

Return with us now...

The Radio Historical Association of Colorado

Volume 4, No. 6
December 1978



Radio Historical Association of Colorado



Fibber McGee & Molly

What's the most enduring memory about Fibber McGee & Molly? It isn't Fibber's bombast, or Molly's calm in the face of his absurdities — it's Fibber's famous closet.

It's interesting that in 1978 sound effects are being rediscovered. A recent article in a newspaper for corporate communicators said "the skillful addition of sound effects will intrigue the audience, reinforce the usual statement and create a moving experience. Machinery, birds, ocean waves or bustling city sounds add to the meaning. Sound effects work well for transition between topics. Sections of purely effects and music can break the pace and revive the audience interest. Layer upon layer of sounds can be built up to create a rich texture."

The suggested source for these sound effects? Lambda Enterprises, of Denver.

Sound effects might change, but closets remain true to the spirit of Fibber McGee.



CHRISTMAS DINNER MEETING CANCELLED -- It is with great regret that we announce that the Christmas Dinner, to have been held on December 17 at the Old Heidelberg, has been cancelled. Despite the fact that four Club volunteers called every local member, only 37 reservations were secured. This despite the fact that there must be close to 200 local members, spouses and immediate family personnel. As a result, there will be no December meeting at all.

JOHN DUNNING'S DECEMBER SCHEDULE:

- 12/3 - Lux Radio Theatre, "Break of Hearts" (Dress Rehearsal), with Orson Welles and Rita Hayworth, 9/10/44
Great Gildersleeve, 10/5/41
Life Can Be Beautiful, 6/25/48
- 12/10 - Lora Lawton, 12/19/47
Just Plain Bill, 6/29/49
Pres. Harry S. Truman's Christmas Message, 12/25/50
Dimension X, "Green Hills of Home" (by Ray Bradbury), 12/24/50
Great Gildersleeve, 12/14/41
- 12/17 - Suspense, with Peter Lorre, 12/23/43
Grand Central Station, 12/21/46
Great Gildersleeve, 12/21/41
- 12/24 - Green Pastures, 12/22/41
Dragnet, "A Gun For Christmas", 12/21/50
Screen Directors' Playhouse, "Miracle on 34th Street", 12/23/49
- 12/31 - Fibber McGee and Molly, 15th anniversary show
Jack Benny and Fred Allen, New Year's show, 12/27/42
Interview with Vincent Price, 10/31/78

It can be seen that, as John is phasing out the series of Gildersleeve programs, he will be featuring a number of soap operas as well, of course, as quite a few Christmas programs. In connection with washboard weepers, I wonder how many readers heard Vic 'n Sade defined as "an island of joy in a sea of tears."

JANUARY MEETING -- The January meeting will be held January 11, the second Thursday of the month, at Majestic Savings on South Colorado Blvd. Please be there by 7:30 P.M. As mentioned earlier, there will be an explanation at that meeting, for new members, of how the library works. Also, John Lloyd has brought up the fact that we have gotten away from one of the original purposes of the club -- members trading with each other. He suggests that everyone bring a catalog of his own programs, to show to others with a view toward swapping. Please show up and help implement this excellent idea.

CHANNEL 6 FESTIVAL -- For the third straight year, the RHAC was asked to furnish volunteers for the Channel 6 Festival (which I earlier mis-called their Auction; that is their other fundraising event, held in the spring). As with so many events lately, response was a bit slack. Despite innumerable phone calls by myself, only 16 persons showed up. Absent were many who promised to come (including some who had come to me to volunteer).

Those participating had a good time, meeting many commercial TV announcers in the flesh, and many of us had a chance to meet Harry Tuft for the first time. As usual, a tour of the studios was given. It appears our members did a lot of good. When we arrived, the blackboard showed total pledges of \$2,200, and when we left the figure was \$5,400. Through mathematics too arcane to be discussed here, I have computed the amount the RHAC raised to be \$3,200.

Those showing up at Channel 6 were: Dan and Barbara Danbom, John Adams, Irving Hale, Ernie and Mary Jessen, Joe Madden, John Lloyd, Carol Roe, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Henry, Jack Richards, Scott McCoy, Jerry Piacentine and Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Barton. We thank you one and all.

NOVEMBER MEETING -- The highlight of the November meeting was the auctioning off of several movie posters, most of which had OTR associations. John Lloyd acted as auctioneer, bringing to mind L.A. "Speed" Riggs at his best. Bidding was spirited, with several items bringing in \$4 to \$5. With the money going to the Club treasury, Joe Madden was happier than Morris touring the Nine Lives factory. Our thanks to John for this ingenious way of enriching the coffers.

