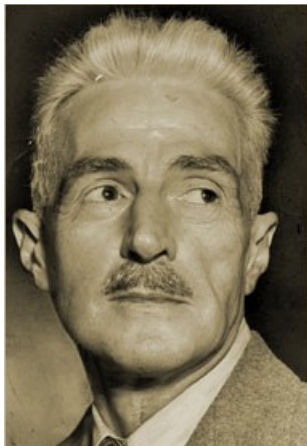




The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective Radio Program

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American Author, Dashiell Hammett, creator of Sam Spade--and The Thin Man, The Fat Man, I Deal In Crime, and Secret Agent X-9

1950

Broken Leg Stops Spade

HOLLYWOOD, Oct. 31.—(INS) Howard Duff, the Sam Spade of radio, faced a 3-month layoff from his screen and radio work today as a result of a fractured right leg. The actor fell down the stairs at his home.

FILM RIGHTS TIED UP

Howard Duff is still anxious to play his radio character, Sam Spade, on the screen. But the film rights are tied up by a suit brought by Warner Brothers. The studio claims prior rights to the character, having introduced him in "The Maltese Falcon."

Neither Howard Duff or any other star will be playing Sam Spade on the screen. Warners claims Sam belongs to them and has tied up the character through litigation. . . .

More to the point, here's *Howard Duff's* contemporaneous observations--in his own words--about the premature demise of *Sam Spade, Detective*, from the Tuesday, October 10, 1950 Edition of *The Bakersfield Californian*:



Duff Mourns Demise of Sleuth Sam Spade

By BOB THOMAS

HOLLYWOOD, Oct. 10. (AP) -- "I'm sorry Sam couldn't show up. He's not very reliable, you know.

The very first Adventures of Sam Spade CBS spot ad, from July 12, 1946



Original Resin Cast Maltese Falcon Statuette from 1941's The Maltese Falcon



1931's The Maltese Falcon

Probably out on a case."

This was Howard Duff jesting about Sam Spade, the radio sleuth Duff has been playing on the air. He admitted a little lonely without Sam, from whom he parted company three weeks ago. The program was yanked off the air.

"It was very simple," Duff explained. "The sponsor wanted a cheaper show."

But what seemed like a simple cancellation of an air show has created something of a furor. The sponsor has reportedly been flooded with a wave of letters, many of them of a threatening nature. The NBC offices here have received protest letters executives say total 45,000, with other parts of the network not yet counted.

NBC, which has no further connection with the show, is reportedly peeved over what to do with the mail. The network was further upset by zealous members of the Howard Duff Fan Club, which set up a picket protest at the studio after Sam Spade was cancelled.

All this amazes and no doubt delights Duff, who confesses an affection for his late friend, Spade.

"I'd hate to see the old boy die off forever," he remarked. "After all, we've been together four and a half years without a vacation or Summer layoff. You can grow fond of a person in that time."

Not to mention the moola which the weekly show brought in. And Duff can credit Spade for bringing him to film fame. He was just another free-lance radio actor when he tried out for the show. Much to his surprise, he landed the role.

His radio fame led him to the movies, and the late Mark Hellinger picked him for "Brute Force" and "The Naked City." He caught on with the bobbysocked crowd and currently leads at least one of the movie magazine popularity polls.

Duff said he hoped to return to the air with Spade, but he has his doubts. Radio is still suffering from the TV jitters and many another top show is languishing without a sponsor.

"Any sponsor who buys Sam will want the TV rights, too," he said.

I can't get tied down to a weekly TV show and do pictures. That would interfere with the deal."

Also, there is a legal snag. Warner Brothers has sued to stop the air show. Sam Spade is the character Humphrey Bogart played in "The Maltese Falcon" and the studio claims it owns all rights. The case has not yet been settled.

Sam has been the most popular private eye on the air and Duff offered his theory: "I think it's because Sam doesn't take himself seriously. He can always see the humor in a situation.

"Still, he can be tough when he needs to be. He's a man of extremes. When he's in good spirits, he's higher than anyone. But when he's low, there's nobody lower.

Ah, I'll miss him," sighed Duff, and I thought I saw a tear drop into his cup of black coffee.



1936's *Satan Met A Lady*



1941's Film Noir Classic
The Maltese Falcon

After the cancellation of 'Sam Spade,' *Howard Duff*, who confessed an affection for his late friend Sam, remarked "I'd hate to see the old boy die off forever."

And so *effectively* ended one of Radio's most heralded and beloved Golden Age Radio Programs. *Dashiell Hammett* enjoyed a relatively brief dalliance with Hollywood for just over seventeen years on and off. During that period his *Maltese Falcon* was brought to the big screen three times:

- 1931's *The Maltese Falcon* with *Ricardo Cortez* as Sam Spade, *Bebe Daniels* as 'Ruth Wonderly' (among other colorful aliases), scary looking *Walter Long* as the ill-fated Miles Archer, *Una Merkel* as Effie, and *Dudley Digges* as Casper Gutman. While briefly renamed '*Dangerous Female*' once it came to Television, it has since reverted to its original *The Maltese Falcon* by its current owners, *Turner Classic Movies*.
- 1936's *Satan Met A Lady*, directed by *William Dieterle*, and starring *Warren William* as 'Ted Shane' (Sam Spade), *Bette Davis* as Valerie Purvis (among other colorful aliases), *Arthur Treacher* as Anthony Travers (Joel Cairo), *Allison Skipworth* as Madame Barrabas (Kasper Gutman), *Maynard Holmes* as 'Kenneth' (Wilmer Cook), and *Marie Wilson* as Miss Murgatroyd (Effie). A rather transparently veiled send up to *The Maltese Falcon*, it's pretty much a calculatedly out of control farce version of Hammett's classic.
- 1941's classic *The Maltese Falcon*, directed by *John Huston*, screenplay by both *John Huston* and *Dashiell Hammett*, and starring *Humphrey Bogart* as Sam Spade, *Mary Astor* as Brigid O'Shaughnessey (among other colorful aliases), *Sydney Greenstreet* as Kasper Gutman, *Peter Lorre* as Joel Cairo, *Elisha Cook, Jr.* as Wilmer Cook and *Ward Bond* as Detective Polhaus. This is considered the definitive *The Maltese Falcon*.

The Radio version of Sam Spade came to the airwaves in the Summer of 1946 as a Summer replacement for the popular *Woody Herman Show*. Titled *The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective*, Radio's Sam Spade was interpreted by young *Howard Duff*, a relative newcomer to Network Radio. And although Duff was a relative novice in a featured Network role, he was supported by no less than 'Radio's First Lady', *Lurene Tuttle* as Effie Perrine and legendary Radio Director *William Spier*, who'd already made a name for himself with the equally legendary and timeless *Suspense* series. *Gil Doud*, *Robert Tallman*, *William Spier*, *Jason James [as Jo Eisinger]*, *Elliot Lewis*, *E. Jack Neuman*, and *Howard Swanton* took the writers' credits over the years, fashioning Radio's Sam Spade as a cross between *Ricardo Cortez's* roguish Spade and *Warren William's* wise-cracking, over-the-top Ted Shane from 1936's *Satan Met A Lady*.

Indeed, although the series had a markedly humorous, tongue-in-cheek slant, most of the mysteries--or 'capers'--presented during the production run were wonderfully twisty, convoluted who-dun-its in their own right. There were several other competing, similarly entertaining detective mysteries on Radio at the time. What set Sam Spade apart from most of them was the wonderful interplay between



Howard Duff with his two Radio mentors, Lurene Tuttle, left, and William Spier, center. ca. 1949

Howard Duff and *Lurene Tuttle*, masterfully timed and paced by *William Spier*. And though not characteristically noted for his comedic timing, Spier's crisp, fast-moving direction never truly allowed the occasional slapstick or *Tuttle-Duff* exchanges to sidetrack the arc of the script.

The equally entertaining *Let George Do It* allowed for a great deal of wise-cracking and droll humor between *George Valentine* and his own 'Effie', *Brooksie*. George and Brooksie had a more intentionally romantic slant to their relationship, whereas *Effie Perrine* had always pretty much reconciled herself to Sam Spade's philandering, while still holding a torch for him. Indeed, Effie's endearing loyalty and concern for Sam became an integral element of the underlying humor of the production as she indefatigably attempts to reform her reprobate employer.



Lurene Tuttle is never more of a scene-stealer than in *The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective*. And professionally generous to a fault, her on-air self-deprecation, feigned witlessness and blind adoration of Sam Spade, create an unprecedented opportunity for *Howard Duff* to shine as her drunken, morally and economically challenged scoundrel of a boss. But in yet another perfect marriage of character to actor, Howard Duff manages to pull it all off, despite his character's scurrilous proclivities. By the end of every episode he somehow finds his conscience, solves the mystery at issue, and redeems himself in time to say, "Goodnight, Sweetheart"--and appear to sincerely mean it.

The magic combination of *Tuttle, Spier* and *Duff* was virtually guaranteed to gain an unprecedentedly loyal audience. Duff, despite his character's wanton moral abandon, continued to charm his audiences for over 220 episodes. Ever the archetypal bad-boy as Sam Spade, Howard Duff's natural charm and irrepressible *Irish* humor elevated both his role and his career opportunities with each passing year of Sam Spade's production run. But *Tuttle, Duff* and *Spier* didn't work their magic in a vacuum. The program's brilliant writers provided consistently intelligent, wonderfully humorous, and engaging material for their stars and director.

The cast held dress rehearsals for the 1949 run on Sundays at noon.



Director Milton Stark, Howard Duff, William Spier and script editor Ed Nathan go over the script--obviously enjoying the process.



William Spier and Howard Duff in rehearsal for The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective



Howard Duff and Bill Spier hammer out a script with Spier's wife June Havoc looking on.

It's quite obvious from almost every episode that the production staff loved their work. One can find an audible break of one kind or another in almost every episode. Either the cast didn't have to rehearse that much or the scripts were so funny and well-timed that even after rehearsing they couldn't help but break each other up *on air*. This is a delicate balance, to be sure. If overdone, it can become a distraction to the listening audience. But Spier seems to have created the perfect environment in which to allow such occasional professional lapses to play themselves out, without interfering with the timing of his scripts. Given both *Lurene Tuttle* and *Howard Duff's* inherent personal charm and good humor, their occasional lapses soon became an anticipated feature of most of their episodes together. Somewhat like the 'Easter Eggs' DVD enthusiasts of today have come to demand from their viewing favorites.



