushed back to the Opry House with the cots.

Little Johnny arrived, flashing his imperishable smile. I hadn't seen him since the day we had met registering at the draft board. Of course, Uncle Sam didn't CAL-L ... F-O-R ... PHIL ... IP MOR ... RIS' call boy—he's only 4-F tall.

Just before Johnny started to distribute

cigarettes to the audience, he brought an armload of the packs up to the cast. To him that hath shall be given.

With the audience and the curtain waiting for our scene shifters to arrive, we learned the latter had been quarantined in barracks. Our frantic efforts to corral volunteers met with failure until someone had the bright thought of sending Dick Bernie out in the colonel's uniform which he wore in the play. He strode pompously down the street and, scowling arrogantly at the first four selectees he came upon, brusquely ordered them to report for backstage duty. They stopped cowering and got suspicious when they saw he was in the cast. But we managed to avert a labor walkout that would have been disastrous by saluting Dick constantly backstage and alluding frequently to the "inestimable prestige" his presence lent our play.

After the final curtain the beguiled stagehandswatched with chagrin as Dick took off his mustache and substituted his private's coat for the one with the eagles. Grumbling vague threats about reporting him for impersonating an officer, they wanted Dick's name.

Dick pushed them gently off the stage. "Please go away," he urged. "I haven't time to sign auto-graphs."

The *premiere* was a great success, justifying the devious scheming that had made it possible. But my impulsive whopper about Ross's triumph in the original production came back to haunt us, and the danger of its exposure grew nightly. I had foolhardily assumed it would be forgotten after serving its purpose. But Mike Wardell unwittingly perpetuated the fraud for all time when he wrote the advertising poster copy and had it approved by the Captain before I could change it. Then, of course, it was too late to do anything about it without jeopardizing the fragile chain of temporary hold orders that held the cast together.

It had been simple enough to hoodwink the officers. They were concerned with other matters than who played what in a 1937 Broadway show. But we were embarrassed regularly by puzzled mem-



bers of our audiences who had also seen the original production and insisted on trying to solve the mystery of why they didn't remember Ross in it. We invented all sorts of reasons—they must have seen it before Ross joined the cast, or the week he had laryngitis and his understudy substituted.

Keeping up this chicanery was a two-man job. Whenever Ross looked ready to crack under the strain, I'd give him a pep talk, and when I was sure we couldn't stave off detection any longer, Ross would buck me up. Gary Merrill enhanced our jittes with fiendish glee by reading or pretending to read from Army regulations a wide variety of punishments for intentionally falsifying reports to a superior officer.

The menace of a scandal over not having a past dogged Ross's trail even beyond the run of *Brother Rat*, right up to the opening of *This Is The Army* Carl Fisher, whom I had known as George Abbott's nephew and business' manager, now serving Uncle Sam and *This Is The Army* in those capacities, asked me one day for a list of the members of the cast

who had worked for Abbott. The producer wanted to dedicate his program ad to them.

With some misgivings I included Ross Elliott's name and watched Carl anxiously. I could see him hesitate when he came to it.

"Are you sure Elliott worked for us, Ezra?" he asked doubtfully. "I don't remember him at all."

"He was in *Brother Rat* a few days," I said weakly. "I think you were on your vacation at the time."

Abbott himself subsequently visited us backstage, and I thought sure the jig was up when he shook hands with all of "his boys"—all but Ross. I brazenly told him he had skipped one and pushed Ross at hurr under the baleful eye of Captain Rankin. "I've hired so many people," Abbott apologized making a pathetic effort to recognize his former "star."

I drew Captain Rankin aside and explained, "Mr. Abbott has spells of amnesia. But don't mention it—he's very sensitive about it."

Phil Harris & Alice Faye Show

To determine what show was the funniest program on radio would not be a simple task. Some might select one that produced the most jokes per half hour or one that generated the longest laughs from the studio audience or one that kept the chuckles rolling for twenty years or more. But if the criterion for funniest show is which one could make us laugh out loud both then and now a leading candidate for that honor would be The Phil Harris-Alice Faye Show.

Credit for the funny lines on the program should be given first to Ray Singer and Dick Chevillat. Singer and Chevillat belong in the pantheon of radio comedy writers with Paul Rhymer, Fred Allen, Don Quinn and Phil Leslie, and the Benny team, all of whom richly deserved the billing they received at the beginning or closing of the program. Singer and Chevillat's special talent was tailoring wisecracks to character so they made certain that the principals on the Harris-Faye show had enough foibles so they could hang an infinite number of gags upon them.

Much of the humor revolved around Phil's character or lack of same. His vanity about his looks and singing was always good for some jokes about curlers, mirrors, gold records, and southern cooking. His affinity for the bottle was evidenced every time he expressed his distaste for water or milk. And his propensity for getting into ridiculous situations was due to his bullheaded pride and his gullibility, both of which seem to have no bounds. One fascinating aspect of the Phil Harris on this program was an outgrowth of the character he played on Jack Benny's show: he was a glib illiterate. He spelled blood b-l-u-d and thought the Eiffel Tower was in New York City. Words like

impecnably, indubitably regularly tumbled out of his mouth.

Yet at the same time he could be charming with a line of self-confident patter followed by a sobriquet. Nobody had a greater reservoir of cognomens than Harris did. Clyde and Myrtle were his favorites, but those around him were just so likely to be called Ogle, Thorpe, Hastings, Casper, Herman, Thelma, Ruby, Clovis, Louella, Mercedes, Hershel, or Bernard. Ed Wynn was the perfect fool; Phil Harris was the perfect cool fool. When Phil wasn't the butt of the humor, Alice frequently was. The wealth that she had supposedly amassed from her career as screen queen was often milked for laughs. Her age was the subject of numerous jests such as "When I was in the fifth grade, my mother took me to see her in..." Little was sacred on the show, for Alice was periodically ribbed about that other subject that was not to be mentioned to women, her weight.

