

The Man From U.N.C.L.E. Notes

The Never-Never Affair - Season 1 - Episode 25

Aired March 22, 1965

The Man From U.N.C.L.E. aired on NBC from September 22, 1964 to January 15, 1968. During the four seasons that the show was on, 105 episodes were filmed for this series.

Dean Hargrove, who wrote this episode, would go on to be the executive producer of shows such as *Diagnosis Murder*, *Jake and The Fatman*, plus the creator and executive producer of *Matlock* and *Father Dowling Mysteries*.

Ian Fleming contributed to the series after being approached by co-creator Norman Felton. According to the book *The James Bond Films*, Fleming proposed two characters, Napoleon Solo and April Dancer, who later appeared on the spin-off series *The Girl From U.N.C.L.E.* The original name for the show was to be called *Ian Fleming's Solo* then later shortened to *Solo*.

The 70-minute television pilot was filmed in color from late November to early December of 1963. In February of 1964, the law firm representing James Bond producers Harry Saltzman and Albert R. Broccoli demanded to not use Fleming's name in connection with the series and end the use of the name and character "Solo", "Napoleon Solo" and "Mr. Solo".

At that time filming was underway for the James Bond film *Goldfinger*, in which Martin Benson was playing a supporting character named "Mr. Solo". The claim was the name "Solo" had been sold to them by Fleming and Fleming could not use it again. Within five days Fleming had signed an affidavit that nothing in the Solo pilot infringed any of his Bond characters, but the threat of legal action resulted in a settlement in which the name Napoleon Solo could be kept but the title of the show had to change. Hence, *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*

The role of the head of U.N.C.L.E. in the pilot was Mr. Allison, played by Will Kuluva, rather than Mr. Waverly, played by Leo G. Carroll. David McCallum's Illya Kuryakin had a very brief role. Revisions to some scenes were shot for television, including those needed to feature Leo G. Carroll. The pilot episode was reedited to 50 minutes to fit a one-hour time slot, converted to black-and-white and shown on television as "The Vulcan Affair".

The show's first season was filmed in black-and-white. The episodes were mainly filmed on the MGM Studios back lot. In their first season, *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* was up against *The Red Skelton Show* and Walter Brennan's *The Tycoon*. The ratings were poor and the show faced cancellation. As a result, NBC switched *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* to Monday nights where it found a receptive audience. Plus, the success of the James Bond film *Goldfinger* created a huge interest in spy entertainment which helped the series' ratings.

The series was popular enough to generate a spin-off series, *The Girl From U.N.C.L.E.* The "girl" was introduced in *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* episode "The Moonglow Affair" on February 25, 1966. The "girl" was played by Mary Ann Mobley. The spin-off series ran for one season starring Stefanie Powers as agent "April Dancer", a name credited to Ian Fleming. Noel Harrison as agent Mark Slate, had been played substantially differently by actor Norman Fell in the pilot.

A reunion TV movie, *Return Of The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* subtitled *The Fifteen Years Later Affair*, was broadcast on April 5, 1983, with Robert Vaughn and David McCallum reprising their roles. Patrick Macnee had replaced Leo G. Carroll, who had died in 1972.

An updated theatrical film of the television series was produced by Warner Bros. and Turner Entertainment. It was released in 2015. The film starred Armie Hammer as Illya Kuryakin, Henry Cavill as Napoleon Solo and Hugh Grant as Alexander Waverly. Filming began in September 2013. The film was released to mixed reviews on August 14, 2015.

Robert Vaughn (Napoleon Solo) - His breakthrough role was in *The Young Philadelphians*. This earned him a 1960 Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor. Vaughn credited Paul Newman with helping him earn his first major film role. He would go on to appear in more films including *The Magnificent Seven*, *Bullitt*, *The Bridge At Remagen* and *Superman III*.

On television, Robert Vaughn could be seen in other programs such as *Gunsmoke*, *The Dick Powell Show*, *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *The Lieutenant* and *The Protectors*. Additionally, he could be seen on daytime television on the CBS soap opera *As The World Turns* and on ABC's *One Life To Live*.

Robert Vaughn continued working on stage, spoken word recordings, in films and television up to 2016. He was also an author and founded a production company. Vaughn earned a PhD in communications from the University of Southern California (USC) in 1970. He has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame located at 6633 Hollywood Blvd.

David McCallum (Illya Kuryakin) - won a scholarship to University College School, a boys' school in Hampstead, London, where he prepared for a career in music playing the oboe.

McCallum began his acting career doing boy voices for BBC Radio in 1947 and taking bit parts in British films from the late 1950's. In 1951, he became the assistant stage manager of the Glyndebourne Opera Company.