Lurene Tuttle and Howard Duff at the CBS Mike for Sam Spade, ca. 1947

Keep in mind that this was, for the most part, live radio. While often transcribed for airing in different time zones, the basic production didn't make allowance for any but the most drastic re-cuts or edits between recording session and broadcast. The program's most avid fans came to expect these charming, spontaneous lapses from their two favorite stars. Over the years, their scripted--and *unscripted*--interplay only endeared them even further to their rapidly growing audience.

DOUBLE DUTY--HOWARD DUFF, busy man these days, brings his portrayal of Private Eye **SAM SPADE** to **THE JOAN DAVIS SHOW** at 6:00 P.M. tomorrow and then faces added dangers on his own show later in the evening at 9:00. **SAM** gets it coming and going this week.



Lurene Tuttle SAM'S GAL

It's also quite apparent that the various supporting casts over the years enjoyed their appearances on Sam Spade with equal zeal. Broadcast from the West Coast for almost the entire run, the predominately West Coast actor pool provided a wealth of talent to the productions. Radio legends *Olan Soulé, Bea Benadaret, Hans Conreid, Elliott Lewis, Paul Frees, Junius Matthews, William Conrad, Jack Webb, Frank Lovejoy, Tudor Owen, Wally Maher, Dick Powell, Jerry Hausner, Cathy Lewis, Joseph Kearns, Jeanette Nolan, Mary Jane Croft, Betty Lou Gerson, and Elliott Reid* supported the production over the years. Indeed, appearances by William Spier's wives *Kay Thompson* and *June Havoc, Peter Lorre,* and Lurene Tuttle's daughter, *Barbara Ruick* (while still a teenager) were among several fascinating, uncredited contributions to the series over the years. To say a good time was had by all, understates the experience. The on-air staff's pranks extended to even their legendary announcer, *Dick Joy*, upon whom several attempts were made over the years to flummox one of Radio's most professional announcers--*to no avail*.

The Bakersfield Californian of January 4th 1948 announces a guest appearance of Sam Spade on The Joan Davis Show

Such was the environment that William Spier created for his cast and crew--and for his listening audience as well. The good humor extended to their sponsor, *Wildroot Cream Oil*, whose emblematic jingle had become part and parcel of every broadcast they sponsored. As equally associated with *Fearless Fosdick* as *Sam Spade*, their advertising campaign featured both fearless sleuths in a series of equally entertaining and engaging comic strips over the years of their sponsorship. Reportedly aired live during each episode, The Wildroot Barbershop Quartet's lively performances of "It's Wildroot Cream Oil, Charlie" remain one of the campier elements of each commercial broadcast.

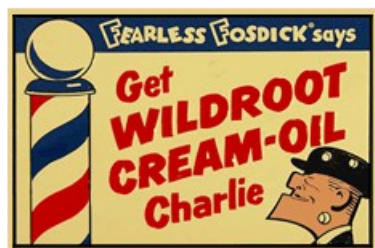
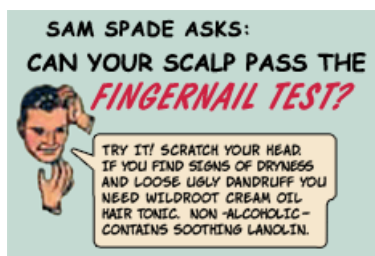


From the November 9th 1946 edition of the Harrisburg Telegraph:

Effie and Sam, in character
ca. 1948



Sam Spade comics advertising Wildroot Cream Oil sprang up for several years in comic books and Sunday newspapers.



Fearless Fosdick Barber Sign, ca.
1954

Sam Spade Solves Missing Denture Mystery on WHP

"The Kandi Tooth Caper" will be solved by Dashiell Hammett's favorite private eye on "The Adventures of Sam Spade" in a two-part presentation. The first part will be given on Sunday, November 10, and the second on Sunday, November 17, at 8 p.m. over WHP.

Let it be understood from the start that "The Kandi Tooth Caper" is not about somebody gone berserk in the sugar shortage. It is about a missionary who is found murdered. Oddly enough, his slayers removed a denture from his mouth. Sam Spade learns that the missionary had acquired the "Kandi Tooth" while laboring among natives in some South Pacific islands. The "Kandi Tooth" is a legendary relic revered by the islanders. The missionary escaped with the "Kandi Tooth" by having it placed in a denture. He was obviously murdered to recover the relic and to fulfill a tribal prophecy. Spade, who is experienced in dealing with more hardened characters, is stumped by this exotic crime. Sam's reading is usually limited to a racing sheet, but by boning up on a little anthropology he solves "The Kandi Tooth Caper."

And from his December 3rd 1946 Radio Review column in The Repository, *John Crosby* chimes in as well:

Radio in Review

By JOHN CROSBY

Mr. Spade and the Kandy Tooth

The curtain had just risen on the Sam Spade program (CBS 9 p.m. Sundays), when Spade's secretary got a phone call from the boss, who, it appears, was in jail charged with murder.

"Bring a pencil and \$20,000 down to the jail at once" he commanded.

"Sam," she protested, "where will I find a pencil at this hour? What are you doing in jail, anyway?"

"My apartment's being redecored, toots."

That is not the sort of bad image you and I would employ in a fairly serious situation but it's hardly surprising to find Spade behaving that way. Dashiell Hammett, who still writes the Spade series, started this offhand sort of talk back in 1934 when he hit the big time with "The Thin Man." He is now the most widely imitated detective story writer on earth and the casual attitude toward homicide has become established as good manners among all plain-clothes cops.

Hammett has always taken a detached and rather cold view of human life. His great detective stories, "The Thin Man," "The Maltese Falcon" and "The Glass Key," rang with authenticity because of it. Now, however, the imitators have so crowded the field that



Al Capp's Fearless Fosdick

Hammett is beginning to sound like one of them. The great virtue of the Sam Spade series is that it's still written by the old master, and once in a while even sounds like it.

The effectiveness of his dialogue (and the above is a rather bad sample) is heightened by his trick of playing against one another a widely divergent crew of characters.

GUTMAN REVIVED

Besides Spade, who can still break a man's thumb without effort or remorse, Hammett recently resuscitated Casper Gutman. Gutman, you will recall, was the elegant and unscrupulous hunk of blubber who chased the Maltese Falcon half way around the world in 1931. At the end of that book, he was dumped into San Francisco Bay, and we were all under the impression that he didn't survive the experience. Well, he did and he's back, still talking his curious 19th century prose. ("And now, sir, if you are so disposed, shall we talk?")

Wilmer, the baby-faced murderer, was not revived for the occasion but Gutman has brought along his brother, an equally furious youngster. There is also a strange young man who says at one point to Spade: "At my hotel, there is a mildewed character who accuses me of acting without charm."

OH, IT SPARKLES!

Says Spade in return: "You better get out of California before Walt Disney sees you." a decidedly arresting remark to hear on the air.

These odd people were all taken from Life, surprising as that may seem. Hammett in his days as a private detective with the Pinkerton agency mixed with a lot of people whom you and I are not likely to encounter in our lifetime. In his books, they had great individual flavor. You never quite knew what they were going to do next. By now, however, they've been reused as often as a paper clip and are getting a little bent and rusty.

Just the same, if you like detective stories of the hard-boiled school, Sam Spade is your best bet. Hammett, incidentally, is still interested in ancient art. The Maltese Falcon has disappeared forever, I guess, but this time Gutman and crew are after the Kandy Tooth, which is right out of Buddah's mouth and is presumably even more valuable than the Falcon. When I last listened, they were still looking.

Copyright, 1946, for the Tribune



Former Republican Congressman J. Parnell Thomas, after being released from prison, ca. 1954 [Life Magazine]



Red Channels Periodical, ca. 1952

And from January 7th 1947 edition of the Williamsburg Journal-Tribune:

Cinderella Tells About Radio And Its Celebrities

By Betty Hasley

Cindy's young "crime detectors" are very enthusiastic about Dashiell Hammett's "The Adventures of Sam Spade" which airs at 7:00 p. m. every Sunday over WMT. This exciting mystery program stars Howard Duff as Sam Spade and he has become so identified with that personality that he's in danger of losing his own identity. Fans hear him on other programs and write about the wonderful performance Sam Spade, not Howard Duff, gave.

Hard-Boiled



Howard Duff stars as a hard-boiled "private eye" in "The Adventures of Sam Spade," which starts on CBS Sunday, Sept. 29

Experts write in about the program. One lady dentist, after hearing "The Kandy Tooth" episode wrote, citing a case in which a university professor of dental anatomy had done ingenious detective work. A ballistics expert sent in statistics and graphs to show the force of recoil of a weapon necessary to knock over a midget. That was a key point in "The Midway Caper." And so it goes. The experts as well as the amateurs are right there with suggestions and advice.

If you like clever, original, keep-you-guessing mysteries, you'll like "The Adventures of Sam Spade."

In his picture it looks as though Sam Spade, I mean

Howard Duff, can take care of himself as well as any given situation, doesn't it?

Lurene Tuttle, one of Hollywood's busiest radio actresses, is heard as Effie Perrine, Spade's secretary. Shw will make her motion picture debut soon in "Heaven Only Knows."

From the September 25th 1949 edition of the Kingsport Times-News:

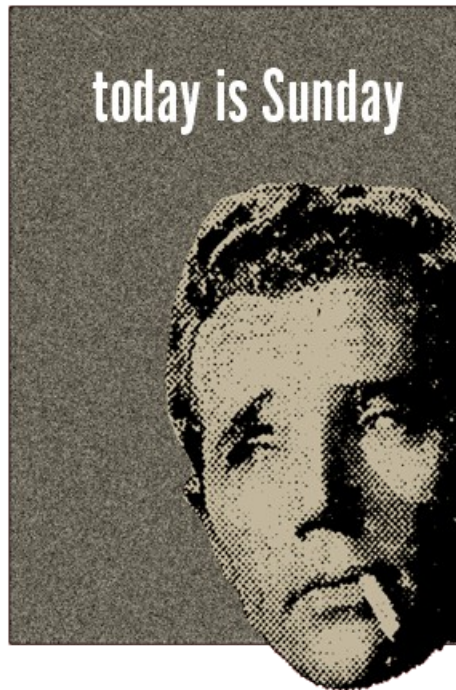
Adventures Of Sam Spade New Sunday WKPT Series

Sam Spade, license number 137596, seldom tells the police all he knows. Sam's the sharp-talking crafty private eye, originated by Dashiell Hammett, and portrayed on the air by Howard Duff. And the Adventures of Sam Spade, coming to WKPT and NBC tonight at 8 for a new Sunday night series, promise plenty of thrills and chills.

