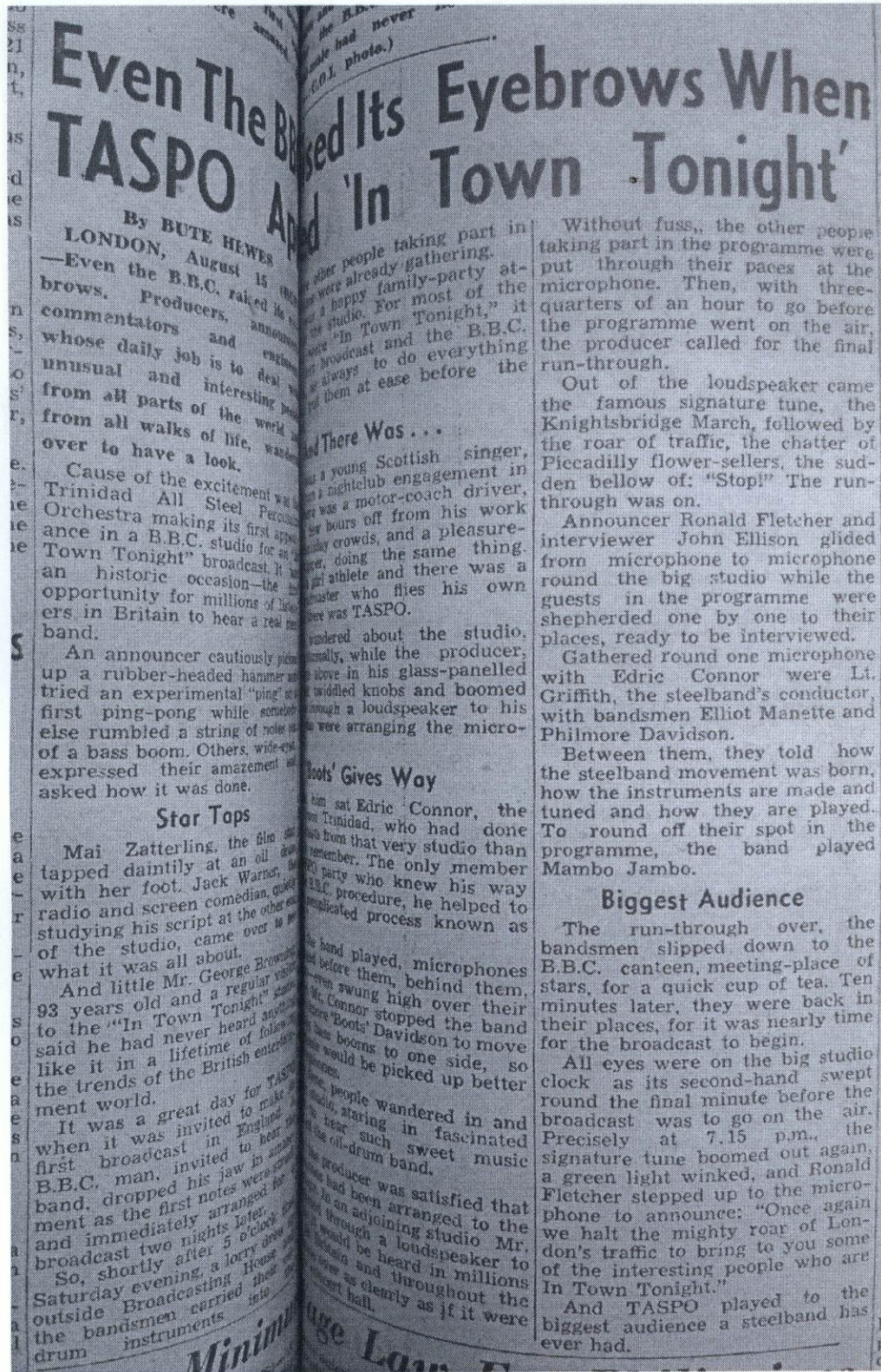


"Even the BBC Raised Its Eyebrows When TASPO Appeared 'In Town Tonight.'" Evening News 16 Aug. 1951: 6-7. Print. [caught between the fold of pages 6 and 7]



# Even The BBC Raised Its Eyebrows When TASPO Appeared 'In Town Tonight'

By BUTE HEWES

LONDON, August 15 (The Evening News photo.) —Even the B.B.C. raised its eyebrows. Producers, commentators and engineers whose daily job is to deal with unusual and interesting programmes from all parts of the world and from all walks of life, wanted to have a look.

