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MEL TORME — Four-page supplement : **ELVIS PRESLEY** — Writes a personal article in this issue



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★ — **GREAT NEWS !!** — ★

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TALKING POINTS

Stars' best records—but they

Conducted by
CHARLES GOVEY

weren't hits

John Emms writes from Evesham Road, Atwood Bank, Redditch, Worcs:

A friend and myself were discussing the other day what we thought some of our British stars' best records were. To our surprise, we afterwards realised those we had selected as the artists' greatest were those that didn't make the Hit Parade.

Here are just a few of the singers and records we selected:

Dennis Lotis's greatest so far is "Domani."

We disliked Ruby Murray and Ronnie Hilton until "Slowly With Feeling" (which didn't make the hit or record parade), and "Give Me My Ranch" (Mr. Hilton's best).

Dick James made his come-back with "Robin Hood," but deserved to do so before that with "A Girl, A Girl" or "You're On Trial."

We couldn't think why Dickie Valentine's "Don't Leave Me Now" wasn't a hit record or David Hughes' "There, But For The Grace Of God, Go I."

Eve Boswell was rightly rewarded for her hard work with "Pickin' A Chicken," but we still think David Whitfield's best effort was "King Of Broken Hearts."

Have other readers any suggestions for this list of hits that ought to have been, but weren't?

Trained singers

E. S. John, of Anthony Road, Heavitree, Exeter, Devon, writes:

When Jack Payne recently told young "hopefuls" that sound training was an asset for an aspiring

vocalist, he exploded the myth of the "untrained popular band singer."

Good crooning (mezzo-voce singing), requires fine technique. I have heard people say: "Sinatra croons—he can't sing." This, of course, is idiocy.

By their own admission, Dickie Valentine and others are trained singers. If some of the "big-headed" toplineers would admit it also, then the young strugglers would be helped.

British music would indeed be on the slide if men like Payne started to laud the Rays and Presleys. However, even Presley knows something about breath control, and could produce reasonable tone if he felt like it.

Lonnie criticised

Lonnie Donegan comes under criticism from Patrick Scanlan of Frithville Gardens, London, W.12.

I read an article in a magazine this week (not the NME) wherein Lonnie Donegan dismisses rock 'n' roll as being a swindle, and says nothing makes him madder than to be bracketed with the rock 'n' roll boys.

The teenagers and others who buy rock 'n' roll discs are the same customers who queue up for his own efforts. They buy Bill Haley and Elvis Presley because their records have a good jive beat; they buy Donegan for the same reason.

In almost any rock 'n' roll record collection, you will find "Lost John" alongside "Rockin' Thru' The Rye." The kids don't really care what



The NME cameraman caught three celebrities having a cosy chat the other day, and they look serious enough to be discussing some of the controversial musical subjects that make our readers put pen to paper on this page. (L. to r.) Al Martino, Ruby Murray and Columbia Records' executive and orchestra leader Norrie Paramor.

Donegan calls his music. His records generate a beat, that is why they sell. As for his voice, it is no better than Haley's or Presley's, while the majority of his numbers—"Diggin' My Potatoes"—do not contain any more real musical value than the majority of rock 'n' roll epics.

Donegan just chanced to "click" because the r & r vogue came along. He should thank his lucky stars for it instead of criticising so strongly. Personally, I buy a lot of rock 'n' roll and a lot of Donegan, and I will continue to do just that.

Lonnie praised

But here is Lonnie seen in a different light by "Bubbles" and "Sherry," of Stamford, Lines:

We would like to express our thanks to a great artist, Lonnie Donegan, for the marvellous performance that he gave on Sunday last at the Stoll Theatre. We travelled 90 miles to see him, and for a performance put on like that, we wouldn't mind travelling another hundred and ninety.

So, thanks again, Lonnie.

Stop moaning!

This point of view on rock 'n' roll comes from Pauline Williams, of Sinclair Road, South Chingford, E.4: Why don't people stop moaning about the latest rock 'n' roll records which they hear on the wireless or television?

After all, if Haley, Presley and Vincent, etc., are so unbearable to listen to, it would not take much effort to switch off the radio or television.

I would like to add that rock 'n' roll records are not made for the people who don't like them in order that they might criticise them, but are made for the millions of people who do like them to buy.

What difference does it make if the rock 'n' roll records are best sellers? They don't stop the non rock 'n' rollers, i.e., Tormé, Whitfield, Sinatra, Martin, etc., from making records which frequently appear on the best-selling charts.

In reply to J. Chappell's letter on the worshipping band of teenagers who overlook Vera Lynn, surely she is a stylist of the past.

The rock 'n' roll craze is something new; we don't want the same style to continue for ever and ever and, as teenagers are the makers of the future, so surely it is up to us to decide what kind of music we want.

They make him laugh!

C. H. Yandle, of Sherwood Road, Coulsdon, Surrey—a staunch Johnnie Ray fan—writes:

Some of the NME readers make me laugh when they attempt to compare Johnnie Ray with Elvis Presley and Gene Vincent. They seem to forget that J.R. was a top-line star while Presley and Vincent and other ghastly singers like these were still in their cradles.

No Vincent fan

23217827 Pte. Berry, Headquarters Coy., Aldershot, Hants, makes the following comments on Gene Vincent:

I'm hoping Mr. Gene Vincent does not visit this country to draw his ever-increasing teenage fans further into the pit of musical ignorance.

His latest offering "Woman Love," is no doubt to rock 'n' roll purists the "most." Personally, I would have thought he was suffering from a hang-over when he made this record, and even hiccups are kindly provided by Mr. Vincent himself!

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SUNDAY

7 Sunday's Requests; 7.45 Come For A Spin; 8 When You're Smiling; 8.30 Holiday Choice; 9 When Irish Eyes Are Smiling; 9.15 Movie Parade; 9.30 Oh I; 10 Time For A Song; 10.30 Bing Sings; 10.45 Intimate Rhythm; 11 Top Twenty. Midnight: Close down.

MONDAY

7 Monday Requests; 8 Calvert Cavalcade; 8.30 Ken Mackintosh; 9 Hello, Marilyn; 9.30 Candid Microphone; 9.45 Scrapbook of Song; 10 Jack Jackson; 10.30 Top Pops of Tomorrow; 11 Talking Points; 11.05 The Bible Christian Programme; 11.15 Frank and Ernest; 11.30 The World Tomorrow. Midnight: Close down.

TUESDAY

7 Tuesday Requests; 8 Made In Britain; 8.30 David Whitfield; 9 Lucky Number; 9.30 Your Song Parade; 9.45 Smoke Rings; 10 The Capitol Show; 10.30 Eddie Barclay & Les Brown Orchs.; 11 Revival Time; 11.30 Oral Roberts. Midnight: Close down.

WEDNESDAY

7 Wednesday Requests; 8 Coming Your Way; 8.30 Dickie Valentine; 9 Stargazers; 9.15 The Stars Are Singing; 9.45 Stan Freberg; 10.0 Primo Scala and his Accordion Band; 10.15 Continental Cabaret; 10.30 Spin With The Stars; 10.45 Late Night Final; 11 Back To The Bible; 11.30 The Hour of Decision. Midnight: Close down.

THURSDAY

7 Thursday's Requests; 8 Music To Tease; 8.30 Fascinat'n' Rhythm; 9 Batchelor Boys; 9.30 Irish Requests; 10 Date With Don; 10.30 Rosemary Clooney; 10.45 Italy Sings; 11 Old-Fashioned Revival Hour. Midnight: Close Down.

FRIDAY

7 Friday's Requests; 8 September Song; 8.30 Shilling A Second; 9 Mel Tormé; 9.15 Scottish Requests; 10 208 Swing Club; 10.30 Record Hop; 11 The Voice of Prophecy; 11.30 The Twenty; One Record Show. Midnight: Close down.

SATURDAY

7 Amateur Football, 7.10 Saturday's Requests; 8 Jamboree; 10 Masters of Melody; 10.30 Fanfare; 11 Bringing Christ to the Nations; 11.30 Jack Jackson; 12.30 a.m.: Close down.

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ELVIS PRESLEY



I'M afraid to wake up each morning. I can't believe all this has happened to me. I just hope it lasts.

Thanks to all my faithful teenage fans. I have made a lot of money all of a sudden. Just two years ago I was driving a truck for \$35 a week in Memphis, Tennessee, and before that I was knocking down \$14 a week (that's less than £5 in your money) as a theatre usher.

Then one day my father gave me a guitar. Although I didn't know a B-flat from C-sharp, I finally learned to play.

My career as a singer started by accident. I went into a record shop to make a record for my mother, just to surprise her. Some man in there heard me sing and said he might call me sometime. He did... a year and a half later.

He was Sam Phillips, the owner of Sun Records, and I made a couple of records for him. Mr. Steve Sholes, who is the head of country-western music at RCA Victor, happened to hear one of them and wanted to sign me up with his company.

It was Mr. Sholes who gave me "Heartbreak Hotel" to cut and, as you know, it turned out to be a million seller.

A lot of people ask me where I got my singing style. Well, I didn't copy my style from anybody. I've got nothing in common with Johnnie Ray, except that we both sing—if you want to call it singing.

I jump around because it is the way I feel. In fact, I can't even sing with a beat at all if I stand still.

The kids are really wonderful the way they respond to my style. I get around 10,000 fan letters a week. So many people all over the country are starting fan clubs for me.

I certainly am grateful to them all, and in answer to some of the questions they ask, here are a few statistics about myself.

I was born in Tupelo, Mississippi, on January 8, 1935. I was raised and went to high school in Memphis, Tennessee, which is still my home. I never took any singing lessons, and the only practising I ever did was on a broomstick before my Dad bought me my first guitar.

I'm six feet tall and weigh 195 pounds. I've gained about twenty pounds in the last year. I can't understand that because my appetite isn't as good as it used to be. I don't have much time for regular meals any more, because I'm always travelling around the country, working in a different city every day.

I usually gulp down a quick sandwich in between shows, but when I can, I enjoy having a big dinner with three pork chops and plenty of mashed potatoes and gravy.

I understand there have been a lot of rumours concerning me, I am beginning to think that they have more rumours about me than records. A while ago, they thought I was dead. Well, I'm as alive and kicking as I'll ever be.

I can't seem to relax ever, and I have a terrible time falling to sleep at night. At the most, I usually get two or three hours of broken sleep. There was even a wild rumour that I shot my mother. Well, that is pretty silly. She's my best girl friend, and I bought her and Dad a home in Memphis, where I hope they'll be for a long, long time. I made my father retire a few months ago. There isn't much sense in his working, because I can make more in a day than he can make in a year. There were some rumours, too, about my getting married. Well, I have no plans for that, and I am not engaged. I guess I just haven't found the right girl yet. Besides records and personal appearances, I am looking forward to making a movie. I took a screen test a couple of months ago and Paramount Pictures signed me to a contract. I may make a picture before the end of the year.

In fact, everything is going so fine for me that I can't believe it's not a dream. And, if it is, I hope I never wake up.

Since last year's tour, only one change in personnel has occurred within the group. Bass singer Edward Ware decided he needed a rest from touring and Al Bishop—a pocket-sized edition of Nat Cole in appearance—has filled the "anchor" rôle. He has a pleasant, forceful voice, and makes excellent use of several solo spots.

NO BALLYHOO
Otherwise, the basic personnel of leader Harry Douglas (baritone), Jimmy Cundy (top tenor), Vernon Gardner (second tenor), and pianist Ray Durrant remains static. Unheralded by the usual "stage, screen and radio star" ballyhoo, the Deeps simply bounced on-stage with a cheerful "Hello, everybody" from Harry Douglas, and immediately let fly into a spirited, rocking "Get Happy."

Harry took the limelight for "Walk Hand In Hand," with some beautiful group harmony behind him, and "Dry Bones" added the first touch of humour to the programme.

Jimmy Lundy's "I'll Be Home" was just about the best version of this tune I've ever heard—bar none. Al Bishop's British variety debut came in the form of "16 Tons," which was an apt showcase for his rich, rock-bottom bass voice.

Al remained in the limelight for an old favourite—"Little Eyes, I Love You," an uproarious piece of fun, but still very musical. Pianist Ray Durrant chose George Gershwin's "Liza" for his solo vehicle—an exhibition of excellent taste as well as excellent keyboard work.

With the intention of pleasing those in the audience that wanted it, the Deeps introduced rock 'n' roll into their act in the form of "Rock A-Beatin' Boogie." And believe me, it really did swing—not with a stodgy, sledgehammer beat, but with a light driving rhythm.

"Moments To Remember" closed the show—and with it, the Deeps were assured of yet another successful British tour.

KEITH GOODWIN.



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PB 618

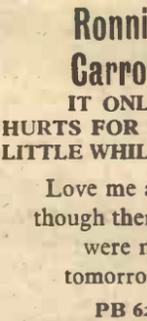


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THE DEEPS ARE BACK!

WHEN most of today's vocal groups have faded into obscurity, one will still continue to pack variety theatres and concert halls in this and many other countries. They call themselves the Deep River Boys—and a more talented, more musical fivesome would be hard to find.

The magnificent Deeps opened their eighth consecutive British variety tour at Finsbury Park Empire on Monday. And what an opening! Their act, on this showing, was just a little better than ever before—in one word, superb.

SHEER TALENT

The Deeps are a vocal group without a gimmick. Sheer talent has earned them their world-wide popularity — talent served up with all the artistry of top-flight performers.

The key to their success on Monday lay in their presentation of a slick, fast-moving, and varied act. Jump numbers are presented with effervescent, contagious excitement, ballads with warmth and sincerity. And the act, as a whole, is stamped with the mark of showmanship from start to finish.

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MOVIES and MUSICAL PERSONALITIES

News from Hollywood rushed to us by DANE MARLOWE

THE unpredictable Mario Lanza is reported to be making a visit to Europe within the next few days—mainly for a holiday, but to include the sights of London. Regretfully, Lanza never seems to be available when contacting him for further details, so, as the title of Doris Day's record says, "Whatever Will Be, Will Be"!

Dean Martin is now in Rome—for his solo screen debut in Joe Pasternak's MGM production, "10,000 Bedrooms". Beautiful Cyd Charisse is anxiously awaiting the return home from London of handsome husband, Tony Martin. Pat Boone sings the title song in the film "Friendly Persuasion"—but several other labels are competing with their top stars.

Not only does bandleader Harry James play the rôle of a gun fighter in "The Outlaw Queen"—but he gets the girl too, in this case Andrea King.

Paramount's "The Lonely Man" includes Tennessee Ernie Ford, who is unseen but sings the title song. Hollywood is astonished at the surprise deal, enabling 20th Century to secure Elvis Presley for his first film project—tentatively titled "The Brothers From Reno." However, the producers and directors had better get moving quickly; not only is "The Pelvis" coining the cash with personal appearances, but is scheduled for a stint in Uncle Sam's Army towards the end of the year.