Some of his early roles include *Robbery Under Arms*, *A Night To Remember* and *Violent Playground*. His first American film was *Freud: The Secret Passion*. He went on to appear in *Billy Budd*, *The Great Escape* and *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. On television, he was on *The Outer Limits* and *Perry Mason*.

After *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*, McCallum appeared on British television programs *Colditz*, *Kidnapped* and *Sapphire & Steel*. In America, he was seen on *Murder, She Wrote* and *Babylon 5*. In 2003, McCallum starred in the CBS television series *NCIS*.

In 2016, he published a crime novel entitled *Once A Crooked Man*. David McCallum was nominated three times for an Emmy Award, two of those times for *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*

Leo G. Carroll (Alexander Waverly) - - was born in Weedon Bec, Northamptonshire, England. Carroll made his stage debut in 1912. Next, he performed in London and on Broadway. His American stage debut came in *The Vortex* in 1925. Carroll moved to Hollywood and made his film debut in *Sadie McKee* in 1934.

He usually played doctors or butlers, but he made appearances as Marley's ghost in *A Christmas Carol* in 1938 and as Joseph in *Wuthering Heights* in 1939.

In a career of over 40 years, he appeared in six Alfred Hitchcock films including *Spellbound*, *Strangers On A Train* and *North By Northwest*. He was also in four television series, *Topper*, *Going My Way*, *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* and *The Girl From U.N.C.L.E.* He was one of the first actors to appear in two different television series as the same character.

Leo G. Carroll appeared in spots on the first two regular episodes of *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In*, the series that had replaced *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* He appears as Mr. Waverly in the very first episode party scene where he is seen using a pen communicator to call Kuryakin to report that he believes he has found THRUSH headquarters.

Barbara Feldon (Mandy Stevenson) - was born Barbara Anne Hall in Butler, Pennsylvania. Feldon has been her last name since she married Lucien Verdoux-Feldon in 1958. They divorced in 1967.

Feldon's big break came in the form of a television commercial for "Top Brass", a hair pomade for men by Revlon. She lounged on an animal-print rug purring at the camera, addressing the male viewers who use it as "tigers".

In the 1960's, she made appearances on *Twelve O'Clock High*, *Flipper*, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* and *Mr. Broadway*. One guest-starring role was opposite George C. Scott in *East Side/West Side* produced by Talent Associates, which was developing a television comedy called *Get Smart* with Mel Brooks and Buck Henry.

Barbara Feldon was cast as "Agent 99" opposite Don Adams, who portrayed Maxwell Smart, Secret Agent 86. She played the role from 1965 until 1970. She was nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series in 1968 and 1969.

Feldon has made many guest appearances on television which include *The Dean Martin Show*, *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In*, *The Carol Burnett Show*, *Thriller*, *The Name of the Game*, *McMillan & Wife* and *Griff*. She reprised her role as "Agent 99" in the made-for-television film *Get Smart, Again!* in 1989 and the short-lived revival of *Get Smart* in 1995. Her final film role was 2006 in *The Last Request*. As of 2024, Barbara Feldon is living in New York.

Cesar Romero (Victor Gervais) - was born César Julio Romero Jr. in New York City. At 6'3", Romero usually played "Latin lovers" in films from the 1930's until the 1950's in supporting roles. In a 1935 leading role, he played opposite Marlene Dietrich in *The Devil Is A Woman*. Romero starred as the *Cisco Kid* in six westerns made between 1939 and 1941.

Along with his numerous film credits, his television appearances include *Martha Raye Show*, *Zorro*, *How To Marry A Millionaire*, *The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour*, *Wagon Train*, *Pete and Gladys* and the Joker on *Batman*.

For his contributions to the motion picture and television industry, Romero has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame located at 6615 Hollywood Boulevard for film and another star at 1719 Vine Street for television.

Kate Murtagh (Miss Raven) - appeared in several films including *Breakfast At Tiffany's*, *The Night Strangler*, *Farewell, My Lovely*; *The Car*, *Doctor Detroit* and *Waxwork II: Lost in Time*. On television, she was in *It's A Man's World*, *Daniel Boone*, *My Three Sons*, *The Munsters*, *I Dream Of Jeannie*, *The Twilight Zone* and *Highway To Heaven*.

John Stephenson (Varner) - His career began in 1951 as an actor and voiceover artist. He was the voice of Mr. Slate from *The Flintstones* and of Fancy-Fancy from *Top Cat*. With 288 credits to his name, numerous films and television roles include *Spartacus*, *Herbie Rides Again*, *Get Smart*, *The Donna Reed Show*, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *The Real McCoys*, *The Andy Griffith Show* and *F Troop*.

REFERENCES

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