Alice's chief source of irritation was often not Phil but rather his left hand man, Frank Remley. Remley's vocation was playing the guitar badly. His avocation was wrecking the Harris house and straining the Harris marriage. He loved cards, booze, and women, his business associates were heading toward or had just emerged from the penitentiary, and he was totally irresponsible. In short, he was just the sort of foil needed to stir the plot. It would probably rankle Frankie to be called a foil. In one episode he said, "Curly, you're the star of this show, but it must burn you up on Sunday when I get all the laughs." Phil replied, "But the fire's put out on Monday when I get all the money." Elliott Lewis, a versatile actor, producer, and director who worked on a score of radio programs, played Frankie



so convincingly that when we hear his voice on any other show we are tempted to say, "Why is Remley playing it so straight?" Lewis acted the part with relish, delivering his lines just the way a lovable rascal should. If awards had been given for best supporting actor on a comedy series, Elliott Lewis would have won at least a couple of them.

His chief competition for that honor might have come from Walter Tetley who played Julius Abbruzio. Julius was the quintessential wise guy, the kind of imp whose entrance speech would consist of endearing sentiments like "I heard youse guys were writing a song and I hurried right over so I could be the first one to say, it stinks. The barrage of insults he hurled at Remley and Harris usually took aim at their intelligence with his barbs often taking the form of asides like "I know everybody's got a right to be a moron, but these guys are abusing the privilege." His primary functions were to serve as unwilling guinea pig for harebrained experiments or reluctant rescuer of the maladroit pair. When he fell victim to their plots, he released his "seal cough" or sent out impassioned calls for help, but as often as not he outwitted his elders and left them with a sardonic "So long, suckers...." Rounding out the regular Cast were Robert North as Willie, Alice's brother,

and Anne Whitfield and Jeanine Roose as the Harris daughters. Willie aggravated Phil because he was everything Harris was not: effeminate, efficient, well educated, and parsimonious. Phyllis and Little Alice were more like Little Phil and Little Phil II because they frequently delivered lines not only in the style of their father but with the very same cadence (e.g. "It ain't been easy, Clyde.")

Everyone in the cast was a master of timing and delivery. The questions "This is a wrestler?" and "Are you kidding?" are not particularly amusing unless someone like Tetley can give them just that right touch of skepticism. North's smug "Good morning, Philip" gets on our nerves as much as it did on Phil's. When Lewis would say, "Some people are nearsighted. You are neareared." he had a way of making such inanities sound perfectly logical. After Remley reveals that he has a total of thirteen cents to get them into the circus, Phil unloads two sentences of priceless sarcasm: "You think it's safe to carry that kind of money around? Somebody might roll you for the whole wad." On one show when Phil says, "This'll take brains," and Remley adds, "Let's put our heads together. Alice delivers the perfect squelch: "that ain't gonna do it."

But, or course, even Groucho or W. C. Fields could not produce guffaws if given Duff. Singer and Chevillat handed the Cast a bountiful supply of ludicrous situations and snappy one liners. They made Frank and Phil the ultimate klutzes, a pair of bumblers who repeatedly dismantled the Harris house or poured money into dubious ventures. The banter that flowed between the duo were some of the best lines on the show as this excerpt from the June 26, 1949 episode demonstrates:

Harris: I've got a good band.

Remley: So has Lombardo.

Harris: So far we're even. Let's go to point two. Lombardo ain't a comedian.

Remley: You're still even.

Harris: Point three. Lombardo don't sing like I do.

Remley: That puts him ahead.

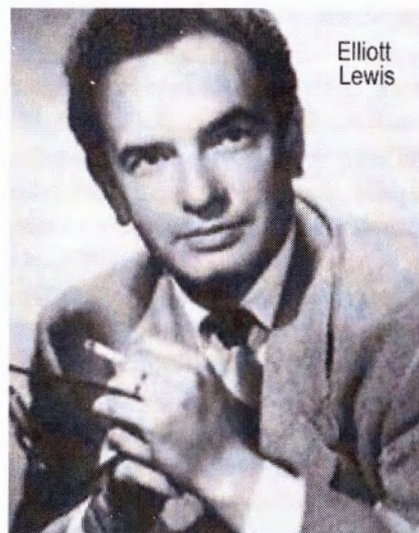
It wasn't just in the exchanges with Harris that Frankie got the big laugh. He liked to tease Curly about being hen-pecked ("Sometimes I'm sorry we married her") and his appearance "I think it's very attractive the way your chins cascade into your chest. I imagine that when you drool it looks like a babbling brook") Nothing could faze him. Even after Mr. Scott (Gale Gordon) told him "I don't want you on the show. I wouldn't have you if you paid me and you can start looking for a new job because you're fired," Remley still has the last word: "Undecided, huh?" Confronted with the problem of disguising a swaybacked horse from Alice, his recommendation was "Let's turn it upside down and tell her it's a camel." Julius's suggestion was even better: "How can we win a race with a thing like that? Every time he takes a step his stomach bounces along the ground like a basketball. I can't ride him. I'll have to dribble him around the track." Then Phil tossed in one nag gag as the plug was clip-clopping his way around the track and started to snore. "I'd wake him up," Phil said, "but believe he's going faster this way.

That series of jokes exemplifies the technique the writers used week after week: start with a predicament and build a fortress of jokes around it. The structure was so rigid that the audience was trained to expect entrances or catch phrases. When Phil asked Remley a question like "Who can you get that will be willing to jump out of a second-story window?" everyone knew that Julius would appear immediately. When Harris asked where he could buy a steer or a boat or a mink coat or anything alive or dead, Remley was sure to say, "I know a guy..." On the June 5, 1949 show after Frankie declared that after an operation "I couldn't eat any solid food. I was on a liquid diet,"

the audience began laughing without waiting for the punchline because his dis-solute reputation rendered any further comment superfluous.

