

# Melody Maker

3<sup>d</sup> INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 30, 1944

# GLENN MILLER IS MISSING

## 'Plane Vanishes on Journey to Paris

DANCE BAND FANS ALL OVER THE WORLD, AND THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ALLIED TROOPS WHO HAVE BEEN CHEERED AND ENTERTAINED BY HIS MUSIC, WILL LEARN WITH THE VERY DEEPEST CONCERN THE GRAVE NEWS THAT MAJOR GLENN MILLER, CELEBRATED LEADER OF THE AMERICAN BAND OF THE ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY REPORTED MISSING.

His last broadcast in person in this country was on December 12, and he left England by air on December 15 to fly to Paris and join the rest of his band, who had already arrived there safely.

SINCE THEN THERE HAS BEEN COMPLETE SILENCE. NO NEWS HAS COME FROM HIM OR THE PLANE IN WHICH HE WAS TRAVELLING; IN FACT, HE AND THE MACHINE SEEM COMPLETELY TO HAVE VANISHED, AND ON CHRISTMAS EVE SHAEF ISSUED A SHORT STATEMENT—WHICH WAS BROADCAST BY THE B.B.C. IN ITS NEWS BULLETINS—OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCING HIM TO BE MISSING.

Right up to the moment of closing this issue for press on Wednesday morning (December 27), the MELODY MAKER has been in constant touch with the authorities, hoping that good tidings would come through. We regret to report, however, that no news has been forthcoming of his whereabouts or—we hate to have to write the words, but the stark facts must be faced—of his fate.

One gleam of hope is the conjecture that his plane may have been forced down in enemy lines, and that he is now a prisoner of war, since it is understood that his flight was in connection with the arranging of troop concerts on the Continent, and therefore there is no reason necessarily to suppose that the plane took the direct cross-Channel route to Paris.

### JERRY GRAY DEPS. FOR XMAS SHOW

Among Major Glenn Miller's engagements on the Continent was the super A.E.F. Christmas show broadcast from Paris on Christmas Day. The show duly took place, with Sergt. Jerry Gray, famous resident arranger of the band, conducting in Glenn Miller's place. It says much for Jerry Gray and the members of the band that they gave as faultless a performance as ever, despite the handicap of anxiety under which they must have been suffering.

Major Glenn Miller came to this country in July, 1944, with the American Band of the A.E.F.—forty-eight strong, and consisting of one of the finest musical aggregations ever to visit these shores. They have broadcast consistently on the A.E.F. programme of the R.B.C., given hundreds of troop and charity concerts (including the Jazz Jamboree), and also recorded here for H.M.V. with Dinah Shore.

Their impeccable playing and brilliant musicianship, as well as the polished slickness with which their broadcasts and concerts are carried out, have rocketed Glenn Miller to the peak of British affection—even enhancing the terrific reputation he made over here with his brilliant pre-war orchestra.

Born at Clarinda, Iowa, in 1910, Glenn Miller first became prominent as trombonist with Ben Pollack. He recorded and arranged with Red Nichols and his Five Pennies, worked with the Dorsey Brothers, Glen Gray, Benny Goodman, Ray Noble, etc., forming his own band in March, 1937.

MAJOR MILLER'S WIFE IN THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN INFORMED BY THE AUTHORITIES THAT HE IS MISSING, AND IN HER LONG HOURS OF ANXIETY AND WAITING FOR NEWS SHE HAS THE VERY DEEPEST SYMPATHY OF US ALL. WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT BY THE TIME THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE MELODY MAKER IS PRINTED IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO ANNOUNCE THAT MAJOR MILLER HAS BEEN LOCATED—AND IS SAFE.

## NAT ALLEN IN FOREFRONT OF BANDS TO ENTERTAIN BLITZ-REPAIR WORKERS

A new field in which dance bands can demonstrate once again their tremendous usefulness in the keeping up of morale, and which is just another manifestation of the national service they have been doing throughout the war, is contained in the news that bandleader Nat Allen and his orchestra are in the forefront of the name bands who are going to play for the thousands of blitz-repair workers now in London.

As is well known to everybody, provincial workers of every kind have been brought to London to lend their skill towards making habitable the houses damaged by flying-bombs.

They are located in hostels in various parts of the Metropolis, and the officials in charge of their welfare have taken great pains to ensure that they get plenty of relaxation in their leisure hours, by providing them with billiard-tables, games-rooms, and other recreational facilities.

