PERSONALITIES IN MUSIC

HOAGY CARMICHAEL, A. S. C. A. P.

Lawyer Into Songwriter

By Daniel I. McNamara

"HOAGLAND CARMICHAEL, Attorney-at-Law."

If the owner of the shingle bearing this legend had been content to remain an obscure young lawyer in Florida, the music-loving American nation might never have sung "Stardust." For Hoagland Carmichael, attorney, and Hoagy Carmichael, composer of popular songs, are identical. Chief difference in the extremes of his dual personality is that the lawyer was a dud—the composer a top-ranking success.

Today Carmichael is one of Hollywood's creators of song with dozens of the nation's favorites to his credit. "Lazybones," Rockin' Chair," "Georgia On My Mind," "One Morning In May," "Little Old Lady" . . . these are a few of the songs that have spread his fame as a composer, and effectually buried all recollections of his having ever been an aspiring young attorney.

Carmichael learned to play piano by ear from his mother, whose ragtime playing was the delight of the Bloomington, Indiana, neighborhood where he was born. He played his way through law school in Indiana University with a three-piece orchestra, and by way of diversion composed "Riverboat Shuffle," in the Negro spiritual idiom. A group of professional musicians, the Wolverines, liked the number, learned it from Hoagy and recorded it. A New York publisher heard the record and printed the music. It was Hoagy's first published work. Then Paul Whiteman picked up his "Washboard Blues," but even that distinction did not impress Hoagy with his aptness in music. His mind was on the law.

He entered a New York bank as a step towards a legal career, declining an offer from a New York publishing house; then went to Florida to hang out his shingle. Clients failed to materialize. He returned to Indiana, wavered for a year between law and music, then joined Jean Goldkette's orchestra. A few months later he organized his own orchestra, in Indianapolis; then with the completed manuscripts of "Stardust" and "Lazybones" set out for Hollywood. His reception was disheartening. He returned to New York, entered a music publishing house as arranger, and after two years, resurrected the almost forgotten "Stardust."

It was an overnight sensation. The young lawyer-composer vaulted into the spotlight. He was besieged with offers. "Lazybones" followed "Stardust." Hollywood called. He has been in the film capital for three years, interrupting his work in pictures occasionally to write a song or two for musical shows, for example, "Little Old Lady," which was the hit of Beatrice Lillie's Broadway vehicle, "The Show Is On."

Hoagy is of medium stature, slim, athletic, a crack tennis player. Happily married, he enjoys his Hollywood home; is a culinary expert, and confesses he'd rather concoct an appetizing new dish than turn out a new song hit.

(Music Features & Photo Syndicate)

Fashions with Connie

A NEW Feature In THE GUIDE

ROBESON HOME; LAUDS SOVIET EDUCATION

New York, May 25 (CNA)—Paul Robeson, internationally famous actor and seinger, arrived in New York this week on the S. S. Normandie.

He explained that he had returned to the United States in connection with a concert our possibly to act in the legitimate theatre.

Robeson said that his son Paul, who has attended school in Moscow, is now in a Soviet school in London. Pointing out that under the Soviet system there is no dist crimination, Robeson declared:

"The boy gets a cultural advantage in that school that he would not have in an American or British school. I am tremenously interested in the social aspects of Russia. My Boy is already interested in aviation engineering. You could imagine what chance a Negro aviation engineer would have in the United States or in England."

The Soviet School in London which young Paul attends, is maintained primarily for children of Soviet citizens residents in the Brtiish capital.

Robeson has lived abroad for several years, only visiting the United States occassionally to make a concert tour or to appear in a motion picture. For a number of years he has spent three or four months annually in the Soviet Union. He is as well known and as popular with the great masses of the Soviet people as he is with the Negro people of the United States.

Lawrence Brown, his close friend and piano accompanist arrived with him.

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BIRMINGHAM EDITOR HAS PLAN FOR AME'S

Birmingham, Ala., June 1 (C)—Editor Robert Durr, of the Birmingham Weekly Review, 416 17th street, N., has come forward with the suggestion that the AME church consolidate all its colleges and universities into two universities—one in the deep South, and one in the North; consolidate the three denominational papers into one; and drastically reduce the number of presiding elders.

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BIRTH OF A SONG

From ASCAP Files by Joseph R. Fliesler and Paul Carruth

(Music Features & Photo Syndicate: Reg., N. Y.)

"DEEP RIVER" Arranged by Harry T. Burleigh

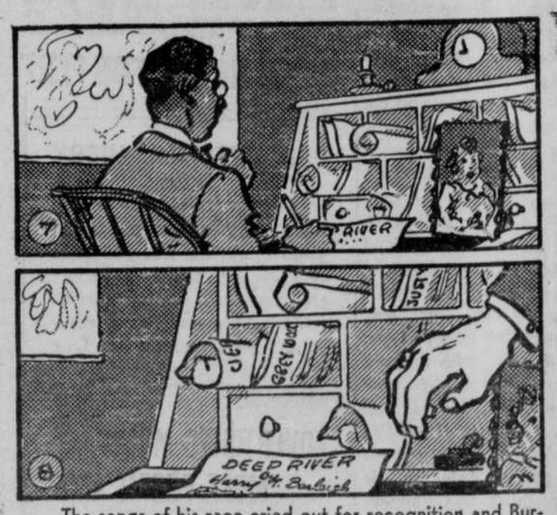
GRANDSON of a blind Maryland slave, Harry first saw light in Erie, Pa. His mother's college degree got her a school job, as janitress.

The young Burleigh worked as a lamplighter, deck steward and other such jobs. He had a fine voice and a good memory for the plantation songs his mother sang.

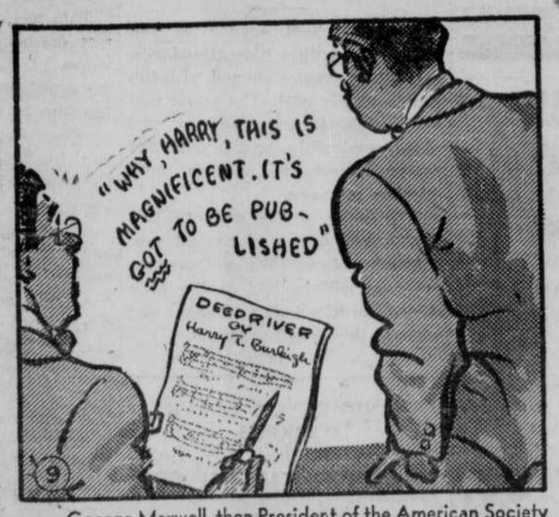
He sang so well in Erie churches that friends sent him to New York for a try at the Thurber Scholarship. Composer MacDowell's mother helped Burleigh make the grade.

Dvorak learned "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" from Burleigh and it found a place in the second theme of the first movement of his New World Symphony. Harry meanwhile joined the choir of St. George's Church.

He has been in St. George's ever since, was also for 25 years in Temple Emanu-el choir and sang for European royalty including King Edward the Seventh.



The songs of his race cried out for recognition and Burleigh, remembering from his mother, wrote them down in modern arrangements.



George Maxwell, then President of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, urged Burleigh to publish these arrangements as well as his original compositions.

"Deep River" has taken its place as an American classic and with Burleigh's other works earned him membership in ASCAP, which licenses their public performance for profit.