LATE DELIVERY -- Again, we must apologize to you for the late delivery of this newsletter, occasioned to a great degree by my spending five days in California over Thanksgiving, visiting my daughters who are in college. We hope to do better for the January issue.

GOSSIP! SCANDAL! -- Far be it from the purpose of Return With Us Now to sink to the level of yellow journalism. We cannot, however, resist asking the following question: What high-ranking RHAC officer is the object of a lawsuit brought by a maverick Denver inventor? If you didn't read Jack Kisling's column in the Nov. 16 Post, you're just going to have to ask someone. I'll never tell (unless bribed by a gin and tonic.)

WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE -- It will be remembered that this section is for members to air their wants. Like the deodorant in the ad, it's working. Last month I asked for a particular Phil Harris show, and John Adams came through handsomely, for which my thanks.

This month, Jack Richards is looking for the Escape Show of 3/7/40 "Jimmy Goggles, the God" and Dimension X from show #26 (9/29/50) to show #50 (9/29/51). Please help Jack out on this, since he probably has put in more time on club activities than anyone.

NIFTY COVER -- Sharper eyed students among you may have noticed that this month's cover greatly resembles those when Dan Danbom was editor. No coincidence; Dan did this excellent cover for us, which is greatly appreciated.

NO NEW LIBRARY -- There will be no additions to the library this month. The next list will be released at the January meeting. Also, a reminder that cassettes are available only on a request basis. Send Chuck Barton your request (all listings from the new reel-to-reel library are available) along with blank cassettes and \$.25 each to Chuck at 2800 Eliot Circle, #105, Westminster, 80030.

OLD LIBRARY KAPUT -- If you were waiting until the February meeting to put in a bid for tapes from the old library, forget it. All but ten of the 120 tapes were spoken for by the time of the November meeting, and the rest are doubtless gone by now.

NEW POSITION -- Jim Vaughn has kindly volunteered to serve in the newly created job of Membership Chairman. It will be Jim's job to orient new members, including furnishing them a kit setting forth what the Club offers and answering questions they may have. Call Jim at 477-8101, if you would like some information on the RHAC.

To Fellow Members of the RHAC:

The officers of the Radio Historical Association join me in wishing all of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We hope you all continue to derive great benefit from belonging to the Club and look forward to your continued support.

Best Wishes,

John Lloyd, President
John Adams, Vice President
Joe Madden, Secretary/Treasurer

Your editors, Dan Daugherty and Irving Hale join in these sentiments.

VINCENT PRICE PROGRAM SET

Shortly after Vincent Price announced his new radio series for Sears, Roebuck in his interview, Clark Secrest's column mentioned that KOA is tentatively planning to carry the programs, which begin in February. We appreciate Mr. Secrest's keeping us apprised of OTR doings, and it probably wouldn't be a bad idea to write KOA to show our support for their plans.

CONTEST WINNER

RHAC member Jim Snyder won a tape recorder for successfully solving the OTR - Anagrams Puzzle No. 2, the solution to which appeared in last month's paper. Our congratulations to Jim.

DUES

A number of people will not be receiving this month's edition of Return With Us Now (Gad, what they're missing!). Why? Because they didn't pay their dues on time. Some stricken names are so well known as to almost be household words. So, pay up and get current, and those of you whose dues are coming up, don't suffer the total withdrawal of missing out on this glorious journalism, to say nothing of other (subsidiary) benefits of membership.

NEW CATALOGS

Two interesting catalogs came in this last month. One is a supplement from The Great Radio Shows in Woodinville, Wash. One gets the idea that George Fowler isn't always the first to receive new programs, but his overall inventory is formidable, his grading is most honest, and his description of programs shows a lot of love and care. Some programs I hadn't heard of in the current catalog are McGarry & His Mouse, Sara's Private Caper, Hotpoint Holiday Hour and Let George Do It.

The other, from Esoteric Vintage Sound in Bolingbrook, Ill. has all the readability of a computer printout, but unusual (to me) listings include Heartbeat Theatre and Faces in the Window. It claims to be first generation stuff, and included are a lot of discs for sale by bid. Call Irv Hale for further info on either catalog.

