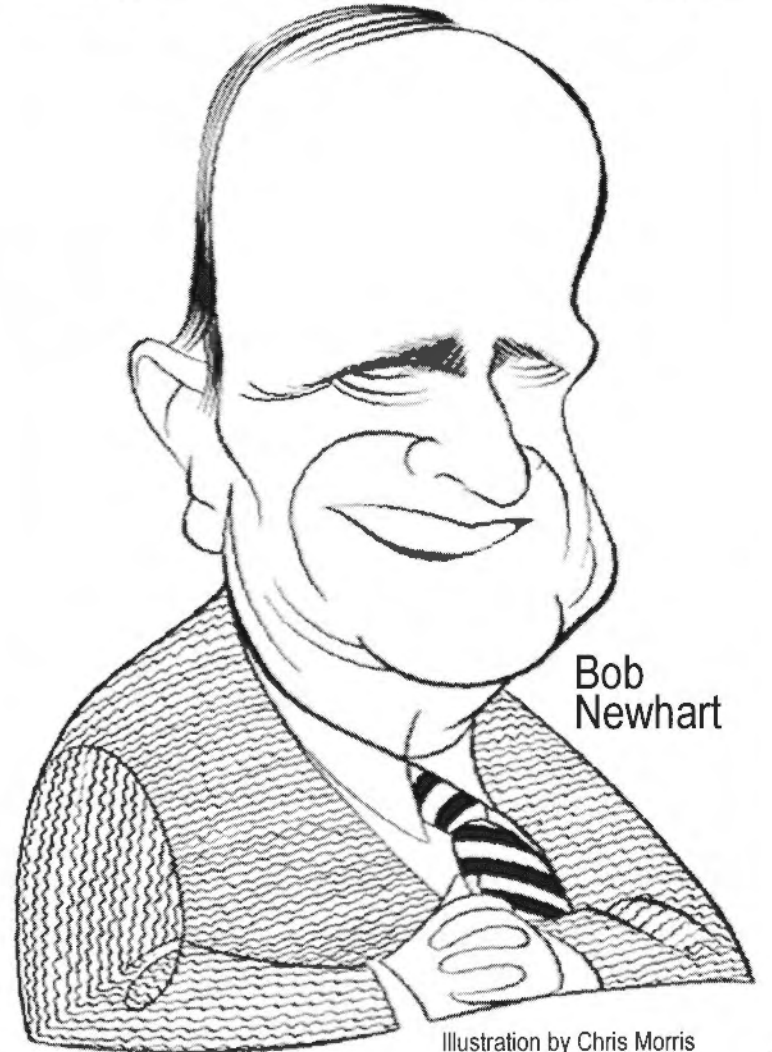


# Old Time Radio **DIGEST**

No. 138

Summer 2012 \$3.75



Bob  
Newhart

Illustration by Chris Morris

# Old Time Radio DIGEST

No.138

Summer 2012

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- 8:00 PM Dennis Day
- 8:30 PM The Great Gildersleeve
- 9:00 PM Duffy's Tavern
- 9:30 PM Mr. District Attorney
- 10:00 PM The Big Story
- 10:30 PM Jimmy Durante Show
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- 11:15 PM Peter Donald Show

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Wednesday, February 11, 1948

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# ACADEMY AWARD

by Dee Neyhart from the Digital Deli 2011©

*Long time friend of and contributor to Digital Deli Too, Jim Hilliker, has graciously permitted us to reprint his fascinating "An Unofficial History of the Academy Awards® on Radio" article of February 23rd 2012:*

## **An Unofficial History of the Academy Awards® on Radio** by Jim Hilliker

This essay is in part about Academy Award®/movie history. Because of my intense interest in early radio history, I thought it would be fun to trace the earliest years that this ceremony or any part of the Oscar® ceremony was ever presented on the radio, especially in the Los Angeles area. Then, my idea grew to try and include the entire history of the Academy Awards® on the radio. We know that the first year the Oscars® were seen on television was in 1953, and the first year it was broadcast in color on TV was in 1966. But, before television, the movie industry publicized their annual awards through the newspapers and gradually by using radio broadcasts too.

Did you know that the last time the Academy Awards® produced a broadcast for only radio was in 1968? It was heard over ABC radio's Entertainment Network, separate from the ABC television broadcast. And, the very first time the Academy Awards® show was broadcast from beginning to end for a network "coast-to-coast" radio audience (and on Armed Forces Radio for the U.S. troops overseas) was in 1945 on more than 250

stations affiliated with the Blue Network of the American Broadcasting Company, and locally on KECA-790 in Los Angeles (now KABC). That network is known today as simply ABC.

Here is what I've discovered so far about the years that any part or all of the Academy Awards® ceremonies were heard on the radio, first in Los Angeles and later across the nation.

### **1930 to 1932**

April 3, 1930---It was only the second year of the Academy Awards® and KNX in Hollywood was the first radio station to carry part of the awards, during a 1-hour broadcast. (KNX had used their station slogan "The Voice of Hollywood" since 1924) The radio log page for the Los Angeles Times on this date does not list this broadcast, but the Academy says it took place, so it most likely did air on KNX that evening.

November 5, 1930---Again, KNX at 1050 on the radio dial was on the scene of the Academy's banquet, as the station aired part of the 3rd annual awards at 10 pm. The listing in the radio page of the newspaper reads: "KNX-Will Hays Banquet." Mr. Hays was one of the speakers at the Motion Picture Academy banquet. There was also a program from 8 to 9 pm on KHJ-900 that night on the CBS west coast network listed as George Olsen and Hollywood celebrities. It's possible that this program may have had something to do with the movie awards being given out

that evening, but I'm not certain. November 10, 1931---The headline in John S. Daggett's Los Angeles Times radio column reads, "Film Academy On Air Tonight." From the Biltmore Hotel, KHJ-900 on your dial, and the Don Lee CBS/Columbia Broadcasting System West Coast network was there to bring listeners the 4th Academy Awards presentation at 10:15 pm. It is described as "the largest social event of the screen year." With the hook-up to the Don Lee-CBS West Coast network, that meant that besides being heard in the Los Angeles area over KHJ, the film awards would also be heard over KFRC in San Francisco and Don Lee stations in San Diego, Santa Barbara, Bakersfield, Fresno, Sacramento, Stockton, Portland, Oregon, plus Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane in the state of Washington. Here's the link to read the newspaper radio column about the broadcast that evening.

November 18, 1932---The radio log for the Los Angeles Times shows that KFI owner Earle C. Anthony's other Los Angeles station, KECA-1430, at 9:30 pm would carry "The Motion Picture Academy of Arts", as it was listed in the paper.

Also, on the night before the 5th edition of the Oscars® took place, radio station KECA presented a half-hour program called "Hollywood On the Air." Its purpose was to have various actors, directors, and others talk about the Academy Awards and the purpose of the Academy. The official Oscar® website has some short audio clips taken from that KECA broadcast of November 17, 1932, which was broadcast from Radio Pictures Studio in Hollywood (later known as RKO Studio). Those heard on the broadcast include Conrad Nagel, screen writer Howard J. Green, director Frank Capra and Mary Pickford, along with

REMEMBER TO

**Listen**



## **6:00 p. m. FRANK SINATRA SHOW**

Soft music . . . soft, romantic songs with Frankie on the lyrics.

## **6:30 p. m. DINAH SHORE SHOW**

Wandering minstrel Burl Ives joins Dinah and Humorist Peter Lind Hayes in a full half-hour of fun.

## **7:00 p. m. ACADEMY AWARD THEATRE**

Screen Star Joan Loring plays in the sinister drama, "Guest in the House."

1160 on your dial

**KSL**



September, 25, 1946

Clyde Lewis and his orchestra and KECA announcer John Trottell.

Click on this link and scroll down to hear the four clips from that program. It's interesting to hear director Frank Capra talk about how the public had likely already made up their minds as to their favorite picture, actor and actress of the previous year. He also asked the listening public to write in to the Academy to let them know why their opinions differ from the Academy, after the awards are announced. The full 30-minute recording of this program is available for listener use at the Margaret



Herrick Library in Beverly Hills.

### No Oscars On Radio From 1934 to 1938

While the radio coverage of the Academy Awards® was short and to the point during those early years, for some unknown reason, a radio broadcast of the Oscar ceremony in Hollywood did not take place from 1934 through 1938, and there was no ceremony in 1933. One possibility is that newspaper publishers may have put pressure on the Academy to not allow radio coverage, so that the papers could have the story first. But, more research will need to be done to find out if that was the case.

### Unauthorized Broadcast Attempted in 1939

There was supposed to be a short radio broadcast of the winners in 1939, after the Academy Awards® banquet had ended that night. However, the Academy says that instead, a short unauthorized broadcast of the Academy Awards was heard briefly on KHJ radio at 900 on the dial. I would like to thank reference librarian Libby Wertin at the Margaret Herrick Library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences® for her research into this broadcast. She has told me that it was radio station KHJ and announcer George Fisher who took part in the unauthorized broadcast of the Academy Awards from the Biltmore Hotel on February 23, 1939.