There is fierce competition to tempt Esther Williams with dramatic acting rôles on her return to California from the London Aqua Show. It is considered unlikely that Esther will venture into her customary underwater escapades in the future, but no firm ruling is known—everything is dependent on which studio successfully lands her signature. . . . Louis Armstrong is definitely set to film in London in December and January—providing full Ministry and



Here is Frankie Laine, as filmgoers will see him in the new Columbia comedy, "He Laughed Last." He takes the part of a singer turned bodyguard, whose job it is to protect a curvaceous chorus girl who becomes Queen of the Underworld.

Pop Records



reviewed by **ALEX MACINTOSH**

union blessing is forthcoming . . .

As Guy Mitchell is of Yugoslavian descent, perhaps it is not surprising that his latest feminine interest is a beautiful Danish actress . . . Johnnie Ray did all expected of him in "There's No Business Like Show Business"—but there must be a moral in this title, considering that 20th Century-Fox have not utilised his services for a further movie (particularly bearing in mind his worldwide appeal).

Sorry to report that 38-year-old TV singing personality, Dinah Shore, was expecting her second child, but regretfully lost the baby: Dinah is, of course, Mrs. George Montgomery.

The most successful come-back over the past year has been Gordon MacRae, with his superb performances in "Carousel" and "Oklahoma"; do not be surprised to find his partnership with Doris Day renewed again very shortly.

It is estimated that the film "Viva Las Vegas" was worth a million dollars in publicity to the Sands Hotel there; one of the owners is Frank Sinatra.

Moving day — with Sarah Vaughan and Billy Eckstine

HELLO, THERE! THIS week—for the twenty-fourth time since the mem and I made a team—the Macintosh gypsies packed their bundles and shifted camp. This time away from the borderland of Shocking Hill Gate out to the quiet countryside of Tulse Hill.

The last-prized pieces to be stacked on the gram were Daddy's records, and as we trundled off in the moonlight I was surprised to find the top disc was the old MGM skimmer by Sarah Vaughan and Billy Eckstine, "You're All I Need."

Surprised because, like a good many others in the old collection, I haven't played it over for some little while, and I'd almost forgotten about it.

Oddly enough, the same day I heard the new MGM Extended Play by this famous twosome, which includes that one together with "Dedicated To You," "Ev'ry Day" and "I Love You."

No self-respecting Vaughan-Eckstine collector will want to miss out on these, and even if, like me, you have the old copies on 78's it might be an idea to hear these if only to appreciate the quality you can get on 45's. Joe Lipman's Orchestra does 'em proud with the backings.

I became slightly fixated over Sarah Vaughan's work long ago, and remember, with affection, her last concert here at the Albert Hall. But of all the songs she's made, the one that stays with me is "These Things I Offer You"—one she recorded with Percy Faith. It's my wife's favourite, so I bought six copies! We still have three to go!

Currently, there's another MGM EP about, titled "Sarah Vaughan Sings After Dark," and a twelve-inch LP by Pye-Emercy called "In The Land Of Hi-Fi." One way and another, it's a pretty good season for Sarah.

Eckstine also has an MGM LP just now which they call "That Old Feeling." Mr. "B" kicks off with that one in romantic mood and it sets the pattern for the other nine, among them, "Love Me Or Leave Me," "Coquette," and "Because You're Mine."

Eckstine is, as you well know, a very polished artist, and an elegant



EVE BOSWELL

By this time, most of the Al Martino fans will have parted with their coin for Al's latest Capitol sides. But in case the news hasn't got to you, the two he is in business with now are "The Girl I Left In Rome" and "Some Cloud Above," both with Neil Hefti's orchestra.

Not great songs, but certainly sung well up to the Martino standard and good enough to keep Al in coffee and cakes whilst he's with us on his present variety tour.

When more than two singers take a stab at a new song, I get the impression it has a chance of hitting the top. "More" is such one.

Perry Como has done it for HMV, Jimmy Young for Decca, with the excellent Bob Sharples Orchestra. Sounds as though this one may click.

It's a Viennese waltz type of number with a lilt, and both Perry and Jimmy give it all they've got—which, in both cases, is plenty.

Any time you feel like buying Mama a present, it might be worth remembering that Sydney Torch has a collection of waltzes on a new Parlophone EP.

His orchestra play some lovely arrangements of "The Haunted Ballroom," "Valse Grise," "Destiny" and "Petite Waltz." Not surprisingly the melodies are called "Concert Waltzes."

I'm not suggesting that Mum is old-fashioned, but these are good listening and they'd make a change from flowers, huh?

TRUMPET-STAR Dickie Hawdon played his final date with the Tubby Hayes Orchestra at the Jazz Note Club, Coventry, on Sunday. He has left to replace Frank Donlan in the Kirchins Orchestra.

BAND CALL

Week beginning September 7

HEDLEY WARD TRIO
Friday and Saturday: Empire, Chatham; Sunday: Wellington Pier, Great Yarmouth; Monday: R.A.F. Camps, Wolverhampton (week).

FREDDY RANDALL BAND
Friday: Hednesford; Saturday: St. Helens; Sunday: Leamington Spa; Thursday: Bognor.

MEL TORME
Monday: Prince of Wales Theatre, London (week).

TERRY LIGHTFOOT'S JAZZMEN
Friday: Bellingham Jazz Club; Saturday: Edmonton; Sunday: Woolwich; Tuesday: Humphrey Lyttelton Club; Wednesday: Southall.

NAT GONELLA
Monday: Empire, Edinburgh (week).

ERIC SILK JAZZ BAND
Friday: Masonic Hall, Leytonstone; Sunday: Ilford Town Hall, Wednesday: Salon Bal, Harringay.

BILLY DANIELS
Monday: Manchester Hippodrome (week).

SID PHILLIPS BAND
Tuesday: Wembley Town Hall; Thursday: Co-operative Hall, Rugby.

AMBROSE ORCHESTRA
Monday: The Glen, Bristol (week).

JOHNNY DANKWORTH ORCHESTRA
Friday: Astoria Ballroom, Nottingham; Saturday: Unity Hall, Wakefield; Sunday: St. George's Hall, Bradford; Monday: BBC.

VIC LEWIS ORCHESTRA
Friday: "400" Ballroom, Torquay; Saturday: Empire Hall, Taunton; Sunday: Alexandra Gardens, Weymouth; Monday: Lyceum, London; Wednesday: USAF, Sculthorpe; Thursday: BBC.

GRACIE COLE ORCHESTRA
Friday: Corn Exchange, Ashford; Saturday: Arden Ballroom, Bedworth; Sunday: Empire Rooms, London; Thursday: New Theatre, Ballroom, Amesbury.

KIRCHINS BAND
Friday: Plaza Ballroom, Derby; Saturday: Windmill Club, Rushden; Thursday: Victoria Hall, Chesterfield.

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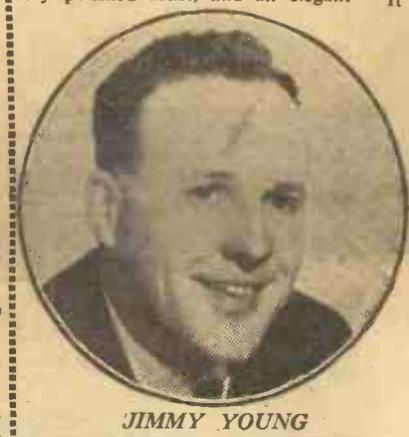
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NME MUSIC CHARTS

BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN BRITAIN

Last This Week	(Week ending September 5)
1	1 WHATEVER WILL BE, WILL BE (Doris Day (Philips))
2	2 WHY DO FOOLS FALL IN LOVE? (Teen-Agers (Columbia))
4	3 SWEET OLD-FASHIONED GIRL (Teresa Brewer (Vogue/Coral))
5	4 ROCKING THROUGH THE RYE (Bill Haley Comets (Brunswick))
14	5 LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS (Anne Shelton (Philips))
3	6 WALK HAND IN HAND (Tony Martin (HMV))
5	7 MOUNTAIN GREENERY (Mel Tormé (Vogue/Coral))
13	8 BORN TO BE WITH YOU (Chordettes (London))
7	9 HEARTBREAK HOTEL (Elvis Presley (HMV))
10	10 SAINTS ROCK AND ROLL (Bill Haley Comets (Brunswick))
8	11 SERENADE (Slim Whitman (London))
12	12 I-M IN LOVE AGAIN (Fats Domino (London))
—	13 GREAT PRETENDER / ONLY YOU (The Platters (Mercury))
18	14 I WANT YOU, I NEED YOU, I LOVE YOU (Elvis Presley (HMV))
15	15 I ALMOST LOST MY MIND (Pat Boone (London))
19	16 YOU ARE MY FIRST LOVE (Ruby Murray (Columbia))
9	17 I'LL BE HOME (Pat Boone (London))
21	18 LONG TALL SALLY (Pat Boone (London))
11	19 WAYWARD WIND (Tex Ritter (Capitol))
24	20 FOUNTAINS OF ROME (Edmund Hockridge (Pye-Nixa))
17	20 WALK HAND IN HAND (Ronnie Carroll (Philips))
16	22 WHO ARE WE? (Ronnie Hilton (HMV))
19	23 BE-BOP-A-LULA (Gene Vincent (Capitol))
22	24 MY SON JOHN (David Whitfield (Decca))
—	25 MY SEPTEMBER LOVE (David Whitfield (Decca))
26	26 DONKEY CART (Frank Chacksfield (Decca))
—	27 WOMAN IN LOVE (Frankie Laine (Philips))
—	28 BRING A LITTLE WATER, SYLVIE (Lonnie Donegan (Pye-Nixa))
30	29 EXPERIMENTS WITH MICE (Johnny Dankworth (Parlophone))
23	30 WAYWARD WIND (Gogi Grant (London))

BEST SELLING SHEET MUSIC (U.S.)

Last This Week	(Week ending September 5)
1	1 Allegheny Moon
2	1 Whatever Will Be, Will Be
2	3 My Prayer
5	4 Canadian Sunset
3	5 Wayward Wind
6	6 On The Street Where You Live
8	7 Song For A Summer Night
9	8 Hound Dog
7	9 I Want You, I Need You, I Love You
10	10 I Almost Lost My Mind
—	11 Soft Summer Breeze
14	12 Sweet Old-Fashioned Girl
13	13 Picnic
12	13 Moon Glow
—	15 Walk Hand In Hand

BEST SELLING SHEET MUSIC (BRITAIN)

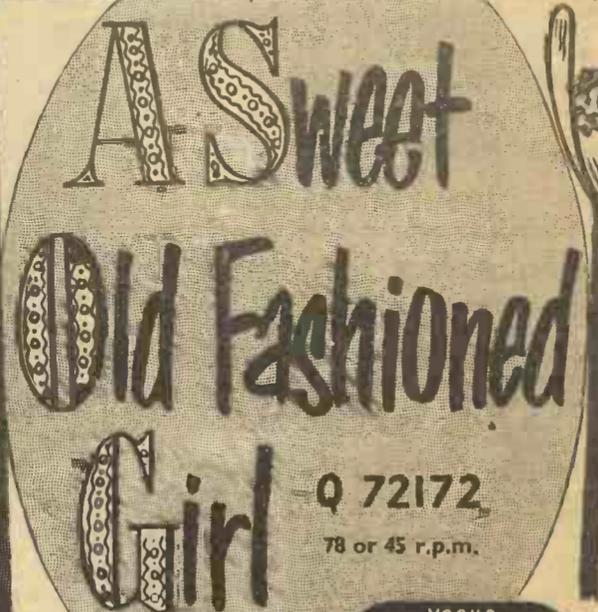
Last This Week	(Week ending September 5)
2	1 WHATEVER WILL BE, WILL BE (Melcher-Toff) 2s.
1	2 WALK HAND IN HAND (Duchess) 2s.
3	3 WHO ARE WE (Bourne) 2s.
4	4 MOUNTAIN GREENERY (New World) 2s.
5	5 WHY DO FOOLS FALL IN LOVE? (Chappells) 2s. 6d.
6	6 THE BIRDS AND THE BEES (Maddox) 1s. 6d.
9	7 SWEET OLD FASHIONED GIRL (Campbell-Connelly) 2s.
7	8 HOT DIGGITY (Peter Maurice) 2s.
8	9 WAYWARD WIND (Lafleur) 2s.
—	10 LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS (F. D. & H.) 2s.
12	11 BY THE FOUNTAINS OF ROME (Sterling) 2s.
10	12 SERENADE (Blossom) 2s.
11	13 MY SEPTEMBER LOVE (Bron) 2s.
13	14 OUT OF TOWN (Kassner) 2s.
18	15 YOU ARE MY FIRST LOVE (Grosvenor) 2s.
14	16 IVORY TOWER (Morris) 1s. 6d.
15	17 NO OTHER LOVE (Chappells) 2s.
17	18 I'LL BE HOME (Box & Cox) 2s.
18	19 BELIEVE IN ME (Macmelodies) 2s.
16	20 IT'S ALMOST TOMORROW (Macmelodies) 2s.
24	21 ONLY YOU (Sherwin) 2s.
20	22 DAM BUSTERS' MARCH (Chappells) 2s. 6d.
—	23 THE GAL WITH THE YALLER SHOES (Robbins) 2s.
—	24 BORN TO BE WITH YOU (Morris) 2s.

BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN THE U.S.

Last This Week	(Week ending September 5)
1	1 Hound Dog/Don't Be Cruel (Elvis Presley)
2	2 My Prayer (Platters)
4	3 Whatever Will Be, Will Be (Doris Day)
3	4 Flying Saucer (Buchanan and Goodman)
8	5 Canadian Sunset (Hugo Winterhalter)
5	6 Allegheny Moon (Patti Page)
5	7 I Want You, I Need You, I Love You (Elvis Presley)
7	8 Be-Bop-A-Lula (Gene Vincent)
9	9 Almost Lost My Mind (Pat Boone)
15	10 Tonight You Belong To Me (Patience and Prudence)
—	11 Honkey Tonk (Bill Doggett)
10	12 Wayward Wind (Gogi Grant)
12	13 Song For A Summer Night (Mitch Miller)
13	14 Fool (Sanford Clark)
—	15 Sweet Old-Fashioned Girl (Teresa Brewer)

The American charts are published by courtesy of "Billboard."

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Announcing the fabulous 'LIBERACE STORY'

FOR millions of television viewers and film fans, excitement is approaching fever pitch at the forthcoming arrival—for his first visit to Britain—of America's fabulous entertainer, LIBERACE.

A strong indication of his enormous following here was evident last week—when all seats for his first London concert at the Royal Festival Hall on October 1, were completely sold out—only two hours after the box-office opened!

Because Liberace has become such a controversial figure in America and Britain, fantastic interest has been aroused by the public in every walk of life—demanding the "inside story" of this unique showman, his autobiography and pictures illustrating Liberace's spectacular Hollywood surroundings.

To meet the demand of overwhelming requests, the NME has made special arrangements—with an independent publishing company—to present a super magazine, "The Liberace Story."

And what a story! This brilliant production, comprising 24 large pages ("Hit Parade" size) is a revealing souvenir album—packed with intimate details, thrilling pictures and several magnificent full-page portraits.