But the men have found one important entertainment factor missing—they want dance bands.

They made an appeal to the officials-in-charge to get them bands so that they could hold evening dances, and the officials at once got in touch with the Melody Maker.

As an impressive start-off to the scheme, we were lucky enough to receive the spontaneous help of none other than popular Nat Allen.

Nat has generously arranged to bring his whole band—consisting of the ace-musicians who play with him on his Sunday "Anne to You" programme—to a hall in St. John's Wood, London, on the evening of New Year's Day, when many hundreds of blitz-repair workers will dance to his music.

What is more, Nat has spontaneously returned the fee for the engagement, and is providing the whole band out of his own pocket—as a splendid gesture towards the men who have come from their homes in all parts of the country to help repair London's houses.

This is but a forerunner of a great deal of planned dance band entertainment which is being inaugurated for the blitz-men, as the Government officials concerned have been amazed at the tremendous excitement aroused by the news that Nat Allen was coming down to play for them.

The popularity of dance music among these workers ensures a new and regular outlet for bands in the future.

Incidentally, Nat is planning to make a special feature at his dance of the tune called "We're Going to Build a Little Home For Two," which he is adopting as the "signature-tune" of the engagement.

### HAYES AIRING

A PROGRAMME that sounds as if it should be ideal for swing fans will be broadcast on January 2 (5-5.30 p.m. Forces), when Harry Hayes and his Band will be in the studios with a special offering of modern music.

Band will be substantially the same as Harry's recording combo, with which he has waxed several sides for the H.M.V. label. Broadcast will be a non-vocal one, featuring all swing. Arrangements played will mostly be by that grand piano-stylist and clever young arranger, Norman Stenfalt.

The Editor and Staff of "The Melody Maker" wish all their readers A Happy New Year And Victory and Peace in 1945

### BOBBY HIND LEAVES FOR INDIA

DURING all the excitement leading up to the Christmas holidays veteran bandleader, Bobby Hind quietly slipped out of the country on the first lap of his journey to present a dance band and musical show to Allied Forces in India under the auspices of E.N.S.A.

Personnel of Bobby's outfit included Cain Market (piano and acc.); Terry Lynne (drums); Arthur Hawes (trombone); Stan Spencer (trumpet); Jan Castelli (saxes); Harry Goss (saxes); George Knox (saxes, etc.); Jack Fricker (piano); Fred Etridge (bass); and Nona Gaye and Bette Blyth (vocalists).

In addition, there are several other well-known dancers, singers, comedians, etc.

"Veteran" of the party from a musical viewpoint is Arthur Hawes, who, in his long service to the dance music profession, almost rivals the record of Bobby Hind himself, and whom many old-timers will remember as having been with the original "Midnight Follies" show under the baton of Jay Whidden.

AFTER a very hectic and adventurous tour of the battlefields, Joe Loss and his Band have now returned to this country and once again are delighting fans at their regular Christmas and New Year haunt, Green's Playhouse Ballroom, Glasgow.

CONGRATULATIONS of the whole profession will go out to notabilities of the London dance-musical world, swing singer Irene King and drummer Johnny Wise, on their marriage. Irene is known through innumerable radio appearances, whilst Johnny has the percussionist's chair in Tommy Rogan's Band at the "400" Club.

## THE MELODY HIT MY FAVOURITE DREAM

THE SWING HIT

MIFF FERRIE'S

# JUNGLE JIVE

BROADCAST BY AMBROSE

3/6 PER SET

THEY'RE WRIGHT OF COURSE!

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing Jan. 1) Carl BARRITEAU and Band, Royal Court Hotel, Southampton.

COTTON IN KNOTS IN NOTTS!

"HECTIC" would seem to be the only appropriate word to use in describing the adventures of Bill Cotton's Band last Monday (Dec. 18) in Nottingham.

Regular Dances at Stoke Newington

WELL-KNOWN "M.M." dance-band contest organisers Charles Cooper and Lyn Morgan are in harness again.

FAMOUS NEGRO TRUMPET-PLAYER'S ADVENTURES UNDER NAZIS IN FRANCE

AFTER vague rumours of his death which circulated in this country during the German occupation of France, it will gladden the hearts of jazz lovers to learn that Arthur Briggs, famous Negro trumpet player, is alive and well in Paris to-day.