REALLY OLD TIME RADIO -- It is with great pleasure that we reprint a couple of very interesting historical items. They come from Darrell Albright in Topeka, Kansas, and were mailed in August, but through a delay in the mail, not received by John Lloyd until October. Space limitation prevented their being printed until now. The first page following this is a series of radio verification stamps collected by a radio fan in Southeastern Kansas. They probably date back to the days of crystal sets or a little later. Mr. Albright had asked for help in determining which states stations 5, 6 & 18 were located in. Based on partial notations in the right margin, my guesses appear below along with the others that he has verified:

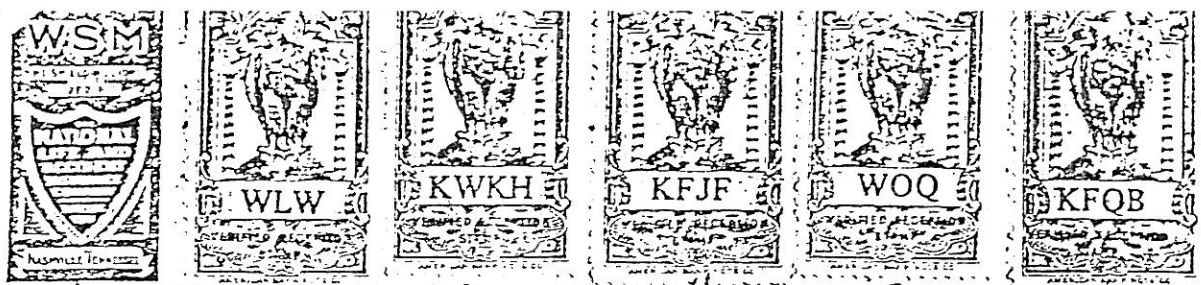
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|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Tennessee | 10. Chicago | 19. Kansas | 28. Chicago |
| 2. Ohio | 11. Colorado | 20. Chicago | 29. Iowa |
| 3. Louisiana | 12. Kansas | 21. Chicago | 30. Pennsylvania |
| 4. Oklahoma | 13. Missouri | 22. Illinois | 31. Illinois |
| 5. Michigan | 14. Louisiana | 23. Colorado | 32. Chicago |
| 6. Texas (or
Tennessee) | 15. Chicago | 24. Iowa | 33. Detroit |
| 7. Kansas | 16. Missouri | 25. Chicago | 34. Illinois |
| 8. Texas | 17. Oklahoma | 26. Kansas | 35. Iowa |
| 9. Chicago | 18. Indiana | 27. Chicago | 36. Milwaukee |

Concerning the letter appearing on the page after the stamps, Mr. Albright writes:

The attached letter is self-explanatory. I took the liberty of removing the city and state of the writer for privacy purposes. Station WREN took its call letters from the middle letters of the city in which it was located at the time, LaWRENce, Kansas. Obviously, it had some connection with a milling company. WREN now broadcasts from Topeka at 1250 KHz.

JIM VAUGHN'S TRIVIA QUIZ #6: JACK BENNY

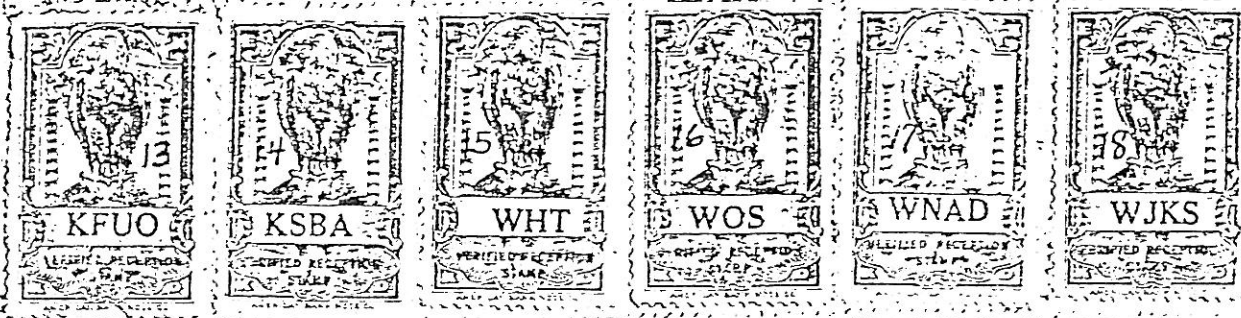
1. Jack Benny was born on St. Valentine's Day, February 14, 1894 in Chicago. What was his real name?
2. On radio, Benny started his career by doing two shows a week that season. During his remaining years in radio, he did a show each week every year. What year did he start in radio?
3. Can you name the cast of the Jack Benny Show? (There were 5 main characters.)
4. Jack opened his show with what two words?
5. What was the name of the hosiery clerk Benny met at the Los Angeles May Company, who was later to become Mary Livingston?
6. Later in its run, his show was sponsored by Lucky Strike. Name the members of the Sportsmen Quartet who sang the commercials.
7. Dennis Day, discovered by Mary Livingston, had a standard phrase he used on the Benny show that always broke up the house. What was it?
8. Who sponsored the show between Jello and Lucky Strike?
9. Benny went to CBS in 1949, where he continued his live broadcasts until what date?
10. Jack Benny died at 11:52 P.M., December 26, 1974. If Jack had lingered for eight minutes more, he would have left us at midnight and presented us with one final silent gag that would have probably left him with a smile on his face. It was the title of the "Ford Theatre" program heard March 4, 1949 on CBS. What was it?