Printed on glossy art paper with a three-coloured cover, "The Liberace Story" will be on sale (price 2s. 6d.) within the next fortnight. Inevitably the demand will be colossal, but NME readers have priority in ensuring a copy—by making reservations at the earliest opportunity, which guarantees no delay in receiving this magazine on the day it is published.

READ ABOUT THE 'RAGE OF THE AGE'

In "The Liberace Story," material has been gathered to illustrate in words and pictures every phase of his exciting life—from childhood handicaps and struggles, to his present-day pinnacle of accomplishment and ambitions for the future.

You can read about the women in his life; his brother George and the Liberace family; all about his TV, recording and screen projects, besides Liberace's favourite entertainers, his adoring fans, likes and dislikes—and a fight against death.

The magazine includes pictures of Liberace's spectacular piano-shaped swimming pool, a signed photograph, his associates, the renowned Californian home and the idol of so many—at work and play.

Nothing is omitted. "The Liberace Story" discloses his business interests, views on marriage, personal points, souvenir collections, clothes, U.S. press opinions—and, in fact, it is an unequalled production in words and pictures.

You may love Liberace, you may hate him—but you cannot ignore this flamboyant personality, who is about to take Britain by storm. This rage of the age is undeniable; his countless followers (and enemies) will treasure "The Liberace Story" as a keepsake, and will be enthralled by this illuminating souvenir album—compiled after months of research by a team of great writers.

His impending visit will create a tremendous demand for this book. To be sure of a copy, place an order now with your regular newsagent or bookstall. Alternatively, you can receive a copy by post immediately "The Liberace Story" is published, by completing the coupon in the display advertisement on page 12 of this issue.

Only by placing an order immediately, or writing at the earliest opportunity, can you be guaranteed a copy of "The Liberace Story." This is something too exciting to miss!

*** Trade inquiries for the "Liberace Story" should be made to the Circulation Manager, c/o NME, 5, Denmark Street, London, W.C.2.

Short notes . . .

A charity concert taking place at the London Coliseum on Sunday, September 30, includes Dickie Valentine, the Ray Ellington Quartet, Anne Shelton, Edmund Hockridge, the Tanner Sisters and Harold Collins with his Orchestra . . . Titled "Annie By Candlelight," singer Annie Ross waxed her first LP album for Pye-Nixa last Monday . . . British-born pianist, Marian McPartland returned to New York from London Airport yesterday (Thursday) after visiting her parents in this country . . . After collapsing during his band broadcast last Tuesday, Harry Roy was able to play at his Femina Club the same evening, following a medical check-up . . . "The Edmundo Ros Half-Hour"—a 30-minute Eastmancolour film—is due for release in the near future . . . Hubert J. Stone, assistant general manager of the American Decca label, is in London for business talks . . . Well-known photographic concern—Polyfoto—open their first record department at their premises in the Strand, London, W.C., next Wednesday (12th), which will be attended by several personalities . . . Esquire Records have secured British distribution rights of the important American jazz Transition label . . . 208 disc-jockey David Gell visits London on Thursday of next week . . . The Jerry Allen Trio will be featured five days each week on the ATV Midlands channel commencing Monday, September 17. Titled "Lunchbox," these programmes will include a guest-singer each week, starting with Annette Kluoger . . . Dean Martin, together with his wife, Jeannie, flew into London on Wednesday afternoon of this week, prior to continuing his journey to Rome for his first solo film . . .



Dennis Lotis and Carol Raye rehearsing for the new British musical, "Harmony Close."

Dennis Lotis show opens Tuesday

THE forthcoming British musical, "Harmony Close," starring Dennis Lotis, has been under rigid rehearsal during the past few days in readiness for its debut opening at the King's Theatre, Glasgow, on Tuesday next, September 11.

The show is to have a two-week residency in Glasgow, followed by a week at the Royal Court Theatre in Liverpool. Further dates in the provinces are still under discussion, and a West End presentation is planned in the near future.

As yet, no theatre has yet been fixed for "Harmony Close" in London.

JIVER HUTCHINSON WILL LAUNCH OWN BAND IN NOVEMBER

THE exclusive NME forecast last week—that trumpeter Leslie "Jiver" Hutchinson is leaving the Geraldo Orchestra to form his own band—has now been officially confirmed.

Leslie will launch his new unit at the Regent Ballroom, Brighton, on Thursday, November 1. Although personnel details are not completed, the band will comprise six instrumentalists and two vocalists.

Besides Leslie himself, there will be three rhythm, trombone, and tenor sax doubling clarinet and soprano.

SINGERS

Cliff Lawrence will be the featured male singer, but Leslie is seeking a coloured feminine vocalist. Derek Boulton will be solely handling the management and booking representation of this attraction.

Leslie will leave Geraldo's Orchestra during the early part of next month. This is the second occasion that he has resigned from Geraldo,

Bill Haley Comets . . . Slim Whitman TEEN-AGERS VOCAL GROUP SIGNED FOR BRITISH

NEW coloured vocal group—the Teen-agers, with 13-year-old Frankie Lyman—have been signed for a tour of Great Britain, including concert dates and TV appearances in addition to variety theatres.

SLIM WHITMAN WILL BE HERE IN FEBRUARY

ALTHOUGH we revealed during the summer that arrangements had been finalised for U.S. western cowboy singing star, Slim Whitman, to undertake a return variety tour of Britain, no indication could be given concerning the proposed dates.

However, latest information regarding Slim Whitman's tour is that it is scheduled to commence at the end of February—continuing for a period of eight—twelve weeks.

Final confirmation is awaited from Whitman's representatives in America, concerning his definite starting date, then the Lew and Leslie Grade office will announce his theatre venues in Britain.

The Lew and Leslie Grade Agency will present this attraction—for a minimum of six weeks—commencing the latter part of February, 1957.

This is the third top U.S. attraction announced to undertake a tour in Britain during February of next year. Bill Haley and his Comets are due in the early part of that month, whilst in the adjoining story concerning Slim Whitman, it is announced that he is expected a few weeks later.

TV APPEARANCE

It is probable that the Teen-agers will be featured in the "Sunday Night At The Palladium" ATV programme, prior to their provincial tour.

The group was formed less than a year ago. With their very first record, they scored a big success in America—"Why Do Fools Fall In Love"—written by Frankie Lyman—and they have since entered the sellers again with "I Want You To Be My Girl."

"Why Do Fools Fall In Love" reached No. 1 place in the NME Best Selling charts last month and is continuing with heavy sales, whilst maintaining No. 2 position.

Final round of BBC Song Festival

IN the last round of the BBC-TV "Festival of British Song" competition on Monday, September 24, producer Francis Essex has secured vocal personality Anne Shelton, Lester Ferguson, Tony Brent and the Coronets.

Two additional artists have still to be announced for the September 24 programme, but music will be provided by the George Melachrino Orchestra in addition to the Frank Weir Quartet.

This will be the sixth presentation of the song festival and the winning titles from each programme will be performed in the finals on Monday, October 22.

In the last of the current Ted Heath TV fortnightly series on Monday, September 17, Ruby Murray has been signed as an additional guest to Lita Roza, and a further artist is still to be named.

More variety for Don Rennie

PARLOPHONE'S romantic singing personality, Don Rennie has signed a lucrative contract for future variety dates.

He opens this tour at Sheffield Empire on September 17, followed by consecutive appearances at the Hippodrome, Manchester; Glasgow Empire; and an important date in London at Chiswick Empire.

STAR GUESTS ON TV WITH SHOW BAND

MORE famous personalities have been secured by producer Bill Cotton, jr., for guest appearances in the forthcoming BBC-TV programmes, by Cyril Stapleton and the Show Band.

On Sunday, September 16, "Black Magic" vocal star Billy Daniels will be appearing—whilst for the final presentation on Sunday, September 23, Britain's "Queen of the Ivories," Winifred Atwell, in addition to rising vocal stylist Michael Holliday, will be featured.

As previously reported, Tony Martin and Lonnie Donegan are the guests this Sunday (September 9). Resident in each programme will be the Stargazers, in addition to Shirley Wilson who is currently the featured vocalist with Don Smith's Band at Luton.

TORME'S LAST DATES HERE

A FURTHER effort to extend Mel Tormé's stay in Britain by two additional weeks in variety has proved unsuccessful. He is unable to secure release from a commitment to open on October 1 in Detroit.

During the second week of his fortnight at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London, commencing next Monday, Mel will make his last television appearance in Val Parnell's "Star-time" on Thursday, September 20.

As exclusively revealed last week, Mel records two sides each with the Ted Heath and Cyril Stapleton orchestras during the same week; his farewell public appearance will be at De Montfort Hall, Leicester, on Sunday, September 23.

Negotiations are still proceeding for Mel to broadcast in the Show Band Show on Monday, September 24, as well as pre-recording a short series of programmes for the BBC.

Tonight (Friday)—and on September 14 and 21—he presents a special selection of discs on Radio Luxembourg.

MANTOVANI OFF TO SOUTH AFRICA

WORLD-FAMOUS orchestral conductor, Mantovani, leaves London Airport on Tuesday next (September 11) to play eight concerts for the Johannesburg Festival in South Africa.

Mantovani returns to London on September 28, and flies out the same evening for a large-scale American tour, spanning the whole of October, November and December, during which he will give over 60 concerts throughout the U.S.A.

in order to launch his own band.

The band will specialise in versatility—with the emphasis on two-beat music, rock 'n' roll, and Latin American rhythms. It is probable that the billing will be "Jiver" Hutchinson and his Band—with the name Leslie omitted.

Derek Boulton told the NME that a heavy schedule of dates has already been secured; negotiations are taking place with some of Britain's leading instrumentalists to join the Hutchinson line-up.

Stephane Grappelly in Yana TV series

GLAMOROUS vocal personality Yana, undertakes her last variety engagement next week, at the Regal, Great Yarmouth, prior to her fortnightly BBC-TV series commencing Wednesday, October 17.

It has been revealed that famous French swing violinist Stephane Grappelly will take part in the Yana programmes—as a straight actor in addition to his musical offerings.

However, the important question of the leading male vocal star still remains undecided.

The BBC invited both Ronnie Carroll and Michael Holliday to appear throughout the series, but one of their business representatives refused to consider the suggestion. The final choice now rests with the BBC.



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man—now GROUP TOUR

Here's the first picture of song-star David Hughes, his wife, Ann, and their new arrival, Shaun, born on August 26. The baby is named after the character David portrayed in his recent stage success, "Summer Song."



Prince of Wales developments

ANNIE DONEGAN WEST END VARIETY DEBUT

A UNIQUE honour has been bestowed upon Annie Donegan and her Skiffle Group. On the eve of their first provincial variety tour of Great Britain — and before playing even one date—Bernard Delfont has secured this group as one of the major attractions to be starred at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London, for two weeks commencing Monday, December 3.

It is a tribute to the Donegan unit that Bernard Delfont has made this unusual commitment without having seen them in action. He has been guided by the sensational reports following their recent Stoll Theatre concert and, of course, the continual hit records which they are producing.

Final confirmation is still awaited concerning the attractions to be presented at the Prince of Wales during November. Our previous reports indicated the strong likelihood of visits by Guy Mitchell, Vic Damone, and the Ames Brothers.

of negotiation on Wednesday of this week, but various difficulties have to be taken into consideration before Delfont is able to announce his final choice.

When Billy Daniels appears at the Prince of Wales (for a fortnight commencing October 8), the supporting artists will include youthful instrumental group, The King Brothers, and vocal impressionist Joan Turner.

In addition to the probability of the Billy Cotton Band Show taking up residency for six weeks during the Christmas/New Year season at the Prince of Wales, there is a strong possibility that this will be followed by the American comedian-entertainer Victor Borge, also for six weeks.

Sept. 25 is L-Day!

WORLD-FAMOUS pianist-entertainer Liberace, together with his violinist-brother George and his wife, and "Mom" Liberace, will arrive here on September 25 for his first-ever concert tour of this country.

With them on the "Queen Mary" will be Liberace's famous candelabra and his Baldwin concert-grand piano with its transparent lid.

The Liberaces recently visited Cuba, where, at the invitation of the President, they appeared at concerts sponsored by 25,000 housewives.

Previously, they had broken all-time attendance records in Dallas with a two weeks' performance of "The Great Waltz," a musical comedy based on the life of Johann Strauss.

Further information regarding the forthcoming tour and the lineup of the George Melachrino Orchestra, which, as reported earlier, will be accompanying Liberace, will be revealed after the return of MCA's Norman Payne, who is currently in America discussing details of the tour with Liberace.

JUPP LEADING NEW-STYLE BAND

WELL-KNOWN bandleader-arranger Eric Jupp, is abandoning his large dance orchestra, which has been recording consistently on the Columbia label for the past three years.

In future, Eric will concentrate on a new combination—featuring himself at the piano—with a rhythm section and twenty violins.

More stage dates for Malcolm Mitchell

THE new Malcolm Mitchell unit have been booked for further variety dates by the Grade office.

Malcolm and the trio will appear at the Savoy Theatre, Clacton (September 17) followed by consecutive weeks at Metropolitan Theatre, London, New Royal Theatre, Bournemouth, and Ipswich Hippodrome.

RAY NOBLE:

BRITISH RESIDENCE

BRITISH-BORN bandleader Ray Noble, who left this country in 1935 to become one of America's foremost batoneers, has announced his intention of settling here "for a year at least, and maybe for good."

At present vacationing on the Continent, Ray was, therefore, not available to comment at-press-time on his future plans.

Widespread reports of Ray's decision to leave America for at least a year were confirmed this week in a New York report from "Hit Parade" correspondent Lance Fielding.

Deep River Boys' new radio series

FOR the third successive year, American vocal group, the Deep River Boys, are pre-recording a series of broadcasts—to be relayed each week on Radio Luxembourg.

Commencing on October 5, these presentations will continue every Friday at 9 p.m.

Show Band pianist, Dennis Wilson, with a hand-picked group of instrumental stars, is providing the accompaniment for the Deep River Boys.

JAMBOREE TICKETS

TICKETS for the 1956 "Jazz Jamboree," sponsored by the Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council, are on sale as from today (Friday). The date for this annual event is set for noon at the Gaumont State, Kilburn, on October 14.

Tickets are priced at £1, 15s., 10s. and 5s., and applications (together with a stamped and addressed envelope) should be addressed to the MSBC, 5, Egmont House, 116, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1, as soon as possible.

Lionel Hampton All-Stars . . . opening dates in Britain Vic Lewis and Tommy Whittle U.S. tour starts in Pittsburgh

THE fabulous Lionel Hampton with his All Stars launch their British concert tour at London's mammoth Empress Hall for an afternoon performance on Sunday, October 21, commencing at 3 p.m.

The Hampton Orchestra will appear here for 25 days—but impresario Harold Davison, who is presenting this attraction will only disclose four other venues.

They are as follows: Public Hall, Preston (Monday, October 22); De Montfort Hall, Leicester (Tuesday, October 23); Town Hall, Birmingham (Wednesday, October 24); and Sophia Gardens Pavilion, Cardiff (Thursday, October 25).

Regarding the Empress Hall concert, Davison emphasises that the Lionel Hampton All-Stars will not be presented on a revolving platform, and every possible effort is being made to place the orchestra in a position most advantageous for the audience.

