STAGE THEATRICAL WORLD SCREEN

H. Lawrence Freeman Discusses

The Late Richard B. Harrison As He Knew Him as Friend, Man and Artist

Great Actor Honored by Harlem Group

NEW YORK, N.Y. — The YMCA Little Theatre was the setting for a very distinctive and unique group of artists to pay a tribute to the late Richard B. Harrison, beloved actor and creator of the role of "de Lawd" in the "Green Pastures."

Officers of the group are as follows: Beatrice Wright Yeates, president; Alanna Cozart, vice president; Leonthia Wright, corresponding secretary. Alice McInnis, financial secretary; Walter D. Smith, treasurer; Viola Frazier, chaplain; and Mayme B. Riley, chairman of the executive committee.

In 1893

The writer first appeared in concert with Richard B. Harrison in Chicago, in 1893.

Henrietta Vinton Davis, one of the greatest tragedienes of the race, was the other featured performer.

It was during this period that the writer's first grand opera, "The Martyr," was first produced, also in Chicago.

The three of us have rooted for each other throughout the years, and when my opera, "Vendetta," was produced at the Lafayette Theatre, in New York City, in 1923 (thirty years later), Richard B. Harrison and Henrietta Vinton Davis, hand in hand, were the first persons backstage with enthusiastic congratulations.

Paul Laurence Dunbar

It was during this period (1893) that the illustrious poet, Paul Laurence Dunbar, joined our ranks, at which time a triumvirate was formed, which existed throughout the lifetime of the late Dunbar, and will ever be cherished and revered in the heart and memory of those still left to carry on.

"Oak and Ivy"

At sometime prior to this, when the writer was residing in his hometown, Cleveland, Ohio, Paul came from his hometown, Dayton, Ohio, staying over night, being en route to Chicago to publish his first book of poems, "Oak and Ivy," have saved sufficient money, running an elevator, to pay for the same.

Dunbar joined Mr. Harrison in Chicago.

Friendly Rivalry

From then on, a great rivalry, fraught with friendly, though spirited competition, existed between the twain as to which one could render Paul's poems in the more exalted manner.

The writer was the judge, in many instances, but was never able to determine which, in his estimation, excelled the other.

The Ways of Genius

Between the two transcendent geniuses, there were great differences in certain respects, as many similarities in other respects. Dunbar, with his flair for dialect, with such subtle mastery of detailed delineation as a whole, as to stamp each rendition a masterpiece of interpretation.

As Musicians

During one of Paul's visits to Dunbar's home, Lawrence Harrison, Richard's little son, just able to toddle around, was seated on the ground, making mud pies, and his father, picking him up, expostulating affectionately, "Just look at you, now! Aren't you a sight?" endeared him into the house to wash his face and comb his hair, before dinner.

Instantly Paul, taking paper and pencil, began to write—inspired—and when dinner was announced a few minutes later, Paul Laurence Dunbar began to read—"Little Brown Baby with Sparkling Eyes," and before Richard retired that night, the master reader had committed the little masterpiece to memory.

"Little Brown Baby," one of the finest gems of Dunbar's vast array of masterpieces, is one have read those lines like unto Paul Laurence Dunbar or Richard B. Harrison.

First Theatrical Role

Richard B. Harrison came to New York, in 1915, appearing in repertoire, in the immortal Madame Walker Theatre.

It was here that I became the writer's friend, which was face, and saddened, to see so great a man, in a play, here, a work by Frank Wilson, and Dunbar.

I was known well, that while I had been giving monologues and soliloquies by Shakespeare, as well as other great writers of readings and recitations, I have never appeared in a role on the stage of legitimate drama.

"Also, there is a part in this play, which I felt, would be beyond a music professor.

"Will you come in with me I'll tell you. How about it?"

I answered, "No thanks, not for me." Little did I know, 20 years

RICHARD B. HARRISON

A hitherto unpublished characteristic study of the late Richard B. Harrison, "De Lawd" of "The Green Pastures," whose life and works are discussed by his old friend and associate, H. Lawrence Freeman.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Next week Mr. Freeman will tell how Richard B. Harrison discovered Margaret Bonds, a woman who promises to become one of America's greatest pianists.

But in the end my friend prevailed, and we sat in my garden, under a spreading tree of paradise, and went to work.

A New Star

With the production of this play, Harlem discovered a great actor, practically over night. The play, itself, as well as the other performers, also came in for a large amount of acclaim.

The title of the play was "Pa Williams's Gal," a comedy—drama in three acts, by Frank H. Wilson. The cast of characters included Pa Williams, by Richard B. Harrison; Ola (Pa Williams's gal) by Dolores Haskins; Grant, by H. Lawrence Freeman; Gregory Coles, by Frank H. Wilson; Jim Braxton, by Morris McKenny; Hattie Davis, by Rose McClendon; Mary Williams, by Marie Young; and Dick Watkins, by Walter D. Smith.

