

Gossip of the Movie Lots

By Harry Levette

DEFENDING BILL ROBINSON
HOLLYWOOD (ANP)—Because it is my custom to refuse to believe more hearsay until proved, I stopped a friend short in his tirade the other day when he began to lambast Bill Robinson, the almost legendary "Bojangles," and in my opinion greatest of all the single vaudeville acts.

The friend, although he is a veteran screen player, has never undertaken the colossal task of alone entertaining and pleasing everybody in a theater audience. So when he wanted to relate in horrified tones and righteous indignation what two or three others had heard that Bill had bowled out and insulted a little colored girl at the Million Dollar theatre, I would not discuss the rumor. I wanted only

to hear from the theatre manager and Bill.

So later on, downtown in the offices I discussed the incident with the management of the Metropolitan theatre circuit, which headed by the Orpheum includes the Million Dollar, Lincoln, Los Angeles, Rio, Globe, and the Palace-Newark. They deplored the fact that an unpleasant incident had occurred, and explained it thus:

An after-school crowd of young girls and boys were seated in the front rows keeping up quite a lot of noise, and as usual heckling of vaudeville acts they did not like. Bill, fresh from a tour during which he had been nightly honored and is dancing applauded to encores after encores, was made the target of a hail of complimentary remarks and puns led by a girl about 12 years old. Coming thoroughly exasperated, Robinson stopped dancing and asked his tormen-

ters to come on the stage. She stood up, and after reprimanding her severely, he walked off the stage to his dressing room without finishing his act.

However, the circuit management took into consideration that a headliner as internationally famous as Bill, and who has never had so free such an experience during the many years he has appeared here, might be caught off guard and lose his temper. Hence they feel that parents should either accompany their younger children to the theatre or train them to not under any circumstances annoy or insult the actions of musicians on the stage.

They also declared that the artistry of Robinson's act was new to them; that leaping, hand springs, cartwheels, spins, running, sliding, and juggling was rated by them as dancing rather than the perfect rhythm of Bill Robinson's tips that have earned him the title of "king of all dancers."

Unfortunately, as is always the case as concerns a celebrity, many made a mountain out of a mole-hill of the incident. As for me, I would

rather think of the many good deeds Bill has done. Making a playground possible for Harlem children is but one, and write here on the coast he has never been known to refuse a request for charity. The People's Independent Church of Christ to which he belongs always appears in and aids benefits; has always been an outspoken foe of discrimination, which resulted in his breaking down of the color bar at the swanky Cafe De Paris on the 20th Century-Fox lot. Likewise, Bill never refuses to aid in drives by other minority groups, especially the Jewish relief funds for the aged. So I agree with the theatre management that the Million Dollar incident should be forgotten.

Paintings Displayed At St. Augustine's

Raleigh — On display in the Sarah Hunter Room of the Benson Library at St. Augustine's

"TOWN" WELL RECORDED IN HERE

RALEIGH — The presentation by the Players of Thornton Wilder's "Town" was enthusiastically received by large audiences Friday and Saturday nights in Greenleaf Hall at Shaw University.

The imagination of the audience was exercised as well and Mrs. Eithylene H. Thomas, secretary of the large cast were highly praised for the power and effectiveness with which the simple story was unfolded.

A singular figure in the play was the stage manager, part played by alternate nights by Herbert H. Raleigh and Dorinda Avon, Wilmington.

Turning in excellent performances along with the stage managers were, Ledonice Smith, Rockingham; Fred Archer, Reidsville; Helen Jean Harrison, Wilson; Yvonne Prunty, North Fork, West Va.; Laura Burnette, Mebane; Felicia Williams, Portsmouth, Va.; Perry Taylor, Princeton, N. J.; Willie Neale, Roca, Va.; Yarrowburgh Williams, Eastville, Va.; Mary Carter, Philadelphia, Pa.; Sandy Yancy, Manson; David Richardson, Norfolk; and Thelma Stokes, New

'Wings' Head Presents Album To Sailor At Sea

NEW YORK — Somewhere at sea or in a distant port, Steward Lee John Williams, J., of the United States Navy, will receive a belated Christmas present from Reverend Lynn T. Settle, originator and director of the Wings Over Jordan Choir.

An album of Wings Over Jordan recordings, autographed by Rev. Settle, has been sent to the young sailor as a token of friendship and appreciation.

Reverend Settle and the Wings Over Jordan Choir received a letter from Mr. Williams on December 18, which was written as his ship passed through the Suez Canal. He wrote to express his pleasure in finding an album of the Wings Over Jordan Virginia, his last trip to Norfolk, Virginia, and requested that certain records be returned to him. He is aware that his young man's national records are eight albums, which includes some of the spirituals he requested.

These were: David Williams, Christine Watson, James Bridgers, Dorothy Stacker, Christine Watson, port News, Va.

They were capably supported by the following: Charles Whitaker, Herbert Mallette, John Turner, Frederick Graham, Edwin Allen, Robert Jones, Thelma Stokes, Marjorie Ford, Eula Pearl Watson, Martha Cheek, Mary Ledbetter, Ruth Olin Walker, Bettie Lou Gilliam, Florence Geneva Boone, Geraldine Turner, Rosetta Norwood, Columbia

ENVOY KING AT ELLINGTON'S RECEPTION

WASHINGTON — (ANP)—Liberian Envoy Extraordinary Charles D. B. King, first minister plenipotentiary of Liberia to the United States, will be principal speaker at a testimonial-luncheon at the Savoy Plaza Hotel in New York City, Dec. 26 honoring Duke Ellington, famous orchestra leader and composer.

The testimonial has been planned by the executive committee of the National Committee for the American Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Liberia in

recognition of his having composed a musical score in tribute to the centenary of the Republic of Liberia.

The composition, known as "The Liberian Suite," is a serious study with themes depicting the growth and development of the small West African Republic.

The work was composed in support of a commission given Mr. Ellington early this year by the committee. It will be performed for the first time at the Ellington concert at Carnegie Hall on the evenings of Dec. 26 and 27.

Congressman William L. Dawson, Chicago; Atty. Perry W. Howard, Washington, and Frank L. Stanley, Louisville publisher, are co-chairmen of the national committee.

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Sunday and Monday
Dec. 28-29
Allen Lane — In
"Santa Fe Uprising"

Tuesday and Wednesday
Dec. 30-31
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"RETURN OF MONTE CRISTO"

Thursday
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