Further confirmation has been secured concerning the first venue on the U.S. concert tour to be undertaken by Vic Lewis and his Orchestra

(on a reciprocal basis for Hampton), together with Tommy Whittle (the exchange for the current engagements here by Sidney Bechet).

The Lewis Orchestra depart from London Airport on Monday, October 8—opening their 25-day tour at Pittsburgh on Thursday, October 11, under the auspices of promoter Irving Field.

Tommy Whittle returns from two weeks with his band in Paris on September 30, prior to making a lone journey to New York on October 2, spending a few days there before joining the all-star package, which includes the Lewis Orchestra and himself as a solo attraction, nine days later.

For his Paris club date, Whittle has completed his line-up with the capture of ace jazz trumpet star Jimmie Deuchar. The Whittle group opens at the Cameleon Club on Saturday, September 15.

JUNE MARLOWE JOINS STARGAZERS: EULA PARKER LEAVES

JUNE MARLOWE—glamorous 25-year-old London mother of two children—is joining the famous Stargazers, replacing Australian strawberry blonde Eula Parker, who is branching out as a solo artist.

Eula plays her last date with the Stargazers at Blackpool on September 30. June makes her debut on the following day, when the group broadcast with Cyril Stapleton and the BBC Show Band.

Plymouth-born June Marlowe is now in her fourth year as vocalist with the Eric Winstone Orchestra, currently appearing at Butlin's Holiday Camp, Clacton.

'NICE CHANGE'

Cliff Adams (leader of the Stargazers) said: "We are delighted to have June with us. Eula spent a very happy year and we will part on very amicable terms, wishing her every success in the future."

June told the NME this week: "This will be the first time that I have sung with a vocal group—apart from the Stagecoachers in Eric Winstone's Band. It certainly will be a nice change from appearing with a big band all the time." Beginning her vocal career with Eddie Mendoza's unit (when she was 17), June married Eddie's bass-player, Peter Van-Dike the following year. The couple live in North Kensington with their two children.

When June successfully auditioned for the Eric Winstone Orchestra, by coincidence, Cliff Adams accompanied her on that occasion, at Eric Winstone's request.



Cliff Adams and June Marlowe

NEW SINGER FOR ERIC

COLUMBIA Records vivacious songstress, Shelley Moore, is to become the new resident singer with the Eric Delaney Band from Thursday next, September 13, in place of Brenda Kaye, who is leaving shortly.

Star tenor saxist Jimmy Skidmore is also leaving the Eric Delaney Band at the end of this month. He will then join Bix Curtis's "Jazz From London" unit.

Barbara's ITV series gets a title

COLUMBIA vocalist and radio personality, Barbara Lyon, whose new ITV series has already been exclusively announced in the NME, has chosen the title "Be My Guest," for the programmes, which will go out every Monday evening from September 17.

A small instrumental group under the leadership of Steve Race, will supply the music in this 15-minute production.

KOPELMAN ISSUES WRITS

PROCEEDINGS claiming damages for libel have been instituted by low-price record personality, Manuel Kopelman, in respect of an article which appeared in the Sunday newspaper, "The People," on August 26.

The writs have been served on Odhams Press Ltd. (publishers of "The People"), Harry Ainsworth (Editor) and Charles Manifold (a journalist).

"OFF THE RECORD" RETURN WILL FEATURE 'DEEPS'

WHEN the famous BBC-TV series "Off the Record" resumes on Monday, October 1, one of America's foremost close harmony vocal teams, the Deep River Boys, will be the main attraction.

Producer Bill Cotton, jr., also introduces for the first time in "Off the Record" on October 1 Decca's new vocal artist Audrey Jeans, besides HMV group, the Three Kayses.

Perennial TV favourite Ronnie Hilton is another top personality on that date, whilst other names have yet to be announced.

Stanley Black and his Orchestra will be resident throughout the series, which will be televised fortnightly. Jack Payne composes.

ROCK 'N' ROLL GOES TO COLLEGE!

TREMENDOUS nation-wide interest has developed in the weekly Rock 'n' Roll programme presented by American disc-jockey Alan Freed in the Radio Luxembourg "Jamboree" series every Saturday night.

Huge fan mail with requests for different artists inevitably follows each Alan Freed broadcast and as a direct result of these programmes, students at the Lancing College in Sussex have formed their own Rock and Roll band, and Radio Luxembourg send them specimen tape recordings of Freed's programmes in order to encourage their progress.

It is proposed to pre-record a programme by the College band to be broadcast on 208 if the standard of the unit reaches a sufficiently high standard.

Alan Freed is particularly well known in the Rock 'n' Roll field and, in addition to his Luxembourg broadcasts he is currently seen in the successful "Rock Around The Clock" film.

Confirmation is awaited in London for a proposed Rock 'n' Roll package show tour, which he wants to bring to Britain in the near future.

POLYDOR SIGN PETER YORKE

WELL-KNOWN orchestral conductor Peter Yorke has been signed by Bill Macdonnell to record for the Polydor label.

The orchestra mainly to be used will be the Silver Strings, who were heard earlier this year with Eddie Calvert in the BBC-Sound "Springtime Serenade" series, each Sunday afternoon.

DAVISON FLIES TO U.S.: PLANS MORE BAND-EXCHANGES

BRITISH impresario Harold Davison planes to America at the end of this month to negotiate with New York booking agencies for two outstanding attractions to appear here during the early part of next year.

It is strongly believed that Davison will finalise the long-awaited confirmation of dates in Britain by Duke Ellington and his Orchestra in January, 1957—on an exchange deal involving the Johnny Dankworth Orchestra.

For the first time this week, Davison revealed his plans to secure the fabulous Norman Granz "Jazz at the Philharmonic" unit for a projected nation-wide tour starting in March, 1957.

Because the number of instrumentalists comprising both units are identical, it is likely that the Kirchins Band will be signed for the same number of dates in the U.S.

RUBY, RONNIE, MEL, WINNIE: TV SPOTS

RUBY MURRAY will be starred in "Sunday Night at the London Palladium"—the ATV presentation on September 23.

In Tom Arnold's "Startime" series on the Midlands and Northern channels next Thursday, September 13, the main attractions will be Ronnie Hilton in addition to Tony Payne and David Evans.

On the following Thursday, London ITV "Startime"—presented by Val Parnell—includes two famous stars, Mel Tormé and piano personality Winifred Atwell.

Royal Command Show

THE entertainment event of each year, the Royal Command Variety Performance, has been fixed for November 5, at the London Palladium.

At this early date, no names of artists appearing on this celebrated occasion, have yet been decided.



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On the eve of his British Variety debut at Nottingham,

LONNIE DONEGAN writes a special article for the NME, and tells you of his SKIFFLE PLANS AND HOPES



WELL, the big day is almost here. In just four days' time, I'll be walking on-stage at the Empire, Nottingham, to make my British variety debut. But although I naturally feel just a little nervous, I'm still looking forward to it very much.

I had a foretaste of things to come—at least, I hope they will come—at our recent concert at the Stoll Theatre in London. My new group and I took the stage for the first time there, and we got a really wonderful reception.

Best group

We never expected the concert to be this good, and we were all amazed at the conclusion when the fans wouldn't let us leave the stage. Anyway, that was a very encouraging sign, and I only hope our receptions will be as good during the tour.

Some people have been asking about the new group that I am now fronting. I'll be very frank about it, and say right away that it is by far the best skiffle group I have ever led.

The musicianship is excellent, and the group swings all the time, which is very important to skiffle music. We haven't incorporated a washboard in the group—you will remember that we used one in "Rock Island Line"—for the very simple reason that I don't like them. Anyway, we have a great drummer, so we really have no need for a washboard at all.

You probably know the names of the boys in the group, but I'd like to take time out to introduce them all individually. Our guitarist, Denny Wright, is a well-known figure in the music business, and he has played with a whole host of famous bands including Francisco Cavez. In the past Denny has played quite a good deal of Latin-American style music.

Bassist Micky Ashman is noted in traditional jazz circles as being a fine musician who is capable of laying down a strong, forceful beat—the sort of thing we need in the skiffle group. He has played, at one time and

another, with the bands of Chris Barber, Ken Colyer and Humphrey Lyttelton, and only recently, demonstrated his versatility during a spell with the Eric Delaney Band.

The third member of the group is drummer Nick Nicholls. Nick has moved around on the jazz scene for quite some time, skipping from traditional to modern jazz groups. Among the many bands he has worked with are those led by the Christie Brothers, Kenny Graham and Geoff Taylor.

Variety act

I'm not going to tell you too much about my new variety act, because I feel that it might spoil the effect when you see it. The element of surprise is always necessary in variety, and I'd much rather you see the show than hear about it.

I will, of course, be singing some of my past hits such as "Rock Island Line," "Lost John," "Stewball" and will incorporate the titles from my latest Pye-Nixa release—"Bring A Little Water, Sylvie" and "Dead Or Alive" in the act. In addition, I'll be singing and playing a good many new tunes.

Before I begin the tour next Monday, I have a television date with the BBC Show Band on the previous day. This might well be my last television engagement for quite some time, as the boys and I will be working six nights each week, and it will be tremendously difficult to squeeze in any other dates.

The tour will run for 13 weeks, and will take me and the band all over the country. During the tour, I will be playing dates in Scotland as well as the provinces, so it

looks like I have got a busy time in front of me.

Because the boys and I will be away from home most of the time, we won't be able to get down to London to record much. But that doesn't worry me unduly, as I've been recording quite extensively during the past few weeks.

You may have read that I recorded a 12-in. long playing album that will be released in America on the Mercury label. While I am on tour, Pye-Nixa will release some of these titles in 78 rpm form, so I gather that there will be no shortage of new records.

U.S. return

You may be interested to know that among the 12 titles on the album is a re-make of "Rock Island Line." There are also some original tunes of mine on the LP, including one called "I'm A Roaming Rambler."

Talking of the last few weeks makes me think of the new sports car that I bought. It's a Daimler Super Sports drop-head coupé—a really marvellous piece of machinery. Believe me, I'm more than just a little proud of it!

Many of you who are reading this probably visited the Radio Show at Earl's Court just a week back. I had a great time at the show myself, and spent two evenings there.

It was a bit hectic though, because, although it's hard to believe, I signed more than 2,500 autographs there. Now I've got writer's cramp!

Apart from the forthcoming variety tour, I've got quite a lot of things to look forward to, and the most important of these is a return trip to America next year.

No definite date has yet been fixed, but it will probably be either in the spring or summer. This time, I intend to take my group with me. More than that I can't say at the moment, but I'll no doubt be able to let you know the more elaborate details at a later date.

When I do get some spare time to

myself, I hope to be able to drop into the London jazz clubs and say hello to all my old friends.

If and when the opportunity arises, I'd like very much to sit in with Chris Barber and the band, and maybe play banjo and sing a little. As you already know, I had a lot of

good times with the Barber Band.

But at the moment, I'm thinking only of next Monday and the Empire, Nottingham. Maybe I'll see you there. If not, drop in and say hello when we play in your town, because I'll always be glad to see you backstage!

Bechet comes to town

HE'S a tough little man, one who might have been a retired Creole sea skipper in the blue blazer and white pants he wore on-stage. With snowy hair, furrowed face, he looks more than three years older than Louis Armstrong (which at 59, he's not), although no traces of senility mark his upright stance and vigorous bearing.

One only-notice-such things before Sidney Bechet starts to blow his gold-lacquered horn, however. The music stemming from his soprano sax is still that of a great jazzman in his prime.

Bechet's vibrant, sweeping style has hardly changed at all in 30 years, yet it remains timeless—a model for youngsters to emulate without hope of anything but superficial success.

At the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday, he allowed the musicians supporting him almost as much solo

space as himself in a 40-minute act. But no one could have doubted whose show it was.

The legendary veteran of New Orleans jazz swung André Réwéliotti's spirited little crew from the top, dominating each ensemble when the treacherous Albert Hall acoustics would allow, setting up pulsating background riffs and, in the end, even leading an unrehearsed "Saints" by the combined Réwéliotti and Humphrey Lyttelton bands into something like appreciable, non-chaotic order.

PROGRAMME

This much said, I must admit that I found the concert partly disappointing... and those who have seen Bechet in France or elsewhere on a good night will probably agree.

"Willow, Weep For Me," "Shake 'Em Up" and "Basin Street Blues" came up to expectations, and "Halle-

Hallelujah" revealed some cogently powerful soprano licks above the needless hand-clapping gimmick.

But Sidney, who claims a personal preference for unbackneyed material, played right into the hands of the squarest members of his audience by cramming his programme with a frantic "Old Man River" and lachrymose "Swanee River," the inescapable "Muskrat Ramble" and "Ognons."

'COMMERCIALISM'

Even here he improvised with power, imagination and full conviction, excellently partnered by Guy Longnon's trumpet—and the crowd cheered him unstintingly.

Fans who chided Armstrong for his "commercialism" in London would have been better advised to reserve their complaints for Bechet, nevertheless.

The Lyttelton group presented a brightly acceptable opening set, high-lit for me by the quietly rocking "Christopher Columbus," Humph's declamatory trumpet on "That's My Home," Bruce Turner's instinctively "right" alto in almost all the solos he took, and the propulsive beat of

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SAM GOLDWYN IS HERE TO SEE HIS \$5½ MILLION MUSICAL

INTO London this week has come someone who has been named "Mr. Motion Pictures"—none other than Sam Goldwyn himself.

Sam, who has arrived for the premiere of his latest epic—"Guys and Dolls"—which opens at London's Empire Theatre on September 19, looks like everyone's ideal grandfather, rather than the caricature-type Hollywood producer whom we are apt to visualise.

74 YEARS YOUNG

Though I call him a grandfather, and he's reputed to be 74 years of age, he looks no more than a youthful fiftyish, with a keen sense of humour running through all his replies to me. In fact, his eyes twinkle even more than those of some of the stars that he has introduced!

In "Guys and Dolls" he is convinced that he has produced a film which will enjoy an even greater success than the now famous stage-version and, though this film will be running concurrently with such movies as "Oklahoma" and "The

King and I," Goldwyn is far from worried.

In fact, he believes that one good film starts off a train of repercussions, and a cinema boom. Two or three bad pictures in a row, and the public stay away.

As Goldwyn says, "You might just as well stay at home and watch bad productions on television. In that way it doesn't cost you anything!"

For "Guys and Dolls," Goldwyn considers that if Brando, Sinatra and Jean Simmons had been unavailable, through other commitments, the story was such that he could have still made a great film—with alternative stars.

But, as Goldwyn hastened to add—"I was pretty glad to have Brando, Sinatra and Jean Simmons all the same."

He was endeavouring to prove his point that the story matters most of all, and after 69 productions, I have no doubt that he's right. Especially as he has just spent his biggest-ever budget of five and a half million dollars on "Guys and Dolls."

Spending millions of dollars has become almost an everyday chore for him, yet his beginnings were humble.

REX MORTON meets 'Mr. Motion Pictures'

In fact, his first wage packet in his adopted America was three dollars a week!