Choral Group

The Folk Song Singers rendered the following spirituals: "Every Time I Feel the Spirit," "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel," and "Steal Away to Jesus." under my direction.

Several of the cast who made their initial appearance in this play have since been in individual dramatic prominence, but none, perhaps, have so far achieved the eminence of the late Richard B. Harrison.

Wins New Laurels

MERCEDES GILBERT,

the new first lady of the dramatic world, who succeeded Rose McClendon in the leading role of Langston Hughes's play, "Mulatto," at the Vanderbilt Theatre. The producer had to interfere to keep southerners from having play ousted. Miss Gilbert, who was a star in "The Green Pastures," is being acclaimed for her performance in this new interracial drama.

Victor Jory Is Tunnel Boss in Lafayette Film

A tough guy admired by those who feared his strength and hated his guts, has been found in his cousin That's Hardrock O'Hara, hero of Columbia's new action romance, "Too Tough to Kill," showing Sunday and Monday at the Lafayette Theatre.

He's harder than the rock he blasts from the earth in the miners's mine. As who wouldn't be, if he was the pet and pretty Sally O'Neil, who appears in "Too Tough to Kill" opposite Victor Jory, the tough miner.

The setting of this new film is the Colorado mountains where modern engineering magic is boring a tunnel through a mountain of rock, where is also as the chief of the tunnel crew, Barton Hughes, dynamite, cave-ins, explosions and the intrigues of an opposition construction company.

The Show Mystery

A group of socially prominent young people—the faster set on Long Island—are shocked into sitting a gay party to find that a murder has been committed in the universal's special production, "Remember Last Night?" which opens at the Lafayette Theatre for two days on Tuesday.

Chief among the players is Edward Arnold, who scored in "Diamond Jim," which also is the latest studded cast are Constance Cummings, Sally Eilers, Robert Young, Robert Armstrong, Gregory Ratoff, Reginald Denny, Monroe Owsley and a number of other stage and screen favorites.

Chinese Village Burned

An entire village, comprising more than a hundred houses and covering about 100 acres of ground, was burned to the ground in the scenic "Hong Kong Nights," thrilling action drama which stars Irene Keene at the Lafayette Theatre, Thursday and Friday.

As a double feature at this theatre on Thursday and Friday will be "Gordon Gordon Detective" with J. A. R. Wylie's noted love story, "A Feather in Her Hat," which features Guinn Williams, Noel Rathbone, Louis Hayward, Billie Burke, Wendy Barrie and Victor Varconi. Alfred Santell directed from the screen play by Lawrence Hazard.

Theatre Group Will Portray Minorities

The Youth Theatre of New York Official theatrical group of the American Youth Congress, will appear at Lehman Hall, Sunday at 7:30 p.m. in a variety program.

With the group there are also dancers, students of Martha Graham and Lily Shapero who directed and did the choreography for the dances, "Voice Of Youth."

The varieties will be the second half of the program at a meeting at which Ben Gold will be the main speaker and local national choruses will sing.

One of the skits of the theatre group will be around the question of national minorities.

Charge Man with False Fire Alarm

The fire department went to a box at Fairmount Avenue and Haver Street in a hurry on Thursday, but there was no fire.

As disgusted smoke-eaters were putting away their apparatus, police of the Eastern district seized James Burkett, 25, of Salisbury, Md., and charged him with sounding a false alarm. He was held for the action of the grand jury under bond of $500.

At the Royal

5 DAYS STARTING JAN. 26

DANCE HALLS

By "LINDY LOU"

HELLO ARE YOU THERE?

I say now 'tis rather cold weather we're having and I was afraid that you were jolly well frozen by now.

My thermometer, the nasty old blighter, has a fashion of going down and down and coming out below 'n below, and I'm down to zero here. And so the Englishman tells me—but right now, although the mercury is coming out below it my business to see how the music goes round and round and round, it comes out "at."

I see, on Friday night, the Blue Jay orchestra let the music out at the New Albert for the baseball battling against landlords and swung right back into popularity with the dance fans.

On Sunday night, the Blue Birds of Washington, put it to a Sunday night dance at the Strand. For something different, we brought a famous out-of-town orchestra here, and, mind you, it's never "phil," the night clubs holding all the odds.

Believe it or not, dance fans, shied off at the word "devils," which was used in the advertisement. People who really are devils, will be in the least shy of the fact, nor do they care to be classed as such.

Another objection is, that some people, no matter what their temperament may be or what more or less religiously superstitious and the worst of us have to see Dr. mixing with "devils" on Sunday nights of all times.

And now for Monday night. How the music did go 'round. It was about the biggest night music

PETER LORRE AND MARIAN MARSH,

stars of the current Columbia production, "Crime and Punishment," which is the feature at the Royal Theatre, for five days beginning Sunday.

