

## A BORN COMEDIAN

### Sandy Powell And His Story

**W**EEK by week the advertising hoardings in Britain present the plump, genial face of a bespectacled comedian smiling at all passers-by. The face is not that of an old man, yet its owner has looked upon many revolutionary changes in entertainment in his short life.

He was born in a tiny two-roomed house in Rotherham, Yorkshire, and his name is Sandy Powell. His father had a job at the gas works—his mother was a variety performer. One of Sandy's very earliest memories was a "free-and-easy" at a public house.

A "free-and-easy" was a rough, genial kind of entertainment presided over by a "chairman," who sometimes played the dual role of "announcer" and "chucker-out." But the entertainment was hale and hearty. The necessity of having to provide varied items was the origin of what we know to-day as Variety (with a capital V). The chairman was respected and obeyed; dubious jokes from the stage were never allowed; the slightest sign of disorder or coarse language from the audience was squashed in an instant. Anything in the way of rough goings-on would have imperilled the all-important licence.

#### A Shrill, Small Voice

One evening when Sandy's mother was on the stage, she invited the audience to join in the chorus of one of her numbers, "Only a Beautiful Picture, in a Beautiful Golden Frame." Little Sandy was parked in the wings, being old enough to travel with his mother. He memorised all his mother's songs, and naturally joined in the chorus along with the audience.

As soon as the chairman heard a piping voice on the side of the stage, he signalled to the audience to keep quiet,



**SANDY POWELL:** To be found in every police station

and left the child to complete the chorus alone. When the refrain was finished, there were thunders of applause and shouts for young Sandy.

His mother went to the side, took her little boy by the hand and led him on to the stage to take the "call" with her. The audience demanded an encore, and this time Sandy sang the chorus all by himself—and that was the first public appearance of Sandy Powell.

#### No Dolls on Sunday

When Sandy Powell was being brought up on the halls, he had the most marvellous dolls which he could play with every day—but not on Sunday. Then they travelled in a basket, shut up and

jolting in the care of the guard, just as he travelled in a third-class carriage, shut up and jolting in the care of his mother. When at last the train reached their destination the dolls went to the theatre; but he and his mother went looking for lodgings for the week.

On Monday morning the dolls were unpacked. At night they came to life. Sandy was only a very few years old when he was allowed to help his mother, Lillie Le-Main, with her marionette show. So the Yorkshire comedian began life.

It was pantomime that put Sandy Powell, then a young lad from Rotherham, on the map. He played in "Cinderella" in Leeds fifteen years ago, and since then he has never looked back. Despite his present day fame, Sandy still has a soft spot for his native town, and a few years ago he took most of his company over from Sheffield to give a concert in aid of the Rotherham unemployed.

Not many years ago Sandy Powell went to a gramophone company to give an audition. His test sketch was called "The Lost Policeman." It filled two sides of a disc, and that audition record was issued just as it was, and sold over a million.

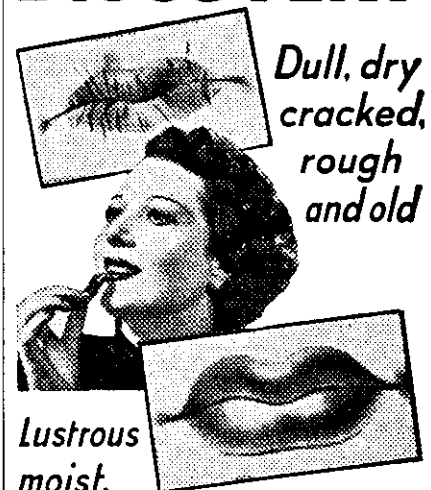
Since then Sandy Powell has recorded over fifty sketches, and the total sales must now have reached an astronomical figure. It used to be said that "The Lost Policeman" record was to be found in every police station in Britain.

#### Official Promotion

Sandy began with a recording of "The Lost Policeman," and he has now recorded a sketch called "Sandy the Detective"—a rise in official status. One month his recording royalties amounted to over £1,200. His gramophone records bring him an enormous fan mail, mostly from children and their parents. This gives him a family following all over the British Empire, and he finds his public loyal.

Listeners to 3YA will have an opportunity of hearing Sandy Powell in his recorded sketch "Sandy the Detective" on Saturday, August 3, at 9.46 p.m.

## Thrilling New LIPSTICK DISCOVERY



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## LESLIE HOWARD HATES ACTING

(Continued from previous page)

lous, the leading lady young, ambitious and inexperienced. They repeat their three lines apace many, many times.

All the technical workers who have been so busy now sit and wait. After the six lines have been rehearsed fifteen or twenty times, and the actor is on the point of screaming, the director mercifully announces he will shoot the scene. But now the cameraman says he must see the actors under the lights.

So they pose for him till both are hot and tired and dislike each other heartily, while lamps are juggled round them endlessly. Then they run through the scene again so that the cameraman can see them in motion. This necessitates more changes, and finally the cameraman says "O.K."

"We will take it," says the director. But now the sound man would like to hear it exactly as it will be spoken.

They do it again. The sound man

now juggles his instruments round and finally says "O.K."

"Let's go," says the director.

But now the leading lady's make-up has started to run, so she goes off to attend to it. There is a pause. Lights go out. Everybody sits. The leading lady returns. The lights go on. The director says he would like another rehearsal in case they have "gone cold on it." The leading lady says it is very warm.

The lights go out. They rehearse the six lines—twice. The director says it is one o'clock, and the men have to have their lunch. The lights go out. Everybody goes to lunch.

#### And So It Goes On

After lunch, following a few rehearsals, light tests, sound tests and so forth, the scene is actually shot. It is shot eight or ten times, though only one or two will be "printed." But our wretched actor has given his all, eight or ten times.

Do not imagine that this ends the matter. This is only the long shot.

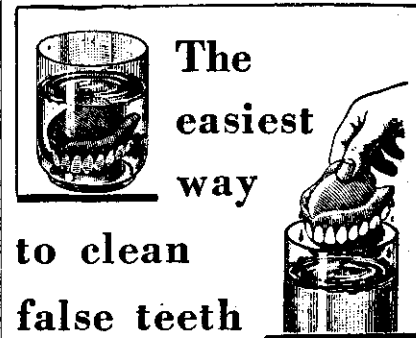
Finally, they get the medium shot. This is also done a great many times,

And finally they reach the close-ups, in which one player is photographed at a time, the other giving the responses from the darkness behind the camera.

By this time the few words, having been given at least fifty or sixty times during the day, have become gibberish, and the actors' faces weary and meaningless masks.

Now if I am alone in thinking this a dreary life, then I must be unique in my idea of an interesting occupation. The screen is a fascinating story-telling medium, but it is the directors who tell the story, not the actors.

So perhaps it will be understood why I am looking for an escape from grease-paint, and for some occupation which will be sufficiently absorbing, and at the same time sufficiently remunerative to keep me in the style to which, heaven be praised, I have become accustomed.



The easiest way to clean false teeth is to put them with 'Steradent' powder in water, as directed on the tin. This solution penetrates every crevice, removes film and stains, and sterilizes your dentures. You may put your teeth in 'Steradent' overnight or regularly for 20 minutes while you dress. All chemists sell it.

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