

# RADIO VARIETIES

JANUARY --- 1941

TEN CENTS

*Minnie Pearl—The Girl With the Big Future at WSM (See Page 19.)*





# PATTER OFF THE PLATTER

The Waltz Kings of the 19th and 20th centuries meet in Johann Strauss' "Wine, Woman and Song," now played by Wayne King, best known popular interpreter of three quarter time. King adds to the Strauss music a new tang and warmth, achieved through the perfect blend of his saxs and strings. The coupling is the waltz sensation of the early twenties, "That Naughty Waltz," featuring the maestro's own golden sax. (Victor 27264)

Larry Clinton styles the lilting new "Moonlight and Tears" (from Warner Brothers' "Four Mothers") in a smooth and effective arrangement reminiscent of "My Reverie." Peggy Mann sings. The reverse is another film tune, "You Forgot about Me" from RKO's "Let's Make Music," featuring a clarinet quartet and vocal by Terry Allen. (Bluebird B-10984)

"Fats" Waller offers "Everybody Loves My Baby" in a fashion that makes us wonder why he didn't record it long ago. The song is a natural for the Waller style and "Fats" rides the keys and the mike for a torrid performance. The companion piece, "Scram" was written by Leonard Feather, the English jazz authority, and comprises instrumental variations on a tricky little riff. (Bluebird B-10989)

One of the most striking swing arrangements to come our way in a long time is Glenn Miller's "Anvil Chorus" which has created a storm of applause at each airing. Glenn has now recorded the number, Parts I and II on both sides of a ten-inch record, making 20 inches of driving, solid swing. There's little we can say about it that hasn't already been said. The pace is fast and furious; the orchestration and solos tremendous. This is a must for any swing fan. (Bluebird B-10982)

As of this writing, "Yes, My Darling Daughter" was enjoying a sunny spot high on the best seller list, thanks entirely to the efforts of Miss Dinah Shore who introduced the number and carried it single-handed. Now Glenn Miller steps aboard and next week you will probably see other orchestras lining up on the right.

Glenn swings the tune at a bit faster tempo than Miss Shore's

vocal arrangement and brings to bear his unison saxs and trombone quartet. Lyrics are handled by Marion Hutton who, if we may say so, does the best job she has ever done on any record. The reverse is another top tune, "Along the Santa Fe Trail" from the Warner Brothers film of the same name. This is in slow, pulsing rhythm with Ray Eberle at the microphone. (Bluebird B-10970)

"Your Dream" (Hammerstein II — Harbach — Kern, from Universal's "One Night In The Tropics") is one of the most delightful melodies to come out of the film factories for some time. Leo Reisman gives it a velvet and cream setting complete with vocal solo by the musical show favorite, Phil Ducey. The coupling, "Remind Me" from the same picture, is in rumba fox trot tempo, clean cut and rhythmic. (Victor 27237)

The old Benny Goodman band (Harry James, Dave Matthews and Buddy Schutz) beat out a tremendous double on "Farewell Blues" and "Margie," a pair of favorites

straight from New Orleans. This was the brand of playing that first brought fame to the Swing King, full powerful brass, solid rocking beat and plenty of unbelievable horn from both B. G. and Harry James. (Bluebird B-10973)

The famous all-star Chicago session which produced "Blue For You Johnny," and "Ain't Misbehavin'" yields another double of pure jazz, "Save It, Pretty Mama" and "Stompy Jones." This was the date with Sidney Bechet on soprano sax and clarinet; Rex Stewart, cornet; Earl Hines, piano; John Lindsay, bass; and "Baby" Dodds, drums. Ellington's "Stompy Jones" is the faster of the two, but both show tremendous driving force and inspired, smoking solo work. (Victor Swing Classic 27240)

From Paramount's new film, "Second Chorus," Victor just released a 12 inch disc of Artie Shaw's, "Concerto for Clarinet," in two parts. This two sided platter contains plenty of "clarinet calories" for devotees of Artie's licorice stick.

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Published at 1056 West Van Buren Street, Chicago, Illinois. F. L. Rosenthal, Publisher. New York Office: 485 Madison Avenue, Hollywood Office: 3532 Sunset Boulevard. Published Monthly. Single Copies, ten cents. Subscription rate \$1.00 per year in the United States and Possessions. \$1.50 in Canada. Entered as second class matter January 10, 1940, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the act of March 3, 1879. Every effort will be made to return unused manuscripts, photographs, and drawings (if accompanied by sufficient first-class postage and name and address), but we will not be responsible for any losses for such matter contributed. The publishers assume no responsibility for statements made herein by contributors and correspondents, nor does publication indicate approval thereof.





## FIRST LADY OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE

Helen Hayes at her piano in the music room of her beautiful Victorian home in Nyack, N. Y., where she finds comfort and relaxation between her dramatic radio shows. Miss Hayes is heard in her own radio playhouse — "Helen Hayes Theater" — on a 63-station coast-to-coast Columbia network. Mark Warnow conducts the orchestra and Harry Von Zell announces. Dramatic material for each Sunday evening series is selected from originals, motion picture hits, magazine stories and novels. "Helen Hayes Theater" is sponsored by Thomas J. Lipton, Inc., in behalf of Lipton's Tea and is heard at 9:30 p. m. CST.



# "We Take You Now to Mitchell Tower"

Every Sunday — for longer than most listeners can remember — this phrase has introduced the oldest educational network broadcast in radio: The University of Chicago Round Table.

**I**N 1931 WHEN the Round Table made its debut on WMAQ Chicago the idea of three professors discussing a current problem before a microphone was neither exciting nor newsworthy. It was an experiment. They used no

ceived and directed the program in its infancy.

Less than two years later, in 1933, the Round Table became an educational feature of the NBC Red Network — the first network broadcast produced without script. Its popularity as a local feature soon was eclipsed by the interest it commanded before a national audience. At first heard only in the East and Middle West, the program later became a "coast-to-coast" feature, with an audience of nearly a million listeners. By

made a grant to the University of Chicago for experimentation in radio education and expansion of the activities of the Round Table.

For the first time the Round Table was equipped to bring recognized authorities from any part of the country to discuss important problems before its microphone. In special instances the mountain went to Mohammed — to Henry Wallace, Thurman Arnold, Clifton Fadiman, who were unable to come to Chicago but whose contributions were essential to an authoritative discussion of the scheduled topics.