CAREY LAFAYETTE

HARRY DUVALL, Manager — WEEK OF JANUARY 26, 1936

SUNDAY and MONDAY—
DONALD COOK and GENEVIEVE TOBIN in
"THE NINTH GUEST"
(6-Act Mystery Drama)
TIM McCOY and JEAN WOODBURY in
"BULLDOG COURAGE"
(Tim's Latest—6 Acts)
Sunday—BUCK JONES in "ROARING WEST"—No. 3.

TUESDAY—
JAMES DUNN and CONSTANCE CUMMINGS in
"SWEETHEARTS OF THE MIDNIGHT"
(6-Act Romance)
Tuesday—"GORS OF TROUBLE" (7-Act Comedy)

TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY—
ROBERT YOUNG, SALLY EILERS and EDWARD ARNOLD in
"DON'T BET ON BLONDES"
(7-Act Comedy)
"REMEMBER LAST NIGHT"
(10-Act Sparkling Comedy)
"KEYSTONE HOTEL"—7-Act Comedy
GEO. O'BRIEN and IRENE HERVEY in
"THE DUDE RANCHER"
(6-Act Western)
Tuesday—"GORS OF TROUBLE" (7-Act Comedy)
Wednesday—BUCK JONES in "ROARING WEST"—No. 3

WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY—
JEAN AUTRY and BUCK, the Great Wonder Horse, in
"MELODY TRAIL"
(6-Act Western)
EDMUND LOWE and DOROTHY PAGE in
"King Solomon of Broadway"
(7-Act Special)
Wed.—"KEYSTONE HOTEL" (7-Act Comedy)
Thurs.—KANE RICHMOND in "ADVENTURES OF REX AND RINTY" No. 11

THURSDAY and FRIDAY—
LEW AYRES and MAE CLARK in
"SILK HAT KID"
(6-Act Racket Story)
STYMIE and OUR GANG in "SPRUCE UP"—3-Act Comedy
VAUDEVILLE MOVIES Presents "DESERT HARMONIES"—3 Acts
KANE RICHMOND in "ADVENTURES OF REX and RINTY"—No. 11
SCRAPPY in a Natural Color Cartoon

SATURDAY—
RICHARD DIX and PRESTON FOSTER in
"THE ARIZONIAN"
(7-Act Western)
STYMIE and OUR GANG in "SPRUCE UP"—3-Act Comedy
VAUDEVILLE MOVIES Presents "DESERT HARMONIES"—3 Acts
OSWALD in Color Cartoon "BUCK JONES in "ROARING WEST"—No. 4

What Is Going on in Baltimore

Dramatic clubs and little theatre groups who wish to get a first-hand knowledge of how the new ideas of the use of dramatic productions are being used to express practical ideas and issues will find it to their interest to attend a performance to be given by the New York Theatre Group of the American Youth Congress at Lehman Hall, Sunday evening.

The American Youth Group is void of all racial prejudices and their performances reflect this idea in a skit they will give that evening. It would be a good thing for young people, especially, to see this performance.

cally this town has ever had.

At the Club Astoria, Don Redmon opened on Monday night for an indefinite stay. His first broadcast over WCBM included several of his own compositions and was a fine exhibition of the singing that his orchestra can do.

This is something new for orchestras here. They play, play, pray, and though they don't pray, they do so, they never swing out with a real lively tune in the "vocal." Baltimore orchestras please take notice! and of all the arrangements on the country's "national theme song," Don Redmon had an entirely different one that was very good.

While Don was making his first down beat in this city, Fats Waller was doing his stuff at a letter and showing his own particular brand of truckin' at the New Albert.

The house was packed to capacity and it is safe to say that his promoter felt better financially for bringing the king of the swing on the ivories to this town. This was high spt No. 2 for us on Monday night.

On the opposite side of the avenue, high spot No. 3 was in progress, although the orchestra was late getting in.

It seems as though Tommy Dorsey's orchestra had some trouble locating the Strand Ballroom and their bus roamed around probably looking for the immense electric sign somewhere else other than on Pennsylvania Avenue. However, the orchestra did come in, and set to work, the crowd was well repaid for waiting.

The whole out-fit out-classes most bands, not because of instruments, and every one is very well trained musician.

Dorsey has spent plenty money to obtain such instruments and there is one thing that he never seems to seem to handle and that is money. Dorsey is the guy that gets back into more training and better arrangements.

The leader of the orchestra, Tommy Dorsey himself told several dance fans that his arrangements on certain numbers ran into more than two thousand dollars, but he knows that competition is so keen among the better of a dance band that only the best can make the grade, and the standard goes up and up.

They get better pay than our orchestras (while booking agencies make less in booking a white orchestra than colored) and know that they must put out a band that is the "business."

