



# The Old Radio Times

The Official Publication of the Old-Time Radio Researchers

Mar / April 2013 www.otrr.org 2373 Subscribers

No. 66

## ROCHESTER GOES TO WAR:

Eddie Anderson and the Pacific Parachute Company By Elizabeth McLeod

He was the most popular member of Jack Benny's supporting cast. He was a fixture of American popular culture for more than thirty years. He was one of the wealthiest African-Americans of his generation. And, he was a pioneer in promoting racially-integrated employment in the United States defense industry. He was Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, a man of many accomplishments who is practically unknown to anyone under the age of forty-five ... unless they happen to be Old Time Radio enthusiasts.

Eddie Anderson never set out in life to be a pioneer in anything. All he ever wanted to do was entertain, and that was an ambition he came by naturally. His parents had greasepaint in their blood -- his father was a minstrel-show comedian of many years' experience, while his mother was a circus acrobat, specializing in tight-wire tricks. Even his older brother Cornelius earned his show-biz spurs as a singing comedian. Eddie might have thought about being a singer himself, had he not sprung his larynx as a loud-shouting newsboy, scarring his voice for life with an unforgettable wheezing rasp. But, Eddie could dance, and he soon discovered that he could leverage his defective voice for laughs -- even the moldiest of jokes took on a certain freshness when brayed out in Eddie's buzzsaw tenor.

By the middle of the 1930's, Eddie Anderson was a fixture on the nation's theatre screens, in



bit roles and in the occasional featured part. His gin-smuggling impression of the biblical Noah was the hit of 1936's *The Green Pastures*, and he capped his success in that film with a hilarious walk-on role as a sarcastic railroad redcap on Jack Benny's radio program in the spring of 1937. That part led Anderson to a regular role on the Benny broadcast, and eventually to his full membership in Jack's "gang." As the bumptious valet Rochester Van Jones, he became a national favorite in the early 1940's, as popular with black audiences as he was with whites.

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Jack Benny paid his cast well, and soon Eddie Anderson was earning a wage suited to one of the nation's most popular entertainers. He indulged in the sort of flashy show-biz habits that one might expect of a celebrity of his stature -- the big house, the fancy cars, a yacht, and even a thoroughbred race horse. But, he wasn't a spendthrift by any means -- Eddie Anderson had sound business sense, and he invested most of his money in real estate, creating the nucleus of a substantial personal fortune. By the time the U.S. entered the Second World War, Anderson was sitting on a comfortable pile of cash, and looking to do something meaningful with it. He bought War Bonds, but he wanted to do more. He was too old to serve in combat, but he gave freely to every bond-selling and usa campaign that asked for his help, he toured military bases at home and overseas, and he was a frequent contributor to Armed Forces Radio Service broadcasts. But he wanted to do more.

He got his opportunity in 1942, thanks to a man named Howard "Skippy" Smith, a man with some impressive accomplishments of his own. Smith was a skillful, rather flamboyant aviator at a time when few African-Americans held pilots' licenses. He made a name for himself as a daredevil, appearing regularly in the Hollywood Airshow as a death-defying skydiver. It was his business to know everything there was to know about parachutes -- and it happened that, with the coming of the war, knowledge about parachutes suddenly became an extremely valuable commodity. Skippy Smith was ready, willing, and able to put that knowledge at Uncle Sam's disposal - but, the life of an airborne stuntman wasn't especially lucrative. As a show-business figure himself, however, he did happen to know Eddie Anderson -- who agreed to bankroll Smith's plan to open a new parachute factory in

San Diego.

With Smith's know-how and Eddie Anderson's money its prime assets, the Pacific Parachute Company opened in March of 1942. The new firm occupied a spanking new building, and there was something else new about it: its workforce was racially integrated. This was a requirement for any plant expecting to do business with the Government, thanks to the Fair Employment Act signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt the previous summer. But, even with the new law on the books, San Diego remained one of the more racially-retrograde cities on the West Coast, and the idea of whites and blacks working side by side was a concept that left many residents far from comfortable. When the plant opened, newspaper accounts specifically mentioned that the initial workforce consisted of "twenty white and colored girls," most of whom had been trained as seamstresses in a New Deal program ad-



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ministered by the National Youth Administration. That number would quickly increase and, for the duration of the war, the plant would boast a racially-mixed workforce. Pacific Parachute acted as a subcontractor to the famous Standard Parachute Company, specializing in the assembly and stitching of parachutes from narrow pie-shaped segments of silk fabric. As the war progressed, an impressive array of sewing machines hummed busily on the factory floor, with nearly a hundred women working side by side -- about one-third white, one-third black, and one-third Mexican -- all pitching in to get the job done. African-Americans served as plant superintendent, factory foremen, and office administrators, and for the entire duration of the war, there were no reported racial incidents. "I must admit that racial tolerance was a problem with me at first," admitted one white employee, a woman from Missouri. "But working at Pacific has actually made me a different person. I wouldn't have missed the experience for anything." Pacific Parachute became a favorite example in the popular media of how "people of all races can to pull together for Victory." In 1943, Smith and Anderson were cited by the National Negro Business League as the owners of the outstanding black-owned business in America.

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As the war progressed, the firm moved from subcontracting to working under direct defense contracts of its own, and was cited by the National Commission on Interracial Cooperation as a prime example of real Americanism in action.

Racial idealism aside, life wasn't perfect at Pacific Parachute. The work was tough and arduous, and when several women attempted to organize the workers into a union, Skippy Smith had them fired -- only to run afoul of the National Labor Relations Board, which ordered him to reinstate the organizers with full back pay. But, the publicity connected with the factory being "Rochester's parachute plant" was always good for a story in the popular press. Employees took a great deal of pride in what they did, how they did it, and for whom they worked. Pacific Parachute's fame spread far from San Diego -- the plant was featured in Life magazine, the workers were photographed by the Office of War Information in a series of vivid pictures which have come to epitomize the "Rosie the Riveter" image of the female war worker, and Pacific was even featured in the New York-based civil rights radio series "New World A'Comin'," complete with a not-altogether-impressive actor impersonating Eddie Anderson.

The plant celebrated its first anniversary in 1943 with a gala presentation hosted by Rochester himself. Eddie Anderson was joined on stage by San Diego city dignitaries, high-ranking Army and Navy officers, and a two-foot high trophy presented by the San Diego Merchants and Manufacturers Association praising the plant for its achievements in manufacturing and in the promotion of racial understanding. It was one of the proudest moments in Eddie Anderson's life.