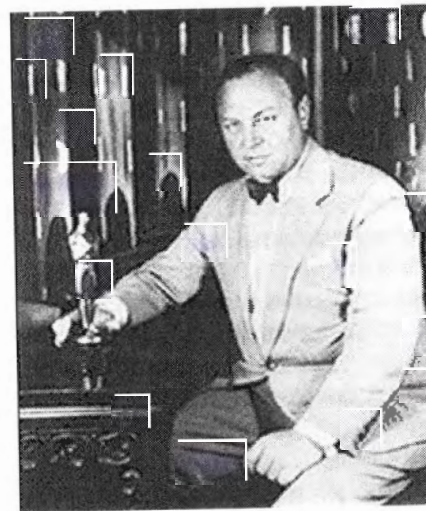
KHJ had planned and was authorized to announce only the names of the winners after 11 p.m. from the Biltmore in a news-type broadcast. So, they had their equipment set up to go on the air. But, KHJ was not authorized to broadcast the entire ceremony itself from beginning to end.

A recording of the unauthorized KHJ broadcast does exist at the Academy's library. Preservation and listening copies have been made of the recording, and are available for use in the library. The

broadcast lasted only about 12 minutes. It ended when Biltmore management shut down the broadcast. (Source: Music and Recorded Sound Collection, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences®.)

Because the written transcript of the 1939 KHJ Oscar® broadcast is a bit long, I will summarize a few of the highlights. The air check was recorded by the Electro-Vox Recording Studio at 5546 Melrose Avenue. The recording begins with the "Star Spangled Banner," as most of the early Academy Awards® banquets did in those days. The first eight minutes of the recording are related to the Awards Show. KHJ announcer George Fisher was said to be upstairs from where the banquet was taking place. After some applause, Fisher announces that the awards presentation has begun. He tells the listeners, "Now I'm going to pause for just a moment to continue my reading of the awards, as we will not be able to pick up the announcements from below, because of the fact that they take so long in-between announcements." He continues reading some of the Academy Award® winners as Academy President Frank Capra was introduced by Basil Rathbone. At one point during his short broadcast, Fisher tells the radio listeners, "I must speak quietly for fear that my voice may be heard downstairs." I will personally comment that my guess is that remark shows that Fisher knew he was not supposed to be conducting this broadcast of the awards show, and he was afraid he would be discovered by Academy and/or hotel officials.

Next, KHJ announcer Don Kurlen makes a comment on seeing Spencer Tracy at a banquet table. A third person present,



*Emil Jannings recipient of first Academy Award® (for Best Actor) May 16 1929*

KHJ engineer Hudson Lyons, is referred to by Fisher. Fisher then continues talking and the Best Song award winner is announced as "Thanks For the Memory." Fisher pauses to listen to the song as it can be heard over the air playing in the background. For the next 4 minutes, Fisher's voice is no longer heard. On the recording, applause is heard and the nominees for another award are announced. Then, there are muffled voices heard saying, "If you don't go, I'll carry you out if you don't go." There are shuffling sounds, some music and then silence, as the broadcast was closed down by Biltmore management.

Music is next heard on the recording, with radio programming now apparently continuing from the studio. At the end of the song, an announcement is heard: "This is the Mutual-Don Lee Broadcasting System." Then, there's a pause of about 12 seconds, followed by a station identification announcement, and apparently the

beginning of a commercial: "KHJ, Los Angeles. Never before such style, never before such luxury, never before such value" Music plays for about 7 seconds and then the air check ends at around 12 minutes. (Source: Music and Recorded Sound Collection, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences®.)

I asked Libby Wertin if this was a piece of unknown radio and Oscar® history, because I had never read or heard anything about this unauthorized 1939 KHJ broadcast. She said, "I do not think there is anything especially secret about this broadcast; there doesn't seem to have been much notice taken of it at the time (at least I find no mention of it in a quick search of the LA Times). I presume the memory of it just got buried over the years."

### Academy Awards® Heard on Radio Again During the 1940s

The following year, at least part of Academy Awards® was heard again on Southern California radio. The listing in the Los Angeles Times radio page for Thursday February 29, 1940 from 11:00 to 11:15 pm shows that station KNX-1050 was scheduled to air the "Film Academy Awards." This may have been for the same type of broadcast KHJ was given permission for in 1939, with only an announcement of the winners in the various categories after the banquet was over that evening, since it is on for such a short time period. This was for the 12th annual Academy Awards®, which were held at the Cocoanut Grove of the Ambassador Hotel.

One year later, the Academy Awards® were heard on the air the night of Thursday February 27, 1941. This time, it seems that this was a broadcast of the entire



Oscar ceremony. The radio listings in the Los Angeles Times at 9:30 pm show the readers were able to tune into KECA-780 to hear the "Film Academy Awards" from the Biltmore Hotel. (It is possible that part of the west coast NBC Blue Network stations were also linked by KECA to receive this broadcast, but I have not had time to check to see if that took place) The paper also lists President Franklin D. Roosevelt as one of the speakers. According to the official Oscar website of the AMPAS®, on this night at the 13th annual Academy Awards®, President Roosevelt gave a 6-minute direct-line radio address from the white House. He paid tribute to the work that was done by Hollywood's citizenry. It was the first time that an American president had participated in an Academy Awards® evening.

In 1942, KNX-1050 was there to broadcast the Academy Awards® at 10:30 pm on Thursday night February 26th from the Biltmore Hotel. Some short clips of the broadcast survive. The oscar.org website in their Legacy section has set aside a few audio clips from that night of the awards for Best Director, Best Documentary, Supporting Actor, Best Actor and Actress, and Best Picture. Go to this link and scroll down to hear the individual clips from the 14th annual Academy Awards.

In 1943, the 15th annual Academy Awards® took place on Thursday March 4 at the Ambassador Hotel. It was the final time that the Oscar ceremony took place at a banquet. While the newspaper radio log does not show any listing for the Oscars that night, Academy photos show that CBS microphones were on the stage, so it was likely KNX was putting on the radio broadcast.

On March 2, 1944, the 16th annual

Academy Awards® was presented at Grauman's Chinese Theater in Hollywood. This was the first time the awards were presented from a theater. A pre-show was broadcast by KFWB-980, with announcer Neil Reagan (older brother of Ronald Reagan). The program itself was hosted by George Jessel, who gives a history of the Academy and what its purpose is. He also does some humorous ad-libs, announces the nominations for the evening and tries to get the various film celebrities to say hello to the radio audience before they enter the theater. The KFWB orchestra also plays a medley of the Oscar winners for Best Song from the past three years.

Following the pre-show over KFWB (which was owned by Warner Brothers Studio at the time), the Academy Awards show was broadcast over KNX and the CBS West Coast feed, with announcer Ken Carpenter and host Jack Benny. Again, this was fairly late in the evening, at 10:15 pm, according to the newspaper listings for the "Academy Film Awards." Also, during the pre-show broadcast, George Jessel said that KFWB would be back on the air to announcer the Oscar winners at 10:15 too, but there is no newspaper listing of that in the same radio log for that evening.

To hear the two programs from the 1944 awards over KFWB and KNX, you may click on this link. The total length is about 55 minutes; much shorter than the 3-plus hours length of today's Oscar programs. The KNX-CBS audio recording of the awards with Ken Carpenter and Jack Benny of the 16th Academy Awards® (for movies released during 1943), is the earliest full audio recording of the Academy Awards® that the Academy library has in its collection.

On March 15, 1945, KECA-790 in

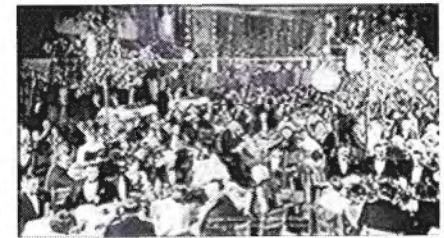
Los Angeles and the Blue Network of the American Broadcasting Company (formerly the Blue Network and the NBC Blue Network, would soon be known simply as ABC) presented the 17th annual Academy Awards at 9:30 pm. This was the first time the Academy Awards® was heard from beginning to end on a nationwide coast-to-coast network hook-up. This was also the first time that film clips were used for nominated categories at the Oscars.

The ABC radio announcer was George Fisher. He was the KHJ announcer in 1939 who was on the air with the unauthorized broadcast of the Academy Awards. (Fisher was a longtime radio broadcaster and newspaper columnist, usually working as an entertainment reporter. He worked at half-a dozen Southern California stations including KHJ, KNX, KFI and KFWB. He has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame for radio.)

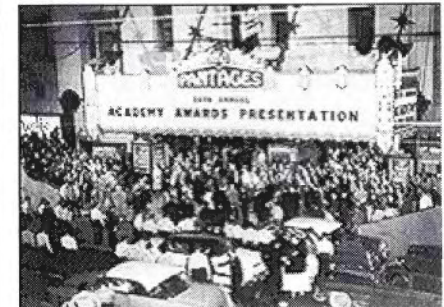
Bob Hope was the host for the evening. The recording is just over one hour in length, though it sounds as if the end of the program may have been cut off, as it ends suddenly after a closing comment from Bob Hope.

The next year, the 18th annual Academy Awards® were presented on March 7, 1946. The network radio broadcast was again carried in Los Angeles over KECA and across the nation on the ABC network, starting at 9:30 pm Pacific time. Bob Hope and James Stewart were the co-hosts. The official oscar.org website has some interesting audio clips from that night for Best Cinematography presented by D.W. Griffith; Best Writing presented by Bette Davis and Best Actress to Joan Crawford, presented by Charles Boyer and accepted by her director Michael Curtiz.

