

# Royal Variety Show discovers 4 famous stars

By WALTER HAYES

**F**OUR of Britain's favourite variety stars, who have been topping the bill for a combined total of 75 years, were "discovered" yesterday.

Carroll Gibbons, Charlie Kunz, Billy Thorburn and Vera Lynn were chosen with 31 other acts for the Royal Variety Show on October 29—the first time they appear in a Royal Variety.

Charlie Kunz was a star on 'syncopated pianoforte' in the thirties.

Billy Thorburn was Uncle Jazz of Children's Hour in the B.B.C.'s Savoy Hill days. Carroll Gibbons has been a big name in dance music for 20 years.

Vera Lynn—the wartime forces sweetheart—has been relegated to the back rooms recently.

## GRACIE'S SIXTH

Who else is new? Arthur English—the super spiv—who was a £6 a week painter two years ago; Kenneth Horne and Richard Murdoch; Jimmy Edwards, Patricia Morison, Sally Ann Howes and Anona Winn.

Who is "old"? Gracie Fields (Royal Show No. 6), the Crazy Gang (No. 8), Norman Evans, Eddie Gray, Cicely Courtneidge.

A black bombshell who will make her British debut at the Royal Show is 30-year-old Pearl Primus, Trinidad-born and acclaimed America's greatest coloured dancer.

## Mrs. Banks (THAT'S GRACIE)

# launches TV in North

**T**ELEVISION came officially to the North last night in a half-hour ceremony before the cameras at Manchester Town Hall.

The B.B.C. chairman, Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, made a speech.

Then the formalities were forgotten as Richard Dimbleby introduced a woman in a Lancashire shawl with a giant chrysanthemum on her head, as "Mrs. Banks from Rochdale." It was Gracie Fields.

She poked Dimbleby in the ribs and said: "I'm never going to be more than 39, even if I have got white hair."

## Music hall 'rookie' in Command show

**S**URPRISE name in the list of artists chosen to appear in the Royal Command Variety Performance on October 29 is Sally Ann Howes.

Although the twenty-one-year-old daughter of musical comedy star Bobby Howes has made many films, she has been a variety artist for only a few days. She appeared at a London music hall a fortnight ago and her song and dance routine was a great success.

Sally, blonde and petite, began rehearsing as soon as she heard the good news yesterday.

The Queen, and probably Princess Margaret, will be

in the audience, at London's Victoria Palace.

A newcomer to Britain whom they will see is Pearl Primus, a girl from Trinidad who has spent months in the African jungle learning native dances. Her grandfather was a witch doctor.

Vera Lynn, for years a top liner, is another to get her first Royal chance.

8.20

Northern  
MUSIC-HALL

from the Theatre Royal, Leeds with Gracie Fields  
Donald Peers, Albert Modley  
Jimmy James and Company  
The Trio Grossetto, The Two Pirates  
Audrey Wayne, Muriel Young  
The Black Dyke Mills Band  
The Yorkshire Girls' Choir  
The Twelve Music-Hall Maids  
Compère, Archie Andrews  
Assisted by Peter Brough

The miracle of Gracie Fields, topping the bill again at the Palladium, is that her act is more sophisticated these days, but the audiences still adore her. The old spell is there, if the songs are slicker. She evokes memories with songs sung in the old manner, but she is best in tender love lyrics. "Our Gracie" has mellowed into an elegant, soft-voiced woman.

## Gracie With Troops

Gracie Fields visited the British military hospital in Trieste while on a tour singing to British troops, says Associated Press.

## Old school pals star in Royal Variety

By Emery Pearce

**T**WO young inseparables who only two years ago decided to chuck up their clerical jobs "and have a bang at radio variety" have hit the top.

They are impressionists Tony Fayne and David Evans. Today they will learn by first post that they have been chosen for the Royal Command Variety Performance.

Tony, now 27, and David, 28, were in the same class at the Cathedral School, Bristol.

## Dozen voices

Three years ago they met for lunch. "Remember when we used to impersonate the teachers at school?" said Tony. Then people in the restaurant were amazed because the two young men started up a heated conversation in a dozen different voices, punctuated with hoots of laughter.

"You should be on radio," said a waitress.

*A year later, they were.*

Listeners heard what seemed to be the voice of Howard Marshall say: "England 55 for nine wickets. Hutton 55." Then John Arlott drawing: "Lindwall tears up and bowls underarm to Compton."

All the voices were Tony's and David's. It was a new form of crazy commentary, and listeners loved it.

Thirty-five acts, from the Crazy Gang to Sally Ann Howes, will be packed into the Command Performance at the Victoria Palace on Monday, October 29.

## Gracie again

Heading the list, issued last night, is Gracie Fields. It is her sixth Royal Variety performance.

Stars from the theatre include Florence Desmond, Cicely Courtneidge, Patricia Morison and Valeric Tandy.

Stars from radio include Vera Lynn, Jimmy Edwards, Arthur English, Anona Winn, Richard Murdoch and Kenneth Horne, and Charlie Kunz.

Stars from the cinema and variety stage include Ivor Moreton and Dave Kaye, piano duet-tists; the Wire Brothers, a knockabout comedy act; the Eight Volants (acrobats and tumblers), and Joaquin Perez-Fernandez with South American Indian Dancers.