Some of the most sustained laughs came not from scripted lines but from bloopers and the ad libs that Phil made after the blunders. On the April 24, 1949 show after Harris answered the telephone Alice asked, "Who was that the cone call was from?" Phil wouldn't let it pass: "You better get your teeth fixed before you go back to pictures. If you walk in there with that revolving bridge... Take it one more time, but let me stand back." When one of the girls mumbled a line on another show Harris quipped, "Why do you have to come in here every morning with a mouthful of mashed potatoes?" After Frank Nelson stumbled over a word on a 1953 show Phil had a line ready: "I'm the one that's a test pilot for Seagram's." He also made the best of his own mistakes. On the October 2, 1949 show he said, "The one with the silery, silery, silery-celery sticking up inside the garbage can," and then quickly added, "This program has been transcribed for earlier broadcast." On a 1953 program in which a crow was a major character he followed a slight flub with "might do the crow before the show's over." It's no wonder that Rexall and RCA sometimes lost part of their final commercials; they couldn't count on the unexpected happening, but perhaps they should have for extended laughs were apt to come from any source.

And the program remained funny right up to the last 1954 show. The best episodes in the series are probably those done during the 1948-50 seasons, but the later shows are amusing even after Willie had virtually disappeared, Lewis began playing a Remleyesque gent named Elliott Lewis, and the Singer-Chevillat team had been replaced by writers like Ed James and Jack Douglas. The pattern of the show changed little from season to sea-



Elliott
Lewis

son: the problem was set up with some familial persiflage, Lewis was brought in, a Harris song and a Faye song, a complication of the problem with Julius, and then the inevitable failure of Phil's plans. Audiences liked the taste of that recipe and kept lapping it up and laughing it up week after week. It was a delicious mixture of one part picaresque characters, one part farce, and two parts zesty monologue with a pinch of exquisite delivery topped in to give it just the right flavor. It's the kind of tempting dish that even today makes us come back for seconds. Or thirds. Or...

PHIL HARRIS: Born in Linton, Indiana on June 24, 1906 son of a traveling musician. Educated in Nashville, Tennessee public schools and at Hume-Fogg Military Academy. Harris was a drummer with several dance bands before beginning his own orchestra. Made his first radio appearance in 1932 on program known as 'Melody Cruise'. During 1933/34 Harris was heard on Listen to Harris on the NBC Blue network. He joined the Jack Benny program in 1936.

ALICE FAYE: Born Alice Jeanne Leppert

in NYC on May 5, 1912 the daughter of a policeman. When she was 13 she auditioned for the Ziegfeld Follies but was turned down. A year later she obtained a job with Chester Hale's dance group and appeared at the Capitol Theatre on Broadway and also toured in the George White Seandals of 1931. She worked with Ethel Merman, Rudy Vallee and Ray Bolger. It was at this time that she changed her name to Alice Faye. Made her radio debut on May 4, 1933 over CBS. That year she also made her first recording for RCA Records. In 1934 she made her screen debut in the film version of George White "Scandal" and as a Jean Harlow look-alike she sang something called 'You Nasty Man'. Miss Faye was signed to a long term contract by 20th Century Fox films. In 1937 she was seen in "Wake Up and Live" which was a satire on the radio industry and was built around the alleged feud between Broadway columnist Walter Winchell and bandleader Ben Bernie. On July 2, 1937 Alice began a half hour radio series on CBS with the Hal Kemp band. She married actor/singer Tony Martin in September 1937. The couple divorced in March 1941.

On September 29, 1946 Phil Harris took over as host of the Fitch Bandwagon program which was heard immediately following the Jack Benny program. The Fitch Bandwagon format continued through the spring of 1948 when the show became known as the Phil Harris-Alice Faye Show which premiered on Sunday, October 3, 1948 for Rexall Went off in 1954.

Alice Faye made her television debut with her husband on a Timex Hour special aired on February 6, 1959. In 1962 she returned to the screen for a re-make of 'State Fair' in which she played singer Pat Boone's mother. Through the years she has made various guest appearances on TV including a special appearance on the Hollywood Palace on November 14, 1964.

Rexall Takes Merciless Ribbing On NBC Comedy

by Danny Goodwin

This article is an example of a sponsor who was the victim of constant joking on the program it sponsored--- yet had enough of a sense of humor to continue sponsoring it without any hurt feelings. What makes this program/sponsor relationship unique--- Arthur Godfrey and Henry Morgan weren't involved with this program.

When *Rexall* signed on to sponsor NBC's *PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW* in 1948, the drug store chain was involved with one of the funniest and most unpredictable situation comedies of radio's golden age.

As with most half hour radio programs, there were 3 commercials on each broadcast. There were 2 serious commercials for *Rexall* at the beginning and end of the program. These commercials featured the "Rexall Family Druggist," as he described the services and products each *Rexall Drug Store* provided. These commercials were informative and uneventful. It was during the program's story where *Rexall* received a merciless ribbing from the program's cast.