The 19th annual Academy Awards®



*May 16 1929 Academy Awards® Banquet at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel's Blossom Room*



*The 1950 Academy Awards® Presentation was held at Hollywood's RKO Pantages Theatre and for the next 10 years thereafter.*

took place on Thursday night March 13, 1947. The host was Jack Benny. The Los Angeles Times radio log page indicates that KFWB-980 carried a pre-Oscar show starting at 8:15 pm. KECA and the ABC radio network began their broadcast of the Academy Awards at 8:45 that evening. It is likely that the presentation of the Oscars® was getting longer than in past years, because the 10 pm listing for KECA shows that the Academy Awards® broadcast was continuing into the next hour. The official Oscar® website also states that this was the first time the general public was allowed to buy tickets to attend the Academy Awards.

The following year, the 20th annual Academy Awards® took place on Saturday



March 20, 1948. The broadcast again was heard in Los Angeles on KECA-790 and nationally on the ABC network beginning at 8:30 pm from the Shrine Civic Auditorium.

The 21st annual Academy Awards® were presented on March 24, 1949. The broadcast was heard over KECA in Los Angeles and across the nation on the ABC network, starting at 8 p.m. Pacific Time from the Academy Award Theater. The 22nd Academy Awards® took place at the Pantages Theater on March 23, 1950. Paul Douglas was the master of ceremonies. The radio broadcast was heard across the nation on the ABC radio network and in Los Angeles on KECA. The announcer for the radio program was Ken Carpenter, and he was assisted with commentary from Eve Arden and Ronald Reagan. The program is split into 4 parts and lasts about 1 hour and 45 minutes. At the end of the program, it is interesting to hear Eve Arden say she wished she could've talked more about the gowns the women were wearing. Television would soon let the movie fans see the Oscar® nominees and the winners on this glamorous night, and the focus on what the women wear at the Academy Awards has increased tremendously since the 1950s.

The 23rd Academy Awards® show took place on March 29, 1951 with Fred Astaire as host. The program was carried in Southern California again on KECA-790 and nationwide over the ABC network. The Los Angeles broadcast started at 9:15 pm and was scheduled to run for 90 minutes. The announcers/commentators for ABC were Ken Carpenter and John Lund.

The 24th Academy Awards® program was on March 20, 1952. The broadcast from The Pantages Theater began at 9 p.m. on KECA-790 in Los Angeles and throughout the USA on the ABC network,

with Paul Douglas the main announcer and commentator. Danny Kaye was the master of ceremonies.

#### **Oscar® Enters the Television Age**

In 1953, the 25th Academy Awards® show was seen on television for the first time on NBC-TV, from the Pantages Theater in Hollywood and the NBC International Theater in New York City, on March 19th. Bob Hope was the emcee in Hollywood and Conrad Nagel in New York. The radio broadcast over NBC radio was carried in Los Angeles by KFI-640 at 7:30 pm. Paul Douglas was the special radio commentator for this broadcast.

The Academy's Oscar Legacy section on their website has a couple of video clips of two winners from that night at this link. The one that I like the most from this 25th anniversary of the Oscars® shows one of the Academy founders, movie pioneer Mary Pickford presenting legendary pioneer director Cecil B. DeMille the award for Best Picture for *The Greatest Show On Earth*.

The 26th Academy Awards were held on March 25, 1954. The hosts were Donald O'Connor in Hollywood and Fredric March in New York. The broadcast was seen and heard on NBC-TV and radio. In Los Angeles, KFI carried the radio portion at 7:30 pm. Richard Carlson was the main commentator during the radio broadcast.

#### **Less Radio Listeners At Night, As More Homes Get Television**

By 1955, 50% of American homes had at least one television set, a number that increased to 87% of U.S. homes with TV by 1960. As the audience at night was increasing for TV, the audience for radio listening during the evening hours was getting smaller. Each year, the Academy Awards became a huge television event.

Still, the Academy continued to do a separate broadcast for radio for 13 more years, through 1968.

From 1955 to 1960, NBC radio's presentation of the Academy Awards® was heard over KFI-640 in Southern California. The station's 'clear channel' 50,000 watt signal most likely also helped bring the Oscars® to listeners without TV in many outlying areas of the west. The NBC radio commentators for the Oscar broadcasts were Richard Carlson in 1955; Jim Backus in 1956; Robert Wagner in 1957; Mel Ferrer in 1958; Paul Douglas and Jan Sterling in 1959; and Vincent Price in 1960.

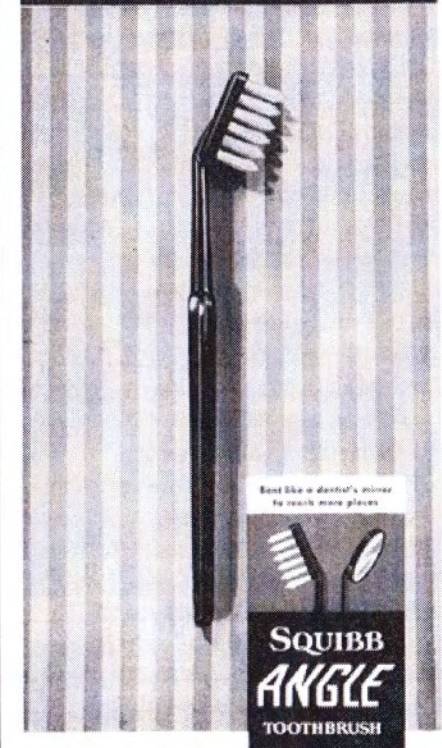
#### **The Final Radio Years of the Academy Awards**

The ABC radio network carried the Academy Awards® from 1960 through 1968. Richard Widmark was the guest radio commentator for the Oscars® on ABC radio in 1961. I have not been able to check the Los Angeles Times radio log to see if the show was heard on a Los Angeles station that year. But, radio logs for the Pasadena Star-News indicate the Academy Awards® show was heard on KABC-790 in L.A. in 1962, 1963 and 1964.

The radio host in 1962 is unknown, but from 1963 through 1968, the radio hosts/commentators were Jack Linkletter (son of radio-TV personality Art Linkletter) and Oscar®-winning costume designer Edith Head. So far, my research of the radio logs shows that the 1965, '66, and '67 Academy Awards show may not have been broadcast by any Los Angeles radio station. More research is needed before I can confirm whether or not any Southern California radio station carried the broadcast.

The 40th annual Academy Awards® was held on April 10, 1968. The ABC radio

## NOTE THAT ANGLE



compare your toothbrush with any other. You will see two important differences. First note the way the small head is bent at a sharp angle. Then note the thin shank near the head. These features make it easy for you to reach every exposed surface and crevice of your teeth—back and front, inside and out. The unique design of the Squibb Angle Toothbrush was developed after long study by a practicing dentist. You'll find this brush remarkably efficient. Your choice of hard or medium bristles.

Shown in Academy Award Theatre every Thursday 7 P.M., S.O.S.T. — CBS Network

**SQUIBB** *A name you can trust*

network had just split into four separate radio networks. The March 15, 1968 issue of Broadcasting magazine ran a short piece promoting Eastman Kodak Company's sponsorship of the Oscars® on ABC radio and television. The item said the radio broadcast would be heard over the ABC Entertainment network. In Los



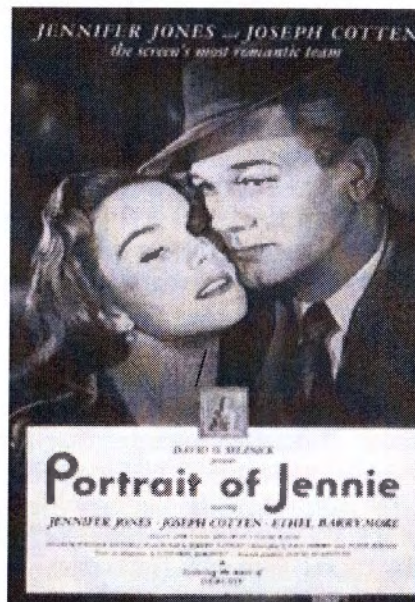
ABC Entertainment affiliate was KFOX-FM at 100.3 on the FM dial. So, while I have no concrete proof that this was the case, it's quite possible that the final network radio broadcast of the Academy Awards® in the Los Angeles market occurred on an FM station. (Also, a post on the Radio-Info.com discussion board states that a man who received an air check from an 'old time radio' tape dealer, has a cassette tape of the final broadcast of Don McNeill's Breakfast Club in 1968. The tape contains both ABC Entertainment Network ID's and the local station ID as KFOX-FM. So, if the 1968 radio broadcast of the Oscars was heard in Los Angeles, it makes sense that it would have been on that radio station.)

I would guess that by this time, the Academy knew that the handwriting was on the wall for ending the network radio broadcasts of the Academy Awards® after nearly 23 consecutive years. With the big ratings the awards show received on TV at this time, it probably was more cost effective to drop the radio broadcast due to its much smaller listening audience. It was the end of an era, as the movie fans preferred to see their favorite actors and actresses win or lose the Oscar on TV, instead of listening to an announcer describing what the stars were wearing and what famous celebrities were inside the theater. But, before television came into most homes, the magic of radio helped bring the excitement Hollywood's most famous and glamorous evening into the homes of movie lovers across the USA for several years.