For the first time the insistent public demand for printed copies of the discussions could be met. In a little more than two years listeners have written for more than a quarter of a million copies of Round Table discussion. Today there are nearly four thousand regular subscribers, and single broadcasts have brought requests for as many as thirty thousand transcripts, which are sold on a non-profit basis.

With a network continuing to expand and an audience that has grown steadily throughout the "summer lull" the Round Table celebrates its seventh network birthday on October 13. Ranked as one of the outstanding programs devoted to the discussion of issues of national and international importance the Round Table exemplifies the American traditions of freedom of expression and communication. The Round Table has never been officially censored because inherent in its three-speaker set-up are a fair treatment of conflicting points of view and a diligent attention to a balanced presentation of controversial subjects.

At a time when civil liberties elsewhere in the world are being restricted by authoritarian governments the Round Table stands as a monument to the democratic guarantee of those liberties. The constantly widening audience for the program demonstrates the practical possibility of stimulating awareness and understanding of important national issues through educational broadcasting.



Emily Post to the contrary, elbows are decidedly in order on the University of Chicago Round Table and the idea is to keep the speakers in microphone position. L. to R.; W. Laves, political science professor, U. of C.; H. Deutsch, history professor, U. of Minnesota; and H. M. Cole, military expert, U. of C.

script, had no rehearsal, and held no conclusion to drive home.

In radio, however, this was a dangerous precedent, an unheard of privilege. There could be dynamite in a program which depended for its content on the whim or judgment of the three speakers. Besides, the topic of the first discussion was highly controversial: The Wickersham Report on Prohibition!

It is a far cry to that Sunday in 1931 when the three professors sat around a card table and analyzed the Wickersham report for a few hundred thousand listeners. But production of that first broadcast remains a tribute to the farsighted judgment of Judith Waller, then manager of WMAQ, and now educational director of NBC in the Middle West. For Miss Waller and Allen Miller, then radio director of the University, had con-

1935 there were more than fifty stations in its network, and the audience grew steadily.

Today the Round Table stands at the top of all discussion programs in educational radio. With a network of nearly ninety stations, more than five million listeners are tuned each week to the discussions.

At first the Round Table trios consisted only of University of Chicago professors. Usually two experts on the topic presented their facts to a third professor who played the role of "intelligent layman," protecting the audience from experts who might cloud the issues in technical jargon.

In 1938 new horizons were suddenly opened to the Round Table. The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, newly endowed for the dissemination of economic knowledge,



## "Cokes" for the Cast of Girl Alone



Members of the cast of NBC's *Girl Alone*, heard Mondays through Fridays at 4:00 p. m. CST over the NBC-Red network, take time out for refreshments between shows at the NBC Round Table at the Merchandise Mart Restaurant. Left to right around the table: Herbert (Ziehm) Butterfield; Lurette (Virginia Richman) Fillbrandt; John (Frankie McGinnis)

Larkin; Betty (Patricia Rogers) Winkler; Pat (Scoop Curtis) Murphy; Joan (Alice Ames Warner) Winters; Frances (Ruth Lardner) Carlon and the vacant chair would have been for June Travis, who plays Stormy Wilson Curtis. Standing, l. to r.: NBC Director Charles Urquhart, Frankie (Jack) Pacelli and Henry (Scotson Webb) Hunter.



# JACK BENNY - THE NEW CHAMP!

**Jack Benny, star of the Sunday evening Jello series, was voted Champion of Champions by more than 700 radio editors in the United States and Canada, queried by MOTION PICTURE DAILY in its fifth annual radio poll on behalf of Fame.**

**B**ENNY, who won the first MOTION PICTURE DAILY poll in 1936, regained the leadership which he lost to Edgar Bergen's Charlie McCarthy during the intervening three years.

Many other old favorites returned to top ranking while some former leaders dropped from grace. Dinah Shore, vocalist on the Eddie Cantor show, was picked by the editors as the Outstanding New Star of the Season, while Edward G. Robinson was selected as the Most Effective Film Player on the Air.

Bob Hope was selected as the Best Comedian, Fanny Brice as Best Comedienne, and Fibber McGee & Molly as the Best Comedy Team. Bing Crosby and Kate Smith again won top spots as popular masculine and feminine vocalists, respectively, with Richard Crooks and Margaret Speaks winning on the classical side.

Raymond Gram Swing rose from fourth place to first among the commentators, with Bill Stern in the lead for Best Sports Announcer.

## **Lux Theatre Wins**

The Best Dramatic Show according to the editors, is the "Lux Radio Theatre" a perennial favorite, and "One Man's Family" drew top honors as Best Dramatic Series. The "Aldrich Family" was voted tops among Comedy Series.

The biggest total was rolled up by "Information, Please," voted Best Quiz Program, and "Vic and Sade" was named best among the Monday-through-Friday daytime serials.

Best Educational Program is the CBS "American School of the Air", which has been recognized in many states as part of the regular curriculum and now is playing an important part in cultural relations with Latin America. Irene Wicker drew top honors for the Best

Children's Program with her show, "The Singing Lady."

Glenn Miller's orchestra was heralded as best among the swing bands and Guy Lombardo was similarly honored for the Best Radio Orchestra (Popular). Kay Kyser's "College of Musical Knowledge" drew top rank for the best popular musical show.

The New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra was voted the Best Radio Orchestra in the classical division, while the "Ford Sunday Evening Hour" drew the plaudits for being the Best Musical Show on the classical side.

With war and politics occupying most of the special events time over all networks, the CBS "European Roundup" was voted best.

## **Hope and Crosby Close**

Following closely on the heels of Benny, in the open championship class, were Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Bergen, in that order. Fred Allen and Helen Hayes were tied for the fifth place.

Jack Benny trailed Hope, however, as Best Comedian. In third place was Fred Allen, followed by Bergen. Eddie Anderson, as Benny's valet Rochester, stepped in with the leaders to take fifth place.

Gracie Allen was runner-up to Miss Brice as Best Comedienne. Mary Livingstone was third, Marion Jordan (Molly McGee) fourth, with Jane Ace and Portland Hoffa tied for fifth.

Burns & Allen followed Fibber McGee & Molly in the ratings for Best Comedy Team. Brenda & Combina placed third, and Amos 'n' Andy, Abbott & Costello and Benny & Livingstone were in a triple tie for fourth place.

