

# INSIDE SCOTLAND YARD—BBC Documentary

WHEN thousands of men and women in Britain were returning to civilian life at the end of the war, all of them with gratuities and hence prospective victims for sharks and swindlers, the BBC broadcast a series of programmes called *It's Your Money They're After* which exposed all the old swindles—and some new ones—by which they might be relieved of their money. Sir Harold Scott, Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, was most enthusiastic about the series, and suggested that as listeners now knew how crooks worked, they ought to know how the police worked too, and should be shown just what the criminal was up against. He gave orders to his senior officials to co-operate in every way with the BBC in presenting an authentic picture of the police machine in operation, and the resulting series of programmes was called *Scotland Yard at Work*.

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laid out we heaved her over with the rising tide. We had her safely back in port in 27 days.

"Then in the previous year in the case of the Anshun it was a matter of getting out the cargo. This 6000-ton ship rolled over in Milne Bay, New Guinea, after a Jap cruiser one night in September, 1943, had sailed in and put seven six-inch shells into her. We took out that cargo, which included a battery of anti-aircraft guns, trucks, jeeps and other military equipment.

"As you see, not all cargoes were lost when ships were sunk. During the war years the salvage unit recovered £22,000,000 worth of cargo, while it would not be possible to estimate the value of the ships raised, repaired and put back into commission again.

## Nerve-Wracking Experience

"Diving in New Guinea waters with the Jap planes concentrating on shipping to say the least was nerve-wracking. Our native labour panicked badly at times and on one occasion I came up to find Captain Herd (who was also on the Niagara salvage) turning the wheels of the air pump, for the two natives had left the pump and dived over the side during a raid.

"Of course attacks on shipping was not a one-sided affair and Japanese losses were enormous. We know of 217 wrecks in Rabaul Harbour — truly a graveyard of ships if ever there was one. I spent the best part of last year in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands looking over wrecks. One job we tackled was the salvage of the 10,000-ton *Reynella*, which ran into the side of a cliff of coral and wedged into a crevice hard and fast. There was 1,200 foot of water under the stern, so we had to work fast, blasting 700 tons of coral reef from under her. We successfully refloated her and towed her back to Sydney—a million pounds worth of ship and cargo saved.

"In some ways it was a similar job to the *Wanganella*, though the *Wanganella* was much more extensively damaged

There are five programmes in the series, and the scripts were written by two former crime-reporters, Robert Barr and Percy Hoskins. All the facts are based on official police records, with leading authorities in every branch of crime and detection taking part. The first programme, "Murder," gives a detailed account of how the police tracked down the murderer in a war-time case that is now regarded as a world classic in detection. Detective Superintendent Rawlings, who was in charge of the case, and Dr. Keith Simpson, Home Office Pathologist, describe their part in the investigation in their own words.

## Hunting Down the Criminal

The crook who wants to hide his identity stands a very poor chance against Scotland Yard to-day, because of the remarkable way in which they record every item of information gathered by the police. If he leaves a fingerprint it is catalogued along with ten million others, if he tries to disguise his identity by forged documents, the

and I don't think any ship came closer to be a total loss. When I was below the movement of the torn plates created such a din that it was almost terrifying." Mr. Johnstone explained that the method used to refloat the *Wanganella*—lifting by compressed air was a "last desperate effort" and could be a dangerous business.

If the Niagara project was decided against, Mr. Johnstone was asked, what then?

"Heaven knows. You see, work like mine cannot usually be planned in advance. You hear of a job and within a matter of hours you are on your way to a wreck perhaps hundreds of miles from your home base. Then I might give diving a rest. My experiences have been interesting enough to be put into book form by James R. Taylor—it will be called "Dark Underworld"—so the point occurs that people may be interested in hearing a personal account of them and I am toying with the idea of making a lecture tour."