Howard Duff, in the title role, has played Sam Spade on the air ever since the series started in 1946. A Bremerton, Washington native, Duff at one time was a window-trimmer in a Seattle department store. The theater was his ambition, and a Seattle radio station gave him his first job . . . not acting, but announcing. He worked there during the day, and acted in Shakespearean dramas with the Repertory Playhouse in the evening, without pay.

That was the beginning. Now, Duff divides his time between radio and films, and is currently being seen in a movie about Sam Spade. On the air, his co-star on the Sunday night show will be Miss Lurene Tuttle, as the ever-essential secretary.

From the January 15th 1950 Baton Rouge Advocate:



THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE are tailored for thrills and excitement. Tonight at 7:00.

Sam Spade

Digging up a murder case almost nearly lands Sam Spade six feet underground in "The Phantom Witness Caper" on "The Adventures of Sam Spade," this evening at 7 p.m. over WJBO-WBRI. Howard Duff stars as Sam Spade on this NBC program.

Two years ago, Spade had a client, Eddie McBride, who was accused of murdering his sweetheart, Julie Van Etten. Eddie hired Spade to find a certain witness to prove his innocence. This witness, an unknown man, had seen Eddie enter Julie's room after she was murdered. However, Spade was unable to find the witness and Eddie was convicted of the crime.

On the night when "The Phantom Witness Caper" begins, Spade receives a call from Eddie at San Quentin. Eddie tells Spade that he has just seen the witness on the warden's television set, watching the wrestling matches at Dreamland auditorium. Thus begins another Sam Spade adventure to thrill mystery fans on JBO-WBRI.

Wildroot Cream Oil's relationship with *The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective* was all roses and champagne until one of Sam Spade's scripts made a passing reference to a notoriously corrupt, Right-Wing Republican Congressional Representative from New Jersey. Thomas, famous for scanning the newspapers for any perceived slight to him or his committee, undertook an 'investigation' of members of *The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective* production company. An archetypal conflicted right-winger, *J. Parnell Thomas*

employed the tried and true right-wing tactic of diverting attention from one's own corrupt dealings by pointing to imagined, fabricated misdeeds of others. In this case, his targets were 'Sam' Hammett and by implication, *Howard Duff* himself. At the same time, investigative journalists *Drew Pearson* and *Jack Anderson* were undertaking investigations of their own--into *Thomas'* own corruption problems.

Hammett had already made many very public, deprecatory observations regarding *J. Parnell Thomas'* right-wing machinations, as well as those of the witch-hunting House Un-American Activities Committee. The HUAC, one of the Right-Wing's more shameful and outlandish 'strawman' witch hunts over the years, was comprised of some of Congress' most sexually conflicted, corrupt, and morally compromised politicians, aides and henchmen who ever gained public office. They exercised their growing power through intimidation, fabricating 'evidence' and outright libel and slander. Duff's efforts in support of labor unions were conflated by the HUAC through their influence over "*Red Channels*", American History's most cowardly, shameful, and *opaque* 'blacklist'. Once a performer's name made an appearance in *Red Channels*, no amount of genuine rebuttal could erase the taint on his or her career.

Even though the damage to *Howard Duff* and *The Adventures of Sam Spade* had already been planted by J. Parnell Thomas, The American Legion [Black Shirt Chapter] and the HUAC, it took Wildroot a year to weigh its 'options'. Apparently feeling that their shiny, slicked-back hair demographic was at risk with further sponsorship of *The Adventures of Sam Spade*, they ruminated over either cancelling *Sam Spade* outright or undertaking another Detective Drama with which to retain the same audience. They decided to do both. Wildroot, to its shame, ultimately canceled *Sam Spade*, citing Dashiell Hammett's 'creator' credit and *Howard Duff'*s starring role. Determined to shift their sponsorship to "*Charlie Wild, Detective*", Wildroot decided to abandon *The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective* entirely. Citing layer upon layer of nonsensical reasons for the series' abrupt cancellation, NBC was understandably deluged with a reported 45,000 to 250,000 demands for the show's reinstatement. But by that time, *Howard Duff* had wisely moved on to a more fulfilling--and financially predictable--Film career.

In an fitting twist, J. Parnell Thomas was brought down at about the same time that Wildroot was approaching NBC about cancelling the program. The House Republican Steering Committee predictably dragged out any sanctions or investigation of Thomas for most of 1949, but a Grand Jury was eventually seated. Thomas was tried and convicted to 18 months in prison for carrying personnel on his Congressional payroll while depositing their pay in his own accounts, and Thomas resigned from Congress in January of 1950, only days before he was to begin his prison sentence at Danbury. In a further, predictable Right-Wing twist, Thomas had taken the Fifth throughout his trial, much the same as Dashiell Hammett had attempted to when he was brought before Thomas's HUAC. In the case of the HUAC, they simply refused to accept a Fifth Amendment election from Hammett. But the trial of J. Parnell Thomas correctly accepted his Fifth Amendment election, while ultimately convicting him anyway.

Hollywood Chatter***Howard Duff's Lonely
As Sam Spade Leaves
Air and Fans Squawk***By **BOB THOMAS**

Associated Press Hollywood Writer

HOLLYWOOD—"I'm sorry Sam couldn't show up. He's not very reliable, you know. Probably out on a case."

This was Howard Duff jesting about Sam Spade, the radio sleuth Duff has been playing on the air. He admitted feeling a little lonely without Sam, from whom he parted company three weeks ago. The program was yanked off the air.

**MR. DUFF**

Duff can credit Spade for bringing him to film fame. He was just another free-lance radio actor when he tried out for the show. Much to his surprise, he landed the role.

HIS RADIO FAME led him to the movies, and the late Mark Hellinger picked him for "Brute Force" and "The Naked City." He caught on with the bobbysocked crowd and currently leads at least one of the movie magazine popularity polls.

"It was very simple," Duff explained. "The sponsor wanted a cheaper show."

But what seemed like a simple cancellation of an air show has created something of a furor. The sponsor has reportedly been flooded with a wave of letters, many of them of a threatening nature.

ZEALOUS MEMBERS of the Howard Duff Fan Club set up a picket protest at the studio after Sam Spade was canceled.

All this amazes and, no doubt, delights Duff, who confesses an affection for his late friend, Spade.

"I'd hate to see the old boy die off forever," he remarked.

News article of October 11th 1950 cites Sam Spade fans' dissatisfaction with the cancellation of The Adventures of Sam Spade

Indeed, some Radio historians cite the cancellation of Sam Spade as the beginning of the end of The Golden Age of Radio. When it became obvious that the political machinations of fringe right-wingers could bring down a program as popular as *Sam Spade* it marked a major sea-change in the rapidly eroding *public ownership of the public airwaves*. NBC finally bowed to the unprecedented public demand to reinstate *Sam Spade* and aired *The New Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective* two months after its cancellation as *The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective*--less its sponsor and star. West Coast NBC up-and-comer *Steve Dunne* was cast as *Howard Duff's* replacement. But as even the show's most ardent fans would admit, the show could never have been the same again without the *Howard Duff/Lurene Tuttle* magic. The program limped along for another twenty-four episodes before its ultimate demise.



SAM AND EFFIE. Steve Dunne, who has replaced Howard Duff as radio's "Sam Spade," doesn't seem to mind the affection of Effie, Spade's secretary, who is portrayed by Lurene Tuttle in the series. The detective show is aired Fridays at 8:30 p.m. over NBC-WTAM.

Local Southern California actor Steve Dunne was tapped to replace Howard Duff when Sam Spade was resurrected in The New Adventures of Sam Spade in November of 1950.

The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective remains one of the most popular programs from The Golden Age of Radio. While there are only a fifth of the Sam Spade *production* programs in circulation, a few previously uncirculated episodes make their way into circulation every few years. One can only hope that all of them will eventually be released by their holders. There's no question that they exist. Consumer recording and transcription equipment was readily available throughout the production run. It's just a matter of time, greed, and conscience before the remainder of the recorded episodes find their way back to the public that popularized them in the first place.

As can be noted in the detailed log below, NBC wasn't quite sure if they'd resurrect *The Adventures of Sam Spade* as late as July of 1951, but as history has proven, there was no further resurrection of the production.

Well, Howard, you got your wish. *Sam Spade* lives on in the hearts and minds of the millions of Golden Age Radio fans who still listen to and treasure this classic Golden Age Radio program even more now than when it first aired.

Series AFRS Sam Spade; AFRS Mystery Playhouse; Charlie Wild, Detective; The McCoy;
Derivatives: BBC: The Radio Detectives

Genre: Anthology of Golden Age Radio Detective Dramas

Network(s): ABC Blue Network [West], CBS, NBC, The AFRS

Audition Date(s) and Title(s):	46-05-01 [Aud] Sam Spade and the Walls of Jericho
Premiere Date(s) and Title(s):	46-07-12 01 The Guiana Sovereign Caper
Run Dates(s)/ Time(s):	46-07-12 to 46-10-04; ABC Network; Thirteen, 30-minute programs; Mondays, 9:00 p.m. 46-09-29 to 49-09-18; CBS Network; One Hundred and Fifty-Six, 30-minute programs; Sundays, 7:00 p.m. 49-09-25 to 51-04-27; NBC Network; Seventy-six, 30-minute programs; Sundays, 7:00 p.m.
Syndication:	AFRS
Sponsors:	Wildroot Cream Oil for the Hair
Director(s):	William Spier, Milton Stark, Gil Doud, Elliott Lewis, Anne Marlowe
Principal Actors:	<i>Howard Duff, Lurene Tuttle, Elliott Lewis, Steve Dunne, June Havoc, Fred Esler, Cathy Lewis, William Conrad, Elliott Lewis, Wally Maher, Sandra Gould, Sara Berner, Alan Reed, Frank Lovejoy, Hans Conried, Tudor Owen, Bea Benadaret, Jack Webb, Dick Powell, Steve Dunne, Tommy Cook, Sidney Miller, Tony Barrett, Verna Felton, Nestor Paiva, Lou Merrill, Shirley Mitchell, Edwin Max, Jerry Hausner, Paul Frees, Kathleen Freeman, William Tracy, Sidney Miller, Herbert Rawlinson, Peggy Webber, Alice Wellman, Charles Smith, Junius Matthews, Edwin Max, Olan Soulé</i>
Recurring Character(s):	Samuel Spade, Effie Perrine, Lieutenant Dundee
Protagonist(s):	Samuel Spade, Effie Perrine
Author(s):	None
Writer(s):	Gil Doud, Robert Tallman, William Spier, Ann Lorraine, Jason James [as 'Jo Eisinger'], Elliot Lewis, Howard Swanton, E. Jack Neuman and Don Terry. Ed Nathan [Script Editor]
Music Direction:	Lud Gluskin
Musical Theme(s):	<i>"Goodnight, Sweetheart"</i> [from the 1931 revue <i>"Earl Carroll Vanities"</i> , by Ray Noble, Jimmy Campbell, and Reg Connelly]; <i>"It's Wildroot Cream Oil, Charlie"</i> , melody by <i>Tad Dameron</i> and <i>Woody Herman</i> , lyrics by <i>J. Ward Maurer</i>
Announcer(s):	Dick Joy
Estimated Scripts or Broadcasts:	243
Episodes in Circulation:	74
Total Episodes in Collection:	60 Plus 2 Rehearsals and 12 AFRS Episodes
Provenances:	RadioGOLDIndex (David Goldin), contributor-at-large <i>Jon Guss</i> , the Hickerson Guide, Martin Grams' <i>Radio Drama</i> .