Well, little about of the blizzard, the Monday night Dancing Class met at the Strand.

The Blue Jays were a surprise to the crowd and every one seemed well satisfied. The Blue Jays commented on the orchestra and stated that it was better by far than last year. The personnel of the Blue Jays is about the same with one or two exceptions.

Members of the Royal A.C. were honor guests.

Next week, Bubby Johnson's orchestra will be the attraction, followed the next week by the Jays, when the Modern Co-Eds will be the attraction.

The gossip corner news was skipped last week, but here's hoping for better luck this time.

Why was Elizabeth Crawthorne shedding tears in the Frolic Cafe Tuesday night.

Harvey Robinson has taken unto himself a wife.

William Bethea and Bertha Ross tied the knot definitely several weeks ago.

Carlean Coombs and Charles Christopher have called it quits. What has happened to the Wide Awake Pals and the Sepia Damsels?

Dovie Dunstan and Mrs. Elizabeth Campbell did the dance in grand style on Wednesday night.

Miss Edna Woods of Philadelphia, visited the class.

—Until next week
Good-bye and Good Dancing.

Pistol Thought Empty but Man Is Shot

While playing with a pistol that was thought to be empty, this week, Bernard Jones, 17, accidentally shot Russell Clark, a friend of his in the thigh.

The young man is temporarily in the Mercy Hospital. Clark lives at 239 N. Dallas Street.

Held on Whiskey Charge

Taken into custody by police on a charge of selling blended whiskey illegally, Fred Petross, 58, of the Westport Dump, was held for the action of the grand jury under bond of $500 at the Southern police station, this week.

Things Theatrical

By FRANKLYN FRANK (For ANP)

CHICAGO.

THE CONGO GOES AROUND AND AROUND AND THE NEWS IS PUSHED OUT HERE

All last week Dave's Cafe was up in the air over the removal from the floor show (by child labor law officials) of Kenneth and Leroy, the two kid dancers. This duo, both under 12, had been dancing for a year, apparently meeting full requirements of this statute. Belief was expressed that rival spots wanted to get the attraction out of circulation.

Chorus gals at one of the better known clubs were told by the producer to cut down on reefers, because cops, who cut their way through the heavy smoke to the muggle users, might sprinkle a few $200 fines around. But instead of taking this as useful information for their own good, the chorines got angry with the impresario.

Marguerite Wilkins, who will wed Jimmy White on her birthday, February 24, won't quit the show business until next August. She and Jimmy are to dance in Atlantic City this summer. It took only a few glances from Marguerite's big brown eyes to make Jimmy ditch Nadine Douglass, his dancing partner and the girl, he told this column last fall, he would marry after New Year's.

Jimmy explains the switch by saying, "Nadine and I couldn't agree on some things." Marguerite will quit the theatrical profesh to manage an undertaking parlor in Pennsylvania—not because she dislikes the show business but because there's not enough money in the game.

DOC HUGGINS, THE DISTINGUISHED

If there is ever a selection made of distinguished appearing men of Bamerica, Doc Huggins, owner of the Cafe de Paris and one of the mighty few sepia night club proprietors in Chicago's Congo, will be well up in the running. Doc's place is, incidentally, the home of the Monkey Club, latest Southside organization that is making a bid for Sunday night popularity. Among stars who have appeared on the Monkey Club program are Chilton and Thomas, Duke Ellington, Ivy Anderson—with more coming up.

* * *

WITHIN THE WHIRL

Believe it or not, but Tanya Bruce prefers symphonic music to jazz for the execution of her amazing contortions. Duke Ellington, who with his band opened in Kansas City, Thursday, said he wanted to set Davis's poem from "Black Man's Verse," entitled "Lynched," to music.

Fletcher Henderson succeeds Earl Hines at the Grand Terrace, Saturday night. Eddie Cole, with the brother, Nat, at the piano, takes over orchestral duties at the Bamamia, this week.

* * * * *

Earl (Grandtown) Morris has found himself on Operator 23 to help out. This column and a Chicago paper may sue him, since we are supposed to be the only people with undercover men—Operator 22, to be exact, who wears a derby.

Ernestine Shell is back at the Arcadia, replacing Zella Smith, who slipped into a white spot. Ernestine, one of the McClain Sisters, was in Denver a few months ago while her sister helped decrease the population.

Geary Johnson, the truckin' emcee, is due back at work this week after being forced to lay out six days because of an auto accident. Louise Beavers was a night club visitor all last week.

At one of the mazda marts, the chorus girls drawing $15 weekly get more in their pay check than the assistant manager. Jimmy Smith is now at the Panama. His stepsphinx is temporarily in the discard. Len Reed has found a spot for his band, which is doing Sunday night stands at the Regal. Warren (Pork Chops) Patterson, the 200-pound boy booster, will be at Dave's another five weeks.