The end of the war meant the end of Pacific Parachute, but not its legacy. The original plant built by Skippy Smith with Eddie Anderson's money still stands on Eighth Avenue in San Diego, and surviving veterans of its sewing floor still take great pride in their wartime achievements -- both for what they did to keep American paratroopers safe and for what they accomplished fighting for freedom on the Home Front. Eddie Anderson accomplished a great deal himself over the course of his life, but none of those accomplishments meant more to America than the pioneering Pacific Parachute Company. ■

*Reprinted for the Radio Collectors of America Newsletter.*



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## A Conversation With Roy Rogers, King of the Cowboys

by Dan Harlow

*NOTE: The following interview was conducted in 1996 and originally appeared in the Fall 1996 edition of Route 66 West magazine.*

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When the young Leonard Slye first traveled Route 66, his goal was to see an older sister in California and find a good job. It was 1930. Within a decade, he would become Roy Rogers, one of Hollywood's great western film stars. Now in his eighties, Rogers recalls the road that led him to fame.

"I was born in Cincinnati, but was raised on a farm in a little place called Duck Run. I went to school there and got two years of high school before I had to go to work. The depression was coming on and it was hard for anyone to get a job. I worked with my dad at the shoe factory in Cincinnati.

"I got up one morning and dad said, 'let's quit our jobs today and go out to see Mary in California'. We were a close family and really missed my older sister. We talked about her all the time. Well, I was just thrilled to death. I told him I had about ninety dollars and thought that was enough for gas. We started packing and were rolling out in about three days."

The road west, not fully paved, was slow and arduous. It left lasting impressions on an Ohio farm boy, which when recalled in later years bring laughter.

"Oh, it was a pistol. We were in an old 1923 Dodge. We had several flat tires. It took us two weeks to come out here. Of course, ninety bucks bought a lot of gas back then.

"I think we picked up Route 66 somewhere around St. Louis. I remember that we burned out the bearings in New Mexico. In those days,



they didn't have places where you could buy bearings and things like that. We had to go out to a junkyard and find another Dodge like ours and take out the bearings. That cost us a couple of days.

"We were from a poor family. Not hungry, but poor.

"For the whole summer of 1931 we picked peaches near Bakersfield in the San Joaquin Valley. When we came back (to Los Angeles), there weren't any jobs. This was during the depression and there just wasn't any work. That's how I got into show business, really.

"There was a program on a radio station in Inglewood called the *Midnight Frolic*. It was an amateur show and anyone could go on. It was on the air from midnight to six in the morning. My sister said I should go on the show. She took me up there and when they called my name, I just froze. Mary touched me on the



shoulder and said, 'Now you get up there and sing.' I sang a couple of songs. I don't to this day remember what songs I sang. I was so scared.

"About three days later this guy called and asked if I wanted to join a group he called the Rocky Mountaineers. It was better than picking peaches. I didn't get anymore money, really. But, it was easier work and I enjoyed it.

"I was the only singer in the Rocky Mountaineers. Bob Nolan joined me and later Tim Spencer. We became the Pioneer Trio. When we got to KFWB radio, they picked the three of us off the Texas Outlaw program and put us on staff."

The Pioneer Trio changed their name to the Sons of the Pioneers. Len Slye found time to play bit roles and extra parts in Republic Pictures western films. It was not long before his name would also change. As Roy Rogers, he rode into the hearts of American movie fans astride a golden palomino named Trigger.

"At first, I trained Trigger and then I met this trainer from Nebraska, Glenn Randall. Glenn was with me for twenty years. Because I'd be on the road with my guitar, I didn't have the time to work with my horse. Glenn came with me and



we just worked together on it. I could get Trigger to do just about anything."

The following years earned him stars on Hollywood's walk of fame for radio, motion pictures, television and recording. After the death of his first wife Arlene, Roy married his costar Dale Evans. Together they raised a large family and eventually settled in Apple Valley near the Route 66 town of Victorville. Victorville is home to the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Museum and future site of Rogersdale, USA.

"We've been here about 29 years. We know a lot of people and have friends in the church. It's a real contrast from Hollywood. Of course, I was raised on a farm so this suits me better anyway. I never was much of a talker. I'm better off in the sticks than in the city.

"After so many years in show business, I thought it was a good idea to have a museum for the people. It's stuff that I've saved all my life. I came up during the depression when we



*1960s-era postcard featuring the Roy Rogers Museum in Victorville, California. The museum has since been relocated to Branson, Missouri. The museum closed at the end of 2009.*

never had anything. Every time I got something, I'd just hang on to it. When we first opened the museum, I had two tractor trailer loads of things.

"I just couldn't think of burying old Trigger. Too many people loved him. We took Trigger, Dale's horse Buttermilk, and Trigger Junior and had them beautifully mounted. Trigger is up on his hind legs and he looks just like he did the day before he died.

"I've been interviewed by just about every newspaper or magazine down through the years. I just tell it the way it is or how it's been. I had an ordinary family life, really." ■

*Dan Harlow is an educator, historian, publisher, and avid proponent of Route 66. He currently makes his home in southern California with his wife, Sheila.*



## Radio Humor

When a recently married sailor was guest of Bob Hawk, Bob asked if he knew why people cry at weddings. "I suppose they've been married themselves and haven't the heart to laugh," replied the sailor. *Thanks to the Yanks (CBS)*

Woody Herman is still laughing over a letter he received from his next door neighbor's daughter. She wrote:

"... Mother makes me eat so much that I've gained an awful lot of weight. I weigh 117 pounds stripped, but I'm not sure that those scales in front of the drug store are right or not: . . ."

Gracie Allen was unpacking her suitcase in the hotel room. "Let's see - cold cream - night cream - vanishing cream - cleansing cream - chin strap - girdle . . . George! Where did you put my things?" *Burns and Allen (CBS)*

A Hollywood delicatessen advertised an "unlimited" selection of sandwiches. A sailor in a joking mood walked by, saw the sign and went inside. "Gimme an ostrich sandwich on rye toast," he ordered. The counterman blandly wrote down the order and headed for the kitchen. In a moment he was back, shaking his head sadly. "Sorry, Mack, but the boss says no. He can't start an ostrich for just one sandwich."

*Helen Forrest (NBC)*

Nothing annoys a woman more than having friends drop in unexpectedly to find the house looking as it usually does.

*Radio Reader's Digest (CBS)*

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## One of the best: Halls of Ivy

By James Mason

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A couple of years ago, I ran across *Halls of Ivy* and listened to a few episodes. I really didn't like it then; it came across as a 'soap opera' to me and one with moral overtones. While the show was in the comedy genre, I could find nothing funny about it. Basically, I just didn't like the show and moved on.

### Chemistry

About six weeks ago, a friend from a forum made the show sound so good (and I trust his judgment about old time radio) that I was persuaded to give the show another go.

Thirty episodes later, I am very happy I decided to listen to it again. This second stab at the show makes me realize how totally wrong I was about the first go-round and how right my friend was about the show.

