



FRANK OWEN
Almost as busy as "the Beaver"



BBC photographs
H. C. FERRABY
President of the "Press Gang"

HE COMES FROM WALES

FRANK OWEN, frequent contributor of the BBC's "Britain Speaks," is—as his voice betrays—a hefty Welshman, an ex-wing three-quarter on the amateur Rugby field, and a hard-boiled pressman who has served that stimulating, if sometimes difficult, taskmaster, "The Beaver"—otherwise Lord Beaverbrook, now Minister of State, but for many years one of the English Press Lords.

Frank Owen was born in 1905, and had a Welsh education at Monmouth Grammar School, from which he won a scholarship in Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge—Oliver Cromwell's college. He took a First in History and Economics, as well as playing for the Cambridge Rugby Fifteen, though he did not actually secure his Blue. He has also played in the Welsh International Trials, for Newport and the London Welsh.

Completely unattracted by the conventional Civil Service career offered to him, Owen pitched himself headlong into the mill of provincial journalism. A chance meeting with Lloyd George led eventually to this up-and-coming young man successfully fighting the Hereford constituency in the Labour interest. That was in 1929 when he became the youngest M.P. in the House.

Failing to hold the seat in the election of 1931, Owen went to Fleet Street, and has never looked back. For the *News Chronicle* he went to Russia—where he saw Stalin—on the *Daily Express* he was a reporter, leader-writer, and then went to Lord Beaverbrook's other paper the *Evening Standard*, first as assistant editor, and now editor.

He describes his association with Lord Beaverbrook as "great fun!—an extraordinary fellow, good boss to work for—but a bit uncanny." That refers to "the Beaver's" combination of insomnia, sudden bright ideas, and invincible flair for "getting his man" on the 'phone. On one occasion in 1937, Owen was in Spain. Bombed in both Valencia and Barcelona, he travelled, without notice or papers, to Madrid on a troop-train. Arriving in the small hours, he hunted up a colleague, Tom Driberg. Tom woke up, eventually

recognised Owen under several days' dirt and beard, and said "Oi!—get on the 'phone to London. The Beaver was chasing you twenty minutes ago."

At one period, before the war, Owen had to write his leaders with "the Beaver" at his elbow, and on another occasion he had the enlivening, if ex-

hausting experience, of accompanying his boss on a voyage to South America. His permanent source of stimulation, however, is his wife—née Grace Stewart of Boston, U.S.A., and now his companion throughout the London blitz.

MILITARY HISTORIAN

CYRIL FALLS, the man whom listeners frequently hear giving the military commentary in the British Broadcasting Corporation's Empire Service, is an Ulsterman who served with his regiment throughout the last war and has attained a high reputation as a military historian and critic.

Captain Cyril Bentham Falls was born in 1888—though he looks much younger—the son of the late Sir Charles Fausset Falls, in County Tyrone, and was educated at Bradfield College, Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, London University, and abroad. During the last war he served with the Inniskilling Fusiliers, and was also on the General Staff of the 36th and 62nd Divisions, was Liaison Officer between the French Army and the Australians, earning the French Croix de Guerre, two citations, and two Mentions in Dispatches.

Though now the Military Correspondent of the *London Times*, since 1923 he has been in the Historical Section (Military Branch) of the Committee of Imperial Defence. He is the author of

many books on military subjects as well as of some dealing with his own Ulster, and of "Rudyard Kipling, a Critical Study."

When asked about his recreations, this precise, dapper man is apt to reply "yachting, shooting, and riding—now chiefly in recollection." Literature and gardening have largely replaced them. France he knows very well in both war and peace, and loves its people. He is also a friend of General Weygand, as well as being the writer of the biography of Marshal Foch.

A MAN OF MANY PARTS

A DIRECTOR of the Royal Academy of Music, Aide-de-Camp to the Duke of Abercorn (Governor of Northern Ireland), composer of the Irak National Anthem and of the world-famous song "I'll Walk Beside You," regular soldier—these are some of the roles played by Major Alan Murray who every day gives a five-minute News Commentary on the Empire Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation. He is also a regular contributor to the North American and Pacific Newsreel.

Alan Murray was born in Guernsey in 1890, educated at Malvern College and Pembroke College, Cambridge, and joined his father's old regiment, the Seaforth Highlanders in India in 1913.

During much of the last war, he served in Mesopotamia—now Irak—and Pales-

during the "Trouble" and on to Northern Ireland, where he held the appointment of A.D.C. to the Duke of Abercorn for three years. He was at the same time a member of the BBC station orchestra in Belfast.

Murray has thus had plenty of experience of military affairs to make his comments on the war situation of high value. What makes him so interesting to meet, though, is the number and variety of his contacts in other walks of life. Music has always been his special interest. It is characteristic of him that he should have composed the Irak National Anthem, and was also a friend of the late King Feisal.

He has been a violinist in orchestras under such famous conductors as Sir Henry Wood, Sir Edward Elgar, and Sir Adrian Boult. In addition to the many songs he has written, he has composed several orchestral works, including his "Suite of Furniture" with its four quaintly named movements "Louis Quinze," "Chippendale," "Rustic" (Garden) and "Modern Tubular Chromoplate."

As a contrast to this, he has played the piano in Ray Noble's dance band in the Rainbow Room at the top of Radio City, New York.

Alan Murray spent a year in Hollywood in 1937-38 where he became great friends with many of the famous film stars. Here, clay-pigeon shooting with Robert Montgomery and Gary Cooper is one of his pleasantest memories.

"FERRETS" OF THE PRESS GANG

"FERRETS," President of the "Press Gang," is the owner of the voice which BBC listeners often hear speaking on naval matters. "Ferrets" to Fleet Street and the Fleet is Hubert Cecil Ferraby, and the "Press Gang" is the members' own name for the Association of Naval Correspondents.

"Ferrets" is a small man with a shock of grey hair, lively eyes, an irreverent sense of humour, and an inexhaustible interest in what is going on round him, especially in matters naval, with which he has been connected for thirty-seven years. He served with the British and

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MEN YOU HEAR WHEN "Britain Speaks"

time. On the latter front, after holding the appointments of Staff Captain and Brigade Major, he was appointed D.A.Q.M.G., on Lord Allenby's General Headquarters Staff, holding the same appointment later in Cairo.

From there he was transferred home and with his regiment went to Dublin



CYRIL FALLS
Recreations chiefly in recollection



BBC photographs
ALAN MURRAY
Composed Irak's National Anthem