



PASSPORT TO PIMLICO

-All ZB Stations. July 1

"The name of Burgundy has denoted very diverse political and geographical areas at different periods of history and as used by different writers."—Encyclopaedia Britannica.

DURING the early part of the war a German pilot dropped a dud bomb on an already-devastated site in Miramont Place, Pimlico, London. Years later, after the war, some small boys playing on the site accidentally rolled a heavy metal wheel into the crater and exploded the bomb. The immediate effects were slight—

Benny: Went right up in the air. I did. Just like a rocket.

Monty: I went higher'n you. Come down on my funny bone.

But the echoes travelled further. They rattled the tea cups in the offices of Whitehall, disturbed the slumbers of Cabinet, and threatened to distract the attention of UN delegates from their pretty secretaries. And why? Because a grocer named Arthur Pemberton fell into the bomb crater and found there an iron-bound chest.

Like most ancient chests, the Pimlico one contained treasure: crowns and ducats, golden goblets, pitchers and ewers to the value of £100,000. More important, it contained evidence that balked the British Exchequer's claim to the treasure trove. Along with the coat-of-arms of Burgundy was a charter of Edward IV granting Miramont House to Burgundy's Duke and decreeing that the entire estate be recognised as Burgundian soil. Miramont Place and its treasure, it seemed, belonged not to the British Crown but to the heirs and descendants of Charles the Rash. Just to clinch the matter a young Frenchman named Sebastian de Charolais turns up with the simple announcement: "I am the Duke of Burgundy."

Pimlico reacts with characteristic wit—
Passenger: Does this bus go to Belgrave Road?

Conductor: No, lady. We're going to England.

Licensing laws, ration books, gaming regulations go by the board. Spivs flog "export" cars in the Burgundian markets. While Foreign, Home and War Office functionaries strive to foist the

case on each other, Pimlico steps high, wide and handsome toward anarchy.

For the newly liberated Burgundians, however, life is not all black-market whisky and skittles. Britain's government takes a "serious view" of the goings-on at Miramont Place. The frontier is closed, customs barriers set up and the water supply cut off. Pimlico retaliates by stopping the Underground trains at its borders and insisting on passports and customs declarations—"Anything to declare, madam? Any foodstuff, livestock, linen, silk or cotton

"Now then, what's going on here?"—Constable Spiller discovers that English licensing laws don't apply to Burgundian territory

goods . . . ? Any muskrats, meal worms, motor cycles, hashesh, prepared opium or agricultural machinery?" Between the tiny duchy and its powerful neighbour a cold war develops. The Burgundians' attitude is best expressed by Arthur Pemberton's wife Connie: "We always were English and we always will be. And it's just because we're English that we're sticking out for our right to be Burgundians." His Majesty's Government, of course, "is always ready to consider any reasonable proposals."

All who saw the film *Passport to Pimlico* will know how, in time, the diplomats of the duchy and the kingdom hammered out a treaty. Those who didn't, and the many who would like to hear it over again (and catch the jokes lost in theatre laughter), should watch for the coming broadcast of a radio adaptation of the

film story. T. E. B. Clarke's screen play has been adapted by Charles Hatton and produced by the NZBS, with players of the Stratford-upon-Avon Company in most of the leading roles.

According to Bernard Beeby, who produced the show for the NZBS, the Stratford players enjoyed their Pimlico performance immensely, taking it as light relief from the high and exacting demands of Shakespeare. The stars of the production were Leo McKern and Joan MacArthur, taking the parts of Arthur Pemberton and Professor Hat-

ton-Jones respectively. The Professor, a somewhat eccentric but highly learned lady from London University, is called in to confirm the authenticity of the documents found in the treasure chest. In the film the part was given a memorable performance by Margaret Rutherford. During the Stratford Company's tour, Leo McKern played Iago in *Othello*, Touchstone in *As You Like It*, and Glendower in *Henry IV*. Joan MacArthur was seen as Emilia in *Othello*, and Audrey in *As You Like It*. She is the wife of Raymond Westwell (Roderigo, Duke Frederick, and Worcester), who plays the part of Wix, banker and chancellor of Pimlico's exchequer, in the NZBS production. Others of the Stratford players in the cast are Kenneth Wynne, James Grout, Jane Holland and Ian Bannen. The local actresses Peggy Walker and Ria Sohler are heard in the play as Connie and Shirley Pemberton, wife and daughter of Arthur, the grocer who unearths the treasure.

Passport to Pimlico is the first show in the ZB Stations' Sunday Showcase, which replaces ZB Book Review at 9.35 p.m. It will be heard from all ZBs on Sunday, July 4.

★ **LEADING players** in "Passport to Pimlico" are (left, from top): Leo McKern and Joan MacArthur, of the Stratford Players; Ria Sohler and ★ Peggy Walker



Much Binding in Fleet Street

NOW back with the BBC after a spell in commercial radio, Richard Murdoch, Kenneth Horne, Sam Costa and Maurice Denham really make news in the *Much Binding* series which begins at the ZBs on July 4. They break into

Fleet Street, take over a newspaper with a circulation of two, and in their first few editions produce a side-splitting crop of literary and typographical errors and misleading household hints. And, of course, when news falls short the old

firm is not too ethical to make their own. Determined to scoop Fleet Street, and undaunted by the lack of real bank robberies, the staff of the *Weekly Bind* agree to stage one.

A newcomer to the aforesaid "old firm" is Dora Bryan, a rising young comedienne of stage, film and radio. Her tips on "How To Run Up a Fancy Dress," her glimpses of Mayfair's "Autumn Modes," and above all, her "Pleasant Thoughts for the Day" (by Prudence Gush, nee Costa), are among the most misleading features that sprinkle the columns of the *Weekly Bind*. Originally a straight actress, Dora was encouraged to enter revue by the London impresario, Hugh Beaumont, who was impressed by her performance of a "party piece" at a back-stage theatrical celebration.

Ablly supported by the BBC Men's Chorus and the BBC Revue Orchestra under Harry Rabinowitz, *Much Binding* is produced by Leslie Bridgmont. The scripts are written by Murdoch and Horne. The show will be heard at 8.30 p.m. on Sundays, beginning from the four ZB stations on July 4 and 22A on August 1.

A reshuffle of ZB Sunday evening programmes places *London Studio Melodies* at 7.0, *Palace of Varieties* at 7.30, the Sunday serial at 8.0, *Much Binding* at 8.30, and *The Bing Crosby Show* at 9.0.



Key staff of the "Weekly Bind": Richard Murdoch (editor), Dora Bryan (fashions), Kenneth Horne (City notes)

BBC photograph