Cause of the excitement was the Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra making its first appearance in a B.B.C. studio for an "In Town Tonight" broadcast. It was an historic occasion—the first opportunity for millions of listeners in Britain to hear a real steel band.

An announcer cautiously picked up a rubber-headed hammer and tried an experimental "ping" on a first ping-pong while someone else rumbled a string of notes on a bass boom. Others, wide-eyed, expressed their amazement and asked how it was done.

## Star Tops

Mai Zatterling, the film star, tapped daintily at an oil drum with her foot. Jack Warner, the radio and screen comedian, studied his script at the other end of the studio, came over to see what it was all about.

And little Mr. George Brown, 93 years old and a regular visitor to the "In Town Tonight" stage, said he had never heard anything like it in a lifetime of following the trends of the British entertainment world.

It was a great day for TASPO when it was invited to make its first broadcast in England. The B.B.C. man, invited to hear the band, dropped his jaw in amazement as the first notes were struck and immediately arranged for a broadcast two nights later.

So, shortly after 5 o'clock, on Saturday evening a lorry drove outside Broadcasting House and the bandmen carried their instruments into the hall.

Without fuss, the other people taking part in the programme were put through their paces at the microphone. Then, with three-quarters of an hour to go before the programme went on the air, the producer called for the final run-through.

Out of the loudspeaker came the famous signature tune, the Knightsbridge March, followed by the roar of traffic, the chatter of Piccadilly flower-sellers, the sudden bellow of: "Stop!" The run-through was on.

Announcer Ronald Fletcher and interviewer John Ellison glided from microphone to microphone round the big studio while the guests in the programme were shepherded one by one to their places, ready to be interviewed.

Gathered round one microphone with Edric Connor were Lt. Griffith, the steelband's conductor, with bandmen Elliot Manette and Philmore Davidson.

Between them, they told how the steelband movement was born, how the instruments are made and tuned and how they are played. To round off their spot in the programme, the band played Mambo Jambo.

## Biggest Audience

The run-through over, the bandmen slipped down to the B.B.C. canteen, meeting-place of stars, for a quick cup of tea. Ten minutes later, they were back in their places, for it was nearly time for the broadcast to begin.

All eyes were on the big studio clock as its second-hand swept round the final minute before the broadcast was to go on the air. Precisely at 7.15 p.m. the signature tune boomed out again, a green light winked, and Ronald Fletcher stepped up to the microphone to announce: "Once again we halt the mighty roar of London's traffic to bring to you some of the interesting people who are In Town Tonight."

And TASPO played to the biggest audience a steelband has ever had.

## There Was ...

... a young Scottish singer, ... a nightclub engagement in ... was a motor-coach driver, ... hours off from his work ... happy crowds, and a pleasure-tourist, doing the same thing. ... athlete and there was a ... master who flies his own ... was TASPO.

## Boots' Gives Way

... sat Edric Connor, the ... Trinidad, who had done ... from that very studio than ... remember. The only member ... party who knew his way ... B.B.C. procedure, he helped to ... complicated process known as ...