Benny's Jello series was given the second place spot behind the "Aldrich Family" as the Best Comedy Series. The Bob Hope show for Pepsodent was third, while Fred Allen's "Texaco Star Theatre"

and the "Easy Aces" tied for fourth.

Yvette, the golden-haired songstress, was voted by the editors as the second Outstanding New Star of the Season. Helen Hayes was third and Carol Bruce, fourth. That the political campaign left its mark on the minds of the editors was reflected in the fact that Wendell L. Willkie received enough votes to tie for the fourth position in this classification.

Kenny Baker followed Crosby as the Best Male Vocalist (Popular). Lanny Ross was third, Frank Parker, fourth, and Frank Munn, fifth.

Miss Shore's rapid rise to stardom on the airwaves gave her not only the top rating for outstanding new star, but also gave her second place to Miss Smith as Best Female Vocalist (Popular) Connie Soswell and Frances Langford were tied for third position and Ginny Simms and Bea Wain were tied for fifth.

## **Crooks Leads Vocalists**

Richard Crooks, best of the male vocalists on the classical side, was followed by James Melton, John Charles Thomas and Nelson Eddy and Lawrence Tibbett, the last two tied for fourth place.

Still on the classical side, but with the feminine artists this time, Lily Pons follows Miss Speaks among the vocalists. Lucille Manners and Jessica Dragonette were tied for third place and Grace Moore was fifth.

Lowell Thomas retained second place among the commentators. H. V. Kaltenborn was third, Elmer Davis, fourth, while Gabriel Heatter and Wythe Williams tied for fifth.

Ted Husing was a close runner-up to Stern as Best Sports Announcer. Red Barber placed third and Stan Lomax and Bob Trout finished in the money by tying



for fourth. Lomax, a WOR sportscaster, was the only non-network star to take a place in the poll.

Following Robinson as the Most Effective Film Player on the Air were Don Ameche, Basil Rathbone and Bing Crosby, in that order. Bette Davis and Miss Hayes tied for fifth place.

The popularity among editors and the people who buy the sponsors' goods has changed little with respect to announcers. Wilson, who has won this poll since 1936, was followed in the top ranking by Harry von Zell, Milton Cross, Ken Carpenter and Bob Trout.

Another repeated favorite is the "Lux Radio Theatre" which was followed in the Best Dramatic Show classification by the new "Helen Hayes Theatre," Arch Oboler's "Everyman's Theater," "First Nighter" and "Columbia Workshop."

#### Criticize Daytime Serials

Following "One Man's Family" as Best Dramatic Series were "Big Town" and the "Aldrich Family," in that order. "Cavalcade of America," "Second Husband" and "Those We Love" were tied for fourth place.

In second place among quiz programs was "Dr. I. Q." followed by "Take It or Leave It" and "College of Musical Knowledge." "Prof. Quiz" and the "Quiz Kids" were tied for fifth place.

Editors who frequently criticize the daytime program material, marked their ballots with a number of asides concerning the daytime serials. "Big Sister," "The Story of Mary Marlin" and "The Goldbergs" were in a triple tie for second place behind "Vic and Sade." Also in a triple tie, but for fifth place, were "Bachelor's Children," "Life Can Be Beautiful" and "The O'Neill's."

"University of Chicago Roundtable" was voted second in the Best Educational Program series. Apparently of the opinion that education can be absorbed in a number of ways, the editors gave "Information, Please" third place, while "American Town Meeting of the Air" were tied for fourth.

Following Miss Wicker's "The Singing Lady" as Best Children's Program were "Coast-to-Coast on a Bus" (Milton Cross), "Let's Pretend" (Nila Mack), and "Quiz

Kids," all in a triple tie for second place, and "Tom Mix's Straight Shooters" in fifth place.

Popular dance bands rated in this order behind Guy Lombardo: Wayne King and Fred Waring, tied for second, Kay Kyser, third, and Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller, tied for fourth.

Miller, who topped the swing bands, was followed by Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and Jimmie Lunceford. Richard Himber just missed the first five.

#### Triple Musical Show Tie

The Fred Waring show, "Kraft Music Hall" and "Your Hit Parade" were in a triple tie for second place behind "College of Musical Knowledge" as the Best Musical Show (Popular). "Musical Americana" came fifth.

The NBC Symphony Orchestra was rated second among the classical radio orchestras. Frank Black's "Cities Service" orchestra was fourth while Andre Kostelanetz's orchestra, Raymond Paige's "Musical Americana" orchestra and Alfred Wallenstein's "Voice of Firestone" orchestra were tied for fifth place.

The "Ford Sunday Evening Hour," which was selected as the Best Musical Show (Classical), was followed by the N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Sunday afternoon broadcasts in second place, the NBC Symphony and "Voice of Firestone," tied for third, and "Cities Service," the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts and the "Telephone Hour," tied for fifth.

War coverage, political conventions and election returns were almost exclusively the items cited by the editors voting on special events. Although the ballots requested designation by network, the second greatest group of votes was for convention and election coverage with "all networks" noted on the ballots. The CBS "European Roundup" was in first place. Among others items cited as outstanding were the NBC spot description of the scuttling of the Graf Spee, general NBC war coverage, and NBC broadcasts of refugee children speaking to their parents in England. Outside of the war and politics, the only other event to get special citation was the NBC coverage of the draft drawings.

## KOSTELANETZ PREDICTS

ANDRE KOSTELANETZ, famous musical conductor of stage and radio, predicts a greater concentration than ever upon Latin-American music this season. It will be the natural result, he says, of the close relations between the United States and the republics to the South, growing out of the hemisphere defense policy.

The movement toward great cultural interdependence between the two continents has already begun, he points out, with the decision of the leading motion picture studios on the West Coast to broadcast programs by their stars to Latin America. Music figures prominently in these plans — all styles and classes of American melody from the folksongs of the mountains and the plains and the old South to the latest Tin Pan Alley hits.

These programs will supplement the regular short-wave programs of music-and-story which go out regularly from New York.

In return, says Kostelanetz, we can expect a steady cargo of Latin-American music — tangos, rhumbas, fandangos, serenades; "all the music, in fact, that is identified with the peoples south of the Rio Grande."

"The more infectious of these tunes will find their way, you may be sure, into the catalogues and music racks of our dance and concert orchestras. I look for the Latin American vogue to be greater than ever this winter."