*The Halls of Ivy* is a show about a husband and wife (William "Toddy" and Victoria "Vickie" Hall.) Toddy is the president of Ivy University, a college somewhere in the United States, while Vickie is a dramatics teacher at the school.

My memory of the show the first time revealed that the show was "heavy" and carried a moral message. I realize now that I misunderstood the show; for though the show can be dead serious about issues such as racism, cheating, stealing, ethics and the usual problems associated with college students at that age (except sex, of course) the show is really about the love of Toddy and Vickie.

After all, Toddy and Vickie were Ronald and Benita Colman in real life and there is a chemistry there that you rarely feel on radio. As a matter of fact, I can't think of another husband-wife couple on radio who come anywhere near it.

School problems are just a buffering periph-



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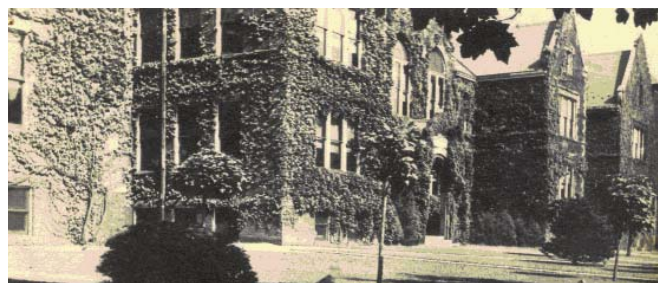
eral to the message of love, understanding and admiration for husband and wife.

Each episode includes a flashback of Toddy's younger days when he found himself falling hopelessly in love with Vickie while on sabbatical in England and she was a rising English stage star. These are well-acted scenes - as is the show in whole.

While this may sound a bit corny or mushy, I assure you, it's not. This may not be a show for the 20-ish year old single male, I'll grant you, but it is a show most can appreciate for it's well-acted, well written value.

Written by Don Quinn (he was the main writer for *Fibber McGee and Molly*) you might expect a show full of clever puns and word jokes; instead *The Halls of Ivy* is warm, intelligent humor - the humor of life. ■

You can follow Jim at his blog  
<http://otrbuffer.blogspot.com/>



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## The Dorothy Lamour Disaster

by Martin Grams, Jr.

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On the evening of Thursday, March 15, 1945, Hollywood forgot all about the recent strikes, jurisdictions and other dramatic doings for a few hours and galloped through the Oscar derby during the 17th Academy Awards. The show got off to a technical start, which was all right for the technicians but not very hilarious for Joe Public, who did not realize that the technician was the man behind the screen who made it possible for stars to pay those abnormal income taxes. The show then turned from technicalities to verbal acrobatics when Ed Gardner took over as emcee for the first half of the program in his best Third Avenue dialect and introduced the Andrews Sisters who, in turn, introduced a couple of tunes never heard before except in 1,500,000 juke boxes. The selections were "Don't Fence Me In" and "Rum and Coca-Cola." Next came Danny Kaye, who put on a one-man show illustrating the art of motion picture production in dear old Moscow. During the second half of the program (the half that was broadcast), Bob Hope drew a lifetime membership to the Academy, followed by his emcee job as the awards were handed out. For the radio audience, listening in on ABC (then recently renamed from The Blue Network) the first half of the ceremony was never broadcast and Ed Gardner was not heard over the airwaves.

Besides his famous apron, Ed Gardner took advantage of his residency in California to solicit autograph requests from his celebrity guests. Charles Coburn, Gene Tierney, Milton Berle and Jennifer Jones, among others, autographed glossy photographs which Gardner collected. Most simply signed their name but when Orson Welles signed a glossy to Gardner, he inscribed,



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"Dear Ed, Here's looking at you and sometimes unavoidable and always an experience, Orson Welles."

The fact that Gardner was never heard over the radio might have annoyed the comedian, but four years later he made a guest appearance on a special Dorothy Lamour broadcast which resulted in a different stance -- he probably wished he wasn't on radio.

Ghost voices, technical difficulties and an overenthusiastic opening night crowd bedeviled a radio broadcast featuring Dorothy Lamour as the "femcee" at the premiere opening of oilman Glenn McCarthy's Shamrock Hotel in Houston, Texas. On the evening of March 17, 1949, Glenhall Taylor, producer of *The Sealtest Variety Theater*, agreed to allow the program to



originate from the Herald Room of the new Shamrock Hotel. The usual format of the program involved two guest spots each week: one performed a comedy sketch, the other a dramatic sketch in which Lamour herself usually took part with the guest star. Music was provided by Henry Russell and his Orchestra with vocals by the Crew Chiefs Male Quartet. For the evening of March 17, Hollywood screen actor Van Heflin and comedian Ed Gardner were in attendance to appear on the broadcast. What followed was a scrambled program which faded several times and was off the air completely at others, now considered one of the biggest disasters for NBC in the calendar year of 1947. Thankfully for Glenn McCarthy, Dorothy Lamour's nation-wide radio broadcast was the only "casualty" of the glittering formal opening of his twenty

million dollar Shamrock Hotel. While Lamour told the press the whole thing was "unavoidable," her name was briefly tarnished in newspapers across the country that week.

Between 2,000 and 3,000 people jammed into the 18-story hotel's dining rooms for a \$42-per-plate dinner marking the formal opening. The confusion was too much for Lamour's radio broadcast which was scheduled at 9:30 p.m. Eastern. As the radio show began, many guests were still hunting for their seats and the hubub was so great that Lamour and her guest stars, Heflin and Gardner, had to shout over the microphone to be heard. "The crowd was still entering the room at the start of the program and we had trouble getting started," Lamour explained. "Later the public address system failed and we departed somewhat from our script."



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The program suffered numerous line breaks and was of low quality with the actors' conversation repeated when they obviously thought they were off the air. The continuity of the program suffered most with ad-libbing in an attempt to keep the show moving. At approximately 9:32:42, a telephone conversation going on at the source of the program came over the air and, although muffled, was intelligible. Radio listeners might have wondered if they had bad frequency on their own radios. Because the attendees arrived late, instructions were never given to prevent the high background noise that was picked up by the microphones. Lamour herself made several attempts to get the cast back on the script but to little avail. Gardner ad-libbed freely after an attempt to tell his "Two-Top Gruskin" routine failed. Instead, Gardner announced the names of prominent guests in the ballroom for the benefit of the radio listeners. The dramatic spot between Van Heflin and Dorothy Lamour suffered most with little of the actual script broadcast.

At Chicago, NBC officials said line failure forced piano standby music to be used during most of the first 12 minutes of the show. NBC officials in Chicago said the program, sponsored by Sealtest, was off the air for the first 12 minutes because of line failure, "probably at the Shamrock Hotel." The direct cause of the error was never reported publicly, to avoid pointing full blame toward the correct source. In Hollywood, it was an NBC spokesman who blamed the whole thing on an "over-enthusiastic opening night crowd," adding that, "at one point, two diners seized the microphone and shouted into it."