ESCAPE

In all this activity, Briggs played an important part and, having unlimited time at his disposal, formed on the side a vocal trio (along with two more coloured prisoners) which gave out with Negro spirituals and other songs.

he is again prominent in Parisian jazz circles, taking a leading part in the direction of the French Hot Club's programmes.

RECORDINGS

Four sides by Johnson on French Brunswick feature Arthur's work, and local Decca issued four more.

FAMOUS RUGGER-PLAYER

Needless to say, Melville has not built his outfit without great difficulty.

Robbins Near the Jap Front Line

MAKING history during the past few months has been the "Sunrays" ENSA Company—in which is included the famous ex-Hylton xylophonist Harry Robbins.

Howard Baker's Waldorf Season

LONDON bandleader and big king Howard Baker returned to the West End over the Christmas vacation, when Howard, with his full broadcasting band, appeared at the Waldorf Hotel, Aldwych, all over the holiday season.

RECENTLY we reported the reopening of the West London Rhythm Club at new premises. Now the club has had another move to comfortable quarters at the "Albion", Hammersmith Road.

MELVILLE CHRISTIE'S 80 AIRINGS

AN orchestra currently making a big name for itself over the air is that of Melville Christie.



runs his own war factory in the district and therefore cannot move far away from Amersbury.

FAMOUS RUGGER-PLAYER

Needless to say, Melville has not built his outfit without great difficulty.

IN PRAISE OF THE BRITISH BOYS

FOR this, the last week of the year, I am dealing with three British combinations.

This is not because my conscience is pricking me for my neglect I may have shown home talent in the past.

Series releases so capably selected by Bill Elliott, and if they have not made any great speciality of those smaller British bands which usually get nearest to playing the best jazz, at least one must hand it to them for not having begrudged the money to enable such personalities as George Evans, Phil Green and Frank Weir to exploit their ideas on swing with as large and as good bands as they have wanted.

HARRY HAYES AND HIS BAND

HARRY HAYES (Jack Russin) (H.M.V. OEA10310). \*\*Sequence (Jack Russin) (H.M.V. OEA10311). (H.M.V. B9397—5s. 4d.)

JERRY DAWSON'S NORTHERN NEWS NOTES

CURRENTLY featured at the Fulford Ballroom, Beverley Rd., Hull, is trumpet-leader Haydn Powell, fronting a ten-piece outfit.

SING A GAY SONG! THE HAPPIEST NEW YEAR OF ALL! READY NOW! TILL STARS FORGET TO SHINE! GEORGE EVANS Arr. Beguine

SING A SONG OF TO-MORROW TO-DAY. S.O.S. 3/- CLUB ORCH. 24 Nov. 24/- SID PHILLIPS' SENSATION FANCY PANTS AND SHOOTIN' A LINE. S.O.S. 3/6 EACH. SEND P.O.

NOEL GAY MUSIC CO. 24, DENMARK STREET, W.C.2. Phone: TEM. 3941-5. (Please turn to page 5)

EDGAR JACKSON'S Record Reviews

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KENNY BAKER, who plays trumpet in the Harry Hayes records reviewed here.

and with Tommy Bromley the rhythm section is at last beginning to sound like one. "Undecided" is the better of these two sides if only because it's a so much better tune, but even in "Boston Bounce" George Chisholm manages to play a swell solo.

VICTOR SILVESTER'S JIVE BAND

\*\*\*Boston Bounce (Bunny Harris) (Eng. Columbia CA19630). \*\*Undecided (Charlie Shavers) (Eng. Columbia CA19629). (Columbia FB3072—4s. 2d.)

VICTOR FELDMAN TRIO

\*\*Drummin' Man (Krupa, Norman) (Parlo. CE1295). \*\*Sweet Georgia Brown (Bernie Casey, Pinkard) (Parlo. CE1296). (Parlophone F2950—4s. 2d.)

ALL that there is to be said about the Victor Feldman Trio was said by colleague "Detector" when, in the "M.M." for November 11 last, he reviewed their airing in "Variety Band Box" on Tuesday, October 31, so I can do no more than repeat that brothers Robert and Monty are no more a good support for Victor than what they play is worthy of any notice in itself.

But that doesn't alter the fact that in these records the still-often-ten-years-old Victor proves conclusively—in spite of the fact that he has yet to acquire microphone technique—that the ambitious claims so often made for him are by no means exaggerated.

A HAPPY and PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL FROM FRANCIS, DAY & HUNTER LTD. 138/140, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, W.C.2. Phone: TEMPLE BAR 9351





