



RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO

Volume 25, Number 1

August, 1999



OTR FOR THE DIGITAL AGE: Recovery of Old Program Material Part 2

By Jim Hougen

Enter the **Digital Age!** Through the use of DAT (Digital Audio Tape) and CDs (Compact Disks) we have a storage medium that will not degrade with playing. A medium that can be duplicated exactly, with no loss of quality. The serious collector now has two tasks: find first generation high quality copies of the program material or the original transcriptions, then transfer to the new medium using the best restoration techniques possible.

The first task is really the major hurdle. High quality copies are often difficult to find and the original disks even more difficult to find. Let's see how to deal with what you *can* find.

In the first instance, let's suppose you found some original 16" transcriptions. The very first thing is to find a turntable and tone arm that will play these disks. You have half a chance when you locate a 12" turntable. About the best current source is a DJ (Disk Jockey) supply or professional musician's equipment store. Some of the 12" turntables with manually operated tone arms actually have sufficient clearance to allow a 16" transcription to be placed on the table and played. If you are mechanically and electronically inclined, you may be able to locate a 16" tone arm. You can then mount this tone arm with a good 12" turntable. Mount the arm such

that the stylus is about 1" past the center spindle to minimize distortion during playback. Do the best that you can. If you are really clever, and have the equipment, it is not impossible to fabricate a 16" tone arm. You may even get one of the manufacturers to make a special one for you, but be prepared for a rather large investment. When all else fails, find a friend who has one.

Now you need the proper stylus and cartridge. Most phono cartridges on the market today have replaceable stylus. If you check the catalogs, such as Shure Brothers, you can find a .0025" stylus designed for 78 rpm records. Remember, I said earlier, the original transcriptions used the same cutting stylus as 78s', therefore the groove is the same, and so that is the stylus that you require.

Transcriptions were cut using either of two methods. The 'lateral cut' transcription is the same as the old 78 rpm records. The stylus moves side to side in the modulation. For these disks, connect the left and right channel output from your stereo phono cartridge in parallel. Be very careful of polarity so that the High (+) side of the left channel is connected to the High side of the right channel. This will reduce the noise component and cancel the stereo output of the cartridge. Now play the disk. For 'vertical cut' transcriptions, mostly from the World Broadcasting System, reverse the polarity of one of the channels in the phono cartridge output.

To get a clean, noise free, playback it will be necessary to carefully clean the disk. A little warm, not hot, water can be run over the disk, then wipe with a lint free cloth. While the disk is still damp, it should be played. It may be necessary to play the disk twice. The first play will clean the grooves, the second play will be 'for keeps'.

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RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

Dedicated to the preservation of old time radio programs and to making those programs available to our members.

RHAC Board Meeting Thursday, August 5, 1999 — 7:30 PM

At

Maletha & Dick King's 900 W. Quincy Ave., Englewood, CO 303-761-4139

Old time radio is alive and well in Denver!

KRMA Channel 6 Secondary Audio Program, RHAC's show *Tribute to OTR* Sunday 2:00 PM

KEZW 1430 AM *When Radio Was* weekdays from 7:00 till 8:00 PM

KEZW 1430 AM *Radio Movie Classics* Sundays 5:00 till 6:00 PM

KFKA 1310 AM *Radio Memories* Sundays 6:00 to 12:00 PM

KUVO 89.3 FM *Destination Freedom* 3rd Sunday of the month 7:30 PM - **BROADCAST LIVE!!!!**

RHAC WEB SITE The RHAC web page and catalog is on the World Wide Web:
<http://www.old-time.com/rhac.html>