The program starred Phil Harris as he portrayed himself (the same character he played on *THE JACK BENNY PROGRAM*). He was the bandleader of a group of misfits that made Spike Jones & The City Slickers look like the New York Philharmonic. Phil (the character) had a large ego and was very impressed with his curly hair and dimples. Alice Faye, Phil's wife on the program (and in real life), portrayed herself as a retired movie star who gave up her career to be a housewife and mother. Although she loved Phil, Alice put him in his place when he needed it--- which was often. Making life more complicated than usual was Frankie Remley (played by Elliott Lewis), Phil's "best friend(?)" Remley played the guitar on the band. His ideas got Phil into

constant trouble with Alice, the sponsor, and the human race in general. To make matters worse, Remley didn't mind stabbing his best friend in the back for his own personal gain. Julius, the deliver boy (played by Walter Tetley), admired Alice very much, but didn't share that same warm hearted feeling for Phil. Since he had this hostility inside his small frame, Julius didn't mind embarrassing and humiliating Phil and Remley when he had the chance to do so. Willie Faye, Alice's brother (played by Robert North), was another thorn in Phil's side. He was a nerd-like accountant who kept a very close watch on Alice's finances. Willie irritated Phil no end, especially when he greeted him with, "Gooooooood morning, Philip." Rounding out the cast was Mr. Scott (played by Gale Gordon), who was in charge of *Rexall's* sponsorship of the program. Among any of the major characters listed, the name *Rexall* was raked

10 New Health Aids at —
REXALL DRUG STORES
EVERYWHERE

5X
FREE
5X

You can depend on any drug product that bears the name Rexall!



among the coals on every broadcast.

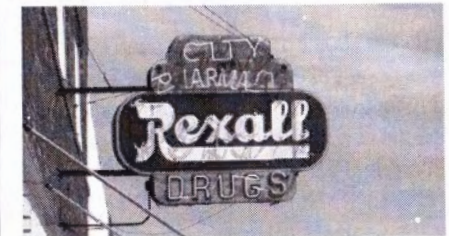
In order to keep going without interruption, the middle commercial was blended into the story line. The radio listeners never knew what would be said about the beleaguered drug store chain--- but they did know it was going to be funny. For example, the scene was in Mr. Scott's office. Earlier on the broadcast, Scott ordered Phil to fire Remley from his band. On this particular scene, Phil and Remley tried to get the *Rexall* boss to reconsider. Unknown to Scott, Remley paid Julius \$20 to come in and give him a rousing endorsement. Although he was paid the money, Julius had a double cross in mind. When he entered the office, Julius tried to butter Scott up with his "admiration(?)" for *Rexall*. Although he said he was too young to "smoke them," Julius stated, "My father have been smoking *Rexalls* for nigh on to 20 years." Needless to say, smoking *Rexalls* didn't impress Scott. He informed Julius that *Rexall* made drug

products. Intentionally misunderstanding what Scott said, Julius then confused *Rexall* for a brand of car. He stated, "My mother won't drive anything else but a *Rexall*." When Scott began to add up what was going on, Julius took great delight in exposing the master plan. The *Rexall* boss ordered Remley to leave his office immediately--- and if Phil didn't leave behind him, he would be fired, too.

This is a sample of the humorous abuse *Rexall* received on *THE PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW*. Since it sponsored the program for 2 seasons, the *Rexall* people didn't mind the humorous comments made about the drug store chain. With the sensitive nature of some sponsors, *Rexall* deserves a medal for being a good sport.



Walter Tetley



New Quick Lux Flakes Wins Hand Test

by Danny Goodwin

When New Quick Lux Flakes was introduced, it was the best Lux Flakes made to date. On paper, this new version didn't look much different from the previous Lux Flakes. The blue box was the same on the outside, and the soap flakes inside also looked the same. Although the soap flakes looked the same, there was a difference. Once it came in contact with water, New Quick Lux dissolved quickly and completely into rich white suds. There was no messy soap gunk on the bottom of the dishpan.

As impressive as quick dissolving sounded, there was another reason why New Quick Lux was better than ever. The radio listeners would know why it was better on a 1940 broadcast of the prestigious *LUX RADIO THEATER*. In between acts of the program, announcer Melville Ruick described how Lux and 5 other major soap brands took part in "The Hand Test."

The testing was done at a famous laboratory with hundreds of women participating. In front of each seated lady, there were 2 dishpans full of water. 1 dishpan had New Quick Lux mixed with water, and the other dishpan had 1 of the 5 major soap brands mixed with water. Each lady placed 1 of her hands into the water that contained the Lux suds, and the other hand was placed into the other dishpan with the suds from the other soap. This was done in 20 minute intervals, 3 times a day for 28 days--- in other words, the conditions of a typical day of washing dishes. In order to keep this test completely fair and impartial, the ladies were not allowed

to wash dishes on their own, and no creams or lotions could be used at any time during the 28 day period. After each session, scientists monitored the results of each lady's hands and kept careful records of their analysis.

When the 28 days of testing were completed, there was a very noticeable difference in the ladies' hands. The hands that were in the Lux suds were all soft and smooth, while the hands in the suds of the other soap were all red, chapped, cracked, and painful.

The ladies were then asked on their thoughts of the testing. Most of them noticed a difference in their hands as far back as the third day. While the Lux hands were consistently soft and smooth, the other soap's hands began to show signs of becoming red, chapped, and rough--- and it would only get worse as time went on. To no great surprise, the ladies were convinced to use New Quick Lux for their dishes from that point on.

For participating in the testing, some of the ladies who took part were featured in magazine ads for New Quick Lux. As the saying goes, "pictures don't lie."--- and they didn't in these ads! The individual lady's hands were pictured in color as they exactly appeared from the testing. There was absolutely no editing of the color or the picture of the hands. It was obvious to the naked eye of the reader which soap was milder and which soap WASN'T! Let's not forget, since this is an article on radio commercials, the Hand Test and its results got some considerable

publicity in the New Quick Lux radio commercials on the *LUX RADIO THEATER*.

Since New Quick Lux was a brand of soap, and the 5 major brands were also soap, why was there such a noticeable difference? The 5 brands had something extra that Lux didn't, that's why! Unfortunately, that something extra wasn't anything to brag about. The 5 major brands--- and many other soap brands for that matter, all had alkali. This not-so-amazing stuff was the guilty party for making hands' miserable when it came to washing dishes. Since this chore was usually done 3 times a day, dishwashing with soaps containing alkali would take its toll on the poor hands. On the other hand, New Quick Lux doesn't have any alkali in its soap formula. When it was used for dishwashing--- no matter how many times a day, the hands were always soft, smooth, and nice to look at after each dishwashing session.