These are my preliminary findings on the history of the Academy Awards® on radio. I would like to sincerely thank Libby Wertin of the Margaret Herrick Library for assisting me with research for portions

of this article. She provided details of the Academy's recordings of the 1932 KECA 30-minute broadcast of "Hollywood On the Air"; the 1939 unauthorized broadcast of the awards on radio station KHJ; and a list of announcers and commentators for the network radio productions from 1944 to 1968.

I hope to have an updated revised edition of this article in the near future, should I find any new and significant information to add to the story.



*The one exception in Academy Award and its adaptations of Oscar®-winning films was Portrait of Jennie, which didn't make it to the big screen until 1948. Academy Award adapted the book instead*



## Q&A: Bob Newhart

After 50 years in comedy, Bob Newhart enters the NAB Hall of Fame By Chris Edling

**Editor's note:** *I know you thinking that Bob Newhart wasn't on radio, so why is there an article about him in this magazine? This may be a stretch, but listening to him on records could be like listening to him on the radio. Besides the illustration made a nice cover.*

*In his late 20s, Bob Newhart was still living with his parents. Then, in 1959, Warner Bros. signed the Chicago native to a record contract, and his debut album, "The Button-Down Mind of Bob Newhart," shot to No. 1 on the Billboard pop chart, won two Grammys and made Newhart a household name. With two long-running TV series behind him, Newhart will be inducted into the NAB Broadcasting Hall of Fame on April 20.*



**The Hollywood Reporter:** You finished college, served in the military and tried law school before going into comedy. Why?

**Bob Newhart:** Coming from good Mid-western stock, you go into a profession. Comedy was never a viable alternative until one day I decided to see if I could make it a career. They had a thing called the DEW Line, which was an early warning system in northern Canada, where they paid you a lot of money to live for two years because it's so desolate. I considered doing that to get a bankroll, then coming back and trying comedy.

**THR:** What was your aim when you were starting out?

**Newhart:** It didn't matter to me whether it was radio, television or standup. In my

case, I made a comedy album, and it went through the roof. Then I had to learn stand-up because that's what I was being offered. Normally, comedians toil in nightclubs for 20 years and then get their big break, but my path was backward.

**THR:** What would you do if you were trying to break in today?

**Newhart:** When I started, I played clubs with a lot of protest songs -- "If I Had a Hammer" and that kind of thing. We didn't have Comedy Stores yet, but from what I understand that was a rough existence. Today, you just go on the Internet and do Facebook or YouTube and, if you get enough hits, you get your own TV show.

**THR:** After nearly a half-century of standup, do you still bomb sometimes?

**Newhart:** Oh, yeah. That's the adrenaline that precedes every performance. It's funny



-- other performers, like dancers or singers, will talk about how well their last gig went. Comedians always talk about the last time they bombed. We think, if we talk about it, hopefully it will never occur again.

**THR:** Do you still get hecklers?

**Newhart:** Occasionally, but it's so rare that it isn't a factor. I almost look forward to it because you can just go off on them. Milton Berle used to hide his mother in the audience to heckle him so he could practice all the put-downs.

**THR:** What is it about Chicago that produces so many comedians?

**Newhart:** For a long time, it was Jewish comics in New York, but then along came Ed Sullivan. They were doing material about subways and hailing cabs, but when you went on "Sullivan" it had to have national appeal, so humor became very midwestern for a while. Chicago had (Nichols & May), Lenny Bruce and myself. Ohio had Jonathan Winters and Tim Conway. Jack Benny was from Waukegan, Ill. I've always said you could fool a New York audience or a West Coast audience, but you can't fool a Midwest audience. They don't put on airs; they just look back at you and go, "I'm sorry, I don't get it. I don't see what's so funny."

**THR:** You've mentioned your fondness for Jack Benny before. What did you admire?

**Newhart:** His bravery. Jack wasn't afraid of silence. He relished it because he realized the payoff was going to be that much bigger. Comedians like Henny Youngman would get nervous if there wasn't a joke every seven to eight seconds, but Jack would go a minute and a half without a joke. People always said my timing is the same as Jack's. I don't think you can teach or emulate that; it's something you hear inside your head like a metronome. There's

a voice that says, "OK, now!"

**THR:** What is the biggest change you've seen in television since the 1960s?

**Newhart:** The one-camera comedy is almost an oxymoron from the way I came up. We always worked to a live audience. On "The Bob Newhart Show," my dresser of several years had a heart attack onstage and died a day later. I went to the writers and producers and said, "I can't do a show in front of a live audience this week. It doesn't seem right." I hated it. It was so sterile. We learn so much from the audience. ("Newhart" recurring characters) Larry, Darryl and Darryl were a one-time appearance, but they got such a reaction from the crowd that we decided to have them back.

**THR:** What shows do you like today?

**Newhart:** I watch Leno and Letterman because sometimes there'll be a new comic doing standup and it will tell me what people are laughing at. Occasionally, "30 Rock" and "The Office." I watch a lot of public television and nature shows.

**THR:** Nature shows?

**Newhart:** Yeah. My wife and I went on a five-day safari in Africa and it was life-changing. You're back at the beginning of time; nothing much has changed. You see animals devouring a kill, and that has gone on for a long time. Ever since then, I've searched out nature shows.

**THR:** In your autobiography, you recall a scene from "The Bob Newhart Show" where your wife reveals she has a higher IQ than you. Have you ever had an IQ test in real life?

**Newhart:** I had it tested in the (military). It was 119 or 129, which either makes me a genius or not very bright. I think I fall somewhere in between.

**THR:** What is the biggest popular

misconception about comedians?

**Newhart:** The idea that, underneath, there's a Hamlet trying to come out -- someone who wants to be taken seriously. I enjoy doing comedy and I don't have any desire to be thought of as a serious actor.

**THR:** What was your biggest mistake?

**Newhart:** What anyone my age says: not stopping to enjoy it more and being driven by things I now realize were never important. I also wish I'd married my wife earlier, when I was starting to get accolades, so I would have had someone to share that with.

**THR:** If you didn't succeed in comedy, what would you have done?

**Newhart:** Maybe become a psychologist -- not a psychiatrist, but a psychologist. Comedians are observers of people; you're never on vacation. You go to Oahu with the family and see someone walking on the beach and you think, "That's a funny walk. I have to remember that."

TONIGHT  
Those bedlamites of  
stage, screen, and radio --  
**ABBOTT and  
COSTELLO**  
note the new  
time!  
10 EWT-9 CWT  
ON THE AIR FOR  
CAMEL

## Radio Oddities

• Orson Welles's Sunday commentary over ABC is probably the only program on the air where animals are permitted to run about the room while the program is on the air. The Welles cat meanders sedately around the premises, and occasionally curls up on the script. His pet dog, Pookles, scampers everywhere and nobody minds if he yips once or twice because, as Orson says, it adds a homey note to the show. Only concession Orson made to the aghast producers was to remove the jingling license tag from Pookles' neck because, explained Orson, he didn't want the listeners to think the Good Humor man was waiting outside,

• There's a scramble among radio performers at this season (0 get jobs as summer replacements for certain shows which seem (0 be sure-fire (0 lead to permanent jobs. Prime example of this is the Bob Hope show, the replacements for which always seem to be successful in their own right under other sponsorship.

• Basil Rathbone, the hunter, heard on the Sherlock Holmes series over the Mutual network, became the hunted when he failed to arrive at a party given in his honor by members of the cast. When he was finally located, the witty sleuth had to admit he hadn't been able to find his way to the scene of festivities.

• The sound man for Kay Kyser's "College of Musical Knowledge" needed a typewriter to supply authentic dicky-dacks for a sequence in the script. He called every department in the studio before he finally located one he could borrow for the broadcast. Just before airtime a messenger delivered the machine-a shiny new noiseless!

TUNE IN April, 1946



# Coming Major

by Ezra Stone &  
Weldon Melick

## Chapter Nineteen

We spent a month rehearsing at Upton before we decamped to New York. Grueling final practice and endless run-throughs at the drop of a brass hat occupied three theatres.

As it was impractical for the government to furnish rations and quarters for us in the city, we made our own arrangements. Those who couldn't live at home doubled and tripled up in small apartments and hotel rooms. Our unicycle juggler, Joe Cook, Jr., undoubtedly numbed by this reasonable facsimile of civilian luxury, overslept the first morning and reported late for formation at the theatre. For this he had to clean the backstage latrine. It was in a shocking state, the theatre having been closed for months. Several hours later I had occasion to investigate the plumbing, and to my surprise it was spotless. On the wall was boldly scribbled (no, not what you think), "Your cooperation in keeping this place clean will be appreciated by Joe Cook, Jr." After the abbreviation "Jr." he had added in parentheses, "Janitor."

When we weren't rehearsing, we were drilling in odd platoons in the Armory at Sixty-first and Tenth Avenue. It was in the Armory, not the theatre, that I suffered a bad case of stage fright. I had been a staff sergeant for three months but hadn't yet drilled a bunch of men. I thought it was about time, so I appropriated a squad of eight and marched them round and around, scraping the sides of the place. In vain I tried to figure out how to get them in the center of the floor. My commands

echoed ad bedlam in the big hall, scaring me out of my wits. When I saw a wall or the arena rail approaching, I lost the power of speech, and the whole squad would climb over the railing into the seats before I could stop them. Or I'd get my flank movements mixed up and have them lined up facing the wall as though waiting for a firing squad. If I'd been in charge of a bunch of Commandos, they'd have accomplished their mission all right. I wouldn't have been able to stop them.