Born in Warsaw, Poland, young Samuel Goldwyn ran away from home at the age of eleven to relatives in England. To make enough money for the next stage of his travels, he worked as a blacksmith in Manchester, until he had saved enough for a one-way sailing ticket to the States.

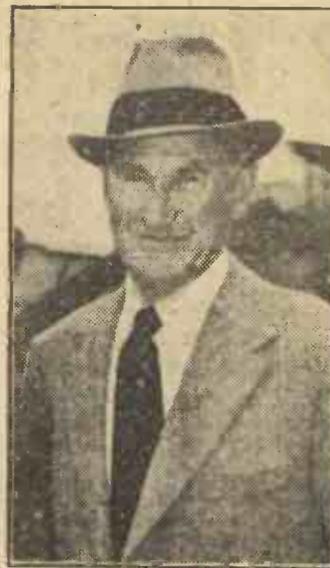
By the age of 13, he had achieved his goal, and he set to work to learn English, and to earn money in a

glove factory in New York.

A born salesman, he eventually became regarded as one of the best glove salesmen in the world. So much so that he was able to afford yearly trips to Europe to visit his mother—all at the age of 18!

But in 1913, Goldwyn saw the future of the motion picture business, and with a partner, he formed his first company.

For their initial venture, the company hired a young playwright—by name, Cecil B. DeMille—and one of the first full-length pictures ever seen



SAM GOLDWYN

name of Goldwyn has been preserved in the MGM company title.

For the last 32 years, Goldwyn has maintained his independence, making pictures in his own way, with his own money, and in his own good time.

To many people the name of Goldwyn conjures up memories of Will Rogers, Eddie Cantor, Gary Cooper, Danny Kaye, and out of his famous Goldwyn Girls came Betty Grable, Paulette Goddard, Lucille Ball, Virginia Bruce and Virginia Mayo.

FILM CLASSICS

In a long, hard road of film-making, milestones of the cinema classics loom up all along the way. Films like "Stella Dallas," "Wuthering Heights," "The Little Foxes," "The Best Years Of Our Lives," and "Hans Christian Andersen" are but a few of the Goldwyn successes.

There's little fear of us losing sight of this famous movie name, for Sam Goldwyn Junior, now aged 28, is rapidly carving a niche for himself in the production field as an independent producer.

Meanwhile I have a feeling that there will be many more epics from Sam Goldwyn in the days to come, and if they are bigger and better than "Guys and Dolls"—there's a treat in store for all of us.

SORRY!

Acute pressure on space has reluctantly compelled us to hold over the following articles by our regular contributors: Jazz Records, by Humphrey Lyttelton; Modern Mood, by Mike Butcher, and Benny Green's weekly column. Their articles will appear again as usual next week.

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American Air-mail 'HIGH SOCIETY' BREAKS RECORDS

WHILE (as reported in the NME last week) the Paramount Theatre, New York, was happily listening to Frank Sinatra, the singing cash register (he earned \$75,000 for his week's stint), Radio City Music Hall announced that the highest box office gross for any opening week in the history of the house was scored by MGM's "High Society," starring Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly and Louis Armstrong. The gross was \$198,419 for the first seven days.

Sinatra, incidentally, had offered to perform on the Ed Sullivan Show, in a singing tribute to the columnist, on August 19. He also agreed to appear on the Steve Allen Show that same night. ABC Television, therefore, asked Sinatra for equal time, and invited him to be a guest of host Donald Woods on "Famous Film Festival" in the interests of fair play to all networks.



Eddie Fisher Bing Crosby

Sinatra graciously accepted the invitation, and on the appointed night, he turned up with a case of laryngitis. He fulfilled all obligations, but did not sing on the Sullivan show.

For Lionel Hampton's tour of the British Isles in October, his wife, Gladys, has obtained permission from Her Majesty's Government to bring in her pet parrots, "Gatemouth" and "Fez Cackleface," which normally would have been barred. Meanwhile, Hamp is readying a new tune a la "Yiddishe Mama" called "Briddishe Mama," as a tribute to English womanhood.

Eddie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds are planning a European tour after the birth of their baby. . . . Tony Bennett has been offered one of the leads in "The Gay Felons," a non-singing rôle.

News from New York rushed by EDITH SCHONBERG, deputising for Nat Hentoff, who is on holiday

Buck Ram, one of the leading writers of rock 'n' roll music, and manager of The Platters and other groups, has taken a unit on the road. Due to recent negative publicity surrounding this type of music, Ram has tagged the beat "Happy Music." . . . Carmel Quinn, Arthur Godfrey's Irish import (she sang with Ambrose in Britain) had a 9 lb. 7 ounce boy at Doctors Hospital. . . . Ed Sullivan is out of the hospital—he was released August 27—and will return to his show September 16. . . .

The readers of NME might be interested to know that the advertisers of Rheingold Beer, accepting the fact that jazz is part of the culture of America, have taken full page advertisements in leading newspapers featuring the smiling countenance of Louis Armstrong with beer in hand. . . . Pianist Joe Bushkin is going to England for two weeks to publicise his new Capitol album. . . .

Birdland, the famous New York jazz spot, is initiating an exciting new project called "The Experimental Workshop In Jazz" which, in effect, will be the introduction four times annually of a new jazz group, created just for the club, and consisting of groups of musicians and arrangers who have always wanted to work with each other just for kicks and to try out new ideas and sounds.

The idea originated with Morris Levy, the man behind the scenes of the Birdland operations, who presented the first of these creations August 30 when he brought in high-note trumpeter Maynard Ferguson and his 12-piece band, consisting of some of the top studio musicians around, gathered together just for this engagement. The aggregation is called Maynard Ferguson and the Dream Band of Birdland.

Northern News By Ron Drake

NEARING the close of his summer season at the Olympia Ballroom, Scarborough, Peter Legh has his winter resident work lined up. Peter will take a ten-piece band into the Baths Ballroom, Scunthorpe, commencing October 17.

Scarborough holiday-makers may also expect to see Peter Legh and his Orchestra return to the Olympia for the 1957 summer season; Peter has already received the invitation and has accepted the contract. His current contract there expires on September 29.

Winter arrangements at the Olympia will bring local leader Joe Blewitt to the hall regularly for one night a week, and a number of name band visits are scheduled, commencing with Johnny Dankworth (November 10).

In negotiation is a Teddy Foster appearance (November 17), while Frank Weir is booked for December 15.

Versatile singer Vicky Fitzpatrick currently appearing in Catlin's Showtime at the Arcadia Theatre, Scarborough, has offers which may take her into panto this Christmas and an Eastbourne summer season next year.

Incidentally, Vicky married former

George Mitchell Group member singer Patrick O'Byrne, in April this year. Both vocalists hail from Dublin.

Hopes for a speedy return to health are extended to Mr. and Mrs. Bert Waller, of Stockton-on-Tees, who are both in Stockton and Thornaby Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Waller are the parents of pianist and composer Bert Waller, accompanist and colleague to Frankie Vaughan. . . . Bert Waller, sen., has been absent from his bandleading activities for some time, having only recently recovered from an operation, and was expecting to resume work when this second illness returned him to hospital.

Next Thursday, North East Lanes fans at Blackburn are to have a first visit of Humphrey Lyttelton. The event, which is to be a three-hour concert, is to be held at the King George Hall. Supporting the Lyttelton band will be the Merseysippi Jazz Band.

The Pavilion Theatre, Liverpool, commences its fortnightly series of concerts with Mick Muligan (Sept. 23). Other bookings include Cy Laurie (Oct. 7); Chris Barber (Nov. 18) and Ken Colyer (Dec. 2).



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ANNE SHELTON IS BACK AMONG THE HITS AGAIN

And that's a place where her singing talents entitle her to be all the time

ANNE SHELTON is back in the best-sellers with a bang. Her newest Philips' recording—"Lay Down Your Arms"—holds position No. 5 in this week's NME Charts.

From entering the charts within three days of issue at No. 28, to No. 14 last week, to its present spot is no mean achievement by any standards, and in this instance, is gained purely by good vocalising.

In fact, if positions were determined in the record-selling charts only by perfect singing, Anne Shelton would be there every time.

Song find

Unfortunately, that quality doesn't necessitate peak sales these days, so Anne is not to the forefront with hit records as often as she should be.

However, like the proverbial river, Anne just keeps rolling along, and is still one of the top attractions in our variety theatres.

"Lay Down Your Arms," of course, was a "natural" for Anne. The sentiment of the lyric, the catchiness of the melody, and most important of all, her long-standing popularity not only with a vast public, but with the boys of the Services also, all contributed to a darn good vocal job from Anne herself.

Alongside the fact that Anne is making this a hit record, one must also salute her artist's and repertoire

by **DOUG GEDDES**

manager—Johnny Franz—for spotting the tune as being a potential seller.

Johnny was attending an annual convention of international Philips companies in Sweden, when his Swedish colleagues played him a marching song recorded in their country, and titled by them as "Anne Caroline."

Though the original Swedish lyric was unsuitable for English translation as written, Johnny saw in it an obvious "must" for the British market, and visualised Anne Shelton as the ideal singer of it.

With a copy of the disc in his baggage, Johnny arrived back in Britain bubbling with enthusiasm about his new find. Within three days, well-known British lyric writer, Paddy Roberts, had produced a worthy lyric.

That lyric is already on everyone's lips, and few people in the past three weeks haven't heard and enjoyed the Anne Shelton version of "Lay Down Your Arms."

Even the "brass-hats" at the War Office are well aware of it, for they were drawn into it at high level.

when Anne's recording company wanted to "borrow" some Service boys for a personal appearance with her at this year's Radio Show.

'Subversive'!

Though the Army authorities objected to the appearance on the grounds that they could not be connected with a song which had a title sounding subversive, the ensuing publicity and public demand for the record has spun Anne's disc to rapid and dizzy heights.

Without any shadow of doubt, Anne's record is destined for the number one position in the Best Sellers, and, as if the British reputation were not enough, Anne's version of "Lay Down Your Arms" is now in the process of setting up a tidal wave across to the other side of the Atlantic.

Philips' associates in America—Columbia Records—have issued the disc this week and, through the disc-jockeys over there who have already taken a "complete tumble" for Anne's version, a sales impetus has been set up, well in advance of the record reaching the stores. First indications are that a similar success will be achieved amongst American record-buyers.

Though American Columbia seldom make use of British recordings, they have instituted a coast-to-coast drive along with their own initial enthusiasm.

U.S. reaction

Advance copies of the record were flown out to every leading d-j in the States and they, in turn, have given it consistent airings since they were first able to lay hands on a copy.

London publisher, David Platz, of Essex Music, bought the U.S. rights for the song from Francis, Day and Hunter on behalf of his Managing Director—Howie Richmond, of Hollis Music.

Within twenty-four hours of the disc leaving England, Howie was not only turning on the pressure with Anne's record, but had other sessions lined up with the Chordettes on the Cadence label, and Russ Morgan on Decca. A further coverage of the title is expected from the big RCA concern.

But despite this competition from other labels, and the established popularity of the home-grown artists, it is the Anne Shelton recording which is causing the really big reaction in America.

So record-wise, our own Anne Shelton is away up top again, and it couldn't happen to a nicer person. The NME's Rex Morton said earlier this year that Anne's name would be gracing the charts again and again; it's certainly happening with a vengeance this time.

Of course, you cannot keep a quality singer like Anne Shelton down. She has been satisfying record-buyers and broadcast listeners for over 15 years now—and she is still only just 30.

Since we first heard her rich voice,

AROUND THE MIDLANDS

by Dennis Detheridge

THE jazz concert season in the Midlands gets off to a rocking start tomorrow night (Saturday) with an "International Jazz Show" at Birmingham Town Hall. It will feature the great American jazzman, Sidney Bechet, plus France's André Réwélliotti Band and our own Humphrey Lyttelton outfit.

Ed. W. Jones is placing the accent on traditional jazz in his new series of Sunday concerts at the Windsor Theatre, Bearwood. After his opening "Jazz Of Two Cities" show, featuring Liverpool's Merseyside Jazz Band and the Midland Jazz Club's New Orleans Jazzmen, on September 23, he presents the Squadronaires (October 7), Alex Welsh's Dixielander (21st), Freddy Randall (November 4), Chris Barber (11th), Sid Phillips (25th), and Mick Mulligan (December 9th).

Dudley Hippodrome also resumes its Sunday swing session on September 23. First attraction is Ted Heath and his Music, who will give two performances. Ted will be followed by Sid Phillips (September 30), Vic Lewis (October 7), Johnny Dankworth (14th), Eric Delaney (28th), and The Kirchins (November 4).

Fans all over the country will see Wednesbury trumpeter, Ken Rattenbury, leading his band in the BBC-TV "Relax, Look and Listen," which is to be televised from Birmingham next Tuesday.

★ Anne Shelton scored a big success in the States when she appeared over there a few years back. In cabaret with her on one of her dates was an unknown singer she befriended and encouraged. His name was Johnnie Ray. Now, Anne and Johnnie are not only firm friends, but Johnnie is Anne's No. 1 fan—and their affection for each other is clearly shown in this picture, taken when they met up in London. ★



at the age of 14, with the Ambrose Orchestra, she has won the hearts of millions.

Throughout the war years, her popularity increased even more and, like the vocalist whose place she took in the Ambrose outfit—Vera Lynn—Anne herself became a wartime Forces' Sweetheart.

Her earliest recording—"My Yiddish Momma"—continues to sell as a Shelton classic. A long Decca association produced hits like "Put Your Shoes On, Lucy" and "Tenebment Symphony," to name but two.

First disc

A spell with HMV followed, during which time only "Arrivederci, Darling," made a reasonable impression, and then Anne transferred to Philips, when she made an immediate success with "Seven Days."

A short while has elapsed before "Lay Down Your Arms," but the waiting period and the eventual top-quality disc whetted our appetites sufficiently to secure a big hit.

As has been said so many times before, Anne Shelton's name ought always to be entering the Best Seller Charts. It's here to stay this time for quite a while. What the next one will be—who knows? But there certainly will be a next one.