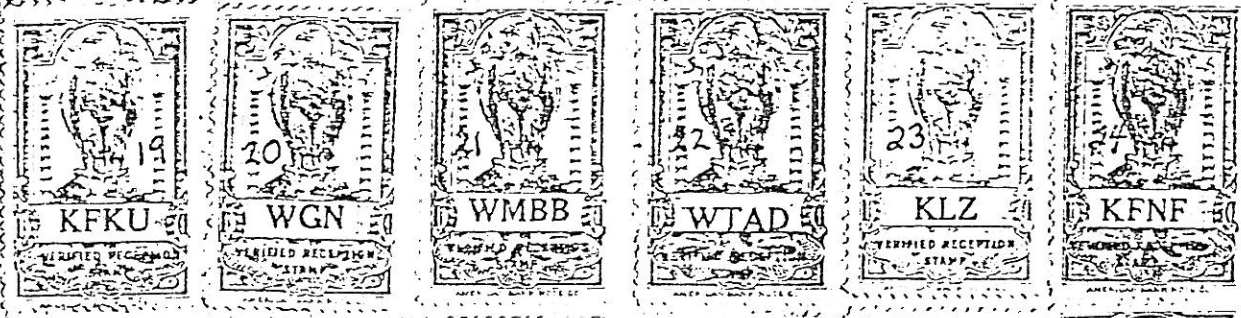
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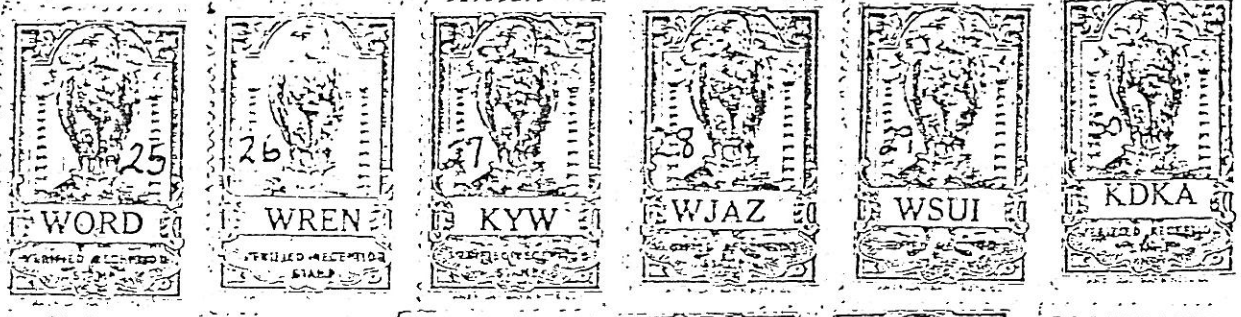
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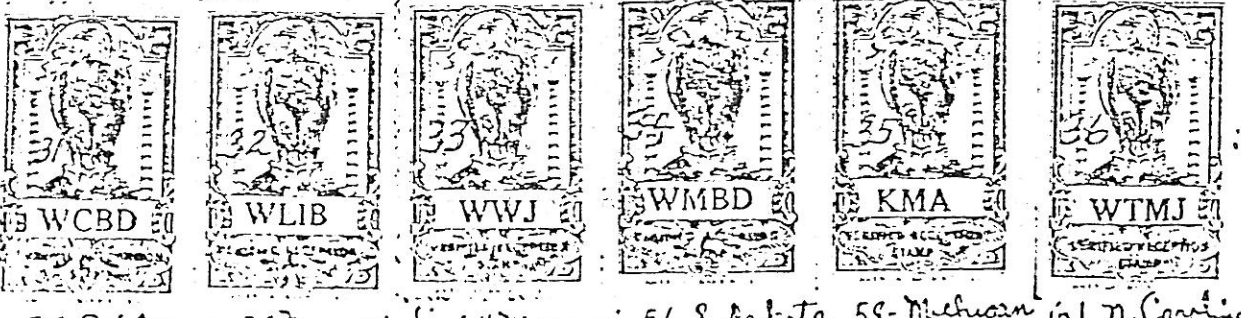
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50 California 52 Minnesota 54 Missouri 56 S. Dakota 58 Michigan 61 N. Carolina
 51 Illinois 53 New Jersey 55 Colorado 57 Illinois 59 Missouri 62 Missouri
 60 Chicago 63 California 49



Jenny Wren Company
MANUFACTURERS OF
JENNY WREN "SELF-RISING" FLOUR

Lawrence, Kansas, U.S.A.