Now that New Quick Lux easily defeated 5 of the most popular soap brands in the 28 day Hand Test, it must be the most expensive soap to buy and use. Not so! Announcer Ruick made it known to the listeners that New Quick Lux didn't cost any more than the competition--- and the BIG box was actually extra thrifty to buy and use.

Ruick also mentioned how New Quick Lux continued the tradition of washing dishes clean without its users suffering from the infamous "Dishpan Hands"--- an adversary Lux Flakes made famous in its advertising during the 1930's (and maybe even before that, but I'm not sure).

It's doubtful that husbands spent entire evenings giving their undivided attention to their wives' hands after using Lux as implied in the enclosed magazine ad, but it is safe to say that washing dishes with this amazing soap made life easier and a lot less painful for the wives who used it.

★ **LUX RADIO THEATRE** ★

TONIGHT

WALLACE BEERY
EDMUND LOWE
LEO CARRILLO • NOAH BEERY
ELLEN DREW
EDUARDO CIANNELLI

IN
"VIVA VILLA"

PRODUCED BY
CECIL B. deMILLE
LOUIS SILVERS, Musical Director

9 P.M. Cincinnati Time WKRC

Old Time Radio Series Reviews

by Bill Kiddle

CEILING UNLIMITED

The Lockheed 5B Vega, a sleek monoplane, was the 'plane of choice' for Amelia Earhart in 1932. A decade later, Lockheed Vega Aircraft sponsored CEILING UNLIMITED, a salute to American aviation. This series of dramas, hosted by Orson Welles (and then Joseph Cotten), was heard over CBS on Monday evenings in a 15-minute format. The series ran for 17 months, between 11/09/42 and 4/30/44. Actors in the series included Agnes Moorehead, Han Conried, Joseph Kearns and Lou Merrill. Music was supplied by Wilbur Hatch & His Orchestra. During the last season, the program became half-hour a musical variety show featuring Nan Wynn.

CENTRAL CITY

Some dramas focus upon breath-taking excitement in distant exotic locales, others bring the reader or listener into the arena of everyday situations found in daily life close to home. CENTRAL CITY, a quarter-hour daily drama focused upon family life in an average US industrial city of 50,000. This serial drama, sponsored by Oxydol, was aired over Blue/NBC from 11/09/42 to 4/25/44. The cast included Frank Wilson (as the "father"), Selma Royel ("mother") Eleanor Phelps ("the daughter") & a very young Van Heflin as the "fiancee."

CHALLENGE OF SPACE

Science fiction and tales about space exploration have had universal appeal on all the continents of the world, including the southern portions of Africa. In the 1960's-1970's South African Radio provided the English-speaking com-

munity with CHALLENGE OF SPACE, an upbeat science/science fiction series which utilized new, more realistic scripts dealing with epic accomplishments in space exploration. The program was sponsored by Carling Beer.

Radio Memories has a few of these programs for your pleasure.

CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON

Station WXYZ in Detroit, birthplace of the LONE RANGER and GREEN HORNET, also produced a third major juvenile adventure series, a fine quarter-hour drama, that took young listeners to the far north and introduced them to the exploits of the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police. CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON was a popular program devoted to the creed "Mounties always get their man." These early broadcasts, bearing the name CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON were aired from 2/03/38 to 11/11/51. At first, the hero, "Sgt Preston", was played by Paul Sutton. In these quarter-hour adventures the brave Mountie was supported by his dog "King" and his great steed "Rex." in their efforts to preserve law and order in the Yukon Territory during the Gold Rush of 1898.

Radio Memories has an excellent collection of 15-minute and 30-minute episodes dating from 1943 to the 1950's.

CHESTERFIELD SUPPER CLUB

For many years, Chesterfield Cigarettes sponsored a number of musical variety shows. The CHESTERFIELD SUPPER CLUB began on 12/11/44 and lasted until 1955. The series, which featured live musical performances, was heard five nights a week at 7:00 over NBC as a quarter-hour series. Perry Como hosted the program on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while Jo Stafford was host

on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Beginning in 1948 singer Peggy Lee joined in and took over the Thursday night broadcast. The program featured, as guests, some of the finest singers of the day, including Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, Eddie Fisher, and King Cole. A number of fine orchestra or the era were featured during the long run of this fine musical program.

CIMARRON TAVERN

Over the span of 17 months, between 4/09/45 and 9/27/46, the incidents in the lives of the people who frequented the Grand Hotel in Cimarron, Oklahoma in the late 1800, were depicted in CIMARRON TAVERN. Paul Conrad was featured as "Starr Travis", federal scout, and Chester Stratton played "Joe Barton." Bob Hite announced this quaterhouse serial drama aired over CBS.

CINNAMON BEAR

Over the decades many fine holiday classics have appeared to promote a festive yuletide spirit. The CINNAMON BEAR, a wonderful 26-part fantasy adventure, was created and written by Granville Heisch for a young listening audience between November 29 and December 24, 1937. The story focused upon the twins "Judy and Jimmy" and their quest for a special star for their family Christmas tree. This quarter-hour serial produced a unique collection of fantasy characters, including: a dragon, a giant, a witch, a whale, a queen, a rhyming rabbit, a magician, and a host of 'extras' --all in a mystical Maybeland.

Radio Memories has the complete run of all the episodes in this fine children's radio classic.

