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'A History of North Regional Broadcasting' - JACK HOLLINSHEAD

(Studio Manager- Joined Jan: 1930)

INTERVIEW 2 (of 53) No Interview Notes; Detailed INDEX and TIMINGS:-

00.00 Trevor

Hill: (Original Introduction) The most celebrated dog in the history of Sound Recording is, believe it or not, still going around today. You'll find this loveable mongrel - 'Nipper' by name, listening to 'His Master's Voice'. He's been doing that on **H.M.V.** since 1912.

A record of a different kind in the history of the BBC's North Region is held by a dog who had his day from October 1932 until the end of 1943. His name is 'Raq' - and he was often heard, '**Out With Romany**'. The name Romany was created, like the magical series, by the **Rev: Bramwell Evens**. On the wireless, 'Raq' existed only in the mind of the listener - but 'Raq' is very much alive and well even today in the person of former BBC 'Effects Man', **Jack Hollinshead**.

And if all that's true, Jack, please bark twice for 'Yes'.

01.48

Jack (does so)

TH Post-war, Jack, you went on doing some 'barking', didn't you.

02.00

Jack (explains for **Alan Ayckbourn** because, until good quality Tape came into being you could hear the 'hiss' from an Effects Disc. Then explains what brought him into the BBC; his interest in Amplifiers and (02.41) how the 'Job Centre' in the 1930's advised he go along to B.H. Manchester; the Interview with **John Beresford Clarke** who required a 'tidy' person to look after the Manchester **Effects Studio**; story about his wishing to see the tidyness of Jack's wardrobe at home. Turned out to be the 'tidy type' the BBC required. He got the job. (04.00) Jack then describes the Effects studio; **the two hand-wound gramophones; 3 Albums of Effects records** and how he produced some of the '**Studio Spot Effects**' (04.48).

06.16

TH (ask Jack what sort of hours he had to do in those days)

Jack (At first, evenings when the cast, who had daytime jobs, arrived. Tells how they assisted him in doing the Spot Fx)

07.20

TH Asks what sort of money they paid him.

Jack (About 17s 6 pence a week; not bad for the 1930's. How he managed to buy his first car for £6-10s, taxed and insured. **Describes the FX Studio in some detail; (08.15) the Marconi Carbon Microphone which picked up the sounds from the Gramophone Effects records etc. Actor Alan Mitcheson and his assistance with some of the Studio Spot.**

09.00

Describes how he carried the portable gramophone, playing an Fx record, away from the microphone to create a 'Fade-Out'.

10.25 Describes a 1930's Rehearsal.

11.12

TH (Asks if all this was done from **Bank Buildings, No 33 Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester from the year 1929).**

Jack: (Replies - mentions the other Manchester Broadcasting Centres prior to Piccadilly

11.40

Then talks about **James R Gregson** producing Radio Drama from Leeds; the part-time schoolmaster, **Cecil McGivern** and his 'Pit' plays; his Feature on the construction of 'H.M.S. Newcastle'; **(12.48)**

The Yorkshire Radio Players; and Producers **Geoffrey Bridson, Robin Whitworth** and **Archie Harding** the Programme Director - who also did the Drama Panel.

13.27

The Feature on the **Building of the Mersey Tunnel** and just how he made the '**Pneumatic drill**' Sound Fx - then, 1936 and **(14.37)** the arrival of the **Thornycroft Mobile Van;** a Studio and Recording Unit).

TH (Asks on what occasion that was first used)

14.44

Jack (Talks about **The Grassmere Games**; - getting the discs back to Manchester that same night and the Transmission from the Watts Room at BH.

15.15

How they 'marked up' each record in bands. Outstanding 1930's **Radio Productions** he then mentions:-

1) Victor Smythe's 1914-1918 war, '**Red Night, Grey Dawn**' with the attic sandbagged and how the 'shells and bombs' were set off; - **the fact that the staircase later had to be re-plastered after that production.**

16.27

2) The Bridson '**Harry Hopeful**' series with **Frank Nichols**; (17.30) the joint-studio production using **Manchester and Glasgow studios** for the celebrated '**The March Of The '45**' Radio Feature; - the first time, '**Live**'.

20.20

The **Dickinson Street Power Station BBC Transmitter**; the **Moorside Edge Transmitting Hall** and its Rushton diesels and his Story; '**How I put the new Stagshaw, Newcastle, Transmitter off the air on it's Opening Night with a single pistol shot !!!**'.

23.00

TH (asks Jack about the use of wet cell Batteries; early Studio 'Cueing')

Jack explains the Studio '**Control Procedure**' and (24.48) - tells the Story about '**the lights that failed**' in the middle of a 'Northern Orchestra' concert when Studio I, Manchester, was suddenly plunged into darkness.

(Ends:-)

Trevor

Hill; "You must have wondered what was going to happen next in those days ! ". (Jack laughs).

END - INTERVIEW 2. (26.19")