In New York, another spokesman said network executives were conducting an investigation to determine whether any profanity went out over the air. Dorothy Lamour insisted no profan-

ity was involved.

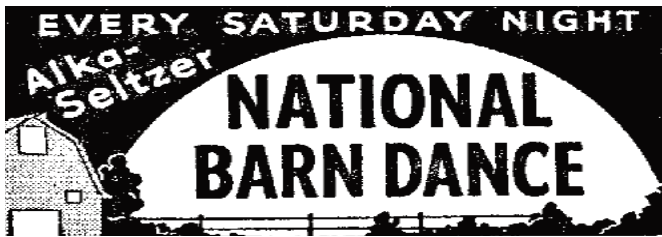
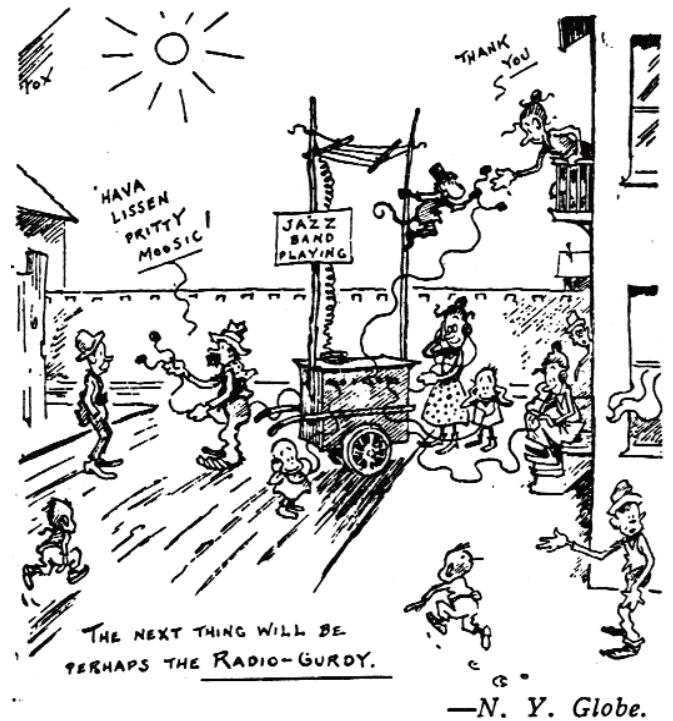
The network at Chicago, the controlling point of the broadcast, stayed with the show for the first five minutes, during line breaks and low quality, in the hope that difficulties would clear momentarily. NBC delivered multiple "One Moment, Please" announcements, then cut to the piano music as filler until 9:43:15 when NBC brought the chaos back to the air.

Ed Gardner had flown to Houston early that morning to participate in the broadcast. He flew back to New York City the morning after and, a week later, took his entire family on a probably much-needed vacation (Honolulu or Miami, depending on varied sources). Ironically, this was not the first time the Sealtest radio program suffered technical difficulties. For the broadcast of October 3, 1946, similar technical difficulties occurred on the same program. AT&T trouble between Denver and Omaha prevented the first two and a half minutes from being broadcast nationwide. Meanwhile, due to Chicago operating error, an announcer apologized to the listen-





ing audience and music filled the remaining minute and a half. The WEA program portion failed to go through for the same reasons, resulting in a standby announcer apologizing and introducing a transcribed orchestra which failed to go out due to engineering trouble. WEA also had dead air for the first minute and a half. *Martin Grams Jr. is the author of the new DUFFY'S TAVERN book due for publication in August 2013.* ■



Coffee ad is from a Cincinnati Sunday paper magazine section June 13, 1944



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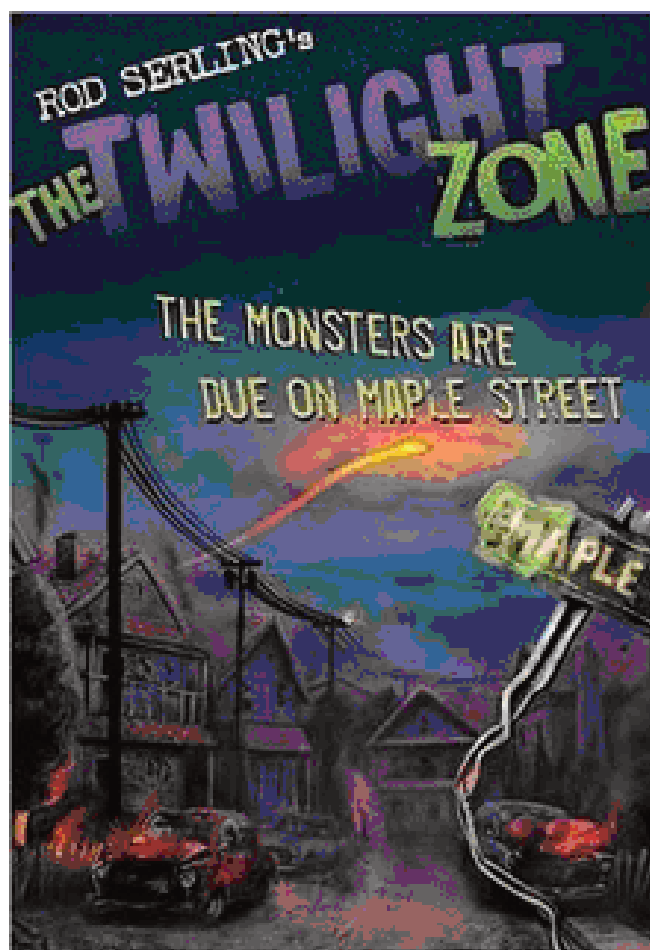
## THE MONSTERS ARE DUE ON MAPLE STREET: The Radio Inspiration

by Martin Grams Jr.

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Most people are familiar with the classic 1960 telecast, written by Rod Serling, about a neighborhood that turns into a murderous frenzy when thrown into darkness for a few hours. Social commentary was never dramatized better. Few people, however, are aware that Rod Serling borrowed elements from a radio script, dramatized on a local Cincinnati radio station nine years prior.

The year was 1951. Rod Serling wrote a radio script titled “The Button Pushers,” a futuristic science fiction drama set in a future Earth, 1970. Huge television screens substituted for advertising billboards in Times Square, air-way rocket trains carried commuters overhead, and the fear of rival nations separated by a large ocean covered the front page headlines. A bloodthirsty general urges a brilliant scientist to complete the development of a new weapon, best described as a “doomsday bomb.” The enemy overseas, reportedly, has already developed a similar weapon. The general asks the scientist to complete the weapon so that it could be fired with the push of a single button – no secondary protocols required. The scientist, fearing his weapon could start a war that would erase the existence of mankind on the entire planet, contemplated the centuries of progress – ancient civilizations that built the pyramids, the deserted Mayan temples and the skyscrapers of today. After 15 minutes contemplating the beauty and wonder Earth had to offer, he completes the weapon and the Army takes over. Against his warnings, the button is pushed. The enemy does



the same, and the countdown for contact begins.