Notes on Provenances:

All above cited provenances are in error in one form or another. The most helpful provenances were the logs of the RadioGOLDIndex and Audio-Classics and newspaper listings. The least helpful were the Hickerson Guide and Martin Grams' *Radio Dra*

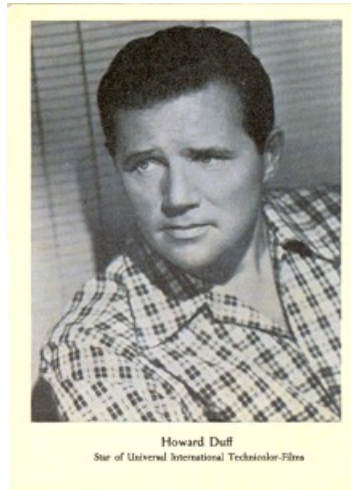
The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective Radio Program Biographies

**Howard
Green Duff
(Sam Spade)**
(1913-1990)

Birthplace:
Bremerton
[Charleston],
Washington,
U.S.A.

Radiography
:

1940 Big Town
1940 Everyman's
Theatre
1941 Latitude Zero
1941 Gulf Screen
Guild Theatre
1941 Romance Of
the Ranchos
1942 The
Pepsodent Show
1943 Major
Bowes' Original
Amateur Hour
1943 Wings To
Victory
1943 The
Westinghouse
Program
1943 Duffy's
Tavern
1943 Spotlight
Bands
1943 The
Telephone Hour
1943 The George



*Early Howard Duff fan card,
ca. 1946*



Howard Duff, ca 1951

Howard Green Duff was born in the former Charleston Township later incorporated into Bremerton, Washington. Both athletic and artistic as a child and young adult, Duff would entertain his school chums as much with his cartoons and caricatures as with his all-around athletic skills. But indeed his athletic career was fated to be cut short by a freak accident which shattered his leg, effectively ending a promising sports career. Duff had already dabbled in amateur Drama in high school and enjoyed the audience reactions so much that he began to consider a career in Entertainment in earnest.

Duff's artistic talent got him some work as a department store window dresser but he hated it. He got the chance to do some radio work at a small local station after he graduated from high school and jumped at it. He did a bit of announcing and spot commercials. While working at the radio station, he apprenticed with the Seattle Repertory Community Theatre Company, eventually graduating from the Seattle Repertory School. He then returned to radio in earnest but within four years Duff found himself drafted into the Army.

Duff's Army service saw him working as an announcer, reporter and journalist for the early *Armed Forces Radio Service* (AFRS), at first serving in the Marianas for six months, then returning stateside to work out of both the *Gower Gulch* and Santa Monica facilities of the *Armed Forces Radio Service Information and Education Recording Center*. It was there that he gained his first worldwide audience recording intros, bumpers, public service announcements and narrations for many of the AFRS' most popular and enduring programming. Duff worked on many of AFRS' most popular series destined for overseas audiences-- *Basin Street* (*The Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street*) among them. Known as 'Sergeant X' to his far-flung *Mystery Playhouse* fans, Duff

Burns and Gracie
 Allen Show
 1943 The Lone
 Ranger
 1943 The Hour Of
 Charm
 1943 Suspense
 1943 Your Hit
 Parade
 1943 The Lifebuoy
 Show
 1943 Chesterfield
 Time
 1943 Waltz Time
 1944 Maxwell
 House Coffee
 Timie
 1944 The Frank
 Morgan Show
 1944 Texaco Star
 Theatre
 1944 The Grand
 Ole Opry
 1944 One Night
 Stand
 1944 The Dinah
 Shore Program
 1944 Sammy
 Kaye's Sunday
 Serenade
 1944 The
 Cleveland
 Symphony
 1944 The Raleigh
 Cigarette Program
 1944 The Jack
 Benny Program
 1944 The
 Carnation
 Contented Hour
 1944 Inner
 Sanctum
 1944 The Xavier
 Cugat Show
 1944 Top Of the
 Evening
 1944 The
 Raymond Scott
 Show
 1944 The Amos 'n
 Andy Show
 1944 The
 Westinghouse
 Program
 1944 The Whistler
 1944 The Pause
 That
 Refreshes...On the
 Air



Corporal Howard Duff with famed Lt Col. Tom Lewis, the man most instrumental in forming and promoting the Armed Forces Radio Service.



Film Corporal Howard Duff in impromptu script conference with his producer/mentor, Mark Hellinger and Yvonne DeCarlo, for Brute Force (1947). Duff was credited as 'Howard Duff, Radio's Sam Spade'



Howard Duff and Burt Lancaster in Brute Force (1947)



alternated with *Peter Lorre* and 'T4Y' to introduce *Mystery Playhouse* renditions of *The Thin Man*, *Mr. and Mrs. North*, *The Hermit's Cave*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Inner Sanctum*, *Charlie Chan*, and the other popular mystery programs of the era to hundreds of thousands of American Expeditionary and United Nations Forces throughout the world. Pictured at left as a corporal, Duff was eventually honorably discharged as a Staff Sergeant.

Desperate for regular work after his discharge, Howard Duff lived a hand to mouth existence for several months, auditioning in vain for any number of Radio and Film opportunities, only to eventually become utterly frustrated in his efforts. It was in that frame of mind that he auditioned--along with a reported 100 or so other aspiring young actors--for Director William Spier's new Dashiell Hammett project, tentatively titled, "Sam Spade, Detective." In Duff's frame of mind his delivery for the audition was almost flippant. Duff admittedly didn't give the tryout any serious interest, but at the end of the day, it was that very casual, flip delivery that caught Spier's attention. Spier reportedly continued to audition for the role of Sam Spade, but couldn't shake his impression of Duff's delivery. Spier ultimately went with his instincts and gave Howard Duff the nod to appear with 'Radio's First Lady' *Lurene Tuttle* as *Detective Sam Spade* and his long-suffering secretary *Effie Perrine* in "The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective."

Within literally weeks of airing the Sam Spade series, Howard Duff was creating a buzz across America. The on-air chemistry between novice Duff and Radio pro Tuttle was the height of Golden Age Radio magic and quite literally propelled the duo to some of the best early audience numbers in Radio history.

More importantly for Duff, Radio's 'Sam Spade' caught the attention of legendary former media critic and Film Noir producer *Mark Hellinger*. Within six months of airing *The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective*, Hellinger signed Duff to a personal services contract for Hellinger's Film projects. Hellinger had worked for both Warner Bros. and 20th Century Fox, but it was his Universal Pictures projects that got him most interested in Duff's raw, natural charisma. Duff's collaboration with Hellinger would see Duff appear in two of Hellinger's *Jules Dassin*-directed Film Noir classics, *Brute Force* (1947) and *Naked City* (1948). Duff's broad appeal to film audiences in *Naked City* put his Film career into overdrive. Tragically, his driven, charismatic mentor, Mark Hellinger, died suddenly in 1947 of a heart attack at the age of 44.

Thus thrust into the spotlight but with his strongest

1944 Columbia Presents Corwin
 1944 Kay Kyser's Kollege Of Musical Knowledge
 1944 The Charlie Ruggles Show
 1944 The Voice Of Firestone
 1944 Your All-Time Hit Parade
 1944 Everything For the Boys
 1944 The Jack Carson Show
 1944 Molle Mystery Theatre
 1944 Hollywood Mystery Time
 1944 The Camel Comedy Caravan
 1944 The Prudential Family Hour
 1944 Saturday Night Serenade
 1944 Tangee Varieties
 1944 The Jackie Gleason-Les Tremayne Show
 1944 The Kenny Baker Show
 1944 The Charlie McCarthy Show
 1944 The Dick Haymes Show
 1944 The Adventures Of the Thin Man
 1944 It Pays To Be Ignorant
 1944 Birds Eye Open House
 1944 Command Performance
 1945 The Chesterfield Supper Club
 1945 The Treasure Hour Of Song
 1945 The Fred Waring Show
 1945 The Great Gildersleeve
 1945 Guy Lombardo and His Musical

Howard Duff with his two mentors, Lurene Tuttle, left, and William Spier, center. ca. 1946



Lurene Tuttle and Howard Duff at the CBS Mike for Sam Spade, ca. 1947



Effie and Sam, in character ca. 1948



Howard Duff as Sam Spade over NBC, ca. 1949

backer prematurely deceased, Duff responded by redoubling his efforts to learn even more about his craft and his profession. He couldn't have been in better hands. By simply continuing to appear as Sam Spade he was working with two of Radio's most legendary talents--*William Spier and Lurene Tuttle*. Performing in both an Acting Lab under the tutelage [or should that be '*Tuttle-age*'] of *Lurene Tuttle* and Directing Lab under the mentorship of *William Spier*, Duff continued to observe, learn and implement the lessons of two of Radio's greatest mentors with every succeeding broadcast of 'Sam Spade'.

That's not to say that the bewildering array of Radio appearances he'd already compiled by the late 1940s weren't helping as well. Duff's Radiography for the year 1944 alone had him appearing in some fifty other concurrent Radio productions besides his own *Adventures of Sam Spade*. Indeed it was the extraordinary reception of his Sam Spade characterization that had both Duff and Tuttle appearing on some forty other programs *in character as Sam Spade and Effie Perrine*. America, it seems, simply couldn't get enough of the chemistry between Sam Spade and the naive, lovable, ditzy Effie.

From the July 13th 1947 edition of the Brooklyn Eagle:

Air Sleuth Turns Crook in Movies

A radio detective with an audience numbering millions of listeners makes his film debut as a convict in Mark Hellinger's "Brute Force," due Wednesday at Loew's Criterion.