The people of the United States, he declares, have long been enthusiastic about the music south of the border. "Its zip and rhythm have influenced our musical fashions deeply for many years. Indeed, for the last few seasons it would seem we can't get enough of Latin American music, just as I understand Latin America cannot get enough of our jazz, our cowboy songs and Negro 'spirituals.'"

Kostelanetz is convinced that this musical exchange is proving one of the most important factors — if it is not the most important — in cementing good will between the two continents.

"We've become good neighbors because we have a common meeting-ground in music.



# The Shadow at Home



**I**T'S HARD to imagine the Shadow having a family, but here it is, intact. Back row, left to right: Jerry Devine, author of the series heard Sundays at 4:30 P. M. CST over MBS; Arthur Vinton, who plays whatever menace is required each week; Ed's son, Keenan Wynn, who plays "Shrevie"; Bill Tuttle, director; Dick Widmark, juvenile lead; Kenny Delmar, "Commissioner Weston."

In the front row, left to right: Bill Johnstone, the Shadow himself who doubles as Lamont Cranston; ingenue Betty Heckser; Marjorie Anderson, the Shadow's girl friend, "Margot"; and Elsie Thompson, whose weird organ introductions precede the Shadow's wicked laugh.



# CHAPLIN PRAISES CBS Color Television



"Terrific," "amazing" and "marvelous" were the words used by Charles Chaplin (left) to express his wonderment at Columbia Broadcasting System's sensational new development of color television. The great film comedian was given a private demonstration of the device by its inventor, Dr. Peter C. Goldmark, CBS chief television engineer. At right is Gilbert Seldes, CBS director of television programs.

vised on black and white and color receivers standing side-by-side and expressed his amazement in typical motion picture adjectives such as "terrific," "amazing" and "marvelous."

"Color seems to me," Mr. Chaplin said, "to be ten times as important to television as it is to the motion pictures, because in black and white television, you can't recognize the details of the picture clearly — and with color you can. With color your eye gets more for its money. I tried to keep comparing the two pictures, but I soon forgot about the black and white."

When Mr. Chaplin learned that Nazi scientists had not only failed to produce color television, but officially had abandoned it as impossible, the man responsible for "The Great Dictator," which satirizes dictatorial control, said:

"The color television I have just seen is an American product, and is a striking argument for Democracy."

After the demonstration of black-and-white television alongside the CBS color method, Mr. Chaplin was initiated into the color control technique, with Dr. Goldmark extracting colors from the image on the television screen.

Then "magnified image" was explained with the great screen star getting a rare peep into the inner workings of the color scanning machinery and a close-up inspection of the newly developed lens which increases the apparent picture area of the television image by about 80 per cent.

After a tour through the laboratories, Mr. Chaplin warmly congratulated Dr. Goldmark on his developing color television and said:

"I think that now that you've got color, you can start television off on its right foot."

for Democracy."

Mr. Chaplin, as guest of the CBS Chief Television Engineer, Dr. Peter C. Goldmark, was shown a comparative demonstration, color control and magnified vision. He saw a reel of color film tele-

**C**OLUMBIA Broadcasting System's color television came in for high praise from one of the motion picture industry's greatest figures when Charles Chaplin described a demonstration as "terrific" and "a striking argument



# Cantor Looks at Radio

**"We need laughter as much as we need music, education and the news of the day," says Cantor. "It is the oxygen tank to keep Americans alive today."**

**YOUR INTERVIEW** with Eddie Cantor is set for the lunch hour. You are admitted to his suite on the top floor of a midtown Manhattan hotel and directed to his bedroom. A faint, linimenty, locker room aroma catches up with you

on the occasion of his decade in radio. Cantor extricates a tanned arm from the white sheet that envelops him and motions you to a seat, just as his muscled masseur punches out a staccato run on the keyboard of his spine.



Eddie Cantor caught in the act of "raiding the ice box" claims his steady diet of milk gives him most of his energy and is the beneficial all around drink in his house.

as you enter and find your host stretched on a table taking his rub-down.

You have come to get a story

"This is how I get my exercise," Eddie tells you dolefully. "Between rehearsals and broadcasts and benefit shows you can never

find time for the real thing."

To start things off, you remind your host that in October, 1931, he began his radio career with the National Broadcasting Company when it occupied only a few floors of broadcasting space at 711 Fifth Avenue. Now that he is beginning his tenth year with NBC with his "Time to Smile" program, how does radio look in retrospect, especially in regard to comedy programs?

Before the masseur can lay hands on another vertebra Cantor replies:

"There have been changes. They were slow in coming, but the changes have been for the better. The quality of radio comedy is at a higher level now than at any period in radio's history. Puns, jokes and wheezes have passed out of the picture. In their place we have situations involving real people. We are making actors living persons instead of machines that spout jokes.

Radio comedy is building characters, not caricatures, and you can give Jack Benny the credit for showing the way. He gave us real characters that every listener can recognize."

The blond muscle man, with hands half closed, half slaps and half punches the comedian's well developed torso. Eddie's voice is about as steady as Jack Benny's in his old Maxwell, but there is no interruption in his train of thought. Resting his chin on his arm, useful as a shock absorber, he goes on!

"Another change for the better is the faster tempo of radio comedy. We're doing in a half hour now what some programs used to do in an hour. We were the first, I believe, to set the style in this respect. We cut away non-essentials like extravagant introductions and buildups, which were quite the rage a few years ago. Listen, this will slay you. Do you know how we introduced Deanna Durbin for the first time? Don't faint. All we said was, 'Here's a 13-year-old girl with a very lovely voice.' "

The famous pop-eyes popped. He pondered this. In retrospect this seemed an incredulous in



roduction to a girl who was to win sudden and spectacular success in the films, but it served to point up the Cantor contention that radio goes too fast nowadays to permit dawdling continuity.

"Crack that knee, will you please," says Eddie lifting his right leg to the man in the white jersey. The masseur obliges, the knee cracks, Eddie continues:

"I'll tell you another thing that has changed for the better. Comedians are broadcasting now for the listening audience and not the studio audience. The boys who made people scream in the studios are not on the air anymore. Actors don't harp on Hedy Lamarr or Bing Crosby's horses to raise a laugh.

Nowadays they cater to the homes. No comedian has a right on the air unless he can see in his mind's eye the Nebraskans, the Alabamans, the Iowans and all the rest."