AFN HIGHLIGHTS

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MONDAY
P.M. 12 Noon Request Show; 1 Martin Block; 1.30 Strictly From Dixie; 2 Outpost Concert; 3.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 4 Tennessee Ernie; 4.30 Cisco Kid; 5 Requests; 6 Frank Sinatra; 7 Music In The Air; 8.05 Could This Be You?; 8.30 Arthur Godfrey; 9.30 Jack Carson; 10 F.B.I. In Peace And War; 11.05 Late Request Show; 1.05 Sign off.
TUESDAY
P.M. 12 Noon Request Show; 1 Martin Block; 2 Outpost Concert; 3.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 4 Tennessee Ernie; 5 Requests; 7 Music In The Air; 8.05 What's My Line?; 9.15 On The Scene; 9.30 7th Army Symphony; 10 Let George Do It; 11.05 Late Request Show; 1.05 Sign off.
WEDNESDAY
P.M. 12 Noon Request Show; 1.30 Les Paul; 1.30 Martin Block; 1.30 Strictly From Dixie; 4 Tennessee Ernie; 4.30 Doctor Sixgun; 5 Requests; 6 Keesler

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TAIL-PIECES by THE ALLEY CAT

IN the "Sunday Dispatch" last week-end, entertainment writer Moore Raymond suggested business projects suitable for these stars in their old age: Plastic Shoulder-Chips—Frank Sinatra; Ear Plugs—Johnnie Ray and LP records—Tommy Trinder. . . . Following the departure of Alfred Marks, comedy in Cyril Stapleton's BBC "Saturday Show" was decidedly weak. . . . Vocal personality Joan Regan is stepping out these days, by receiving expert coaching in dancing lessons—from BBC-TV producer Ernest Maxin. . . . The names of two Australian vocalists and two famous sportsmen have been associated romantically—Lorae Desmond and Fulham's international footballer Johnny Haynes, also the Stargazers' good-looker, Eula Parker, and Surrey's England Test Match bowler, Alec Bedser. . . . A surprising choice, but Vera Lynn

is an ardent collector of Bill Haley discs. . . . Yana's forthcoming BBC-TV series will be produced by Barbara Lyon's husband, Russell Turner. . . . The Blackpool ATV show last Sunday did not reveal the Deep River Boys at their best, but the stage setting and production for Shani Wallis's appearance were first-class. . . . Ronnie Carroll waxed his first LP for Philips last Friday—recording eight titles, all composed by Bill McGuffie (music) and Bob Halpin (lyrics). . . . No, it was not Doris Day singing with Cyril Stapleton and the Show Band on their broadcast last Saturday; maintaining a consistent standard for sounding like other vocalists, Janie Marden departed from her customary Rosemary Clooney style in "Whatever Will Be, Will Be." . . . Liked Bobby Pratt's trumpet-playing and the easy



To celebrate the first birthday of Essex Music, David Platz threw a party on Monday, and this picture shows him with some of the guests—(l. to r.): Bert Corri, Pat Doncaster, Daphne Richardson, David Platz, Ivor Raymonde, Julie Dawn, Paddy Roberts, Roy Berry and Bob Crabb.

compering of Ted Heath, introducing his own BBC radio programme, also on Saturday; praiseworthy was Peter Lowe's "Mountain Greenery" vocal—without attempting to copy Mel Tormé.

Comedian-vocal star Jerry Colonna planned from London to Rome on Tuesday of this week for a short holiday, to be followed by U.S.-TV dates—prior to his return here for the co-starring fortnight with Dickie Valentine at London's Prince of Wales Theatre (October 22—November 13). . . . Zsa Zsa Gabor is booked for cabaret at the Café de Paris—whilst Eartha Kitt is almost certain for a return visit, early next year . . .

Rumours that Jimmy Lorde is joining the exploitation department of Mills Music have been vigorously denied by the company's general manager, Fred Jackson. . . . Apologies to Bron's Music, concerning our reference last week to the hit song they have purchased

MAMA, TEACH ME TO DANCE

Recorded by ALMA COGAN (HMV) ANNETTE KLOOGER (Decca)
Song Copies 2/- each F.O. Sets 4/- each

LEEDS MUSIC LTD., 4 DENMARK ST., W.C.2. COV 2962

Simons has secured publishing rights of the theme music from Broderick Crawford's "Highway Patrol" ITV programme.

Rita Hayworth and Kim Novak have been named as Frank Sinatra's co-stars in screen version of "Pal Joey"; George Sidney, director of the "Eddy Duchin Story," will handle presentation. . . . Although Jimmy Parkinson's "Great Pretender" disappeared from the hit parade several months ago, the original American best seller—by the Platters—made a sensational entry this week; this surprise is due to their performance of the title in the "Rock Around The Clock" film, and gives Mercury their first British major success under the auspices of Pye. . . . When Tony Martin was a professional musician named Al Morris, he played sax in the same band as Woody Herman. . . . Plenty of praise in Tin Pan Alley for NME advertisement representative Don Roper—following his two goals and brilliant football for Arsenal against West Bromwich last Saturday. . . . Glen Mason is certainly the busiest vocalist on ITV channels these days; he resumes in the Jack Jackson series, every Sunday from September 16. . . . The very first American waxing of "Walk

Hand In Hand"—by former Gerald vocalist Denny Vaughan—has now been released here by Morris Levy's Oriole label.

"Sadie's Shawl"—a recent disc hit in Britain for the Frank Cordell Orchestra—is published in the U.S. by Perry Como's music company. . . . Viewers either love Liberace or hate him—but ticket sales for his London concerts next month prove that he cannot be ignored. . . . Mrs. Billy Daniels has returned to her parents' home in Canada, to await a "happy event." . . . Johnny Dankworth Band in great radio form (BBC, last Monday)—but this ardent admirer was disappointed at handling of "How Little We Know" by Cleo Laine. . . . Bruce Trent and Winifred Atwell entertained the prisoners at Wormwood Scrubs last Sunday; Bruce raised howls of laughter when he announced that he would sing "Wish You Were Here" and "Walk Hand In Hand." . . . American vocalist/actor Jerry Wayne, now domiciled in London, is the composer of "10,000 Miles." . . . Asked how her record-sales were progressing on "Why Do Fools Fall In Love," Alma Cogan replied: "It is doing wonderfully well under the other names which I use—the Teena-Agers."



Joan Regan Geraldo

from America; the correct title is "Happiness Street"—not "Street Of Happiness"—with Tony Bennett and Georgia Gibbs strongly battling for best-selling honours in the States.

Between performances at his recent Finsbury Park week of stage performances, Al Martino enjoyed a special Italian meal—provided each night by Pinochio Restaurant proprietor/accordion dealer, Fermio Gaudini. . . . In his newspaper column, disc-jockey Neal Arden makes persistent mistakes: his latest is that "Three Galleons" by Robert Earl reached the top ten. . . . Comedian Jimmy Wheeler is one of the first personalities attending Jill Day's new physical culture school.

Will the BBC restrict Tony Martin's latest American recording success, "It Only Happens In The Dark"? . . . A guest appearance in Jean Carson's coast-to-coast TV show is likely for Eve Boswell, who visits the U.S. next month. . . . Since the beginning of last year only Bill Haley has challenged David Whitfield—as the most consistent hit maker in the NME best selling records for Britain chart. . . . The new Pye-Nixa release of Lonnie



Liberace Jill Day

Donegan's latest disc, had an advance order of 30,000—before it is issued!

Unusual for this columnist to do things in half measures, but must apologise to Michael Holliday; his latest Columbia disc is titled "10,000 Miles," which is double the figure mentioned last week in Tail Pieces. . . . Two well-known recording managers are "infantingating"—Dick Rowe (Decca) and George Martin (Parlophone).

Despite a recent "incident," trombonist Harry Roche remains with the Geraldo Orchestra. . . . Many American stars owe their disc success here to AFN performances prior to release; will this be the case with the Ames Brothers' "It Only Hurts For A Little While," which has been recently waxed by Ruby Murray (Columbia) and Ronnie Carroll (Philips).

Absent from the record charts for nearly eighteen months, Joan Regan smashed a box office variety record at the Regal, Great Yarmouth, last month. . . . It was embarrassing for BBC Northern Variety Orchestra leader, Alyn Ainsworth, when visiting London recently; he was continually asked about the rumours, suggesting that he might succeed Cyril Stapleton as Show Band leader—if a change is made.

Strong favourite to replace Doris Day at the top of the record chart is Anne Shelton's "Lay Down Your Arms"; two other labels have covered this hit—HMV with the Three Kays and Columbia's release by Billie Anthony.

Vocalist Johnny Green televises in "In Town Tonight" tomorrow (Saturday) and on October 7 in the ABC-TV "Number Please" series. . . . Pickwick Music executive Cyril

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TRIBUTE to TORMÉ *



THE TOAST IS TORMÉ!

WE, of the NME, are extremely proud to present this four-page supplement dedicated to the life, work and opinions of Mel Tormé—a great American star who is now generally conceded to be in a class of his own in the world of entertainment.

Arriving in Britain for the first time less than two months ago, Mel was then an unfamiliar personality to us all, except as a voice on records. To see him in person, however, and gauge the full extent of his talents has been a unique thrill for professionals, critics and fans alike.

It was this paper's privilege to promote the first London concert starring Mel Tormé at the Gaumont State, Kilburn, on July 29. So fantastic was his success that we quickly arranged two further Tormé shows, at the Stoll Theatre, Kingsway, a fortnight later, and he registered equal triumphs on all three occasions.

And now, starting next Monday (September 10), Mel is all set to climax his initial, British tour with a two-week West End variety booking at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Coventry Street... a date which had not even been discussed at the time of his arrival.

Singer, pianist, drummer, comedian, composer... Mel Tormé is all of these—and more. This, therefore, is our special tribute in words to the man aptly described by critic Mike Butcher as "the most wonderfully complete—and completely wonderful—entertainer in the world today."



WHAT THE STARS SAY ABOUT MEL TORME

AL MARTINO

Mel is the greatest entertainer. I feel that a lot of people are not quite aware just how much talent he possesses. For instance, apart from his singing, he is a great writer.

I was fortunate enough to record one of Mel's original songs, "Say It Again," on a Capitol date—and believe me, it was a piece of material that I was proud to handle!

Also, I have known Mel personally for some years, and will say, without hesitation, that he is one of the most sincere people whom one could ever hope to meet.

SAM COSTA

I've waited a long time to see this tribute come to Mel. Since his recording of "What Is This Thing Called Love" with Artie Shaw, he's been a top favourite with me.

Nevertheless, it wasn't until his current British appearances that I realised how great he is as an all-round artist, not just as a singer. The Stoll Theatre concert I attended was a revelation.

TONY MARTIN

Mel's talents should have been hailed to the skies long ago in America, yet for some obscure reason he has never had the full-scale attention back home that he deserves.

Everything he does is in perfect taste, wonderfully entertaining, inventive... choose any word of praise you like and it fits.

He is too self-effacing by far, never boasting his own great compositions like "Country Fair," "Stranger In Town," "Christmas Song," and the phenomenal "California Suite" as much as he should. He arranges music brilliantly—anything from a trio to heavy opera, though vocal group writing is his forte.

In short, he's miraculous, and if his climactic moments of triumph are now in sight... well, I repeat, it should have happened long ago.

'CALIFORNIA SUITE' — HIS GREATEST CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

MEL TORME signed with Capitol in 1949, the year when long-playing records first hit the American market as a force to be reckoned with. But on being asked by his new company to make "an original LP," Mel discovered that every idea he thought of seemed to have been tried before.

A Gordon Jenkins tone-poem that he heard on the radio, the descriptive portrait-in-sound called "Manhattan Towers," gave him his inspiration. Choosing the State in which he lives and, therefore, knows well as a subject, Tormé set to work on "California Suite."

It took Mel almost a year to finish writing both the words and music.

Eventually, the suite was complete in a piano and vocal version. Mel

harmonised the vocal parts himself and assigned the orchestration to a hand-picked team of arrangers.

Neal Hefti took care of the jazz-flavoured sequences. Harold Mooney handled the romantic themes and Billy May the atmospheric parts.

For a supporting cast, he chose Susan Melton (a thin disguise for the unmistakable identity of Peggy Lee), the Jud Conlon Chorus, his own Mel-Tones and conductor Harold Mooney.

The finished article (Capitol LCT. 6004) astonished even the most blasé critics.

Although divided into several movements, "California Suite" is a continuous work, lasting some 35 minutes. The chorus, orchestra and soloists (including Tormé himself, of course) follow the beautifully contrasted melodic lines from one tempo

to another.

We are taken from the mellow, mood-setting "Mountain And Desert Theme" to the sparkling gaiety of "The West Coast Is The Best Coast," the humorous "Coney Island" and lush "Miami Waltz" to a Latin-style "They Go To San Diego," which could well become a hit song in its own right.

On the second side of the record, the sequence runs from "Sunday Night In San Fernando" to another potential best-seller, "Got The Gate On The Golden Gate" and a bustling Hollywood sequence culminating in the wistful ballad, "Poor Little Extra Girl."

If he had never written another note of music or line of lyrics in his life, "California Suite" would have been enough to promote Mel Tormé into the very first rank of American composers.

MEL TORME: A PERSONAL MESSAGE

"A GREAT deal has happened for me within the past month-and-a-half, as I hardly need tell you at this point.

"But to have a special 'New Musical Express' supplement written and printed in my honour is an especially rare and wonderful privilege. Although I'll admit I have blushed unashamedly at the fine words published in the NME about a character called Tormé, I will treasure them for ever.

"I feel I can do no better in closing this message than repeat some words I first wrote in an NME by-line article some weeks ago: 'Overwhelmed, thrilled, excited'... I guess they all look like ordinary, overworked expressions, but they're not.

"They just express exactly how knocked out I am over my reception here. No matter how much I added to the lines you have just read, the basic message would be the same—the most sincerely felt 'thank you, everyone' that I ever had reason to express."

MEL TORME

appearing at the Prince of Wales Theatre for two weeks commencing 10th September

GENE NORMAN presents MEL TORME AT THE CRESCENDO

From this moment on; That old black magic; Get out of town; Goody goody; Love is here to stay; Blue moon; Old devil moon; Get happy; Mountain greenery; County fair; The Christmas song; Jeepers creepers; You're driving me crazy; Bernie's tune

LVA 9004 (L.P.)

MOUNTAIN GREENERY JEEPERS CREEPERS Q 72150 (78/45)

MEL TORME with THE MARTY PAIGH "DEK-TETTE"

Lulu's back in town; When the sun comes out; I love to watch the moonlight; Fascinating rhythm; The blues; Carioca; The lady is a tramp; I like to recognise the tune; Keeping myself for you; Lullaby of Birdland; When April comes again; Sing for your supper

LTZ-N 15009 (L.P.)

LULU'S BACK IN TOWN THE LADY IS A TRAMP HLN 8305 (78/45)



He came . . . he saw . . . he conquered FABULOUS MEL TORME

American singing star Mel Tormé flew into London today from New York," reported the *Star* on July 19, 1956. "His visit follows the success of his recording here of an old American song, 'Mountain Greenery,' which was hailed by Frank Sinatra as the best vocal record of the last five years.

"He is to broadcast, and will sing in London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Manchester." This small news item—which followed all the advance news of

his coming exclusively reported in the NME—must have been the first ever read by the general public about Mel—but within a few days, he had become the most discussed, highly praised and widely welcomed figure in the whole of show business! (writes Mike Butcher).

Heading his *Daily Express* article for July 25, "He's won a million fans in a weekend," Cyril Stapleton, who had introduced Mel to BBC listeners the previous Saturday lunch-time, wrote: "Mel Tormé, pronounced tor-may. It sounds like a new kind of chocolate. In fact, it is the name of the biggest singing sensation in Britain this year."

Cyril continued with the prophecy that "by the end of the year, Mel's discs will be in wild-fire demand." As things turned out, however, the "biggest singing sensation" of 1956 crashed back into the NME's "Top Ten" listings, not merely by the end of his tour, but just one week after Stapleton's tribute appeared in print.

'Velvet Fog'

Older fans will doubtless remember Tormé from his early days of fame soon after the end of World War II. "The Velvet Fog," as he was then called, crashed through to success on the crest of the first Sinatra boom. Journalists referred to him as "the bobby-soxers' gift to themselves."

