

Frank Crumit 1889- 1943

Frank Crumit was born in Jackson County, Ohio, in 1889. He worked in vaudeville, on Broadway, made over 250 recordings, and in partnership with his wife, Julia Sanderson, enjoyed a phenomenal career in early radio.

Most of Crumit's pieces sport catchy, often zany lyrics, such as *There Is No-One with Endurance Like the Man Who Sells Insurance* and *A Tale of a Ticker*, which foreshadowing the 1929 stock-market crash laments:

Oh the market's not so good to-day, your stocks
look kind of sick.
In fact they all dropped down a point each time
the tickers tick.
We'll have to have more margin now. There
isn't any doubt.
So you better dash with a load of cash, or we'll
have to sell you out.

Both *There Is No-One with Endurance Like the Man Who Sells Insurance* and *The Tale of a Ticker* appear on *Gay Caballero*, Intersound's 1992 digital re-mastering of 22 original Crumit recordings. According to Dave Lennick's liner notes, Crumit is still one of the best-remembered names from early radio. Request programs get calls from listeners asking for "the song about the bulls, the bears, and the stock market," the insurance song, the one about prunes, and of course, *Abdul Abulbul Amir*.

Reminiscences crop up in other places too. In his memoir *An Open Book: Coming of Age in the Heartland*, Ohioana Book Award and Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Dirda relates childhood memories of his dad singing *Abdul Abulbul Amir* and *Ivan Skavinsky Skavar* to him as a boy.

Despite Crumit's immense popularity and a lingering presence in the American subconscious, very little of his sheet music is available in libraries. Fourteen institutions collectively hold only 84 original publications. Thanks to a donation from Laura M. Mueller, 55 of these are owned by Ohioana (36 unique titles). Ohioana preserves one of the two library copies of *There Is No-One with Endurance Like the Man Who Sells Insurance* and the sole library copy of a *Tale of a Ticker*.