This radio sleuth who turns lawbreaker on the screen is Howard Duff, presented Sunday nights over C. B. S. in "The Adventures of Sam Spade," a mystery series based on Dashiell Hammett characters. Burt Lancaster, Hume Cronyn, Charles Bickford, Yvonne DeCarlo, Ann Blyth, Ella Raines and Anita Colby have the leading roles in the film which revolves around a prison break.

By a coincidence of show business, Duff is directed by Jules Dassin, who was the director, of the stage play, "Birthday," in which Duff appeared for the Actors' Lab. After this play Dassin secured a number of film offers for Duff, all of which the young actor declined. When Dassin was assigned to direct "Brute Force," the first actor whom he suggested for the cast was Duff.

Duff plays the part of an ex-soldier in "Brute

Autographs
 1945 Kraft Music Hall
 1945 Words At War
 1945 The Jimmy Durante Show
 1945 The Fitch Bandwagon
 1945 An Evening With Romberg
 1945 Arch Oboler's Plays
 1945 Theatre Guild On the Air
 1945 This Is My Best
 1945 Hollywood Preview
 1945 The Alan Young Show
 1946 Marcus O'Connor, Detective First Class
 1946 A Gathering In the Air
 1946 Theatre Of Romance
 1946 Cavalcade Of America
 1946 The Cass Daley Show
 1946 Suspense
 1946 Lady Esther Screen Guild Theatre
 1946 Dark Venture
1946 The Adventures Of Sam Spade
 1946 Encore Theatre
 1946 The Life Of Riley
 1946 Favorite Story
 1946 The Rudy Vallee Show
 1947 Voyage Of the Scarlet Queen
 1947 Mr President
 1947 Philco Radio Time
 1947 Mail Call
 1948 Joan Davis Time
 1948 The Amazing



Ida Lupino and Howard Duff in *Woman In Hiding* (1950)



Howard Duff and Ida Lupino, ca. 1952



Bridget Duff seems a bit put out during a photo opportunity on the set of *Mr. Adams and Eve*

Force" and is in real life a veteran of World War II. He Served from 1941 to 1945, was attached to the Armed Forces Radio Service and was active in the Pacific battle area.

The notoriety of his early successes in both Radio and Film found him dating the likes of *Yvonne DeCarlo*, *Ava Gardner*, and eventually Film Noir actress and director *Ida Lupino*. As Duff's star continued to rise, so did his Film, Radio and Television opportunities. Clearly already typecast for a succession of Film Noir projects over the following ten years, Duff was characteristically laid back and pragmatic about the very Sam Spade role that got him there.

Duff's personal and professional appeal came so apparently effortlessly that one gets the impression that Radio, Film and Television history tend to take Duff's natural talent for granted. But then that's precisely how the entertainment world viewed *Lurene Tuttle's* talent as well. Not to elevate Howard Duff's achievements in Radio to the level of *Lurene Tuttle's*, but there's much they shared in common. And to her great credit, *Lurene Tuttle* is arguably most responsible for the oversight of recognition to both her career and Duff's as well.

Radio 'magic' is a far different *intangible* than *screen magic* or *screen chemistry*. On-screen chemistry has many objective and subjective, elements at play. But *Radio magic*, by contrast limited as it is by its aural dimension, is so much harder to pin down. When it comes off--consistently--there's simply no other way to describe it. It's not simply personal chemistry, since the very *purpose* of radio dramatization is to evoke a very personal experience in what amounts to a universal audience. It's far beyond that. And it's that very elusiveness that makes Radio magic so much harder to analyze or dissect. The universal appeal of the Duff/Tuttle years of *Sam Spade* over Radio are simply enigmatic. There's no other rational way to describe them. But there's no escaping the fact that that elusive quality of the *Sam Spade* chemistry owes itself to Howard Duff and *Lurene Tuttle's* very special brand of emotional spontaneity, transparency, integrity and *craftsmanship* in both their roles.

That dramatic crucible paved Duff's way throughout the remainder of his amazing Radio career, a Television career spanning some 300+ appearances over 45 years, and a Film career spanning some twenty feature films. It's no wonder that he ultimately attracted the attention and affection of famed Film Noir actress, producer and director, *Ida Lupino*. Together the couple built on the

Mr Malone
 1949 Fibber
 McGee and Molly
 1949 Philip
 Morris Playhouse
 1950 Sara's
 Private Caper
 1950 The Miracle
 Of America
 1950 Hedda
 Hopper's
 Hollywood
 1951 Hollywood
 Star Playhouse
 1951 The McCoy
 1973 Hollywood
 Radio Theatre
 1979 Sears Radio
 Theatre
 Campbell
 Playhouse
 The Chamber
 Music Society Of
 Lower Basin
 Street
 Hollywood Calling
 Yarns For Yanks
 The Fanny Brice-
 Frank Morgan
 Show
 Mr and Mrs North
 Johnny Mercer's
 Music Shop
 Front Line
 Theatre
 This Is the story



Howard Duff and Ida Lupino introduce their daughter Bridget to legendary Director Fritz Lang



In good company -- Left to right, George Sanders, Ed Sullivan, Ida Lupino, Richard Hearne, and Howard Duff, ca. 1957



Howard Duff and Ida Lupino in publicity still from their Television program Mr. Adams and Eve, ca. 1957

independent production company Ms. Lupino had formed with her second husband, *Collier Young*. With *The Filmmakers* and their later *Bridget Productions* the couple set about producing, directing, and occasionally starring in their own Television and Film projects.

Duff's own indefatigable self-confidence helped him endure any number of life circumstances that would have thrown most other people into a series of bouts of depression. Duff seems to have simply had that gift of being able to move on, no matter what was thrown into his path. The premature cancellation of what--at the time--was Radio's 2nd or 3rd highest rated program was a perfect example. Spun a bewildering number of ways ranging from accounts of a fall Duff had endured, re-breaking the leg that had cut his sports career short to a protracted dispute between Warner Bros. and NBC over the rights to the Sam Spade character--and everything in between.

In reality, Duff had simply been yet another victim of the fascist witch hunts of the mid-1940s to mid-1950s HUAC hearings and their lying, manipulative minions. Duff's offense? Being seen at a political rally for the 'wrong' candidate. That was the beginning and end of his short-lived blacklisting. That's all it took during that cowardly, black era in our cultural history. Indeed, the hysteria also eventually caught up with Dashiell Hammett himself. Apart from the apparently indisputable income tax problems he'd brought on himself, Hammett was yet another patriotic, outspoken, veteran of two World Wars to be deemed a 'commie sympathizer' for either appearing at the wrong political rally, or simply refusing to rat out his friends.

Indeed, to this very day--as inexplicable and indefensible as the phenomenon remains--extremist right wing *chicken hawks, never having served their country in uniform*, continue to distort the military experience of targeted individuals who actually *have* put their own life on the line for their country. More so if that veteran supports the *wrong* candidate or cause. So what's changed in fifty years? Very little, other than the abolishment of the very *Fairness Doctrine* that tended to even the playing field in the face of whispering campaigns and distortions.

Duff moved on. Hammett, not so much. Duff's success with Ida Lupino--at least professionally--also produced a lovely daughter, *Bridget* (after whom they named their second production company). Duff and Lupino eventually divorced resolutely after eighteen years of marriage and another fifteen years of separation. Duff remarried



Howard Duff, ca. 1965



"Goodnight, Sweetheart"

and Ida Lupino remained single until her death in 1995.

Howard Duff continued to appear in an extraordinary variety of dramatic and comedic productions over the years. Most notably with his own Television program, *Mr. Adams and Eve* (1957), inspired by Duff and Lupino's own domestic life together, and culminating in Duff's memorable appearance as the pragmatic, almost cold-bloodedly matter of fact divorce lawyer in the Oscar-winning *Dustin Hoffman* vehicle *Kramer Vs. Kramer* (1979).

Duff starred in five other Television programs of his own over the years, was in equal demand as a guest star as simply *himself* and ultimately endeared himself to several new generations of Television and Radio fans as more and more of his body of work enters circulation for the first time.

From the May 5th 1968 edition of the Buffalo Courier Express:

Duff Believes Sleuth Role His Destiny

WITH TWO seasons of "The Felony Squad" behind him and a third coming up, Howard Duff is of the opinion that he is destined to be known as a detective for the rest of his life.

"And that's not bad," he hastens to add.

Duff stars as Detective Sgt. Sam Stone in the television series which is seen this season every Monday night on ABCTV. He started his Hollywood career over 20 years ago as another detective Sam — Sam Spade, in the celebrated radio series, "The Adventures of Sam Spade."

"**I ENJOY** the action and the challenge of playing a television detective. It keeps me on my toes mentally and in good shape physically. But I have always viewed myself as an actor suited to more romantic roles and even Shakespearean roles," Duff says.

"Apparently, however, the intrigue and drama of the detective story is how producers visualize me, and it has given me a rewarding career. I have been on the side of the law in over a dozen movies, so I feel comfortable in the part.

"**I'M GETTING** a change of pace this spring," Duff reports. "I go to San Francisco during the

production break of 'The Felony Squad' to play in the stage production of 'The Girl In the Freudian Slip.' "Then it's back to Sam Stone for another year — and I'm delighted."

The mellow register of Howard Duff's voice seems to so inexplicably touch the soul of anyone who hears it. Call it a gift, universal appeal, call him 'a natural', call it whatever . . . Whatever that elusive quality was, you can still hear it in every word this remarkable man uttered over an amazing 55 year, multi-media career. He delivered. And he continues to deliver. And despite an amazing career that quite rightfully eclipsed his four and a half years as Sam Spade, it's as Sam Spade that the vast majority of us continue to love him and hang on his every word. It that fair? Perhaps not. I sense that Howard Duff, wherever he is at the moment would view this assessment as pragmatically as he viewed the rest of his storied life. If it works for us, it works for him. Simple, straightforward, matter of fact.

Goodnight, Sam . . .



AS TWIN SISTERS on "The Whistler" dramatization of "Death Sees Double," Lurene Tuttle portrayed both the murderess and her victim. Doing six pages of solid, rapid dialogue with herself, she used two almost identical voices, varying their pitch by perspective, working at two microphones and changing the positions of her head in relation to them.

