

JAZZ KING'S JUBILEE

"I have been part of American music for 50 years; to have been privileged to have helped in its development, to be fortunate enough to have been able to encourage musical artists, composers and performers alike, and then to have so many of them return and show such obvious affection and pleasure at being back again, making the same sort of sounds we used to make together—well, what more can a man want!"

That was how Paul Whiteman felt last year when he celebrated his 50 years as a professional musician and conductor by making an album of his best-loved music with some of the artists who first made it famous. Some of the items in this album will be played from 22B on Sunday, October 6, at 9.0 p.m., and from other Commercial stations in following weeks.

Paul Whiteman began his musical career in 1906, playing first viola in the Denver Symphony. Later he shifted to the San Francisco Symphony, where he added to his income by working with dance bands. He lost one orchestral job in a restaurant because he could not *ad lib*, so when another opportunity came—to lead a dance band in the Fairmont Hotel—he worked at it all the harder.

His musicianship was coupled with imagination and an innate flair for giving people what they wanted—a rare combination that has remained with him ever since—and his band was such a hit that the owner of the hotel chain put him in charge of dance bands in Los Angeles, Pasadena and Santa Barbara. Then he sent Paul Whiteman and his best men to the Ambassador Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey, for the band's first eastern appearance.

At first only a few couples turned up to dance, but soon the word got round and the crowds began to appear. Eventually the hotel had to open four rooms for dancing, with the Whiteman band moving from one to the other. That year, 1918, the band made its first recording for Victor, wearing tennis shoes and playing from memory to prevent any possible noises. The re-

cords, "Whispering," "Japanese Sandman," "Avalon," "Wang Wang Blues," "Any Time" and "Best Ever" Medley, were huge successes. Soon Whiteman moved to New York's Palais Royale night club.

In this beginning of the jazz age, living was so high that Paul Whiteman on several occasions received 10,000 dollars just as a tip. Certainly the band did well, touring Europe as well as the United States. Gradually what had started out as a modest-sized dance orchestra began to approach concert-size, with Whiteman making addition after addition as he broadened the scope and appeal of his music. Then in 1924 he organised the famous concert at the Aeolian Hall, when he presented dance music and jazz as concert subjects, and the evening reached a climax with George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, especially written for this occasion. Paul Whiteman had brought his band into the precincts of serious music.

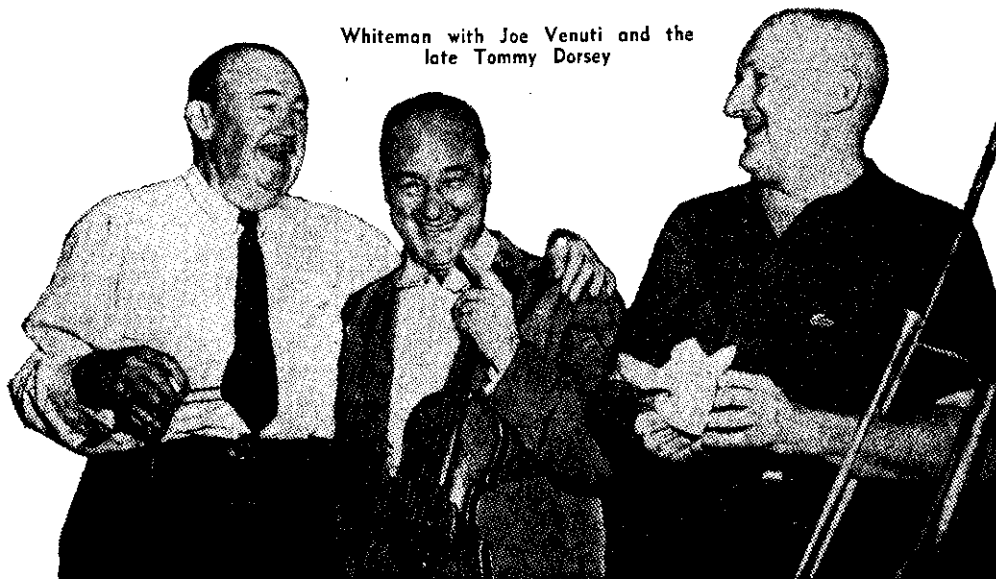
From that concert, the band moved farther into uncharted territory for dance bands—to vaudeville at the Palace, the Hippodrome, the Paramount Theatre, where they played for two years, and the Paul Whiteman Club, specially opened in New York's Times Square for the band and its maestro. Several musical comedies featured the band, whose fame spread even farther afield through motion pictures—*The King of Jazz*, *Thanks a Million*, *Strike Up the Band*, *The Fabulous Dorseys*, and *Rhapsody in*

Blue. Then there were the almost constant radio and, later on, television appearances, which brought to all America not only the music of Paul Whiteman, but also his charm, humour and humanity.

Paul Whiteman has made many friends. Not least among these must be counted the many artists whom he discovered and encouraged towards brilliant careers. All of these who could still play came eagerly to the recording studios for the anniversary album—Joe Venuti, the jazz violinist; Johnny Mercer, singer and composer; Jack Teagarden, singer and trombonist; and Hoagy Carmichael, with the tune that introduced him to Paul Whiteman. Bing Crosby, perhaps the greatest of all Paul Whiteman's soloists, is represented with a song he made when he rejoined the original Rhythm Boys for a radio show. The late Dorsey brothers are in this album, too, recreating for the last time some of the wonderful music they made with Paul Whiteman before forming their own bands.



Whiteman with Joe Venuti and the late Tommy Dorsey



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