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President:	Guy Albright, 786 South Quitman St., Denver, CO 80219	303-934-0184
Vice-President:	Larry Weide, 5270 E. Nassau Cir. Englewood, CO 80110 E-Mail: lweide@ibm.net	303-758-8382
Secretary:	John Stevenson, PO Box 1908, Englewood, CO 80150	303-573-7558
Treasurer:	Maletha King, address below	303-761-4139
Newsletter Editor:	Stewart Wright, 8120 W. 26 th Ave. # 17, Lakewood, CO 80215 E-Mail: stewartwright@worldnet.att.net	303-237-4055
Historian:	John Adams, 2811 S Valentia St., Denver, CO 80231	303-755-9185
Players:	JoAnn Bantin, 1290 Dayton Street, Aurora, CO 80010	303-343-7508
Tribute to OTR Show:	Dave Clow 8606 S. Yarrow St. Littleton CO 80128 E-Mail: ROFDave@ghostmine.com	303-972-2850
Talking Newsletter:	Mike Fields, 243 S. 1100 E., Greentown, IN 46936	
Membership:	Dick King, PO BOX 1908, Englewood, CO 80150 E-Mail: dick.king1@juno.com	303-761-4139
Tape Donations:	Bill McCracken, 7101 W Yale Ave #503, Denver, CO 80227 Herb Duniven, 4184 S. Syracuse St., Denver, CO 80237	
Directors at Large:	David L Michael, 1999 Broadway, Lowery Suite, Denver, CO 80202 Herb Dunniven See Above Dick King See Above	

LIBRARIES

Reference Material:	Bill McCracken, address above	303-986-9863
Logs & Scripts:	Fred Hinz, c/o RHAC, P O Box 1908, Englewood, CO 80150	
Open Reel Tape Librarian:	Maletha King, 900 W. Quincy Ave., Englewood, CO 80110	
Cassette Tape Librarians:		
#1 (1-499)	Marilyn J. Turner 2299 S. Sable Blvd., Aurora, CO 80014	303-751-4325
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#4 (5001 up)	Mika Rhoden 3950W Dartmouth Ave., Denver, CO 80236	303-937-9476

PICNIC



RHAC PICNIC!

Here's your chance to meet some of your fellow RHAC members and share your interest in Old-Time Radio. Make sure to mark your calendar for Saturday, August 21st. The RHAC picnic will be held at the King's - 900 W. Quincy Ave, in Englewood. The picnic will start at 2:00 PM. The Kings will provide the hamburgers and corn. Members should bring a covered dish or salad to share. Also bring something to drink and a chair. Don't forget the RHAC Garage Sale! See below.



RHAC Garage Sale

On Saturday, August 21st, at the RHAC Picnic, we will have our Garage Sale.

Over the years, RHAC has inherited many pieces of equipment that are part of radio history. The big problem with this is storage. The warehouse that RHAC has used for many years is now going to be sold and we are looking for new homes for these historic items such as: one pair of turntables mounted into a single wood table, a large professional

mixer, a power supply that was probably used for remote recordings (it is very big), audio discs that have never been cut (in boxes of 25 each), and a large speaker. These items are all part of radio history, and we would be glad for them to find new homes. If any groups out there would like to avail themselves of some of these items, we would be glad to send them on to them. (Recipients would pay shipping costs.) If some individuals would like some of these items, a small contribution to RHAC would be in order.

The only complete transcription disc player that we had has found a home, as soon as we can get it shipped. We still have two players that have been robbed of the tone arms to keep other players operating.

The cassettes, records (78's and 33's), other memorabilia will be offered VERY CHEAP to members at the Picnic, August 21st. There may be items you were looking for and just didn't know it.

OTR FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

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You should employ a graphic equalizer and judiciously adjust during playback to compensate for poor recording techniques such as I mentioned at the beginning of this paper. All of this work should be done in the analog domain. That is, do NOT convert to digital format until you have done the best that you can with noise reduction and equalization.

Tape copies of OTR broadcasts are often inferior to disks. At best, there will be added tape noise. In dealing with this issue, it will be necessary to digitize the tape noise independently of the program material. I suggest you copy 30 seconds to a minute worth of tape noise before the program starts. You may have to get this from the end of the tape, a pause in the middle, or most anywhere. I'll explain why this

is necessary a bit later on.

Compact Disks, CDs, are the preferred medium for your OTR copies. They provide 74 minutes per disk, they are easily duplicated with proper equipment, and when stored in a jewel case, there is ample physical space for program notes. The CD has the added bonus of instant access to any part of the program, unlike tape, if you provide the necessary index points.