CHARLIE WILD, DETECTIVE

According to an old adage, "politics make strange bedfellows." In 1950 mystery

writer Dashiell Hammett and actor Howard Duff fell victim to the 'Red Scare' of Senator McCarthy. Hammett's popular crime drama THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE was yanked off the air by the sponsor Wildroot Cream Oil and replaced by CHARLIE WILD, DETECTIVE. This move proved to be a none too successful "bed-fellow." "Charlie Wild" was another typical gumshoe detective who chased lovely ladies, battled crooks of all descriptions, and engaged in fist fights in every episode. This disappointing replacement, directed by Carlo DeAngelo, had two runs: September to December 1950 over NBC, and January to July over CBS. The twin-series also had three different actors: George Petrie, Kevin O'Morrison, and John McQuade appear in the leading role.

CHARLOTTE GREENWOOD SHOW

A long-legged comedienne Charlotte Frances Greenwood is remembered as an actress, singer and dancer. She made her Broadway debute as a teen-age dancer in 1905. Over the years Ms Greenwood made an easy transition to character roles in Hollywood musicals and situation comedies on radio. Between 6/13/44 and 1/06/46 she exhibited her acting talents in two different roles. In the first CHARLOTTE GREENWOOD SHOW, a summer substitute over NBC for the BOB HOPE SHOW, our ex-high kick dancer played the role of a young reporter on a small town newspaper aspiring to a Hollywood career. In the ABC Fall offering, sponsored by Hallmark, Ms. Greenwood played a kindly aunt who raises the three Barton" children, and helps keep the family estate solvent in the small town of "Lakeview."

CHICAGO THEATER OF THE AIR

An operetta by definition is a "short opera of a light or comic character." For almost 15

years, between 5/09/40 and 2/26/55, the CHICAGO THEATRE OF THE AIR reproduced translations of well-known European musical works for radio. This highly acclaimed series produced a fine list of operatic compositions and aired them over WGN and the Mutual network. For the first seven years, Marion Claire was the featured soprano. Her leading men included James Melton, Thomas L Thomas, Richard Tucker and Jan Pierce. The dramatic cast included Bret Morrison, Betsy Winkler, Marvin Miller, Barbara Luddy, Les Tremayne and others from the "Chicago radio pool." Radio Memories has a number of these fine 60-minute programs from 1949-1950.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

For almost two decades, between 12/25/34 and 12/20/53, Charles Dicken's holiday classic, A CHRISTMAS CAROL, was broadcast on an annual basis in programs of various lengths and formats, mostly over CBS. During this long run, the leading role of "Ebenezer Scrooge" was played by Lionel Barrymore, one of Hollywood's premier character actors. Mr. Barrymore's fine performances make THE CHRISTMAS CAROL "one of radio's best-loved" single program events.

CLICQUOT CLUB ESKIMOS

To the sound of seigh bells, a team of Husky dogs, and the crack of a whip, Harry Reser brought his musical group, The CLICQUOT CLUB ESKIMOS to station WEAJ in New York in 1923. The interesting musical act, heard mostly over NBC or CBS, lasted until 4/12/36. Clicquot Club was the name of a popular ginger ale and the Eskimos were initially a six-piece banjo ensemble, soon to become a full orchestra. The Eskimos produced many recordings for Columbia Records.

COAST TO COAST ON A BUS

When the voice of a child proclaimed, "the White Rabbit Line jumps any where, any time" an ABC listening audience knew that COAST TO COAST ON A BUS was on the air. This unusual and most successful, children's program, heard for 24 years between 1924-1948, was in fact a "Children's Hour", a training ground for many young singers and actors seeking show biz careers. Milton Cross, well-known host of classical music, was the "director of the bus." The Sunday broadcasts, in various time formats, provided a variety of music, drama and comedy for "youngsters of all ages".

CONSIDER YOUR VERDICT

English-speaking audiences in South Africa enjoyed fine radio dramas on a regular daily basis long after these programs left the networks here in the US. In 1969-1970, CONSIDER YOUR VERDICT was an interesting crime drama heard over Springbok Radio at 8:30, sponsored by Bristol Myers. The program re-inacted famous British murder cases from the 1960's, and placed the listening audience in the jury box to hear the evidence and determine the fate of the accused. The court room atmosphere was enhanced a bit by the "Perry Mason" theme music so popular with US TV viewers.

Radio Memories has several of these interesting episodes.

CONFIDENTIALLY YOURS

For slightly over three months, between July 7 and October 27, 1950 CONFIDENTIALLY YOURS, an anthology of newspaper dramas were aired as a summer replacement over NBC on Friday nights at 9:30. The dramatizations were based upon the crime cases covered by Jack Lait for the old New York Daily Mirror. Mr.

Lait acted as both host & narrator in the series.

COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Alexander Dumas' famous adventure yarn, THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO, was recreated for America listening audiences in a series aired over the Mutual network at various times between 12/19/46 1/1/52. Charlton Young was cast in the role of "Edmond Dantes" a brave young Frenchman falsely accused of treason and convicted sentenced to life in prisonment. The story line tells of his escape, his retreat to the isle of Monte Cristo and his ongoing battle against corruption in 18th century France. In the cast were Parley Baer as "Rene Michon" and Ann Stone as "Dante's" romantic interest.

COUNTERSPY

During World War II and the hectic post-war era, the American people had a deep abiding interest in national defense. For 15 years, between 5/18/42 and 11/29/57, COUNTERSPY, created and produced by Phillips H Lord (of GANGBUSTER fame) promoted the thesis that the federal government in Washington was protecting our nation from foreign and domestic criminals. Don McLaughlin played the role of "David Harding", the chief government agent in the series. In 1949, the series was sponsored by Pepsi Cola and heard twice a week in the evening at 7:30 over ABC. Radio Memories has in its collection a number of episodes in this fine crime drama series.

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN

Several well-known comic book heroes brought their science fiction adventures to radio. In the 1930's listeners thrilled to the exploits of BUCK ROGERS and FLASH GORDON, quarter-hour serials

recorded in mono. Listeners to CONAN, THE BARBARIAN, have a matchless stereo experience in store when they listen to the 15-minute adventure serial episodes of their sword-wielding hero, created by Robert E. Howard, and made famous by Arnold Schwarnegger in the 1980's. These broadcasts date from the 1980's.

