



STILL MORE ON 'POPS'

(Third in a series of articles on Louis Armstrong.)

DURING THIS and the ensuing articles, my approach to the vast, fantastic career of the indefatigable Louis will be a personal one. As I have said, this will be Satch as seen through my own eyes, ears and heart.

During December of 1957, the Armstrong All Stars were headlining at the since-demolished Roxy Theatre on 50th Street at Seventh Avenue in the Apple. Al Hirt, a new Orleansman who was to burst upon the entertainment scene several years later, came into New York City during that time accompanied by the late Dan Levy, Al's patron and owner of Dan's Pier 600.

(Al and Louis are currently competing for the top spot on the best selling single records charts; Al with "Java" and Louis with "Hello, Dolly". Al hadn't been born when Pops cut his first recording sessions, which points up the timelessness and the vitality of this man who forty-some years later has the best selling record made in the United States.)

Al and Dan checked into the Manhattan Hotel and called this bearded one at home. We were going to discuss Al's future; sign him with Associated Booking Corporation and Joe Glaser, who has handled Armstrong's affairs since the 1920's; set up his recording contract with Audio Fidelity; take some pictures, and what was most important to both Al and Dan, meet Louis Armstrong. Although all three were New Orleansmen, Al and Dan had never met Louis. No youngster collecting his first important autograph could have been more excited than Al and Dan as we headed backstage at the Roxy after-catching the Armstrong All Stars performance.

To me, the simplicity of Louis' efforts is the proof of his greatness. As an artist, I would rank him with the all-time "heavyweights." Just look at the record(s). The man knows what is important. This is a most vital attribute; an essential. If Louis were Chinese, he could never be accused of "painting legs on the snake." (This is your second Zen lesson during this series). One of Armstrong's favorite sermons to the world at large and to anyone whom he encounters is "regularity" and its importance. "Scoff (eat) all you want the night before but tomorrow morning leave it all behind you!"

JUDGING BY the amount of advertising in the various communications media, getting to the bathroom successfully every day is as serious a problem as the hydrogen bomb, peace in our time, the coming presidential election, the rent, taxes and keeping peace with our mate.

Pop's is an avid advocate of Swiss Kriss, a herb preparation, and one of the more impossible tasks upon meeting Louis for the first time is to escape without a small, green personally autographed packet of this potion. My own sample has been carefully preserved (contents intact) to this day. The presentation usually follows an exhortation.

Al Hirt, Dan Levy and I were escorted back-

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SHERMAN GARDENS SIGNUPS--Manager Elmo Jackson (phone) and receptionist Pomey Washington (pen) register tenants for new Sherman Gardens West apartments on "J" St. off Owens Ave. Signing up (from left) are Lue Berda Coleman, Fred Bates, Barbara J. Duke and Vertis Mae Thompson. (See adv. back page.)

stage by Doc Pugh, who along with Frenchy has been part of the Armstrong entourage almost since his first association with Glaser. After the amenities, Satch went into his sermon. The main theme was "Leave that bathroom ready for a new start each morning!" As you probably know, Hirt weighs nearly three hundred and Dan was his equal in size. Levy did have the problem to which Louis was so earnestly addressing himself. It was only natural that Dan should become just a little uncomfortable as the point was made first gently and then with increasing intensity. You felt that Louis knew this and wanted to make sure Dan left the backstage dressing room convinced. Armstrong was picking up in fervor. Al and I were now ignored as he concentrated on the needy one, Dan.

Finally, Dan could stand it no more and he interrupted, "But Louie, I do go to the bathroom every morning!"

Pops paused and then drove it home, "You go to the bathroom, BUT DO YOU GO?"

For the benefit of those of you who have the above problem and for a few others needlessly sensitive (and in the interest of continuing this series), yours truly has changed only the last word in Armstrong's comeback topper. Put the "legs on the snake" yourself if you wish.

Next week's column will be devoted to Louis and Joe Glaser, one of the really great human relationships in a profession not noted for longevity as regards personal associations. And perhaps we will include Pops' personal recipe for Red Beans and Rice, New Orleans style, which I received along with own personal packet of Swiss Kriss.

Kenya Men Trained In Bulgaria

A controversy has been stirred up in the Kenya press by revelations that 105 Kenya students are undergoing military training in Communist Bulgaria for possible service as freedom fighters in other parts of Africa.

Allegedly personally selected by Kenya Home Minister Oginda Odinga, often described as pro-Communist, the group left Nairobi April 24 in a Bulgarian aircraft without approval from the full cabinet of Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta.

Significantly, Odinga was Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's personal guest at May Day celebrations in Moscow last week.

About three-fourths of the students are reported to be Kikuyus and the rest from other tribes. They are scheduled to remain in Bulgaria six months, with some later going on to Moscow.

Negro Elected

Negro teacher Mrs. Dorothy E. Harmon has been elected corresponding secretary of the Tampa, Fla., chapter of the United Church Women, a predominantly white organization.

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