Nov. 2, 1927.



D. D. Murphy,
405 S. Highland

Dear Mr. Murphy:-



I thank you very much for sending us the "Proof of Reception Card" and the ten cents and we are sending you one of our "ekko" stamps herewith.

Yours truly,

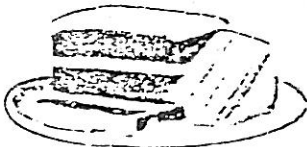
JENNY WREN COMPANY,
Station W-R-E-N.

By

R. G. Jackson



RCJ-PK.



'War of Worlds' Still Amazing

EDITOR'S NOTE: There's really been nothing like it before or since. Thousands panicked by a radio announcer's voice describing the landing of Martians in New Jersey. It was, of course, only an Orson Welles radio drama, but 40 years ago, few listeners realized that.

By SAM BLACKMAN
For The Associated Press

"We interrupt our program of dance music to bring you a special bulletin from the Intercontinental Radio News. At 20 minutes before 8, Central Time, Professor Farrell of the Mount Jennings Observatory, Chicago, Ill., reports observing several explosions of incandescent gas occurring at regular intervals on the planet Mars."

That's the way the radio broadcast began the night of Oct. 30, 1938, followed by an announcement that a meteorite "of unusual size" had landed at Grovers Mills, near Princeton, N.J. When the broadcast ended, Orson Welles' dramatization of H. G. Wells' fantasy, "The War of the Worlds," had frightened the nation.

From coast to coast, uncounted thousands believed from subsequent simulated news bulletins that the Martians had really landed and were devastating the country.

Forty years later, it is still as hard to believe how it was that night in the New York office of the Associated Press when its Newark bureau reported some residents were rushing from their homes with towels over their faces and fleeing to the hills.

"WHAT KIND of stuff are they drinking in New Jersey now," was the first reaction. (During Prohibition the favorite drink in New Jersey—often called "as wet as the Atlantic Ocean"—was straight applejack.)

The panic wasn't confined to New Jersey. Similar reports came in from other areas, fueled by the announcement that "Martian cylinders are falling all over the country." In New York City a report said: "Black smoke is drifting over the city. People in the streets see it now. They're running toward the East River, thousands of them, dropping in like rats." And this from "The Secretary of the Interior": "Citizens of the nation: I shall not try to conceal the gravity of the situation that confronts the country."

Newspaper offices, police stations and radio stations were swamped with calls from people convinced war had come. The New York Times received 875 calls. Many listeners had tuned in late and didn't hear, or ignored, announcements that the dramatization was fictional.

PROVIDENCE, R.I., reported "weeping and hysteria. Women swamped the switchboard of the Providence Journal for details of the massacre and destruction at New York." The utility company was urged to turn off the lights "so that the city would be safe from the enemy."

The Kansas City Bureau of the Associated Press received inquiries from Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Beaumont, Texas, and St. Joseph, Mo. One caller said he had loaded his children in his car, had filled it with gasoline and was going somewhere. "Where is it safe?" he asked.

IN PRINCETON, The Daily Princetonian, the campus newspaper, received calls from alarmed families of students and from alumni. Two professors of the geology department went with equipment to Grovers' Mill, where the "meteorite" had fallen. There they found sightseers, who like them, came for specimens.

And so it went, nearly everywhere. Efforts were made to stem the panic. The Associated Press moved this note on its wires at 8:48 p.m.—12 minutes before the broadcast ended:

"Note to Editors: Queries to newspapers from radio listeners throughout the United States tonight, regarding a reported meteor fall which killed a number of New Jerseyites, are the result of a studio dramatization."

The New York City police department sent this message on its teletype to stationhouses, which relayed it to police cars:

"To all receivers: Station WABC informs us that the broadcast just concluded over that station was a dramatization of a play. No cause for alarm. The New Jersey State Police sent a similar message.

(Afraid of a similar scare, the administration in Washington delayed announcing last January that a Soviet satellite had gone out of orbit and was heading toward the earth.)

Why the mass hysteria?

SOME psychologists noted that the broadcast came one month after the Munich agreement, which in turn ended a month of war scares—Hitler's demands on Czechoslovakia and partial mobilization in Paris. Radio stations had frequently interrupted programs to report developments.

The late Charles Jackson, author of "The Lost Weekend," was also a script writer for the Columbia Broadcasting System which presented the play. He wrote that the reaction was understandable in the light of world news events.

