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*The gamble that paid off for Paul Maxwell,
Coronation Street's bridegroom. See pages 2-3*

Cover: Paula Darrell, with the Eddie Robinson Quintet, appears in Monday's FIRSTIMERS



When the danger was real

THREE men got out of the car and walked into a small harbour-front cafe. There, a stranger was waiting for them.

"All set," he said, tersely. "Nobody knows you're here."

"We'd better phone them," said one of the men.

"No phone," said the stranger.

"How do we get in touch?" asked another of the men.

"You don't," said the stranger. "We'll take you out there."

They got up quietly and left. A launch was waiting near a quay. Silently, they went on board.

Soon after, the launch disappeared in the Channel mist . . . Smugglers at work? Secret agents on a mission?

No—just the *Danger Man* production unit on a reconnaissance for the making of another episode.

The mysterious rendezvous happened during the work on "Not So Jolly Roger," a story that takes John Drake aboard a pirate radio station on the high seas.

Producer Sidney Cole has always insisted on as much authenticity as possible on the *Danger Man* series. In the case of "Not So Jolly Roger," he felt that to get the right atmosphere, filming would have to be done on an actual pirate radio station.

So informal contact was made with the famous Radio 390, then operating from a wartime anti-invasion fort off the Channel coast. A meeting was arranged in Folkestone.

It turned out to be a real life *Danger Man* affair. Officially, the pirates didn't exist. Communications between them and the shore could take place only on a hush-hush radio, in emergencies.

When it came to the actual filming, getting cameras and equipment aboard the pirate fort was a hazard in itself. Technicians had to be hoisted aboard amid 20 feet high waves.

Patrick McGoohan as a pirate radio disc jockey with Patsy Ann Noble in a scene from *Not So Jolly Roger*

Danger Man, with Patrick McGoohan, returns to Granada screens on Wednesday. The background story is sometimes as exciting as the episodes you will see

by **GEORGE MARKSTEIN**

who was script editor of the series

chew their nails in frustration.

At least one *Danger Man* adventure anticipated, by many months, events in Africa involving mercenaries and mutinous native troops.

Two *Danger Man* episodes were being written when incidents hit the headlines with exactly the same situations involved. Both had to be scrapped.

These days, in espionage and security affairs, fact is often so much more strange than fiction. Trying to keep ahead of the headline hasn't been easy.

No pains have been spared to get things right in the series, which is seen in dozens of countries. When John Drake moves to Japan, as he does in two episodes, producer Cole had to bear in mind that *Danger Man* has an enormous following over there.

The Japanese Embassy provided a technical adviser who was on the set every day to ensure accuracy and the right "flavour."

By coincidence, it turned out that actress Amanda Barry had lived in Japan, and knew some of the language. That's why she is so fluent on the telephone during that mysterious scene in

her Tokyo flat. The Kabuki sequence in "Koroshi," a version of Hamlet performed in the centuries-old style of traditional Japanese theatre, took some 10 days to rehearse. On the screen, it lasts only a few moments.

Danger Man McGoohan is easily spotted by crowds when he is shooting on location. Yet sometimes, they miss him completely.

In "The Hunting Party," Drake has counter-intelligence business at the House of Lords. For a whole Sunday morning, McGoohan was filming outside the House of Lords.

But no one recognised him except an alert policeman.

There have been plenty of adventures behind the scenes on *Danger Man*. Some have involved physical risks, like a car chase sequence about which stunt men still speak with awe.

But, always, in a spy series it is not easy to get technical advice from the experts. That's been one of the problems *Danger Man* has had to overcome.

After all, the people who really know have signed the Official Secrets Act.

