

NIELA—NEW AND NICE

The Success Story of our latest visitor from America
—and how she is now going places in British Radio.

Told by SUSAN COLLYER



NIELA GOODELLE

You've heard her in "Monday at Seven," "Band Waggon," and Horlicks "Picture House." And you'll be hearing her plenty more—and you'll be liking it!

SHE landed on this island of ours just over nine weeks ago, and her radio record so far is "Band Waggon," "Monday at Seven," Radio Cabaret, and at least four television appearances.

You also hear her in *Horlicks Picture House* on Sundays. She was signed up for half a dozen shows at first, but she has now been told that she'll be wanted for *Picture House* just as long as she's over here. Nice work if you can get it!

In the meantime she's been making a hit in cabaret. Her first engagement over here was at the Ritz and last week she paid a return visit to this most swlegant and select of West End palaces.

What does it take to get four broadcasts in as many weeks, when hundreds of others go on struggling for years without getting such a chance? How is it that Niela Goodelle, up from nowhere, who arrived friendless and unknown this side of the Atlantic nine weeks ago, now has her days and nights so full with broadcasting and cabaret work that she only gets to bed in the small hours and sleeps till twelve next day?

A Real Discovery

It sounds like a miracle, and perhaps it is. For she's a discovery, there's no doubt about that. She's good to look at. She's got a dandy voice. And, although she's slight and nervous, and young, she's got that certain something that holds even a bored society crowd that's intent on its dinner.

Cabaret is the acid test. You've got to be good to put yourself over in an atmosphere of tinkling glasses, chatter, turned backs, running waiters, succulent smells of food and a general air of polite boredom.

Niela comes from Florida. She tells you so in that fetching soft American drawl of hers. She's got a tip-tilted nose, dancing brown eyes and black page-boy bobbed hair.

"Where did you come from, baby dear? Out of everywhere into here?" Niela didn't even have an audition—she just arrived, trailing clouds of glory from her American radio work and was

forthwith pitchforked into one programme after another.

It was her manager, Henry Sherek, who brought her over. He was doing a little talent spotting on the other side and happened to hear her sing. But let's begin at the beginning.

In her schooldays Niela didn't dream she would ever be connected with show business. No relation of hers had ever been on the stage. It is true she was fond of singing, but she was fond of other things as well, languages, for instance, and riding and swimming. She was especially fond of the piano and it was decided that she should take it up for a career when she left school.

Why She Started

Then came a sad blow. Her father, who was in real estate business, lost all his money and Niela, for the first time in her life, was faced with the prospect of having to earn her living.

It happened that just at that time she accompanied her "voice master," as she calls him, at a concert at Palm Beach. Afterwards he persuaded Niela herself to sing a couple of songs. That decided her career.

An agent in the audience was agreeably impressed and booked her on the spot. Almost without realising it, she found herself a member of the "profession." And so far she has been remarkably successful. She has been in two Ziegfeld Follies, for instance, and is well known to American listeners for her frequent broadcasts.

"Ah, but that's nothing," says Niela. What she has done so far, she explains, is nothing compared with what she dreams of doing in the future—on films, on the stage, on the air.

She doesn't know how long she is staying in London. She may appear on the stage here; there are offers pending. In the meantime, she and her mother have settled down in a little house in Mayfair and are hoping that her father will join them soon.

"I love singing to English people," says Niela "Your audiences are so polite. If they like you, they are charming to you. Americans, especially cabaret audiences—are much rowdier. Even if they like you they think it smart not to!"

When she arrived, Niela knew no one, except her manager; now she has a large circle of friends, one of whom is Colin Becke, Eve Becke's dress-designer brother. He is making two beautiful gowns for Niela, a dinner dress of patterned silk, mostly green, and a turquoise blue net evening dress, beaded and backless—a wonderfully glamorous affair.

What is Niela Goodelle like? She is nervous, as she herself confesses. Her dark lashes flutter as she talks, and her pink-tipped hands grip her elbows. But she's not shy—you have to get used to meeting people in the radio world.

Loves Her Knitting

She's impatient, quick-tempered—temperamental, perhaps, a little. She says she has learned to be less "naughty" than she used to be. But there are times when she can be peaceful—for instance, she loves knitting! Curious how this occupation is popularly supposed to belong to elderly aunts, in common with parrots and bed-socks, when for long knitting has been unrivalled as the dearest hobby of the Smart Young Thing!

At the present moment, Niela is engaged on making an "Afghan," which, in case you don't know, is a crochet patchwork quilt. She is an enthusiastic cook, too, and her favourite dish is a nice, juicy steak and mustard sprouts.

Yes, Niela loves everything English, the people, the cooking, the countryside. Her favourite song is not the topical hit of the moment, as you might suppose, but *John Peel*, set to her own swing arrangement. She wants to reset many traditional English and Scottish tunes in the same way.

It's nice to have met you, Niela, and we hope you've come to stay. A new name in the programme is all to the good—especially when it possesses the unusual charm of Niela Goodelle's!



Thanks, Christopher Columbus! If you hadn't discovered America we would never have discovered Niela Goodelle!