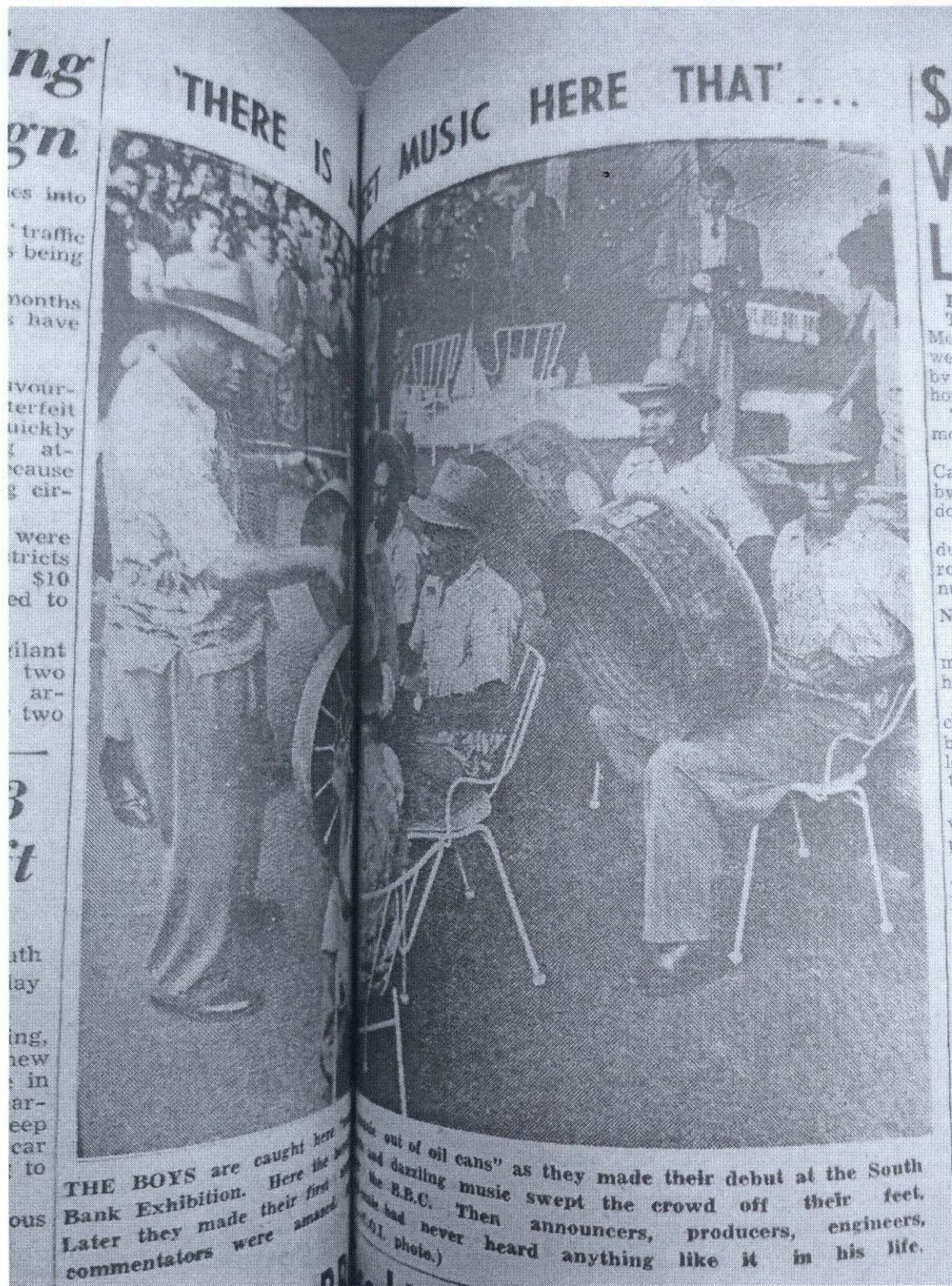
... band played, microphones ... before them, behind them, ... swung high over their ... Connor stopped the band ... "Boots' Davidson to move ... bass booms to one side, so ... would be picked up better ...

... people wandered in and ... staring in fascinated ... to hear such sweet music ... of a drum band.

... producer was satisfied that ... had been arranged to the ... in an adjoining studio Mr. ... through a loudspeaker to ... would be heard in millions ... and throughout the ... as clearly as if it were ... hall.

## Minimal ...

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Above Caption "Even The BBC..." appeared below this photograph. Unfortunate fold.