The ending featured a series of explosions on the surface of planet Earth, and two aliens on another planet across the universe start the following discussion:

**VOICE 1:** Ah, Verus . . . Have you see the little planet – Earth?

**VOICE 2:** Why no . . . come to think of it, Felovius I haven't seen it . . . In a few hundred light years. Seems to have just disappeared all of a sudden.

**VOICE 1:** Ah . . . Then I win my bet.

**VOICE 2:** Bet?

**VOICE 1:** Yes, I bet the keeper of the North Star that the little Earth would destroy itself before the next billion years had gone by . . . and she has. She seems to have just blown herself



up . . . disintegrated . . . she no longer exists. Tch, tch . . . Pity . . . she was a lovely little planet. Wonder what caused it?

**VOICE 2:** That is a question . . .

**VOICE 1:** Oh, what am I thinking of . . . I know what destroyed it. It had human beings on it. I'd forgotten.

**VOICE 2:** Well then, that explains it . . . Those pesky little things can't live side by side very long. Shall we go back and tell the others?

**VOICE 1:** Why take the trouble? As if anyone cared about tiny Earth . . . So unimportant a speck . . . so insignificant a dot in the universe. Who cares?

**VOICE 2:** I guess you're right. (sighs) Nice night . . . So quiet . . . So uneventful.

It appears that while *The Twilight Zone* was clearly ahead of its time, Rod Serling recycled the closing scenes from his 1951 radio play for "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street," considered today by fans as one of the top ten episodes of the series.

"*The Twilight Zone* I have, with varying degrees of success or failure, attempted to touch upon moral themes utilizing the device of the parable," Serling concluded. "In other words, I have tried to insert subtly what I hope to be a message, but couched it in such a manner that it



becomes almost an unconscious effect. Hence, I will tell a story about an invasion from outer space, but tell it with an implicit suggestion that human beings are prone to inordinate suspicions and prejudices about things that are 'different.'"

Shortly before the premiere of *The Twilight Zone*, Rod Serling assured columnist John P. Shanley of The New York Times that, "I'm not writing any material that lies in the danger zone. There won't be anything controversial in the new series." This episode, however, left a commentary that could have been considered "controversial" by a percentage of the viewers. Serling indicated that he was no longer inclined to battle the forces that had drawn his fire in the past. "Now we're petulant aging men. It no longer behooves us to bite the hand that feeds us. Not a meek conformist but a tired nonconformist. The facts of life are these: the creative person is not in control in a creative medium nor shall he ever be, except possibly in the legitimate theatre."

"You can spend half your life fighting points instead of writing points," he continued. "I think you can get adult drama without controversy. In the past when I was doing something even remotely controversial, I've been knocked for it. They said I vitiated it, diluted it. My attitude now is – rather something than nothing."

About the time this episode aired, when asked early in the series what kind of program *The Twilight Zone* was, Serling replied, "they're not vehicles of social criticism. One story, 'The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street,' is a strange oblique commentary on prejudice. The minorities always need a scapegoat to explain their own weaknesses."

The entire episode was filmed on the New England Street on Lot 2 at M-G-M. Two outside prop rentals were required for this episode – a



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vending bike and a power mower, which cost Cayuga \$50. Set designs including the “Maple Street” sign for the sign post, landscapes, automobiles and other props cost a total of \$750. The exterior of the spaceship was filmed on the evening of the third day. Electronic instruments, garden tools and the illusion of the scenic view of Maple Street and the inhabitants in a panic, cost \$1,000.

Serling intended to use the following for the trailer, but it was considered too lengthy, and needed to be trimmed down. Here's the complete rundown:

*“Next week on ‘The Twilight Zone’ we put you in a glider on a warm summer evening, front porch, tree lined street, typical small town. We let you look at ice cream salesman, listen to kids laugh and play, listen to housewives gossip over porch railings. And then . . . then we pull the rug out from under your feet and we throw a nightmare at you that we venture to say will not be easily set aside. Next week Claude Akens, Jack Weston and Barry Atwater are your neighbors just at the moment when ‘The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street.’ Don’t chicken out. See you next week.”*

According to a letter dated November 28, 1959, “Along with schedule changes, ‘The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street’ has been delayed until a February or March date because of production problems.” This may explain why revised pages are dated November 12, weeks after filming was completed. It is possible that insert shots and revised scenes were re-filmed before the final film was put together.

On March 5, 1960, Earl Kemp of the Chicago Science Fiction League wrote to Serling as an “unashamed fan letter.” In the letter, Kemp regarded *The Twilight Zone* as “a piece of rare magnificence, combining integrity and taste in



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the right proportions for relaxing enjoyment. . .

You have always dealt completely honestly with the field of science fiction and fantasy, adding to the prestige of the genre rather than detracting from it. Of course, I do have complaints, too. I’m pretty damn tired of seeing M-G-M’s overworked Forbidden Planet saucer, and the same astronomicals. I am extremely tired of the odd-angle and screw-ball shots that add not one single thing to the photography but a desire that it should cease.”

Serling defended, “While I don’t think the camera on it was exceptionally good, I cannot defend the M-G-M saucer. Unfortunately, with budget problems, you have to fall back on standard overworked devices too often.”

The Waterloo Daily Courier described the episode being an “excellent production.” Other television critics raved about the telecast, but viewers of education took note, and began writing in their praises. Joseph Janovsky, principal of a school in Brooklyn, New York, felt that the program contained the essence of a “Human Relations” course and requested in writing to Serling and Oscar Katz (vice president in charge of programming in New York) that he acquire a 16mm print of the episode for future courses and classes. Janovsky was not the

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only person to request a copy of the episode. John Bauer, Ph.D., a professor at City College of New York, felt that his classes would benefit greatly with an opportunity to review the production.

“One of the outstanding frustrations in my attempt to further the education of my students is the solidly encased ‘It can’t happen here’ attitude which prevails among today’s college youth,” Bauer wrote. “Your play might help to break through the unrealistic complacency which marks their thoughts regarding most psycho-social disruptive forces.” Serling referred Bauer to Guy Della Cioppa of CBS at Television City in Hollywood, suggesting this might help Bauer avoid any red tape and acquire a print.

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By April 14, 1960, Serling was getting tired of the numerous requests from viewers asking for a copy of the script or a 16mm print of the film. In a letter addressed to Miss Pat Thomas of the WAC Department at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, in response to a request from the chaplain at the U.S. Army, dated that same day, Serling explained to his sorrow: “CBS is no longer allowing films from the series to be shown to public or private groups for whatever reason. We’ve had so many requests for ‘The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street’ and found out along the way that

there were more requests than there were films. So they’ve just taken a blanket position of no films to anyone. If he wants to pursue this further, have him write to Guy Della Cioppa, CBS Television City, Hollywood, and explain the situation.”