**Lurene Tuttle
(Effie
Perrine)**

Stage, Screen,
Radio, and
Television
Actress;
Lecturer and
Acting Coach
(1907-1986)

Birthplace:
Pleasant Lake,
IN

Radiography:

1937 Hollywood
Hotel
1937 White Fires of
Inspiration
1937 Columbia
Workshop
1937 Lux Radio
Theatre
1938 CBS
Hollywood
Showcase
1938 Silver Theatre
1938 Texaco Star
Theatre
1939 Calling All
Cars
1939 The Chase
and Sanborn Hour
1939 The Jello
Program
1940 Good News of
1940
1940 Forecast
1940 The Rudy
Valee Sealtest
Show
1941 The Great
Gildersleeve
1941 Hollywood
Premier
1942 CBS Looks At
Hollywood
1942 Cavalcade of
America
1942 The
Adventures of Red
Ryder
1942 Stars Over
Hollywood
1942 Forty Years
Remembered



Lurene Tuttle,
Western radio
actress, fre-
quently plays
in sketches on
the CBS Holly-
wood Showcase.

*Caption: Lurene Tuttle,
Western radio actress,
frequently plays in sketches on
the CBS Hollywood Showcase
(1938)*



Lurene Tuttle circa 1940



Lurene Tuttle's Radiography is arguably the most extensive and versatile in the annals of Golden Age Radio History. There was simply nothing she--*and her amazing voice*--could not do, and do superbly. She remains this author's all-time favorite radio actress. Lurene Tuttle was born in Pleasant Lake, Indiana in 1907, but was reared out west on a ranch in Arizona near the California border. O.V. Tuttle, her father, had performed in minstrel shows but relied primarily on work as a railroad station agent during the 1920s. Lurene Tuttle's grandfather had been a Drama teacher, managing an opera house at one time in Indiana, her birth state. Lurene studied acting in Phoenix and the cute, petite redhead showed her scene-stealing comedic talent early on.

After she turned 15, her family relocated to Monrovia, California, where Lurene Tuttle began her performing career in earnest. She obtained her formal dramatic training at the Pasadena Playhouse, appearing in many of their productions with great success. She later joined Murphy's Comedians, a vaudeville troupe, and began performing as a dramatic *ingénue* in stock productions.

Though Broadway eluded her, Lurene Tuttle performed on Stage regularly until the 1930s.

Known for her fine speaking voice and extraordinary range of dialects, The Depression Years lead her to work in Radio, a natural medium for her extraordinary voice talent. For the next 25 years of the Golden Age of Radio, Lurene Tuttle became one of Radio's most recognized voices in virtually every Radio venue in which she performed.

From the August 1947 issue of Radio Mirror, in Lurene Tuttle's Own words:

Luck is
HARD WORK
By Lurene Tuttle

I WONDER if the first "split-personality" a psychologist ever discovered wasn't an actress? And if you're a radio actress as well, believe me--my personality isn't just split, it's all in little pieces.

In the morning I wake up, peer at myself in the

In the morning I wake up, peer at myself in the mirror and--yes--I can recognize the Ted hair and the grey eyes that belong to Lurene Tuttle; but an hour later I'm standing in front of a microphone, sneering my way through a broadcast as a blackhearted murderess . . . or as an eighty-year-old grandmother . . . or as a brat or as a queen . . . or a barmaid.

And that goes on all day long.

Is it any wonder I sometimes wonder just who Lurene Tuttle is? Not only are there all these make-believe characters I slip in and out of during broadcasting hours--but there's the me that is mother to my teen-age Barbara. And the me that likes to prowling around in dusty antique shops for the little porcelain dogs I collect. And likes to play crazy word games with friends or settle weighty problems over a midnight pot of coffee.

And there's the me that's known around the studios as "The Rock." (It doesn't apply, they tell me, to the way I look; I can't gain an ounce over my hundred and two pounds and I stopped growing at five feet three.) It's short for the Rock of Gibraltar, that symbol of stability and dependability. Maybe it's not glamorous, but I'd rather be known as "The Rock" than as almost anything else, because it indicates that I've been at least a little successful in being where I'm supposed to be when I'm supposed to be there, and in giving the best performance I know how no matter what the part.

I say almost anything else. That means that, above all, I want to be the me that's Barbara's mother. I don't understand actresses who are ashamed to admit they have grown-up daughters. Barbara is in High School, and I see no point in talking about her as "my little girl," trying to disguise my age, as I've heard some do. I'm a lot more apt to brag about her! She's bright and she's pretty and some day I think she'll be showing me how to act.

Barbara's father, Mel Ruick, and I were divorced a few years ago. We're still good friends. Though his radio announcing keeps him in New York, Mel was able to spend Christmas here with Barbara and they are still a close father-and-daughter team. But, for most of the year, it's just the two of us, and Miss Johnson, who looks after us both. And, of course, all of Barbara's friends . . . I'll never forget, for instance, last New Year's Eve. It's seldom I go to a party, but this one I was looking forward to. Yet--promptly at twelve midnight I had to excuse myself, explain hastily to my escort, and drive home and then taxi an assorted bunch of some twenty-five kids from Barbara's party to their respective homes which were scattered all over the San Fernando Valley! I got back to my own party and date at two-thirty in the morning, just as all the other guests were yawning their way out the front door.

But I'm no Big Sister, only, to Babs. I'm her mother. She comes to me with help with her problems as well as for her fun. Whether it's boy-friends or clothes or our endless discussions of what she will do when she's "grownup," I try my honest best to help her. We have our rules, too. When it comes to schoolwork--my share is helping in research, but she's the one to actually do the job.

And there's one opening night I'm looking forward to as intensely as if it were my own premiere of the movie "Heaven Only Knows."

Babs and her gang of friends have made a movie of their own, with themselves as actors, and they tell me its showing is to have an audience of one. The kids have decided that only Mother Tuttle is to be permitted to peek at it, because it seems they feel I'll take a professional attitude and not a parental one . . . and they're afraid of shocking their own families!

I do understand--because I remember wondering how my mother and dad were going to react the first time they saw me kiss a boy on stage!

Between that first kiss and that good part I mentioned in Seymour Nebenzal's "Heaven Only Knows" there have been a lot of years, a lot of disappointments, a lot of hard, hard work.

Before Barbara goes into anything like that, I want her to have all the sound preparation she can get; I want her to have the same safe, lovely life I had as a child. Not that my family was rich, or that I was sheltered from the world. But there had always been affection, family ties, experiences shared.

It was in a small mining town called Johannesburg, on the edge of the California Mojave desert that I spent my childhood.

DAD was station master and every day I met the trains with him. The mines at Johannesburg and Atolia and the Yellow Aster at Ransburg, nearby, were going full blast and it attracted people from all over the country. I was excited by all these colorful people and, unconsciously, I studied them and watched them. Afterwards I would imitate them. Dad always encouraged me, because his own hobby was putting on amateur theatricals.

It wasn't difficult to break into stock companies. For many years I was leading lady for major stock companies, among them the Henry Duffy Players.

Then came the depression--and stock was out. Came my marriage to Mel Ruick and Barbara.

Even if stock companies hadn't gone out of business, though, I had resolved to be a mother, entirely, for the first three years of Barbara's life. That kind of security I felt she needed because I knew how formative are these early years of a child. After that, I felt, she wouldn't need me with her; she would be sure of my love for her. But

until she was three years old I had determined to forget the stage.

The time passed. Three years were soon over. Barbara had had everything, so far, that I could give her, and I was ready to go back to work. I was and am an actress; an actress has to act to be happy. But at that point, I suddenly discovered that I was a frustrated housewife with no future in sight. A person doesn't just walk out and get a good part on the stage or in the movies. I hadn't thought at all of radio. I got very, very discouraged indeed.

And all of a sudden a friend, Cy Kendall, called me to say that tryouts for the Hollywood Hotel program were being held at CBS and why didn't I rush right over? But I've never been in front of a microphone in my life, I worried--even as I was putting on my hat and running out the front door. I was scared, all right, but it was a chance to act, and I was passing up no chance at that stage of my career!

At ten o'clock I entered the studio. It was five o'clock before my turn came. But I got the part!

Though I signed a contract with the Hollywood Hotel program for three years, new parts came slowly. Then I heard Charles Vanda of CBS was producing *White Fires*. I begged for a chance. *White Fires* was the weekly dramatic presentation of lives of famous people--just the kind of roles I wanted.

The next week I was on the show, and I stayed with *White Fires* for two years. I grew with that show.

I learned something very strange about myself, then. In a theater or in a movie you have costumes, and makeup men to change your appearance. But there is nothing of that in radio. You wear the same dress you wore when you were out shopping an hour before and your make-up is just what you would ordinarily have on the street.

But I swear that with me there is an actual physical as well as emotional change that goes on when I pick up the script and start reading my lines.

The time I spent on *White Fires* really paid off and nowadays I have so much work it's like hopping on and off a merry-go-round every week, grabbing for the brass ring at every show.

Want to take a ride with me for one week? Here's how it goes--

MONDAY: Breakfast with Barbara. To the movie set of "Heaven Only Knows" (I play Mrs. O'Donnell, the scrublady). Rehearsal of the *Dark Venture* radio show at five; broadcast at 9:00 (murderess).

Tuesday: Movie set in the morning. Rehearsal for Academy Award show (fourteen-year-old girl). Home to spend an hour with Barbara.

Wednesday: Ten o'clock broadcast of serial *Masquerade*. On to movie set. Back to studio for Academy Award broadcast. Home, to check household accounts and plan week's menus with Miss Johnson.

Thursday: This was the day I almost fell off that merry-go-round. Morning, on "Heaven Only Knows" set in costume and make-up. Since we were going to be shooting off and on all day, I had the bright idea of keeping my scrublady costume on even when I went to broadcasts.

But it didn't work out that way. At 2:45 when I put in an appearance for the Dick Haymes rehearsal, the director took one horrified look at me and loudly said No! Nothing to do but send a studio page for my own clothes on the set; showed up just in time for me to change and dash over to the first show of Burns and Allen at NBC; back to movie set at 6:30 (and into scrublady costume); back to Burns and Allen again for second show; to Dick Haymes broadcast on CBS; back to movie set again and into scrublady costume for night shooting that lasted until 12:30 in the morning!

Friday: Up in the morning for *Masquerade*. Rehearsal then of *Star Tune* show (tough chorus girl).

For the future I want what every radio actress wants--a show of my own. Top billing, instead of building characters to prop up someone else. And a chance to use originality.

But until that time, I'll go on being "the Rock." It's not so bad really. And it has its rewards. There's a true story about an evening at the Robert Youngs' house where a friend was telling Mrs. Young that her husband was getting to be very popular in radio, in addition to his movie career.

"Why," the friend said, "every time I turn on the radio lately, I hear Bob on some program."

"Yes," Mrs. Young replied, "Bob is getting to be the male Lurene Tuttle of radio."