ASSORTED SHORTS

Sally Eilers, the movie star, has introduced the "Addis Ababa choker" out yonder in Hollywood. This necklace is four inches wide, of silver mesh, and studded with rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and other semi-precious stones. A bracelet, of African war mace motif, fashioned of opaques, turquoises and heavy gold, is also worn by Sally to keep up the good old Ethiopian mood in Hollywood.

The Three Keys, who started out in high hopes over the N.B.C. coast-to-coast network, have gone to pieces in a hurry. They quit last week in the "All-Star Radio Revue" presented at the Hollywood Theatre in Atlantic City.

Latest word from New York is that the suit filed by several white Georgians against the Hamtown Jubilee Singers, the Harlem Negro Choir, and the "Mulatto," will be dropped.

FILMS

By JAI BUTTI

CHAFING UNDER THE STRAIN OF INACTIVITY, Brandon Hurst is drawing their weekly pay checks, are many screen players here. Reginald Fenderson, one of the younger generation of Lincoln Theatre presentation of "The Green Pastures," who was so popular with the younger crowd when it played here.

He complains because, as he puts it, "All I do is go out to the studio and stand around. I have to do this until the middle of February, when my part begins."

On top of that, poor Fenderson must be in the studio each Wednesday to get his check. Who would not cry at that?

"De Lawd" himself, Rex Ingram, is

STEPIN FETCHIT, Twentieth Century-Fox screen comedian, upon his arrival here last week aboard a plane, revealed that he had originally planted to fly on the luxury air liner Southerner which crashed near Little Rock, Arkansas killing seventeen persons.

Fetchit made an earlier plane, declining to lay over in the Capital City long enough to meet President Roosevelt. The President's secretary had told the comedian that he would gladly arrange an appointment with the chief executive following Sunday. Fetchit's personal appearance through the capital was a success.

DUNBAR THEATRE

410 N. CENTRAL AVENUE — WEEK OF JANUARY 20th

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26th—MONDAY, JANUARY 27th—
LOUIS WOLHEIM and ROBERT YOUNG in
"THE CRUSADES"
COMEDY — NEWS — CARTOONS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28th—
SIDNEY BLACKMER and RUSSELL HOPTON in
"FALSE PRETENSES"
COMEDY — NEWS — CARTOON

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29th—THURSDAY, JANUARY 30th—
GLENDA FARRELL and ROBERT ARMSTRONG in
"LITTLE BIG SHOT"
COMEDY — NEWS — CARTOON

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31st—ONE DAY ONLY—
JAMES DUNN and PATRICIA ELLIS in
"WAKE UP AND DREAM"
REX and RIN TIN TIN, JR. in
"THE ADVENTURES OF REX AND RINTY"—No. 12
COMEDY — NEWS — CARTOON

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1st—TWO BIG WESTERNS—
No. 1—**MAYNARD IN THE TOWN THE TROUBLE"**
No. 2—**BUCK JONES in "TREASON"**
COMEDY — NEWS — CARTOON
Also "THE NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN"—No. 1

HOWARD THEATRE

Washington, D. C.

1 WEEK BEGINNING FRIDAY, JANUARY 24TH

ON STAGE—1936 EDITION

BLACK & WHITE REVUE

★ 30 – White Stars – 30 – Colored ★

Dusty Fletcher - Cora Green
Monty Hawley - Billie McLaurin
Ford, Bowie and Daily
Lillian Fitzgerald
Clarence Robinson and
16 Dancing Girls

Ben Lynn
Lee Murray
York Tracy
Geo. Burns
and Co.
16 EARL JARROLD BEAUTIES

Midnight Show Saturday with Reserved Seats

STAR THEATRE

1529 EAST MONUMENT STREET

SUNDAY—MONDAY—TUESDAY — JANUARY 26-27-28

LUCKY MILLINDER
AND HIS ORCHESTRA
"SCANDAL"
WITH AN ALL-COLORED CAST
ADDED ATTRACTION
CAB CALLOWAY AND HIS ORCHESTRA

WEDNESDAY—THURSDAY — JANUARY 29-30
LOUISE BEAVERS and FREDI WASHINGTON
"IMITATION OF LIFE"
ADDED ATTRACTION: "THE CABIN KIDS"

FRIDAY—SATURDAY — JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1

TWO BIG PICTURES
No. 1—KEN MAYNARD WESTERN
No. 2—NINA MAE McKINNEY in "LIFE IS REAL"

FREMONT THEATRE

"THE HOUSE OF HITS"

SUNDAY and MONDAY, JAN. 26 and 27—NEW G-MEN PICTURE—
GEORGE BRENT, RICARDO CORTEZ, JACK LaRUE and BETTE DAVIS
"SPECIAL AGENT"
Also "OUR GANG COMEDY" and FRED MARSHALL and His ORCHESTRA

TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28 and 29—2-BIG SHOWS—2
No. 1—CHARLES STARRETT in "GALLANT DEFENDER"
No. 2—SHIRLEY GREY in "GIRL CAME BACK"
G-Woman Thriller
Also "ADVENTURES OF REX AND RINTY"—Chap. 4

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30—ONE DAY ONLY
RUSSELL HOPTON and LOLA LANE in
"DEATH FROM A DISTANCE"
Comedy—"ON THE WAGON" and NEWS

FRIDAY and SATURDAY, JAN. 31 and FEB. 1—2-BIG SHOWS—2
No. 1—JOHN WAYNE in "WESTWARD HO"
No. 2—SHIRLEY TEMPLE in "BABY TAKES A BOW"
Also "THE NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN—Chap. 9

COMING SOON—WATCH FOR THESE HIT ATTRACTIONS!
"Broadway Melody of 1936" — "Shipmates Forever"
"Escape from Devil's Island" — "Dr. Socrates"

HARLEM THEATRICAL NEW YORK PAGE BROOKLYN

JOHN D BOGLE, Manager
RALPH MATTHEWS, Editor

OFFICE: 205 W. 135th St. AUDubon 3-7730 New York City

Reporter Who Discovered Harlem's "Perfect Crime" Recalls Horrifying Experience

Al White Knew Thelma Scott as Prize-Winning Dancer

By Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK, N.Y. — In an exclusive interview, Alvin White, well-known Harlem newspaperman, recalled how he accidentally discovered the triple murders of beautiful Thelma Scott and her mother and aunt in a tenement house nearly five years ago.

He says this was his greatest newspaper thrill and Harlem's greatest mystery.

The murders, which have long been looked upon as the "perfect crime" because so far all efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice have come to naught, flared suddenly again in the news of the week when an unknown informant linked the name of John (Pegleg) Smith with the crimes. Smith died in the chair in Sing Sing, Thursday night.

Was Dancehall Hostess

"Back in 1931," recalls Mr. White, "the Renaissance Ballroom was even more popular with the younger set than it is today. There wasn't a night that passed that it was not packed with first one club and then another giving dances and contests.

"In connection with my newspaper work I was also active among these groups as a promoter and master of ceremonies at their amateur contests. That is how I first met Thelma Scott.

Wonderful Dancer

"She was a wonderful dancer and was popular with all of the clubs, so much so, that she was able to cop trophies for dancing regardless of which club was sponsoring the affair. I introduced her so much that I believe I knew her almost like a sister.

Missing a Week

"It was quite natural, therefore, that when after a whole week she did not put in her appearance, I was rather upset about her. Nobody seemed to have seen or heard of her.

Notes in Door

"One day when I was in her neighborhood I went to her home in and see where she was or if she were sick. I got no response to my knock and I was about ready to end me as being very strange.

"At least a half dozen notes representing a week's accumulation, left by callers, were stuck in the door. So I knocked at the family and left town.

Notices Light

"I thought no more of it until Sunday, when I came back and I left the Renaissance Ballroom. I saw a light burning in the apartment from the street and it seemed odd. I got a friend of mine and we went back and in trying to peep through the window we detected a sickly odor.

"My companion said it smelled like a rat was dead in the walls. A feeling of horror came over me and I decided to call the police station and told them of my suspicions.

Force Way In

"A couple of officers went back with me and we went through an adjourning vacant apartment and entered through the fire escape. The smell of decayed flesh was terrific, and nauseating.

Tied to Bed

"We found the body of Thelma Scott tied to the bed with legs and arms outstretched and her throat cut fro mear to ear. A pool of blood covered the floor and rats and maggots were feasting on her body.

"In the bathroom we found Mrs. Scott with a rope around her neck. She had been strangled to death.

"The aunt, Mrs. Reed, also had a rope around her neck and she was dead kneeling beside the bed.

"The baby of Mrs. Reed was starving, though still alive, but to arrive.

Above is picture of a Harlem scene in the area near the theatre where Thelma Scott, whose slaying was never solved, won many prizes in amateur contests.

Many Theories

Mr. White declared that he had worked out a number of theories of how the murders were committed. But as to the identity of the slayer, he has never been able to get to first base.

He is certain that the slayer knew Thelma Scott and mother could have identified him or put police on his trail, and therefore after killing the first victim he took his time and wiped out the entire family to cover up his tracks.

"From the accumulation of cigarette butts in the living room it was apparent that the slayer had calmly sat down by the radio between the killings and smoked while waiting for the next victim.

the ambulance arriving.

Left Weapon

"He took me to several night clubs and insisted that I take a drink for old times' sake. I remember taking the drink, but I don't remember much else. I found myself groggy and dazed right there in the booth where he had taken me, but my watch and rings were gone and $24 was missing from my pocketbook.