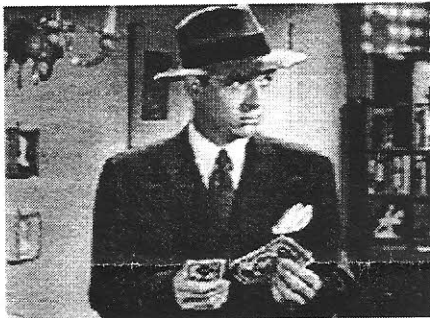
The second issue of concern in transfer to CD is in the program material itself. You must decide what index points you want. On a music program, it is often helpful to provide in index at the start of each new song. In an opera, perhaps you want to index each aria, a symphony, each movement and so forth. In a dramatic program, you might want to index each scene. Don't forget to index the commercials. These have real interest for some, others may wish to skip over them.

If the program is longer than 60 minutes, decide where to break. Keep in mind the 74 minute CD maximum time. That is an absolute maximum. Some folks will advise that you can double this time by recording one program on the left channel only and a second of the right channel. This is foolish because most players do not have crosstalk free playback capability and index points can only relate to the whole disk, not a single channel. Even if you can live with these limitations, you will have to adjust your playback amplifiers to add the single channel to both left and right speakers. A large hassle at best!

To do this work, you will need a computer equipped with a Pentium processor and a speed of at least 133 MHz. The computer needs a CD-R or a CD-RW recording drive to actually record the CD. A sound card is required for the A/D (Analog to Digital) conversion. You should have a pair of speakers connected to the computer so that you can do audio editing on the computer. Don't

believe those who tell you that you can effectively record 'On-The-Fly' CDs. The equipment may be capable of the 'real-time' mode, but for OTR copying, this is definitely NOT the way to go. The impact of this is that you will require about 1 gigabyte of hard disk storage for CD recording only. This should be a separate disk partition with nothing in it except the program(s) to be recorded and some 'overhead' storage for indexing and special processing. The 74 minutes of audio only will require 650 Megabytes of storage and TOC (Table of Contents).

Editor's Note: Jim's article will conclude in next month's *Return With Us Now*. . . .



Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar

By Stewart Wright

Note: Bob Bailey photo, courtesy of Scott and Jan Macgillivray, is actually taken from his first film, "Jitterbugs," a Laurel and Hardy 1943 film.

A somewhat different version of this article (including a program log) - by Stewart Wright and Kevin Smith can be found on Kevin's Smith's *Thrilling Detective* Web site. Kevin's site is located at:

<http://www.colba.net/~kvnsmith/thrillingdetective/>

Everyone has a favorite radio series. *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* is the series that got me into OTR show collecting and was the original reason I joined RHAC. I probably have more episodes of *Johnny Dollar* in my collection than any other single series.

For over 12 years (1949 - 1962, including a one-year hiatus in 1954-55), the series recounted the cases of *Johnny Dollar*, "the insurance investigator with the action-packed expense account." *Johnny* was an accomplished padder of his expense account. The name of the show derives from the fact he closed each show by totaling up his expense account and signing it "End of report...Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar."

Terry Salomonson in his authoritative "A Radio Broadcast Log of The Drama Program *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*" notes that the original working title was *Yours Truly, Lloyd London*. Salomonson writes, "*Lloyd London* was scratched out of the body of the (Dick Powell audition) script and *Johnny Dollar* was written in. Thus the show was re-titled on this script and the main character was renamed. Why it was this was done was unclear, possibly to prevent a legal run-in with Lloyd's of London Insurance Company."

Johnny was based in Hartford, Connecticut, the insurance capital of the world. He got around quite a bit during his investigations; his adventures took him all over the world.

There were some unusual devices used in *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* that helped set it apart from other shows. There was no partner, assistant or secretary for *Johnny*. Also *Johnny* generally got along well with the local authorities, something that many other radio private investigators didn't do. Another atypical aspect gave the show additional credibility. Frequently, characters on the show would mention that they had heard about *Johnny's* cases on the radio. *Johnny* often used his time when filling out his expense account to act as a narrator and give the audience necessary background information or to express his thoughts about the current case.

No fewer than eight actors played the role of *Johnny Dollar*. Dick Powell (*Rogue's Gallery*), cut the

original audition tape but chose to do *Richard Diamond, Private Detective* instead. Gerald Mohr (*Adventures of Philip Marlowe*) auditioned in 1955 prior to Bob Bailey getting the title role.