In September of 1960, Gregory Guroff of Decision Magazine at Princeton University wrote to Serling, asking for a complimentary copy of the script, for use as the basis of either a story or parable. Serling obliged, explaining that, “since this is a file copy and one of only two in my possession, I would greatly appreciate its return to me after your perusal.”

When this script was adapted into a short story for *Stories from the Twilight Zone* by Bantam Books, Serling made one noticeable change at the conclusion. He described how the sunrise revealed the remains of dead bodies draped about the streets and porches, and how, hours later, new residents had arrived to move in – with two heads for each new resident. The script itself has become a textbook standard, having been reprinted in a number of scholastic books over the years, so children of various ages could be exposed to the moral Serling emphasized. The pattern of conflict in a street when contact with the rest of the world is cut off closely resembled that of a teenage science fiction book titled *The Year When Stardust Fell* (1958), written by Raymond F. Jones and published by the John C. Winston Company. When a viewer brought this to Serling’s attention, he confessed that he was unaware of the book and sought out a copy to check its contents and settle his curiosity.

The book concerned a mysterious comet that appears in the sky and is apparently the cause of all car engines, worldwide, to mysteriously overheat. By the next day, airplanes,

trains, generators and other machinery does not function. Nearly in a state of panic, hysteria and superstition, the people of the Earth resort to mob rule in a fight for survival. In 1962, a book reviewer for *Show* magazine reviewed the book, and claimed it mirrored too much like Serling's teleplay, unaware that the initial publication year pre-dated the *Twilight Zone* production.

The premise of power shutting off all machinery to make a point was also explored in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), which may have been a brief inspiration for this episode. In the episode "Boom Boom Out Goes the Ed" of the animated television series *Ed, Edd n' Eddy*, initially telecast November 11, 2005, the lead characters start to panic when the power goes out, and Ed claims the blackout is a result of evil mole people. As the neighbors start to panic, à la spoof of this *Twilight Zone*, the children soon discover that the only way to stop the escalating panic is to take matters into their own hands.

Cold War hysteria at its best was paid a second visit on the evening of February 19, 2003, when a remake of this same teleplay was telecast on a newer rendition of *The Twilight Zone*. One notable difference between the remake and the original was the driving force behind the hysteria. Instead of visitors from outer space, employees from a special branch of the U.S. government were responsible for the power blackouts. The government was conducting tests to see how small town America would react in the face of foreign terrorism.

### **Recurring Product Placement**

Two automobiles are featured in this episode: a 1959 Ford Sedan and a 1959 Ford Station Wagon. The station wagon was the same one the mechanic was working on in "Walking Distance" (verified by registration numbers).



### **Production #3620 "THE MONSTERS ARE DUE ON MAPLE STREET"**

(Initial telecast: March 4, 1960)

© Cayuga Productions, Inc., March 3, 1960, LP16337 (in notice: 1959)

Date of Rehearsal: September 28, 1959

Dates of Filming: September 29, 30, October 1 and 2, 1959

Script #20 dated: September 8, 1959, with revised pages dated September 24 and November 12, 1959.

### **Budget**

Producer and Secretary: \$660.00

Story and Secretary: \$2,395.00

Director: \$840.00

Cast: \$8,459.50

Unit Manager and Secretary: \$520.00

Production Fee: \$750.00

Agents Commission: \$5,185.55

Legal and Accounting: \$250.00

Below the line charges (M-G-M): \$32,135.73

Below the line charges (other): \$5,692.99

Total Production Costs: \$56,888.77

**Cast:** Claude Akins (Steve Brand); Sheldon Allman (Space Alien #1); Barry Atwater (Mr. Goodman); Anne Barton (Mrs. Brand); Joan Boston (silent bit part); Paul Denton (silent bit part); Ben Erway (Pete Van Horn); Mary Gregory (Tommy's Mother); Lyn Guild (Charlie's



Wife); Jan Handzlik (young Tommy); Jim Jacobs (silent bit part); Jason Johnson (man one); Diane Livesey (silent bit part); Bob McCord (the ice cream vendor); Beryl McCutcheon (silent bit part); Burt Metcalfe (Don); William Moran (silent bit part); Vinita Murdock (silent bit part); Amzie Strickland (first woman); Joan Sudlow (woman next door); Lea Waggoner (Mrs. Goodman); William Walsh (Space Alien #2); George Washburn (silent bit part); and Jack Weston (Charlie).

**Original Music Score Composed by Rene Garriguenc and Conducted by Lud Gluskin (Score No. CPN5882):** Main Title (by Bernard Herrmann, :40); Maple Street (:30); What Was It? (:21); The Power's Off (1:01); Tommy's Outer Space Story (2:02); Uneasyness on Maple Street (1:15); Reaction (:08); A Kind of Madness (:07); Ruminating Suspicion (1:44); The Needling (1:01); Footsteps (:07); Lights and Suspicion (:57); Lights and Hysteria (1:30); One to the Other (:47); and End Title (by Herrmann, :39).

**Director of Photography:** George T. Clemens, a.s.c.

**Production Manager:** Ralph W. Nelson

**Film Editor:** Bill Mosher

**Art Directors:** George W. Davis and William Ferrari

**Assistant Director:** Edward Denault

**Casting Director:** Mildred Gusse

**Set Decorations:** Henry Grace and Rudy Butler

**Sound:** Franklin Milton and Jean Valentino

**Directed by** Ronald Winston

**Teleplay by** Rod Serling.

*"Maple Street, U.S.A., late summer. A tree-lined little world of front porch gliders, barbeques, the laughter of children, and the bell of an ice-cream vendor. At the sound of the roar and the flash of light, it will be precisely six-forty-three PM on Maple Street . . . This is Maple Street on a late Saturday afternoon. Maple Street – in the last calm and reflective moment . . . before the monsters came!"*

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**Plot:** Shortly after a mysterious flash of light hovers over Maple Street, late one afternoon, the power goes out – appliances, power tools, radios, even automobiles. Before Charlie and Steve can walk into the next town to learn the source of the power failure, young Tommy warns the citizens of Maple Street that aliens from outer space are responsible. The young boy suggests that a few of them might already be living among their community. As the hours pass, suspicion grows as Les Goodman’s automobile starts up automatically, the lights in Charlie’s house come on, and everyone starts pointing accusatory fingers at each other. Charlie is quick to point a finger and ends up shooting Pete Van Horn in the streets, mistaking him for an alien. Charlie blames young Tommy for the comic book scare and the inhabitants become a mob. Stones are thrown and gun shots ring through the streets while the entire neighborhood turns into a murderous frenzy. High above on top of a grassy hillside, two aliens observe the massacre. One being explains to the other that if they turn off the power and throw the humans into darkness for a short while, they will find their own worst enemy – themselves. Having seen the results first-hand, the alien race plans to go from one Maple Street to the other until all of mankind has killed itself off.