At this point Bunky steps silently in view. Bunky is an old time vaudeville trouper who gave Eddie his first job. Cantor, as a youngster, worked for Bunky (the Arthur of Bedini and Arthur) as a black face juggler, becoming one of the first stooges in vaudeville. Bunky is now the comedian's all-around man. He stands before him now to point a thumb in the direction of the living room. Eddie understands' the song pluggers are here on their daily visit. He slips on a bath robe and goes in to meet them. There are three of them. Perfunctorily they cluster around the little upright in a corner. One sits at the piano; another, holding a little sheet of music, sings; the third, the publisher, stands by following the score. Eddie stands close to the singer, facing him. It's a marching song about a young man who is drafted and goes to camp. Eddie listens attentively, tapping one foot in time with the music. He hears several choruses and then there is a pause for the verdict.

"It's got a good title, boys, and it shows thought. But I don't believe you have scratched the surface. This is straight stuff. It's factual. You've got to be comical, very comical. The way to make a hit is to make people laugh." Eddie, who will draw parallels at the drop of a hat,

gave as an illustration his famous 'Potatoes Are Cheaper' song. He sang for their benefit one refrain.

'You're not a Taylor or Gable,  
But Do What You're Able.'

"You have got to have a first act curtain at the end of each chorus. I think you can punch it up. Work it over and see me in a couple of days."

The pluggers get the drift and leave. Eddie, still humming the tune, sits down at a bridge table for his first meal of the day. Bells begin to ring: the door bell, the



Eddie Cantor keeps in trim by taking a plunge each morning in his private pool on his California estate.

phone, but the busy little man goes ahead with his meal, taking in order orange juice, figs on dry cereal, cream cheese, milk and a spot of vanilla ice cream.

Distractions notwithstanding, the comedian's mind is still on radio. Particularly his new show, "Time to Smile," which is presented from NBC's studio 8-H, from whence he broadcast the first comedy program to emanate from Radio City. It was on the occasion of dedication of NBC's present headquarters in 1933.

Of his new discovery, Mrs. Waterfall (Maude Davis), Cantor says: "She has a better sense of timing than any woman I have

worked with in my life."

Of Harry Von Zell, his announcer, he says: "Unquestionably the greatest announcer-actor-comedian in the business. When he makes a mistake it's an improvement over what you've got."

You talk about straight men and Eddie is reminded anew of the progress radio has made. When he first started in radio he horrified sponsors, he tells you, by suggesting that the commercial be said by the comedian's straight men, just as Von Zell is doing today. It took almost a decade, he says, for sponsors to appreciate the value of incorporating the plug for the product in the running dialogue rather than to set it as something apart.

Eddie was ahead of his time and in any review of the history of radio comedy his name will be preeminent as a pioneer who helped develop it. He was the first to go out of his way to find new talent and develop it (Bobby Breen, Deanna Durbin, Parkyakarkas). He was the first to do a preview of his program before submitting it to a nationwide audience.

He was a pioneer in admitting the public to his broadcasts, rather than reserve the privilege to a handful of friends of the sponsor. These and other innovations have helped radio comedy progress.

You ask him about the future of radio comedy and he answers:

"There will be an avalanche, an epidemic of laughter. We need laughter as much as we need music, education and the news of the day. Laughter is a balance very necessary in these times. You will hear more and more laughter because people will be afraid NOT to laugh. If the dictators didn't suppress laughter they wouldn't have a chance, because laughter makes a people relax and think. As long as we can laugh, we're safe. There have been substitutes for oil, for food and clothing, but never has there been a substitute for laughter. There has yet to be an ersatz laughter. Laughter is the most important thing in the world today. It is the oxygen tank to keep Americans alive today."



# RADIO VARIETIES GOLD CUP AWARD

Presented to

## Meet Mr. Meek

★ Though "Meet Mr. Meek" has been on the air only since July, its audience rating is higher than many programs on the air much longer.

★ The pathos and humor of the scripts are typically American — the situations ones that could happen nowhere but here. The Meeks might be the Joneses or the Smiths or even the listener's own family.

**R**AUDIO VARIETIES herewith presents Meet Mr. Meek with the Radio Varieties Gold Cup Award.

Each episode is complete in itself, peppered with situations that point up the good character qualities of the persons involved. Even Mr. Meek's wife, Agatha, thought somewhat a nagger, is absolved at the end of every script so that

a class all its own.

In casting the program, foresighted Dick Marvin, radio head of the agency bankrolling the show, took television into consideration so that today, each individual in the Meet Mr. Meek cast is prepared for visual radio by looking his part as well as sounding it.

Doris Dudley is one of radio's

★ It brings the public some of the finest acting on the air in the persons of ingenue Doris Dudley, whose flair for the spectacular is unequalled; Adelaide Klein, one of radio's best character actresses; Frank Readick, veteran of screen, stage and radio and Jack Smart, a Bob Hope alumni whose work is well known to radio listeners from coast to coast.

Tall, dynamic, blonde, she is now preparing for the legit' season and by the time this appears in print, may be rehearsing a Theatre Guild play.

Jack Smart, who plays Louie, Mr. Meek's lazy brother-in-law, almost needs no introduction. He was on the Bob Hope show all last year and made about eight pictures with Hope. Now, in Manhattan, he divides his time between the Meek program and appearances on most of the big variety shows.

This gesture toward the radio progress of tomorrow, he believes, will not only safeguard the show's future, but the actor's future as well. If actors look their parts, they can't lose out when television becomes a reality.

The title role is played by small, lithe, goodnatured Frank Readick. He has been in radio for twelve years and it was he who created the original Shadow. His experience as an actor dates back to the days when his father toured the far west in a covered wagon show and allowed Frank to break into show business with a song and dance when he was barely out of rompers.

Adelaide Klein, who plays Mr. Meek's wife, Agatha, started out to be a concert singer but switched to straight dramatic acting when radio started going places. She wrote monologues where she played five different women, so Rudy Vallee put her on his show five consecutive weeks and after that, Addie was a star. Today, in addition to her work on Meet Mr. Meek, she appears as one of the leads in "We the Abbotts" and is heard weekly on such shows as Gangbuster, Kate Smith, Helen Hayes and other major network shows.



Frank Readick who portrays Mr. Meek

the listener is left with sympathetic reactions toward her and her lazy brother, Louie.

