



## MORE LAMBS FROM OHIO

Seventh and final installment of a series of biographical sketches of Ohioans who are members of the Lambs, America's oldest theatrical club.

*By Russ Johns, a Lamb from Chillicothe now living in New York where for years he has been directing radio programs for the Columbia Broadcasting System.*

### 15. EARL WILSON

Earl Wilson says his birthplace is so small that the only time anyone sees it in print is when he writes it. Located south of Toledo, and with a population of about a thousand, the little town of Rockford has a real claim to fame in Earl Wilson. He insists on not hurting anyone in his writings, if possible, and has tried to avoid malicious gossip.

In 1930 he couldn't quite make the college editorship at Ohio State. Today he covers page one personalities and human interest all over the country. And travel he certainly does. As a press release on him states, "Earl Wilson may be covering a play in New York on Wednesday, and a 'Punkin Show' in Circleville on Friday." Or his stories may be datelined Hollywood, Houston, Mexico City, Paris, anywhere. His New York apartment he calls "Hillbilly Hall" and "BW" has become famous from coast to coast as Wilson's "Beautiful Wife." "BW" was Rosemary Lyons, born in East St. Louis, and she and her mother keep the home fires going while Earl is "on the road."

Before becoming a New York columnist Wilson worked for the Piqua *Daily Call*, the Tiffin Bureau of the *INS*, and the Akron *Beacon-Journal*. Later came a job on the *Washington Post* and

then in the middle thirties one as a rewrite man on the *New York Post*. (Somewhere in there he found time to be a Sunday School teacher!) 1943 was the year that Wilson got the Broadway columnist call. With himself as the butt of his humorous articles he soon had the readers with him. He was "different." Even his books had a different slant: *I'm Gazing Into My Eight-Ball*, *Pike's Peek or Bust*, *Let 'Em Eat Cheesecake*, and *Look Who's Abroad Now*.

His wife wanted him to dedicate his first book to her. He finally solved the problem this way: "To the wonderful little woman who darns my socks, rears my son and cooks my meals—my mother-in-law."

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### 16. JONATHAN WINTERS

Jonathan Winters may have given his parents a chuckle that day in Dayton when he made his first appearance—Nov. 11, 1925. For he certainly has added to the merriment of millions in recent years. My first encounter with Jonathan took place in The Lambs, where he had everyone in stitches, as they say in comedy circles. (I secretly believe he was trying out new material for his next appearance, and I admired him for his courage. To make another actor laugh you have to be good!)

Jonathan is a very cheerful man, popular with his co-workers, and has had a steady successful career since he spent those formative years at Springfield High,

and Kenyon College in Gambier. Then two and a half years in the Marine Corps in the South Pacific aboard the U.S.S. *Bonhomme Richard*, Task Force 58. Three years of commercial art at the Dayton Art Institute, and in 1948 disc-jockey at WING in Dayton followed by WBNS in Columbus as staff announcer and character actor. January is not the best of all possible months to come to New York to make a fortune, but 1952 was the year, and January was the month. (I suppose for a man named Winters to arrive in a summer month would have been unpoetic!)

However, the rest is recent TV, theatre and night club history. In TV the list includes "Today", "The Garry Moore Show", "Steve Allen Show", "Jack Paar Show", "Arlene Francis Show", "Omnibus", "Studio One" and many others. In 1956-57 he had his own show "The Jonathan Winters Show" (a fact he almost forgot to tell me!) The night club bookings include the best across the land. Jonathan and his wife Eileen and their son and daughter live in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York.

Critics have been kind to Jonathan Winters, and with good reason. He is a talented man, and a very friendly one. I think modesty and thrift also can be

included in those virtues. He says "You might add that I write most of my own material. Not bragging, just trying to save!"

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#### 17. LOUIS VAN ROOTEN

Louis Van Rooten, though not born in Ohio, "would like to be included", as he played an active part in the architectural field in Ohio. After graduation from the Univ. of Pa. School of Architecture, Louis eventually became an Associate in the firm of Charles Bacon Rowley Associates, Inc., in Cleveland. With them he worked on the Cleveland Playhouse, Cleveland Country Club, the Shaker Square Development, plus a lot of development work in Ohio generally.

His acting career started at the Cleveland Playhouse, and included WTAM and WGAR, etc. In 1935 Louis was Special Assistant to the State WPA Supervisor with headquarters in Columbus. His job was to coordinate the various art projects into a radio set-up. So in spite of now making his home in the east, Louis "still feels closely associated with the state, and still maintains his architectural license to practice in Ohio." That should make him at least one-half Buckeye!

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#### Oxford String Quartet Opens Its Season

The Oxford String Quartet, Miami University artists-in-residence group, is combining services to public school music with its concert tours as it opens its fourteenth season. For example, its first tour, comprising concerts in Lexington, Ky., and Dayton, Wooster and Alliance included informal sessions with young string musicians and orchestras in the public schools of Alliance, Shaker Heights, East Cleveland and Cleveland.

Personnel of the quartet has remained the same since the addition of its newest member, Adon Foster, violinist, in 1953. Elizabeth Walker, violinist, and Elizabeth Potteiger, cellist, were in the original group in 1946. Joseph Bein violist, has been a member since 1948.