CONFESSION

For a few short weeks, between July 5 and September 13, 1953, CONFESION, an interesting crime drama anthology, was aired over NBC on Sundays at 9:30. This program, true stories about crime and punishment, was set in Southern California and unfolded a story in reverse order, with the criminal retracing his steps in the form of a confession to police authorities. The cast consisted of a group of fine Hollywood radio actors, including: Paul Frees, Herb Butterfield, Jack Moyle, Parley Baer, and Barney Phillips. A special note of realism was added during intermission by the commentary of Richard McGee, Director of California Department of Corrections. The program always maintained a high moral tone.

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AMOS & ANDY

- 01792 10/21/51 DePiester's Party
- 10/28/51 Engaged To
- Susan Bennett
- 01793 11/04/51 New Boarder
- Chester Benson
- 11/11/51 Sapphire Looking
- For Romance
- 00794 12/02/51 New Neighbors -
- The Jacksons
- 12/09/51 Wedding Invitation
- Mix-up
- 00795 12/16/51 To Break Up Andy &
- Madame Queen
- 12/23/51 Annual Christmas
- Show (Skips)
- 00796 12/30/51 Porch Wreckers
- 01/06/52 Keeping New Year's
- Resolutions
- 00797 02/03/52 The Piggy Bank
- (Cracked Disc)
- 10/12/52 Reward For
- Reggie Simpson
- 00798 10/19/52 Jobs As Office Cleaners
- 10/26/52 Leroy Returns From
- South America
- 00799 11/02/52 Aunt Harriet Visits
- 12/28/52 Mink Stole For New
- Year's Party
- 15440 11/16/52 The 10,000th Broadcast
- 02/14/54 Life Story
- 00800 02/01/53 Mama To Marry
- Percival Jackson
- 02/08/53 Saves Millionaire
- From Drowning

CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON

- 01356 06/12/47 #485 The Wolf Club
- 06/19/47 #486 Grizzly
- 01357 06/26/47 #487 Pet Bear
- 07/03/47 #488 The Puppy
- 01358 07/12/47 #489 Sam's Gold
- 07/19/47 #490 The Man In the
- Fur Cap
- 01359 07/26/47 #491 A Dog
- Named Mabel
- 08/02/47 #492 Messenger
- of Mercy
- 01360 08/09/47 #493 Derelict Dog
- 08/23/47 #494 The Revenge of
- Steve Carlton
- 01361 08/30/47 #495 Clue To a Killer
- 09/06/47 #496 The Stolen Pups
- 01362 09/11/47 #497 The Northern
- Pursuit
- 09/18/47 #498 The Fraud
- 01363 09/25/47 #499 Reprisal
- 10/02/47 #500 The Proof
- 01364 10/09/47 #501 The Malamute Pup
- 10/16/47 #502 The Last Cabin
- 01365 10/23/47 #503 Rex
- 11/01/47 #504 Sam's Wife
- 01366 11/08/47 #505 King's Escape
- 11/15/47 #506 The Limping Dog
- 01367 11/22/47 #507 King Gets His Man
- 11/29/47 #508 Tara
- 01368 12/06/47 #509 The Marked Cards
- 12/13/47 #510 White Man's Law
- 01369 12/27/47 #511 The Shepard Dog
- 01/03/48 #512 The Silent One
- 01370 01/10/48 #513 Tago, the
- Half Breed
- 01/17/48 #514 The Bridge

CINNAMON BEAR

- 16487 #01 Promo Show 11/29/37
- #02 11/30/37
- #03 12/01/37
- #04 12/02/37
- 16488 #05 12/03/37
- #06 12/04/37
- #07 12/05/37
- #08 12/06/37
- 16489 #09 12/07/37
- #10 12/08/37
- #11 12/09/37
- #12 12/10/37
- 16490 #13 12/11/37
- #14 12/12/37
- #15 12/13/37
- #16 12/14/37
- 16491 #17 12/15/37
- #18 12/16/37
- #19 12/17/37
- #20 12/18/37
- COMMAND PERFORMANCE**
- 06431 AFRS #307 Anita Ellis
- AFRS #353 Vincent Price (C-90)
- 06429 AFRS #314 Edgar Bergen &
- Charlie McCarthy
- AFRS #316 Celeste Holmes
- 06430 AFRS #368 Lina Romay (Vol Flux)
- AFRS #397 Alexis Smith
- 06426 AFRS #215 June Haver
- AFRS #226 Shirley Temple
- 19159 03/01/42 #01 Eddie Cantor
- 03/09/42 #02 Fred Waring
- 19160 03/13/42 #03 Kate Smith
- 03/18/42 #04 Fred Allen
- 19162 03/29/42 #05 George Jessel
- 04/01/42 #06 Kay Kyser
- 19163 04/12/42 #07 Gene Tierney
- 04/16/42 #08 Clifton Fadiman
- 13365 04/19/42 #09 Shirley Temple
- 04/23/42 #10 Pat O'Brien
- 05/07/42 #12 Betty Grable (C-90)
- 13366 05/13/42 #15 Marlene Dietrich
- 06/02/42 #16 Mickey Rooney