Nevertheless, the popularity of such waxings by Mel as "It's A Dreamtime," "Again," and "Blue Moon" (the Capitol version), encouraging as it was between 1947 and about 1950, had faded in the past few years to the extent that Tormé had become a specialised

THE STORY OF A GENIUS

attraction, strictly for the habitués of intimate night haunts.

At one of these, the now-famous Crescendo in Hollywood, recording manager and impresario Gene Norman, took down on tape a complete show devoted to Mel's vocal artistry. Enough material for two entire 12-inch LP's, though only one has so far been released.

Mel selected his programme from the files of time-tested standards, including an ingenious Rodgers and Hart hit dating right back to 1925. There's little need to remind you of the title—"Mountain Greenery." On the other hand, these two magic words certainly didn't spell "sudden success" again for the mercurial Mr. Tormé.

The "Crescendo" album remained unissued for months, finally appearing here in the *Vogue-Coral* lists last February. Then, to quote an article I wrote for the NME, dated 25/5/56: "Tony Hall, in charge of exploitation, found the disc-jockeys eager to spin tracks from a set which cut clean across the general run of chapel-crying hokum.

"Alan Dell chose 'Mountain Greenery' from the 14 songs covered by Mel, put it in his 'Pick Of The Pops' BBC radio show—and the thumbs-up letters from more good folk than Alan could count prompted *Vogue-Coral* to reissue 'Greenery' as a single.

'Greenery'

"It moved with speed and force enough to crash our 'Best Selling' frame . . . and it's still there . . ."

"Mountain Greenery," in the fresh, slick-as-paint guise bestowed upon it à la Tormé, actually entered the NME sales charts at 29th position on April 27, if you're interested in specific facts and figures.

Rising five places the following week, it had climbed to slot No. 15 by mid-May . . . and slipped completely out of the picture two months

later. Until Tormé himself came to town, booked for a British theatre tour on the strength of one seemingly eclipsed record side.

He broadcast "Mountain Greenery" live in the Show Band Show on July 21, repeating it the following evening before the TV cameras in "Sunday Night 'At Blackpool." July 27 saw Mel's momentous *Vogue-Coral* waxing back in the charts at 20th place, after which it jumped, issue by issue, to 9th and finally 4th position.

Raves

Turn to page 5 of our present edition and you'll still find it there among the leaders . . . and to think we all believed it had almost completely run its course six weeks ago!

Yet those whose knowledge of Mel Tormé is confined to "Mountain Greenery" on 10 inches of shellac still have the thrilling surprise of their lives to come when they catch up with his act in person!

The first press notices from Birmingham, when Mel opened his variety tour there on July 23, gave some clue as to the range, scope and world-beating quality of his talents.

"Brimming over with vitality and obviously enjoying himself as much as the audience, he succeeded in making his act much more than a selection of songs," glowed the *Birmingham Mail*.

"He gave us three different personalities," beamed the *Birmingham Gazette*. "First came Mr. Tormé, singer-cum-comedian, with an infectious grin and a 'Mickey Rooney' personality. Then Mr. Tormé, cabaret artist, with songs at the piano. Finally we had Mr. Tormé, drummer—the 'teenagers' swoon boy and, oh yes, croon boy."

It was strange to see the guy who sings "When The Sun Comes Out" and "Love Is Here To Stay" so sensitively described as "A New American Comedian" in one newspaper headline, stranger still (but most reassuring) to learn that Mel had confounded the gloomier and even the more optimistic prophets by drawing packed houses to the Birmingham Hippodrome.

After his first Sunday concert, sponsored by the NME at the Gaumont State, Kilburn, on July 29, however, the full, "Tormendous"



THIS MAN MEL

BORN in Chicago, September 13, 1925, Melvin Howard Tormé began his career early. At six, he sang each Monday at the Blackhawk Restaurant in his hometown with Joe Sanders' Band. At seven, he took drum lessons—and at eight, started an extensive series of radio rôles as a child actor.

His first published song, "Lament To Love," was written by Mel before his 15th birthday . . . but Les Brown, Harry James and Dick Haymes were impressed enough to record it! Then the youthful Tormé took the road at 16 as drummer and vocal-group arranger with a band led by comedian Chico Marx (of the Brothers).

In 1943, he appeared as singing

pianist in Frank Sinatra's first feature film, "Higher And Higher," and as drummer in a second full-length movie, "Pardon My Rhythm," in which his vocal group, the Mel-Tones, were also featured.

Tormé was then called for army service, but soon after demob. he made his first hit record, "What Is This Thing Called Love," with the Mel-Tones and Artie Shaw and his Orchestra.

Commencing solo work full-time in 1946 at the Million Dollar Theatre, Los Angeles, Mel gained a commercial radio series sponsored by Toni Shampoo, and a film contract with MGM (which, in his own words, led to "nothing significant").

force of a uniquely earth-shaking artist bowled us over so hard that we are still trying to recover.

Your present writer, seated at the back of the circle—so far away from Mel that he looked like a midget on-stage, made no less than 17 attempts at a balanced appreciation of Tormé at his Kilburn debut before coming near to describing the total greatness of "the most wonderfully complete—and completely wonderful—entertainer in the world today."

I wrote (NME, dated 3/8/56): "Never in my long experience has an artist made such a phenomenal impact on me—and on all the other 4,000 members of a jam-packed audience.

"To say that everyone is raving about his magnificent performance is no exaggeration. Professionals in the audience, overwhelmed by the brilliance of this amazing young man, were only too glad to give him spontaneous and unreserved praise.

"He (Mel) improvises all the time, adding variations of unfailing inventiveness to the familiar tunes which are also freshened by his flexible voice, instinctive taste, lyrical intelligence, phrasing and control.

"Above all, however, Mel has achieved the seemingly impossible by blending his superb vocal performances with elements of universal appeal—hilarious comedy, satiric impressions, the intimate contact of a star with his audience—which will ensure his complete triumph in all

locations from out-of-town music halls to the most exclusive of supper clubs."

The bookers and theatre managements agreed with London's verdict. Tormé had been scheduled to make just one concert appearance in town—the Kilburn concert.

But within hours after his unmitigated triumph there, NME Managing Director Maurice Kinn secured Mel's services for two further performances at the Stoll Theatre on Sunday, August 12.

Only one thing was missing to put a record-breaking tour for Mel on the wildest kind of dream-level . . . and the dream came true in next to no time when Bernard Delfont booked him for a fortnight's sojourn in the West End at the Prince of Wales Theatre, commencing next Monday (September 10).

Mel Tormé's present visit to Britain cannot last much longer owing to a series of unbreakable American commitments.

Before he leaves, however, he will have recorded two of his own compositions for British Decca, pocketed much fatter personal-appearance cheques than the original, far from negligible, guaranteed figures suggested, played several major dates which had not even been mentioned before he arrived here, and pasted literally hundreds of rave-notice press clippings in his scrapbook.

For him, 1956 will go on memory's file as a never-to-be-forgotten year.



MEL TORME on M-G-M Records



"Voice in Velvet"
I'm yours; Until the real thing comes along;
Dream awhile;
Love, you funny thing
MGM EP 562
7" 45 r.p.m. EXTENDED PLAY

I can't give you anything but love baby; There's no business like show business
MGM 922 (78 and 45)



THESE RECORDS WILL BE ON SALE WEEK COMMENCING SEPTEMBER 10
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Mel Tormé is obviously delighted when NME Managing Director, Maurice Kinn (right), shows him a rave article all about himself in our companion monthly magazine, "Hit Parade."

CHAPPELL'S

Wish you every Success in your Prince of Wales Theatre, West End Variety debut, and congratulate you on your fabulous record Hit—

MOUNTAIN GREENERY

MEL TORME

WHAT THE STARS SAY ABOUT MEL TORME

BILLY ECKSTINE

During my recent visit to Britain, I told a newspaper man that your audiences would go wild over Mel Tormé.

I'm glad to hear that the boy hasn't let me down!

Mel and I came up around the same time, and have always kept a watchful, but friendly, eye on each other's careers. It really thrills me to know that he is having the great triumph he deserves in the country which has given me so many fine times and happy memories.



ERIC DELANEY

I think we all owe Mel Tormé a debt of gratitude for the way he has galloped to the top of the music ladder.

In these days of jungle noises, he has again opened the market for good singers and good music—which, in the long run, must be of benefit to all of us in the profession.



CONGRATULATIONS . . .

MEL TORME

Premier

ON YOUR TOUR

THE PREMIER DRUM CO. LTD., LONDON, W.1





In between his provincial variety engagements, Mel Tormé made a special visit to London last Sunday to attend the Ted Heath Swing Session at the London Palladium. This picture, taken backstage, shows (l. to r.): Bobbie Britton, Peter Lowe, Dennis Lotis, Ted Heath and Mel Tormé.

Bars of MELody! Did you know . . . ?

THAT during Mel Tormé's last season at the Crescendo Club in Hollywood, Judy Garland and Frank Sinatra occupied a "ringside" table? On the following day, Judy met Tony Martin at a party, and told him that Mel's performance was one of the greatest she had ever witnessed . . .

THAT Marty Paich, who with his Dek-tette, accompanied Mel Tormé on his recent London LP album, was the pianist and musical director for Dorothy Dandridge, at her London cabaret engagement earlier this year at the Savoy . . . ?

THAT in a press interview, Oscar Hammerstein declared that Mel Tormé and Robert Wells were "by far the best of the new songwriting teams" . . . ?

THAT at the age of fourteen, Mel Tormé composed "Lament To Love," which was recorded by Dick Haymes . . . ?

THAT when Mel Tormé made his solo New York debut—at the Copacabana Restaurant in 1947—he was severely panned by the most important Broadway critics . . . ?

THAT during the war, Mel served in the U.S. Army . . . ?

THAT in 1945, Mel's vocal group—the Meltones—enjoyed their first hit record in both America and Britain ("What Is This Thing Called Love," with Artie Shaw and his Orchestra) . . . ?

THAT Mel Tormé's father was a professional dancer . . . ?

THAT during the late 'forties and early 'fifties, Mel's business representative was Carlos Gastel—Nat "King" Cole's manager—who recently presented Ted Heath and his Music for their American tour . . . ?

THAT both Frank Sinatra and Mel Tormé made their screen debut in the same film—"Higher and Higher"—for RKO in 1943 . . . ?

THAT sales of Mel Tormé's "Mountain Greenery" disc in Britain are approaching 200,000 . . . ?

THAT during his fortnight in London at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Mel will wax four titles with Cyril Stapleton and his Orchestra and Ted Heath and his Music; on each occasion, one of Mel's own compositions will be recorded . . . ?

THAT at the age of fourteen, Mel attended the same high school in Chicago as Steve Allen—the famous American TV personality, who portrayed Benny Goodman in the "Benny Goodman Story" film? Steve Allen was the pianist and Mel the drummer in their school band . . .

THAT one of Mel Tormé's most ardent admirers in Britain is Alma Cogan's mother . . . ?

THAT, composed by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, "Mountain Greenery" was written for the stage musical, "Garrick Gaieties," in 1926, and was one of that year's big song successes? Thanks to Mel Tormé, it became a smash hit again—exactly thirty years later . . . !

THAT Hyman Zahl, a director of Foster's Agency, was responsible for negotiating Mel Tormé's current variety tour of Great Britain . . . ?

THAT Mel Tormé's birthday is next Thursday, September 13—when he will be thirty-one years of age . . . ?

QUESTION-TIME WITH THE STARS

MEL TORME ANSWERS OUR READERS' QUERIES

EVER since his arrival in Britain, Mel Tormé has been the subject of more letters than we can count, addressed to the NME. Some of these included readers' queries for our "Question Time" feature, of course.

So today, it is Mel's turn to take the stand, giving his personal and absorbing answers to the questions which you asked us to ask him.

Q. When you interview Mel Tormé for "Question Time," will you please ask him for a list of his favourite—singers, bands, songwriters, etc.? (William Harley, Bedford.)

A. That's quite an extensive list! And I'm sure I'll miss out half of my favourites by naming them on the spur of the moment. Apart from the most obvious singers—people like Crosby, Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald—there are many whose work I always enjoy.

Among the girls, Eydie Gormé and Carmen MacRae seem to get less recognition over here than they deserve. Also Jackie Cain, the former Charlie Ventura vocalist, who now has a great floor-show act. I like Lee Wiley and Mary Ann McCall. Also Martha Raye, who would be recognised as a fine vocalist if she weren't so well known as a comedienne!

Jeri Southern has a delightful style and superb musicianship—while, as a complete performer, there's still only one Lena Horne, the woman who can prove she's a wonderful actress merely by singing a song.

My choice for a complete performer among the male singers, apart from Crosby and Sinatra, would be Tony Martin. And I simply must mention Buddy Rich, my all-time hero as a drummer, but also a most engaging vocalist in the manner of Fred Astaire—who is another of my top choices, incidentally.

From the bands now working in America, I find little to choose between Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie and Duke Ellington—all so tremendous that it's impossible to put them in any order of merit.

I heard Dizzy's new group at Birdland just before I came to Britain, and it completely fractured me!

My selections in the songwriting division have to be Jerome Kern, Richard Rodgers and Harold Arlen, assuming that I should limit my choice to three, and among the lyricists, I particularly admire Oscar Hammerstein, the late Lorenz Hart and a guy some people are inclined to overlook, Johnny Mercer.

Q. Please ask Mel Tormé where he lives in America, and to describe his home. (Doris Steel, Glasgow, W.I.)

A. I have lived in Los Angeles since 1942 and still do, though I rented a New York apartment for a while not long ago. Right now, I have a small "bachelor flat" (as you would say) in Crescent Heights, just a few rooms, but cosy enough to suit me perfectly.

For furniture, I incline towards early American suites, but I bought some modern American chairs and accessories when resident in New York. So at the moment, my apartment boasts a crazy mixture of two contrasted styles!

Q. What are Mel Tormé's hobbies and interests, outside show business? (Beryl Atkinson, London, N.W.3.)

A. Well, my main interest over the years has been collecting antique firearms. I have a fairly imposing array of early frontier pistols—or Colt Single Action Army



Mel at the piano.

Model pistols, if you want to be technical.

I'm also an inveterate motoring enthusiast—but not actually a "collector" of cars! At the moment, I have a white-Buick station wagon back home, and a 1937 Jaguar SS.100, which I bought over here. An old car? Man, you should see her move!

Q. I believe Mel Tormé has made several records as a pianist and drummer. Can I have details, please? (Bob Coupland, Birmingham.)

A. The only records I have made as pianist are those on which I accompany my vocals at the piano. For Capitol, I made "You're A Heavenly Thing" and "Foolish Little Rumours" in this way, and I'm also at the keyboard for more than half the tunes in my "Crescendo" album.

My drumming on wax, apart from a few transcriptions not on general sale, is confined to a Vox album (released in Britain by Vogue, I believe) called "Jazz Off The Air."