"In this period of war nerves," Jackson said, "Orson Welles produced his Martian invasion and millions of jittery Americans were instantly convinced that war had come to them."

H. G. Wells wasn't pleased. His New York agent issued a statement saying CBS had been granted the right to dramatize the novel but "it was not explained to me that this dramatization would be made with a liberty that amounts to a complete rewriting of 'The War of the Worlds,' and renders it into an entirely different story. Mr. Wells personally is deeply concerned that any work of his should be used in a way, and with a totally unwarranted liberty, to cause deep distress and alarm throughout the United States."

HE HENTED at legal action, unless CBS made a full retraction.

CBS issued a statement saying that the adaptation of Wells' 40-year-old novel "followed the original closely, but to make the imaginary details more interesting to American listeners, the adapter, Orson Welles, substituted an American locale for the English scenes of the story."

CBS noted that the fictional character of the broadcast had been announced four times but "nevertheless, the program apparently was produced with such vividness that some listeners who may have heard only fragments thought the broadcast was fact, not fiction." Five announcements to reassure listeners were made later that evening.

CBS said it wouldn't again use "the technique of a simulated news broadcast within a dramatization when circumstances of the broadcast could cause immediate alarm."

Orson Welles expressed regret and said, "I don't think we will choose anything like this again." He said he had hesitated originally to do the play because he felt people would be bored "at hearing a tale so improbable."

HEADS OF the radio networks met with the Federal Communications Commission and agreed to restrict use of "flash" and "bulletin" to news items of unusual importance and use them sparingly in dramatizations of fictional events. The FCC said it would take no action against CBS because steps had been taken "sufficient to protect the public interest."

hearing some stories which were nearly straight from the Canon, as well as some which were uncanonical in the extreme, but as to which were wick I cannot say.

A second and third series of stories were prepared and broad-- cast, again written by Edith Meiser and played by Richard Gordon and Leigh Lovell. It should be noted that in these later series the longer, novel length stories began to appear as 4 to 6 week series. Also tales of two other types began to make their appearance as most of the original material had been used. These were again short tales, complete in one half-hour broadcast. One type was stories based on the famous "untold tales" which abound in the Canon. Watson, in beginning his stories, was wont to mention several earlier adventures by title--titles for which stories were never written. Titles such as The Giant Rat of Sumatra, The Dutch Steamship Friesland, the singular Affair of the Aluminum Crutch, and The Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant appeared. The third type of story is strictly apocryphal--tales made up from whole cloth invented in the fertile mind of Miss Meiser, or possibly based somewhat lamely on some incident in a Canonical story.

The second series for G. Washington Coffee was as follows:

(Note: Stories in this and the following series marked with an ** are entirely apocryphal, those marked with a + are 'Untold Tales'.)

WEAF-NBC 17 Sept. to 17 Dec. 1931, WJZ-NBC 30 Dec. to 27 April 1932
WEAF-NBC 5 May to 23 June 1932

1931	September	17	unknown
		24	Lady Frances Carfax
	October	1	Wisteria Lodge
		8	The Devil's Foot
		15	The Red Circle
		22	The Bruce-Partington Plans
	November	29	The Dying Detective
		5	The Cardboard Box
		12	The Three Gables
		19	A Study in Scarlet (in four parts)
		26	"
	December	3	"
10		"	
17		The Engineer's Thumb	
1932	January	30	The Hindoo in the Wicker Basket **
		6	The Yellow Face
		13	The Gloria Scott
		20	The Beryl Coronet
	February	27	The Hound of the Baskervilles (in six parts)
		3	"
		10	"
		17	"
		24	"
		2	"
March	9	Murder in the Waxworks **	
	16	A Case Of Identity	
	23	The Ace of Spades **	
	30	The Missing Leonardo da Vinci **	
	April	6	The Veiled Lodger
13		The Three Garridebs	
20		The Giant Rat of Sumatra +	

1932	April	27	The Haunted Clock **
	May	5	From May 5 to June 23 I can find no account of the stories, but there were several since this series is said to have run to 40 broadcasts.
	June	23	

The third series for G. Washington Coffee was as follows:

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes WJZ- NBC 28 Sept. 1932 to 31 May 1933 36 broadcasts Written by Edith Meiser, Sherlock Holmes: Richard Gordon, Dr. Watson: Leigh Lovell