Aptly referred to as "*The First Lady of Radio*," she was most fondly remembered for her role as *Effie*, the deliciously endearing "*Girl Friday*," to Howard Duff's Sam Spade on *The Adventures of Sam Spade*. Dyed-in-the-wool Sam Spade fans universally refer to the interaction between Duff and Tuttle as pure Radio magic--and deservedly so. Her comedic timing and interplay with Duff was absolutely superb, rivalled only by the Radio chemistry between *Frances Robinson* and *Bob Bailey* in *Let George Do It*.

By the time Film and early Television discovered her acting talent she found second and third careers as a durable, versatile character actress in a wide range of roles characterized primarily by their depiction of archetypal middle-American wisdom and warmth. Later years found her in recurring characterizations as a 'brittle' world-weary matron.

She debuted in Film in *Heaven Only Knows* (1947), then appeared alongside **Cary Grant** in *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House* (1948) and *Room for One More* (1952). She performed with **Marilyn Monroe** in *Don't Bother to Knock* (1952) and *Niagara* (1953). She also appeared with **Joan Crawford** in *Goodbye, My Fancy* (1951) and **Leslie Caron** in *The Glass Slipper* (1955). To Film's everlasting shame, she never got her chance to appear as a lead, not for lack of either versatility or talent. As it was, she continued to develop her talent as a durable, reliable character actor--and occasional scene-stealer.

Indeed her innate ability to steal any scene--on big screen or small--with an impish, knowing grin or world-weary, cynical glance remained two of her signature characterizations throughout her remarkable career. Her only real lead during this period was her portrayal of the crazed Ma Barker, in *Ma Barker's Killer Brood* (1960), a B-movie that's reached cult status.

Television was more cognizant of Lurene Tuttle's natural warmth and wisdom, which, given the *kinder, gentler, family oriented* fare of 1950s Television, found her performing regularly in a wonderful array of sitcoms, appearing as a starchy relative, gossipy gadfly, or archetypal *down-home* townfolk.

Lurene Tuttle married fellow actor and announcer, *Mel Ruick* a performer she met often while both were performing in Radio. Their daughter, **Barbara Ruick**, became an actress best known for her portrayal of Carrie Pipperidge in the wonderful musical comedy *Carousel* (1956). Barbara Ruick later married famed American composer *John Williams*, but died unexpectedly in 1974, just as John Williams' world-renowned talent was becoming recognized.

Lurene Tuttle became a widely-respected Drama and diction coach for several decades. She taught radio technique in the 1940s and re-trained several prominent actors returning from World War II duty. After her Television career in the 1950s, Lurene Tuttle returned to teaching. Her students included Red Skelton, Orson Welles, Milton Berle, Steve Allen, and Jayne Meadows. She joined the faculty of The University of Southern California, teaching acting technique, and remained in Southern California until she succumbed to cancer at the age of 78.

"I have a full life - radio acting, TV shows, movies, and my daily teaching - all crammed with delight. I find that the best way for me to conduct my life is to run my life - my way." -- Lurene Tuttle

Thankfully, her fame endures as new generations of Golden Age Radio and Television fans continue to discover her anew. Thus she remains to this day--and throughout the foreseeable future--as one of the most beloved, most enjoyed and most admired voice and character talents of The 20th Century.



Lurene Tuttle as listed with Wormser, Heldfond & Joseph circa 1986

William Hannan Spier (Producer, Director, Writer)

Radio, Television, Film and Stage Producer, Writer, Director (1906-1973)

Birthplace:

New York City, New York, U.S.A.

Radiography:

- 1929 The Atwater Kent Radio Hour
- 1937 The March of Time
- 1938 Music For Fun
- 1941 CBS Forecast
- 1942 Columbia Workshop
- 1942 Suspense
- 1943 The American Comedy Theatre Of the Air
- 1945 Columbia Presents Corwin
- 1946 The Adventures Of Sam Spade**
- 1946 The Adventures of the Thin Man
- 1947 Fibber McGee and Molly
- 1948 The Clock
- 1949 Philip Morris Playhouse



Gifted CBS Producer, Director, and Writer, William Spier, ca. 1947



William Spier with his two brilliant Sam Spade actors, Lurene Tuttle, left, and Howard Duff, right. ca. 1946



June Havoc and husband William Spier circa 1948



Spier was a double recipient of The Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Awards--

Born and raised in New York City, William Spier's extraordinary Media Arts career began with Radio. Spier's first major production was in 1929 with the Atwater Kent Radio Hour, which he both produced and directed--at the age of 23. By 1936 was directing Radio's long-running *The March of Time*.

When he joined the *Columbia Broadcasting System* in 1940, Bill Spier had already been a top-flight radio writer, producer and director for twelve years. He soon became *Chief of the Writers' Department* and *Director of Scripts* for the *Columbia Broadcasting System* in 1940, while co-producing *Suspense* (1942) and *Duffy's Tavern* (1941). By 1947, he'd shared a prestigious *Edgar Award* from *The Mystery Writers of America*--with writers *Bob Tallman* and *Jason James*--for *Best Radio Drama* with their *The Adventures of Sam Spade* (1946). The *Edgar* is a porcelain bust of the *patron saint* of mystery drama scribes, *Edgar Allen Poe*. William Spier later won another *Best Television Drama Edgar* in 1962 for *The Untouchables*. Spier was also awarded three *George Foster Peabody Awards* while with CBS.

As brilliant as his work on *Suspense*, *Duffy's Tavern* and '*Sam Spade*' was, it was his contributions to *CBS Forecast* and *Columbia Workshop* that established his reputation as a fearless, innovative, calculated-risk taker with a brilliant intuition about what creates truly great Radio. Spier's '*gut-sense*' for great Radio transcended technology, scriptwriting, or simple talent selection. Spier quite simply *knew* what would work and what wouldn't. And sure, it *was* a mixture of timing, talent, production technology, script selection and flawless direction. But there was also that intangible *Spier element*--the *pinch of saffron* if you will. Whatever it was, Spier possessed it his entire career. An amateur magician in his own right, it's tempting to simply call it *magic*. But Spier was also a life-long Music fan. So perhaps it's more fitting to call it *music*. In the end, as with the many intangibles associated with The Golden Age of Radio, some intangibles simply can't be dissected. They simply were what they were and the result was consistently great Radio.

A genuine *Radio man* William Spier seemed to have continually focused on *scripts, scripts and more scripts*. Indeed, he's supposed to have read all scripts that were submitted to CBS while he was Director of Scripts. We noted that above. But he had also drawn up an instruction sheet for mailing to all free-lance writers who requested it "*to save writers a lot of time and effort in preparing scripts which otherwise must be unusable so far as our show is concerned.*"

Clearly, scripts weren't his *only* focus. It was widely

Clearly, scripts weren't his *only* focus. It was widely reported that Spier was an absolute stickler for realism. One interesting anecdote from his *Suspense* years went as follows:

"Spier goes in for realism during a broadcast. There was the time Lucille Ball starred in "Dime a Dance." Extras were hired to dance to an orchestra in one studio to create the dance hall background— and Miss Ball emoted with the cast in a studio a block away."

A perfectionist, Spier's attention to all production values extended to every facet of a production, especially foley work. Citing the failure of sound effects as *"the deadliest moment in Radio,"* Spier once reminisced about *Suspense* when guns didn't go off as scheduled:

*"Once an actor cried "Don't shoot me!", nothing happened, and another actor came to the rescue by exclaiming "Okay, I'll use this knife!" Recently, when William Bendix did "Three Faces for Midnight" **two** guns balked; finally one delivered the fatal bang."*

Yet another gunshot snafu involved Spier's future wife, lovely actress June Havoc:

"During one crime melodrama on Sam Spade, a sound effect gunshot went off too close to Miss Havoc and actually set her skirt on fire! Trouper that she was, she kept calmly reading her script—of course the show was going out live (although likely being transcribed for later broadcast to the "other" coast) while the control booth went nuts and the props guy threw some water on her. If Bill Spier hadn't been in love with her already, her sang-froid while literally on fire, let alone under it, would have sealed the deal! And Miss Havoc says that's what won her admission in the special cadre of radio actors."

Another instructive anecdote captures Spier's *out of the box* thought processes regarding what the *Columbia Broadcasting System* referred to as *Experimental Radio* with their ground-breaking *Columbia Workshop* project:

"The Columbia Workshop, testing ground for many a new radio ideas adds another link to its chain of experiments when it produces chapter one of "Flight to Arras" current No. 1 non-fiction best seller by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. . . . Not only has "Flight to Arras" never before been done in any form in radio, but this is the first time Columbia Workshop has picked the first chapter out of a book and presented its pages in radio form. The production cannot in truth be called a dramatization, because no attempt is made to dramatize the author's words. "I would rather," says William Spier, the program's producer, "call the attempt a 'radioization.'" Audience reaction on the experiment is being solicited by Columbia Workshop because, if successful, many books of literary value are thus opened for radio production."

Spier's record of achievement didn't end with Radio. Spier continued on into Television, adding over forty writing, directing and producing credits to his resume. Spier was also active in local New England Stage productions and Television specials right up until he passed away in 1973 at the age of 67. He was survived by his wife of twenty-five years, June Havoc, a gifted actress, director and writer in her own right.



Dick Joy at the KNX Mike for CBS, ca. 1946

A Connecticut native, beloved local--and national--Radio announcer Richard 'Dick' Joy got his start in Radio by airing some bit announcements and fill for local Los Angeles, California radio stations while attending *Journalism School* at the *University of Southern California*. After graduation from U.S.C. he became a staff announcer for the Hearst radio station, KEHE. Joy later became a staff announcer for L.A.'s CBS flagship station, Radio KNX. When Joy joined the CBS Radio network, at 21, he was their youngest staff announcer in history. Within three years, Joy entered active duty during World War II with the U.S. Naval Reserve.

During the War, Joy wrote and broadcast for the Navy's contingent of the *Armed Forces Radio Service*, recording the intros for *Downbeat* and *'Hello, Americans'*, among several other patriotic War effort productions.

Upon returning from the War he partnered in the construction and operation of Radio KCMJ, the voice of Palm Springs, California. Joy remained in Southern California to become the announcer for such long-running programs as *Silver Theatre*, *The Adventures Of Sam Spade*, *Vox Pop*, *The Telephone Hour*, and the *Danny Kaye*, *Nat King Cole*, and *Spike Jones* shows.



Dick Joy broadcasting for KCMJ, Palm Springs' first Radio station.