Our costume fittings the Brooks Costume Company into utter confusion. The wardrobe girls didn't know whether to send our female impersonators to dressmakers on the women's floor or to tailors on the men's floor, and neither seemed the proper place to order built-in bosoms.

There were so many complications at every turn, in fact, that Berlin bet me \$100 we'd have to postpone the opening. It did seem that we'd need a couple of miracles to manage it, but I clung to my old obsession about opening on time.

I must admit that it looked more impossible than ever at noon on the day set, July 4. The finale hadn't yet been staged with equipment, and the copyists didn't have the musical arrangements ready, after working night and day for a week. (Some of the second-act music arrived in time to be distributed to the orchestra during intermission that night.) The porters had already cleaned the theatre for the premiere, but you never would have guessed it after the assembled cast had laid a camouflage screen of assorted debris. If the first-night audience had arrived a few



The David Library that Ezra's father started for his collection of Civil War Documents.

minutes earlier, they might have been startled to see ninety of the star performers crawling about on the floor of the auditorium and under the seats, apparently grazing on cigarette butts and candy wrappers.

All the military officials had been invited to the premiere, but I had been distressed to learn a couple of days before the event that the committee in charge had neglected to make arrangements for the presence of the Mayor and Governor Lehman. The house was already sold out except for a few boxes at \$1,000 apiece. I offered to pay for one myself in order that our civil leaders might not feel slighted, and my check was accepted in the same spirit that a soldier accepts a ten-day furlough. (As it turned out, the La-Guardias could not be present at the opening but attended later in the week and paid for their third-row seats.)

Berlin paced the lobby as though he were looking for a convenient spot to have a nervous breakdown. It was the first Army show on Broadway since World War I. The

audience was expectant but skeptical. They had paid high prices for their seats. It had better be good.

Before long we knew they thought it was, and that gave us confidence. Joe Lippman's magnificent arrangement of the overture, played by the entire orchestra under Rosenstock's direction, received a tremendous ovation. There was another spontaneous salvo of applause when the curtains parted to reveal a living backdrop of two hundred men on the minstrel stands. Then in turn, "Stump" Cross and the Harlem number, Eddie Barcliff's dancing, Jimmy MacColl's impersonations, Alan Manson as Jane Cowl, and the Allon Trio, all brought down the house. We finished the second act and took our curtain calls in a golden glow. We had a hit.

But we read the rave notices of the critics next morning with mingled emotions. Success meant a long run, and although we were glad of an opportunity to show the home folks what we were doing



as soldier-actors, some of us didn't hanker to spend the duration laid up in a cast. We had hoped we might tryout on Broadway and then get on to the important business of entertaining the armed forces in camps and overseas or go into active service ourselves. We felt it behooved civilians to take care of their own morale and release able I-A's for other duties. The fact that the money we earned would alleviate suffering and hardships of comrades in arms was some consolation, but that too, we thought, might be managed in other ways.

Ralph Nelson was the envy of all those who were afraid they were going to get lost in transit. He had applied for training as a pilot in the Army Air Forces even before the show was cast and had been accepted. A lot of the boys applied for transfer to combat units during our subsequent tour, and quite a number were allowed to leave. But the War Department thought certain others were serving better in the show than they were capable of doing elsewhere.

Gary Merrill, in the three months before he passed the Air Forces age limit, diligently pursued a course of eye exercises in a desperate attempt to bring his vision up to passing standards. He took the tests time after time but never made it.

In my own case I felt strongly that the most valuable contribution I could make to *This Is The Army* had already been executed in assembling and directing it. I had purposely given myself an acting part that anyone at random could replace me in, or it could have been dropped from the show entirely without being missed. I applied several times for transfer to combat duty-before, during, and after the show's run. But each time my application

was turned down. Hank Henry expressed the disappointment a number of the boys felt when he said his sister had joined the WAC's because someone in his family had to fight the war.

I'm not kidding when I say we were Prisoners of War in the theatre after we reported in at 8:05 until the curtain rang down. MP's at the doors kept us from going outside even long enough to get a sandwich or coke. We began to talk about carrying our own emergency rations, like combat soldiers, when we left civilization behind for our nightly maneuvers back of the footlights.

One evening one of the fellows spied an ice-cream cart from his dressing-room window and enticed its owner to the stage alley, where he made a deal with him to relay a sandwich from the drugstore. This opened up a vein of three hundred prospective customers, and the vender promptly branched out into a profitable sideline of his own. Everybody was happy for several nights until the sandwich broker discovered he had a monopoly by reason of our confinement. He immediately doubled his prices, sliced the meat to a smelly, and cut out butter entirely.

This scurvy trick so galled Private Schlisserman, one of the musicians, that he went into competition with the robber by buying twenty-five sandwiches from a near-by delicatessen before every performance and retailing them to his companions as the evening wore on. Lloyd Wright worked up a brisk potato salad and cake trade, and a merger of the two sent the smalltime racketeer scooting back to his popsicles. But Schlisserman's "Pillar to Post Exchange" eventually went into bankruptcy, not for lack of trade but because the mild-mannered, classic clari-



Traffic to the Men's room was a disconcerting spectacle



career beyond a Juilliard scholarship. The boys who played the girls' parts always had the excuse of having left their pockets in their dressing rooms, and lenient Schlisserman let them keep eating on the cuff until he had lost his shirt.

Private George Meister, a backstage technician, then took over the concession on a no-credit basis. Gary Merrill became his helper to settle a small gambling debt, and the partnership persisted. "The Foodstuff Frolics" played the A. and P. circuit clear across the country. Meister and Merrill spent all their spare time shopping for bargains in milk, cheese, cakes, celery, tomatoes, ham. In New York and Pittsburgh they also rented slot-machine beverage dispensers. They had no cash register—you tossed your money into a little dishpan and took out your own change. But you did it under the shadow of a poised bread knife in the capable hands of either Meister or Merrill.

Several women's clubs in Cleveland played right into those capable but grasping hands. Thinking the lunch counter a government project, they baked a landslide of cakes and cookies in a rash of patriotism and delivered them to our unscrupulous hucksters. They of course turned around and sold them to us at a huge profit. Which just goes to show you should always investigate your charities.

The picture rights to *Tita* had been sold the day before our New York opening. No one knew yet whether Warner Brothers intended to use the Army cast, but Alan Manson, who dominated the Stage Door Canteen skit as Jane Cowl, wasn't going to get caught with his slip showing. We shortly began to notice him before his dressing-room mirror, tipping his nose up, pressing the nostrils together, inspecting

his teeth, pushing his ears back, puffing his hair forward, and examining his image by the hour from every angle. Offstage he blossomed out in tailor-made un-GI pants, with buttoned-down pockets, zipper, and pleats, Hollywood style. I guess he wanted to be a picture actor more than anybody ever wanted anything in this world.

Manson and the rest of the thirty boys who impersonated USA dancers and actresses created a sensation out front in their custom-designed low-cut gowns, featuring hair on the chest. But they created an even bigger sensation out back-in the latrine. It was always disconcerting to catch a glimpse, out of the corner of your eye, of yards of skirt breezing through the door marked "Men." The way the brazen GI hussies conducted themselves once inside the door was even more startling. Their difficulties with the unaccustomed garments were complicated by extra layers of masculine coverings underneath and would have discouraged a Houdini.

Ty Perry, however, couldn't wear either shorts or the regulation type of masculine G-string—his gown was of a soft clinging material that would have shouted their presence and spoiled the Lynne Fontanne illusion. But there was another way of spoiling the illusion that he hadn't reckoned with. We knew something was wrong when the boys in the orchestra pit began taking a hilarious interest in the show for the first time. They even looked up from the books they usually read from one music cue to the next as soon as Ty strode in and swept majestically about the stage. So Ty got himself a loin cloth modeled after one he once saw on the lee side of Gypsy Rose and joined the Wearers of Slings for Things—a brotherhood to which I already belonged by reason of the concealed

rubber bustle which served me in *Brother Rat*. And the orchestra ogled went back to their books, or the contemplation of pretty girls and stars in the audience.

Ty's unintentional exhibition was very mild compared to the private performance we gave every month for Dr. Chartock, the medical officer. In camp we would have had our regular "short-arm" inspection in the barracks. But on tour, for convenience and lighting facilities, it was given on the stage of whatever theatre we were currently playing, thereby assuming the aspect of a mass strip tease. Once there were two women in the darkened auditorium unbeknown to the Doctor who was giving explicit instructions for conducting this ceremony. I believe they fled before the actual undress rehearsal and the presentation to Hank Henry "for record achievement" of a Navy E pennant whipped up by our artist-designer, Al Reuben.

The constant dovetailing of our theatrical and military lives kept us always well supplied with such grotesqueries. One night a Colonel was backstage talking to me just as I should have made my entrance. Butting in when your superior officer is speaking is something that isn't done in any army. Neither do you edge away gradually or make a quick break for it and leave him talking to himself. What did I do? I disproved for all time that old saw, "The show must go on." The Colonel went on-and on and on. But the show didn't. At least my part of it didn't. I missed a whole scene.

I don't know how the rest of the cast coped with the situation, but no doubt the scene was much funnier without me. For some morbid reason an audience delights in seeing things go wrong on the stage.