1932	September	28	The Second Stain
	October	5	The Empty House
		12	His Last Bow
		19	The Three Students
		26	The Sign of Four (in six parts)
	November	2	"
		9	"
		16	"
		23	"
		30	"
	December	7	The Blue Carbuncle
		14	Death in the Club Window **
		21	The Haunted Bagpipes **
		28	Murder by Proxy **
1933	January	4	The Dying Rosebush **
		11	The Missing Black Bag **
		18	Her Majesty's Wine Cellar **
		25	The Missing Dancer **
	February	1	Death At Stonehenge **
		8	Mr. Pottle's Secret Profession **
		15	The Voodoo Curse **
		22	Death Holds the Prompt Book **
	March	1	The Typewritten Will **
		8	The Aristocratic Model **
		15	The Poison Keg **
		22	The Corpse in the Cab **
		29	The Jewish Breastplate **
	April	5	The Lost Train ** (See note below-Ed.)
		12	Schoscombe Old Place
		19	The Sealed Room **
		26	Vamberry The Wine Merchant +
	May	3	The Walking Corpse **
		10	The Poisoned Stick **
		17	The Case With Two Solutions **
		24	The Singular Affair of the Aluminum Crutch +
		31	The Armchair Solution **

This ends the first series of Sherlock Holmes stories on radio, all written by Edith Meiser and all but the first starring Richard Gordon and Leigh Lovell. There are many other series and many actors have played Holmes and Watson on radio, but that must wait 'till another chapter of this rather long tale be told--if ever.

(Editor's Note: The April 5, 1933 show 'The Lost Train' may very well be based on an Arthur Conan Doyle short story "The Lost Special" in which the mystery is investigated by an Inspector Collins, who fails to find a solution. Perhaps Edith Meiser felt

that Sherlock Holmes deserved a shot at the case. "The Lost Special" was broadcast on the Escape radio series on February 12, 1949)

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE TV DOESN'T WORK.by John Adams

This past spring our TV was not working, and not having the \$50 to get it fixed it set idle for three months. What do you do with your time? The thought came to me, why not listen to some of my tapes?

When you are busy making copies you don't just listen, you are busy watching meters, checking levels, looking up dates, typing fly sheets for the boxes and a thousand other things, but not really listening to the content of the shows.

The next job was what to listen to. We wanted something light, a comedy, so since I had ten reels of EASY ACES with Goodman and Jane Ace and the shows were in sequence, that was my first choice. It was a run from 1945-1946. I do recall that when I was young the show was very funny.

Ten reels would only last sixty hours, and episode #1 was started. Jane Ace is charging her brothers clothes to Mr. Ace's account. Jane's brother Johnny was not one to take work whenever it was possible to avoid it. Jane and Marge (her live-in friend) start a bridge school to teach people how to play bridge like Jane, and Jane adopts 21 year old Ko Ko as her son. The hours rolled on and on. As soon as a side was finished, we rushed to change the reel to see what else could possibly happen.

That first evening it was 2 AM before the tape machine was turned off for the night. We couldn't wait 'till dark to continue with the story.

Sixty hours or a week had passed, and Easy Aces was coming to a close. The time was at hand to make the next selection. I had a thirty reel run of Peg Lynch, from Ethel and Albert thru The Couple Next Door to Little Things In Life--a span of some 30 years. Peg Lynch wrote her own material, very much like Goodman Ace did, but in some ways was even funnier. She took everyday happenings from her personal life and put them down on paper. She had two children in the stories, and you followed them thru their teens, into college, and marriage. The family goes on a six month trip to Europe, and they sell their city house and build a country home.

In the 30 years Peg had four different husbands. In 1941 for eight weeks Richard Widmark is husband number one, then Allen Bunce holds the longest run of 12 years until the 1960's. Husband number three is Carl Schmidt, and his regime is 20 weeks in 1973. Her last husband lasts six months in 1975-1976, and is Robert Dryden in Little Things In Life.

The listening time excellerated to some ten hours a night, and we were becoming fiends for more and more. A month later Peg Lynch had run the gamut. It was time to choose again. Still sticking to light comedy, we quickly exhausted Fibber McGee and Molly, Amos 'n Andy, Lum and Abner, My Friend Irma, and Our Miss Brooks. The

whold idea had become a monster, and it was time to make a change. The neighbors had not seen us for months, the phone was not being answered, and our social life was nill. I even missed a RHAC meeting.

The TV was taken in for repairs. The tape machine was given a chance to cool down. Things were back to normal. But on nights when all that was on was Happy Days, Laverne and Shirley, or Wonder Woman, we longed to get back to listening to tapes again. There are still the Westerns, Escape, Suspense, and some odd 995 other reels.

THE CLIFF HANGER THAT REALLY LEFT ME HANGING. Dan Daugherty

John Adam's article, "What to Do When the TV Doesn't Work" has struck home in two ways. First, I, like John and no doubt many other collectors, know what it's like to have a shelf full of radio shows I've faithfully collected, but never really listened to. Second, I understand the ability of the old radio serials to still capture your interest and keep you coming back for more.