Through the first three *Johnny Dollars* - Charles Russell, Edmond O'Brien, and John Lund, there was little to distinguish the series from many other radio detective series. *Dollar* was just another hard-boiled detective, in a medium that was overloaded with the stereotype. Charles Russell, the first actor to play the role in the series, would throw silver dollar tips to belly boys and waiters. Luckily, this trite gimmick did not long survive.

On October 3rd, 1955, after a hiatus of over a year, *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* came back with a vengeance. A new production team (including director-writer Jack Johnstone), lead - Bob Bailey (*Let George Do It*), and format would set the series apart from its competitors. *Johnny's* cases were now a continuing serial, five-days a week for 15 minutes each evening. With 75 minutes of air time (minus commercials), there was sufficient time to develop good story lines and interesting characters.

During this time, *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*, attracted some of the best writers in Hollywood including Jack Johnstone (aka John Dawson), Robert Ryf, and Les Crutchfield. Bob Bailey also wrote a script while he was playing *Johnny Dollar*. He used the pen name Robert Bainter (Bainter was his middle name) as the script writer for "The Carmen Kringle Matter" that was aired on Saturday, 12/21/1957 on the West Coast and the following day for the rest of the country.

Bob Bailey, generally thought of as the most popular of the *Johnny Dollars*, brought a very different interpretation to the character. Tough, but not hard-boiled; street-wise, but not overly cynical, Bailey's *Dollar* was smart and gritty when he had to

be. But Bailey's *Johnny Dollar* was also human. His character would get emotionally involved in some of his cases. He had a streak of impatience and would occasionally not fully listen to a witness and rush off on a tangent before realizing his mistake.

The weekday serialized episodes are generally acknowledged as some of the finest radio detective shows ever produced. (There were 55 multi-part shows in all: 53 five-part, 1 seven-part, and 1 nine-part.) The serialized episodes continued until November 2, 1956, when the series reverted to a once-a-week, 30 minute format. Bob Bailey continued in the lead role until the "Empty Threat Matter" on November 27, 1960 when the Hollywood run ended. Bailey's run of over five year is by far the longest of any of the actors who played the part.

In December, 1960 *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* moved New York. Robert Readick started the New York run as *Dollar*, but lasted only a short while. Jack Johnstone no longer directed, but continued to write for the show and submitted scripts from California. (Johnstone wrote about 350 *Johnny Dollar* scripts under his own name and his pen names John Dawson and John Bundy. As Dawson, he also wrote or adapted scripts for such shows as *Romance and Have Gun Will Travel*.)

The guest stars and supporting casts were always first-rate, attracting the best radio actors in both Los Angeles and New York. Particularly noteworthy was the work of Virginia Gregg and Harry Bartell. Gregg played many roles including Johnny's girlfriend, Betty Lewis. (Betty never quite managed to get *Johnny* to the altar.) Bartell was also a frequent guest who did many of the Spanish dialect roles when *Johnny* went to a Latin American country. Vincent Price co-starred as himself in "The Price of Fame Matter" and went to Europe with Johnny on the case. The character closest to a continuing role was that of Pat McCracken, of the

Universal Adjustment Bureau, who assigned *Johnny* many of his cases. McCracken was played by many actors.

And so the era of the radio private eye passed. *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* was the last continuing detective series of the Golden Age of Radio. Mandel Kramer was the last *Johnny Dollar* (and a close second in popularity to Bailey) when the final episode, "The Tip-Off Matter," of the series was aired on September 30, 1962.

Plans for a television series fell through. A television pilot show was made and aired in 1962. Television executives felt that Bob Bailey just didn't "look the part" of *Johnny Dollar* (Bailey stood 5-foot-9 and weighed 150-pounds) and that the public wouldn't accept another actor in the role.

Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar
(1948-62, CBS)

Over 800 broadcasts; approximately 660 broadcasts are available

First Broadcast:

December 8, 1948 (Dick Powell audition show)

February 11, 1949 first show series

Last Broadcast:

September 30, 1962

Directed By: Anton Leader, Richard Sanville, Norman MacDonnell, Gordon Hughes, Jaime Del Valle, Jack Johnstone, Bruno Zirato Jr., and Fred Hendrickson

Writers: Bob Bailey (as Robert Bainter), Stuart Palmer, Jack Johnstone, Gil Doud, Blake Edwards, John Dawson, Paul Dudley, E. Jack Neuman, Sidney Marshall, Bob Ryf, Les Crutchfield, and many others.

Announcers: Charlie Lyons, Dan Cubberly, Roy Rowan, Art Hanna, and others.

Starring: Dick Powell and Gerald Mohr (Audition Shows only), Charles Russell, Edmond O'Brien, John Lund, Bob Bailey, Bob Readick and Mandel Kramer as *Johnny Dollar*.

Guest Stars: Parley Baer, Michael Ann Barrett, Harry Bartell, Jeanne Bates, Jackson Beck, Gloria Blondell, Herb Butterfield, Lillian Buyeff, Bill Conrad, Ted De Corsia, John Dehner, Don Diamond, Larry Dobkin, Paul DuBov, Sam Edwards, Georgia, Ellis, Herb Ellis, Sandra Gould, Virginia Gregg, Jack Grimes, Stacy Harris, Bill Johnstone, Charles McGraw, John McIntyre, Howard McNear, Tyler McVey, Jack Moyles, Jeanette Nolan, Jay Novello, Dan O'Herlihy, Santos Ortega, Vic Perrin, Barney Phillips, Vincent Price, Lurene Tuttle, Willard Waterman, Ben Wright, and many others.

The Charles Russell Episodes

(February 11, 1949 - January 14, 1950, CBS) 30-minute episodes

The Edmund O'Brien Episodes

(February 3, 1950 - September 3, 1952, CBS) 30-minute episodes

The John Lund Episodes

(November 28, 1952 - September 19, 1954) 30-minute episodes

The Bob Bailey 15-minute Daily Episodes

(October 3, 1955 - November 2, 1956, CBS)

At this point, the *Yours Truly Johnny Dollar* went from a weekly, self-contained 30-minute show to a daily, 15 minute format, presenting a five-part serial (unless otherwise noted) every week

The Bob Bailey 30-minute Episodes

(November 11, 1956 - November 27, 1960, CBS) The show reverted back to self-contained 30-minute weekly episodes. November 27, 1960 - End Of The Hollywood Run.

The Robert Readick Episodes

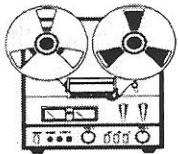
Originated From in New York City (December 4, 1960 - June 18, 1961, CBS) 30-minute episodes

The Mandel Kramer Episodes

(June 25, 1961 - September 30, 1962, CBS) 30-minute episodes

Editor's Note: Many episodes of

Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar can be found in the RHAC library. Please consult your catalog index for additional details. There are *John Dunning Interviews* with Roberta Goodwin (Bob Bailey's daughter), writer E. Jack Neuman, and writer/director Jack Johnstone and many *Johnny Dollar* guest stars in the RHAC library.



New in The Tape Library

By Maletha & Dick King

Before we talk about this month's entries into the library, a few problems have come to light - thanks to notes from some members.

Rewind Those Cassettes

First is that some members are not rewinding the cassettes so the next member may start them without first inspecting them. If you stop a cassette in the middle, or after one side, PLEASE be sure to rewind it so the next member can enjoy it.

Defective Cassettes

Another thing that is happening, if you send a note about a cassette that should be replaced, please be sure to identify it by the number, not by the title. We are swamped with work and have no time to start searching for worn cassettes by name only.

Always be sure to put your notes on the OUTSIDE of the box so they will be noticed when they are handled.

Let Us know Who You Are

Someone named Scot wanted some catalog sheets, but we have no idea who Scot is. Be sure to sign your notes with your full name and include your address, so we may make the proper corrections.

This Month's Entries

We have just finished the August entries into the Contributor's Library.

Please note that there are lots of sound problems, and there is nothing more we can do with them. It is a great series of *The Charlotte Greenwood Shows* and even with lots of sound problems, we did enjoy them. We do thank the member, Jack Mandik, who gave us the opportunity to hear them.

