

Billy Rowe's Notebook



THE LATE ED SULLIVAN ENTERED THE FIGHT IN 1949

N' YORK CITY:—The late Ed Sullivan is a person to remember and respect. In fact, should the Apollo Theatre and African-American Guild of Performing Artists ever come to terms on establishing a permanent Hall of Fame, he should be among the initial honorees. This scribe has a real goodie this time. It has to do with a long ago column battle that the Black

Press declared against the lack of African-American artists television involvement on the tube, and other job descriptions. Without asking, he joined the fray and made the announcement as a guest of our weekly column, then carried by the Pittsburgh Courier, the largest Black chronicle of its time. Ed we're proud to repeat that column.

"THE 'NEGRO' AND

TELEVISION:—Television not only is just what the doctor ordered for 'Negro' performers; television subtly has supplied ten-league boots to the 'Negro' in his fight to win what the Constitution of his country guarantees as his birthright. It has taken his long fight into the living rooms of American homes, where public opinion is formed, and the 'Negro' is winning! He has become a welcome visitor, not only to the white adult, but to the white children, who finally will lay jim-crow to rest. On that subject, I believe I can speak as an authority, because my CBS-TV "Toast of the Town," playing to millions of people all over the country on Sunday nights, is nearing its first anniversary. In practically every Sunday show of ours, I have used 'Negro' performers. I couldn't get along

without them! In its present stage of photographic development, television is either kind or brutal to the white performer. Yet it is always flattering to the 'Negro', whose vitality and wonderfully expressive face registers wonderfully well. In big movie presentation houses, the 'Negros' smile and genial personality often is lost, beyond the first few rows. But in television, he comes right into your living room and when he arrives, beaming at you from a few feet away, you just know that the stuff is here and it's mellow. Some of the greatest hits I've had on "Toast of the Town" have been the venerable W.C. Handy, Bill Graves and his two little sons, Bill Robinson of course, tap dancing marvel Bunny Briggs and one of the greatest comedy geniuses and instincts of modern show-busi-

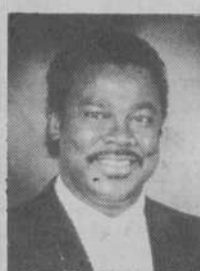
ness, Judge Pigmeat. The remainder of this historic column will be continued next week.

NEWS NOTES:—The annual Sarah Vaughn memorial was held at St. Peter's Church on Lexington Avenue. Those in attendance included Pricilla Baskerville, Melba Joyce, and Sylvia Simms, who read a telegram from Frank Sinatra. The audience heard a lovely telegram from the late singer's 90 year old mother. Yes, that was Evelyn Cunningham doing the conga at one of the performances of "Five Guys Names Moe." The Champagne Comedy Club, Westchester's newest comedy venue, hosted its first annual salute to the legendary Jackie Mom's Mabley. New Rochelle's Janet Page entertained a packed house with her Moms impersonation. In the audience were Mom's brother, Eddie Parton and his wife Jackie Louis Parton, former showgirl Mable Lee, actor Joe Seneca and bass player Jimmy Butts. Owner Randy Forrest has located his club in Napoleon Holmes Palace Entertainment Complex. A goody number of Las Vegas citizens are in the Apple for the spring theatre season. Alice Key, Ann Bailey, Querida Harbart, Marvis Harris and Bea (sorry about the last name, but the memory ain't what it use to be!) Martha Jordan, widow of Louis-Jordan, flew into town with a group of 50. All attended the opening for the Jordan inspired musical "Five Guys Named Moe." Other shows

set for viewing include "Jelly's Last Jam," "Two Trains Running" and "The High Rollers Social and Pleasure Club." The passing of "Stan" Scott has weighed the heart and soul of all who were privileged to claim his friendship. All of us, I included, profited by his love of humanity.

END NOTES:—Mother Ruth Roper denies rumors that there's bad blood between daughter Robin Givins and Pamela Gidley on the set of Polish Hill. Quincy Jones has extended his musical reach to magazine publishing. Called Volume, the magazine will be published by Time Warner's Time Publishing Ventures and Quincy Jones Entertainment. A test issue will hit newsstands across the country on Sept. 7th. Described as a "hip hop" music and life-style magazine in addition to music, it will cover film, fashion, literature and visual arts. Johathan Van Meter, a former Vogue editor, is editor and Jane Pratt, editor in chief of Sassy Magazine and a host of Fox Network's the "Jane" show, will serve as editorial consultant. Russell Simmons, the impresario of rap will also play a prominent roll. So far the only soul people that seemed to be involved are Jones and Simmons. For the first time in the eight years that ad agency BBDO has been tracking the TV viewing habits of Black viewership and there appears to be no overlap between what we watch and what the rest of America watches. On the scale, "A Dif-

(See Billy Rowe, Page 17)



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AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY GRANVILLE T. WOODS (Inventor)

By Gwen Walker

Granville T. Woods was born in Columbus, Ohio on April 23, 1856, and attended school until he was 10 years-old.

Mr. Woods was first employed in a machine shop and continued to improve his mechanical aptitude by working on a railroad in 1872; in a rolling mill in 1874 and later by studying mechanical, engineering at college. In 1878, Woods became an engineer aboard the *Ironsides*: A British Steamer, and within two years he was handling a steam locomotive on the D&S Railroad.

In 1887, he patented the most advanced of many inventions: the Synchronous Railway Telegraph. This device was designed for the purpose of averting accidents by keeping each train informed of the whereabouts of the one immediately ahead of it, in communicating with stations from moving trains, and in promoting general social and commercial intercourse.

Woods marketed this product as well as the others which followed it through his own company.

A perusal of patent files in Washington, D.C. shows Woods to have been an extremely prolific inventor, as well as a highly important one. In the 20 year span between 1879 and 1899, no less than 23 separate inventions bear his name. In 1887 alone, he registered seven separate inventions with the patent office, all of them connected with the ingenious railway communication system he devised.

Mr. Woods died in New York City on January 30, 1910.



GWEN WALKER