The old serials are sometimes corny, often dated, but still effective. Besides, there's a tremendous amount of satisfaction for a collector in being able to listen in one evening to more chapters of I Love A Mystery or One Man's Family than the original radio audience could have heard in a month. In a sense, we cheat the writers of the scripts.

When the writers of Buck Rodgers left you with Killer Kane's threatening laugh as Wilma or Dr. Huer fell into his grasp, you were supposed to be left hanging in suspense for a full 23 hours and 45 minutes before finding out what happened. The writer, bless his sneaky little heart, would then give you the outcome you've been waiting so long for, only to pick you up and hang you in suspense once more at the end of the 24th hour. What's worse, every fifth chapter, you had to wait an entire weekend! Some writers were even more diabolical than that. Carlton E. Morse, in his Adventures By Morse series, would leave you wondering what dangers the howl of the werewolf forbode to Captain Friday and Company at the end of chapter 6, then hang you up on his own special kind of suspense hook for an entire week!

Well, let Morse plot in the mysterious and murky depths of his imagination; we collectors have only to turn the reel, and in two minutes we know exactly what happened with that darned werewolf.

A local FM station, KADX, has been running 15 minute chapters of old radio serials at 8 A.M. on weekday mornings for some time now. They began with 68 chapters of Chandu The Magician, and Chuck Hansen faithfully copied each chapter and arranged them on reels which he then loaned to me to copy. It was summertime and I had some yard work to do, so as one tape machine copied from another, I set up a speaker by the patio door pointed into the back yard and going full blast. As I shoveled and graded, my wife and I were transported off to encounters with the mysteries and dangers of Egypt--and may inadvertently have turned a few neighbors into Chandu the Magician freaks at the same time.

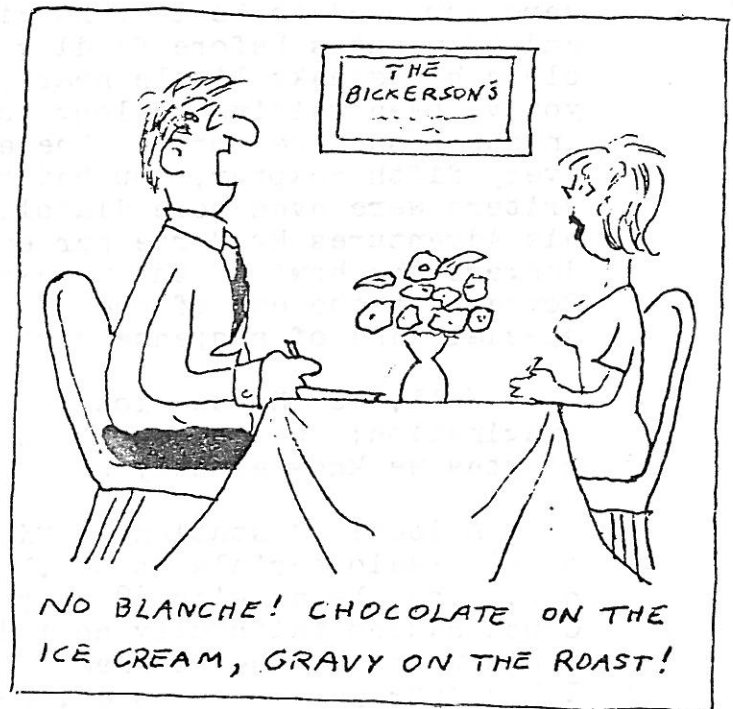
I chuckled as one chapter ended, for the next was but a few turns of the reel away. But when I got to the end of the last reel, I was only up to chapter 64. The last four weren't there!

Wherever Vera Oldham was at the time, I imagine she was snickering and saying "Gotcha!" 46 years after the show had first aired, she was still leaving someone hung on her own special suspense hook while I eagerly waited for Chuck to dig through his tapes and find the reel that contained the last four chapters!

PROGRAMS, DEAR PROGRAMS, COME HOME TO US NOW -- Last month, we mentioned that several reels from the new library are long overdue. Once again, we ask that they be turned in. Starting next month, we will print a list of the reels, and the persons to whom they have been routed, in an effort to dig them out.

COMING NEXT MONTH -- Lots of good material has been given to us, and the January issue will be devoted to printing a great deal of it. Included is a monstrous crossword puzzle of Jack Richards, that should keep you off the steets for quite a while. Also, Roger Smith, do not despair. The next installment of your Fibber McGee article will also appear next month.

VISUAL HUMOR DEPARTMENT -- Speaking of Jack Richards, and saving the best until last, we conclude with the following cartoons, drafted by our eminent librarian:



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