Indiana Recording Club

Paul Urbahns, the newsletter editor of the Indiana Recording Club has ADVISED THAT A GROUP OF MEMBERS RESURRECTED THEIR OLD CLUB. I hope that other people will take note that this can happen to any club, when the members become too complacent and do not do their share of the work to keep a club joining.

Heads Up!

We have just received a note from SPERDVAC that several members placed orders with *Benny's Bargain Basement* after seeing an ad the June Issue of their newsletter, *The Radiogram*. Their members advise that their checks have been cashed, but as of July 24th, no merchandise has been received. Maybe the company is just very slow servicing orders, but they are wondering????

Raised on Radio



RAISED ON RADIO

Gerald Nachman

Pantheon Books \$28.50

Reviewed by David L. Michael

On page 497 (502 pages total) Nachman summarizes what all old time radio enthusiasts live with each passing day:

"Radio in the late 1990s seems as far removed from the radio heyday

of the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s as did radio's heydays from the prim and primitive radio of the late 1920s.... *Maybe saddest part* is that nobody seems to notice, much less care, primarily because few listeners under fifty-five realize that radio was ever anything more-than it once throbbed with theatrical life and exploded with laughter."

Don't let the price frighten you off--buying this book from Barnes & Noble or Amazon "on line," delivered by mail, will set you back less than twenty bucks and you'll most likely enjoy it. It's a fun and quick read. One reviewer has quipped, I was not only raised on radio, I was raised by radio.

Nachman traces radio back to its early moments. He discusses serials, soaps, comedians, comedies, theater, westerns, the gamut. Within each discussion there are anecdotes (sounding a lot like gossip of the time) about the actors, the writers, directors, sound men, all persons involved.

Overall RHAC members may not find a great amount within this book not written about previously. But Nachman has well researched his material and does not hesitate to present material (and his opinions) which seem far different from what we old time enthusiasts may hold sacred. Some of our idols, Red Skelton, for one, are toppled from their thrones. Preparing for his book, Nachman conducted scores of interviews and from these come insights into the persons who peopled radio in its heyday(s).

This is, as our children (or grandchildren) say "a trip"---a very enjoyable one, right down memory lane.

OTR Quiz & Puzzle

The OTR Quiz and Crossword Puzzle are taking a couple of month's off. They will resume with the October Issue of *Return With Us Now*...



OTR On The World-Wide Web

Editor's Note: If you find an interesting Old-Time Radio-related web site or page, why not tell our readers by writing a short article on it for *Return with Us Now...* Send the article to Stewart Wright. My E-Mail address is on page 2.

Twists, Slugs and Roscoes

Tired of that everyday problem of not being able to understand the slang used by those hard-boiled radio detectives? We

offer you. . . *Twists, Slugs and Roscoes: A Glossary of Hard-boiled Slang* compiled by William Denton. His page is a very extensive list of the those slang words and phrases used on shows like *Pat Novak For Hire*. Most of the following is taken directly from William's page.

If you've ever read or listened to a hardboiled detective story or radio show, you may have come across a sentence like, "I jammed the roscoe (gun) in his button (face) and said, 'Close your yap (mouth), bo (pal, buster, fellow), or I squirt metal (shoot bullets.)'"

Something like this isn't too hard to decipher. But what if you encounter, "The flim-flammer jumped in the flivver and faded." You may need to translate this into normal English just to be able to follow the plot.

Or maybe you want to seem tougher. Why get in a car when you can hop in a boiler? Why tell someone to shut up when you can tell them to close their head? Why threaten to discharge a firearm when you can say, "Dust, pal, or I pump lead!"

This is the language spoken by Philip Marlowe, Sam Spade, Mike Hammer and the Continental Op. When Cagney, Bogart, Robinson and Raft got in a turf war, this is how they talked. Now, with the help of this glossary, you too can speak it like a native!

The address for this page is: <http://www.miskatonic.org/slang.html>

Editor's Note: About "The flim-flammer. . ." Translation: The swindler jumped into a Ford auto and got away.

Radio Historical Association of Colorado
P.O. Box 1908 Englewood, CO 80150

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