We got terrific laughs, for instance, on several occasions when the sound equipment accidentally let out a blast like a twelve-o'clock factory whistle while I was talking to Alan Manson in the Canteen scene and I casually observed, "I think your kettle is boiling over, Miss Cowl," or "she" coyly quipped, "Do you whistle at all the girls like that, Sergeant Stone?"

My favorite ad-libs took place not on the stage but in the orchestra pit. Jack Towne, after playing his baritone sax under the stage of the Broadway Theatre in New York for several weeks, changed his seat one night to a position where he could see the actors. The next day he was heard to remark, "Gosh, what a show, fellers. They've got costumes and everything!" And Harry Rosoff, a zany fiddle player, put his cohorts in stitches at a performance in Boston by leaning over the orchestra railing and addressing a lady in the first row, "Madam, would you please take off your hat? I can't see the audience."

Then there was the time Joe Cook, Jr., dropped an Indian club while riding his unicycle along the footlights and juggling over the orchestra pit. The next night, when Joe came on for his act, the whole fiddle section, in unison and without cracking a smile, put on their combat helmets.

Incidentally those coal scuttle headdresses substantially cut us off from the outer world. After the finale curtain it was our routine to stand at ease while the company announcements were read, and those of us in overseas gear removed the sound-proof helmets along with a feeling akin to watching an old silent movie. One night, however, we were ordered to keep them on and stand at attention with arms, in deference to Colonel Darryl Zanuck who had recently made that



grade in two jumps with the speed of a wipidissolve. He had come backstage in his shining new regalia, including outsize eagles that might have come off the flagpole at Twentieth-Century Fox.

The Colonel went into a lengthy address, not a word of which anyone heard through his helmet. Our visitor's clever sallies would have met better response at Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum. Thoroughly bewildered by the turn events hadn't taken, Colonel Zanuck threw a confused look in my direction, and I Edgar Bergened through closed teeth, "Tell them 'At Ease!'" He did, and after we yelled it a few times, the boys got the general idea through their thick iron skulls and removed same. Then a good time was had by all. Especially me. I had given an order to a full colonel without being court-martialed!

Mrs. Roosevelt saw *Tita* twice while it was in New York and came backstage to compliment us and to invite us to have dinner at the White House when we played Washington. Hank Henry said, "We'll come if we don't have to do KP afterwards."

She was with Franklin, Jr., one of the times, and remarked, "You see I brought the Navy to see the Army."

"I hope you can come back again and bring the Marine," I said.

"Oh, I wish I could," she exclaimed fervently. "I don't know where Jimmy is now. He's somewhere in the Pacific," she added with a solemn wistfulness that somehow didn't belong to a First Lady. But in that moment she wasn't a First Lady. She was just one of a million mothers, anxious and helpless.

One of the biggest clicks in *Tita* was the Allon Trio's slow-motion tumbling act, which had so impressed me when I

first saw it at Fort Dix. It gave me a real sinking feeling, therefore, to learn from Alan Anderson just before a performance that little Louis Bednarcik, top balancer of the group, had hurt his thumb. Knowing that muscular injuries usually take an interminable time to heal and that Louis was indispensable to his partners, I reluctantly informed him that we would have to replace their turn with something else. But I didn't for the life of me know what we could get to fill in on such sudden notice. Poor Louis, looking forlorn, pleaded to stay in the show and promised to do tricks that wouldn't require the use of his hand. I finally consented to let them muddle through one performance so he could see for himself that it wouldn't work.

I immediately regretted my indulgence. It might ruin the show, and it wasn't fair to the act itself. For Louis would obviously have to cut out all his sensational hand-balancing tricks, and what could he possibly substitute that would be half so effective?

When the Allon Trio went on, I couldn't bring myself to watch the hopeless salvage operations. I only wanted it to be over quickly, so I could put my foot firmly down on any more such foolishness.

Suddenly I realized the acrobats were getting even more applause than usual. Puzzled, I ran to the wings. The Allon Trio was going through its regular repertoire, trick for trick, with one very minor discrepancy.

Louis was balancing on one hand instead of two.

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RETURN WITH US TO...

by Bill Owen  
 Don't 139  
 Showed!

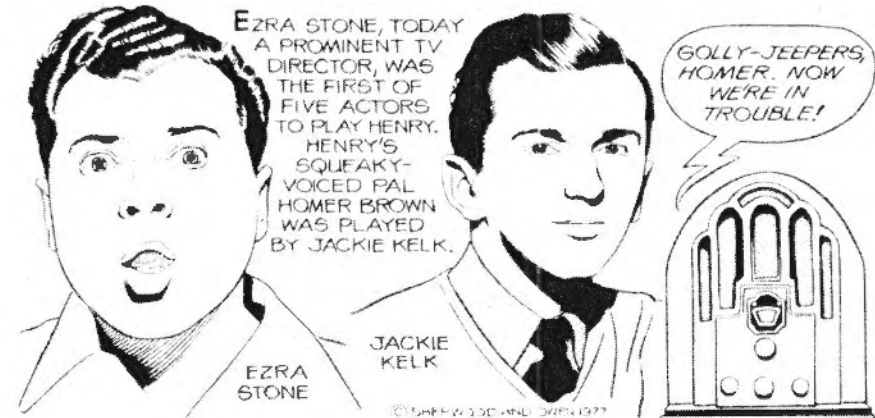
# THE ALDRICH FAMILY

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PLAYWRIGHT CLIFFORD GOLDSMITH WAS VIRTUALLY PENNILESS AFTER SUFFERING FAILURE FOR YEARS WHEN HE CREATED THE ALDRICH FAMILY FOR THE BROADWAY PLAY *WHAT A LIFE!* RUDY VALLEE ASKED GOLDSMITH TO WRITE SOME SKITS ABOUT THE CHARACTERS. THEY WERE A BIG HIT AND GOLDSMITH WAS SOON EARNING \$3,000 A WEEK AS A RADIO WRITER.



THE HILARITY OF THE ALDRICH FAMILY INVOLVED SUCH "CRISES" AS HENRY'S LOST PANTS, A TIED-UP FAMILY TELEPHONE AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS WITH HIS GIRL FRIEND KATHLEEN.



EZRA STONE, TODAY A PROMINENT TV DIRECTOR, WAS THE FIRST OF FIVE ACTORS TO PLAY HENRY, HENRY'S SQUEAKY-VOICED PAL HOMER BROWN WAS PLAYED BY JACKIE KELK.

EZRA STONE

JACKIE KELK

© SHIP WOODHEAD OWEN 1977



# Old Time Radio Series Reviews

by Bill Kiddle

## SEXTON BLAKE (BBC)

"Don't let the name fool you." SEXTON BLAKE, one of the most famous detectives in English entertainment history, was a far cry from a timid character who might be a caretaker of church property. On the contrary, back in 1893 author Henry Blyth created a luridbrawling character who many indicate "ranks second only to "Sherlock Holmes" in detective fiction popularity over a span of a century. SEXTON BLAKE came to the BBC listeners in 1967, and with William Franklin cast in the title role, our hero sets forth to solve a series of not-so-baffling mysteries assisted by his two friends: "Sgt Tinker"(a Cockney police officer) and "Paula Day" his lovely secretary.

## SHADOW OF FU MANCHU

British pulp ficator writer Rax Rohmer was greatly influenced by the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900) and midst racial tensions he invented "the ultimate villain"- a Chinese master criminal of utold wealth, intelligence and accult powers, whose goal was world conquest. In the summer of 1939, just weeks before the outbreak of World War II in Europe, THE SHADOW OF FU MANCHU returned to radio in a quarter-hour, three times a week format. The series, syndicated by Radio Associates, boasted Hanley Stafford and Gale Gordon (both of later comedic fame) in the roles of "Inspector Nayland Smith" and "Dr. Petrie", the two "defenders of Western Civilization" against what was called "the Oriental peril."

Interesting of a type!

## THE SHERIFF

Radio western dramas often had a law

officer as the featured character. THE SHERIFF (aka DEATH VALLEY DAYS) was an anthology that centered around the exploits of "Mark Chase", a World War 2 vet who returns home to his post as Sheriff of Canyon County California. "Sheriff Chase" a bachelor, uses modern crime-fighting tools including psychology and a personal bankroll to rehabilitate ex-offeners. The program, heard for six years, 6/29/45 to 9/14/51 over ABC on Friday nights at 9:30, was best known for it's sponsor Twenty Mule Team Borax. An interesting side note- Olyn Landick (a male) played the part of "Cassandra Drinkwater" (Cousin Cassie) as a regular member of the cast.

## SECRET CITY

Sometimes interesting genres fail to mix and the product, like a home-made angelfood cake, fails in the pan. SECRET CITY, a juvenile detective serial, heard over the Blue Network for eleven months, between 11/03/41 an 8/25/42, never quite reached a level of popularity with a preteen audience. This quarter-hour drama heard daily at 5:15 starred Bill Idelson as "Detective Ben Clark" who, with his mechanic friend "Jeff Wilson", tried to solve the strange "doings" of a figure known as "The Stranger" in long-vacant mansion.

## SECRET OF DOMINION

Over a span of several decades, FLASH GORDON, BUCK ROGERS, and DIMENSION X all provided radio listeners with interesting galactic voyages into new realms in time and space. Unfortunately, SECRET OF DOMINION, a reasonably well produced 13-episode story, never quite reached a high level of dramatic excellence.