*“The tools of conquest do not necessarily come with bombs and explosions and fall-out. There are weapons that are simply thoughts, attitudes, prejudices – to be found only in the minds of men. For the record, prejudices can kill, and suspicion can destroy and a thoughtless, frightened search for a scapegoat has a fallout all of its own for the children . . . and the children yet unborn. And the pity of it is . . . that these things cannot be confined to . . . The Twilight Zone.”*

### Talent Fees For This Episode:

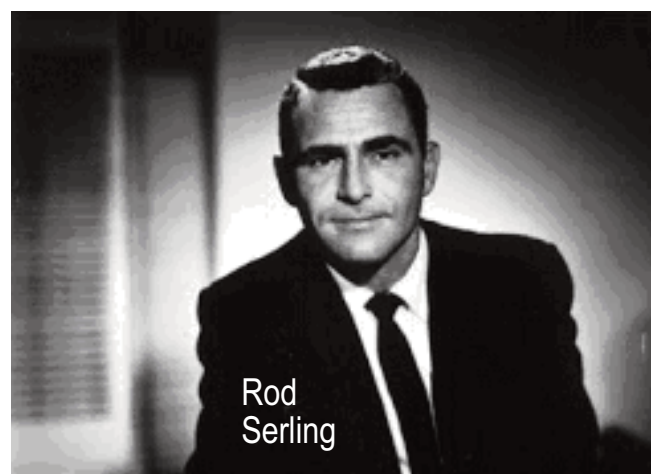
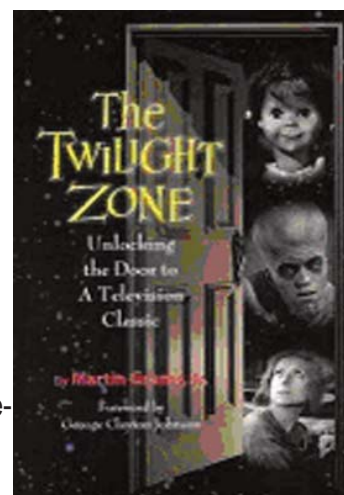
Minimum film residuals and minimum theatrical reruns applied.

Claude Akins (\$500) as Steve  
Jack Weston (\$850) as Charlie  
Anne Barton (\$500) as Mrs. Brand  
Amzie Strickland (\$500) as Woman One  
Jason Johnson (\$500) as Man One  
Burt Metcalfe (\$500) as Don  
Jan Handzlik (\$500) as Tommy  
Remaining members of the cast varied from \$75 to \$100 per day.

### Orchestra Music Featured

1 Piccolo, 1 Flute, 1 Alto Flute, 1 Oboe, 1 English Horn, 2 Clarinets, 2 Bass Clarinets, 1 Bassoon, 1 Euphonium, 3 Horns, 1 Harp, 1 Tympani, 1 Vibraphone and Bass.

All excerpts are from *The Twilight Zone: Unlocking the Door to a Television Classic*, by Martin Grams. This 800 page book was a recent winner of the Rondo Awards for "Best Book of the Year." Martin also provided audio commentary for the BluRay release of *The Twilight Zone*. Excerpts reprinted with permission from both the author and the publisher. ■





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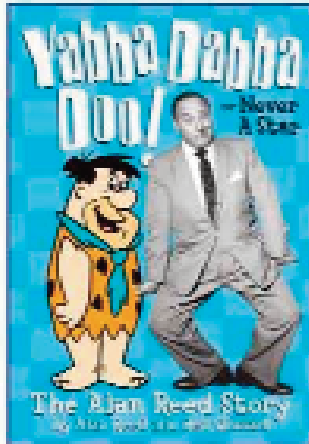
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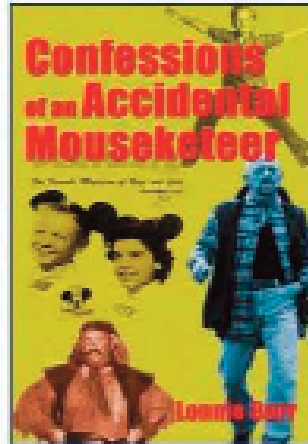
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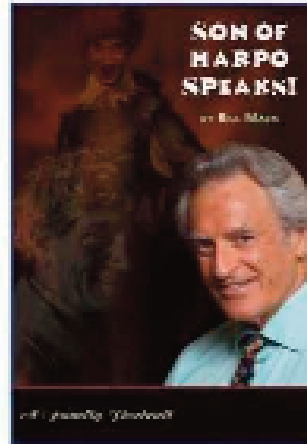
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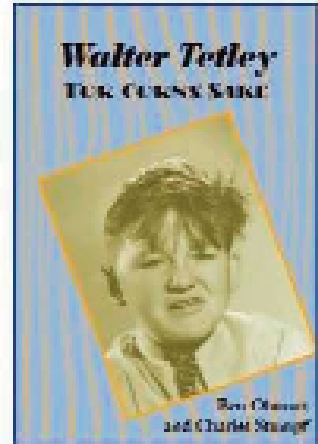
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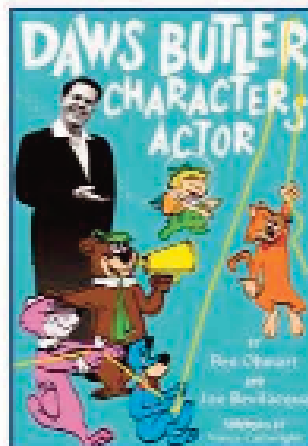
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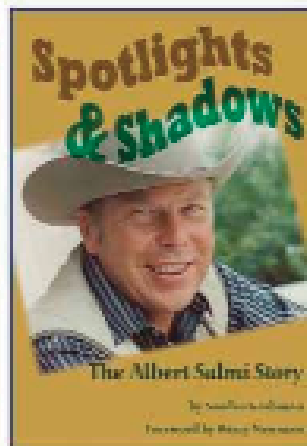
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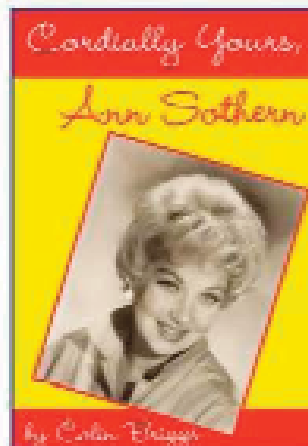
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## **OTRR ACQUIRES NEW EPISODES & UPGRADED SOUND ENCODES FOR MAR / APRIL**

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The following is a list of newly acquired series/episodes. They may either be new to mp3 or better encodes. These were acquired by the group during the months of May and June. They were purchased by donations from members and friends of the Old Time Radio Researchers. If you have cassettes that you would like to donate, please e-mail [beshiresjim@yahoo.com](mailto:beshiresjim@yahoo.com). For reel-to-reels, contact [david0@centurytel.net](mailto:david0@centurytel.net) & for transcription disks [tony\\_senior@yahoo.com](mailto:tony_senior@yahoo.com).