Specs Powell was the regular drummer on the date, but I sit in for an uproarious "How High The Moon" and take a scat vocal on "Honeysuckle Rose." The group I'm heard with includes some jazz "greats" in the personnel—Roy Eldridge, Flip Phillips, Mike Coluccio (piano), Albert Casey (guitar) and Eddie Safranski.

Q. Will you ask Mel Tormé for me what are his ambitions for the future? (Jean Mason, Newcastle-on-Tyne.)

A. In a way, I guess I could say that my ambition is to be recognised as an entertainer in the class of Fred Astaire. Sure, I don't dance, but there's much more to Fred's appeal than that. His phenomenal polish and poise, his perfection in bringing out every nuance of meaning in a lyric, give me an ideal to strive for.

One other thing I hope to do in time is make some movies that I can be proud of. I had several years' acting experience as a kid in Chicago, yet got fobbed off with a song or two when contracted to MGM for films a while ago.

Some day, perhaps, I'll be able to take part in a really good screen musical. Even more than this, I'd welcome having the opportunity to try my hand at a three-dimensional dramatic rôle. I have long been an admirer of the British films made by

the J. Arthur Rank organisation, and would have fulfilled a major ambition if I was ever able to act in one of them.

Q. Can you ask Mel Tormé to give his opinions on the present trends in American popular music? (Betty St. John, Oldham.)

A. The present entertainment scene? Just plain awful! It's ridiculous for a guy of my age (I'll be 31 on September 13, during my London season at the Prince of Wales Theatre) to long nostalgically for "the good old days"—but that's the way it goes.

I'd say there's more trash being thrown up in the name of entertainment right now than at any other time in history. Nevertheless, a couple of hopeful signs like the new popularity of Frank Sinatra make it seem that the teenagers are finally beginning to realise that their taste is as dreadfully bad as the critics say!

The brightest aspect of all is the increasing popularity of LP record albums. When you're paying out four dollars, or anything up to a couple of pounds over here, for a recording, you want to have something that'll sound good to you in a year's time.

That's why most LP's in the popular field are made up of standard material, sung or played by artists of real talent. Anyone who starts collecting quality material on discs can hardly continue to fall into the "traps" set for them by some disc-jockeys and a. and r. men.

As for me, I've been a record collector for years, and I guess I have most kinds of music on the shelves—modern jazz, Dixieland, musical comedy, standard favourites, classics. But I haven't bought a current hit in ages!

Q. Has Mel Tormé had the chance of hearing any bands or singers during his stay in Britain? If so, how does he rate them? (Linda Haines, London, S.E.5.)

A. Honestly, I must say I have been most pleasantly surprised at the standards of musicianship and artistry that I've encountered over here.

My broadcasts or concerts with the bands of Cyril Stapleton, Geraldo and Vic Lewis provided the kind of backings to which we are accustomed back home—and we Americans are wrongly inclined to think we lead the world in popular entertainment!

The Ted Heath Band impressed me tremendously with its all-round competence at the Stoll, and again at the London Palladium "Swing Session," which I was lucky enough to attend last Sunday.

Also, the little I have heard of Johnny Dankworth and his Orchestra leaves me with a completely favourable impression.

Afterthoughts, by Mel Tormé:

HECK, there's one record on which I played drums that I forgot to mention before—Buddy Rich's vocal on "Love Is Just Around The Corner" for Clef. It was never publicised that I was the drummer. The whole thing was just a quiet little ball for Buddy and me.

We've been friends for years, and had a kind of pact along the lines of "anything you can do I can do better." When Buddy bought his first sports car, I got myself a bigger one. When I started using drums in my night club act, he came along to sit in a couple of times to show me how drums should be played.

That's a thing which I'll never be able to beat Buddy at—playing drums. Nor will anyone else in this world.

One last point I'd like to clear up relates to my wartime army service. Mike Butcher wrote a very complete and accurate biography of me in an earlier NME, and never having met me at the time, I sincerely think he did a wonderful job.

However, the story that I served in the army as a pistol instructor was incorrect, though it's been printed as a fact in the States more often than even I can say.

The only brush I had with pistols as a G.I. came when the sergeant asked me if I knew how to strip and take care of a .45 automatic. I said I did—so he gave me about a hundred of them to clean!

Otherwise, I was an ingloriously non-combatant serviceman!

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TORME ON RECORD

THE following records by Mel Tormé are now on sale in Britain. They cover his entire career since the war (see dates in parentheses), and brief comments have been appended where considered useful.

BRUNSWICK—Singles (1946)
 O.3731—Day By Day/Prove It By The Things You Do (vocals by Bing Crosby, with Mel Tormé and the Mel-Tones).

O.3831—Stranger In Town/You've Laughed At Me For The Last Time (vocals by Mel Tormé and the Mel-Tones. "Stranger" is a Tormé original).

WORLD RECORD CLUB—LP (1946)

R.23—What Is This Thing Called Love (Mel Tormé and the Mel-Tones)/Get Out Of Town (Mel Tormé) . . . the remaining tracks on this LP are by Artie Shaw or Georgia Gibbs, without Tormé.

MGM—Single and EP (1947)

(45-) 922—You're Driving Me Crazy/There's No Business Like Show Business.

MGM-EP.562—I'm Yours/Until The Real Thing Comes Along/Dream Awhile/Love, You Funny Thing.

VOGUE LP (1947)

LDE.007 "Jazz Off The Air" (a radio jam session, featuring Mel on drums and vocals with Roy Eldridge, Flip Phillips, etc.).

CAPITOL—Singles (1949/52)

CL.13094—Again/Careless Hands.
 CL.13123—Blue Moon/You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me.
 CL.13131—It's Too Late Now/She's A Home Girl.

CL.13148—There Isn't Any Special Reason/Four Winds And The Seven Seas ("Reason" is a Tormé original).
 CL.13232—Sonny Boy/Meadows Of Heaven ("Boy" is a bop-scat version of the Jolson standard).

CL.13241—Old Master Painter/Bless You (For The Good That's In You) . . . duets by Mel Tormé and Peggy Lee. "Bless" is a Tormé/Lee original.

CL.13244—Don't Do Something To Someone Else (with the Mel-Tones)/Blossoms On The Bough.
 CL.13291—Piccolino/I Hadn't Any-

one Till You (with the Mel-Tones).
 CL.13292—Oh, You Beautiful Doll/There's A Broken Heart For Every Light On Broadway.

CL.13322—Bewitched / Queen Of Hearts Is Missing.)

CL.13448—Do-Do-Do / Recipe For Romance (with the Mel-Tones).

CL.13495—Sidewalk Shufflers/Around The World.

CL.13591—You Locked My Heart/Love Is Such A Cheat.

CL.13609—Don't Fan The Flame (duet by Mel Tormé and Peggy Lee).

CL.13675—You're A Heavenly Thing/Lullaby Of The Leaves (Tormé accompanies himself at the piano on "Thing").

CL.13837—Casually / Anywhere I Wander.

CL.13851—Black Moonlight/Skylark.

CAPITOL—LP (1949)

LCT.6004—California Suite (an appreciation of this Tormé composition appears elsewhere in our present supplement).

VOGUE-CORAL—LP and Singles (1954)

LVA.9004—From This Moment On/That Old Black Magic/Get Out Of Town/Goody Goody/Love Is Here To Stay/Blue Moon/Old Devil Moon/Get Happy/Mountain Greenery/County Fair/Christmas Song/Jeepers Creepers/You're Driving Me Crazy/Bernie's Tune.

This is the fast-selling album which helped so much in the promotion of Mel's present popularity. A recording of his act at the Crescendo Club, Hollywood, on December 15, 1954, it features Tormé with a small combo led by his regular American pianist, Al Pellegrini.

Pellegrini plays clarinet on tracks 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14, while Mel accompanies himself at the piano. "Fair" and "Song" are Tormé originals.

(45-) Q.72150—Mountain Greenery/Jeepers Creepers (this coupling, like the following two, was taken from Vogue-Coral's "Mel Tormé At The Crescendo" LP (above). "Greenery" is, of course, the best-selling side with which Mel is now primarily associated).

(45-) Q.72159—Blue Moon/That Old Black Magic.

(45-) Q.72185—Love Is Here To Stay/Goody Goody.

LONDON—LP and Singles (1956)
 LTZ-N.15009—Lulu's Back In Town/When The Sun Comes Out/I Love To Watch The Moonlight/Fascinating Rhythm/Blues (from Black, Brown And Beige)/Carioca/Lady Is A Tramp/I Like To Recognise The Tune/Keeping Myself For You/Lullaby Of Birdland/When April Comes Again/Sing For Your Supper.

Mel is featured here with the Marty Paich Dek-Tette, a pick-up combo playing Paich arrangements (but Marty is not heard at the piano, despite London's sleeve-credit).

Among the top-line instrumental soloists in the Dek-Tette are Bud Shank (alto), Bob Cooper (tenor), Pete Candoli and Don Fagerquist (trumpets) and Bob Enevoldsen (valve trombone).
 (45-) HLN.8305—Lulu's Back In Town/Lady Is A Tramp (taken from the above LP).

SINGERS' SINGER

PROOF that Mel Tormé was always been a "singers' singer" was given in a HIT PARADE feature last April. Several weeks before Mel's record of "Mountain Greenery" showed signs of becoming a nationwide hit—and, in fact, when he was almost unknown to, or forgotten by, the public here—we asked six well-known British vocalists to name their own favourite singers for our "Stars Speak" column.

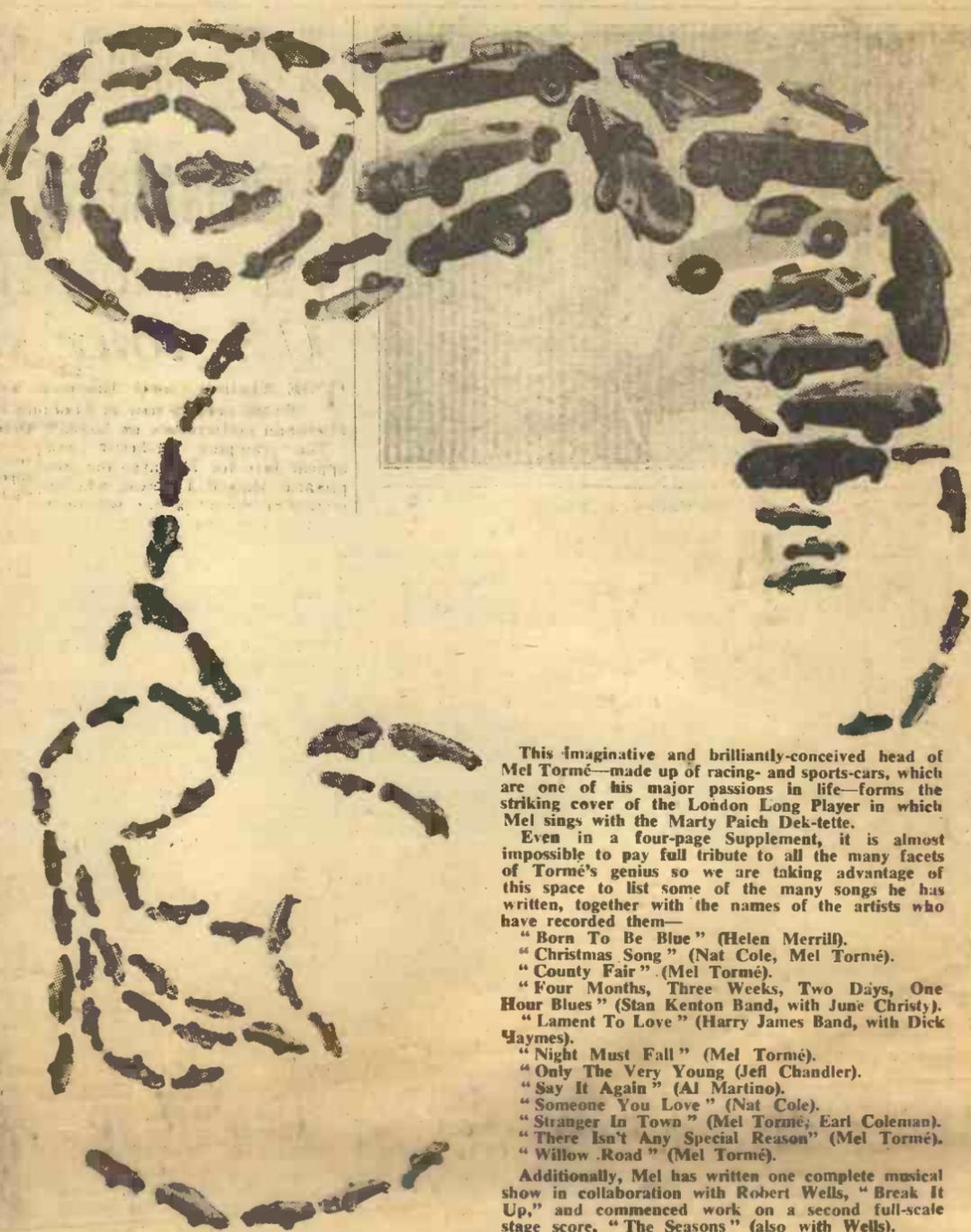
Of the six, no less than four nominated Mel. Here is what they said about him, in quotes collected and transcribed by Keith Goodwin:

Cleo Laine: "Close behind Sinatra, I place Mel Tormé. He has a lovely, cool sound that really appeals to my ears, and he always chooses nice tunes."

Don Lang: "Mel Tormé, with that smooth 'velvet fog' voice, is another of my all-time favourites. The most striking thing about Mel is his excellent choice of material."

Dennis Lotis: "Mel Tormé's voice has that certain rhythmic quality that I always admire in a singer. He interprets different songs in a very musicianly manner, and gets so much out of every tune."

Annie Ross: "Mel Tormé, I think, is very underrated, but is still a wonderful singer. He is a musician, and his voice has an unusual tone. He always seems to be 'way ahead of his time.'"



This imaginative and brilliantly-conceived head of Mel Tormé—made up of racing- and sports-cars, which are one of his major passions in life—forms the striking cover of the London Long Player in which Mel sings with the Marty Paich Dek-tette.

Even in a four-page Supplement, it is almost impossible to pay full tribute to all the many facets of Tormé's genius so we are taking advantage of this space to list some of the many songs he has written, together with the names of the artists who have recorded them—

"Born To Be Blue" (Helen Merrill).
 "Christmas Song" (Nat Cole, Mel Tormé).
 "County Fair" (Mel Tormé).
 "Four Months, Three Weeks, Two Days, One Hour Blues" (Stan Kenton Band, with June Christy).
 "Lament To Love" (Harry James Band, with Dick Haymes).
 "Night Must Fall" (Mel Tormé).
 "Only The Very Young (Jeff Chandler).
 "Say It Again" (Al Martino).
 "Someone You Love" (Nat Cole).
 "Stranger In Town" (Mel Tormé, Earl Coleman).
 "There Isn't Any Special Reason" (Mel Tormé).
 "Willow Road" (Mel Tormé).

Additionally, Mel has written one complete musical show in collaboration with Robert Wells, "Break It Up," and commenced work on a second full-scale stage score, "The Seasons" (also with Wells).

WILLIAM LOEB

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