- 13364 05/14/42 #13 Edward G Robinson
- 05/18/42 #14 George Raft
- 13045 11/10/42 #41 Jack Benny
- 11/15/42 #42 Leopold Stokowski
- 13046 12/09/42 #42a Dinah Shore
- 01/02/43 #45 Linda Darnel
- 14543 12/24/42 Christmas Special
- CRIME CLUB**
- 16236 01/22/47 Mr Smith's Hat
- 03/20/47 Dead Man's Control
- 16579 03/27/47 Silent Witnesses
- 04/03/47 Sun Is a Witness
- 16237 04/10/47 Gray Mist Murders
- 06/05/47 Murder Rents a Room
- 18792 04/24/47 #22 The Topaz Flower
- 05/01/47 #23 Epitaph For Lydia
- 18793 05/22/47 #26 Murder On Margin
- 05/29/47 #27 Murder Makes
- a Mummy
- 18794 06/12/47 #29 Death Is A
- Knockout
- 06/19/47 #30 Hearses Don't Hurry
- 06/26/47 #31 Death Never
- Doubles
- 16238 07/17/47 Death Deals a Diamond
- 08/07/47 A Pitch In Time
- 18795 07/24/47 #35 Serenade Macabre
- 07/31/47 #36 Self Made Corpse
- 18867 12/02/46 #01 Death Blew Out
- the Match
- 03/13/47 #16 Fear Came First
- CRIME DOES NOT PAY**
- 04543 10/10/49 #01 The Kid With a Gun
- 10/17/49 #02 All-American Fake
- 04544 11/07/49 #05 Trigger Man's Moll
- 11/14/49 #06 Body of the Crime
- 04545 11/21/49 #07 Summertime Take
- 11/28/49 #08 Female of the
- Species
- 04546 12/05/49 #09 A Piece of Rope
- 12/12/49 #10 Gasoline Cocktail
- 04547 12/19/49 #11 Dead Pigeon
- 12/26/49 #12 Glossy Finish

04548	01/02/50 #13 Clothes Make the Woman	06298	02/13/50 Captain Rock
	01/09/50 #14 Law of the Jungle		02/20/50 The Greek Connection
04549	02/13/50 #19 For He's a Jolly Good Fellow	05722	02/20/50 Assignment: The Greek Connection
	02/20/50 #20 Death On the Doorstep		03/06/50 Assignment: Wire Spool
04550	02/27/50 #21 Kangaroo Court	05723	03/20/50 Assignment: International Blackmail
	03/06/50 #22 What's In a Name		03/27/50 Assignment: The Sheik's Secret
04551	03/27/50 #25 Thick As Thieves	05724	04/10/50 Assignment: Pirate Loot
	04/03/50 #26 Ingenious		04/17/50 Assignment: UFO's In Ecuador
04552	05/08/50 #31 Don't Write - Telephone	05725	04/24/50 Assignment: The Nazi & the Physicist
	05/15/50 #32 Between the Dark & the Daylight		05/03/50 Assignment: Sabotage In Paris
04553	05/22/50 #33 The Second Hand Pistol	08875	05/10/50 Assignment: (No Title)
	05/29/50 #34 Imported Headache		05/17/50 Assignment: The Lost City
04554	06/19/50 #37 Clipjoint	08876	05/24/50 Assignment: Burmese Witness
	06/26/50 #38 The Professor Pulls a Switch		05/31/50 Assignment: Little White Pill
04555	07/03/50 #39 The Lady Loves Kittens	05728	06/07/50 Assignment: Deadly Bacteria
	07/10/50 #40 Once Too Often		06/21/50 Assignment: Lefty & Sam
04556	07/17/50 #41 Burglar Alarm	05729	07/26/50 Assignment: Five Gardenias
	07/24/50 #42 Horseshoes Are For Luck		08/02/50 Assignment: Vienna Mystery
04557	07/31/50 #43 Beauty & the Beast	05730	08/09/50 Assignment: Death Drums
	08/07/50 #44 Giddyup Horsey		08/16/50 Assignment: Hired Killer
DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT		08877	08/23/50 Assignment: Bombay Gun Runners
05718	07/09/49 Assignment: Relief Supplies		08/30/50 Assignment: Guided Missile
	07/16/49 Assignment: Sunken Ships	05732	09/06/50 Assignment: Balkans
05719	07/23/49 Assignment: Nigerian Safari		09/27/50 Assignment: Latin America
	08/06/49 Assignment: Millionaire Murders		
05720	08/13/49 Assignment: Alien Smuggling		
	08/20/49 Assignment: File #307		
05721	02/06/50 Assignment (No Title)		
	02/13/50 Assignment: Captain Rock		

CHUCK WAGON JAMBOREE (NEW)

22357 #85 Sweet Betsy From Pike

#86 Mama Don't Allow

#87 Mail Order Mama

#88 Keep On The Sunny Side

22358 #89 Jubilo

#90 I'm Riding That Long, Long Trail

#91 O Dem Golden Slippers

#92 It Ain't Gonna Rain No More

22359 #93 Down Quintana Way

#94 Way Down In Dixie

#95 Waiting For The Robert E. Lee

#96 Michael Finnegan

THE LONE RANGER (NEW)

22378 07/01/40 #1160 Hold-Up Stagecoach

07/03/40 #1161 Gunpowder Ballots

22379 07/05/40 #1162 Sheep In Wolf's Clothing

07/08/40 #1163 Outlaw Valley

22380 07/10/40 #1164 Double Masquerade

07/12/40 #1165 Rendezvous With Death

GREEN HORNET

10636 05/05/38 The Political Racket

10/31/39 Parking Lot Racket

18483 06/15/39 #350 Justice Wears A Blindfold

07/06/39 #356 Disaster Rides The Rails

20890 10/12/39 #385 Michael Parole Board Racket

10/17/39 #386 Property Tax Racket (Brief Speed Flux)

18486 11/25/39 #397 The Smuggler Signs His Name

03/12/46 #746 The Letter

20891 12/09/39 #401 Phony Accident Racket

12/14/39 #402 Carling Tells All

20892 12/16/39 #403 The Writer's Racket

12/21/39 #404 Waiter's Union

20893 12/30/39 #407 Snavely, The Crooked Politician

01/04/40 #408 The WPA Graft

09481 09/27/40 Votes For Sale

10/03/40 The Highway That Graft Built

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