The story line was serious-the world of the late 21st century is controlled by an

The practice of freedom has been crushed and only a small band of rebels seek the answer to the secret that will end the tyranny. The story is built into episodes that never quite connect, and the acting and direction never meets STAR WARS quality. **SGT PRESTON OF THE YUKON** Lovers of adventure, those who enjoy the exploits of the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police and their faithful sled dogs working in the snow-encrusted Yukon region, had a special program. For 17 years, between 1938-1955,SGT PRESTON OF THE YUKON (aka CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON) was a popular program devoted to the creed that "Mounties always get their men." The series, created by Tom Dougall, was aired out of WXYZ, Detroit. For the first nine years the program was heard in a 15-minute format. Later, in 1947 the program was expanded to one half hour. *Radio Memories hasan excellent collection of this show listed unfer* CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON which has Jay Michael cast in the title role.

## SF-68

Radio, the "theatre of the mind" was the most effective and least expensive outlet for science fiction dramas. During the 1950's many excellent sci-fi programs were heard over the networks in the US., but by 1960 all were gone as radio bowed out to TV in the production of good home entertainment. In 1968, English-speaking listeners to radio in South Africa were treated to an excellent series of 18 half-hour science fiction dramas, sponsored by a local laundry product. *Radio Memories catalog contains a dozen of these fine drama for you.*

## SEVEN FRONT STREET

The real estate agents tell us that "location is location" and the producers of SEVEN

FRONT STREET, a mystery anthology, tried unsuccessfully to establish a mystery/ adventure address at a waterfront dive. Kenneth King was the narrator-host of this short-lived series heard over Mutual on Thursday nights at 8:00. The only episode in the series to survive was titled "The Sheik", and it was broadcast October 2, 1947.

## THE SHADOW

Walter Gibson (aka Maxwell Grant) created for pulp fiction the character of THE SHADOW, a mysterious figure who was in a battle against the forces of evil. Little did this author realize at the time that his character would become one of radio's most enduring heroes. to capture the minds and hearts of radio listeners for a quarter of a century, from 7/31/30 to 12/24/54. By 1937, the fourth season, "the Shadow" had a well-defined persona in "Lamont Cranston", wealthy man-about-town, played first by Orson Welles (then by several others). He had a secret identity and the power of invisibility that struck terror into the hearts and minds of all criminals. *Radio Memories has a excellent collection of episodes from this outstanding radio drama.*

## SECOND HOLMES

"Old traditions die hard" and the image of the immortal "Sherlock Holmes" continued to burn brightly in the mind of Grant Eustace when he wrote SECOND HOLMES, a new series of programs, brought to the BBC's Radio 4 in early 1983. These were humorous cases of detective "Stamford Holmes", grandson of Sherlock Holmes. Peter Egan was cast in the title role and Jeremy Nicholas played his faithful companion "Dr. Watson." In this mini-series "Stamford," a reluctant consulting detective in our modern age, is often bored with mundane acts of crime and "Watson" has to spur him on to reach the levels once achieved by the grandfather.



All good fun! **SHERLOCK HOLMES** Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's immortal detective, SHERLOCK HOLMES was one of radio's most beloved characters. For over 60 years, between 1930 and 1993, the adventures of the great Victorian sleuth were recreated for listening audiences both here in the States and in the UK. In the 1940's Denis Green and Anthony Boucher created for radio a new series of Holmes adventures that were broadcast on Monday evenings at 8:30 for Petri Wine. This series make Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce household names. Radio Memories has an interesting collection of SHERLOCK HOLMES tapes including those of: Conway/ Bruce; Gielgud/ Richardson, Hobbs/ Shelly; Stanley/Shirley and of course Rathbone and Bruce.

#### **SILENT MEN**

Douglas Fairbanks Jr. swashbuckling hero of dozens of Hollywood films, shed some of his macho, romantic persona when he played the roles of different US government agents each week in SILENT MEN, "transcribed stories of the undercover operations of the special agents in every branch of the federal government." This short-lived program, directed by Mr. Fairbanks, was heard over NBC as a sustaining feature on Sundays, and later on Wednesdays, between 10/14/51 and 5/28/52. Many of the dramas had a strong post-war, Cold War focus.

#### **SILVER EAGLE**

According to an old adage "all good things come to an end" and SILVER EAGLE, an early evening "family" adventure series, was one of the last of it's genre to come to ABC, between 7/05/51 and 3/10/55. The program, sponsored by General Mills, was the story of "Jim West" A Canadian Northwest Mounted Policeman whose

exploits earned him the name of "Silver Eagle." Veteran radio actor, Jim Ameche, was cast in the title role and his side-kick "Joe Bideau" was played first by Mike Romano and later by Jack Lester. Other featured characters were "Inspector Angyle" and "Doc" (played by Clarence Hartzell). A good half-hour drama.

#### **SILVER SKY (BBC)**

Most Americans associate Manchester, England with gritty factories and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. However, in 1980 a drama company in that fair city produced an interesting 90-minute radio production for BBC THEATRE. "Silver Sky" was recorded in stereo (Dolby) sound and aired on 9/09/80. The story is an original science fiction melodrama about a disgruntled English scientist who attempts to travel back and forth in space, but ends up colliding with a second time capsule piloted by a lovely woman who is also on a time-space mission, but from another world. Very interesting!

#### **SILVER THEATRE**

International Silver Company and 1847 Rogers Brothers, two of the best-known names in silverware, sponsored THE SILVER THEATRE, an interesting anthology of light-weight original dramas broadcast on Sunday evenings over CBS at 6:00 during the decade of 1937-1947.

During the early years of the series, top-flight Hollywood film talent made their way to the SILVER THEATRE soundstage under the very capable direction of Conrad Nagel. Well worth the listening!

#### **SQUAD ROOM**

Police and crime dramas were an important part of each network's lineup of weekly programs. Most listeners will recall GANGBUSTERS and DRAGNET for their long tenure and high level of popularity.

However, SQUAD ROOM was a low key, "no name cast" production by Win Wright, heard over the Mutual network as a sustaining show for three seasons. between 1/11/53 and 7/17/56. Each week detective "Scanlan" (Bill Zuckert) and "Brady" (Chuck Webster) faced realistic situations as big city police officers.

#### **STANDARD HOUR**

Lovers of classic music, especially those residing on the West Coast, were able to partake of one of finest major musical series that spanned the entire thirty plus year history of network broadcasting. In 1926 the Standard Oil Co. in San Francisco financed the debt of the local symphony orchestra, gaining the rights to broadcast the one hour concerts over NBC on Sunday evenings. Over the years, the musical fare ranged from symphonic classics to light opera. In the Fall of 1946, the San Francisco Opera Orchestra performed "La Traviata", "La Boheme", "Otello" and "Romeo & Juliet." In this era Licia Albares (soprano), Jan Peerce (tenor) and Robert Weed (baritone) were featured vocalists.

#### **STARS IN THE AIR**

In 1951-1952, The Theatre Guild Players returned to the networks in a slightly different anthology. STARS IN THE AIR was an interesting collection of recreations of popular Hollywood movies. The short-lived series was heard on CBS from 12/13/51 to 6/30/52 on at least three different nights and times. There was "too much of a good thing."

#### **STARS OVER HOLLYWOOD**

For thirteen years, between 5/31/41 and 9/25/54 CBS aired STARS OVER HOLLYWOOD, an interesting and popular anthology of original radio dramas around the noon hour on Saturday mornings.

The program presented stories that were generally light comedies and fluffy romances. Most of the story-lines centered on college boy meets girl or show-biz guy meets budding starlet. *Radio Memories has an interesting collection of these shows.*

#### **PRICE OF FEAR**

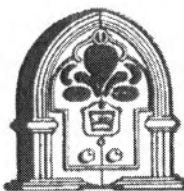
Born to a wealthy family in St. Louis, Missouri, Vincent Price was a "true Renaissance Man." He found the finer things of life (such as the arts) easily within his grasp, and he took full advantage of them. During the span of four decades, he was a star of stage, screen, and radio/television. To many he was type-cast as a master of mystery and the macabre. In 1983 Mr Price returned to the UK to host and narrate PRICE OF FEAR a BBC mystery/ horror drama series that became very popular with listening audiences on both sides of the Atlantic.