## Three Radio Talks

Meantime the New Zealand public will have an opportunity to hear something of Mr. Johnstone's 30 years' experience in the series of talks he has recorded for broadcast from 1YA. The first two, to be heard at 3.30 p.m. on Sunday, April 18, and Sunday, April 25, will cover the Niagara salvage. Mr. Johnstone will tell of the difficulties faced in the year-long undertaking and will deal with lighter aspects of the operation such as the salvage ship's crew playing threepenny poker on a table made of gold bars worth many thousands of pounds, and of taking the gold from the ship to the bank in the back of an unguarded greengrocer's waggon. In the third talk, to be given on Sunday, May 2, at the same time, he will tell of general diving experiences—meetings with an octopus with tentacles as thick as a man's calves, the deadly crocodile and crocodiles, and something of the intriguing sights of that underwater world in which divers operate.

police scientific laboratories will expose the forgery. And the whole system is so organised that each department can pool its share of the evidence that may lead to an arrest. In the second programme, "The Alias," which describes how the Yard tracked down a man wanted for robbery with violence, Superintendent Cherrill, the world's greatest fingerprint authority, and Inspector Percy Law, expert on the infra-red and ultra-violet ray lamps used for detecting forgeries, are among those taking part. In "The Master Criminal" other brilliant scientists who work with the London Police come to the microphone to explain how the modern criminal is up against a body of experts who will never admit defeat, and they describe how they have solved a number of actual cases.

## The Flying Squad

One of the most thrilling programmes in the series is called "Mobile Crime." In it Chief Inspector Fabian, Officer in Command of the Flying Squad, explains how the squad is fighting London's smash-and-grab gangs, and one of the drivers tells in his own words the story of a break-neck chase through London streets that ended in the capture of a car-load of crooks who had just robbed a jeweller's shop.

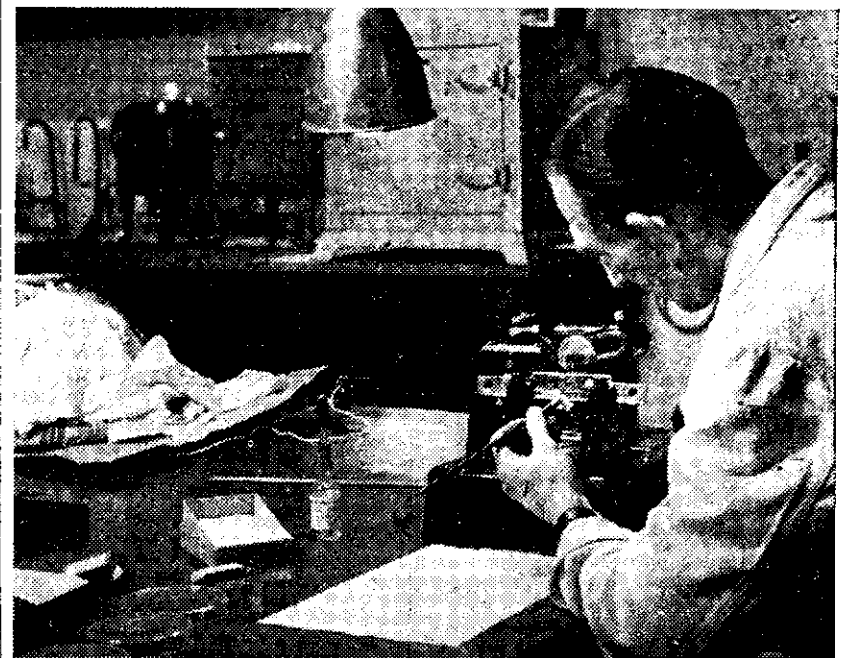
The Flying Squad came into being in 1916 when a small group of police offi-

cers were taken in ex-army tenders to places where pickpockets were expected to operate. So great was the success of this sudden appearance that the squad was built up to its present organisation. Neither the crooks nor the public can tell a Flying Squad vehicle until it suddenly goes into action. It may be a limousine, an ordinary-looking private car, even a tradesman's van, but all squad vehicles have two things in common—a powerful engine that gives them a surprising turn of speed, and a first-class driver who knows all the tricks of the crook's game as well as his own.

*Scotland Yard at Work* starts from 2YH at 4.30 p.m. on Sunday, April 18, and will be heard later from the other National stations.



BBC photograph  
FINGER-PRINT identification by means of microscope and microphotograph



BBC photograph  
AN ASSISTANT in the Metropolitan Police laboratories prepares for the microscope material being examined for clues