Excellence of writing combined with excellence of acting and directing lift the Meek program from the ranks of the banal into

most brilliant young actresses. After finishing a year's run with John Barrymore in "My Dear Children," Doris came to New York and landed her first big night time radio role in Meet Mr. Meek. She plays the Meek's daughter, Peggy.



# Alec — the Music Box Collector

**A**LEC TEMPLETON is in a fair way to open a music instrument shop providing the notion strikes him.

For in his Chicago suite the "Puck of the piano" has a collection of musicana which is threatening to dislodge conventional accoutrements.

As you enter Templeton's abode you may be surrounded by the rippling tones of a piano, the

in composing such Templetonia as "Corelli in the Old Corral," "Bach Goes to Town" and "Mendelssohn Mows 'em Down." Still Alec finds time for his hobby.

Some thirty-six music boxes compose the major part of the collection.

Show piece is the ancient French box, a ponderous affair weighing forty-five pounds and estimated to be 150 years old. Alec

may procure them. When he was the guest at a University of Oklahoma sorority music box party, he came away with two instruments: one playing "The Sidewalks of New York" in B-flat, and the other, shaped like a flower pot.

The zither is neglected these days — excepting by Templeton. He possesses an ancient one for which he has invented a new scale based on the overtones of A flat. Its weird tones were produced over the air on "Alec Templeton Time" when he composed "Fantasy For Zither and Chorus."

A Chinese bell, hundreds of years old, was presented to Alec by a San Francisco admirer. Alec claims it is a rarity because the tone is exceptionally clear. It is in the key of G.

Castanets, rhumba gourds and sticks are among the exotic instruments Templeton plays dexterously. Most unusual of this division is the little brown-nut-sized gourd which has been hollowed out. When struck by a special wood hammer, it produces a high monotonous note. It originated in Japan where it was used to drown out mundane sounds while the owner was at worship.

And if all these instruments were not sufficient, Alec will point out his concert grand piano, radios, record playing machines and several hundred records.

However, like all true collectors, Templeton is constantly searching for the "major prize."

The "prize," in Alec's case if and when he obtains it, is a harpsichord untouched by the mechanical perfection of modern times.

Once when Alec visited them he sat down at a harpsichord and played "Bach Goes to Town" with complete splomb — even though he had never before played the instrument.

Alec Templeton is the star of the Alka Seltzer program, "Alec Templeton Time", heard each Friday evening at 6:30 and 9:30 (CST) over the red network of the National Broadcasting Company.



Alec Templeton enjoys a secret joke with Edna O'Dell before a broadcast of "Alec Templeton Time." Miss O'Dell was a recent guest songstress on the program. "Alec Templeton Time" is aired each Friday evening at 6:30 and 9:30 (CST) over NBC.

tinkling notes of a music box, the chime of a musical clock, or the majestic music of Mozart from a recording machine, the rhythmic beat of castanets, rhumba gourds, and a radio playing "Beat Me, Daddy."

When Alec Templeton was a lad of two, he reached up on the parlor table in the Welsh farmhouse where his family lived and pulled down the family's ancient music box. For fear it would break, his mother cautioned him never to play it. He didn't, but he discovered another way to listen to its tune. By running his fingers over the roll (similar to a player-piano roll) he figured out its melody.

Since that time, Alec Templeton has had a passion for music boxes, and as years passed, a passion for musical instruments of all types.

Some part of each day is spent with his collection. There may be a rehearsal for "Alec Templeton Time" or he may be engrossed

discovered it in the farm house of some French-Canadian friends. It is entirely handmade and plays twelve different operatic selections in a rich, bell-like tone.

The European symphonium also is 150 years old. It is four feet long, two and a half feet high, three feet wide and plays fifty large metal records.

Until recently the prized possession of a Hoosier admirer is the small spun-metal musical powder box. A fragile picture of a costumed lady is painted on a tiny china circle inserted in the lid.

Among the other thirty-six are an Old English "Toby" jug, a cigarette box, beer mug, Swiss music box playing metal discs, a miniature grand piano and an old teapot which plays two melodies in E major.

Templeton's love for these odd music makers is known throughout the country. He is constantly advised by the public where he



# Let's Look at WLS

SMILEY SUTTER, YODELING newcomer who stops the WLS National Barn Dance every Saturday night, is a crossword puzzle addict. He can complete the toughest puzzles in record time and has probably one of the largest vocabularies in radio. He is never without his pocket dictionary, and whenever he runs across a new word, he looks it up, studies it, applies it, and uses it from then on.

WLS REGULARLY AUDITIONS countless numbers of aspiring artists, after each has applied for an audition on the blank form provided. One of the strangest requests for a hearing, however, came recently from an Indiana housewife, a soprano soloist. In the space for miscellaneous remarks, this soprano wrote somewhat irrelevantly: "I won the hog calling contest at the Farmers' Picnic."

ROY KNAPP, DRUMMER with the WLS Orchestra, also teaches percussion instruments. Among his pupils have been Gene Krupa and the drummers in Ted Weems', Paul Whiteman's and Wayne King's orchestras.

"K-I-D-S CLUB" IS now heard at 7:45 a. m. Mondays on WLS instead of during the Sunday morning "Everybody's Hour." Chuck Acree, who conducts the show, offers pencil boxes for best riddles. Many people write him after each show, asking for copies of the prize winning riddles when they have missed the show for one reason or another. One woman recently wrote that her house was on fire during the show and she didn't hear it. She wanted the riddles because they were the best device she had to keep the attention of her Sunday School class.

SOME BIRTHDAYS AT WLS you may wish to note: Chuck Acree, September 22; Ken Trietsch, September 13; Grace Wilson, April 10; Eddie Allen,

August 27; Julian Bentley, August 19; Pat Buttram, June 19; Red Foley, June 17; Jack Holden, October 21; Dr. John W. Holland, May 8; Salty Holmes, March 6 and Chick Hurt, May 11.



Twice a year or more, stars of the WLS National Barn Dance put on a special show for the wounded veterans of the last World War at Hines Memorial Hospital, near Chicago. Some of the veterans engaged in a "Jam session" with two of the Barn Dance lasses after a recent show. With the patients, above, are Mary Ann on the left and Verne Carter, of the Verne, Lee and Mary trio.