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### ACADEMY AWARD

- C04200 03/30/46 # 1 Jezebel  
w/Bette Davis  
04/06/46 # 2 Kitty Foyle  
w/Ginger Rogers
- C04201 04/13/46 # 3 The Life Of Louis Pasteur w/Paul Muni  
04/20/46 # 4 The Great McGinty w/Brian Donlevy, Gerald Mohr
- C04202 04/27/46 # 5 Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs  
05/04/46 # 6 Stagecoach w/Randolph Scott, Claire Trevor
- C04203 05/11/46 # 7 If I Were King w/Ronald Colman  
05/18/46 # 8 My Sister Eileen w/Janet Blair, Rosalind Russell
- C04204 05/25/46 # 9 The Informer w/Wallace Ford, Victor McLaglen  
06/01/46 #10 Arise My Love w/Ray Milland
- C04205 06/08/46 #11 Ruggles Of Red Gap w/Charles Laughton  
06/15/46 #12 Pride Of The Marines w/Rosemary deCamp, John Garfield
- C04206 06/22/46 #13 The Front Page w/Adolphe Menjou, Pat O'Brien  
06/29/46 #14 A Star Is Born w/Janet Gaynor, Fredric March
- C04207 07/03/46 #15 The Maltese Falcon w/Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Sydney Greenstreet  
07/10/46 #16 Young Mr. Lincoln w/Henry Fonda

- C04208 07/17/46 #17 The Prisoner Of Zenda w/Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.  
07/24/46 #18 Foreign Correspondent w/Joseph Cotton
- C04209 07/31/46 #19 Hold Back The Dawn w/Olivia deHavilland  
08/07/46 #20 Watch On The Rhine w/Paul Lucas
- C04210 08/14/46 #21 Vivacious Lady w/Lana Turner  
08/21/46 #22 Keys Of The Kingdom w/Gregory Peck
- C04211 08/28/46 #23 One Sunday Afternoon w/James Stewart  
09/04/46 #24 Pinocchio
- C04212 09/11/46 #25 Shadow Of A Doubt w/Joseph Cotten  
09/18/46 #26 The White Cliffs Of Dover w/Irene Dunn
- C04213 09/25/46 #27 Guest In The House w/Kirk Douglas, Anita Louise  
10/02/46 #28 My Man Godfrey w/William Powell
- C04214 10/09/46 #29 It Happened Tomorrow w/Ann Blythe, Eddie Bracken  
10/16/46 #30 Blood On The Sun w/John Garfield
- C04215 10/23/46 #31 The Devil & Miss Jones w/Charles Coburn  
10/30/46 #32 Suspicion w/Cary Grant
- C04216 11/06/46 #33 Cheers For Miss Bishop w/Olivia deHavilland  
11/13/46 #34 Night Train w/Rex Harrison

### SHERLOCK HOLMES

- C18972 04/09/45 #174 The Viennese Stranger  
04/23/45 #176 The Notorious Canary Trainer
- C18973 04/30/45 #177 The Unfortunate Tobacconist  
05/07/45 #178 The Purloined Ruby
- C18974 09/03/45 #182 The Limping Ghost  
09/10/45 #183 Col. Warburton's Madness
- C18975 09/17/45 #184 The Out Of Date Murder  
09/24/45 #185 The Eyes Of Mr. Leyton
- C18976 10/01/45 #186 The Problem Of Thor Bridge  
10/08/45 #187 The Mystery Of The Vanishing Elephant
- C18977 10/15/45 #188 The Manor C-90 House Case  
10/22/45 #189 The Great Gandolfo  
10/29/45 #190 Murder In The Moonlight
- C19055 11/12/45 #192 The Speckled Band  
11/19/45 #193 The Double Zero
- C19056 11/26/45 #194 The Accidental Murderess  
12/03/45 #195 Murder In The Casbah
- C19057 12/10/45 #196 A Scandal In Bohemia  
12/17/45 #197 The Second Generation
- C19058 12/24/45 #198 The Night Before Christmas  
12/31/45 #199 The Iron Box
- C19059 01/07/46 #200 The Murderer In Wax  
01/28/46 #203 The Demon Barber

- C18516 01/21/46 The Telltale Pigeon Feathers  
02/04/46 The Indiscretion Of Mr. Edwards

### STARS OVER HOLLYWOOD

- C16015 11/15/47 Ask Thyself  
04/16/49 Dead On Arrival
- C17025 10/06/51 I Knew This Woman  
11/10/51 Short Story
- C17026 11/24/51 Three Is An Odd Number  
12/01/51 The Perfect Mate
- C17027 01/12/52 Fog Warning  
03/01/52 When The Police Arrive
- C17028 03/08/52 The Driven Snow  
03/15/52 The Truth Pays Off

### SF 68 ( South African)

- C16193 Jenny With Wings  
Homecoming
- C16194 Quest  
The Answer (Distortion)
- C16195 The Castaway  
The New Wine
- C16197 The Will  
Watchbird
- C16192 Wanted In Surgery  
Routine Exercise
- C16962 A Sound Of Thunder  
C-90 Greenville's Planet  
ROD STEELE Serial (South African)
- C16196 The Death Dust  
C-90 Space Cow  
The Cage

### THE SHADOW

- C08004 09/26/37 # 86 Death House Rescue  
10/17/37 # 89 Murder By The Dead (This Is A Recreation NOT An Actual Broadcast)
- C08005 10/24/37 # 90 The Temple Bells Of Neban  
10/31/37 # 91 The Three Ghosts



C08006 11/28/37 # 95 Circle Of Death  
12/12/37 # 97 The Death Triangle  
C08007 01/09/38 #101 The League  
Of Terror  
01/16/38 #102 Sabotage  
C08008 01/23/38 #103 The Society Of  
The Living Dead  
01/30/38 #104 The Poison Death  
C08009 02/06/38 #105 The Phantom  
Voice  
02/20/38 #107 Hounds In The Hills  
C08010 02/27/38 #108 The Plot Murder  
03/06/38 #109 The Bride Of  
Death  
C08011 03/13/38 #110 The Silent Avenger  
03/20/38 #111 The White Legion  
C08012 03/27/38 #112 The Hypnotized  
Audience  
04/03/38 #113 Death From  
The Deep  
C08013 04/10/38 #114 Firebug  
04/17/38 #115 The Blind  
Beggar Dies  
C08014 04/24/38 #116 The Power Of  
The Mind  
05/01/38 #117 The White God  
C08015 05/08/38 #118 Aboard The  
Steamship Amazon  
05/15/38 #119 Murders In Wax  
C08016 05/22/38 #120 The Message  
From The Hills  
05/29/38 #121 The Creeper  
C08017 06/05/38 #122 The Tenor With A  
Broken Voice  
06/12/38 #123 Murder On  
Approval  
C08018 06/19/38 #124 The Tomb  
Of Terror  
06/26/38 #125 Death Under  
The Chapel  
C08019 07/03/38 #126 Caverns Of Death  
09/25/38 #127 Traffic In Death

**THE ALDRICH FAMILY**

C14944 02/11/43 Valentine's Day Party  
03/11/43 Seeks Legal Advice  
C13205 02/11/43 Two Valentine Parties  
00/00/00 Warm March Day  
C14943 04/01/43 Selling War Bonds  
10/23/41 Forgets To Mail Letter  
C16206 11/20/44 McCall's Bike  
01/25/45 Church & Chocolate  
C09192 06/24/48 Summertime Blues  
09/16/48 A Quiet Night At Home  
C09193 10/07/48 Mary's Surprise  
10/14/48 The Great Weiner Roast  
C09194 10/21/48 The Babysitter  
10/28/48 Sticky Situation  
C09195 11/04/48 The New Hat  
11/11/48 Toy Repair  
C09196 11/18/48 Grab Bag Sale  
04/07/49 Blind Date  
C09197 04/14/49 Shortstop  
04/21/49 First Date  
C09198 04/28/49 First Impressions  
05/05/49 Homer's Anniversary  
C09199 05/13/49 Spring Fever  
Ice Fishing For Fruitcake  
C09200 Model Airplane Race  
Mother's Day Dinner  
C09201 School Picnic  
The Cross Country Race  
C15437 02/21/52 The Debate Team  
11/23/52 Last Turkey For  
Thanksgiving  
**ALL STAR WESTERN THEATRE**  
C23324 10/11/47 # 62 Young Love &  
C-90 Manana Joe  
10/18/47 # 63 The Rabbit  
10/25/47 # 64 To Settle An  
Account  
C23325 11/01/47 # 65 Life & Death &  
Scotty  
11/08/47 # 66 A Combination  
That's Hard To Beat  
11/15/47 # 67 One Man's Poison

C10466 11/20/48 Bear Hunting  
11/27/48 Modern Movie Making  
C10467 12/04/48 Magnolia The Chicken  
12/11/48 Cattle Rustlers  
C10468 12/18/48 Buying A Tractor  
01/01/49 The Sheriff Of Red Dog  
C10469 01/07/49 Gem Deposits  
01/14/49 Stormy The House  
C10470 01/21/49 Sunshine Johnson  
01/28/49 Charlie Nichols  
General Store

**THE BIG STORY**

C19543 10/01/47 #27 The Case Of The  
C-90 Counterfeit Coins  
01/07/48 #41 Manhunt In  
Manhattan  
05/19/48 #60 Murder Victim  
Buried Alive  
C15685 10/15/47 The Dorothy  
Kilgallen Story  
12/03/47 The Howard  
Boffay Story  
C15686 12/10/47 The Audrey  
Murdock Story  
12/17/47 The Russ Wilson Story  
C15689 03/09/48 The Ike MacNelly Story  
12/06/50 The Bernie  
Beckwith Story  
C15687 05/05/48 The William Miller Story  
05/29/48 The Ralph K Mills Story  
C15688 07/21/48 The Keeler  
McCartney Story  
01/29/49 The Joseph  
Wurgiss Story  
C19545 07/20/49 #119 Deat & Hate Can  
Be Partners  
11/15/50 #188 The Highland  
Park Murder  
**ACADEMY AWARDS CEREMONY**  
C17169 04/13/47 Host: Jack Benny, Part 1  
(VG) (C-90)  
C17170 04/13/47 Host: Jack Benny, Part  
2 (VG) (C-90)

C17171 1949 Host: Paul Douglas, Part 1  
C17172 1949 Host: Paul Douglas, Part 2

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