"He had doped me and robbed me that quick, and still back home they believe he is a big shot in New York. And they say: 'HARLEM IS HEAVEN.'"

* * * * *

When Love Goes Cold

He dropped into the office the other day—a seedy, broken fellow. Several years ago we had worked together running elevators in an apartment house downtown.

I hardly recognized him as the handsome chap I had once known.

He wanted a letter attesting to his character, so he could get a job, and admitted that he had been "up the river" for a couple of years.

"I was framed," he said. "Following the crash in '29, wages on apartment house jobs were cut to nothing, and tips even were scarce. My wife had been accustomed to dressing pretty well, and when things got tight she couldn't take it. She started running with a man who could do more for her than I could, but I was in their way.

"One day I went home and just as I stepped in the door two policemen grabbed me. My wife told them that I had threatened her life, and to prove things, she raked an old revolver out of the bottom of my trunk which I thought was gone.

"When I admitted that the gun was mine, that settled things. They sent me up under the Sullivan law, and you can guess the rest."

And HARLEM IS HEAVEN.

* * * * *

Common-Law Stuff

He is going to quit his job, another chap who confessed his plight over a glass of beer the other night. And it's a good job, too, he tells me, that he has found in Harlem. He says he must get out of New York, away from the Harlem he loves so well. He had considered himself one of the wisest men in a smart guy, until he fell in love with a girl who knew her way around.

They called and together something before he ever took her to his apartment, but the man was smart, too. He always hustled her out before 6 a.m. The law requires that.

But, one morning he missed. That was all she wanted. That afternoon she moved in bag and baggage.

Naturally, they quarreled about it when he got home that night and found her there. This brought the cops.

During the altercation, the landlady was forced to admit that he had seen the girl going and coming. The girl had moved in, he was told, because it wasn't being done, there, and she couldn't say she had.

The girl had the benefit of the doubt.

The upshot of it all was, the girl, pretending to be broken-hearted "after I have given so much of my life to this man," moved out of the apartment, under the protection of a law-abiding citizen, and the law, which she had been violating, was called upon to force him to leave.

That's why the wise guy must quit his job, shake the dust of New York from his feet and start life again elsewhere.

If he gets too far back in his alimony to the woman he only knew a few days he will get in New York's alimony prison.

And HARLEM IS HEAVEN!

* * * * *

Tips for Autoists

The out-of-town motorists coming to New York find lots not to be thankful for. For some unknown reason, New York State takes the position of letting the motorist drive anywhere in any of our horse-power, as is the practice in some other States.

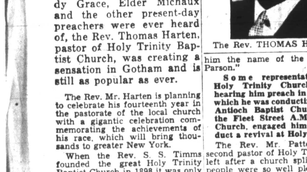
Maryland's tag that costs eight bucks, for instance, goes to thirteen berries in New York, and besides, you have to renew your driver's permit yearly, plus taking an examination. They also charge you pounds for each added accessory like an extra tire, a trunk or tool chest.

You must list whether your wheels are wood, disk or wire, because the weight of each is different, and there is no cheating on the weight because a standard weight for each item is on file, direct from the factory.

Another thing about autos in New York is that if once you learn to drive well in New York, you can drive anywhere in America, but if you do, you will go to jail because everything you do in New York is unlawful every place else.

On the Fat of the Land

At last I've found the man who really lives on the fat of the land. He is Doc Bob Johnson, the massive, who does the rough work on over-developed abdomens at the 135th Street YMCA.



He also has offices up on Sugar Hill, where people have their hips reduced, and the double chins rolled away.

It is great fun to watch him massage the avoirdupois in his electric cable boiler, and pounding away for dear life on the hefty legs and arms of rolly-poly bald-headed men anxious to regain their lost shapes.

He is a native of British Guiana, and came to America via London.

I found he beats a dozen cure-alls for a grippe. The other day I was in the last stages of physical decay, I thought, when he massaged me and I came out a new man.

He baked and stewed me, dashed me in and out of alternating hot and cold showers, tied me in knots and massaged me with alcohol, and today, I am as fresh as a daisy and a glutton for work.

Children's Fund Changes Personnel

NEW YORK—The official staff of the Harlem Children's Fresh Air Fund, 2303 Eighth Avenue, was changed at a called meeting of the executive board last week.

The office of the president and vice-president were eliminated. The personnel now includes:

Executive board of six officers and nine laymen, serving for a period of one year. A women's auxiliary, composed of three officers and a minimum membership of 100, is headed by Mrs Vivian Mason, who is in charge of the W. 135th Street emergency relief bureau.

Bellhops, Maids Must Give Finger Prinis in N.Y.

NEW YORK—Two thousand colored bellhops, maids, housemen and culinary workers are being photographed and finger-printed in a new policy now being adopted by hotels in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

The movement, it was said, followed the recent urging of Governor Lehman and federal authorities for the adoption of fingerprinting as a general means of identification.