Laurel and Hardy of movie fame recently joined Aunt Rita and Uncle Charlie in reading the funnies on WLS, Chicago. Here are Oliver Hardy, Rita Ascot and Stan Laurel. Charles Eggleston is hidden behind Laurel.

HARRIET HESTER, WHO conducts "Homemakers' Hour" and "School Time" on WLS, collects old-time hymnals and old-fashioned dishes. She has some particularly rare pieces of French china and looks forward to the day she may discover another piece to add to her collection.

SANTA CLAUS IS coming, and WLS personalities have their lists all made out. News Editor Julian Bentley jokingly asks for a draft exemption from St. Nick. Actually, Julian is a member of a business man's civilian unit taking military drill every Saturday afternoon. On the more serious side, Julian hopes to get a radio-phonograph combination for Christmas. Ervin Lewis, Assistant News Editor, would like to ask Santa for a new Packard, but he's afraid that would be too hard to wrap up. So all he wants is a stable reference map of Europe.

JOHN BROWN MUST want diamonds. When asked what he wanted for Christmas, he said he had something brilliant in mind—but wouldn't say what. He was on his way to buy a new alarm clock to get him up in time for "Smile-A-While." Just a pessimist, apparently. For John already has two alarm clocks and hasn't been late for the show yet!

WHEN MAKING 50 gallons of sauerkraut from a radio recipe, it is best to get the whole recipe before starting. Frank Baker, continuity editor at WLS, received a frantic call from a housewife at Palatine the other day. "Several days ago I heard a recipe for sauerkraut on WLS," she said. "I've started making some — 50 gallons — but now I forget what comes next. What shall I do?" Baker didn't know what to do. But he turned the call over to the WLS Homemakers' department, and Harriet Hester read the rest of the sauerkraut recipe over the phone.

THE 1941 WLS Family Album, with new pictures of all WLS personalities, has just been published.

JOE ROCKHOLD, KNOWN to WLS listeners also as Honey Boy and the Great Orrie Hogsett, has 14 hunting dogs — and hopes someone will give him another good coon dog for Christmas! He has only one dog with him in Chicago; the rest are "boarded out." He has turned down an offer of \$150 for the dog he has with him, but all 14 cost him nothing. Listeners have given the dogs to him at various times.





## Watch the Birdie!

When radio's popular family, "The O'Neills," started a new five-times-weekly schedule on CBS network, the photographer heralded their arrival by snapping this lively tintype. Suitably framed, it would be fine to hang over your Morris chair. In center is Ma O'Neill (Kate McComb), flanked at right by her son and daughter Danny and Peggy, and at left by her adopted children Eddie and Janice. In real life Danny and Peggy are James Tansey and Claire Niesen, and Eddie and Janice are Jimmy Donnelly and Janice Gilbert. "The O'Neills" are heard Mondays through Fridays at 4:15 CST.



**T**HE TRAINING of the nation's conscription army is now under way in camps throughout the country. The folks back home want to know what the boys are doing and what life is like in army barracks.

To give listeners on-the-scene accounts, to let them hear the boys in uniform themselves, and to show what army training really means, NBC is sending a streamlined mobile unit on a trans-continental tour of the 13 training centers with a crew of announcers, engineers and production men. The crew will be on tour for about three months. They will travel more than 10,000 miles.

Descriptions of how raw recruits are transformed into competent fighting men will be fed to the networks by Announcers George Hicks and Bob Stanton. And aside from training techniques employed in various branches of the service, Hicks and Stanton will supply listeners with a variety of camp vignettes. They're going to tell how (and when) the trainees eat, sleep, play and are entertained, spreading the whole panorama of camp life before radio listeners.

And to show how the problems of whipping into shape the nation's greatest peacetime army are being solved, they will interview officers, medical men, mess officers, orderlies, and the conscripts themselves. They're going to air such human interest episodes as "Blue Monday," regular Army wash day, amateur shows and boxing bouts.

Although the unit's itinerary will be subject to frequent change, it is planned to stop first at Fort Devens in Massachusetts, then head across the northern tier of states before snow falls, with visits to Camp Custer, Michigan; Fort Sheridan, Illinois; Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and thence to Fort Lewis in Washington.

During the last war radio as we know it today didn't exist. Not a single broadcasting station was in operation. Coast-to-Coast networks where an obvious impossibility. This is the first time in history that the American system of broadcasting has had the opportunity to show what it can do for the nation in the development of a great peacetime defense effort.

# RADIO AND U. S. DEFENSE

● Radio, which enjoys the full freedom accorded it by a Democratic form of Government, ful-

fills its task in preserving Democracy as we know it in the United States of America



The National Broadcasting Company, cooperating with the federal government in the development of the national defense effort, goes into the field to bring radio listeners first-hand descriptions of activities underway. Most recent undertaking will be the tour of the country's thirteen conscription army training camps for a series of on-the-spot broadcasts describing the processes by which civilians are turned into a reserve of trained manpower.

In addition to actual coverage of training camps, NBC will continue its informative and stimulating regular weekly programs dealing with national defense and the American way of life.

"I'm an American," broadcast with the help of the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, brings to the mike such famous naturalized citizens as Claudette Colbert, Albert Einstein, Lulse Rainer, and William S. Knudsen.

These people, who have come to America from many different lands, talk about democracy and the American way of life on this series. Songwriter Irving Berlin, born in Russia, revealed how he came to write "God Bless America," and brought Lenny Ross along to sing it. Einstein, German-born appeared on the program a few hours after his citizenship examination. Two young naturalized citizens interviewed



The portable microphone and transmitter picks up the rat-a-tat-tat of the deddy U. S. Army improved machine gun.



The mobile unit of the National Broadcasting Company, manned by two announcers and two engineers, are touring the United States to bring listeners a series of broadcasts from the thirteen training camps of the country's first peacetime conscription army. Having already seen service in covering sports, disasters, parades and political events, the mobile unit sets out in behalf of national defense. The unit includes a studio, a power plant and four separate transmitters mounted in a specially built five-ton car with a speed capacity of 70 miles an hour.

Mrs. Roosevelt on youth problems in a democracy. Weeks to come will feature such noted naturalized citizens as Marlene Dietrich. Dr. Walter Damrosch,

Paul Muni, Leopold Stokowski and many others. ("I'm An American" is heard Sundays at 1:00 p.m., EST, over the NBC-Blue Network.)