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### **Fibber McGee And Molly**

55-09-28 McGee Fixes The Bathroom Shade.wav  
55-09-29 McGee Is Charitable To Lester.wav  
55-09-30 McGee Tries To Tell A Joke.wav  
55-10-03 McGee Makes A Suggestion To Molly's Club.wav  
55-10-04 Penetrating The Fortress.wav  
55-10-05 Preparing for Mister Shi.wav  
55-10-06 Doc And McGee Mess Up The Chowder.wav  
55-10-07 Molly Buys A Bookend.wav  
55-10-12 Mr And Mrs Average Citizen.wav  
55-10-13 McGee Tries To Write A Dunning Letter.wav  
55-10-14 McGee Delivers Papers.wav  
55-10-15 The Knocking Door Mystery.wav  
55-10-02 McGee And Wimple Visit A New Barber.wav

### **Great Scenes From Great Plays**

48-10-01 (01) Cyrano de Bergerac.wav  
48-10-08 (02) The Corn Is Green.wav  
48-10-10 (11) The Old Lady Shows Her Medals.wav  
48-10-15 (03) The Barretts Of Wimpole Street.wav

48-10-22 (04) Dark Victory.wav  
48-11-05 (06) Little Women.wav  
48-11-12 (07) A Tale Of Two Cities.wav  
48-11-19 (08) The Enchanted Cottage.wav  
48-11-26 (09) What Every Woman Knows.wav  
48-12-03 (10) The Devil And Daniel Webster.wav  
48-12-17 (12) Young Mr. Lincoln.wav  
48-12-31 (14) You And I.wav  
49-01-07 (15) The Citadel.wav  
49-01-21 (17) Icebound.wav  
49-01-28 (18) The Goose Hangs High.wav  
49-02-04 (19) The World We Make.wav  
49-02-11 (20) Dead End.wav  
49-02-18 (21) A Doll's House.wav  
49-02-25 (22) The Lady With A Lamp.wav

### **Green Hornet**

43-11-21 Fire Blitz.mp3  
43-11-28 Diamond In The Rough.mp3  
43-12-11 The Man Who Came Back.mp3  
43-12-18 Story Of A Parrot.mp3  
44-01-01 Obvious Clue.mp3  
44-01-08 The Way Of A Woman.mp3  
44-01-15 Lowrey's Big Moment.mp3  
44-01-29 Pressure From Without.mp3  
44-02-05 Bent Paper Matches.mp3  
44-02-12 A Light In The Dark.mp3  
44-02-19 Short Circuit.mp3  
44-02-26 Murder Will Out.mp3  
44-03-04 A Case Of Honor.mp3  
44-03-11 Fog In The Night.mp3  
44-03-15 The State Versus Chester Canby.mp3  
44-03-25 The Man Who Fooled The World.mp3  
44-04-08 Intrigue On The Waterfront.mp3  
44-04-11 When Fools Rush In aka Death Wears A Mask.mp3  
44-04-18 Lady Of Intrigue.mp3  
44-04-25 The Orphan From St. Amand.mp3  
47-10-28 Exposed.wav  
47-11-04 Graft Crosses A Bridge.wav

47-11-11 Too Hot To Handle.wav  
 52-10-01 Political Crossfire.mp3  
 52-10-03 Spy Master.mp3  
 52-10-08 The Changing Alibi.mp3  
 52-10-10 Keys To A Robbery.mp3  
 52-10-15 Election Boomerang.mp3  
 52-10-17 Proof Of Treasure.mp3  
 52-10-22 Jeff Warren's Safe.mp3  
 52-10-24 Unknown Assassin.mp3  
 52-10-29 The Microfilm Of Death.mp3  
 52-10-31 The Hawkridge Gems.mp3  
 52-11-05 A Friday Night In The Mountains.mp3  
 52-11-07 The Simple Clue.mp3  
 52-11-12 The Triple Cross.mp3  
 52-11-14 Ceiling On Crime.mp3  
 52-11-19 The Cigarette Filters.mp3  
 52-11-21 Shipment For Korea.mp3  
 52-11-26 Gas House Ending.mp3  
 52-11-28 Murder And Espionage.mp3  
 52-12-05 Axford's Romantic Disaster.mp3  
 52-12-03 Pretenders To The Throne.mp3  
 MGM Theater Of The Air ]49-12-09 (8) Anna Karenina.wav

**MGM Theater Of The Air**

49-12-16 (10) The Youngest Profession.wav  
 50-01-13 (14) Crossroads.wav  
 50-01-20 (15) Slightly Dangerous.wav  
 50-01-27 (16) Riptide.wav  
 50-02-10 (18) Third Finger, Left Hand.wav  
 50-02-17 (19) Queen Cristina.wav  
 50-02-24 (20) Come Live With Me.wav  
 50-07-28 (41) Public Hero Number One.wav  
 50-08-04 (42) A Letter To Evie.wav



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**RADIOQUIZ**

**DON McNEILL**

**GUEST QUIZARD**

MERRY QUIPSTER OF BLUE'S "BREAKFAST CLUB"



1. Jack Benny sports insignia of: (A) Swiss Navy Commander (B) Nebraska Navy Admiral (C) Inland Sea Captain



3. Decked out in black-face, they're called: (A) Pick and Pat (B) Sooty and Boxcar (C) Molasses and January.



2. Marion Loveridge is known as: (A) Purple Heart Sweetheart (B) Medal of Honor Darling (C) Navy Cross Pin-up



4. Do you remember this little lad? His daddy is crooner: (A) Frank Sinatra (B) Dick Haymes (C) Perry Como



5. Listening for a cue is ace writer-director-producer: (A) Norman Corwin (B) Jerry Devine (C) Arch Oboler



6. Engineers on this "Army Hour" broadcast, simulating battlefield conditions, make use of a sturdy: (A) dynamic mike (B) ribbon mike (C) lapel mike,

**RADIOQUIZ ANSWERS**

4-(A) Frank Sinatra. 5-(A) Arch Oboler. 6-(A) dynamic mike. 3-(A), (B) and (C). The team has used three different sets of names. 1-(B) Nebraska Navy Admiral. 2-(A) Purple Heart Sweetheart.

TUNE IN September, 1945