In a number of instances bellmen have complained that the $2 charge should be paid by the owners and not levied against the workers. The new policy affects bellmen, maids and tipped workers in the following New York and Brooklyn hotels:

Manhattan, Alcazar, Wellington, Taft, Grace Roger, Ansonia, Belmont, Ritz Carlton, Park, Early, Early Collingwood, Chelsea, Lincoln, Lincoln Square, St. George, Pierre, Winston, Ambassador, Commodore, Roosevelt, Prince George, Willard, Marie Antoinette, Gotham, Gladstone and a number of others.

Brooklyn, Bossert.

Imports Ethiopian Coffee

NEW YORK—Samuel Daniels, general manager of the Ethiopian Products Distributing Company, Inc., with offices at 132 West 135th Street, announced on Monday that he has completed negotiations with an Ethiopian firm, and had received his first shipment, 2,000 pounds of Ethiopian coffee.

U. S. to Observe Scottsboro Day Sunday, Jan. 26.

NEW YORK — Nation-wide meetings in a score of more cities will be held on National Scottsboro Day Sunday, under auspices of the Scottsboro Defense Committee, it has been announced this week.

The committee includes: the NAACP, International Labor Defense, American Civil Liberties Union, the Methodist Federation for Social Service, the Industrial Democracy, and the Church League for Industrial Democracy. Though the committee, the committee hopes to mobilize new sentiment and financial support for the trials of the nine youths.

The New York meetings will be held on Belmont Drive, 108 W. Forty-third Street, at 2 p.m. Norman Thomas, Socialist leader, and Roy Wilkins, editor of the Crisis, are among the speakers. Among the cities which expect to hold joint meetings are:

Philadelphia, Boston, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., Cleveland, Detroit, Baltimore, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Richmond, Va., and Newark, N.J.

Elk Leaders Attend Funeral of Former Temple Head

Mrs. Laura Williams Who Was Grand Daughter Ruler Buried.

BAND PLAYS AS ELKS PAY FINAL TRIBUTE

Belonged to Many Fraternal Organizations.

By Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK—J. Finley Wilson grand exalted ruler of the I.B.P.O.E. of W., and Abbie M. Johnson, grand daughter ruler, were among the chief mourners Sunday afternoon at the funeral services for Laura E. Williams, who served three terms as grand daughter ruler, from 1923 to 1926.

The services, conducted at the Mother A.M.E. Zion Church, lasted five hours. The Order of Eastern Star, of which Mrs. Williams was also a member, conducted special rites the night before interment was made at Evergreen Cemetery Monday morning.

Sick Eight Months

For eight months prior to her demise, Mrs. Williams was confined to bed. She spent the last month at Bellevue Hospital, where she died last Wednesday. She was 61.

The deceased, a native of Washington, D.C., came to New York at an early age. She was married thirty-five years ago to Louis E. Williams. She was past daughter ruler of Eureka Temple No. 22, a member of Alpha Council No. 1, Past Daughter Ruler, Lodge No. 1, Black Chapter, Order of Eastern Star (Prince Hall) and the women's auxiliary of the Clubmen's League.

Two-Part Service

The service Sunday night was divided into two parts. The first part was the regular church services conducted by the Rev. James W. Brown, pastor of Mother Zion, assisted by the Rev. P. A. Price. The funeral rites of the I.B.P.O.E. of W. made up the second part.

Edward W. Simons, exalted ruler of Manhattan Lodge and a trustee of the Temple, delivered a solo, "Shine on Me." The Rev. Dr. Frank Price, Elks chaplain, led in prayer; there was a selection by the White Rose Quartet, and Mrs. Mamie Lee Ross, 77, the eulogy by the grand daughter ruler. Floral tributes were given by Eureka Temple, and a selection by the Harmony Quartet.

Wheat Given Relief

Then followed a eulogy by the grand exalted ruler, a solo, "There Is No Death," by Daughter Elizabeth Carroll of Manhattan Temple, accompanied by N. B. Marshall, the auditor; the reading of scores of telegrams of condolence, Daughter Ethel Frazier, who was formerly private secretary to Mrs. Williams; a selection by the Harlem Glee Club; ritualistic ceremonies which the Bells is given to the people, and closing remarks by Judge William C. Houston, Elk commissioner of Harlem.

Band Plays

Members of the order were then allowed to view the body while the various glee clubs, Boston, Milwaukee, Manhattan and Imperial Lodge of bands played in the lobby of the church. J. Dallas Bowman, of Chicago, was master of ceremonies.

Among those present were Burna V. Kelley, grand daughter secretary; Minnie T. Wright, grand daughter chairman of education; Judge Armond W. Scott, of Washington, D.C., and others. The Rev. Mr. Monroe also spoke.

Harlem Sheiks Won't Wear Haitian Sandals on Street; Importers