To bring home to listeners the importance of aviation in our national life, there's a weekly series called "Wings Over America." NBC has obtained the cooperation of James R. Ray, long a prominent figure in aviation, to insure the authenticity and completeness of the scripts, which are the combined work of Ray and Richard McDonagh of the NBC Script Division. Each of the weekly programs consists of a dramatization that brings to life an achievement or episode of historical importance and a discussion by guest speakers acknowledged as experts in some particular branch of aviation. ("Wings Over America" is heard Sundays at 11:30 A.M. CST, over the NBC-Red Network.)

"You're in the Army Now" is a new weekly NBC series dealing with life in the newly drafted forces. This is a dramatic program, aimed to interest all American families. These comic but plausible stories of the army camps are written by Wyllis Cooper, a World War Veteran and Captain in the U. S. Reserve. Cooper's successful career in radio includes the origination and writing for two and a half years of the famous "Lights Out" series. ("You're In The Army Now" is broadcast Mondays at 8:00 p.m., CST, over the NBC-Blue Network.)

The National Farm and Home Hour, produced in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, is devoting a current series of weekly shows to the relationship of agriculture to the nation's defense. The contributions agriculture can make and is now making is being told by farm men and women, boys and girls, as well as officers of the Federal agricultural services who are now actively engaged in carrying on the agricultural phases of the defense program. (The National Farm and Home Hour is heard Mondays through Saturdays at 11:30 A.M., CST, over the NBC Blue Network.)

The Army Recruiting Services assisted in the broadcasting of a series designed to stimulate recruiting, while another NBC defense series, "This, Our America," described the nation's resources and the part they will play in the present defense program.





What poor Daddy Hanley Stafford goes through in his attempts to discipline Baby Snooks is only too clearly shown in these shots during the Maxwell House Coffee Time program on NBC. When Snooks (Fannie Brice) smashes his best China, Daddy is firm about it (upper left). By gradual stages, resistance weakens to utter exasperation.



# MINNIE PEARL The Girl With the Big Future

**For a girl who had pined for the triumphs of Cornell in plays by the Bard-of-Avon, Ophelia Colley is doing right well by herself on the WSM Grand Ole Opry,**

**I**F THE name Ophelia Colley fails to strike a familiar note, then perhaps you've heard of Minnie Pearl. Minnie is the little girl who came onto the Opry stage in Nashville a few weeks ago and brought the house down with her homey patter and songs.

She is not yet as well known as Uncle Dave Macon, Roy Acuff, The Solemn Old Judge, the Fruit Jar Drinkers and a few other top-stars of "The Grand Ole Opry." But given a little time, Minnie Pearl stands every chance of blooming into a full-grown star. In fact, she is already being compared—and not unfavorably—with the Songbird of the Ozarks . . . Judy Canova.

So if you have not yet heard about Minnie Pearl, you are likely to hear a lot about her in the near future. And RADIO VARIETIES wanted to be the first to introduce her to you.

Minnie Pearl was born in Centerville, Tennessee in 1912, which is about fifty miles Southwest of Nashville. The exact date remains her secret, as part of a woman's prerogative. To be perfectly exact, however, we cannot say that Minnie was born these twenty-eight years ago. It was Ophelia Colley who was born then. Minnie came along much later, as this story reveals.

Ophelia lived the normal life of a young girl in a small town of a family above the average means. She never wanted for anything, least of all diversion. For she more than made up what the town lacked in playmates by her own vivid imagination.

That imagination turned toward "play-acting" and as years went by toward "acting." Nothing would do but the Centerville-Cornell should have serious training for the stage.

The envy of many a young Centerville lassie, Ophelia went off to Ward-Belmont college, swank

girl's school in Nashville which attracts subdebs from all over the country. It is a superb finishing school.

But the Centerville entrant was not so much concerned with finishing touches as the dramatic work offered there. For five years, she labored to learn the technique of the stage. Then after receiving her glossy diploma, back she went to Centerville's security to teach youngsters there the fine art of the drama (with a long "a").

But two years of this found her gradually getting up momentum for the big plunge, which was made in 1934 when Ophelia joined the Wayne P. Sewell Producing company of Atlanta, travelling all over the South giving dramatic readings and coaching home talent for their own production.

She still yearned for the serious side of drama, but fate seemed to conspire to turn her toward comedy. There was an abundance of native humor to be found in these little communities all over the South—humor which seemed to be begging expression.

The young Ward-Belmont graduate lived in the homes of the country-folk she was teaching, worked hours on end with the whole small township in producing their own plays. Invariably, she learned they were better at their own sort of plays than those of any playwright, including even Shakespeare.

Or, as she now admits, especially Shakespeare.

If that were the case of the country folk of Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Arkansas—then it was doubtless so of Tennesseans . . . of those from Centerville, including Ophelia.

Thus she reasoned as she came to the conclusion to abandon the serious drama and turn to the native country wit of the South. For three years, this young girl

traveled through twenty states of the South and South-east, talking with, working with, and living with the folks in the country areas and the small towns.

Little by little she picked up bits of wit and humor from the natives which she incorporated in the character she began building—building with one idea in mind: presenting it on the Grand Ole Opry.

Minnie Pearl, then, is no one character, but bits of many people Ophelia Colley knows very well. So are the other characters that appear on the Opry with Minnie Pearl, all creations of this young girl gleaned from her extensive travels through the rural Southland. And Grinders Switch, where Minnie lives, is actually a place not far from Centerville.

"Nobody lives there any more," Ophelia explained, "So I thought they would not mind if I moved Minnie in. Nobody has complained. And I reckon the only one who would is Farmer Stephenson, who owns the ground where Grinders Switch is located. There used to be a couple of families there, but they moved away. It makes a nice home for Minnie Pearl."

Incidentally, that name is the part of two persons who contributed to the creation. But Ophelia never thought there was such a real person. Since her debut on the Grand Ole Opry, she has heard from scores of real, honest-to-goodness Minnie Pearls.

And although Minnie is pretty dumb, no one has complained. For Minnie is too real and very lovable. Nobody could dislike her, or take exception to what she says.

That's the reason WSM officials feel she has a long and happy and prosperous life ahead of her, feel she is destined to add glory, if not glamour to the Grand Ole Opry.

If you haven't heard about Minnie, you will before very long.

And if you haven't heard Minnie, you should right away.



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