Not just a 'talking head' but rather a serious, full-time journalist, Dick Joy pioneered the use of a running series of 'voice bites' to punctuate and bring normally dull news narratives to life with fast-paced, succinct snippets illustrating news items. He worked with CBS News Producer *Barney Miller*, to create *CBS Sunday Desk*, the first news-capsule program to employ such voice and sound 'bites'.

Joy returned to KNX as a newscaster from 1950 - 1956, overlapping that job with work as News Director of the L.A. classical music station KFAC, a position he held from 1951 - 1967.

Dick had made a successful transition to *CBS Television* in the late 1940s as a reporter for CBS' *You Are There*, and later as the announcer for *December Bride*, *Perry Mason*, *Have Gun—Will Travel*, *Daktari*, *Lost in Space*, and *Gomer Pyle U.S.M.C.* The high point of his announcing career was while he worked for CBS Television's legendary *Playhouse 90*, which brought him in weekly contact with Drama's best, brightest, and most talented for four years.



Ozzie Nelson and Harriet Hilliard visit Dick Joy, third from left at Palm Springs' KCMJ.

Throughout those years, he freelanced in Radio and Television, while maintaining his position as News Director at KFAC. Joy spent a total of 35 years in the L.A. area, broadcasting before his retirement in 1969. He ultimately retired to the Medford Oregon area in 1975.

And yet despite this extraordinary career in Commercial and Public Communications, Dick Joy is probably most fondly remembered to this day, as the announcer for the 1940s' *The Adventures of Sam Spade . . . Detective*. Indeed it was Joy's own punctuation of the word *'Detective'* in those weekly broadcasts that so firmly associated Dick Joy with that famous series of Golden Age Radio broadcasts.

One of the most fascinating and enduring anecdotes about Dick Joy's poise and professionalism arose out of the famous--or infamous--*The Indian Caper*, or more accurately and authentically titled:

The Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchau-bunagungamaugg Caper

As the story goes, in Massachusetts, there is a town named *Webster*, located on the shores of *Webster Lake*. Apparently the actual Nipmuc Indian name of the lake is one of the longest place names in the world. A writer for *The Adventures of Sam Spade* was determined to work that name into an episode of 'Sam Spade'. The name became the working title for the script that aired September 25, 1949, *The Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchau-bunagungamaugg Caper*.

Knowing Dick Joy's reputation for being one of Radio's most poised, unflappable, and *elecutory* professionals, the writers and the crew conspired to play a little practical joke on Joy. Accordingly, when they rehearsed the script, they contrived to keep the title page of the episode out of Dick Joy's copy of the script--until the actual live broadcast was underway.

William Spier directed their first customary commercial break, after which they'd return and announce the 'caper' for the evening. And so as Joy completed his Wildroot Cream Oil plug, the crew handed him the infamous title page to the script, all grinning from ear to ear in anticipation of finally flummoxing the legendary Dick Joy.

He took the page, cleared his throat and seamlessly recited, "And now we return to *The Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchau-bunagungamaugg Caper*, brought to you by *Wildroot Hair Oil*."

Letter perfect, no hesitation, no faltering, no flub. Perfect. The crew's joke lay shattered, most of them muttering under their breath, 'How in heck did he manage that!?!'

What none of them could have known, least of all former New Englander *William Spier*, was that Joy had grown up in none other than *Webster, Massachusetts*.

Richard W. 'Dick' Joy, 75, veteran Radio and Television announcer died at his home in Talent, Oregon, of complications from liver disease. His legacy lives on through thousands of Radio recordings stamped with Joy's unmistakable, bell-clear, concise baritone narrations. He's remembered--and will continue to be remembered--as one of Radio's most unmistakable voices and one of Radio's most likeable personalities.

Steve Dunne
[Francis
Dunne]
(Sam Spade)
 Stage, Screen,
 Radio, and
 Television
 Actor
 (1918-1977)
Birthplace:
 Northampton,
 Massachusetts,
 U.S.A.



*Steve Dunne publicity photo,
 ca. 1945*

Radiography
 :

1947 Deadline
 Mystery
 1947 Family
 Theatre
 1949 Richard
 Diamond, Private
 Detective
 1949 Screen
 Director's
 Playhouse
 1950 Lux Radio
 Theatre
1950 The
Adventures Of
Sam Spade
 1953 Stars Over
 Hollywood



*Steve Dunne (as Michael
 Dunne) in Shock! (1946)*



*Steve Dunne in Alfred
 Hitchcock Presents' The Man
 with Two Faces from Dec. 13,
 1960*

Brown-haired, blue-eyed Steve [Francis] Dunne was born and raised in Northampton, Massachusetts. He got his start in his working life as a stenographer for the local *General Electric Company*, but at the age of 17 determined to increase his knowledge. He entered the *University of Alabama*, majoring in Drama and Journalism.

To finance school he secured a job as a disc-jockey at the local radio station. He liked it--so much so that he quit school and moved to Chicagoland where he became a top-flight Radio announcer. From there he took the leap of faith to the Big Apple and WOR, New York, and the *Mutual Broadcasting System*.

New York employment led to a screen test and a movie contract that eventually netted him featured roles in 30 films. Steve Dunne met *Vivian Bellveau* in 1940. They married and soon had two children--*Stephen* and *Christina*. His Film work took him back to the West Coast, where he hooked up with Southern California Radio and Television stations under the CBS Network.

By the 1950s a locally popular fixture on KTSL, the CBS Flagship Television station, Dunne stayed busy with local origination quiz shows, late-night movie retrospectives, and the occasional Film role. His first real break in Radio came with the premature, short-lived cancellation of the Golden Age Radio classic, *The Adventures of Sam Spade*, formerly starring *Howard Duff* as Sam Spade. Clouded in obfuscation, no *believable* reason was ever cited for the cancellation of the program. Inundated by negative correspondence, NBC frantically resuscitated the program as *The New Adventures of Sam Spade* while racing around to reassemble what was left of the crew, direction, scripts and actors. The following newspaper clipping pretty much sums up the selection process:

"THE NEW Sam Spade, one of radio's most rewarding acting plums, is Steve Dunne. A veteran actor with 30 film credits and hundreds of West Coast radio and TV performances under his belt, Dunne was selected for the part in Hollywood by Director-Producer William Spier after a score of radio actors were auditioned. He now carries on his San Francisco capers on "The New Adventures of Sam Spade" at 8:30 P.M. Fridays on WSYR, playing opposite Lurene Tuttle, still heard in the role of Effie, his secretary. Dunne succeeded Howard Duff in the title role. He was called up for the private eye assignment as a result of a five-year-old note scribbled and filed by Spier. In

Dunne succeeded Howard Duff in the title role. He was called up for the private eye assignment as a result of a five-year-old note scribbled and filed by Spier. In 1945, the producer saw a movie, "Shock," in which Dunne played a small part. Spier never met or interviewed the actor until this year, when he sought the new Sam Spade after checking his file."

Now the *newest* Sam Spade on the radio, Dunne was wisely hedging his bets with a featured daily appearance on the newly launched *Jack Kirkwood Show* on radio. He continued to work at CBS Television station KTSL and continued to develop even more ambitious plans to augment his Sam Spade success. But alas, the Sam Spade role was embarrassingly short-lived. Running for only 24 'new' installments, the *Adventures of Sam Spade--'New' or otherwise--*came to an abrupt end at the end of April 1951.

Dunne for his part, continued to announce the commercials on *What's the Name of That Song* and narrate *Stranger Than Fiction*, in addition to starting his own program in a disc-jockey setting 'spinning platters' of 'soundie' vignettes for a call-in audience to guess at. The resulting program, *Picture Platters*, was relatively short-lived as well.

Dunne's career didn't lack for brushes with greatness. In 1949, Dunne starred in Columbia's *Kazan* (1949), with *Lois Maxwell*, the leggy secretary of *James Bond Film* fame. He did get a full six-months of acting lessons from *Lurene Tuttle* in the short lived *New Adventures of Sam Spade*. He made an erstwhile connection with famed CBS producer *William Spier* and his wife, *June Havoc*. But he later somewhat embarrassingly stabbed *June Havoc* in the professional back by making her the goat over a silly on-screen credit kerfuffle.

The rolling credits for *James Mason's* 1952 film *Lady Possessed* said '*Introducing Steve Dunne*'. Of course by that time, Dunne had already appeared in some 31 minor and feature films already. He passed it around that the Director's wife and co-star *June Havoc* was the one raising a ruckus about having to share on-screen credit with Dunne. Understandably, any goodwill Dunne had accrued with famed Director *William Spier* and his equally famous actress wife, *June Havoc* vanished in a thrice.

A shameless self-promoter, Dunne had compiled a long record of self-promoting, self-advancing strategies during his long employment with KTSL in Los Angeles. From his various TV disc-jockey programs, to his *Love and Kisses* (1950) situation comedy, to his nightly sign offs on KTSL to his short-lived *Professional Father* (1955) series, Dunne was never one to miss any opportunity to paint himself in a better professional light.

Sadly, almost all of these exploits seem to have continually resulted in somewhat short-lived professional showcases of his talent. He continued to compile a longer Film and Television resume, but he never again found that dream shot, like *The New Adventures of Sam Spade* had promised to be.

Dunne's career was not without its lighter moments. Witness this amusing account of a live '*wardrobe malfunction*' during the early years of live Television situation comedy:

"Why actors prefer filmed TV:

Steve Dunne raced off stage for a wardrobe change while emoting in CBS' "My Favorite Husband." The overzealous wardrobe man in his haste not only pulled off Steve's trousers, but his shorts, too. Joan Caulfield and Barry Nelson had to ad lib while Steve recovered his dignity in the wings."

With some 80+ Television appearances to his credit, Dunne certainly proved his durability in the medium. Indeed his Television career pretty much paralleled his Radio career with a dizzying array of 'almosts' over the span of twenty-five years. If there was an Emmy for "*picking yourself up, dusting yourself off, and starting all over again,*" Steve Dunne may very well have been a perennial award recipient. But alas it didn't pan out that way.

Doomed to be remembered as either the local L.A. TV personality that made good, or the actor that finally killed Sam Spade, neither prospect has a great deal to offer in the form of historical import. But that's not being fair, either. In the case of Sam Spade, that was NBC's incompetent bungling and no one else's. That *William Spier*, *Lurene Tuttle*, and *Steve Dunne* even managed to throw together another 24 episodes is a tribute to the three of them, all things considered.

As for the rest of Steve Dunne's ostensibly lackluster career, the 'luster' is clearly in the eyes of the beholder. In a market as huge as Southern California, Dunne could have simply soldiered on-- locally--and done very well for himself, thank you very much. Did his reach exceed his grasp? Possibly. *But at least he reached.*